

Brine Leas School Risk Assessment (from 1st September 2021)

Assessment Completed by	Headteacher				Date	3rd th September 2021
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Probability	5	Very Likely	4	Likely	3	Quite possible	2	Possible	1	Unlikely
Severity	5	Catastrophic	4	Major	3	Moderate	2	Minor	1	Insignificant

Overall risk rating								
0-8	Low risk. No action required		9-15	Medium risk. Ensure adequate controls are in use		16-25	High risk. Stop and implement adequate control measures	

General Principles

Competence, approval, consultation, review and compliance

- This risk assessment has been undertaken by the Headteacher who is a competent person, holding the General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety (NEBOSH).
- The risk assessment will be approved by the Local Governing Board. It will be shared with every member of the school community via the school website (and email for staff). It will be sent to Trade Unions for consultation.
- The risk assessment shall be reviewed if there is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid; or there has been a significant change in the matters to which it relates; and in any case of a period not to exceed one calendar month.
- Appropriate monitoring and supervision will take place to ensure compliance.
- The latest Local Authority checklist has been used to ensure compliance.
- The HSEs risk document has been used to check for compliance.
- The latest [Operational Guidance for Schools](#) has been used in the assessment and planning process.

The basic principles of control for schools at the start of September 2021 is:

- 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 COVID-19.

General Principles

- Outbreak Management Plan

Good hygiene for everyone

Hand hygiene

- Frequent and thorough hand cleaning should now be regular practice as handwashing is one of the most important ways of controlling the spread of infection.
- We must continue to ensure that students clean their hands regularly and practise this ourselves. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser.
- This is particularly important:
 - before eating
 - before and after using the toilet
- Spitting and coughing at people is strictly not allowed would be recorded as a 'near-miss' reportable incident.
- Posters will reinforce the need to wash hands regularly and frequently.
- School leaders monitor the extent to which hand hygiene is taking place on a regular and frequent basis.

Respiratory hygiene

- Follow the catch-it, bin-it, kill-it approach as per the guidance.

Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

- Most staff in schools will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work.
- The [guidance on the use of PPE in education, childcare and children's social care settings](#) has been used to plan the use of PPE for COVID-19.
- A good stock of PPE is readily available and this will be maintained.
- Any person that wants to wear PPE will be allowed to do so, but in line with Government Guidance there is no requirement to wear PPE for COVID-19 in school.
- PPE will be used wherever exposure to substances requires the person to do so.

Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes.

Cleaning

General Principles

- An enhanced cleaning plan has been implemented which minimises the spread of infection and this complies with the advice contained in the advice from PHE <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>
- Surfaces that are frequently touched have been identified and are subject to an enhanced cleaning regime (door handles, push plates, handrails).
- Shared equipment is subject to a regular cleaning regime.
- Sufficient cleaning material/consumables will be maintained onsite by the cleaning supervisor.
- The Facilities Manager and SLT will inspect cleaning standards to ensure that a good standard of cleaning is maintained across the school.
- The school's cleaning team have been briefed to ensure that they know that they must pay particular attention to fixtures, fixings and surfaces that students/staff will touch throughout the day.
- In the event of a room being closed due to illness, the room will be deep-cleaned before re-opening.
- The Facilities Manager will ensure that the cleaning team have access to the appropriate PPE that may be required to complete their work safely.

Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.

When school is in operation, it is important to ensure it is well ventilated and that a comfortable teaching environment is maintained.

Opening external windows improves 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). This will be the standard operation of the rooms wherever possible. The need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature.

The [Health and Safety Executive guidance on air conditioning and ventilation during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) and [CIBSE COVID-19 advice](#) provides more information.

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

- All students will be offered two Lateral Flow Tests in the first week of term.
- All staff and students will be reminded of the need to test at home twice weekly and this is under review by the Government at the end of September. The supplies for this will be provided by school after receipt of the national/local deliveries.
- An Outbreak Management Plan has been created and is on the school website.

