

**Whole School Normal Operating Procedures
Checks and Balances:
Responding to COVID-19 –
Parent/Carer Handbook**



Version 2.3 – 26th August 2021

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Related Reference Documents on Gov.uk

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/schools-covid-19-operational-guidance>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings/send-and-specialist-settings-additional-covid-19-operational-guidance-applies-after-step-4>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-local-restrictions-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings/rapid-asymptomatic-testing-in-specialist-settings-applies-from-step-4>

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care/the-use-of-personal-protective-equipment-ppe-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings-including-for-aerosol-generating-procedure>

In order to ensure the safety of all pupils, students, staff, parents and carers, it is important that all parents/carers read and adhere to the information and guidance in this Handbook.

Introduction

Step 4 marked a new phase in the government's response to the pandemic, moving away from stringent restrictions on everyone's day-to-day lives, towards advising people on how to protect themselves and others, alongside targeted interventions to reduce risk. The school risk assessment reflects this response, whilst taking into account the specific vulnerabilities of individual pupils/students and staff members.

As coronavirus (COVID-19) becomes a virus that we learn to live with, there is now an imperative to reduce the disruption to children and young people's education - particularly given that the direct clinical risks to children are extremely low, and every adult has been offered a first vaccine and the opportunity for 2 doses by mid-September.

In addition to this young people aged 16 and 17 can now get their first dose, as well as some children aged 12-15 (including conditions which our children may have such as severe learning difficulties, Down syndrome and severe problems with the brain/nerves such as cerebral palsy). **The school supports the take up of the vaccine for its pupils, based on their individual health conditions.**

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

We ask that all parents/carers read this handbook in order to familiarise themselves with new ways of working at Foreland Fields School in order to promote the health and safety of all members of the school community. **Parents/carers should also read the school Risk Assessment (available on the school website), which acknowledges that national and local cases have risen again and may rise further. Therefore, the final section of the risk assessment contains a contingency plan, which will be enacted based on PHE and DFE advice.**

Foreland Fields School – Reducing The Transmission Risk

It is important that all parents/carers, staff and all other stakeholders adhere to the control measures we have put in place in order to play their part in reducing the COVID-19 transmission risk.

Key Control measures

The school will:

1. ensure good hygiene for everyone
2. maintain appropriate cleaning regimes
3. keep occupied spaces well ventilated
4. follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19

Parents and Carers of secondary aged pupils can support the school effort to reduce risk of COVID transmission **by continuing to engage in the programme of twice weekly home lateral flow testing** and then sharing these results with their class teacher via Dojo or the home school contact book. Your support in this is appreciated and will contribute to keeping your child, their friends, yourselves and ourselves safe. This programme is being reviewed by the Government at the end of September.

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Symptoms

Any measures we, as a school, put in place are only effective if all members of the school community act responsibly and pay attention to the latest advice and guidance.

No child or adult should attend school if they, or any members of their household, are displaying any of the symptoms below:

- High temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature).
- New, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual).
- Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

Any pupil who is a close contact of a positive case including a member of their household, should complete a PCR test at the earliest opportunity.

Pupils (under 18 ½) and pupils who are double vaccinated can continue to attend school whilst awaiting their PCR test result.

Any pupil who develops symptoms at school is isolated in the COVID response room (whilst supported by a member of staff who wears PPE) and sent home immediately. Staff are asked to leave the school site immediately. Staff/Parents/Carers are then asked to book a PCR test online or by phoning 119.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

In this scenario, if the individual tests negative they can return to school. However, **in the event of a positive test result, they must self-isolate (regardless of vaccination status) at home for ten days** and follow the guidance available online:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/>

In order that we can contact parents to pick up their child should we need to, it is vitally important that parents/carers are contactable by phone at all times. Could all parents/carers please be advised by staff, to ensure the school has 2 current contact numbers for the school to use in an emergency.

Test and Trace

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/>
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works#how-nhs-test-and-trace-works>

In the event that an individual tests positive for COVID-19, they will be asked by test and trace to provide information about recent close contacts.

Parents/carers should notify SLT if they or a family member has COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 / symptoms of COVID-19. Parents/carers should notify SLT if they receive information that a pupil or a pupil's family member has COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 / symptoms of COVID-19.

The school will be monitoring numbers of suspected and confirmed cases in to enable us to liaise with the Local Authority, DfE and PHE in the event that the schools contingency plan for a substantial rise in cases needs to be brought into action.

