



The Cottesloe School

# Contingency Plans for Coronavirus Restrictions

**Updated 05/09/2021 following new DfE guidance:** [Contingency Framework August 2021](#)

The COVID – 19 pandemic continues to impact on aspects of our lives. To ensure we are fully prepared for all eventualities, the aim of this plan is to give all stakeholders clear understanding of their roles, in order that they understand what they would do if children, pupils, students or staff test positive for COVID-19, or how they would operate if they were advised to reintroduce any measures to help break chains of transmission.

The Government has made it a national priority that education and childcare settings should continue to operate as normally as possible during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Prioritising education**

The overarching objective is to maximise the number of children and young people in face-to face education or childcare and minimise 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.

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.

The school's risk assessment sets out the actions we will take to minimise the risks to all stakeholders. Any additional measures set out in this document will be introduced following advice from the local Director of Public Health to help break chains of transmission.

## Baseline measures

The [Operational Guidance](#) sets out the measures that all education settings should have in place to manage transmission of COVID-19. At TCS, we are following this guidance. It includes:

- Students in secondary schools and colleges should be tested twice on site at an Asymptomatic Testing Site (ATS) on return in the autumn term. The tests should be 3-5 days apart.
- Thereafter, staff and students in secondary schools should test themselves using LFD twice a week at home until the end of September, when this will be reviewed. This is critical for identifying positive cases early and ensuring they isolate.
- Those who test positive should isolate, take a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test, and continue to isolate if the result is positive. Schools and colleges will need to be prepared to implement high-quality blended learning arrangements so that any child who is well enough to learn from home can do so.
- Under-18s, irrespective of their vaccination status, and double vaccinated adults will not need to self-isolate if they are a close contact of a positive case. They will be strongly advised to take a PCR test and, if positive, will need to isolate.
- 18-year-olds will be treated in the same way as children until 6 months after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, to allow them the opportunity to get fully vaccinated
- All education and childcare settings should continue to ensure good hygiene for everyone, maintain appropriate cleaning regimes, keep occupied spaces well ventilated, and follow public health advice on testing and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- All settings should continue their strong messaging about signs and symptoms, isolation advice and testing, to support prompt isolation of suspected cases. Settings should also continue to encourage vaccination uptake for eligible students and staff.

## When settings should consider extra action

This section of the contingency plan sets out the additional actions and measures the school will take should the number of cases of COVID -19 in the school population reach the thresholds below:

- *5 children, pupils, students or staff, who are likely to have **mixed closely**, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period; or*
- *10% of children, pupils, students or staff who are likely to have mixed closely test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period*

Wherever additional measures are considered, the objective is to maximise the number of children and young people in face-to-face teaching and minimise control measures that disrupt education, balanced against the risks of COVID-19 transmission.

All settings should seek public health advice if a pupil, student, child or staff member is admitted to hospital with COVID-19. They can do this by phoning the DfE helpline (0800 046 8687, option 1), or in line with other local arrangements. Hospitalisation could indicate increased severity of illness or a new variant of concern. Settings may be offered public health support in managing risk assessments and communicating with staff and parents.

## **Close mixing**

Identifying a group that is likely to have mixed closely will be different for each setting. For schools, the DfE suggests this could include the following - it will rarely mean a whole setting or year group:

- a form group or subject class
- a friendship group mixing at break times
- a sports team
- a group in an after-school activity

## **Actions to consider**

When the above thresholds are reached, TCS will review and reinforce the testing, hygiene and ventilation measures we already have in place. TCS will consider:

- whether any activities could take place outdoors, including exercise, assemblies, or classes
- ways to improve ventilation indoors, where this would not significantly impact thermal comfort
- one-off enhanced cleaning focussing on touch points and any shared equipment

TCS will seek additional public health advice if we are concerned about transmission within the school community, either by phoning the DfE helpline (0800 046 8687, option 1) or in line with other local arrangements.

## **Testing (after the end of September)**

- TCS will reintroduce testing for staff and students twice weekly or more frequently if advised using the Lateral Test at Home kits.
- TCS may reintroduce on site asymptomatic testing for all students, or a specific year group
- TCS will communicate to students and parents if there is a requirement to undertake the above and how they will report the results of tests to school.

## **Face coverings**

- TCS may reintroduce the advice that face coverings should be worn in communal areas and/or classrooms and also on dedicated school transport. This will be communicated to families.
- In all cases, any educational and wellbeing drawbacks in the recommended use of face coverings should be balanced with the benefits in managing transmission.

## **Shielding**

Shielding is currently paused. In the event of a major outbreak or VoC that poses a significant risk to individuals on the shielded patient list (SPL), ministers can agree to reintroduce shielding. Should this be required, TCS will ensure appropriate support is put in place for staff or students that are required to shield. It should be noted that shielding can only be reintroduced by national government.

