

The Mercian Trust

COVID-19: Outbreak Management Plan

**Queen Mary's
Grammar School**

September 2021

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1. Introduction

This plan is based on the [contingency framework for managing local outbreaks](#) of COVID-19 and the [schools operational guidance from step 4](#), 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), director 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
- 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)

2. 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, information relating to when testing will take place, where testing will take place and who will receive on-site testing, will be communicated to relevant stakeholders.

3. 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

4. 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.

5. Other measures

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

6. Attendance restrictions

Attendance restrictions will only be recommended as a last resort. If recommended, we will implement the measures in this section.

6.1 Eligibility to remain in school

In the first instance, we will stay open for:

- Vulnerable pupils
- Children of critical workers
- Year 10 and 11 pupils
- Year 12 and 13 pupils
- Any other pupils due to take external exams this academic year

If further restrictions are recommended, we will stay open for:

- Vulnerable pupils
- Children of critical workers

6.2 Education and support for pupils at home

All other pupils will be required to stay at home and will receive 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 the schools remote learning policy.

The school will continue to provide meals, lunch parcels or vouchers for pupils eligible for free school meals while they are not attending school because of COVID-19 isolation guidelines. Specific details relating to the distribution of meals will be communicated to parents if/when required.

6.3 Before/ After school activities

We will limit access to before and after-school activities during term time and holiday periods to those that need it most.

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

6.4 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.

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

The Mercian Trust

Outbreak Action Plan Risk Assessment - September 2021

Assessment conducted by: H Kay	Job title: Head of Estates	Covered by this assessment: Mercian Trust Schools
Date of assessment: 02/09/21	Date of next review: Ongoing	

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. Measures affecting education and childcare may be necessary in some circumstances, for example:

- to help manage a COVID-19 outbreak within a setting
- as part of a package of measures responding to a Variant of Concern (VoC) or to extremely high prevalence of COVID-19 in the community
- to prevent unsustainable pressure on the NHS

For most education and childcare settings, whichever of these thresholds is reached first:

- 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

The Mercian Trust recognises the risk posed by COVID-19 to our staff, pupils and their families. Control measures to minimise the risk of infection and the transmission of the virus are provided in this risk assessment. We will put in place appropriate protective measures to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff and pupils.

Control measures will be N/A unless directed to action by DfE/ Public Health/ Local Authority.

Areas for concern	Risk rating prior to action (H/M/L)	Control measures	Please mark Y/N/NA for each bullet point	Further actions/comments needed only if N is put by a bullet point	Residual risk rating (H/M/L)
1. Minimizing Transmission					
1.1 General					
Direct or Indirect transmission of COVID-19 virus	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main risk assessment, detailing the prevention and response system of controls in place, continues to be reviewed on a two weekly basis. Liaison with Walsall PH team over concerns. 	Y		M
1.2 Directed to restrict attendance					
Extremely high prevalence of COVID-19 and existing measures have failed to reduce community transmission	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is significant concern that existing or recently introduced measures in an area have failed to mitigate community transmission, or that a more robust response is required to contain the outbreak of a VoC it may be necessary to limit the number of students through attendance restrictions and a switch to online learning. No school should move to implement restrictive measures of the kind set out in the contingency framework without the explicit approval of DfE. 	Y		M
1.3 Asymptomatic testing of staff					
Extremely high prevalence of COVID-19 / variant of concern (VoC)	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When a variant of COVID-19 is classed as a variant of concern (VoC), DHSC will ramp up targeted testing in that geographical area to help suppress and control any possible new cases and better understand the new variants. An increased use of home testing by staff may also be advised. 	Y		M

1.4 Face Coverings					
<p>Extremely high prevalence of COVID-19 / variant of concern (VoC)</p>	<p>H</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary re-introduction of face coverings. In all cases any educational drawbacks in the recommended use of face coverings should be balanced with the benefits in managing transmission and should allow for reasonable exemptions for their use. • Where social distancing cannot be maintained in indoor locations, face coverings will be worn by staff and visitors, unless they are exempt. • Face visors or shields will not be worn as an alternative to a face covering. They will only be worn where they have been identified as appropriate following risk assessment and will be thoroughly cleaned between uses. • Those who rely on visual signals for communication, or communicate with or provide support to such individuals, are currently exempt from any requirement to wear face coverings but can, if they choose, wear transparent face coverings. 	<p>Y</p>		<p>M</p>
1.5 Out-of-school activities					
<p>Extremely high prevalence of COVID-19 / variant of concern (VoC)</p>	<p>H</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools who run community activities, holiday clubs, breakfast or after-school clubs, tuition and other out-of-school or childcare provision should be able to continue to open for both indoor and outdoor provision. • If attendance restrictions are needed, vulnerable children should be allowed to attend. For all other students, parents and carers should only be allowed to access these providers for face-to-face provision for their children for a limited set of essential purposes, such as to allow them to go to or seek work, attend a medical appointment, or undertake education or training. 	<p>Y</p>		<p>M</p>

