

COVID-19: outbreak management plan

Reading Girls' School



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| Approved by: | Principal | Date: 01/09/21 |
| Last reviewed on: | 01/09/21 | |
| Next review due by: | 01/09/22 | |

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Principles

Prioritising education.

The overarching objective is to maximize the number of children and young people in face-to face education or childcare and minimize any disruption, in a way that best manages the COVID-19 risk.

The impacts of having missed face-to-face education during the pandemic are severe for children, young people and adults. In all cases, any benefits in managing transmission should be weighed against any educational drawbacks.

Decision-makers should endeavor to keep any measures in education and childcare to the minimum number of settings or groups possible, and for the shortest amount of time possible.

Decision-makers should keep all measures under regular review and lift them as soon as the evidence supports doing so.

Measures affecting education and childcare settings across an area should not be considered in isolation, but as part of a broader package of measures. Attendance restrictions should only ever be considered as a last resort.

The Government will try to give as much notice as possible of any changes to the way settings should operate

1. Introduction

This plan is based on the [contingency framework for managing local outbreaks](#) of COVID-19 and the [schools operational guidance](#), published by the Department for Education (DfE).

We will only implement some, or all, of the measures in this plan in response to recommendations provided by our local authority (LA), directors of public health (DsPH), Public Health England (PHE) health protection team or the national government.

It may be necessary to implement these measures in the following circumstances:

- To help manage a COVID-19 outbreak within the school. Actions will be considered when either of the following thresholds are met:

- There are 5 positive cases amongst pupils or staff who are likely to have mixed closely within a 10-day period
 - 10% of pupils or staff who are likely to have mixed closely test positive within a 10-day period
- › If COVID-19 infection rates in the community are extremely high, and other measures have failed to reduce transmission
- › As part of a package of measures responding to a 'variant of concern' (VoC)
- › To prevent unsustainable pressure on the NHS

2. Seeking public health advice

When one of the thresholds above is met, we will review the testing, hygiene and ventilation measures already in place.

We will also seek public health advice from a director of public health or health protection team. The Principal and/or SLT in charge for Inclusion will be responsible for seeking this advice, and will do so by telephoning the DfE helpline (0800 046 8687).

Public Health Advice will also be sought if a pupil, child, or staff member is admitted to hospital with COVID-19. This will be done by phoning DfE helpline (0800 046 8687). Hospitalisation could indicate increased severity of illness or a new variant of concern.

Measures that we will plan for:

3. Testing

If recommended, we will increase the use of home testing by pupils and staff. If it is advised that we reintroduce an asymptomatic testing site (ATS) at our school, we will consult with the director of public health (DsPH) to discuss any further support we need to do this.

If we reintroduce on-site asymptomatic testing:

- **When testing will take place.**

Testing will be staggered by Year groups, and administered by trained official. Thames Learning Trust will support RGS by liaising with the Nursing Team.

- **Where testing will take place**

An on-site Testing Centre will be set up in the Hall.

- **Who will receive on-site testing**

All students, whose parents give consent, will be eligible for testing.

4. Face coverings

If recommended, pupils, staff and visitors who are not exempt from wearing a face covering:

- › Will be asked to keep on or put on a face covering when arriving at school and moving around indoors in places where social distancing is difficult to maintain, such as in communal areas

And/or:

- › Will be asked to wear a face covering in classrooms or during activities, unless social distancing can be maintained or a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity

5. Shielding

We will adhere to national guidance on the reintroduction of shielding, which would apply to those on the [shielded patient list \(SPL\)](#).

We will speak to individuals required to shield about additional protective measures in school or arrangements for home working or learning.

6. Other measures

Parents, carers, pupils and staff will be informed promptly about the introduction of control measures. This will be done via School Comms and letters sent with pupils, once a decision has been made.

