



## Woodbridge School COVID-19 Operational Policy – 6 January 2022 (whole school including Prep, Pre-Prep and EYFS)

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<b>ISI Reg:</b>	N/A
<b>Other related policies and documents:</b>	WBS Covid-19 Policy – Roadmap Update May 2021; WBS Covid-19 Outbreak Management Plan; H & S Policy; Behaviour Policy; Safeguarding Policy.

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### **1. Overview**

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with the previously updated Woodbridge School's COVID19 Policy. On Wednesday 8 December, the Prime Minister announced the implementation of [Plan B of the COVID-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan](#), to reduce pressure on the NHS. Plan B sets out a number of additional measures across society to control transmission of COVID-19. Previously on 27 November, the Prime Minister announced the temporary introduction of new measures as a result of the Omicron variant. These measures are precautionary, while the variant is tracked and assessed. As a result, the government is reflecting these measures in the Guidance for Schools, most directly a temporary recommendation on the wearing of face coverings in schools and changes to isolation requirements for confirmed and suspected cases of the Omicron variant and their contacts. A further government update was provided on Sunday 2 January 2022.

COVID-19 continues to be a virus that we learn to live with and the imperative to reduce the disruption to children and young people's education remains. Our priority as a school is to continue to deliver face-to-face, high-quality education to all pupils. We will be closely monitoring and following government guidance.

### **2. Changes to the previous Government's guidance**

Changes to the Government's guidance since its 27 September 2021 publication include:

- Updated advice on Tracing close contacts and isolation to reflect the change in measures for close contacts of suspected or confirmed Omicron cases
- Updated advice on Face coverings to reflect changes in measures – it is now recommended that face coverings are worn in classrooms where pupils in year 7 and above are educated. The advice is short term only, to support pupils and teachers as they return to school this term and builds on the existing proportionate guidance that recommends face coverings for all adults in communal areas of all settings.
- Replacement of references to Public Health England with references to the United Kingdom Health Security Agency (UKHSA)
- Updated information in the Other considerations section on vaccination of under 18 year olds

- An updated Travel and quarantine section to reflect that pupils arriving from abroad will need to isolate and test on arrival
- An updated Educational visits section to advise we consider whether to go ahead with any planned international educational visits.
- Office workers who can work from home should do so from Monday 13 December. Anyone who cannot work from home should continue to go into work – for example, to access equipment necessary for their role or where their role must be completed in-person
- Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10-day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason. Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. This also applies to children under 5, with LFD testing at parental or guardian discretion. If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to your education setting from day 8. Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10 day period of self-isolation.
- Confirmatory PCR tests following a positive lateral flow device test result are to be temporarily suspended from Tuesday 11 January. This will mean that anyone who receives a positive LFD test result will be required to self-isolate immediately and will not be required to take a confirmatory PCR test. Anyone who develops 1 of the 3 main COVID-19 symptoms should stay at home and self-isolate and take a PCR test. They must self-isolate if they get a positive test result, even if they have had a recent negative lateral flow test – these rules have not changed

### **3. Mixing and ‘bubbles’**

The government do not recommend that it is necessary to keep children in consistent groups (‘bubbles’). This means that ‘bubbles’ will not need to be used in schools. As well as enabling flexibility in curriculum delivery, this means that assemblies can resume and we do not need to make alternative arrangements to avoid mixing at lunch. We will ensure our Outbreak Management Plan covers the possibility that it may become 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 need to take account of the detrimental impact they can have on the delivery of education.

### **4. Tracing close contacts and isolation**

Close contacts in schools are now identified by [NHS Test and Trace](#) and education settings are not expected to undertake contact tracing.

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 from a school setting 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. The school may be contacted in exceptional cases to help with identifying close contacts, as currently happens in managing other infectious diseases.

From Tuesday 14 December, a new national approach to daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 is being introduced. All adults who are fully vaccinated and children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 – whether Omicron or not – should take a lateral flow device (LFD) test every day for 7 days instead of self-isolating. Daily testing by close contacts will help to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 will help protect education settings by reducing transmission and will also help keep pupils in face-to-face education.