1.6 Educational visits					
Extremely high prevalence of COVID-19/ variant of concern (VoC)	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any attendance restrictions should be reflected in the visits risk assessment and school leaders should consider carefully if the educational visit is still appropriate and safe. Only students who are attending the school should go on an educational visit. Schools should consult the health and safety guidance on educational visits when considering visits. 			M
1.7 Clinically extremely vulnerable pupils					
Extremely high prevalence of COVID-19 / variant of concern (VoC)	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shielding was paused on 1 April, and those who are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) are no longer advised to shield. 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. Shielding would be considered in addition to other measures to address the residual risk to people on the SPL, once the wider interventions are taken into account. Shielding can only be reintroduced by national government. 	Y		M

1.8 Education workforce					
<p>Extremely high prevalence of COVID-19 / variant of concern (VoC)</p>	<p>H</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers should continue to implement the system of controls set out in Government guidance. • Explain to staff the measures they are putting in place to reduce risks to staff, including how these protective measures have been reviewed as part of an updated workplace risk assessment. • Have regard to the guidance on clinically extremely vulnerable people. • Schools should also consider if the COVID-19 education contingency framework offers more opportunities for staff to work at home, given reduced numbers of pupils onsite and the use of remote education for pupils scheduled to be at home. • Have regard to staff work-life balance and wellbeing. This includes considering how best to balance the demands of on-site teaching and support for remote education, which should be done within the terms and conditions of teachers' and staff employment. 	<p>Y</p>		<p>M</p>
1.9 Remote Education					
<p>Extremely high prevalence of COVID-19/ variant of concern (VoC)</p>	<p>H</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality remote education should be provided for all pupils not attending. • Refer to the school's remote learning statement and the governments remote education and good practice document: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/remote-education-good-practice/remote-education-good-practice 	<p>Y</p>		<p>M</p>

1.10 Other measures					
Extremely high prevalence of COVID-19/ variant of concern(VoC)	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools should ensure plans cover the possibility that they are advised to limit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - residential educational visits - open days - transition and taster days - parental attendance - performances Local authorities, DSPH and PHE Health Protection Teams may recommend these precautions in one setting, a cluster of settings, or across an entire area. 	Y		M
1.12 Safeguarding and designated safeguarding leads					
Extremely high prevalence of COVID-19/ variant of concern(VoC)	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If restrictions are implemented in the school setting, we would expect all local safeguarding partners to be vigilant and responsive to all safeguarding threats and ensure vulnerable children and young persons are safe, particularly as more children and young people will be learning remotely. Schools (ideally led by the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or a deputy) should review their child protection policy so that it reflects the local restrictions and remains effective. In some cases, a COVID19 annex or addendum that summarises any key local restriction related changes might be more effective than re-writing and reissuing the whole policy. It will be important that all staff working in the school are aware of the revised policy. 	Y		M

1.11 Vulnerable children					
Extremely high prevalence of COVID-19 / variant of concern (VoC)	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where vulnerable students are absent, schools should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> follow up with the parent or carer, working with the local authority and social worker (where applicable), to explore the reason for absence and discuss their concerns encourage the child to attend educational provision, working with the local authority and social worker (where applicable), particularly where the social worker and the Virtual School Head (where applicable) agrees that the child's attendance would be appropriate focus the discussions on the welfare of the child and ensuring that the child is able to access appropriate education and support while they are at home have in place procedures to maintain contact, ensure they are able to access remote education support, as required, and regularly check if they are doing so. If settings have to temporarily stop on-site provision on public health advice, they should discuss alternative arrangements for vulnerable children with the local authority 	Y		M
2. Additional site-specific issues and risks					
Settings to add any site-specific issues/arrangements here and ensure mitigation strategies are in place to address them					
Building and class occupancy levels	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School groups form bubbles and the school should identify the number of pupils within each bubble. Implement year group bubbles to enable the delivery of the full range of curriculum subjects with students able to receive specialist teaching. 	Y		M