1. NET CAPACITY AND ORGANISATION OF TEACHING SPACES

All pupils are expected to attend/work school onsite, with the only exceptions being those CEV pupils who are self-isolating on advice of their Doctor/Consultant and those who are isolating as they have currently tested positive for COVID-19.

The mitigation against the risk of the enhanced net capacity is the roll out of the national vaccination programme, where the majority of school staff and an increasing number of

secondary and 6th form aged pupils have now been vaccinated. Additionally, the home testing capacity (twice weekly until review at the end of September) and the small onsite testing capacity will test staff and secondary age pupils, further reducing transmission risk. The control measures described above and below remain in place to minimise risk of transmission.

Consistent groups reduce the risk of transmission by limiting the number of pupils and staff in contact with each other to only those within the group.

Whilst schools no longer operate bubble systems, our school has a smaller population and is naturally divided into department groups. Following in school review we have also adjusted some aspects of the school day. This means that many events which involve mixing of large numbers of pupils/students have been adjusted to better reflect our pupils needs. School break, lunch times, and assemblies will all be needs led. This means that the pupils will have a better, more successful educational experience with the added benefit of being more Covid secure.

2. TRAVEL

- The school encourages parents/carers without school transport to use active travel, walking and cycling wherever possible. We are starting the bikeability scheme in September and will be in touch with the parents/carers of pupils involved with this programme in the coming weeks.
- The government is removing the requirement to wear face coverings in law, but expects and recommends that they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces, including where you may come into contact with people you don't normally meet.
- Children and young people aged 11 and over should wear a face covering when travelling on dedicated transport to secondary school or college. Children with SEN are exempt from this guidance, unless choosing to wear a face covering.
- The government no longer recommend maximising distancing and minimising mixing, but unnecessary risks such as overcrowding should be minimised. This means normal levels of bus occupancy can be used.
- Drivers and passenger assistants will not normally require personal protective equipment (PPE) on home to school transport. However, where the care and interventions that a child or young person ordinarily receives on home to school transport required the use of PPE before COVID-19, that should continue as usual.
- School transport should follow all control measures including face coverings, where recommended, hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene (catch it, bin it, kill it), cleaning regimes/schedule for the buses and allowing fresh air into vehicles when occupied.
- School transport will follow all guidance in relation to testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases.

3. ARRIVAL TO AND DEPARTURE FROM SCHOOL

- The risk of transmission will be reduced by ensuring that all parents/carers remain outside of the building and are spread about the site to reduce crowding.
- The school day is no longer staggered. Doors will open at 8.30am, with school starting at 8.40am, and ending at 2.50pm.
- From September, the school will close every Thursday at 2.00pm in order to allow time for staff training and ensure opportunities for staff to meet to discuss pupils, provision and development.
- Pupils/students will no longer be collected from their cars.
- Nursery and Infant pupils should enter through the Infant gate, waiting on the new hard surface area and will be directed by staff to the appropriate place for their child to be collected.
- Junior pupils will be collected from outside the main reception entrance.
- Key Stages 3, 4 and 6th Form will be collected from outside the main secondary entrance.

4. MOVEMENT AROUND THE SCHOOL including visitors

- Parents or external visitors are to be invited or allowed into reception via prearranged meetings wherever possible. Online meetings should occur when this is possible.
- Visitors will be asked to evidence a negative lateral flow test no more than 2 days prior to their visit. They will have their temperature taken on arrival.
- Reception Area cleaned daily, especially touch surfaces such as the staff sign in area, the door opening button and all door opening surfaces and handles.
- Alcohol gel dispenser available at sign in and prior to entering admin corridor.
- Face coverings are longer advised for pupils, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas.
- The Government is removing the requirement to wear face coverings in law but expects and recommends that they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces where you may come into contact with people you don't normally meet. This means that face coverings should be worn in meetings with external visitors, except where there is adequate spacing and ventilation. Visitors should wear face coverings as they move around the school.

5. CLASSROOM ORGANISATION

- The key to being covid secure in all classes and activities is to follow the overriding control measures. This means we will be keeping rooms well ventilated, maintaining cleaning schedules in class, with a particular focus on those items which are touched most regularly e.g. sensory toys and IT equipment, using catch it, bin it, kill it and maintaining high standards of hand hygiene through regular hand washing.
- The curriculum is in normal operation. This means all shared rooms are available, all in-house therapeutic activities are fully functioning and risk assessed offsite educational visits are taking place.

