

## HEALTH PROTECTION TEAM

### MITIGATION MEASURES & CONTINGENCY PLANNING

#### OVERVIEW

The following document outlines additional guidance to support implementation of enhanced Covid-19 mitigation measures for Schools and Early Years settings, where appropriate following a clinical risk assessment in conjunction with the Lincolnshire Health Protection Team. It is intended as an additional information resource to be used alongside:

[Contingency framework: education and childcare settings](#)

[Schools COVID-19 operational guidance](#)

[Actions for early years and childcare providers during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

[Actions for FE colleges and providers during the coronavirus outbreak](#)

[Rapid asymptomatic testing in specialist settings](#)

It is recommended that any additional measures are only introduced after discussion with Lincolnshire Health Protection Team or Department for Education (DfE).

#### USEFUL CONTACTS

##### 1. Lincolnshire City Council

- a. Public health team for all Covid-19 questions or queries:  
[Healthprotectionteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:Healthprotectionteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk) or Tel: 01522 552993
- b. Education team for all non Covid-19 questions or queries:  
[educationteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:educationteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

##### 2. Public Health England: [phe.crc.eastmidlands@phe.gov.uk](mailto:phe.crc.eastmidlands@phe.gov.uk) or Tel: 03442 254 524

- a. For out of hours guidance and covid-related support;
- b. For out of hours escalation to the Lincolnshire Health Protection Team for enhanced local support in complex situations.

##### 3. Department for Education

- a. For advice or information on Covid-19 issues:  
[dfc.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:dfc.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk) or Tel: 0800 046 8687

#### WHEN TO USE THIS GUIDANCE

You should refer to this guidance alongside your settings own contingency plans to support decision-making and management of positive cases in your setting. The guidance covers the following topics:

- Measures to follow all of the time;
- Enhanced measures for multiple cases;
- How to establish whether cases are linked within your setting;
- Dealing with multiple clusters of linked cases within your setting;
- Supporting Resources.

## MEASURES TO FOLLOW ALL OF THE TIME



- Emphasise good hand washing technique – sanitising gel should only be used if there is no alternative.
- Washing hands with soap and water is better at reducing transmission of Covid-19 but also reduces the risk of spreading other infectious diseases such as sickness, diarrhoea, colds or flu.



- Wear face coverings on school transport (secondary schools).

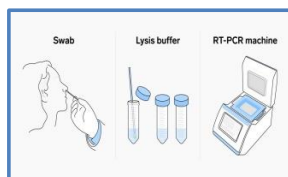


- Comprehensive information on the HSE website.
- Keep windows open where possible – including just top windows when the weather gets colder.
- Purge rooms during break times when pupils are not there or staff rooms during lesson times when staff are not there – open all doors and windows to let the air blow through.
- Where space and weather permits, carry out activities outdoors as much as possible.



- Strongly encourage all those eligible to carry out twice weekly LFD testing

- Strongly encourage all those who are eligible to get vaccinated.



- Emphasise messages regarding not coming to school if symptomatic and to get a PCR test.
- Emphasise message of isolating if tested positive or if a close contact and not: doubly vaccinated, under 18 years and 6 months or medically exempt from vaccination.
- Provide clear instructions on informing the school of a positive test.
- Request close contacts of a case to get a PCR test within two days of being in close contact and carrying out a further LFD test five days after being in close contact.

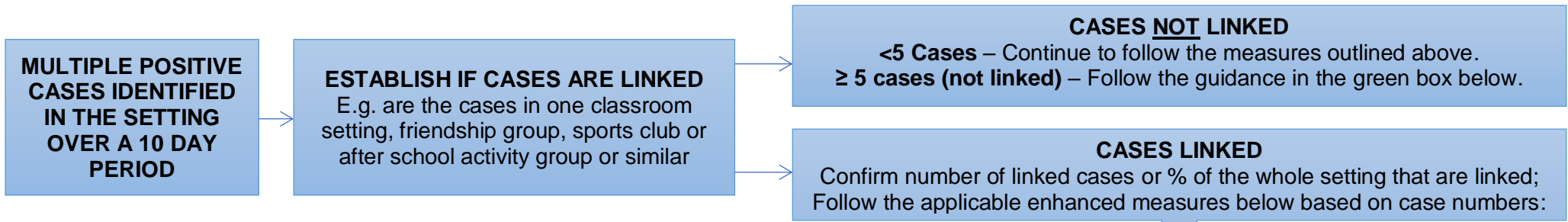


- Carry out regular cleaning, particularly of common touch points or busy areas.

Once we are working with the HEALTH PROTECTION TEAM all advice and instruction for action will be through them as part of their management plan for us as a school. Their actions may alter dependent upon the situation in our school at the time. They clearly instruct us NOT to follow any other actions than those provided by them during the meeting / call.

