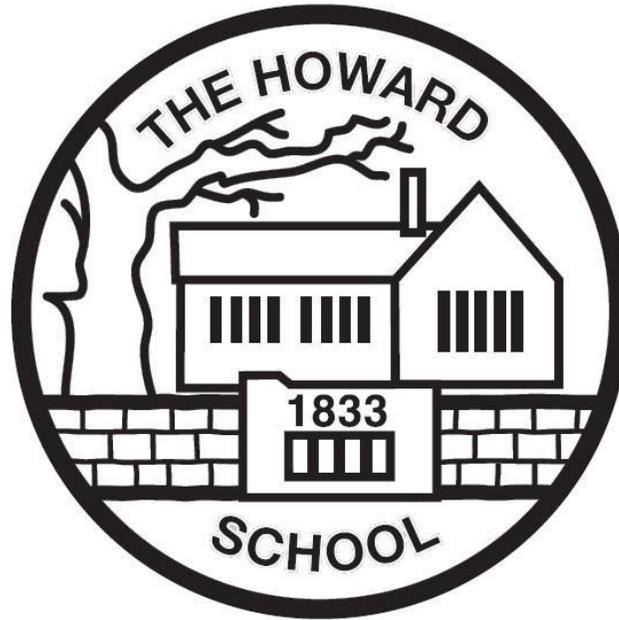


Ackworth Howard C of E School

Educating for 'life in all its fullness.'



COVID-19 School Guidance

Spring 1 Update



COVID-19 School Guidance

Introduction – Spring 1 Update

Dear parents/carers, colleagues and governors...

I am writing to you with an update of the school's operational guidance. **Any significant changes from the previous plan are highlighted in purple to make them easier to identify.**

The government states that it continues to manage the risk of serious illness from the spread of the virus. The Prime Minister announced on the 27th November the temporary introduction of new measures as a result of the Omicron variant and on 8 December that Plan B, set out in the autumn and winter plan 2021, was being enacted. As a result, these measures are reflected in this document. This advice remains subject to change.

COVID-19 continues to be a virus that we learn to live with and the imperative to reduce the disruption to children and young people's education remains.

Our priority is to continue to deliver face-to-face, high-quality education to all pupils. The evidence is clear that being out of education causes significant harm to educational attainment, life chances, mental and physical health.

Thank you again for your ongoing support, I hope that you have had a wonderful festive period and I look forward to welcoming you all back on Wednesday 5th January 2022.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Walker
Headteacher



COVID-19 School Guidance

Additional Measures – Local Advice

Unfortunately, the arrival of the Omicron variant has led to incredibly high case rates nationally, which have reached Wakefield over the Christmas holidays. The current case rate is around 1,000/100,000 – in other words, 1 in 100 people in the Wakefield District is testing positive for COVID-19. This is more than double what it was before the Christmas break. It is anticipated that these numbers will rise over the coming weeks.

There is increasing evidence that probably due to a mixture of high vaccine coverage and the characteristics of the variant itself, Omicron infection is less likely to lead to very severe illness and ICU admission. However, Public Health are still seeing sharp increases in hospital admissions locally, and very high levels of staff sickness. This is putting enormous pressure on health, social care and other key local services.

The majority of Omicron infection has so far been in the 20 – 49 age group, with comparatively lower rates in under-18s. Unfortunately, this does mean that on return to school, children are at higher risk of large numbers of Omicron infections.

Additional Measures in School - Adopted from Local Advice:

- **If a relative or household member has tested positive for COVID-19 (on LFD or PCR)**, pupils are advised to stay at home for 5 days if possible (any length of time is better than none). If possible, they should take daily lateral flow tests as per Government advice. If they develop symptoms, they should get a PCR test straight away and continue to stay at home. If they have no symptoms after 5 days and daily lateral flow tests (if taken) are negative, they can return to school. Parents/carers who still want their child to continue to attend school have the right for them to do so. We hope that most parents will understand the reasons behind the request and will feel able to support it, especially as they will have at least one household member self-isolating at home already. All children who do attend school and are close or household contacts are **strongly advised** to take daily lateral flow tests for 7 days, as per national guidance.
- If children or staff test positive then as per national guidance, they can return from day 7 onwards, provided they have two negative LFTs 24 hours apart. Children/staff who have not tested, or who are still testing positive at this stage, must complete 10 days' isolation.