Managing positive cases

General Principles

The operational guidance for schools/settings outlines how they should manage positive cases or those with symptoms. Schools/settings should follow this guidance and ensure that anyone who has tested positive or who is displaying any symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend the setting and should be recorded in the register using the appropriate code i.e., 'X' for those who are absent due to COVID-19 but is not a confirmed positive case and 'I' if they are isolating following a positive PCR test. Further details on recording attendance can be found at [Recording attendance addendum](#).

Close contacts of positive cases

Contact tracing will be carried out by NHS Test and Trace and will be limited to those individuals who are specifically mentioned as close contacts by the positive case or their parents. Close contacts are no longer required to isolate if any of the following apply:

- they are fully vaccinated
- they are below the age of 18 years 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.

Fully vaccinated means that a person have been vaccinated with an MHRA approved COVID-19 vaccine in the UK, and at least 14 days have passed since receiving the recommended doses of that vaccine.

If a person feels they are a close contact and have not been contacted by Test and Trace, they can book a PCR test for themselves and can continue to attend the school/setting while awaiting the result if they meet the isolation exemption criteria. The only exception to this would be when an individual awaiting a PCR result normally works very closely with clinically vulnerable children who have not been vaccinated. Such cases should be discussed with the LA.

Close contacts who are exempt from isolation may also be advised by Test and Trace to consider other actions to reduce any potential for transmission. If a person reports to the school/setting that they have been given this advice, there will usually be nothing extra that they need to do apart from the actions listed in the Appendix 1, Advice on managing positive cases, although a risk assessment of any activities planned for such individuals might be useful.

School based contacts can continue to attend unless notified otherwise by Test and Trace and there is no expectation that the school/setting carries out any contact tracing. Personal details of staff or other students should not be passed to the positive case or their parents/carers, but the school/setting should carry out a risk assessment for any vulnerable staff or students.

Schools will report all positive cases to the COVID Education Team via the online form so that patterns of infections can be monitored across areas and resources and support can be appropriately deployed.

General Principles

We will seek Public Health advice if a student, student, child, or staff member is admitted to hospital with COVID-19. We will do this by contacting the COVID-19 Education team by phone or email. Hospitalisation could indicate increased severity of illness or a new variant of concern. Settings may be offered support in managing risk assessments and communicating with staff and parents.

Outbreak Management Plan

The Outbreak Management Plan is on the school website

Fire Procedures and Evacuation

- Fire procedures have been reviewed and revised where required.
- Staff and students will be briefed on any new evacuation procedures at the start of the term.
- Incident controller and fire marshals have been trained and briefed appropriately.
- Plans for fire evacuation drills are in place.
- A fire drill will be carried out at the start of this term.
- School will ensure that registers are readily available for evacuation purposes.

Mental health concerns

- Staff are encouraged to focus on their wellbeing.
- Line managers will be proactive in discussing wellbeing with the staff that they manage, including their workload.
- Staff briefings and training have included content on wellbeing.
- Staff have been signposted to useful websites and resources.
- The school has trained two Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA).
- Workload is being monitored by line managers.

Policies and Procedures

- All relevant policies have been revised to take account of government guidance on social distancing and COVID-19 and its implications for the school.
- Behaviour policies recognise that adverse experiences of lockdown and or lack of routine and regular attendance at school may lead to levels of disengagement, anxiety and behavioural responses setting reasonable and proportionate expectations of behaviour and make appropriate provision to support.
- Staff, students, parents and governors have been briefed accordingly.

General Principles

- The Board of Trustees, local governing bodies and Trust committees have approved revisions.
- Policies have been updated as appropriate and have been published.

