

Pathways School

Covid 19 Statement and **Risk assessment**

Policy Monitoring

This policy was reviewed: September 2022

Reviewed by: Saima Ali Majid, Chair of Trustees

Neil Jones, Headteacher

Date of next review: February 2023

This policy will be reviewed at least termly and following any concerns and/or updates to national/local guidance or procedure.

1. Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected us all and has been particularly disruptive to schools and has at times, limited learning opportunities for children and young people due to restrictions in place to manage the spread of the virus. This policy statement and risk assessment consider the very latest government and public health advice issued in May 2022, including Schools COVID 19 operational guidance (DfE) and SEND and Specialist settings: additional COVID 19 operational guidance (DfE)

2. Links to other school policies and practices.

- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Risk Assessment Policy.
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Education Visits Policy.

3. Risk assessment

Pathways School is required to comply with health and safety laws and put in place proportionate control measures. We regularly review and update our risk assessments, as the circumstances in our school and the public health advice change.

4. Mixing and bubbles

Bubbles and social distancing are no longer required by law. We have contingency plans to cover the possibility that it may become necessary to reintroduce 'bubbles' for a temporary period, to reduce mixing between groups.

5. Tracing close contacts and isolation

Individuals are no longer required to self-isolate and contact tracing has ended:

6. Face coverings

Face coverings are no longer required in school but may be required to be worn when travelling on public or dedicated transport.

We will work with health protection teams in the case of a local outbreak. If there is a substantial increase in the number of positive cases or if the central government offers the area an enhanced response package, a director of public health might advise a setting to temporarily reintroduce some control measures.

Circumstances where face coverings are recommended

If a director of public health advises that face coverings should temporarily be worn in communal areas or classrooms (by students, staff, and visitors, unless exempt). We will comply.

In these circumstances, transparent face coverings, which may assist communication with someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate, can also be worn. Transparent face coverings may be effective in reducing the spread of COVID-19.

Face visors or shields can be worn by those exempt from wearing a face covering but they are not an equivalent alternative in terms of control of virus transmission. They may protect the wearer against droplet spread in specific circumstances but are unlikely to be effective in preventing the escape of smaller respiratory particles when used without an additional face covering. They should only be used after carrying out a risk assessment for the specific situation and should always be cleaned appropriately.

The use of face coverings may have a particular impact on those who rely on visual signals for communication. Those who communicate with or provide support to students who rely on visual signs are exempt from any recommendation to wear face coverings in education and childcare settings.

Pathways School has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students to support them to access education successfully. We will discuss with students and parents the types of reasonable adjustments that are being considered to support an individual.

No student should be denied education on the grounds of whether they are, or are not, wearing a face covering.

7. Stepping measures up and down

We have contingency plans outlined in the event students or staff test positive for COVID-19, and how we will operate if we are advised to take extra measures to help break chains of transmission. Given the detrimental impact that restrictions on education can have on children and young people, any measures in schools should only ever be considered as a last resort, kept to the minimum number of schools or groups possible, and for the shortest amount of time possible.

Central government may offer local areas of particular concern an enhanced response package to help limit increases in transmission.

The contingency framework describes the principles of managing local outbreaks of COVID-19 in education and childcare settings. Local authorities, directors of public health (DsPH) and PHE health protection teams (HPTs) can recommend measures described in the contingency framework in individual education and childcare

settings – or a small cluster of settings – as part of their outbreak management responsibilities.

8. Control measures

We will:

1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone.
2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes.
3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.
4. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

8.1 Good hygiene for everyone

Hand hygiene

Frequent and thorough hand cleaning should now be regular practice. We will continue to ensure that students clean their hands regularly. This is done with soap and water or hand sanitiser.

Respiratory hygiene

The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important.

8.2 Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes, using standard products such as detergents

We maintain an appropriate cleaning schedule, which includes regular cleaning of areas and equipment, with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces.

8.3 Keep occupied spaces well ventilated

When school is in operation, it is important to ensure it is well ventilated and that a comfortable teaching environment is maintained.

Opening external windows can improve natural ventilation, and in addition, opening internal doors can also assist with creating a throughput of air. If necessary, external opening doors may also be used (if they are not fire doors and where safe to do so).

We balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature.

9. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19

When an individual develops COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test

Students, staff, and other adults should follow public health advice. They should not come into school if they have symptoms, have had a positive test result or other reasons requiring them to stay at home due to the risk of them passing on COVID-19.

