



COVID-19 INFECTION CONTROL POLICY

- in line with operational guidance that applies from 24 Feb. '22

STATEMENT OF INTENT AND CONTEXT

This policy statement outlines the academy's approach to COVID-19 infection control measures, incorporating guidance published by the Government and relevant public health organisations.

On Mon. 22 Feb. '21, the Prime Minister announced details of the Government's 'roadmap out of lockdown'. As a result of the success of the vaccination programme and the public's response to the measures imposed, a view was taken that the relevant data indicated that restrictions could begin to be lifted, albeit in a staged way, with the proviso that the 'roadmap' would be subject to change, based on emerging data.

Ensuring that children returned to school for face-to-face education was identified as a top priority (Stage 1) action and it was decided that all students should return, during the week commencing 8 Mar. '21. For secondary age students, this would be done in conjunction with three initial lateral flow tests, conducted on site, followed by a programme of twice-weekly home testing (from 15 Mar., at the earliest), in addition to regular home testing for all teachers, measures that would aim to reduce the chance of the virus spreading in schools.

As the Government's vaccination programme 'rolled out', there was an increasing number of people who had received either one or two courses of the vaccine and schools were asked to positively promote the Government's vaccination programme.

In Sep. '21, as the country moved to Stage 4 of the 'roadmap', the Government's response moved away from some of the more stringent restrictions on people's lives, towards advising them on how to protect themselves, and others, alongside some targeted interventions to reduce risk. As COVID-19 became considered as a virus with which we learned to live, it was decided that the disruption to students' learning must be reduced, particularly as the direct clinical risks to children were identified as extremely low and every adult had, by then, been offered a first vaccine and an opportunity for two doses by mid-September.

The government continues to manage the risk of serious illness from the spread of the virus. The Prime Minister announced, on 27 Nov. '21, the temporary introduction of new measures, as a result of the Omicron variant, and, on 8 Dec. '21, that Plan B (set out in the autumn and winter plan 2021) was being enacted.

On 21 Feb. '22, the Prime Minister announced the removal of measures put in place during the COVID-19 pandemic as we learn to live with the virus. This includes changes for schools and colleges such as no longer recommending regular testing for students and staff without symptoms and removing the legal requirement for people to isolate following a positive test - this includes students and all staff in mainstream education and childcare settings. Settings may be advised by their local public health team to recommend lateral flow device (LFD) tests to manage an outbreak. Furthermore, although this will no longer be recommended, staff in education and childcare settings and students and pupils can still access test kits by ordering them online or through their local pharmacy if they wish.

From 24 Feb. '22, the Government removed the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test. In addition, the Government will no longer ask fully vaccinated close contacts and those aged under 18 to test daily for seven days and routine contact tracing will end. Adults and children who test positive will continue to be advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for at least 5 full days and then continue to follow the guidance until they have received 2 negative test results on consecutive days. Staff, children and young people who are contacts should attend their education settings as usual. This includes staff who have been in close contact within their household, unless they are able to work from home.

Anyone with any of the main COVID-19 symptoms should order a test and is advised to stay at home while waiting for the result. If they test positive, they are advised to follow public health advice.

The Government's message is that vaccines remain the best weapon against the virus. By getting vaccinated, children and young people can increase their protection against COVID-19. While most children infected usually have mild symptoms from COVID-19 some may go on to develop more serious symptoms. Doctors are still learning about these long-term effects but the Government stresses that vaccination helps to protect against these risks.

Schools are expected to continue to reduce the risk of transmission through the measures that are put in place. It is worth noting that the use of face coverings is no longer advised in schools (unless schools are temporarily advised by a local director of public health) to reintroduce their use. Whilst doing so, they are also expected to offer a broad and effective curriculum. This risk assessment has been designed to respond directly to, and incorporate securely, the Government's system of controls, as follows:

PREVENTION:

Always:

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

In specific circumstances:

- Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)

RESPONSE TO ANY INFECTION:

Always:

- Manage and report confirmed cases amongst the school community
- Follow local health protection team advice to contain any outbreak

This policy supports the academy's revised **COVID-19 Risk Assessment and Action Plan**. It outlines the steps that will be taken to mitigate the risk of infection spreading and to keep our school community safe. To support our decision-making, parents/carers and staff members are also consulted and we will also be updating the risk assessment, this policy and associated procedures on a continuous basis, in response to new information and guidance.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to relevant legislation and guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

[GOV.UK: Coronavirus Act 2020](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-act-2020)

[DfE, 24 Feb. '22: Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#)

[DfE, 25 Feb. '22: Managing coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in education and childcare settings](#)

