

## **Corbets Tey School and CTS @ The Avelon Risk Assessment and Approach to our system of Controls**

### **STEP 4**

#### **Dating from Sept 2021**

Although Corbets Tey is not a health setting some of our learners have complex health needs in addition to the barriers they experience through their learning difficulties. This means that we want to ensure their educational experience is as safe as possible whilst limiting the impact COVID has on life in our school.

#### **Important factors influencing our assessment of risk:**

- Our assessment of risk, although we fully take on the importance of testing, deduces a significant number of our secondary aged young people with severe or profound learning difficulties would not have a toleration for, or understanding of regular testing. To mitigate the additional risk this entails we will enhance other control measures described in the guidance.
- We have learners with complex health needs involving weakened immunity and chest/lung vulnerabilities; we are predominantly a severe learning disability community with a high level of students with severe autism which has an implication on levels of understanding and operational challenges with our system of controls.
- Also, we will monitor our 18+ population regarding vaccination and bring in contingency planning should learners have to isolate at 18 + 6 months.
- Home-School Transport necessarily involves mixing classes each day for two journeys. The local authority has again supported us in ensuring that there is a limit to the number of classes mixing on transport.
- We have visiting professionals entering the building regularly who are essential to the quality of education and care

The Government has published new guidance for schools to follow for Step 4 of the COVID-19 recovery Roadmap. I have included the link to the full guidance for you.

<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>

The lifting of COVID-19 restrictions in schools is in line with the general removal of restrictions for England at Step 4. We will all have to be aware that decisions may change in the light of national and local infection rates.

#### **Bubbles**

Government guidance states that 'Bubbles' will end for all children under 18, social distancing will no longer be necessary. However, due to the school's special nature and the needs of our students, we will still keep broadly to our previous zones until the review at the end of September. This will only aim at 'limiting' contact and we will not keep a hard and fast rule if there is a good reason to mix associated to essential learning and wellbeing.

We will always make a balanced decision on whether it is in the learner's best interest to move across zones; we just want to do what we can to reduce contacts and keep going as a school.

Assembly style activities can resume limited to the students in a particular zone.

Lunches will still be eaten in class given the vulnerability of students in the school and the fact that this has worked so smoothly last year.

## **Arrival and Departure**

We would like to move back to a more manageable arrival and departure procedure for the school so will work on streamlining arrivals and departures over the next few weeks whilst maintaining safety in the car park and senior playground.

## **Testing**

Staff will continue to test twice weekly.

The Government will review testing requirements by the end of September.

The guidance states that two onsite tests should be taken by each secondary school and college student on return, followed by twice weekly testing at home. However, this is not possible with some of our learners so we will continue to ask the main caregiver to test on their behalf as an indicative measure.

<https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>

From September staff and students with a positive LFD test result or displaying symptoms should self-isolate in line with the stay at home guidance. They will also need to get a free PCR test to confirm more accurately 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 student can return to school, as long as the individual doesn't have COVID -19 symptoms or are otherwise unwell.

## **CEV - clinically extremely vulnerable children and young people**

The UK Clinical Review Panel has recommended that all children and young people under the age of 18 should no longer be considered CEV and should be removed from the Shielded Patient List, the national database of people considered clinically extremely vulnerable.

All children and young people should continue to follow the same guidance as everyone else, which can be found at [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus). For a very few individual children and young people, specific clinical advice may be given and this should continue to be followed.

The Department for Health and Social Care have developed an [FAQ](#) that can be accessed online.

A letter has been sent by the Department of Health and Social Care to the families of children and young people who were previously classified as CEV informing them of this change. Although shielding was paused on 1 April 2021, we know that for some this may be a significant change and they may be anxious about returning to face-to-face education for the Autumn Term. Whilst attendance is mandatory, we recommend that leaders in education work collaboratively with families to reassure them and to help their child return to their everyday activities. Discussions should have a collaborative approach, focusing on the welfare of the child or young person and responding to the concerns of the parent, carer or young person.

## **Self-isolating**

Children under the age of 18 years old will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case.

