

31<sup>st</sup> August 2021

### **Changes to Contact Tracing in Schools**

Dear Parent / Carer

In preparation for the return to the Academy next week, I am writing to confirm the changes to contact tracing in education settings and the current position on the use of face coverings. One of the key changes for our school at this step of the roadmap is that education settings are no longer conducting routine contact tracing. As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace now work with either the positive case – or in the case of children – the parents, carers or guardian of the positive case, to identify close contacts.

NHS Test and Trace already manages the contact tracing process for the rest of society – including children who have recorded a positive PCR test – and has expertise in supporting people to identify close contacts.

This letter sets out in more detail below how the process works and what you need to do if your child tests positive for COVID-19. It is particularly important that the academy is kept informed so that remote learning can be implemented for your child if they are absent from the academy due to COVID-19 reasons.

#### **Being symptomatic and/or taking tests**

1. If your child has Covid-19 symptoms, they should self-isolate and you should inform Airedale Academy either by ringing reception or by using [covid@airedaleacademy.com](mailto:covid@airedaleacademy.com) - you should immediately order a PCR test for them. If the PCR result is negative, they can stop self-isolating (unless instructed to self-isolate for other reasons). If the PCR result is positive, they must self-isolate until 10 days after the onset of symptoms.
  
2. If your child has a positive result from a lateral flow device (LFD) test, they should self-isolate and you should inform the academy. You should immediately order a confirmatory PCR test. If the confirmatory test is taken within two days and the result is negative, they can stop self-isolating and return to school (unless instructed to self-isolate for other reasons). If the confirmatory PCR test is positive (or is taken more than two days after the LFD), they must self-isolate until 10 days after the LFD test.

PCR tests can be booked online through the [NHS Test and Trace website](#) or by calling 119.

3. PCR test results will be recorded with NHS Test and Trace automatically, but you should also communicate the result to the academy.

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### Contact tracing

4. If your child has a positive PCR test result, NHS Test and Trace will contact you, using the details you registered when ordering the PCR test. You and/or your child will be asked a series of specific questions designed to identify who your child has been in close contact with. Being in the academy with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 will not necessarily mean a person is identified as a close contact.
5. You will be asked to provide the contact details (if you know them) of anyone who has been identified as a close contact. NHS Test and Trace will then get in touch with these close contacts and provide appropriate instructions or advice (see below).

### Self-isolation and/or testing of close contacts

6. Individuals are no longer 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, if 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

Instead they 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. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so. There is no requirement to self-isolate whilst awaiting the PCR test result but if a positive result is returned, they should self-isolate and not attend their academy.

\*Children aged under 18 years and 6 months, who usually attend school and have been identified as a close contact, should continue to attend school as normal, unless they develop symptoms or return a positive PCR test result.

7. If none of the above criteria in number 6 apply, the individual will still be required to self-isolate, in accordance with the current government guidance - [when to self-isolate and what to do](#)

### Face Coverings

The government no longer advises that face coverings should be worn by students and staff, either in classrooms or communal areas. I recognise that this change may cause some anxiety to some parents

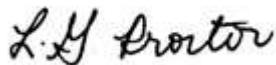
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/ carers and their child(ren) and have therefore made the decision that it will be personal choice as to whether students wear a mask on site for the month of September. This situation will be continually reviewed. However, until further notice, it is still expected and recommended that face coverings are worn when travelling on public or dedicated school transport.

I hope this letter clarifies the changes and we look forward to welcoming back all of our students in what we hope will be a more settled year with less disruption due to the pandemic. We remain committed in providing our children and young people with an outstanding education experience, delivered by passionate staff who genuinely want to make a difference to their lives.

We recognise how difficult the past 18 months have been and the sacrifices that all families, education and childcare settings have had to make. This has been an enormously challenging time for everyone and we would like to take the opportunity to thank you for everything you have done.

Yours faithfully



**Miss L Proctor**  
**Principal**

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