



Head teacher/Principal



Date: 04 November 2021

Dear Head teacher/Principal

Re: Recommended control measures to manage COVID-19 transmission in early years settings, schools and FE providers from November 2021

Thank you for your continued support during the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases continues to remain very high in Telford & Wrekin, with continued week-on-week increases during the first half term. The vast majority of positive cases are in school aged children and young people.

Settings will have no doubt seen much commentary and speculation about the government moving to 'plan B' and 'plan C'. At this moment the Council is not aware of anything more than what is in the public domain but will keep you updated as developments progress.

With regard to the here and now, it is important we take proactive steps to reduce the spread of infection, bring cases down and minimise further disruption to education. The DfE [contingency framework](#) allows local authority public health teams to recommend controls as part of their outbreak management responsibilities. Therefore as soon as practically possible following publication of this letter, Telford & Wrekin health protection hub is advising education settings to implement additional COVID-19 control measures.

These are advisory, not compulsory but are aimed to help settings reduce the transmission of the virus and support outbreak management.

There are two main additional sets of controls that we are proposing. The first includes the recommendation that children who are household contacts of positive cases take daily LFT tests for a period of 7 days (this includes primary aged children but not those that attend early years provision). This is in addition to the PCR test they will have been recommended to take. This is a request and is not mandatory and pupils should still come into school unless they are symptomatic or test positive on either a LFT or PCR test (see Appendix A for further detail). The second set of measures reintroduce some of the COVID-19 precautions that were in place in schools during the last academic year. These measures include wearing face coverings in communal areas, staggering lunch times, considering teaching in class bubbles and moving all non-essential events where parents / carers visit schools to virtual experiences



(see Appendix B). You may consider introducing all or some of the measures set out in Appendix B dependent on the individual circumstances of your school, COVID infection rates and potential impact on the quality of teaching and learning. All schools and educational settings should consider implementing additional measures now as a preventative measure and not wait until they hit the threshold for intervention as specified in the DfE contingency framework. As the LA we will ensure that we provide you with the best and most recent information however, we understand that you know your setting best.

We do appreciate that this will add to your school or setting workload at an already busy time, but we strongly believe it is important to act to prevent positive cases escalating further. We are aware that many local authorities have already, or intend, to implement similar measures.

The health protection hub continue to be available Mon- Fri 8.00am to 5.00pm. To contact the team, please email healthprotectionhub@telford.gov.uk or phone 01952 381800.

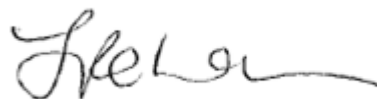
We are sure you will understand why these additional control measures have been suggested. The COVID-19 case rate and the impact on our schools and settings continues to be monitored very closely. These recommendations will be reviewed at least fortnightly. Decisions about stepping down measures will occur if the overall number of cases reduces and you will be kept up to date regarding our local advice.

Thank you for your on-going support.

Yours sincerely



Helen Onions
Acting Director: Health & Wellbeing
(Acting Statutory Director of Public Health)



Simon Wellman
Director: Education & Skills

Additional testing for children who are household contacts

- Where pupils are identified as a household contact of a positive case please recommend that they take a PCR test. In addition all children, including primary aged children (reception onwards), should take daily LFT tests for a period of 7 school days. (Children in early years provision should not undertake LFT testing). Secondary aged children will have access to LFT testing kits via their schools. Unfortunately there is no national plan to provide primary schools with testing kits for pupils and therefore parents should be signposted to order them online or collected via a local pharmacy. The pupil can attend school whilst taking their daily LFT tests. This is a request and is not mandatory and pupils must be allowed to come into school if they decide not to conduct LFT tests. Further guidance about this can be found [here](#).

Appendix B Reintroduction of COVID control measures

Primary and Special Schools

Review your COVID risk assessment and consider:

- Re-introducing class bubbles
- Limiting staff cross overs
- How you hold 'all school' events e.g. assemblies
- The risk and benefit of external visitors
- Moving all non-essential events where parents / carers visit schools to virtual
- Virtual all staff meetings
- Staggering lunch and start and finish times
- Wearing of face coverings in communal areas by school staff
- Ensure any visits out of school are to COVID-secure premises
- Any other COVID-secure controls that were used in the last academic year
- Staff to test themselves for COVID-19 twice a week, and more frequently if they are specifically asked to do so.
- Promote vaccination to staff not yet fully vaccinated and boosters as staff become eligible

Secondary and further education

Review your COVID risk assessment and consider:

- Re-introducing year group bubbles
- All staff, visitors and all pupils aged over 12 to wear a face covering in all communal areas unless exempt. (including when moving between classrooms and in the Dining Hall - except when eating and drinking)
- Staff to teach from the front with a 2m distance
- Virtual all staff meetings
- Moving all non-essential events where parents / carers visit schools to virtual
- The risk and benefit of external visitors
- COVID-19 management for PE lessons and changing
- Staggering lunch and start and finish times
- Ensure any visits out of school are to COVID-secure premises
- Staff and Pupils to test themselves for COVID-19 twice a week, and more frequently if they are specifically asked to do so

- Consider other COVID-secure controls that were used in the last academic year
- Promote vaccination and boosters to staff and eligible pupils not yet fully vaccinated.