COVID-19 School Guidance

Key Information

Mixing and 'bubbles'

- It is no longer recommended that children should be kept in consistent groups and we will not be doing this in school unless the outbreak management plan is enforced. We also do not need to make alternative arrangements to avoid mixing at lunch and at break times.
- As well as enabling flexibility in curriculum delivery, this means that important things in school such as whole school worship and family dining have resumed.
- The outbreak management plan/school guidance covers the possibility that in our local area it may become necessary to reintroduce 'bubbles' for a temporary period, to reduce mixing between groups.
- Any decision to recommend the reintroduction of 'bubbles' would not be taken lightly and would need to take account of the detrimental impact they can have on the delivery of education and the mental health of the school community.

Tracing Close Contacts and Isolation

- School is no longer involved in contact tracing. Close contacts are now identified via NHS Test and Trace.
- NHS Test and Trace work with the positive case to identify close contacts. Contacts from a school setting will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact. This is likely to be a small number of individuals who would be most at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of the close contact. School may be contacted in exceptional cases to help with identifying close contacts, as currently happens in managing other infectious diseases.
- **From 14 December 2021, adults who are fully vaccinated and all children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 are strongly advised to take a LFD test every day for 7 days and continue to attend school as normal, unless they have a positive test result. Daily testing of close contacts applies to all contacts who are:**
 - fully vaccinated adults – people who have had 2 doses of an approved vaccine
 - all children and young people aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, regardless of their vaccination status
 - people who are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons
 - people taking part, or have taken part, in an approved clinical trial for a COVID-19 vaccine.
- **Children under 5 years are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily testing of close contacts.**
- School will continue to have a role in working with health protection teams in the case of a local outbreak. If there is an outbreak in school or if central government offers the area an enhanced response package, a director of public health might advise school to temporarily reintroduce some additional control measures.



COVID-19 School Guidance

Key Information

Face Coverings – (This is a temporary measure)

- Face coverings help protect the wearer and others against the spread of infection because they cover the nose and mouth, which are the main confirmed sources of transmission of COVID-19.
- It is recommended that face coverings should be worn by staff and adults (including visitors) when moving around in corridors and communal areas. Health advice continues to be that children in primary schools should not be asked to wear face coverings.
- Face coverings do not need to be worn when outdoors.
- School has a contingency supply of face masks should anyone need one when entering school.

Safe Wearing and Removal of Face Coverings

- When wearing a face covering, staff, visitors and pupils should:
 - wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on
 - avoid touching the part of the face covering in contact with the mouth and nose, as it could be contaminated with the virus
 - change the face covering if it becomes damp or if they've touched the part of the face covering in contact with the mouth and nose
 - avoid taking it off and putting it back on a lot in quick succession to minimise potential contamination.
- When removing a face covering, staff, visitors and pupils should:
 - wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before removing
 - only handle the straps, ties or clips
 - not give it to someone else to use
 - if single-use, dispose of it carefully in a waste bin and do not recycle
 - once removed, store reusable face coverings in a plastic bag until there is an opportunity to wash them
 - if reusable, wash it in line with manufacturer's instructions at the highest temperature appropriate for the fabric
 - wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser once removed.



COVID-19 School Guidance

Key Information

Control Measures

These measures include:

- Ensuring good hygiene for everyone.
- Maintaining appropriate cleaning regimes.
- Keeping occupied spaces well ventilated.
- Following public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone

Hand hygiene

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

Respiratory hygiene

- The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important.
- **The [e-Bug COVID-19 website](#) contains free resources for you, including materials to encourage good hand and respiratory hygiene.**

Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

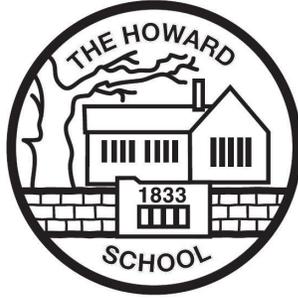
- Most staff in school will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work. There may be occasions where additional PPE may be required such as when coming into contact with a suspected Covid-19 case.