If anyone in school develops COVID-19 symptoms, however mild, we will send them home and they should follow public health advice.

For everyone with symptoms, they should avoid using public transport and, wherever possible, be collected by a member of their family or household.

If a student is awaiting collection, they should be left in a room on their own if possible and safe to do so. A window should be opened for fresh air ventilation if possible. Appropriate PPE should also be used if close contact is necessary. Further information on this can be found in the use of PPE in education, childcare and children's social care settings guidance. Any rooms they use should be cleaned after they have left.

The household (including any siblings) should follow the PHE stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

Asymptomatic testing

Testing remains important in reducing the risk of transmission of infection within schools. That is why, whilst some measures are relaxed, others will remain, and if necessary, in response to the latest epidemiological data, we all need to be prepared to step measures up or down in future depending on local circumstances.

Testing remains voluntary but is strongly encouraged and we will support students with asymptomatic testing if requested by their parents.

10. Admitting children into school

In most cases, parents and carers will agree that a student with symptoms should not attend the school, given the potential risk to others.

If a parent or carer insists on a student attending your school, we may take the decision to refuse the student if, in our reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other students and staff from possible infection with COVID-19. The decision will be carefully considered considering all the circumstances and current public health advice.

11. Attendance

School attendance is mandatory for all students at compulsory school age, and it is a priority to ensure that as many children as possible regularly attend school.

12. School workforce

Pathways School is committed to working with individual staff members to meet their needs.

Pathways School Covid-19 Risk Assessment September 2022

This Risk Assessment applies to all Students, Staff, Volunteers and Visitors is considering recent government guidance. This Risk Assessment is a live document and will be updated regularly by the Headteacher in line with DfE guidance and stakeholder feedback.

We aim for open and clear communication to all stakeholders, particularly parents/carers, which we believe is essential to the successful and smooth opening of school to all staff and students in April 2022.

Control Measures

- 1 Ensure good hygiene for everyone.
- 2 Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes.
- 3 Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.
- 4 Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

The DfE latest documents and guidance webpage is updated regularly:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>

Additionally, leaders may find the following guidance particularly useful:

10. Supporting SEND students with re-opening <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialistsettings/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings>

Specific Issue	Control Measures	By Whom/By When	Notes
Site Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outer door buzzers and handles to be cleaned at least daily. • Cleaning equipment and gloves to be provided in all classrooms • Process to clean hands before and after use. • Signs up to remind visitors to clean hands. • Communicate to any visitors, such as suppliers, not to enter the school if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus 	Headteacher Sept 2022	Daily cleaning now in place from contractor
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are encouraged to be part of national vaccination programme • All staff will be allowed to wear face coverings if they want to. • Face coverings will be required when travelling in cars 	Headteacher Sept 2022	
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asymptomatic testing available as agreed with parents 	Headteacher Sept 2022	
Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soap, hot water in every toilet area • Hand sanitiser provided to all staff • For early and intermediate learners hand sanitiser pumped by staff member 	Headteacher January 2023 BA & Tutors Sept 2022	Cleaning equipment provided in each classroom. Replenished when needed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand sanitizer to be placed in safe position in the classroom depending on student behaviours • Sensitive hand wash available on request for staff • Bins placed in all classrooms and communal spaces • Tissues placed in every learning area and disposed of in bins; small packs of tissues provided to staff • Windows open where possible to ensure good ventilation. • Schedule for when hands cleaned: arrival, before and after break, before lunch, after lunch, before going home, before and after using equipment such as bikes • Staff should clean surfaces/shared spaces before leaving • Staff to wipe surfaces after use of photocopier (anti bac gel available) • Cleaning tools available in each area e.g., cloths, gloves, detergent, tissues; allows to deal with case of a student's coughs/sneezes on a piece of equipment. • All staff to read this advice from HSE http://coshtool.hse.gov.uk/assets/live/SR04.pdf 		<p>Daily cleaning now in place from contractor</p>
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Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures to be always followed 	Headteacher Sept 2022	
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback and consultation from staff to be welcomed • Staff aware that policy/risk assessment could change • Covid-19 Policy and procedures and any risk assessments that have been written • Updates from the DFE and guidance from the Public Health England shared to staff via email as appropriate 	Headteacher Sept 2022	