



## Version 6 School Outbreak Plan Purpose

The outbreak (contingency) 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.

This V6 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 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022)***

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

### **1. Context**

#### ***Schools COVID-19 operational guidance (updated 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022)***

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, and the management of cases in line with current public health advice. Schools should continue to encourage uptake of COVID-19 vaccination for eligible students and staff.

#### ***Special Schools COVID-19 operational guidance (updated 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022)***

Link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings>

In addition to the preventative measures for all schools, special schools, alternative provision and SEND units are advised to continue twice weekly LFD testing for staff and secondary age pupils.

In addition to the preventative measures if there is a significant 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.

### **Adult & Health Services**

Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UG

Main Telephone 03000 26 0000

[www.durham.gov.uk](http://www.durham.gov.uk)

## 2. 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.

### Mainstream primary and secondary schools:

A higher than previously experienced and/or rapidly increasing number of staff or student absences due to COVID-19 infection

Or

A cluster of cases where there are concerns about the health needs of vulnerable staff or students\* within the affected group

Or

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

\* NHS information regarding children, young people and adults who are at high risk from COVID-19:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/who-is-at-high-risk-from-coronavirus/>

### Special schools and Alternative Provision:

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

## 3. 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 there is no sustained community transmission

## 4. 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.

## **5. Outbreak assessment during March 2022**

The management of COVID-19 outbreaks in all schools is currently in a period of transition between management by DCC (as has been the position during the 2 years of the pandemic) to the NE Health Protection Team who are part of UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). This transition will occur during March, and you will be informed prior to the transition taking place.

Currently whilst DCC support the management of outbreaks please follow the processes in this document.

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 where there are:

A cluster of cases where there are concerns about the health needs of vulnerable staff or students\* within the affected group

Or

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

\* NHS information regarding children, young people and adults who are at high risk from COVID-19: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/who-is-at-high-risk-from-coronavirus/>

Continue to report cases as usual and school will be directly supported by the public health team.

Mainstream schools without cases associated with the setting which are associated with a cohort where there are vulnerable staff or students OR without a case who is hospitalised are requested to assess their outbreak using the checklist provided at appendix 2

## **6. 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 who are at increased risk from COVID-19\* and for pregnant people\*\*. Where needed seek advice from your occupational health advisor and/or health and safety advisor.

\* NHS information regarding children, young people and adults who are at high risk from COVID-19: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/who-is-at-high-risk-from-coronavirus/>

\*\* Coronavirus (COVID-19): advice for pregnant employees <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-pregnant-employees/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-pregnant-employees>

## **2) 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.

## **3) Testing:**

Testing may be advised this may include:

Use of home LFD testing by staff (all schools) and pupils and students (secondary age pupils in schools and colleges).

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

Request 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 7 days.

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

### **And/or**

There may be a requirement for asymptomatic LFD 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.

### **And**

Staff and Students for staff and students who are at higher risk are advised to take a PCR test and guidance indicates that the NHS will have sent PCR tests to their home to be used if they develop symptoms.

COVID-19: guidance for people whose immune system means they are at higher risk

Link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk>

**4) 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.

**5) 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 and live performances.

**6) 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.

**7) Safeguarding**

Vulnerable children and young people who are self-isolating:

- notify their social worker (if they have one) and, for looked-after children, the virtual school head and agree with the social worker the best way to maintain contact and offer support.
- check if a vulnerable pupil is able to access remote education support, support them to access it (as far as possible) and regularly check if they are accessing remote education.
- keep in contact with them to check their wellbeing and refer onto other services if additional support is needed.