The policy operates in accordance with the following school policies, procedures and checklists:

- COVID-19 Risk Assessment and Action Plan
- Site Cleaning Schedule (COVID-19)
- Site Maintenance Checklist (COVID-19)
- Transport to and from School Risk Assessment (COVID-19)
- Fire Evacuation Procedure (COVID-19)
- Safeguarding Policy Addendum (COVID-19)

(These are amended to accommodate the measures in the revised risk assessment and policy documents)

RISK ASSESSMENT

The risk assessment has been revised to establish the level of risk, both before and after mitigation, and to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to protect students and staff. It covers the following key areas:

- Safety of the school premises
- Cleaning measures, infection control and the ability to implement protective measures
- Supporting the wellbeing of students and staff (including, in particular, more vulnerable members of the school community)
- Supporting students' learning
- Catering for students with special needs and disabilities
- Safeguarding
- Transport arrangements
- Communication of plans and procedures and required training

Minimising the risk to vulnerable people

The greater level of risk to vulnerable people is considered carefully in the **COVID-19 Risk Assessment and Action Plan**.

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.

Where a student lives with a clinically extremely vulnerable person, they should attend school. (The DfE guidance is very clear on this). It is also the case that staff in this position are expected to attend. Where there are concerns, support will be provided and, where possible, measures will be taken.

Clinically vulnerable students are expected to attend school. Where parents/carers are concerned and significant risk factors are identified, the school will listen to these concerns and provide reassurance regarding the measures that are being implemented.

Black and minority ethnic people are at a statistically greater risk of contracting the virus and the school's position is that this should be considered in the same way as the approach for clinically vulnerable people.

Minimising contact with people who are symptomatic

Students, parents/carers, visitors (inc. suppliers) and staff must not come onto the site (and should self-isolate) if:

- they are displaying any symptoms;
- they have tested positive in the appropriate time period (see below).

People with COVID-19 can infect other people from 2 days before the start of symptoms, and for up to 10 days after. They can pass on the infection to others, even if where they have only mild symptoms, or no symptoms at all. Anyone with COVID-19 should stay at home and avoid contact with other people. They should not attend work. Where possible, they should contact people with whom they have been in close contact, so that those people can follow official guidance. Many people will no longer be infectious to others after five days. They may choose to take a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test from five days after symptoms started (or the day the test was taken, where there were no symptoms) followed by another LFD test the next day. If both of these test results are negative, and they do not have a high temperature, the risk that they are still infectious is much lower and they can safely return to their normal routine. If the day five LFD test result is positive, they should continue taking LFD tests until they receive two consecutive negative test results. Where further tests are positive, they must self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the first test.

Children and young people with COVID-19 should not attend school while they are infectious. They should take an LFD test from five days after their symptoms started (or the day their test was taken if they did not have symptoms) followed by another one the next day. If both these tests results are negative, they should return to school, as long as they feel well enough to do so and do not have a temperature.

OTHER CONTROL MEASURES

A variety of linked **control** measures have been put in place to support the safety of the school's on-site provision.

Travel to, and from, school

Parents/carers are asked to encourage their children to walk or cycle, where possible. Arrangements are in place for students to store their cycles securely. We do not allow the use of, or storage of, e-scooters on the school site.

Where students and staff use public transport to travel to school, they should follow closely government advice: [DfT, 25 Feb. '21: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safer travel guidance for passengers](#)

Parents dropping off students should use the main car park and stay in their cars. The main car park is also used by staff, visitors and contractors.

School-organised home-to-school transport – using our transport providers and/or our own vehicles – have all necessary safety measures in place (including cleaning vehicles thoroughly between trips) as detailed in the **Transport to and from School Risk Assessment (COVID-19)**. Students use hand sanitiser on boarding and, consistent with expectations for travelling on public transport, students, staff and drivers wear a face mask.

There are hand sanitiser stations at each entrance/exit to the school and students are expected to use these as they enter and leave the school.

Classrooms

Windows are left open (for ventilation). [It will be therefore be advisable to wear warm clothing]. Some judgement can be exercised in how wide to open a window in a given situation. Where opening windows results in an uncomfortably cold working environment, coats can be worn and/or other sources of heating can be used. Also, where possible (bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding issues), doors are propped open - to limit the use of door handles and improve ventilation. Air conditioning can be used in rooms that have it, as long as this is on the 'fresh air' setting.

Classrooms should be tidy and uncluttered, with any unnecessary items removed (where there is space to store them elsewhere).

Students and teachers / TAs use hand sanitiser on entry to the room.

