

Recommended controls to manage COVID-19 transmission

Dear Parent / Carer

As you will be aware, the South West positive COVID-19 case rates are rising rapidly. The majority of cases across the South West are in school age groups. There is evidence of this translating into adults of parent age. We are writing to let you know that South West Directors of Public Health have jointly agreed the additional advice and action set out below in order that all educational settings can implement additional COVID-19 response measures as proportionate or necessary. Your setting will share any changes with you via their normal communication channels. As soon as the number of positive cases reduce, these temporary measures may be stepped down.

Particular measures for consideration on a case-by-case basis include:

1. Continued good infection prevention control (ventilation, touchpoint cleaning), including in areas where staff gather
2. Promote and publicise the effectiveness of vaccination as the best protection for all eligible cohorts including staff and students
3. Continued efforts on testing. Examples are included in the DfE participation toolkit, including:
 - a. Household siblings (secondary school age) of confirmed cases are advised to take daily LFD tests while awaiting their PCR test results and to continue to attend school (unless test is positive). This is also advised for primary school aged children but is at the discretion of the parent/guardian
 - b. Given high prevalence it is appropriate to recommend daily LFD testing for all close contacts identified by NHS Test and Trace whilst individuals await their PCR results
 - c. Promotion of twice weekly asymptomatic testing
 - d. During an outbreak / following a risk assessment, to extend daily LFD testing for close or household contacts (identified by NHS Test and Trace) while awaiting PCR results to a minimum of 5 days, increasing to 7 days as necessary to ensure the final test is taken on a school day
 - e. If unwell stay at home until symptom free. If testing negative for COVID, individuals should still wait until 24 hours post fever to go back into a setting. Colds and other non-COVID symptoms are circulating but in the first instance the main symptoms should be treated as possible COVID and trigger isolation and testing. This is the case even if others in the setting /group have tested negative for similar symptoms
4. The introduction of face coverings in communal areas such as corridors when movement occurs between lessons (for secondary school and college settings)
5. Reduced mixing between groups of students as much as possible including consideration of pausing 'whole school' assemblies for the time being and any other 'large gatherings'.

We hope you will understand and support the need for caution at this time. We have taken this decision to ensure that we are providing both pupils and staff with a further layer of protection.

Proactive things for everyone to do

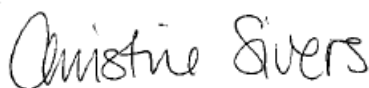
To keep education and family life moving in South Gloucestershire, here are some practical things to do:

- Follow hands-face-space and fresh air. Try to meet outdoors where possible, or if indoors, open windows, wear a face covering in crowded places and wash your hands regularly.
- Wear face coverings in confined spaces i.e. school transport, unless exempt. Seek advice about having the COVID-19 vaccine if you have not had this already, now offered to all those aged 12 and over.

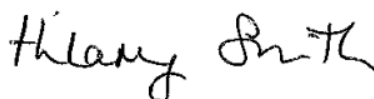
Even if you have had your COVID-19 vaccinations, by making the above part of your routine you will be helping your school community to continue doing the things they enjoy and help stop the virus spreading.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Kind regards



Director of Children, Adults and Health



Head of Education, Learning & Skills



Director of Public Health for South Gloucestershire