Governance

- The Headteacher's report to governors includes content and updates on how the school is continuing to meet its statutory obligations in addition to covering the school's response to COVID-19.
- Regular dialogue with the LGB and Trust is in place.
- Minutes of meetings are reviewed to ensure that they accurately record governors' oversight and holding leaders to account for areas of statutory responsibility.
- The budget setting process is continuing to meet financial and audit requirements and will be approved by Trustees as appropriate.
- Recruitment is continuing to meet staffing requirements and structures will be approved by Trustees as appropriate.
- Social distancing requirements are being adhered to in recruitment processes and vetting checks are being undertaken in accordance with amended COVID guidance in line with KCSIE.
- Any new member of staff/volunteer must undergo relevant safeguarding induction.
- Admission appeal processes can continue in line with DfE guidance and revised regulations.
- COVID 19 risk is scrutinised termly by the appropriate risk group.
- LGB and Trust are overseeing the risk assessment process.
- Every 2-3 weeks the Headteacher speaks to the LGB Chair to update them on the planning and the current state of play.

Bereavement

- The school has access to trained staff who can deliver bereavement counselling and support.
- Support is requested from other organisations when necessary.
- The SENCO and Safeguarding leads have training in trauma.
- We have support from a counsellor who is also trained in bereavement support.

Communication to parents and stakeholders

- As part of the overall communications strategy parents are kept up to date with information, guidance and the school's expectations on a weekly basis using a range of communication tools.
- Parent newsletters are created to keep all informed.
- All stakeholders will be provided with guidance regarding the proposed mass testing system.
- Any policies were reviewed for the opening of the school have been be sent to all the relevant parties/staff.
- Reporting accidents and other incidents will be reported in line with RIDDOR regulations 2013.

General Principles

- Staff and parents will be informed of positive cases.

Guidance and Legislation

- All relevant guidance and legislation have been considered in the production of this risk assessment and some of the major documents are listed below:
 - [Schools COVID-19 Operational Guidance](#)
 - [Mass asymptomatic testing: schools and colleges](#)
 - [Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care](#)
 - [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings outside the home](#)

Local Context – Cheshire East Council

These are the most recent data from the Cheshire and Merseyside Directors of Public Health 7 and 14 day daily dashboard.

Using data from 20 August 2021, there have been:

1076 cases in the previous 7 days

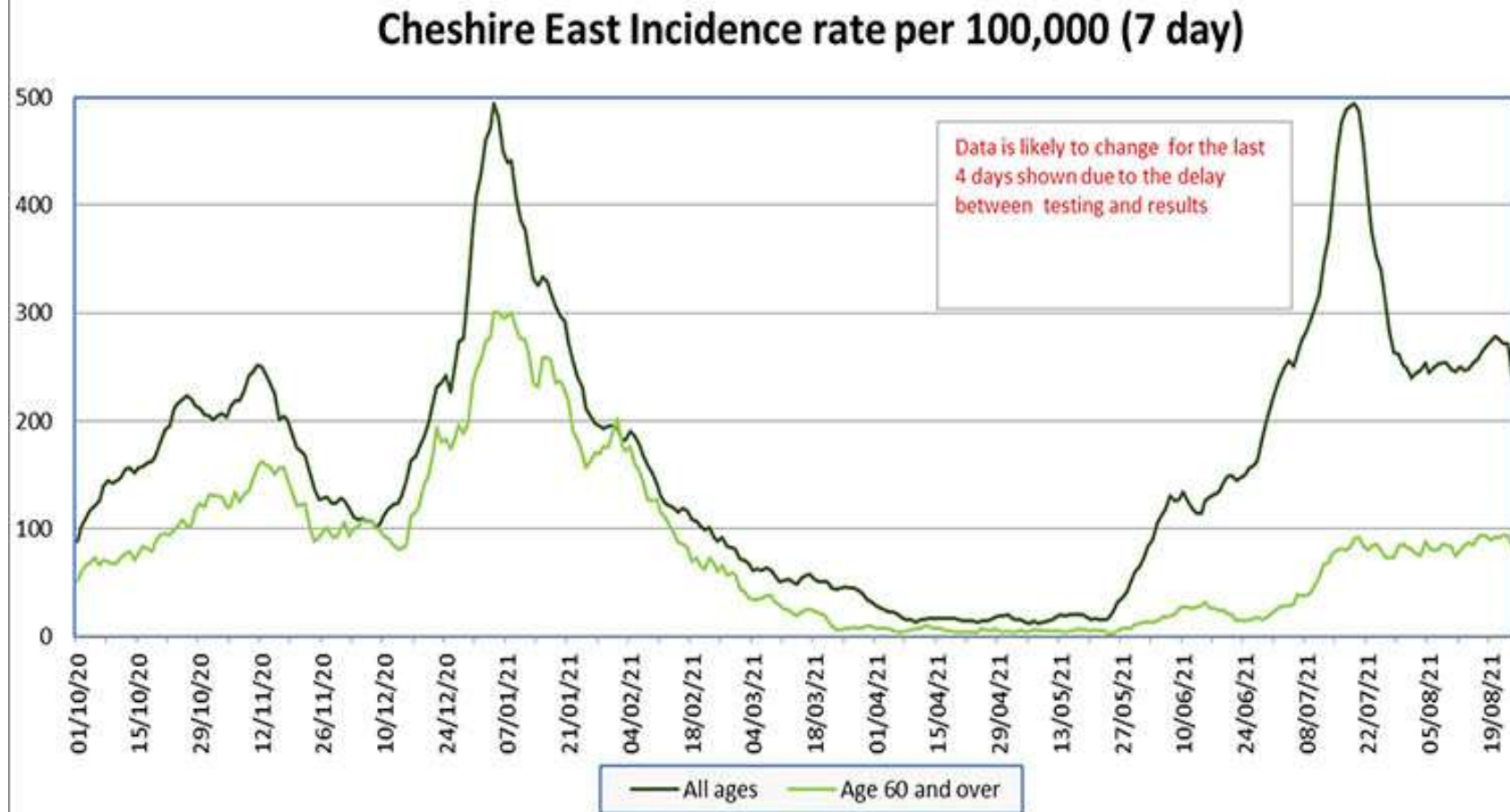
955 cases in the prior 7 days (up to 13 August)

278 cases per 100,000 population in the previous 7 days

327 cases in England per 100,000 in the previous 7 days

The current estimate for the R number in the North West is 0.9 – 1.1 (updated 20 August 2021). This means that, on average, 10 infected people will transmit the infection to 9 to 11 other people.