Performing Arts

Any singing, wind and brass instrument playing must be undertaken in line with the guidance in [DCMS, 24 Feb. '22: Working safely during COVID-19](#).

Hands must be washed/sanitised before, and after, handling equipment, especially when it is being used by more than one person. Sharing equipment should be avoided, wherever possible. As appropriate, name labels should be placed on equipment to help identify the designated user. If instruments and equipment have to be shared, they should be disinfected regularly (including any packing cases, handles, props, chairs, microphones and music stands) and always between users in different year group 'bubbles', following government guidance on cleaning and handling equipment. Where possible, instruments should be cleaned by the students playing them.

Background, or accompanying, music should be kept down to levels that do not encourage teachers, or other performers, to raise their voices unduly. Microphones can be used to reduce the need for shouting, or prolonged periods of loud speaking or singing. However, where possible, it is best not to share microphones.

Instrumental one-to-one and small group lessons are subject to a specific approved risk assessment being in place.

The handling of music scores, parts and scripts is limited to the individual using them. For KS3 drama groups, scripts are projected - to avoid paper scripts being passed around.

For good ventilation, the fire door in the Drama Studio is kept closed and the door to the English hub is kept open.

PE and Sports

Wherever possible, activities take place outside. Any indoor activity takes place in a well-ventilated, large space and careful consideration is given to the nature of the activity.

The PE curriculum is delivered in accordance with: [Guidance on coronavirus \(COVID-19\) measures for grassroots sport participants, providers and facility operators](#)

Design and Technology

The curriculum is adapted, so that the use of electrical machinery that relies on air extraction is avoided.

Remote Learning

Where students are working at home, in the short term they will be directed to relevant Oak National Academy resources. In the longer term, where students are self-isolating for [a longer period](#), where possible they will be invited to join 'live' classroom-based lessons via Teams. On other occasions, they will be directed to other targeted digital and recorded teaching and resources that align with the curriculum taught in the classroom.

Library

Hand sanitiser is used on entrance to the library.

Students return their books to a large plastic box, which is kept safely for 72 hours before scanning books back in and returning them to the shelves.

Use of toilet facilities

Toilet facilities are kept stocked up with soap and hot water is readily available. This is checked regularly throughout the day (as defined by the **Site Maintenance Checklist (COVID-19)**).

The toilets are cleaned regularly throughout the day by cleaning staff, consistent with **PHE, 19 Jul. '20: COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings outside the home** and as specified in the **Site Cleaning Schedule (COVID-19)**.

Toilet areas are adequately ventilated.

The use of toilet facilities during break and lunch periods is supervised.

Students are generally expected not to use the toilets during the lesson periods (unless they have a medical 'toilet pass').

Water fountains are provided to enable students to fill up water bottles (so that these can be used instead of taps/sinks).

Staff break / work areas

Hand sanitisers and cleaning products are available in all office areas.

Wherever possible, visits to offices (from colleagues based elsewhere and other visitors) should be avoided. Contact should be made by telephone and email, wherever possible. Where colleagues do visit an office (a restricted space), they should make efforts to socially distance.

Visitors

The entrance foyer area (especially door handles) is cleaned regularly.

Access points and protection in relation to visitors are reviewed, with times for contractors arranged in such a way that the number on site at any one time is minimised. Where possible, visits are arranged outside of the school day (i.e. students' hours).

A Health Declaration Check is completed (verbally) with each authorised visitor, as a condition of entrance into the school building.

Visitors are briefed on Health and Safety protocols, consistent with this policy. Where possible, Health and Safety information is provided in advance of the visit and checked/reinforced on arrival.

Assemblies / large meetings

Assemblies, for year groups (and organised with forms seated together) have been reintroduced.

Extra-curricular activities

Educational trips and visits will need to be authorised by the Head of School (taking into account the uncertainty of the situation and 'lost learning') and will need careful planning, with rigorous risk assessments in place.

Student behaviour

The approach to the management of student behavior, in these circumstances, is compassionate and proportionate, supporting students who may exhibit problematic behaviours as a response to trauma that they may have experienced during 'lockdown'. Nevertheless, no student can be allowed to create an unsafe environment for themselves and others.

Uniform

Students are expected to attend in full school uniform.

Student attendance

Students should attend school.

Where a clinically extremely vulnerable young person is under the care of a specialist health professional, a course of action is determined in conjunction with this medical advice. This will generally enable the student to attend school, with modifications in place.

Supporting and safeguarding students

We aim to ensure that students' emotional needs are well supported, and will provide pastoral/counselling support, as required.

The Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) programme gives timely coverage of issues relating to mental health and wellbeing. Additional sessions are also provided to highlight important safe working issues in relation to online working.