## ENHANCED MEASURES FOR MULTIPLE CASES

Please note that the following measures apply to all settings except special schools and boarding schools, who should contact Lincolnshire Health Protection Team for immediate support if 2 or more cases identified.



**GREEN: LESS THAN FIVE CASES THAT ARE LINKED IN A SETTING OVER A 10 DAY PERIOD OR MORE THAN FIVE CASES THAT ARE NOT LINKED IN A SETTING**

Ensure all cases isolate at home for 10 days from first symptom or positive result whichever is the earliest.

Ask close contacts of a case to do a PCR test (they do not need to leave school to do this and do not need to isolate while waiting results if they have no symptoms) or an LFD if unable to access the PCR test.

Close contacts are those who have sat closest to the case (e.g. at the same table) within the classroom or indoors break area/staff room or staff who may have worked within 1 metre of the case for more than 1 minute.

Ask close contacts to stay at home if they have symptoms and get another PCR even if the first was negative.

Children who are 4 and under are advised not to do a PCR test unless the positive case was someone in their own household.

Ask close contacts to do a further LFD on day five of their close contact with the case (or as near as possible to day five).

Ask students to sit in the same place every day and for each of their classes if they go to separate classrooms during the day so that wherever possible they are sitting next to the same people when they share the same classes.

## YELLOW: 5 – 10 CASES OR 10% OF THE WHOLE SETTING THAT ARE LINKED IN THE SETTING OVER A 10 DAY PERIOD

### In addition to previous measures:

Inform Lincolnshire Public Health if not already aware ([healthprotectionteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:healthprotectionteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk))

- **If cases are linked across classroom settings**
  - Increase cleaning of common touch points such as toilets etc.
  - Where possible keep students within the same classroom setting (primary school) to reduce mixing with other classes.
  - Where possible ensure students sit next to the same students in all classes including form and other subject classes (secondary school).
  - Where possible arrange seating so that students are sitting in pairs, facing one direction only and sit next to the same student.
  - Explore other potential areas of mixing and, where possible, introduce measures to prevent as much mixing as possible e.g. virtual assemblies.
  
- **If cases are linked within one classroom setting:**
  - Ask all students within the classroom setting to have a PCR test.
  - Ask all students to have a further LFD five days after their close contact.
  - Restrict where possible all mixing between this class and other classes including at break times.
  - Where possible restrict the affected class to one toilet block and increase cleaning.
  - Where possible create additional space between tables, ask students to sit in pairs and facing forwards; keep to the same seating arrangements.
  - For an agreed temporary period, consider restricting school trips or outings, open days or performances for this class or ask students/staff to provide a negative LFD beforehand particularly those which may be more risk such as indoor sports or singing clubs.
  - For an agreed temporary period, consider restricting access to after school clubs or activities.
  - Consider carrying out twice weekly on site LFD testing for this one class for a period of two weeks (secondary school).
  - Discuss with public health regarding a temporary introduction of face coverings – initially in communal areas only (secondary schools).
  - Consider one off enhanced cleaning.
  
- **For cases linked within the same friendship/sporting/after school group**
  - Identify close contacts and ask them to have a PCR test
  - Ask all close contacts to have a further LFD five days after contact.
  - Ask all contacts within a friendship group to have a PCR test and a follow up LFD five days after close contact.
  - For indoor sports activities or singing clubs consider asking the whole team to have a PCR test (depending on the sport and nature of activity – for example high exertion activity within a confined space is a higher risk and therefore all club members should test) and a follow up LFD five days after close contact.

**AMBER: 11 – 20 CASES OR 20% OF THE WHOLE SETTING THAT ARE LINKED IN THE SETTING OVER A 10 DAY PERIOD**

**At this stage an outbreak control meeting maybe considered for discussions regarding potential measures. This would involve the school, Lincolnshire Health Protection Team, Public Health England and DfE (if required). In addition to previous measure in Green and Yellow above, additional measures could include:**

- **If cases are linked across classroom settings**
  - Recommendation for testing across the affected classrooms.
  - Restricting mixing between affected classroom settings and other classes
  - Recommend twice weekly on-site LFD testing for a limited period of time (secondary schools).
  - Staggering break and lunch times to reduce mixing with other classes
  - Consider temporary face coverings for communal areas (secondary schools).
  - Consider temporary face coverings in classrooms (secondary schools).
- **If cases are linked within one classroom setting**
  - Whole class supervised testing (surge testing).
  - Temporary closure of classroom for home based online learning
- **If cases are linked within one friendship group/sports club**
  - Whole group/club testing
  - Temporary suspension of club/activity for two weeks in the first instance

**RED: 21+ CASES OR 30% OR MORE OF THE WHOLE SETTING THAT ARE LINKED IN THE SETTING OVER A 10 DAY PERIOD**

**At this stage an outbreak control meeting will be called for discussions regarding potential additional measures. This would involve the school, Lincolnshire Health Protection Team, Public Health England and DfE (if required). In addition to previous measure in Green, Yellow, and Amber above, additional measures could include:**