2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes, using standard products such as detergents

- School has put in place and maintains an appropriate cleaning schedule. This includes regular cleaning of areas and equipment (for example, twice per day), with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces.

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.
- Checks will be regularly undertaken to identify any poorly ventilated spaces and steps will be taken to improve fresh air flow in these areas, giving particular consideration when holding events where visitors such as parents are on site, for example, Inspire Mornings.
- **CO2 monitors have been provided to all state-funded education settings and have been installed in all of our classrooms. Teachers should continually identify if ventilation needs improving during different times of the day.**
- Opening external windows improves natural ventilation, and in addition, opening internal doors can also assist with creating a throughput of air. If necessary, external opening doors will also be used (if they are not fire doors and where safe to do so).
- School will balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature.



COVID-19 School Guidance

Key Information

Control Measures Continued...

4. 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

- Pupils, staff and other adults should follow public health advice on when to self-isolate and what to do. 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 (for example, they are required to quarantine).
- If anyone in school develops COVID-19 symptoms, however mild, they will be sent 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 pupil is awaiting collection, they will be moved to a room on their own if possible and safe to do so. A window will be opened for fresh air ventilation. Appropriate PPE should also be used if close contact is necessary.
- The household (including any siblings) should follow the [UKHSA 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.
- [Staff should continue to undertake twice weekly home tests. Testing remains voluntary but is strongly encouraged.](#)
- [Parents and other visitors are strongly advised to take a lateral flow device \(LFD\) test before entering the school.](#)

Confirmatory PCR tests

- Staff and pupils with a positive LFD test result should self-isolate in line with the stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection. They will also need to get a free PCR test to check if they have COVID-19.
- Whilst awaiting the PCR result, the individual should continue to self-isolate.
- If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test and the individual can return to school, as long as they don't have COVID-19 symptoms.

Other considerations

- School will ensure that key contractors are aware of the school's control measures and ways of working.



COVID-19 School Guidance

Key Information

Control Measures Continued...

Those formerly considered to be clinically extremely vulnerable

- Following expert clinical advice and the successful rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine programme, people previously considered to be particularly vulnerable, clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV), and high or higher-risk are not being advised to shield again. Children and young people who were previously identified as being in one of these groups, are advised to continue to follow the guidance contained in Coronavirus: how to stay safe and help prevent the spread.
- Children and young people previously considered CEV should attend school and should follow the same COVID-19 guidance as the rest of the population. In some circumstances, a child or young person may have received personal advice from their specialist or clinician on additional precautions to take and they should continue to follow that advice.

Vaccination

- It is recommended that all school staff take up the offer of a vaccine.

Mandatory Certification

- Schools are not required to use the NHS COVID Pass, unless holding a specific event (such as a reception, concert or party) that meets the attendance thresholds. This is extremely unlikely in our school.
- Where applicable, school will follow guidance on mandatory certification for events.
- Under 18s are exempt from showing their COVID Status but should be counted towards attendance thresholds.



COVID-19 School Guidance

Key Information

Attendance

- School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and it is a priority to ensure that as many children as possible regularly attend school.

Parental Attendance

- Parents are able to enter school.
- Parents' and carers' most up-to-date contact details in case of an emergency must be up to date.

Remote education

- Not all people with COVID-19 have symptoms. Where appropriate, **school is required** support those who need to self-isolate because they have tested positive to work or learn from home if they are well enough to do so along with other pupils needing to isolate. **Where pupils are deemed vulnerable, additional systems will be enacted.**
- The remote education provided will be equivalent in length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school. You can find out more about our remote education provision here: <https://www.ackworthhowardschool.co.uk/curriculum/curriculum-brochure-2020-2021>
- School will work collaboratively with families and put in place reasonable adjustments so that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can successfully access remote education.