We will continue, and enhance, programmes to support vulnerable students with rebuilding friendships, social engagement and equipping students to respond to issues relating to COVID-19.

Staff should be alert to any safeguarding concerns and follow procedure, in line with the Safeguarding Policy and **Safeguarding Policy Addendum (COVID-19)**.

The SENCO reviews EHC plans and linked risk assessments to determine what support will be needed for individuals to return to school under this model of provision. Students' views, the views of parents/ carers and, as appropriate, specialist views will be taken into account.

Supporting and safeguarding staff

We encourage staff to give an early indication of specific pressures / difficulties and issues concerning work-life balance, directly to the Business Manager or Head of School. Line managers are also consulted, as appropriate, regarding staff deployment and welfare issues. A counselling support service is also available to staff. Furthermore, colleagues are able to access the [Education Support Partnership](#) - as a further/alternative source of support and guidance.

Where colleagues have concerns about coming onto the school site, their views will be taken seriously, together with any medical advice. An Occupational Health Service referral is made, as appropriate. [The duty to protect the mental, as well as physical, health of staff is recognised and the approach outlined above reflects this].

Staff are given guidance in how to ensure safe online teaching and learning practice.

Fire safety

Revised arrangements are in place. These are outlined in the **Fire Safety Evacuation Procedure (COVID-19)**.

Cleaning hands frequently

All site users are encouraged to wash hands regularly and thoroughly (for 20 seconds at a time with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly) and/or to use hand sanitiser, ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.

Furthermore, all students and teaching staff are asked to use hand sanitising gel at the start of each lesson period. [The gel is situated on a table near the entrance to the classroom door and staff supervise students' use of this]. Hand sanitiser is also available in all other frequently used indoor spaces, including the library, staff room and offices/work areas. Furthermore, sanitising stations are positioned in food service areas.

Students are discouraged from touching their faces, or putting objects in their mouths. Posters and rolling digital displays reinforce good hygiene measures.

Ensuring good respiratory hygiene

The 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' approach is promoted through the school, including through the use of posters and rolling digital displays.

A good supply of tissues is supplied in each classroom. Foot-operated pedal bins are also situated in each classroom and in other high usage areas around the site. These bins are emptied regularly.

Disinfectant wipes/spray are available in each classroom (in case anyone sneezes).

Cleaning the site

We ensure that our cleaning contractors follow carefully the published guidance on cleaning (infection prevention and control) – [PHE, 19 Jul. '21: COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings outside the home.](#)

An enhanced cleaning schedule (the **Site Cleaning Schedule (COVID-19)**) is implemented, including definition of responsibilities, methods, frequency and in which circumstances an additional clean is needed.

Cleaning prioritises surfaces that are touched by multiple people – photocopiers, door handles, table/counter tops, computers (including mice/keyboards), whiteboards, light switches, telephones, chairs, bannisters, specialised equipment for SEND students, toilets, toilet handles, sinks, taps, etc.

Cleaning substances are risk assessed. Dirty water is disposed of safely and there is a designated locked area for cleaning products.

The standard of cleaning is monitored closely and there is close liaison with the cleaning company's management team.

Classrooms, the library, office spaces, the reception desk, the first aid bay and toilets are cleaned by the cleaning contractors, taking into account high incidence touching surfaces and multiple users, consistent with [PHE, 19 Jul. '21: COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings outside the home](#).

Use of resources and equipment

Where possible, resources are laid out on desks before the class enters the room and, where possible, sharing resources is avoided. Resources (including text books) can be shared but should be cleaned (wiped down with disinfectant) regularly.

Students should bring their own pencil cases with all the equipment they need.

Where possible, students' books/folders are kept in classrooms, but students are able to take these to and from home, as necessary.

Teachers mark students' work (in accordance with Assessment Policy), but they should sanitise/wash their hands, before and after contact.

Library books are loaned out and are sanitised before handing out and on receipt.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Reference to PPE in this section means: fluid-resistant surgical face masks; disposable gloves; disposable plastic aprons; and eye protection, e.g. face visor or goggles.

The Government has advised that the majority of school staff do not need to wear PPE routinely, beyond what they would normally use for their work. Where staff wish to use PPE, they must liaise with the Business Manager and demonstrate that they are able to use it correctly.

