Northumberland
County Council

COVID19 Outbreak Contingency Plan

Broomhaugh CE First School

27 August 2021

About this Outbreak Contingency Plan

Please note the following:

- It will be used in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19.
- It is based on the content of the Operational Guidance for Schools, the "Contingency framework: education and childcare settings" document and advice from the local Health Protection Team.
- It has been adapted based on a model written by the NCC Corporate Health and Safety Team, in conjunction with the NCC Education and Public Health Teams.

Introduction

All education and childcare settings are required to have an outbreak management plan (sometimes called a contingency plan) which **outlines how they would operate if any of the measures described in this document 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.

Broomhaugh CE First School recognises the need to respond to outbreaks of COVID-19 quickly, effectively and proportionately, to ensure a safe school environment whilst minimising the effect of loss of face-to-face education by prioritising measures which ensure business continuity. In all circumstances, the potential benefit of measures to reduce transmission will be weighed against the potential impact on education and restrictions on attendance will only be considered as a last resort. The health and safety of staff, pupils and visitors remains our number one priority.

The COVID-19 risk assessment for the school [add link] records the key protective measures in place, including some measures which may need to be re-introduced as part of this plan.

What is an Outbreak?

Where the number of positive cases substantially increases, this could indicate transmission is happening in the school. At this point, advice is sought from the NCC Public Health Team in the following circumstances:

> 5 children, pupils, students or staff, who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period;

Identifying a group that is likely to have mixed closely could include:

- A class group
- a group such as school council
- a group in an after-school activity

The school will also seek public health advice if a pupil, student, child or staff member is admitted to hospital with COVID-19. Hospitalisation could indicate increased severity of illness or a new variant of concern. Support in managing risk assessments and communicating with staff and parents may be offered.

Communication and Record Keeping

This plan is kept under periodic review by Jennifer Ainsley (Executive Head Teacher) and will be reviewed following an outbreak to identify any aspects which worked well or areas for improvement.

The following arrangements are in place in the event of a case(s) of COVID-19:

- Parents are asked to inform the school of any positive COVID-19 case as soon as possible, as per normal arrangements for reporting sickness absence **Parents contact the school office (telephone) Office staff to inform Executive Head and Deputy immediately.**

- NHS Test & Trace will undertake contact tracing and provide advice to close contacts. From 16 August those under 18 will no longer be required to self-isolate at home but they will be advised to take a PCR test.
  Note: staff are instructed not to share contact details of individuals with anyone other than Test and Trace/Public Health Team (staff should not share contact details of close contacts with other parents/carers)
- Details of the positive case will be kept so that any linked cases can be identified - including dates of symptoms/date of positive test/date last in school/details of class or social group.
- NCC Public Health Team are notified of the positive case(s) via the on-line notification form. If at a later date the school become aware that an individual has been hospitalised, the Public Health Team will be notified via the enquiry form. Covid management flowchart
- Staff are informed when there has been a case of COVID-19 within the school and to be vigilant of anyone displaying symptoms.
- Inform and advise communications are sent to parents of groups of pupils who may be possible contacts of the positive case. This will request them to be vigilant for symptoms, keep pupils off school if they become symptomatic, go for a PCR test if they are identified as close contacts by Test and Trace.
- Broomhaugh CE First School will be informing parents if it is known their child has been a close contact and will also be requesting that all children / staff would book to take a PCR test. Children/staff can still attend school while awaiting the result. Staff will continue regular home testing also.

Activating the Plan - Collaboration

The Local Authority, Director of Public Health for Northumberland, and Public Health England local health protection teams are responsible for managing localised outbreaks. They play an important role in providing support and advice to education and childcare settings. In all situations where this plan is implemented, the school will liaise and cooperate with the above to agree on the most appropriate protective measures which may need to be reintroduced to contain an outbreak, bearing in mind the priority of maintaining school attendance.
The plan will be activated in the following circumstances:

- to help manage a COVID-19 outbreak within the school
- if there is extremely high prevalence of COVID-19 in the community and other measures have failed to reduce transmission
- as part of a package of measures responding to a Variant of Concern (VoC)

The Executive Head Teacher or Deputy will contact the NCC Public Health Team if they consider there may be an outbreak within the school due to illness reported. The NCC Public Health Team will contact school if they become aware of a possible outbreak within the school/area from PHE data they receive.