Pupil wellbeing and support

- Some pupils may be experiencing a variety of emotions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as anxiety, stress or low mood. School has a dedicated Inclusion Team and Early Help offer and will work with families to support this. <https://www.ackworthhowardschool.co.uk/wellbeing/howard-early-help-offer>
- You can access useful links and sources of support on [promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools](#).

School meals

- School will continue to provide free school meal support to any pupils who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals and who are learning at home during term time.

Educational visits

- School will undertake full and thorough risk assessments in relation to all educational visits and ensure that any public health advice, such as hygiene and ventilation requirements, is included as part of that risk assessment.

Wraparound provision and extra-curricular activity

- Wraparound provision and extra-curricular activity will continue to run as normal.



COVID-19 School Guidance

Key Information

Sports provision

All sports provision, including competition between settings can go ahead and, should be planned and delivered in line with this guidance.

Providers of sports activities should also refer to:

- guidance on [grassroot sports for public and sport providers](#) and [guidance from Sport England](#)
- advice from organisations such as the [Association for Physical Education](#) and the [Youth Sport Trust](#)
- information on school swimming, water safety and [returning to pools guidance from Swim England](#)
- advice on [using changing rooms safely](#)

Performances and Events

- Performances and events will return fully.
- When planning an indoor or outdoor face-to-face performance in front of a live audience, school will follow the latest advice in the [DCMS working safely during COVID-19 in the performing arts guidance](#).
- If delivering sporting or other organised events, school will utilise the information which can be found in [COVID-19: Organised events guidance for local authorities](#).



Outbreak Management Plan

Stepping Measures Up and Down

This plan is based on the [contingency framework for managing local outbreaks](#) of COVID-19, provided by the Department for Education (DfE) and outlines how we will operate if extra measures are needed to help break chains of transmission.

Given the detrimental impact that restrictions on education can have on children and young people, any measures in school will only ever be considered as a last resort and for the shortest amount of time possible.

We will only implement some, or all, of the measures in this plan in response to recommendations provided by our local authority (LA), director of public health (DsPH), Public Health England (PHE) health protection team or the national government. In the case of a small number of cases in the same area of school, we will continue to make decisions on whether to implement certain measures to reduce transmission.

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

- To help manage a COVID-19 outbreak within the school.
- To help manage a suspected COVID-19 outbreak within school.
- 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).

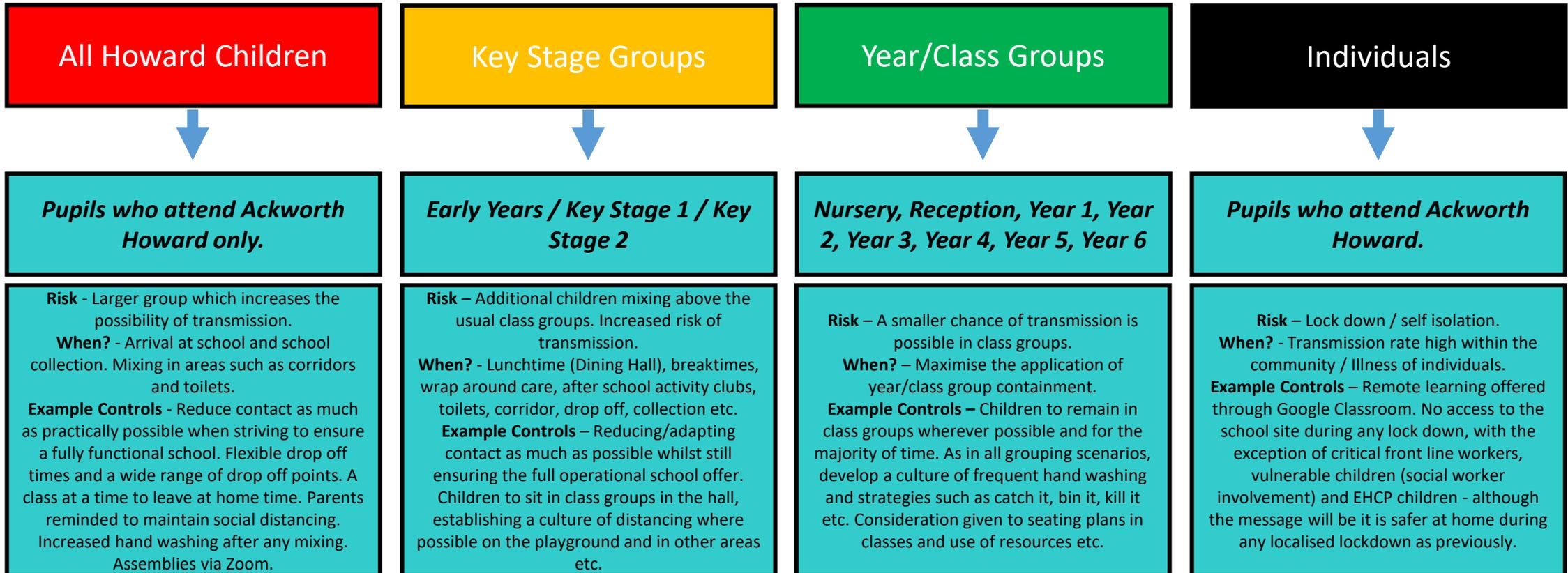
At all times when implementing additional protective measures the school's leaders will follow the advice of the local authority, the Department for Education and Public Health England.