Instead, children 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. To protect our school community and keep our service as consistent as possible, we ask that all staff and students take a PCR test if advised to do so.

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.

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

### **Control Measures**

Protective Measures will remain in place for the Autumn Term in all education settings including practicing good hygiene, ventilation, and regular staff testing until the end of September to strike a balance between relaxing restrictions and minimising further disruption to young people's education.

We 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.

Because we are not able to test all of our young people we need to be extra careful when young people display any possible symptoms, and we ask parents/carers to bear with us as we try to balance our responsibility to keep the school as safe as we can.

All education settings will continue to have an outbreak management plan and work with local health teams, as is standard practice. Local Directors of Public Health may advise a setting to temporarily reintroduce some control measures in the event of an outbreak.

### **Accessing the Community**

Again, because of our specific vulnerability as a community we will defer the full resumption of trips out until the government review at the end of September. Trips that are an important part of the curriculum may take place after a comprehensive risk assessment has taken place.

### **Face coverings**

At Corbets Tey we have learners with complex health needs coming in to school every day; we do need to remain extremely vigilant in order to keep them safe. Therefore, until the review point at the end of September, we will continue to wear face coverings in the way that we do now; using our discernment where risk is greater.

The general advice to all schools is that face coverings are no longer needed but we are not a typical school community and have a duty to consider our more vulnerable children and young adults.

Our young people are exempt for mask wearing on home-school transport but we will request that drivers and escorts will continue to take this measure when in close proximity of our students.

Staff sometimes wear PPE in connection with our everyday care of young people. We will continue to do this as it is unrelated to COVID-19 measures.

## Visitors

Until the national review at the end of September we will continue to meet with parents on-line unless there is an essential reason for an in-person meeting. Much as we want to meet again face to face we think a slight delay is a small price to pay for keeping the cases down and keeping the school up and running.

## NHS Test and Trace

Now that we are in Step 4, close contacts will be identified via NHS Test and Trace and education settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing.

When reporting self-test results parents and carers will now be offered the opportunity to create a household account, which should take no more than 2 minutes. This allows parents and carers to save their children's details to their own user accounts so parents and carers can report results for multiple members in the household more quickly and easily. Parents and carers can then add all household members to their account, enabling them to save time when reporting all future self-test results.

## In alignment our guidance to all staff is as follows:

The Government has published new guidance for schools for Step 4 of the COVID-19 recovery roadmap.

Summary changes to guidance with reference to school are:

1. 'Bubbles will end and social distancing will no longer be necessary' - for September we will continue to keep broadly to zone groupings of classes to limit contact. Assemblies will resume in zones if classes would like to restart these.
2. 'Staggered arrival and departures are no longer necessary' - for CTS and CTS @ The Avelon we will gradually streamline arrivals and departures into a shorter period whilst ensuring safety of all concerned.
3. Staff working in education settings are to continue to undertake test twice weekly lateral flow testing through September and the Government will review this by the end of September. Please ensure you report results to <https://testregister.co.uk/login>. Test kits are available from the upper hall for staff.
4. From 16th August if you're fully vaccinated or under 18, you will not need to self-isolate following close contact with someone who has COVID-19. You'll still need to take a PCR test and self-isolate if it's positive - close contacts will be identified via NHS Test & Trace and education settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing
5. Protective Measures will remain in place for the autumn term in all education settings including practicing good hygiene, ventilation, and regular staff testing until the end of September to strike a balance between relaxing restrictions and minimising further disruption to young people's education
6. The general national advice is face coverings are no longer necessary in education settings - At Corbets Tey, as we have learners with complex learning and medical needs, we will continue to wear face coverings as we are now: using our judgement where risk is greater
7. We ask staff to take a cautious and sensible approach to mixing and gathering over the lunch break - windows should always be open and staff should meet outside as much as possible. We will continue current designated lunch areas for staff and review broader access to the staffroom at half term.

This document accompanies the COVID Risk Assessment which has been updated at regular intervals throughout the Pandemic.