In accordance with DfE guidance, PPE is provided to staff (who are expected to use it) in the following circumstances:

- 1) Where staff are caring for students whose intimate care needs already require the use of PPE
- 2) Where a student becomes unwell on site - with symptoms of Coronavirus - and requires direct personal care until they can go home, a fluid-resistant surgical mask should be worn by the staff member caring for the student. If contact with the pupils is necessary, the staff member should wear disposable gloves, a disposable apron, and a fluid-resistant surgical mask. Where there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, e.g. from coughing, eye protection should be worn.

When using PPE, staff follow PHE's guidelines on putting on and taking off equipment. PHE's infographics will be displayed in the medical area. Before using PPE, colleagues should watch this [short video](#). Any queries/questions should be directed to the First Aid Officer or the Business Manager.

When using face masks, staff ensure that the masks:

- Cover both the nose and mouth.
- Do not dangle around the neck
- Are not touched, once put on, except when carefully removed before disposal.
- Are changed whenever they become moist or damaged.
- Are only worn once and then discarded.

PPE is disposed of by putting it into the plastic bag inside a closed pedal bin. The bin bag will be taken out of the pedal bin by the site staff and placed inside another bag ('double bagged'). The waste is stored safely and securely kept away from students. It is not put out for refuse collection for at least 72 hours. This waste does not require a dedicated clinical waste collection.

Additional risk assessments are conducted to determine whether PPE is required for other tasks and activities.

On-site development of symptoms

A protective screen is installed around the first aid bay.

If someone becomes unwell on site, with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they are sent home (by a senior member of staff). Where this is a student, parents are contacted. A contactless thermometer is used to help to inform the judgement regarding COVID-19 symptoms.

Where a student needs to be collected, they are moved to a dedicated room, where they can be isolated – behind a closed door, with ventilation. (If it is not possible to isolate them, they are moved to an area that is at least 2 m. away from other people).

If the person needs the toilet, they should use a separate toilet, which should then be locked and subsequently deep-cleaned before further use.

In any situation where a 2 m. distance cannot be maintained, first aid staff wear PPE (disposable gloves, apron, disposable face mask and eye protection).

Where a parent/carer collects their child from school, they are asked to wait in their car, while the student is escorted by the first aider (at a safe distance) to them. Where they are not in a car, a meeting point is agreed, outside of the school buildings.

In the case of an emergency, 999 is called.

Where a member of staff has helped someone who was unwell with COVID-19 symptoms, they do not need to go home themselves unless they also develop the symptoms (in which case, a test is available), or the person subsequently tests positive. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds.

The area where the person has been, and all surfaces with which the person has been in contact, should be cleaned with disinfectant. Gloves and an apron should be worn (as a minimum). Where an area has been heavily contaminated, such as with visible body fluid, protection for eyes, nose and mouth should also be used. Public areas where a symptomatic person has passed through, and spent minimal time (and are not visibly contaminated) can be cleaned as normal.

Disposable cloths/mop heads and/or paper towels should be used for cleaning, with an approved disinfectant.

Waste from possible cases is put in a pedal bin, collected and double bagged by the site team (as for other waste). It is kept for 72 hours and then disposed of with normal waste.

Staff who have helped someone with symptoms, and students who have been in close contact with them, do not need to go home to self-isolate, unless they themselves develop symptoms (in which case, they should arrange a test).

Everyone who has been in contact with someone who has been unwell, with COVID-19 symptoms, should wash their hands thoroughly (for 20 seconds) with soap and running water, or use hand sanitiser.

Management of confirmed cases

Parents/carers are asked to inform the school, without delay, of the results of a COVID-19 test via the designated email address:
covid@chaseterraceacademy.co.uk.

The advice outlined in the 'Minimising contact with people who are symptomatic' section of this policy must be followed.

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

[See the **COVID-19 Risk Assessment and Action Plan** for further detail]

COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING

COVID-19 infection control measures are communicated to all relevant stakeholders, including students, parents/carers, staff, visitors, suppliers and contractors. All members of the school community are reminded regularly of their responsibilities.

Staff are informed of all relevant plans and safety measures and, as required, have training on the new measures. They are encouraged to provide continuous feedback on the arrangements that are in place.

Students receive detailed reinforcement of expectations in lessons and assemblies.

Visual aids around the school remind the school community of the measures in place, and the expectations, with regard to social distancing and infection control.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy (and the **COVID-19 Risk Assessment and Action Plan**) is reviewed regularly by the Executive Headteacher, in consultation with the Head of School and other senior staff. The review is informed by feedback from site users and parents/carers.

Updates made to this policy are communicated to all staff members and parents/carers. The Executive Headteacher also liaises regularly with the Chair of the Trust Board and keeps directors of the Trust and members of the Governing Body well-informed of any significant developments in relation to the risk management process.

Stuart Jones; 28 Feb. '22