

Version 5 School Outbreak Plan : Cassop

1. Purpose

The outbreak plan template for schools aims to guide schools in the actions which they need plan for to respond to either a local outbreak of COVID-19 (including variants of concern) or an outbreak in their setting.

The V4 template has been revised in accordance with the most recent version of the national contingency framework for education and childcare settings and should be read alongside this national document.

Contingency framework: education and childcare settings (updated 14th December 2021)

Link: www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-local-restrictions-in-education-and-childcare-settings/contingency-framework-education-and-childcare-settings

The contingency framework describes the principles of managing local outbreaks of COVID-19 (including responding to variants of concern) in education and childcare settings and sets out that local authorities, directors of public health (DsPH) and PHE health protection teams (HPTs) are responsible for managing localised outbreaks and that they play an important role in providing support and advice to education and childcare settings. The measures described in the contingency framework are reflected in this template.

2. Context

Schools COVID-19 operational guidance (updated 14th December 2021)

Link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

The preventative measures which schools need to maintain are outlined and covered in this guidance. Schools require a current risk assessment and proportionate control measures including: good hand hygiene, good respiratory hygiene, environmental cleaning, good ventilation, testing in accordance with current guidance and the management of cases and contacts in line with current public health advice.

In addition, if there is an outbreak of coronavirus in school then some additional measures which may be advised on a temporary basis in an outbreak situation. These measures are reflected in this template.

3. Thresholds for Action

National guidance recommends that for most settings it will make sense to think about taking extra action if the number of positive cases substantially increases. The thresholds, detailed below, can be used by settings as an indication for when to seek public health advice if they are concerned and appendix 1 provides details of the process for contacting Durham County Council.

Adult & Health Services

Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UG

Main Telephone 03000 26 0000

www.durham.gov.uk

Mainstream primary and secondary schools:

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

Or

If any case of COVID-19 in school has resulted in that person being hospitalised

*in the same cohort, for example class/year group/activity group/friendship group/home to school transport

Special schools:

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

Or

If any case of COVID-19 in school has resulted in that person being hospitalised

*in the same cohort, for example class/year group/activity group/friendship group/home to school transport

4. Outbreak definition

A standard outbreak definition is two or more confirmed COVID-19 cases associated with the setting with an onset of illness in the last 14days and:

- where the cases are likely to have been exposed to each other using the close contact definition (within 2m for more than 15minutes, within 1m for 1minute, within 1m and face to face for any amount of time, shared a small vehicle for any amount of time)

Or

- where the there is no sustained community transmission

5. Outbreak assessment

An assessment of an outbreak is undertaken, in most instances when the threshold for action is reached, by working with public health who will advise on public health actions and this assessment is made taking into account the current position regarding COVID-19 in the population.

6. Outbreak assessment in periods of exceptional demand

Periods of exceptional demand schools will be notified by the Head of Education and the DPH.

Special schools will continue to report cases as usual and will be directly supported by the public health team.

Mainstream schools where there are any cases associated with the setting who are hospitalised will continue to report cases as usual and will be directly supported by the public health team.

Mainstream schools without cases associated with the setting who are hospitalised will be requested to assess their outbreak using the checklist provided at appendix 2

The revised reporting process for mainstream schools in periods of exceptional demand is provided in appendix 3.

7. Outbreak Management Plan Template

All education and childcare settings should have outbreak management plans outlining how they would operate if any of the measures described below were recommended for their setting or area.

This includes how they would ensure every child, pupil or student receives the quantity and quality of education and care to which they are normally entitled.

Public Health Actions to be included:

1) Prevention measures:

Review the current COVID-19 risk assessment and ensure that all prevention measures are fully implemented. Where needed seek advice from your health and safety advisor.

Review individual risk assessments for staff and pupils. Where needed seek advice from your occupational health advisor and/or health and safety advisor.

2) Bubbles

Bubbles may need to be reintroduced and please plan for how these would be reinstated for each of your classes and/or year groups in school.

3) Face coverings

Face coverings may need to be reintroduced for staff (all schools) and students (secondary age pupils/schools and colleges), and as previously there will be reasonable exemptions for their use.

This may include face coverings in communal areas (for pupils, students and staff) and/or classrooms (for both pupils, students and staff).

Please refer to the section covering face coverings in your current risk assessment.

4) Testing:

Increased testing may be advised this may include:

Increased use of home testing by staff (all schools) and pupils and students (secondary age pupils/schools and colleges).

In accordance with the testing guidance in the current risk assessment schools may be advised to:

Request more frequent use of home LFD testing by some staff (all schools) and pupils and students (secondary age pupils/schools and colleges) for a specified period, for example 7days.

Please refer to the section covering testing in your current risk assessment.

And/or

Request the use of home PCR testing by some staff (all schools) and some pupils (all schools) by accessing testing via NHS 119.

And/or

There may be a requirement for asymptomatic testing to take place at school. This may include scaling up the asymptomatic test site retained at school, the reintroduction of an asymptomatic test site or setting up a new asymptomatic test site. This would be agreed with the school and support would be available from DCC.

5) Shielding

People previously considered to be clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) will not be advised to shield again.

Individuals previously identified as CEV are advised to continue to follow the guidance on how to stay safe and help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Individuals should consider advice from their health professional on whether additional precautions are right for them.

6) Other activities

A range of activities may be paused or restricted during an outbreak including: educational visits, residential educational visits, open days, transition days, parental attendance, live performances and use of the school premises by other organisations.

7) Contact tracing

Contact tracing may be reinstated and in this situation DCC will work with schools to ascertain the contacts of cases during their infectious period and will provide a template letter for schools to share with identified contacts advising the contact to seek a PCR test and where not exempt, to self-isolate.

For primary school age pupils, the whole class would usually be considered contacts of a case.

For secondary school age pupils, contacts would usually be those pupils/staff who meet the standard contact tracing definition which is a person who has been within 2m for more than 15minutes, within 1m for 1minute, within 1m and face to face for any amount of time, shared a small vehicle for any amount of time during the infectious period for the case.

8) Attendance restrictions

Settings should make sure their outbreak management plans cover the possibility they are advised to limit attendance, although this would be a measure of last resort.

High-quality remote education should be provided for all pupils or students not attending.

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.

9) Other areas:

Safeguarding and Welfare

- Welfare calls will take place daily for vulnerable children and these will be followed up by home visits if necessary – ie if the parent/ carer cannot be contacted by 10am.
- A DSL will be on duty on at all times from 8.15am and the HT can be contacted at all times should a concern arise.

Food

- The School Business Manager, pastoral team and Admin Team will manage the offer of school meals to families with children who are isolating who are eligible for free school meals. Phone calls at the start of the absence will be followed up regularly and meals made available if necessary.

Internet Access and Devices

- IT Access will be supported by the SMB, HT and the Admin Team should families require support or access to devices from school. Documentation will be provided to ensure school devices are returned in an acceptable manner so they can be used again.

Communications

- All letters will be sent via Weduc as our communication platform.
- The school text messaging service will be used should rapid contact be needed so families should ensure all contact details are up to date.

Contingency plans for staff absence

- Staff will work together to cover classes should absence arise, we may also need to utilise supply agency staff.

Contingency plans for pupil absence

- First day calling will continue once registers are completed (by 9.30am). Families will have access to the school messaging services to report absence and this should be done each day a child is absent if length of absence is unknown (ie isolation date not known). All first day absences not reported will be followed up by admin staff as soon as possible.