**8) Other areas which you may wish to include are:**

Meals

IT Access

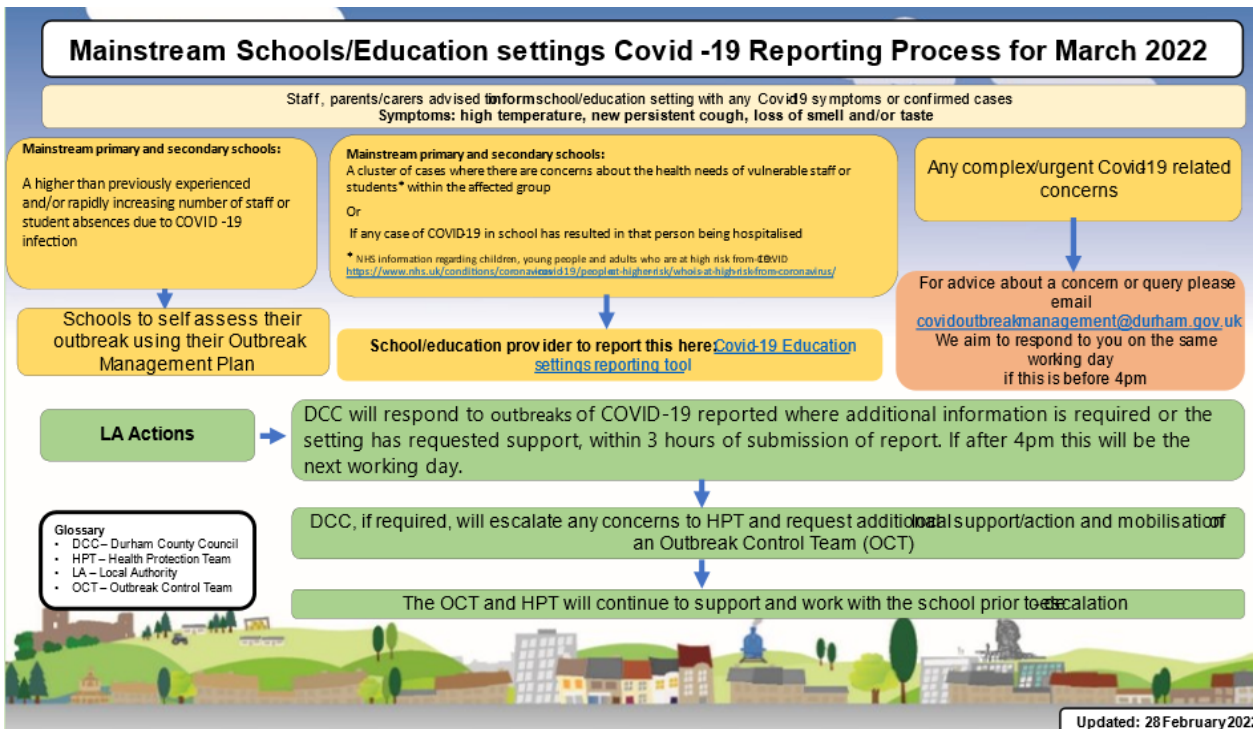
Communications

Contingency plans for staff and pupil absence

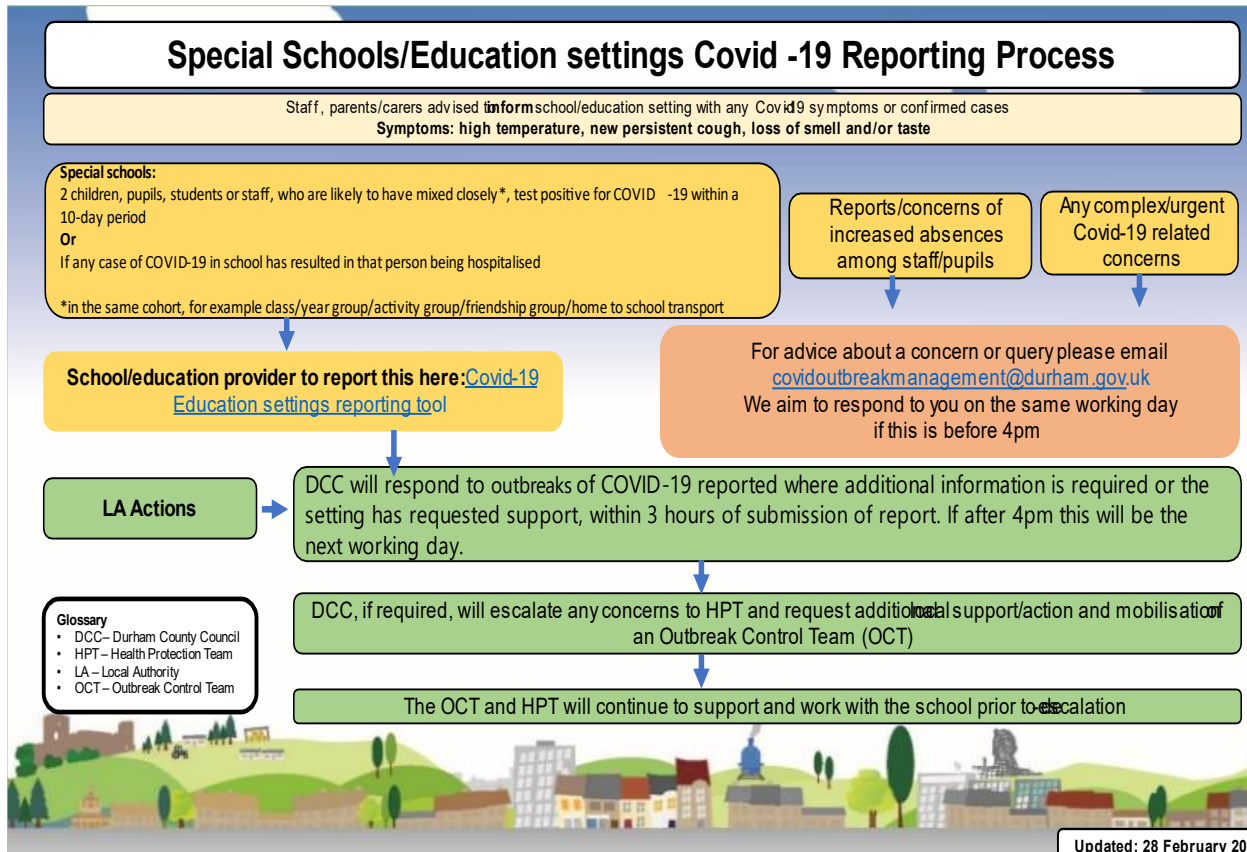
Thank you for considering this outbreak plan template and if you have any questions please contact your Leadership Advisor.