6. PUPIL BEHAVIOUR

Challenging behaviour

- The risk of transmission associated with physical intervention means that we are required to make additional risk assessments for the safety of pupils and staff.
- Pupils will be risk assessed on an individual basis to evaluate their provision. This assessment will take account of their safety, the safety of their peers and the staff working with them. The outcome of this risk assessment could be; enhanced use of PPE and cleaning, 1:1 provision, reduced attendance or off-site provision (home learning).
- We will continue to give appropriate, clear messages to pupils regarding expected behaviour.
- We will continue to follow each pupil's behaviour plan, paying particular regard to proactive strategies, in order to prevent escalation. Where these plans include possible physical intervention, the risk assessment described above will come into effect.
- **If challenging behaviour persists, despite use of proactive strategies, and it places the child and others at risk, parents may be called to collect their child.**

Pupil behaviour that constitutes a risk to good hygiene and COVID-19 transmission e.g. spitting and/or smearing

- Pupils will be risk assessed on an individual basis to evaluate their provision. This assessment will take account of their safety and the safety of their peers and the staff working with them. The outcome of this risk assessment could be; enhanced use of PPE and cleaning, 1:1 provision, reduced attendance or off-site provision (home learning).

7. BREAKS AND LUNCHTIME

- Breaks and lunchtimes are split into department groups and use a variety of areas around the school. This means mixing between classes and total pupil numbers in any space at a given time is reduced. This also enables higher quality support in the key curriculum area of play.
- Pupils will either eat dinner in class or in a dining hall. Lunchtime is part of our curriculum and pupils will be supported to develop a wide variety of skills and abilities at this time.

8. HYGIENE AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

School Hygiene:

Handwashing

- Handwashing is one of the most powerful forms of protection against COVID-19. We will continue to maintain high standards of handwashing in terms of frequency (minimum 6 times a day) and quality (for 20s following NHS guidance on techniques).
- Teachers and TAs will continue to actively teach handwashing techniques and supervise as appropriate. Hand washing occurs on arrival, after the toilet and before and after eating. Also, when transitioning between areas of the school and activities as well as other times across the day.

- We have hand sanitiser available across the whole school in addition to the basins and soap used for standard handwashing.

Clothing

- We expect all pupils, wherever possible, to come to school in their uniform. Uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal.
- Sometimes, due to their needs, our pupils require access to a spare set of clothes. **If your child is likely to need a spare set at school, please pack these in their bag.** If this spare set are not needed during the course of the day, they will remain in their bag.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Parents/Carers should be aware that staff will be using enhanced PPE during routine school procedures such as changing a child, giving medication, feeding 1:1 or via Gastrostomy or when undertaking Aerosol Generating Procedures. This is to protect both the child and staff member during this time of close physical proximity. Staff have always used aprons and gloves, but will now also use surgical face masks during these times.

Changing

- Please can parents/carers whose child needs to be changed and normally have continence products at school send in new, sealed packs of continence products to school.

Pupils with excess saliva

- Pupils will be risk assessed on an individual basis to evaluate their provision. This assessment will take account of their safety, the safety of their peers and the staff working with them.
- Pupils who have difficulty with excessive saliva as a function of their SEN will have the following strategies applied as appropriate to their individual case:
 - Saliva bib/scarf as appropriate to pupil age.
 - Saliva medication as advised and prescribed by the NHS.
 - Additional PPE will be employed when supporting the child. Staff will use disposable gloves with a clean tissue/scarf/bib to clean the saliva.
- **We ask that for any pupil who have their own bibs/scarves that parents/carers provide spare items for use throughout the day.**
- Spare clean clothing, from home, may also be appropriate for those who require changing throughout the day.

Face Coverings

- Face coverings are longer advised for pupils, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas.
- The Government is removing the requirement to wear face coverings in law but expects and recommends that they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces where you may come into contact with people you don't normally meet.

- This includes public transport and dedicated transport to school or college.
- Face coverings may be reintroduced in communal areas or classrooms by the school following positive cases in the setting and resultant advice from public health. In these circumstances, transparent face coverings, which may assist communication with someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate, can also be worn. Any reintroduction of face coverings will take account of PHE advice, the students educational needs and staff working conditions, balancing these with the need to control the risk of transmission.

