

05 November 2020



Dear Parent

Education Settings: New National Restrictions from 5 November 2020

While it feels dispiriting that the COVID-19 situation in England has led to the need for a further lockdown period from today, we are pleased that Springfield School is able to remain open for our young people. Attending school is essential for children's education and for their wellbeing; and despite the many logistical and other challenges facing all schools at the moment, we are working hard to provide as safe and calm a learning environment as we can for our pupils during these problematic times.

Late yesterday afternoon the Government published some guidance for education settings for the period of new national restrictions from 5 November, pertinent elements of which I will summarise below for your information.

Risk - The risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school. For the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in the classroom far outweigh the low risk from coronavirus (COVID-19). The school continues to implement the system of controls set out in Government guidance which put in place proportionate protective measures for pupils and staff.

Face coverings – From today the Government is stipulating that in schools where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, **face coverings should be worn** by adults and pupils when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. As you know, Springfield introduced this additional protective measure at the start of the week and we thank all members of the community for their support with effecting this change.

We ask for parents' ongoing support with ensuring that their child brings a face mask with them to school each day (with a sealable plastic bag in which to store it) and takes care to wear it correctly. Pupils are asked to wear their face mask in communal areas including the canteen queue, corridors and in the halls during 'wet break'. (Face coverings can have a negative impact on learning and teaching and so are not to be worn in classrooms or other teaching spaces.) The school will maintain a contingency supply of disposable face masks that can be given to pupils who do not bring one to school; however, kindly note that with effect from 10 November there will be a nominal £1 charge issued for these to parents via the School Gateway, so please do remind your child to bring their own to school! Please note that young people aged 11 and over must also wear a face covering on public transport.

Clinically extremely vulnerable children - Most children originally identified as clinically extremely vulnerable no longer need to follow original shielding advice. We advise parents to speak to their child's GP or specialist clinician if they have not already done so, to understand whether their child should still be classed as clinically extremely vulnerable. Those children whose doctors have confirmed they are still clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend education whilst the national restrictions are in place. Children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are not clinically extremely vulnerable

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themselves, should still attend education. The Government has advised that parents of clinically extremely vulnerable children will be receiving a letter shortly confirming this advice.

Exams - The Prime Minister and Education Secretary have stated that exams will go ahead next summer; GCSEs will be held 3 weeks later to help address the disruption caused by the pandemic.

Children's Social Care - Social care provision will continue as it has been to protect and support the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people for the duration of the national restrictions.

System of controls – Essential measures at school continue, including:

- a requirement that people who are ill with COVID-19/symptoms stay at home
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene
- enhanced cleaning and ventilation arrangements
- engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- systems to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible e.g. keeping children in year group 'bubbles', staggered break times and start/end times to the school day

COVID-19 symptoms - Regrettably, cases of COVID-19 are increasing nationally and locally and families will be aware that local secondary schools, including Springfield, are now reporting some cases. It is important that pupils do not come to school should they have any COVID-19 symptoms or have tested positive in *at least* the last 10 days. The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- high temperature
- new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

If any pupil (or adult) in the school develops COVID-19 symptom(s) during the school day they will be sent home; parents should follow the advice on self-isolation for their child (and household) and arrange for their child to have a test.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

Please inform the school immediately should your child receive a positive test for COVID-19 or need to self-isolate. Any pupil who needs to self-isolate should follow the advice regarding remote learning on the school website.

<https://springfield.uk.net/index.php/learning/remote-learning>



Public Health England (PHE) – If a pupil (or staff member) who has attended school tests positive for COVID-19, then the school immediately contacts PHE who determine the action that should be taken based on the latest public health advice. This may involve sending ‘close contacts’ home to self-isolate as a precautionary measure. (Kindly note that the school will contact directly by telephone and email the parents of any pupil who needs to self-isolate in such a circumstance.) In some cases, health protection teams may recommend that a larger number of other pupils self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps a teaching group, year group or even the whole site.

While schools are open we recognise that restrictions apply elsewhere which pupils must follow. When not at school pupils should be at home unless conducting an essential activity. They should not be generally meeting friends socially or mixing in other households as explained in Government guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november>

We hope that the new measures prove to be effective and look forward to a time when they are no longer needed.

Take care and kind regards

Ms S F Spivey
CEO, Headteacher