## **Other measures**

TCS will determine whether the following events should be limited or take place virtually or via another means appropriate to the circumstances:

- residential educational visits
- open days
- transition or taster days
- parental attendance in settings
- live performances in settings

## **Assemblies/Larger gatherings of students**

- Whole year group assemblies will take place via Google meet or in smaller groups.

## **Remote learning**

High-quality remote learning in schools should be provided for all students if:

- they have tested positive for COVID-19 but are well enough to learn from home; or
- attendance at their setting has been temporarily restricted

TCS will deliver high quality remote learning using Google classroom where students are having to self-isolate. On-site provision will be retained for vulnerable children and young people and the children of critical workers.

## **Short term attendance restrictions**

As a last resort, and only if the above measures have not broken the chains of in school transmission; the local Director of Public Health may advise the school to restrict the attendance of some student groups for a short period; this would most likely be a class or a year group

TCS school will ensure high quality remote learning is in place via Google Classrooms for those students affected, with lessons delivered on a blended basis to ensure high quality learning can continue.

## **Free school meals**

We will continue to provide free school meals or food parcels for eligible students who are not attending school where they:

- are self-isolating
- have had a positive test result themselves
- are not attending as a result of implementation of local restrictions advised by government

## **Safeguarding and designated safeguarding leads**

There will be no change to local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, which remain the responsibility of the 3 safeguarding partners (local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and chief officers of police). Please see our FAQs section at the end of this document for details of the Safeguarding and Child Protection processes and procedures at TCS.

## **Exams and assessments**

Should the contingency framework thresholds be reached during a time when exams and assessments are planned to take place, we will remain open. We may implement additional mitigations to ensure that the delivery of exams and assessments is COVID-secure, in addition to the measures already set out in the [actions for schools during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#). These additional mitigations may include:

- wearing face coverings in communal areas
- 2-metre spacing between all desks
- additional protections for candidates who are classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, such as taking exams and tests in a separate room to other candidates

The guidance directs senior leaders at TCS to determine whether it is appropriate, practical and reasonable to provide exams and tests in a separate room or, in exceptional circumstances, at the candidate's home. We will work with the individual student and their family to determine the most appropriate and safest course of action.

## **Educational visits**

Any attendance restrictions should be reflected in the visits risk assessment. TCS leaders will consider carefully if the educational visit is still appropriate and safe. Only students who are attending the setting will be able to go on an educational visit. TCS will consult the health and safety guidance on educational visits when considering visits.

## **Transport**

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

## **Education workforce**

If restrictions on child, pupil and student attendance are ever needed, TCS is best placed to determine the workforce required onsite and if it is appropriate for some staff to work remotely. Plans surrounding this will be communicated as necessary.

# FAQs for Parents - updated 05/09/2021

## **What are the expectations of students if they are working remotely?**

Students should follow their usual timetable which provides a structure to the day and helps to ensure an even amount of time is dedicated to each subject as it would be if students were present at school. However, we appreciate that owing to shared devices across family members, this may not always be possible.

We recognise that students will respond in different ways to this working arrangement. Many will take to it very smoothly. However, those who find independent work difficult will find this challenging and need more support. Our tips and FAQs are designed to help all families during these trying times. The FAQs include additional ways to contact the school should the need arise.

## **Where is my child's work?**

All work (including homework when school is operating on a normal basis) can be accessed via a student's Google Classroom. Students need to log in to their school Google account, as they have been using since Easter 2020. Parents can sign up to receive daily emails about work set so that they can track their child/ren's learning. If a child is self-isolating they will be added to a year group specific Google Classroom to access learning whilst they cannot attend school.

## **What happens if an individual student needs to self-isolate for a set period?**

Once the school has been made aware that a student is self-isolating, the student will be added to a year group specific Google Classroom for the duration of their isolation period. This 'Covid' classroom will contain appropriate online lessons to cover the period of time that the student will be absent from school. Students should follow their usual timetable to complete the relevant lessons on the same day as if they were attending school.

Where a student is unwell, they are not expected to complete online learning.

## **How should work be submitted?**

Submitting work should be done via the Google Classroom for each subject. Teachers will provide instructions about how they would like the work to be submitted, along with any deadlines.

## **When will my child's learning activities be available?**

Work will be set according to the usual school timetable. In some instances, several lessons will be set per subject in one go rather than setting work for a single one-hour lesson, so students will need to learn to manage their time well during the day. Work is therefore likely to be set in advance, and where a whole year group is at home, teachers will be online at the usual teaching time to support and facilitate the learning via the relevant Google Classroom.

