

# FAQ's for Parents

## Covid planning & Bubble closures

SUE SAVAGE & DONNA MOULDS



# FAQs for Parents - Covid 19

## Why can't I know the details of a confirmed case?

Schools are bound by data protection laws and are not allowed to give information or details of the case as it may identify the person who has tested positive.

## Why does the whole school need to close for a day or more?

Closing for a day allows us time to deep clean the school after a confirmed case. It also gives us the time to confirm a positive case with the Department for Education. Their team of advisors then informs schools on what action is needed based on the latest public health advice, and to work through a risk assessment to identify close contacts. Sometimes this consists of very many phone calls and communications back and forth with different departments and also the LA.

## Why does it take a long time to make a decision?

Currently there are a high number of schools contacting the DfE for advice and it is not always possible to speak to someone immediately. The risk assessment takes time to complete and the DfE then has to advise schools on the best course of action based on the latest PHE guidance. Head Teachers cannot make the decisions without speaking to the DfE and this is clear in the guidance.

## Why is it that sometimes more than one bubble has to close?

If the risk assessment identifies a person, in another bubble that has had close contact with the confirmed case or there are not enough adults in school to cover the class additional bubbles need to close. The guidance states that staff can move between bubbles to enable schools to provide a full and balanced curriculum. Where schools are small, staff have multiple roles and the site itself is small. With staff isolating more staff are needing to cover in other classes. It would be easier in some instances to treat the whole school as a bubble but schools continue to maintain the discipline of staggered breaks and monitored movements to avoid as much as possible this happening and to try and limit closures. The decision making is lengthy and complex and completed with lots of discussion and risk evaluating with experts.

## How many children are in a bubble?

In primary schools, a bubble is usually a class of pupils in some smaller schools the whole school is a bubble. Some schools have 2 or more classes in a bubble depending on curriculum provision and planning.

## I have concerns about the arrangements that the school is putting in place to respond to COVID-19?

Schools are required to follow national guidance and carry out risk assessments to ensure that children, staff, and parents are kept as safe as possible. This does mean however that

## FAQs for Parents - Covid 19

each school may be implementing arrangements that are unique to the circumstances, site access and layout of the school. If you have any concerns you should make contact with the school direct to discuss the matter further and follow the complaints policy. Schools want to hear about concerns through our policy and procedures so that they can review if anything needs to change or be re-evaluated. Feedback for safety measures helps shared understanding and also planning.

### What if my child has symptoms?

If your child has symptoms of coronavirus (high temperature/hot to touch, new persistent cough, loss or change in sense of taste or smell) the child and their household need to follow the Government guidance on self-isolation ([www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance)) and arrange for your child to be tested (call 119 or book through [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test)). Schools cannot advise on symptoms at home – they will refer parents to the guidance. Parents also need to inform the school.

### What happens if my child is sent home or a bubble closes with learning?

Schools will plan for remote learning following the policy created by senior leaders in the Trust. Policies are on the school website. There are various scenarios that can happen with a teacher streaming in from home and LSAs covering lessons or children joining for parts of lessons from home or everyone streaming! All schools will have an emergency 3-day plan that children can access straight away without teacher supervision. This is to ensure continuity of education straight away but also to allow class teachers and senior leaders to plan cover and future lessons and support families with connectivity etc... Learning remotely is not optional and all best endeavours should be made by families to support this planning. The plans put in place by teachers link very closely to the existing curriculum to keep that consistency and connect with their learning in school.

### What if another child in the class has symptoms?

Schools will follow Government guidance if this happens. The child will be sent home and asked to self-isolate. Children who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home to self-isolate unless the child tests positive, your child develops symptoms themselves or you have been requested to do so by NHS Test & Trace. Your child will be asked to wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser and the area around the person with symptoms will be cleaned with normal household disinfectant after they have left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.