

Horizon Community College Outbreak Plan

Introduction

This plan is based on the 'Contingency framework for managing local outbreaks of COVID-19' and the 'Schools COVID-19 guidance' (17th August 2021), published by the Department for Education (DfE). The measures stated in this plan complement those identified in the Horizon Community College COVID-19 risk assessment (updated 1st September 2021).

Aim

To ensure that Horizon Community College continues to provide high quality education whilst providing a safe working and learning environment for staff and students in the event of:

- a COVID-19 outbreak within the college
- If COVID-19 infection rates in the community are extremely high, and other measures have failed to reduce transmission
- As part of a package of measures responding to a 'variant of concern' (VoC)

Implementation of measures will be in response to recommendations provided by the local authority (LA), Public Health England (PHE) health protection team or the national government.

Responding to an 'Outbreak'

The DfE contingency framework states that advice must be sought from Public Health England when either:

- 5 students or staff who are likely to have mixed closely test positive for COVID-19 within a 10 day period, or
- 10% of students or staff who are likely to have mixed closely test positive for COVID-19 within a 10 day period (whichever comes first).

Close mixing could include:

- Form groups or subject classes
- Friendship groups mixing at breaktimes
- Sports teams or extra-curricular activity groups

If it is agreed that there is an outbreak in the college, then advice will be sought from the LA and PHE to inform decisions in the following areas:

- Testing
- Prevention and Control within the building
- Attendance Restrictions

Decisions as to which stage of measures that are implemented in each of these areas is to be taken by the College Outbreak Response Group (ORG) comprising of the college Principals Team, Director of Human Resources (Assistant Principal) and the Assistant Principals for Support Staff

The following pages explain the measures available to the college to respond to an outbreak situation.

Testing

In College

If the college is required to introduce whole college lateral flow testing (LFT):

- The Activity Hall will be used as the base for LFT;
- Consent for LFT will be requested from parents/carers of all students via ParentMail;
- Year groups will be tested twice weekly, the priority for testing being as follows:
 - Mondays and Thursdays Year 11, Year 10 and Year 7;
 - Tuesdays and Fridays Year 8 and Year 9.
 - Wednesdays will be used as contingency days for students who have missed their test days.
- Recording and reporting of the results of LFT for individual students will be in line with the government COVID-19 National Testing Programme 'How To Guide'
- On site LFT will continue until an outbreak is reduced to a threshold agreed in consultation with the local PHE team, at which point the college will continue to recommend twice weekly home testing for a period of time agreed with the LA.

During normal operations:

- DT05 will be the base for LFT;
- Any additional individuals or groups that require testing will be determined by the ORG;
- Recording and reporting of the results of LFT for individual students will be in line with the government COVID-19 National Testing Programme 'How To Guide'.

At Home

In the case of an outbreak or additional measures being implemented, outside of on-site lateral flow testing (LFT), the college will advise all staff and students to carry out twice-weekly lateral flow testing:

- Students and staff will be advised to continue lateral flow testing and recording their results with the NHS on Wednesday and Sunday evenings;
- Where provided by the government, test kits will be distributed to students and staff on Tuesdays on a fortnightly basis;
- Staff, parents/carers and students will receive weekly reminders to complete LFT for the duration of any measures implemented by the college.

Prevention and Control

Face Coverings

In the case of an outbreak or additional measures being implemented (for those who are not exempt from wearing them):

- Staff may be asked to wear a face covering when arriving at school and moving around in communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain. Those who car-share when travelling to and from college will be advised to wear a face-covering for the duration of the journey.
- Students may be asked to wear a face covering when arriving at school and moving around in communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain. Students on school bus services will be asked to wear a face covering for the duration of their journey to and from school. A record of students who are exempt from wearing a face covering will be collated and kept on file by the ORG for reference purposes for the duration of the outbreak.
- If the college is allowing external visitors to enter the building, then they will be asked to wear a face covering when arriving at school and moving around indoors in places where social distancing is difficult to maintain.

Shielding

The college will adhere to national guidance should there be a re-introduction of shielding, which would apply to those on the [shielded patient list](#).