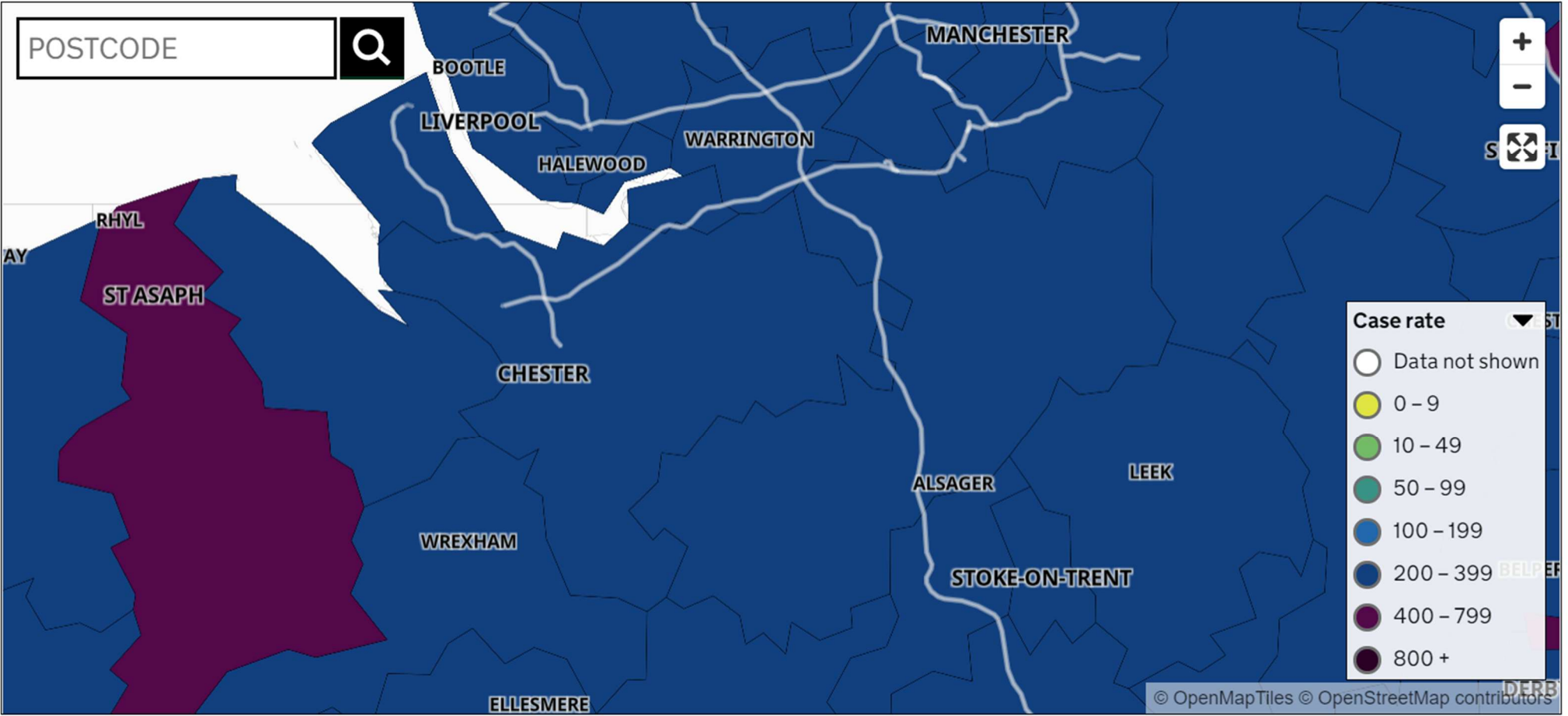
General Principles



Local Context – UK Coronavirus dashboard

Interactive map of cases

Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug



System of Control

We know that the predominant new variant of coronavirus (COVID-19) is more transmissible however, PHE advice remains that the way to control this virus is with the system of controls, even with the current new variants.

This is the set of actions you must take. They are grouped into 'prevention' and 'response to any infection'. If you follow the system of controls, you will effectively reduce risks in our setting and create an inherently safer environment. These additional measures will be reviewed in partnership with health experts to decide whether evidence suggests that these measures can be eased ahead of the summer term.

Prevention - we will always:

1. Minimise contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring they do not attend the school.
2. Ensure face coverings are used in recommended circumstances.
3. Ensure everyone is advised to clean their hands thoroughly and more often than usual.
4. Ensure good respiratory hygiene for everyone by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.
5. Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents.
6. Consider how to minimise contact across the site and maintain social distancing wherever possible.
7. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.

In specific circumstances:

8. Ensure individuals wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary.
9. Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing, where available.

Response to any infection - we will always:

10. Promote and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.
11. Manage and report confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community.
12. Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice

Schedule	Initial			Hazard/Operation Existing Control Measures	Symptomatic staff/students/visitors (not in school)	Residual			Further Controls
	Sev	Prob	Risk			Sev	Prob	Risk	
1.2	4	4	16		Advice, guidance, communication, checking, enforcement	4	2	8	No

- Parents will be instructed not to make their child attend school if they are symptomatic or have been instructed to isolate.
- Staff and visitors are instructed not to attend school if they are symptomatic or have been instructed to isolate.
- Parents and staff are advised to follow the advice of the NHS and 111.
- We will actively engage in the NHS Test and Trace program as per the guidance.