Step A – a single case or cases below the threshold of an Outbreak of COVID-19 in setting

- Parents notify school of a positive case or the school is notified by the NCC Public Health Team.
- NHS Test & Trace will undertake contact tracing and advise close contacts to arrange a PCR test. The school is not expected to follow up the results of PCR tests.
- School should note details of the case so that any linked cases within school can be identified.
- Notify the Public Health Team of the positive case(s) via the on-line notification form.

- The actions in the **Communication and Record Keeping section** are implemented.
- Covid risk assessment/existing protective measures are reviewed to identify any areas for improvement.
- Staff/pupils are reminded of the importance of following the protective measures in place within the setting.

Step 2 - An outbreak of COVID-19 in setting

When the school becomes aware of a possible outbreak we will contact the NCC Public Health Team via their enquiry line:

https://form.northumberland.gov.uk/form/auto/covid19_education_enq

The NCC Public Health Team will:

- work with the school to identify the cohort the cases belong to and undertake an assessment including number of cases, spread within the school and evidence of on-going transmission.
- work with the school to determine appropriate public health action in the event of an outbreak
- Hold an Outbreak Control Team meeting if required (informed by the public health team's risk assessment)
- Variant of Concern (VOC) cases – may be managed differently. Additional actions / investigations may be undertaken if a new variant is detected and that this will be led by the Health Protection Team in Public Health England (PHE).

The school/setting will:

- Implement the Outbreak Management Plan.
- Follow protocol as in **Step A for a single case.**
- Review and reinforce the testing, hygiene and ventilation measures they already have in place.
- Consider whether any activities could take place outdoors, including exercise, assemblies, or classes
- Consider ways to improve ventilation indoors, where this would not significantly impact thermal comfort
- Arrange a one-off enhanced cleaning focussing on touch points and any shared equipment
- Follow the advice of the NCC Public Health Team/Outbreak Control Team to implement recommended additional protective measures.
- Follow the actions in the **Communication and Record Keeping section**.

Protective Measures – Arrangements

Reintroduction of limits on mixing of pupils

Collective worship / assemblies to return to individual classes.

Note: The DfE advise that any recommendation for the reintroduction of 'bubbles' is not taken lightly and would need to take account of the detrimental impact they can have on the delivery of education.

Reintroduction of face coverings (staff, parents and visitors)

- Agree with NCC Public Health Team where masks will be worn.
- Review and update the school COVID-19 risk assessment/separate face coverings risk assessment.

- Implement the control measures detailed in the risk assessment e.g. reminders on donning and doffing safely, ensure sufficient bins for disposal, ensure there is a supply of disposable face coverings
- letter/messages home to parents informing them of the change in practice.

Restricting Attendance
Due to the number of days of missed on-site education to date, restricting attendance of pupils at school will only be considered if absolutely necessary and on the advice from the DfE/Government/Public Health Team/Director of Public Health for Northumberland. Where restrictions are put in place across a geographical area, the government will issue detailed operational guidance.

- Where restricted attendance is in place, we will reactivate our arrangements to enable high quality remote learning. (School Website)
- Priority for on-site attendance is given to vulnerable children and children of critical workers.
- Wrap around care is given to vulnerable children and children of critical workers.

Shielding
Shielding for those identified as clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19 is currently paused. In the event of a major outbreak or variant of concern that poses a significant risk to individuals on the shielded patient list (SPL), ministers can agree to reintroduce shielding.

Shielding can only be reintroduced by national government. If this were to happen the school will:

- Reactivate remote learning/support for pupils of the shielding list. (School Website)
- Review individual risk assessments for relevant staff. Make arrangements to support working from home.
- Additional resources may be needed – agency staff, staff redeployment.

Other measures
It may be necessary to cancel, postpone or review arrangements for out of school visits, after school activities or large scale gatherings/events.

This will include: *(possible alternatives)*

- residential / educational visits (*local visit / postponed or virtual visits*)
- open days (*recorded tours / virtual meetings*)
- transition or taster days (*recorded tours / virtual meetings*)
- parental attendance in settings (*recorded events shared / virtual meetings / website photographs*)
- performances in settings (*recorded events shared / virtual meetings / website photographs*)

Resources:
COVID-19 management flowchart – including link to notification/enquiry form.
Inform and Advise communications – model letter/text

Government Guidance:
Operational Guidance for Schools
"Contingency framework: education and childcare settings"

Document History:
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