- Recommence twice weekly on-site LFD testing for a limited period of time (secondary schools).
- Consider testing across the whole setting.
- Recommend temporary face coverings for communal areas (secondary schools).
- Recommend temporary face coverings in classrooms (secondary schools).
- Recommend restriction of trips, open days or performances.
- Recommend restricted access to school premises for after school clubs or activities.
- Recommend restriction on external visitors, including parents (unless for safeguarding reasons)

## HOW TO ESTABLISH WHETHER CASES ARE LINKED WITHIN YOUR SETTING

The Lincolnshire Health Protection Team will help with this process so please get in touch with us via [healthprotectionteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:healthprotectionteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk) if you have any questions or haven't heard already from public health.

- The following would not be considered as linked within a setting:
  - Positive siblings or staff/students from the same family (though note that this should not be ignored/ discounted if there is a wider outbreak as it may be a potential route of transmission across classes/year groups).
  - Students or staff who have tested positive but who have not been school for at least seven days before onset of symptoms or date of positive test (whichever is earliest).
  - Positive cases in different year groups or classes where there has been no close mixing between classes/year groups.
- The following examples would be considered as linked within the setting (not an exhaustive list):
  - Positive cases where cases have spent at least 1 minute less than 1 metre apart or at least 15 minutes 2 metres apart for example:
    - Sitting at the same table or mixing during class, break or lunch
    - Close 1:1 work with a student/teacher
    - Contact sports
    - Team indoor sports activity

## DEALING WITH MULTIPLE CLUSTERS OF LINKED CASES WITHIN YOUR SETTING

In line with the Contingency Framework, focus has shifted to a more targeted approach of implementing enhanced precautions where cases are linked within education settings via close mixing, instead of the broad-stroke measures such as immediate closure of a bubble or year group.

It is possible therefore that settings may experience two or more clusters of linked cases, which when deal with separately may or may not meet the thresholds for enhanced measures. The identification of separate clusters is an important part of the clinical risk assessment and the Health Protection Team will support you to establish whether clusters of cases are linked.

### Examples

#	Situation	Action Required
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 9 Form B – have 3 positive cases; they all sit near to each other.</li> <li>• Year 11 Form E – have 4 positive cases; they all play on the football team.</li> <li>• There is not a link between the cases in 9B and 7E.</li> </ul>	<p>The cluster of cases in 9B does not require enhanced mitigation.</p> <p>The cluster of cases in 7E does not require enhanced mitigation.</p> <p><b>However</b> as there are 7 cases in total, the setting is recommended to follow the GREEN mitigation outlined above.</p>

2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 3 Form A – have 2 positive cases; they sit next to each other.</li> <li>Year 3 Form B – have 3 positive cases; they play closely with the positive cases in 3A.</li> <li>Years 5 and 6 – have 1 positive case each</li> <li>There is not a link between the cases in year 3, year 5 or 6.</li> </ul>	<p>The cluster of cases in 3A is linked to the cluster in 3B and therefore meets the threshold for GREEN mitigation measures outlined above, <b>and should be managed as 1 cluster.</b></p> <p>The individual cases in years 5 and 6 do not require enhanced mitigation.</p>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 8 Form D – have 6 positive cases; they sit near each other in classes.</li> <li>Year 10 Form A – have 12 positive cases; they sit near each other in classes.</li> <li>There is not a link between the cases in 8D and 10A</li> </ul>	<p>The cluster of cases in 8D meets the threshold for YELLOW mitigation measures outlined above.</p> <p>The cluster of cases in 10A meets the threshold for AMBER mitigation measures outlined above.</p> <p><b>The two separate clusters of cases should be managed separately where possible.</b></p>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEND Setting – has 2 positive cases in the setting.</li> </ul>	<p>Mitigation for SEND settings will be bespoke and tailored following a clinical risk assessment, therefore the above enhanced mitigation thresholds do not apply.</p> <p><b>Notify the Lincolnshire Health Protection Team for 2 or more cases.</b></p>

## SUPPORTING RESOURCES

In the event that Amber or Red mitigation measures need to be implemented, the Health Protection Team may provide additional supportive resources, which will be determined on a case by case basis and may include:

- Letter to Parents/ Carers from the Director of Public Health (DPH) to support PCR testing of close contacts;
- Letter to Parents/ Carers from the DPH to support temporary recommendation for use of face coverings in certain situations (secondary schools only);
- Deployment of DPH resources to support on-site/ surge testing;
- Regular monitoring and review of case numbers with HPT clinicians;
- Dedicated out-of-hours contact point for urgent enquiries, such as situations where service provision may be impacted due to loss of staff, or if considering stopping face-to-face teaching for parts/ all of the setting.