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The groups will form a cohort and should work together; being segregated from all other groups and individuals by social distancing. • Specific locations for each group to work in should be identified. If groups move between locations suitable cleaning and sanitising should be undertaken of each location after each use. • Non-teaching staff work from home if possible, if not dedicated work stations are identified for each staff member. • Large gatherings should be avoided including Assembly's and other large groups. 			
Segregation of pupils	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staggering arrival and departure times for each group to ensure that there is social distancing between groups. • Each group having a dedicated work space and remain within this work space for the majority of lessons. • Having tables and work stations as far apart as possible. • Having forward facing tables so pupils are sitting side by side and not facing each other. • Having one way systems around the school to support social distancing if the site allows. 	Y		M
Contamination on surfaces	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that all surfaces and shared resources are suitably sanitised regularly between each group use. This should include all outside play equipment, science equipment, PE equipment. • Ensuring that all surfaces are sanitised at the end of each day and regularly throughout the day. • Pupils and staff having individual equipment provided where possible including paper and pens. These items should not be shared. 	Y		M

Staff at increased risk from the virus	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that all surfaces and shared resources are suitably sanitised regularly between each group use. This should include all outside play equipment, science equipment, PE equipment. • Ensuring that all surfaces are sanitised at the end of each day and regularly throughout the day. • Pupils and staff having individual equipment provided where possible including paper and pens. These items should not be shared. 	Y		M
Common areas	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create additional space by using other parts of worksite or building that have been freed up by remote working or other pupils who are not at school. • Reconfigure seating and tables to maintain spacing and reduce face-to-face interactions and maintain social distancing where possible. 	Y		M
Transport to and from school	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In line with government guidance discourage the use of public transport. • Stagger arrival and leaving times to allow for an increase in private cars, walkers and cyclists. • Group together pupils within the same bubble if at all possible. • If drivers and pupils are within 2m of each other, suitable face covering should be worn (for those over 11 years old). • When public transport is used the school should liaise with the transport provider to discuss suitable controls including: Staggered transport times, social distancing on the transport, hand sanitation and the use of face coverings. • Put a process in place for the removal and disposal of face coverings when pupils and staff who use them arrive at school. 	Y		M

3. Queen Mary's Grammar school local arrangements

Settings to add any site-specific issues/arrangements here and ensure mitigation strategies are in place to address them					
Year group bubbles		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the event of an outbreak, the school may revert back to year groups bubbles (as in 2020-21) • Year groups are organized in geographical areas for form time (see separate maps) and these shall become teaching zones if needed • Pastoral support staff to be designated to year groups as in 2020-21 			
Staggered start and finish times		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the event of an outbreak, the school may revert back to staggered start and finish times for different year groups (including designated entrance and exits from the school site) • Separate maps and details will be released 			
Staggered lunch time times		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the event of an outbreak, the school may revert back to an extended split lunch, with designated sittings per year group • Separate maps and details will be released 			
Teacher zones		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the event of an outbreak, the school may revert back to designated teacher areas in classrooms (as in 2020-21) • Teacher zones will remain marked out in classrooms and it may be advised that teachers stick to these zones to maintain social distancing from students 			



Daily routine

From 8.30 to 8.45.

Year 8 come through Main Entrance gate 1 (pedestrian gate) going through the quad and around to the H block

Year 10 come through the Main Entrance gate 2 (vehicle gate) entrance through Reception

Year 12 come through the CPA Entrance into the Science Block

Daily routine

From 8.45 to 9.00.

Year 7 come through Main Entrance Gate 1 (pedestrian gate) enter school from DT corridor entrance.

Year 13 come through the CPA Entrance into the Science Block

Daily routine

From 9.00 to 9.15.

Year 9 come through the Main Entrance gate 1 (pedestrian gate) entrance through Reception

Year 11 come through the CPA Entrance and enter school from grass quad area



Daily routine



Supervised study

Year 12 out via Science main doors around by the pavilion and into the side entrance of the Sports Hall

Year 13 out via Moss Close and into the Sports Hall via the main entrance



Daily routine



P4

Canteen rota 12.10 – 13.05

Year 11 to go to the canteen at 12.10

Year 8 to go to the canteen at 12.30 (use hall to avoid reception and Café 6 area)

Year 13 to use Café 6, external service and offsite facilities as of 12.10

Pupils must follow the same routes to and from the canteen/other facilities.



Daily routine



Lunch time

Canteen rota 13.05 – 14.00

Year 7 to go to the canteen at 13.00 (leaving slightly early to fit into the rota)

Year 9 to go to the canteen at 13.20 (use hall to avoid reception and Café 6 area)

Year 10 to go to the canteen at 13.40 those in C1 during P4 should wear a face mask when crossing to the Art corridor

Year 12 to use Café 6, external service and offsite facilities as of 13.05

Pupils must follow the same routes to and from the canteen/other facilities.