If recommended, we will limit:

- › Residential educational visits
- › Open days
- › Transition or taster days
- › Parents coming into school
- › Live performances

If recommended, we will reintroduce:

- › Bubbles, to reduce mixing between groups

7. Attendance restrictions

Attendance restrictions will only be recommended as a last resort. High quality face-to-face education remains a government and school priority. Attendance restrictions will only be considered as a short-term measure and as a last resort:

- Based on public health advice
- On LA or government advice.

If recommended, we will implement the measures in this section.

7.1 Eligibility to remain in school

If restrictions are recommended, we will stay open for:

- › Vulnerable pupils
- › Children of critical workers

7.2 Education and support for pupils at home

All other pupils will be required to stay at home and will receive high quality remote education.

We will aim to deliver remote education that meets the same quality and quantity of education that pupils would receive in school, as outlined in our COVID 19 Provision Strategy – A Measured Approach.

The school will continue to provide meals or lunch parcels for pupils eligible for benefits-related free school meals while they are not attending school because of COVID-19 isolation guidelines.

Pupils and their families will be invited to collect FSM.

7.3 Wraparound care

We will limit access to before and after-school activities and wraparound care during term time and the summer holidays to those that need it most.

We will communicate who will be eligible to attend once the restrictions are confirmed.

7.4 Safeguarding

We will review our child protection policy to make sure it reflects the local restrictions and remains effective.

We will aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible.

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be on site, they can be contacted remotely by phone: 07707036359

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

When vulnerable pupils are absent, we will:

- Speak to parents/carers and, where appropriate, social workers and the local authority, to work out the reason for absence
- Encourage attendance
- Ensure vulnerable pupils can access appropriate education and support while at home
- Maintain contact, and check regularly that the pupil is able to access remote education provision

8. Transport

Transport services to RGS will continue to be provided as normal where children are attending RGS. The guidance on transport to schools and colleges during the COVID-19 pandemic guidance remains in place.

9. Free School Meals.

We will continue to provide FSM for all pupils who are in schools. Meals will be available free of charge to all FSM pupils.

We will continue to provide FSM support in the form of meals or lunch parcels for pupils who are eligible for benefits related to FSM and who are not attending school because they have had symptoms or positive test results themselves.

10. Educational Visits

Any attendance restrictions will be reflected in the visits risk assessment and setting leaders will consider carefully if the educational visit is still appropriate and safe. Only students attending RGS will be eligible to go on visits. We shall consult the health and safety guidance on educational visits when considering visits.

11. The following Actions will be considered once a threshold is reached.

RGS will review and reinforce testing, hygiene and ventilation measures we have in place.

We will consider:

- Whether any activities could take place outdoors, including exercise, assemblies, or classes
- Ways to improve our ventilation indoors, where this would not significantly impact thermal comfort.
- One-off enhanced cleaning focusing on touch points and any support equipment.

- We will seek additional public health advice, either by phoning DfE helpline (0800 046 8687 Option 1) or in line with our local arrangements.

12. Additional action that could be advised by public health experts

Once we have contacted the DfE helpline or Director of Public Health (DsPH) or a Health Protection Team (HPT), they will inform us if additional action needs to be taken, as a result of assessing that transition is likely to be occurring in the school, they may advise us to:

1. Strengthen our communications to encourage pupils to undertake twice weekly rapid asymptomatic home testing and report.
2. Temporarily reinstate face coverings for pupils, staff and visitors in indoor and / or communal space. This will be for two weeks in the first instance.
3. Reinstate on-site rapid LFD testing for a two-week period.
4. Increase frequency of testing.

They may also recommend the actions listed under 'other measures' in the contingency framework.

In extreme cases, and as a last resort where all other risk mitigations have not broken chains of in-school transmission, A DPH may advise introducing short-term attendance restrictions in a setting, such as sending home a class or year group.

High quality remote learning will be provided for all pupils well enough to learn from home. ON -site provision should in all cases be retained for vulnerable children and young people and the children of critical workers.