Schedule	Initial			Hazard/Operation Existing Control Measures	Symptomatic staff/students/visitors (in school)	Residual			Further Controls
	Sev	Prob	Risk			Sev	Prob	Risk	
1.3	4	4	16		Communication and instruction given to parents and students	4	2	8	No

- The Headteacher and/or SLT will need to be notified immediately.
- Symptomatic staff, students and visitors will be isolated and then sent home at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Cleaning and personal hygiene measures will be undertaken for people and areas that may have been contaminated by the person.
- A 'suspected coronavirus' letter will be sent home for parents.
- Parents have been instructed not to make their child attend school if they are symptomatic.
- Staff are instructed not to attend school if they are symptomatic.
- Parents are advised to follow the advice of the NHS and 111 and should isolate themselves as per the guidance from the NHS. We will actively engage in the NHS Test and Trace program as per the guidance.
- The school has a medical room and isolation room for the purpose of dealing with COVID-19 symptomatic staff and students in school.

Schedule	Initial			Hazard/Operation Existing Control Measures	Contractors	Residual			Further Controls
	Sev	Prob	Risk			Sev	Prob	Risk	
1.4	4	4	16		Risk assessments, visitors and contractors procedures	4	2	8	No

- All contractors' names and telephone numbers will be taken down for NHS Test and Trace.
- Contractors working onsite will have to provide their own hand sanitisers and PPE.
- Contractors arriving to complete work will contact site team or go to the main reception and wait to be directed to appropriate area.

Schedule	Initial			Hazard/Operation	Visitors	Residual			Further Controls
	Sev	Prob	Risk	Existing Control Measures		Sev	Prob	Risk	
1.5	4	4	16		Risk assessment	4	2	8	No

- If a visit can be arranged out of school hours, it should be.
- A record of all visitors and their contact numbers are obtained and retained for the purposes of Test and Trace procedures.
- Visitors will be asked to maintain social distancing from members of our community while on the school site.
- Non-essential deliveries and visitors to school are minimised.
- A hand sanitising station is available in the main students and visitor reception areas for all stakeholders to use on arrival.
- Where possible the school will instruct that all their deliveries are delivered before or after school. A note will be put on orders stating this. If a delivery should arrive reception will notify the site team immediately.
- For evacuation purposes, office staff will be required to make a note of all visitors coming into school.

Schedule	Initial			Hazard/Operation	General Operation	Residual			Further Controls
	Sev	Prob	Risk	Existing Control Measures		Sev	Prob	Risk	
2.1	4	4	16		PPE, sanitiser, handwashing, ventilation, cleaning.	4	2	8	No

- Each room has alcohol hand sanitiser dispensers fitted to the wall by the door and staff and students should be asked to use on every entry/exit to the room.
- Each room has opening windows and the windows will be used to provide extra ventilation.
- Students and staff have as much PPE provided as they feel comfortable with.
- Staff can collect as much PPE from the PPE stations as they need.
- Surfaces that are frequently touched have been identified and are subject to an enhanced cleaning regime (door handles, push plates, handrails, coat hooks, toilet doors).
- Any issues or non-compliance should be reported to the Headteacher (or other senior member of staff) immediately.
- Any activity that could increase significant exposure should be separately risk assessed (music, singing etc.)

Schedule	Initial			Hazard/Operation Existing Control Measures	Breaks and Lunchtimes Distancing, furniture layouts, staggered timings, training, signage	Residual			Further Controls
	Sev	Prob	Risk			Sev	Prob	Risk	
2.2	4	4	16			4	2	8	No

- Students are supervised and monitored by educational support staff and the pastoral team.
- Students wash or sanitise their hands before eating.
- Students will be encouraged to wash/sanitise their hands after activities and before they re-enter their classroom.
- Face coverings can be worn by any member of staff or student but are not mandatory
- Hand sanitising stations have been set up around the school.
- To allow for maximum ventilation in the kitchen, kitchen staff will ensure that their windows are fully open and that their extract system is on with the fan speeds set to full.
- To allow for maximum ventilation in the dining room, the kitchen staff will ensure that the windows are open in the dining room before, during and after each service.
- All staff/students using the bio readers will need to use the hand sanitiser that will be located next to the bio reader.

