

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

September 2021



*This term:*

### **Do staff need to wear a face mask in school?**

Yes, in all communal areas around the school/college. Staff do not need to wear a face mask in the classroom unless they wish to do so. If staff prefer, there are plastic face shields available to use. Staff to ask the Site Team for a face shield, if needed.

Please could all staff continue to wash their hands regularly throughout the day (wash hands for at least 20 seconds using hot, soapy water) and use Hand Sanitiser at other times.

### **Are staff still expected to take lateral flow tests?**

As per last term, staff to please continue to take a lateral flow test twice weekly (Monday and Friday) and report the result via the NHS app. If staff move around classes during the week or visit other sites, additional lateral flow tests need to be taken beforehand.

### **Will staff still be allocated separate staffrooms?**

Yes.

### **Are there any changes from last term when using school vehicles?**

No, staff to use the same procedures please. Ensure vehicles are left tidy and dispose of any rubbish after each journey. Staff to please wipe down and disinfect the inside of vehicles (handles, steering wheel, gear stick etc).

### **Will the schools continue to be “fogged” regularly?**

Although there is no official requirement to do so, Senior Leaders are in the process to re-instate “fogging” on each site and will consider the frequency. “Fogging” also has an impact on preventing other infections and viruses eg D&V, and improves the general hygiene across the schools.

### **Will staff be required to take pupil temperatures daily? And temperatures of any visitors coming into school?**

Yes, pupil temperatures will need to be taken daily. Any temperature above 37.8°C should be reported to the Nursing Team/Senior Leaders. We are still limiting the number of visitors coming into school but if visitors agree, Reception Staff should take their temperature as a precaution.

### **What happens if a pupil starts showing Covid-19 symptoms whilst at school?**

The same procedure will happen as per last term. The pupil will need to be collected by their family and taken home as soon as possible. A member of staff will need to wear full PPE (face mask and optional face shield, apron, gloves) and sit with the learner in a separate room to await collection. Ideally, if the member of staff and learner could wait outside in the fresh air, this would be preferable.

Otherwise please wait:

- at Bidwell Brook, in the PPA room at the front of the school;
- at Ellen Tinkham School, in the room inside Nikki Burroughs's office;
- at Ellen Tinkham College, in the therapy room near Reception or in the Nurses office.

### **Do staff/classes need to continue working in "bubbles" this term?**

Yes, staff to continue to work in the same "bubbles" that were in place in the Summer Term. Whilst working in a "bubble" is not official Government guidance for schools this term, the Federation is being cautious in light of the rising number of Covid-19 cases in Devon over the summer. Working in "bubbles" will help to stop the transference of Covid-19 should we have a positive case in one of our schools. We will continually review this way of working but expect staff and classes to continue working in "bubbles" until October half term at the least.

### **Will there be playground rotas in place again?**

Yes. At Bidwell Brook, now that the building work has been completed, Marie Barrett will produce new rotas for the playground. At Ellen Tinkham School and College, rotas that were previously in place should be adhered to for the foreseeable future.

### **If a member of staff feels unwell with Covid-19 symptoms either at school or home, what should they do?**

Staff should take a PCR test asap. If the member of staff is in school and becomes unwell, they must inform their HR Manager prior to leaving the site.

Staff to please prioritise either driving or walking to a local test centre to take a PCR test, as the result is usually returned very quickly. Postal PCR tests take a while to come through so should only be used as a last resort. We really need to try to stop the transference of Covid-19 and it is in the school community's best interest if the PCR result is known as quickly as possible.

Staff should inform the school of their absence in the usual way. If the PCR test unfortunately comes back as positive, staff should call their HR Manager as soon as possible. Staff need to follow NHS advice and stay at home to self-isolate for 10 days.

### **What happens if someone in the household tests positive and needs to self-isolate?**

As per Government guidance, if a person has been double vaccinated, there is no need for others in the household to self-isolate at home for 10 days.

If a family member becomes infected with Covid-19, staff should also take a PCR test and if negative, continue to come into work unless there are exceptional circumstances, in which case please contact their HR Manager to discuss. Staff are also requested to take a lateral flow test each day until the 10 day isolation period at home has elapsed.

### **Can pupils (who are displaying no symptoms of Covid-19) come into school if their parent or sibling has Covid-19 and is self-isolating?**

Yes. The Government is very clear that all pupils are entitled to their education and the advice is that pupils who have someone self-isolating in their household should continue to come into school as long as they are feeling well and showing no symptoms of Covid-19.

If a pupil is showing any signs of Covid-19 symptoms, they should take a PCR test and stay at home whilst waiting for their result. Families should inform the school of absences in the usual way.

**What happens with the “bubble” if a pupil or member of staff tests positive?**

If there is a positive case of Covid-19 within a “bubble”, NHS Track & Trace has the responsibility to notify all close contacts. The “bubble” will remain open for both pupils and staff. Staff will be asked to undertake a PCR test plus carry out daily lateral flow tests for the next 10 days. Staff and pupils should continue to come into school unless they show any symptoms of Covid-19.

**How will Parents’ Evening run this term? (Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September at Ellen Tinkham; Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September at Bidwell Brook)**

It would be preferable if Parents’ Evening could take place over Teams or via a phone call. Face-to-face visits into school are permitted if the family is new to the school and a visit has been requested.

**Can the class organise trips for groups of pupils?**

Through Evolve, teachers can request visits to outdoor venues ie local parks, open spaces, and the Outdoor Education team can book planned activities as per last term. Planned trips to indoor venues eg a visit to a local shop, must have a specific risk assessment in place and each request will be approved on a case-by-case basis only.

We will continue to review the situation as the term progresses.



**Nikki Burroughs**  
**Executive Head**