## **The work seems to be taking my child longer than the usual one-hour lesson. What do I do?**

If you have any concerns regarding the actual work your son or daughter has been asked to complete, please contact the subject teacher that has set the work in the first instance. You will receive the fastest and specific response by doing so. The work set by teachers should be the equivalent of their usual one-hour lesson. Some students may find working at home in the peace and quiet, that they are getting through the work more quickly than one hour. If this is happening on a regular basis, please make the class teacher aware so they can adjust tasks accordingly. If the work is taking considerably longer, students should only work for the hour and then make the teacher aware that they have not managed to finish. They should not keep working and working to complete a task so that they then miss the next lesson on their timetable.

## **Where should my child complete the learning activity?**

This will vary for each subject and each task. Instructions will be in the lesson activities and all work should be completed online. However, if this is difficult, students can do it on paper or in their exercise book.

## **My child does not understand what to do. How can they get help?**

Teachers will be using Google Classrooms to keep in touch with classes. Students can send messages to their teacher via the Google Classroom message system, this will be sent via the student's school email address. Students should make sure that they use their school emails if they want to contact their teacher. Teachers won't reply to a student's personal email address. Teachers and other staff will be communicating regularly with you over any period of school closure.

## **How do I get in contact with someone if I have a question?**

If you know the email of the member of staff you need to get in touch with, please contact them. Alternatively, email [office@cottesloe.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:office@cottesloe.bucks.sch.uk) clearly stating who your email is for.

Please respect wherever possible the school's working hours when sending emails. If an email is sent out of hours, it will almost certainly not be opened and responded to when normal working hours resume.

Please be mindful that online learning has brought about significant change for teachers as well as students. We are all adapting as quickly as possible, but the more enquiries we receive, the longer it will take to respond to them. If your enquiry is essential, please don't hesitate to contact us.

## **What do I do if I have a safeguarding issue that I want to discuss?**

With the move to the local restriction tiers, there has been NO change in the processes and procedures for Safeguarding matters and the role of the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, Chloe Hankin. You can contact the school's [Safeguarding Team](#) and one of the Safeguarding team will contact you to discuss and offer support.

Should you have an emergency, you should follow the [advice here](#) to take the appropriate next steps. The Safeguarding Team will be in contact with Children's Services and will continue to support your child if such support is already in place and is required.

## How will my child access support from Team HUB?

Students will be able to seek support as necessary from their form tutor, Head of Year or Team HUB. These adults will be in touch with students regularly to offer support as necessary.

## How will SEN support operate now?

TAs will work alongside teachers to provide resources for the students they would normally be supporting in class and these resources will be available alongside all other work on Google Classroom.

SEN students will be allocated a TA who will then regularly contact students via email and/or Google Classroom to ensure they are accessing work and to support them however they can.

## My child is eligible for Free School Meals. Can you help?

The school is currently providing free school meals on site as normal. If your son or daughter is required to self-isolate, then the appropriate arrangements for free school meals will be undertaken.

The provision will reflect the latest Government Guidance and any national initiative such as the Food Voucher Scheme.

## When will you reopen if the school is required to close?

We are in frequent contact with the Local Authority and Health Officials. We will share reopening plans as advice becomes available.

## E-Safety

Please discuss e-safety with child/ren before they start our online learning programme. Childline has produced [an excellent resource](#) to help you with this.

## Other useful tips for Parents and Students

- **Establish routines and expectations:** start times, breaks and lunch at school are at clear times. Maintaining this routine can help maintain a positive work ethic. Get dressed!
- **Identify a clear physical space in which to work:** this will make it easier to focus.
- **Talk about the plan for the day, and the lessons ahead:** spending extended time working at home is unfamiliar territory. Talking about how things are going can help pre-empt any problems.
- **Set times to be on and offline:** There will be more screen time than normal when working at home. You may have to share devices with family members, setting time limits in advance can help manage this. Spending time offline is important to maintain a sense of balance in the day.
- **Remember to exercise:** Wellbeing is enhanced by physical activity, so do make time for this. The PE team has planned some excellent activities. This can really help if you are feeling anxious, which is completely normal whilst you are working from home.
- **Talk about things on your mind:** it has been a big adjustment for everyone to manage working from home every day. Talk about how things are going. It is normal to feel uncertainty about this too. Be conscious of how much of the news you watch and talk about what you are watching.
- **Read a book:** Escape, relax, unwind. Look after yourself.

# Sources

This document was produced using the following sources (all information is up to date as of 05/09/2021):

- [What parents need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges during COVID-19](#) GOV.UK - DfE
- [Contingency framework: education and childcare settings](#) GOV.UK - DfE
- [Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#) GOV.UK – DfE