Once notified by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact, all eligible staff, pupils and students should take an LFD each day for 7 days and report the results through the [Online Reporting System](#) and to their setting. If they test negative, they can continue to attend their education setting. Outside of the education setting, they should continue to follow the advice set out in the [Sunday 12 December press release](#). This approach should also be adopted over the winter break and on return in January.

All staff and secondary aged pupils and students have access to a box of 7 LFD tests from the School. For primary aged children [LFD test kits are available through the usual routes](#) (community test sites, local pharmacies or online).

Further actions for educational settings may be advised by a local Incident Management Team (IMT) investigating a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant of COVID-19.

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.

The School will continue to have a role in working with health protection teams in the case of a local outbreak. If there is a substantial increase in the number of positive cases in the school (see [Stepping measures up and down](#) section for more information) 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.

## **5. Face coverings**

Face coverings help protect the wearer and others against the spread of infection because they cover the nose and mouth, which are the main confirmed sources of transmission of COVID-19.

Where pupils in year 7 (which would be children who were aged 11 on 31 August 2021) and above are educated, the government recommends that face coverings should be worn by pupils, staff and adult visitors when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas. This is a temporary measure. Pupils in these schools should also wear a face covering when travelling on public transport and dedicated transport to and from school. The government do not advise that pupils and staff wear face coverings in classrooms, unless the school is advised to temporarily do so by the local Director of Public Health.

In primary schools, the government recommends that face coverings should be worn by staff and adults (including visitors) when moving around in corridors and communal areas. Health advice continues to be that children in primary schools should not be asked to wear face coverings.

Face coverings do not need to be worn when outdoors.

Schools, as employers, have a duty to comply with the Equality Act 2010 which includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled staff. They also have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, to support them to access education successfully. No pupil should be denied education on the grounds that they are not wearing a face covering.

## **6. Social distancing**

The Government guidance no longer requires social distancing but it is good practice not to invade another person's personal space as this may make them more anxious.

## **7. Control Measures**

The School will continue to:

- 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 COVID19.
1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone -
    - Hand Hygiene - The School will continue to emphasise the importance of frequent and thorough hand cleaning using both soap and water along with the hand sanitisers that are throughout the Schools. Signs are displayed throughout the Schools to remind and reinforce the importance of hand hygiene.
    - Respiratory Hygiene – The School will continue the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach with signs around the Schools reminding everyone. This continues to be a very important part of the Government’s strategy.
  2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes -
    - Schools will continue to maintain appropriate cleaning regimes
  3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated -
    - When the Schools are in operation, it is important to ensure that it is well ventilated and that a comfortable teaching environment is maintained.
    - The Schools will risk assess school events on an individual basis ensuring as part of that assessment ventilation and air-flow are considered.
    - Opening external windows can improve natural ventilation, and in addition, opening internal doors can also assist with creating a throughput of air. If necessary, external opening doors may also be used (if they are not fire doors and where safe to do so).

It is important to balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature.

#### 4. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19 –

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

Pupils, 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 or they are a close contact of a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant of COVID-19).

If anyone in your school develops [COVID-19 symptoms](#), however mild, you should send them home and they should follow public health advice.

If a pupil in a boarding school shows symptoms, they should usually self-isolate in their residential setting so that their usual support can continue, others may then benefit from self-isolating in their family home.

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

If a pupil is awaiting collection, they should be left in a room on their own if possible and safe to do so. A window should be opened for fresh air ventilation if possible. Appropriate PPE should also be used if close contact is necessary. Further information on this can be found in the [use of PPE in education, childcare and children's social care settings](#) guidance. Any rooms they use should be cleaned after they have left.

The household (including any siblings) should follow the UKHSA [stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#).

#### 8. **Asymptomatic testing**

Testing remains important in reducing the risk of transmission of infection within schools.

Staff and secondary school pupils should continue to test twice weekly at home, with lateral flow device (LFD) test kits, 3-4 days apart. Testing remains voluntary but is strongly encouraged. The senior school will test all pupils in year 7 and above, once on their return to school in January.

There is no need for primary age pupils (those in year 6 and below) to test.

Parents, guardians and other visitors are now strongly encouraged to take a LFD test before entering any school site.