**Appendix 1**

Mainstream Schools Reporting and Outbreak Management Process



Special Schools Reporting Process



DCC check list for mainstream schools



This self-assessment checklist is for use by mainstream schools without cases associated with the setting who are hospitalised.

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

Please undertake this self-assessment also using the information in the current COVID-19 Cue Cards.

**1) Prevention measures:**

Review the current COVID-19 risk assessment and ensure that all prevention measures are fully implemented.

Consider:

Increasing ventilation

Increasing hand hygiene

Increasing cleaning and in particular touch points including door handles

Ensure social distancing as much as possible and particularly between staff, including in the staff room.

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.

**3) Face coverings**

Reintroduce the use of face coverings are in use in communal areas for all staff and visitors.

Reintroduce the use of face coverings are in use in communal areas for all secondary school pupils.

Reintroduce the use of face coverings in class by all staff in the cohorts with an outbreak.

Reintroduce the use of face coverings in class by all secondary school pupils in the cohorts with an outbreak.

As previously there will be reasonable exemptions for the use of face coverings.

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

#### **4) Testing:**

Reintroduce LFD testing in accordance with your outbreak management plan in the cohorts with an outbreak. This may include daily LFD testing for 7 days.

#### **5) Other activities**

Pause all non-essential activities during the outbreak including:

- educational visits
- residential educational visits
- live performances
- use of the school premises by other organisations.

Where possible move activities to a virtual format including:

- open days
- transition days
- parental meetings
- staff meetings
- assemblies

#### **6) Contact tracing**

You are not required to undertake routine contact tracing.

However, if you are aware that any staff or pupils have health conditions which mean that they may be at increased risk from COVID-19 please advise them to seek a PCR test. This will ensure any infection with COVID-19 is quickly identified and will support prompt access to treatment if required.



Please refer to the close contact definition in the current version of the COVID Cue Cards.

## 7) Communications

Share the standard letter regarding COVID-19 cases in school with staff and with parents/carers. This ensure that all have assesses to current advice and enables individuals to respond to the COVID-19 risk taking into account their individual circumstances.

## 8) Seek further public health advice

When you have completed this self-assessment please contact the DfE helpline for further advice if you consider that you require additional public health advice.

DfE coronavirus helpline on 0800 046 8687

Version	Date	Section Revised
3	28/02.2022	Bubbles/Cohorting removed Face coverings revised Testing revised Contact tracing revised
2	04/02/2022	Face coverings revised
1	07/01/2022	Original version