The principle of this management plan is to ensure that every pupil at Ackworth Howard receives the quantity and quality of education and care that they would normally receive.



Outbreak Management Plan

In the event of a local or school outbreak the school will reduce contact between groups as before, illustrated below. Staff and children will be limited to movement around the school and all past Covid prevention measures will be re-introduced.





Outbreak Management Plan

This operational guidance sets out the measures that school could put in place to manage transmission of COVID-19 day to day. It makes sense to think about taking extra action if the number of positive cases substantially increases. This is because it could indicate transmission is happening in the setting. The thresholds, detailed below, are currently being used by school as an indication for when to seek public health advice if we are concerned.

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

At the point of reaching a threshold, leaders will review and reinforce the measures already in place.

Attendance Restrictions

- High-quality face-to-face education remains a government priority. Attendance restrictions should only ever be considered as a short-term measure and as a last resort:
 - for individual settings, on public health advice in extreme cases where other recommended measures have not broken chains of in-setting transmission
 - across an area, on government advice in order to suppress or manage a dangerous variant and to prevent unsustainable pressure on the NHS
 - In all circumstances, priority should continue to be given to vulnerable children and young people and children of critical workers to attend to their normal timetables.
- Where measures include attendance restrictions, DfE may advise on any other groups that should be prioritised. Contingency planning covers the possibility that if advised, temporarily, to limit attendance, school will ensure that high-quality remote education is provided to all pupils or students not attending.

Education Workforce

- If restrictions on pupil attendance are ever needed, leaders will determine the workforce required onsite and if it is appropriate for some staff to work remotely.

Safeguarding and Designated Safeguarding Leads

- If restrictions on pupil attendance are ever needed, there will be no changes to local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- School will continue to have regard to statutory safeguarding guidance that applies to us, including:
 - keeping children safe in education
 - working together to safeguard children
 - the early years foundation stage (EYFS) framework
- The Headteacher will review the child protection policy so that it reflects the local restrictions and remains effective.
- A trained DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or Deputy will be on site at all times should attendance be restricted.
- DSL meetings will increase to ensure that all children are monitored regularly. This will also focus on those pupils that are not attending and not engaging with remote learning. Appropriate steps will then be determined and actions agreed and implemented.



Outbreak Management Plan

Face coverings

- Staff and visitors must wear a face mask in the corridors, staff room (unless eating/drinking), reprographics room and any other communal areas where social distancing is difficult.
- Parents advised that 1 parent must bring/collect their child only and that social distancing must be adhered to where possible and to minimise time on site. Adults entering the school site should wear a face covering, particularly in narrow access points on the grounds and where social distancing is difficult.
- 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 source 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 those who do, are exempt from any recommendation to wear face coverings in education and childcare settings.