Schedule	Initial			Hazard/Operation Existing Control Measures	Workrooms, offices and other workspaces Layouts, reduced staffing, distancing, hygiene ventilation and PPE	Residual			Further Controls
	Sev	Prob	Risk			Sev	Prob	Risk	
2.5	4	4	16			4	2	8	No

- Correct ventilation, following guidelines should be adhered to.
- The cleaning regime takes account of these spaces.

Managing Cases and Outbreaks in Schools and Settings

Local Authority support for schools and settings

Cheshire East Council has worked closely with its schools/settings throughout the pandemic to provide as much support and advice as possible to Headteachers, Leadership Teams and Managers. As we move into the next phase of the Government's Roadmap, we will continue to provide effective support at the point when it is required by schools/settings in a manner which impacts as little as possible on their ability to provide high quality, face to face education for all children and young people. This guidance is based on national and regional guidance, with additional details provided by the Cheshire East Public Health.

Managing positive cases

The operational guidance for schools/settings outlines how they should manage positive cases or those with symptoms. Schools/settings should follow this guidance and ensure that anyone who has tested positive or who is displaying any symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend the setting and should be recorded in the register using the appropriate code i.e., 'X' for those who are absent due to COVID-19 but is not a confirmed positive case and 'I' if they are isolating following a positive PCR test. Further details on recording attendance can be found at [Recording attendance addendum](#).

Close contacts of positive cases

Contact tracing will be carried out by NHS Test and Trace and will be limited to those individuals who are specifically mentioned as close contacts by the positive case or their parents. Close contacts are no longer required to isolate if any of the following apply:

- they are fully vaccinated
- they are below the age of 18 years 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.

Fully vaccinated means that a person have been vaccinated with an MHRA approved COVID-19 vaccine in the UK, and at least 14 days have passed since receiving the recommended doses of that vaccine.

If a person feels they are a close contact and have not been contacted by Test and Trace, they can book a PCR test for themselves and can continue to attend the school/setting while awaiting the result if they meet the isolation exemption criteria. The only exception to this would be when an individual awaiting a PCR result normally works very closely with clinically vulnerable children who have not been vaccinated. Such cases should be discussed with the LA.

Close contacts who are exempt from isolation may also be advised by Test and Trace to consider other actions to reduce any potential for transmission. If a person reports to the school/setting that they have been given this advice, there will usually be nothing extra that they need to do apart from the actions listed in the Appendix 1, Advice on managing positive cases, although a risk assessment of any activities planned for such individuals might be useful.

School based contacts can continue to attend unless notified otherwise by Test and Trace and there is no expectation that the school/setting carries out any contact tracing. Personal details of staff or other students should not be passed to the positive case or their parents/carers, but the school/setting should carry out a risk assessment for any vulnerable staff or students.

Schools/settings are asked to report all positive cases to the COVID Education Team via the online form so that patterns of infections can be monitored across areas and resources and support can be appropriately deployed.

All settings should seek Public Health advice if a student, student, child, or staff member is admitted to hospital with COVID-19. They can do this by contacting the COVID-19 Education team by phone or email. Hospitalisation could indicate increased severity of illness or a new variant of concern. Settings may be offered support in managing risk assessments and communicating with staff and parents.

Extract from Actions for Schools during the Coronavirus Outbreak/Guidance for Full Opening Schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-fulloopening-schools>

As is usual practice, in an emergency, call 999 if someone is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Anyone with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms should not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms and any students who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home to self-isolate unless they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should arrange a test) or if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive (see below) or they have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace.

Everyone must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser after any contact with someone who is unwell. The area around the person with symptoms must be cleaned with normal household bleach after they have left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. See the COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance. Public Health England is clear that routinely taking the temperature of students is not recommended as this is an unreliable method for identifying coronavirus (COVID-19).

When should a setting contact the Local Authority and implement their Outbreak Management Plan (OMP)?