## 9. Guidance on other school issues/procedures including Educational Trips

- **Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) pupils and staff:**

Clinical studies have shown that children and young people, including those previously considered to be clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV), are at very low risk of serious illness if they catch the virus. The UK Clinical Review Panel has recommended that no children and young people under the age of 18 should be considered CEV and under-18s should be removed from the Shielded Patient List. The chief executive of the UK Health Security Agency and head of NHS Test and Trace has written to parents of these children to inform them.

Children and young people previously considered CEV should attend school and should follow the same [COVID-19 guidance](#) as the rest of the population. However, if advised to isolate or reduce their social contact by their specialist, due to the nature of their medical condition or treatment, rather than because of the pandemic, they should continue to follow the advice of their specialist.

The government recommends all school staff and eligible pupils take up the offer of a vaccine.

- **Pupil Wellbeing and Safety:**

Woodbridge School is committed to ensuring:

- i) Suitable and Sufficient mental health, pastoral or wider wellbeing support for children (e.g. bereavement support).
- ii) Consideration of impact on pupils with protected characteristics, in developing our approach.
- iii) Opportunities for children to talk about their experiences over the last few months.
- iv) Opportunities for 1:1 conversations.
- v) Re-focused lessons on relevant topics, e.g. mental wellbeing and staying safe.
- vi) Pastoral activities, e.g. renewing and developing friendships

- **Staff Wellbeing and Safety:**

Woodbridge School is committed to ensuring:

- i) That the wellbeing of school leaders is supported by Line managers, the Leadership team and HR, who are Mental Health First Aid trained.
- ii) Risk assessments are in place that consider staff anxiety linked to work, new working practices and social distancing advice for schools and settings.
- iii) All staff having appropriate 'breaks', while maintaining statutory requirements for safeguarding, first aid and health and safety.
- iv) That staff working practices, including flexible working, to support workload, expectations and staff wellbeing are considered.
- v) Regular checks on all staff wellbeing as well as access to an Employee Assistance Programme for further support.
- vi) Impact on staff with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are considered, in developing our approach.

- **Educational Visits:**

- i) From the start of the Michaelmas Term all restrictions on international and domestic trips have been lifted subject to the Governments "traffic light" guidance

for international travel. Staff must ensure that appropriate cancellation insurance is in place before organising/booking trips and that appropriate risk assessments have been completed. **At present it is School policy that no international trips are to be arranged until further notice.** It is hoped that international trips will commence once more from January 2022. Risk Assessments must include public health advice such as hygiene and ventilation requirements.

- ii) Trip Organisers should be aware that the international travel list (and broader international travel policy) is subject to change and green list countries may be moved into amber or red. The travel lists may change during a visit and you must comply with international travel legislation and should have contingency plans in place to account for these changes.
- iii) All trips must be approved as per the school's procedures.

UPDATE (4<sup>th</sup> October 21) – The government has scrapped the “traffic light” system for international travel with effect from 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021. There will now only be a “Red List” of countries advising which countries not to travel to unless essential.

UPDATE (1<sup>st</sup> November 21) – From 4am on Monday 1 November, the remaining 7 destinations on the red list; Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Panama, Peru and Venezuela will be removed. The government will review the red list every 3 weeks and will impose restrictions should there be a need to do so to protect public health.

UPDATE (29<sup>th</sup> November 21) – At 4am on 28 November Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Angola were added to the [travel red list](#). South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Eswatini, Zimbabwe and Namibia moved onto the red list at midday on 26 November.

UPDATE (6<sup>th</sup> December 21) – At 4am on 6 December Nigeria was added to the [travel red list](#).

## 10. Working from home

Office workers who can work from home should do so from Monday 13 December. Anyone who cannot work from home should continue to go into work – for example, to access equipment necessary for their role or where their role must be completed in-person.

The School expects to continue to provide face-to-face teaching, and staff will continue to attend their place of work if required in order to deliver this. Teaching and learning will not be moved online as a result of the work from home guidance.

## 11. Compliance and Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be subject to a thorough review process including consideration at the Compliance and Risk Committee on an annual basis. This will ensure that practice across the whole School is in line with this policy, the Complaints procedure and with current guidance and legislation.