Shielding

- Following expert clinical advice and the successful rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine programme, people previously considered to be particularly vulnerable, clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV), and high or higher-risk are not being advised to shield again. Children and young people who were previously identified as being in one of these groups, are advised to continue to follow the guidance contained in Coronavirus: how to stay safe and help prevent the spread.
- Children and young people previously considered CEV should attend school and should follow the same COVID-19 guidance as the rest of the population. In some circumstances, a child or young person may have received personal advice from their specialist or clinician on additional precautions to take and they should continue to follow that advice.

Educational Visits

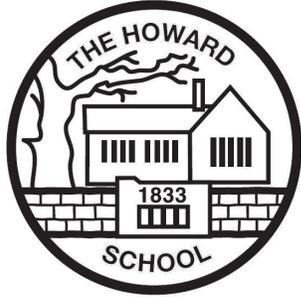
- In the event of a local outbreak, the school will postpone all school trips that involve the use of transport.
- Where the risk assessment allows then local visits to outside locations would still be permissible as long as it was within a sensible walking distance of the school.
- If a trip cannot be postponed, then it will be cancelled and parents refunded any contributions that they have made.

Transition events

- Transition plans will be altered to reflect the local guidance at the time of the planned event. If events are impacted by a local outbreak, then alternative arrangements will be made similar to plans during the height of the pandemic.

Parental attendance in school

- When school returned in September 2021 we reverted back to parents being allowed into school for meetings and events etc. If a local breakout was to occur the previous arrangements will take place such as events and meetings via Zoom.



Outbreak Management Plan

School performances/assemblies

- In the event of a local outbreak all school activities, that may have included a parental audience, will revert to online or recorded.
- All internal worships/assemblies will be held over Microsoft Teams or Zoom and class bubbles will return.

Attendance restrictions

- These will only be considered as a last resort and in consultation with the local authority and Public Health England.
- If we are advised to limit attendance due to Covid cases our remote learning plans will be reintroduced. If it is a local lockdown all children will attend unless advised otherwise. Staffing issues will be taken into consideration with each year team.

Remote learning

- Should we need to restrict attendance then remote learning will be used for all pupils who are not attending the onsite provision. The school will:
 - Identify pupils and families that require IT equipment support.
 - Provide weekly work which follows the school's long-term curriculum map.
 - Provide daily Reading, Writing and Maths lessons and Zoom support where staffing allows.
 - Teachers will maintain an attendance register for all sessions and those pupils who do not attend will be contacted by the school to establish reasons for non-attendance and to offer support.
- The remote education provided will be equivalent in length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school. You can find out more about our remote education provision here: <https://www.ackworthhowardschool.co.uk/curriculum/curriculum-brochure-2020-2021>
- School will work collaboratively with families and put in place reasonable adjustments so that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can successfully access remote education.

Attendance of vulnerable pupils

- Where vulnerable pupils are absent, the school will:
 - Follow up with a parent or carer, working with the local authority and social worker to establish the reasons for absence and discuss concerns.
 - Encourage the child to attend educational provision and discuss benefits with parents or carers.
 - Focus discussions on the welfare of the child, ensuring that they can access appropriate education and support whilst they are at home.
 - If a vulnerable child is not attending school and is not engaging with remote learning then the Inclusion Team in conjunction with the senior leadership team will contact parents/carers daily in order to welfare check the children.



Outbreak Management Plan

Enhanced Cleaning

- Continue the adaptations to the enhanced cleaning schedule already in place:
 - More frequent cleaning of rooms/shared areas that are used by different groups.
 - Additional cleaning hours allocated after lunch.
 - Frequently touched surfaces being cleaned more often than normal with detergents.
 - Different groups don't need to be allocated their own toilet facilities, but toilets will be cleaned more frequently and pupils will be encouraged to clean their hands thoroughly after using the toilet.
 - Where a number of positive cases occur in a short space of time, the building will be deep cleaned and fogged. The process will include, every touch point being wiped with a special antibacterial solution then all rooms being fogged.

Testing

- Increased use of lateral flow device (LFD) testing by staff will be encouraged.
- This could also include the reintroduction of onsite LFD testing.