



COVID Policy Update – Michaelmas Term

Summary

This policy update explains the revised actions Langley school will take to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) within the school community.

We will continue to work closely with parents and carers, staff and unions when agreeing the best approaches throughout any changing circumstances advised by the Government, Public Health England, Norfolk County Council, and the Department of Education.

Overview

The government continues to manage the risk of serious illness from the spread of the virus. 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. As 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.

Risk assessment

Langley school will continue to comply with health and safety law and put in place proportionate control measures. We regularly review and update our risk assessments - treating them as 'living documents', as circumstances in school and the public health advice changes. This includes having active arrangements in place to monitor whether the controls are effective and working as planned.

Mixing and 'bubbles'

It is no longer recommended that it is necessary to keep children in consistent groups ('bubbles'). This means that bubbles will not need be in place as we begin Michaelmas term.

As well as enabling flexibility in curriculum delivery, this means that assemblies can resume, and we will no longer need to make alternative arrangements to avoid mixing at lunch.

We have ensured that we have contingency (outbreak management plans) in place, in the event we are advised it is necessary to reintroduce 'bubbles' for a temporary period, to reduce mixing between groups.

Any decision to recommend the reintroduction of 'bubbles' would not be taken lightly and would take place in collaboration with the Norfolk County Council Outbreak Management Team and Public Health England.

Tracing close contacts and Isolation

Close contacts will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace.

As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case and/or their parent to identify close contacts. Contacts will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case and/or their parent specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact. This is likely to be a small number of individuals who would be most at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of the close contact. Where required, Langley school will assist to help identify close contacts.

Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply:

- they are fully vaccinated
- they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Instead, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.

Staff who do not need to isolate, and children and young people aged under 18 years 6 months who usually attend school, and have been identified as a close contact, should continue to attend school as normal. They do not need to wear a face covering within the school, but it is expected that these are worn when travelling on public or dedicated transport.

18-year-olds will be treated in the same way as children until 6 months after their 18th birthday, to allow them the opportunity to get fully vaccinated. At which point, they will be subject to the same rules as adults and so if they choose not to get vaccinated, they will need to self-isolate if identified as a close contact.

We will continue to work with health protection teams in the case of a local outbreak. If there is a substantial increase in the number of positive cases 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, in which instance we will advise accordingly.

Face coverings

Face coverings are no longer advised for pupils, students, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas.

The government has removed 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 dedicated school transport. All pupils in Year 7 and above **will be required** to wear a face covering whilst traveling on the school buses, unless they have an exemption.

Whilst we have set out our procedures to the above advice, if a member of our community wishes to wear a face covering, this will be permitted, we would ask that they follow the Public Health England's 'safe use and disposal of face coverings' guidance.

Other circumstances where a face coverings may be recommended

If there was a substantial increase in the number of positive cases in School, a director of public health might advise that face coverings should temporarily be worn in communal areas or classrooms (by staff, pupils, students and visitors, unless exempt).

No pupil or student will be denied education on the grounds of whether they are, or are not, wearing a face covering.

Stepping measures up and down

Langley school has developed contingency (outbreak management plans) outlining what we would do if children, pupils, students or staff test positive for COVID-19 and how we would operate if we were advised to take extra measures to help break chains of transmission. Given the detrimental impact that restrictions on education can have on children and young people, any further measures will only ever be considered as a last resort, kept to minimum impact, and for the shortest amount of time possible.

Control measures;

Hand hygiene

Frequent and thorough hand cleaning is now regular practice. We will continue to remind pupils and students the importance of regular hand washing with soap and water and for the whole community to continue to wash hands regularly and use the hand sanitiser in place across both sites.

Respiratory hygiene

The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important and will continue to be emphasised throughout the school sites.

Antimicrobial treatment, advanced cleaning and sanitation

Prior to the start of term, both sites will receive a further antimicrobial treatment to all common areas, classrooms and touch points.

Our cleaning teams will continue to carry out advanced daily cleaning and sanitation each school day. Paper roll and sanitising spray will be plentiful throughout both sites for those who wish to sanitise keyboards and commonly used items during the day.

Keeping occupied spaces well ventilated

It remains important to ensure occupied spaces are well ventilated and that a comfortable teaching and working environment is maintained.

Where mechanical ventilation is not in place, we encourage all staff to open windows, as required, to ensure there is a regular exchange of air where possible. As the temperature declines air circulation can be maintained by a short burst of fresh air in between lessons. The aim is to balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature.

Testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases;

When an individual develops COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test.

Pupils, students, staff and other adults should follow public health advice on [when to self-isolate and what to do](#). They should not come into school if they have symptoms, have had a positive test result or other reasons requiring them to stay at home due to the risk of them passing on COVID-19 (for example, they are required to quarantine).

If anyone in school develops [COVID-19 symptoms](#), however mild, they will be isolated until collection can be arranged and they will be required to follow public health advice.

If a pupil or student in boarding shows symptoms, they will usually self-isolate in their residential setting so that their usual support can continue, we will however, discuss this with their family on a case-by-case basis.

For anyone with symptoms, they should avoid using public transport and, wherever possible, be collected by a member of their family or household.

Asymptomatic Testing

Testing remains important in reducing the risk of transmission of infection within schools. That is why, whilst some measures are relaxed, others remain, and if necessary, in response to the latest epidemiological data, we will be prepared to step measures up or down depending on local circumstances.

Staff, pupils and students in year 7 to U6 should continue to lateral flow (LFD) test twice weekly at home until the end of September, when this will be reviewed.

We will retain a small asymptomatic testing site (ATS) on each site until further notice so we are able to offer testing to pupils who are unable to test themselves at home or to offer support to those who are new to self-testing.

Testing kits **must** be logged out upon collection and **each test** taken must be uploaded to **NHS test and trace** and the **school portal**, both links are available from our COVID-19 link on the school website. Please refer to the Langley Testing Programme document for further guidance.

Confirmatory PCR tests

Staff, pupils and students with a positive LFD test result should self-isolate in line with the [stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#). They will also need to [get a free PCR test to check if they have COVID-19](#).

Whilst awaiting the PCR result, the individual should continue to self-isolate.

If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test and the individual can return to school, as long as they don't have COVID-19 symptoms.

Blended learning

Where appropriate, Langley school will support those who need to self-isolate because they have tested positive, to work or learn from home if they are well enough to do so. We will maintain delivery of high-quality remote education, including working with pupils and students who are abroad, facing challenges to return due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, for the period they are abroad.

Clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV)

All clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) children and young people should attend their education setting unless they are one of the very small number of children and young people under paediatric or other specialist care who have been advised by their clinician or other specialist not to attend. Please speak to one of our School Nurses (Senior) or Matron (Prep) should you wish to discuss individual circumstances in confidence.

Social distancing measures have now ended in the workplace and it is no longer necessary to instruct people to work from home. Clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) adults are advised, as a minimum, to follow the same guidance as everyone else. It is important that everyone adheres to this guidance, if you are CEV or feel you are at additional risk and wish to discuss control measures in place or personal to you please do contact HR or the Director of Compliance and Operations to discuss further.

Wellbeing

We understand that the pandemic has been an unsettling time, and that everyone's circumstances and experiences have been individual to them. We recognise that members of our community may be experiencing a variety of emotions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and we aim to ensure that wellbeing is a priority for all.

Further information and point of contact

School Covid Coordinator - Rachel Smith - Director of Compliance and Operations

School Covid information hub - www.langleyschool.co.uk COVID-19 link

Government link - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance and support - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-and-support)

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