Schools/settings can request advice at any time, but will be contacted if there are multiple cases in the area which constitute an outbreak. At this time the school/setting should implement its Outbreak Management Plan, part of which will be a plan agreed with the COVID Education Team and Public Health about the appropriate actions to be taken.

Thresholds for implementation of the Outbreak Management Plan

The DfE Operational Guidance and Cheshire East Risk Assessment Checklist identify measures that all education settings should have in place to manage transmission of COVID-19 day to day. Settings will want to consider additional measures if their number of cases substantially increases. This is because it could indicate that transmission is happening in the setting. Settings can discuss concerns with the Education or Public Health Teams at any time but should always seek advice if the thresholds below are met:

- 5 individuals (children, students, students or staff), who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period, or
- 10% of a group of individuals (children, students, students or staff) who are likely to have mixed closely test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period

Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process

Schools must ensure they understand the NHS Test and Trace process and how to contact their local Public Health England health protection team. Schools must ensure that staff members and parents/carers understand that they will need to be ready and willing to:

- book a test if they are displaying symptoms. Staff and students must not come into the school if they have symptoms, and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in school. All children can be tested, including children under 5, but children aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit
- provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test and Trace
- Agree to be tested for 7 days in school following their last close contact with a positive case or self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19).

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. Tests can be booked online through the NHS testing and tracing for coronavirus website, or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet. Essential workers, which includes anyone involved in education or childcare, have priority access to testing. Staff can get a weekly test on school site.

The government will ensure that it is as easy as possible to get a test through a wide range of routes that are locally accessible, fast and convenient. We will release more details on new testing avenues as and when they become available and will work with schools so they understand what the quickest and easiest way is to get a test. By the autumn term, all schools will be provided with a small number of home testing kits that they can give directly to parents/carers collecting a child who has developed symptoms at school, or staff who have developed symptoms at school, where they think providing one will significantly increase the likelihood of them getting tested. Advice will be provided alongside these kits.

Schools should ask parents and staff to inform them immediately of the results of a test:

- if someone tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating. They could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of their household can stop self-isolating.
- if someone tests positive, they should follow the ‘stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection’ and must continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste. This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. The 10-day period starts from the day when they first became ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 10 days.

Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community

Schools must take swift action when they become aware that someone who has attended has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). Schools should contact the local health protection team. This team will also contact schools directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) attended the school – as identified by NHS Test and Trace.

The health protection team will carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the person during the period that they were infectious, and ensure they are asked to self-isolate or agree to be tested for 7 days following their last contact with a positive case.

The health protection team will work with schools in this situation to guide them through the actions they need to take. Based on the advice from the health protection team, schools must send home those people who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive, advising them to self-isolate for 10 days since they were last in close contact with that person when they were infectious or agree to be tested for 7 days following their last contact with a positive case. Close contact means:

- direct close contacts - face to face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin)
- proximity contacts - extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

The health protection team will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home/tested. To support them in doing so, we keep a record of students and staff in each group, and any close contact that takes places between children and staff in different groups (see section 5 of system of control for more on grouping students). This should be a proportionate recording process. Schools do not need to ask students to record everyone they have spent time with each day or ask staff to keep definitive records in a way that is overly burdensome.

A template letter will be provided to schools, on the advice of the health protection team, to send to parents and staff if needed. Schools must not share the names or details of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) unless essential to protect others. Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the child, young person or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms. If someone in a class or group that has been asked to self isolate develops symptoms themselves within their 10-day isolation period they should follow 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection'. They should get a test, and:

- if the test delivers a negative result, they must remain in isolation for the remainder of the 10-day isolation period. This is because they could still develop the coronavirus (COVID-19) within the remaining days.
- if the test result is positive, they should inform their setting immediately, and must isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms (which could mean the self-isolation ends before or after the original 10-day isolation period). Their household should self-isolate for at least 10 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms, following 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection'

Schools should not request evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation. Further guidance is available on testing and tracing for coronavirus (COVID-19).