9. ACTIONS TO TAKE IF YOU, A MEMBER OF YOUR FAMILY OR YOUR CHILD SHOWS COVID-19 SYMPTOMS. ACTIONS TO TAKE IF CONTACTED VIA THE GOVERNMENT TEST AND TRACE SYSTEM.

- **Any pupil displaying symptoms of COVID-19 should not come to school:**
 - High temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature).
 - New, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual).
 - Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

We will continue to update parents/carers regarding signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

- Parents/carers should notify the school if they, their child or a household member has COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 / symptoms of COVID-19.
- Parents/Carers should notify the school if they receive information via the Governments Test and Trace programme that they or their child has been in contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case (See 'Test and Trace' detail in introduction to this document).
- Parents should keep checking emails, letters, the school website and ClassDojo for updates on COVID-19.

10. ACTIONS IF THERE IS A SUSPECTED CASE OF COVID-19 IN SCHOOL

- **If any pupil, or members of that child's family, is displaying any symptoms of COVID-19 the child must not attend school.**
- Any pupil with any of the symptoms listed on the DfE / NHS websites is to be sent home.
- If a child shows symptoms of COVID-19 whilst at school, they will be isolated in the small therapy room and supported by a member of our staff team, who will be wearing PPE (gloves, apron, face mask and eye protection).
- **Parents will be contacted as a matter of urgency and told they must collect their child immediately if they are showing symptoms of COVID-19.**
- **Parents will need to book a PCR test for their child online: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>. This can be a test at a centre or to arrange delivery of a home test kit.**

- If the school feels that a child is displaying any signs of COVID-19, they will act immediately, following the above guidelines. **The school will always err on the side of caution in regards to a child displaying any of the symptoms following the Government and PHE guidelines.**
- Public Health England are clear that the routine taking of temperature of pupils is NOT recommended as it is an unreliable method for identifying coronavirus.

11. POLYMERISE CHAIN REACTION (PCR) TESTING

- Any child displaying COVID-19 symptoms during the day will be sent home to isolate. Parents/carers will be advised to arrange for their child to have a PCR test.
- In all confirmed cases, DfE/Public Health England will be consulted and their advice adhered to.
- If the child tests negative via a PCR test they can return to school. However, in the event of a positive test result, they must self-isolate at home for 10 days and follow the guidance available online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>.
- Any staff or pupil who is a close contact of a positive case (as confirmed via a PCR test) including a member of their household, should complete a PCR test at the earliest opportunity.
- Pupils (under 18 ½) and those who are double vaccinated can continue to attend school whilst awaiting their PCR test result.
- In the event that a child tests positive for COVID-19, they (or their parents/carers) will be asked to provide information about recent close contacts.

12. ASYMPTOMATIC LATERAL FLOW TESTING (LFT)

- All secondary students will be encouraged to test twice on return to school with at least one of these tests conducted immediately prior to return.
- All secondary pupils and all staff are encouraged to continue with twice weekly home lateral flow testing (until the end of September when this is under review by the Government) and to share these results with the school and with the National Test and Trace system.
- A small onsite testing capacity will be retained for students who would be best supported completing this at school rather than home (as long as they can self-administer). The school recognises that testing is voluntary and that many of our students will not be able to be tested due to their SEN.
- Any student testing positive via a lateral flow test at home or at school will need to complete a PCR test at home or at a test centre and if this test comes back negative they can return to school.
- Any staff or pupil who is a close contact of a positive case (as confirmed via a PCR test) including a member of their household, should complete a PCR test at the earliest opportunity.

- Pupils (under 18 ½) who are double vaccinated can continue to attend school whilst awaiting their PCR test result.
- Results for school and home lateral flow tests will all be recorded.
- Parents/carers will notify their teacher via an email/class dojo/message in home contact book of the result of each home based or rapid test centre based asymptomatic test.
- We are not currently able to assist pupils that cannot self-administer lateral flow tests.
- The national testing programme is voluntary but essential in the nation's fight against the global pandemic, and in keeping our school community safe.

14. Foreign Travel

- All pupils travelling to England must adhere to travel legislation, details of which are set out in government travel advice.
- Parents travelling abroad should bear in mind the impact on their child's education which may result from any requirement to quarantine or self-isolate upon return.

In order that we can contact parents to pick up their child should we need to, **it is vitally important that parents/carers are contactable by phone at all times.** Could all parents/carers please ensure the school has **2 current contact numbers for the school to use in an emergency.**