Working in 'Bubbles'

The college may re-introduce 'bubbles' for each year group based on guidance or directives from the LA or PHE. Each year group bubble will be located as follows:

Year Group	Main location	Break and lunch location
7	9 block, 8.01 and 8.08	Canteen, staff entrance side of Heartspace
8	11 block, DT06, DT07, DT08, DT09 and DT10	Canteen, staff entrance side of Heartspace
9	10 block (excluding the DT areas)	Café area, student entrance side of Heartspace
10	7 block, PA06, PA07, PA08 and 10.9	Canteen, staff entrance side of Heartspace
11	8 block (excluding 8.01 and 8.08)	Café area, student entrance side of Heartspace

Bubbles will only be introduced as a last resort given the potential impact this will have on the wider curriculum, particularly in the case of subjects needing specialist equipment. Some specialist spaces, such as the PE block, ICT areas and some DT rooms may be shared by year groups, with hygiene measures implemented in line with the Operational Guidance.

Other measures in the case of an outbreak

Educational Visits

In the situation that an outbreak is isolated to a particular year group, this may not impact on a visit taking place if attendees are not considered to have been closely mixing with positive cases. However, decisions such as this would be taken on a case-by-case basis and with advice from the LA and PHE.

If close mixing has taken place between attendees and positive cases, this may mean attendance on the visit is prevented, or postponed to a later opportunity. Students who are self-isolating would not be able to attend any visits for the period of self-isolation.

For students in a year group where an outbreak is present, visits would be postponed/cancelled/held virtually to minimise/prevent risk of further infection.

The visit risk assessment would include any attendance restrictions set out by the ORG in consultation with the LA and PHE.

Open days

College open days would continue to be held in the case of an outbreak. These would be outside of the normal college day and only those not considered to be close contacts of positive cases would participate in the events. In the case of local or national restrictions, attendees may be asked to provide proof of a negative lateral flow test taken at most 48 hours before arrival.

Transition or taster days

The college may decide to cancel, postpone, or reduce the number of transition days for students joining Horizon Community College in the following September. This decision would be dependent on advice from the LA and PHE, or from national government.

As there would be no close mixing with students from other year groups in the building, Summer School days would still be offered to Y6 students joining Horizon Community College in the following September, as long as their current measures allow.

Parents coming into college

Wherever possible and practicable meetings with parents/carers would be held virtually via use of Zoom or SchoolCloud (for parent consultation evenings).

Events such as the college Options evening, Transition evenings and awards ceremonies will be recorded or held virtually as directed by the college ORG. Recordings will be shared via links from the college website and/or e-mails to attendees.

Live performances

Live performances will be recorded or held virtually as directed by the college ORG. Recordings will be shared via links from the college website and/or e-mails to attendees.

Additional guidance

Additional guidance can be found in the 'Policies and Reports' section of the college website, in particular the Remote Education, Teaching and Learning, Attendance and Behaviour and Standards policies, as well as the College COVID-19 Risk Assessment.

Attendance restrictions

Individuals

Individuals who are identified as close contacts of positive cases should only isolate if directed by NHS Test and Trace guidance. Students who are required to self-isolate and are well enough to work from home will access their lessons remotely, following the college Remote Learning Policy.

Class Groups/Year Group 'bubble' closures

The ORG, on advice from the LA and PHE, may need to close a class group or year group bubble in the event of an outbreak isolated to that group:

- Parents/carers will be contacted in advance of the bubble closure;
- Equipment loans will be offered to digitally disadvantaged students;
- All lessons will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams, to ensure access to a full curriculum;
- Vulnerable students and children of critical workers may be allowed to continue attending in person if recommendations allow;
- The re-opening of a bubble will be decided in consultation with the LA and PHE, and the appropriate date communicated with parents, students and staff.

Whole college

In the event that the LA/PHE recommends the introduction of a whole college closure to students, then:

- Parents/carers will be contacted in advance of the closure;
- Equipment loans will be offered to digitally disadvantaged students;
- All lessons will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams, to ensure access to a full curriculum;
- The re-opening of the college will be decided in consultation with the LA and PHE, and the appropriate date communicated with parents, students and staff.

Where the LA/PHE recommendations will allow, the priority for attendance in the building will be as follows:

1. Vulnerable students and children of critical workers
2. Year 11
3. Any other students due to take external exams this academic year
4. Year 7
5. Year 10
6. Year 8
7. Year 9

Further operational planning

Education and support for students at home

The college will continue to follow our Remote Learning policy. Essentially:

- Teachers will continue to use Microsoft Teams as the platform for offering remote lessons to those students recorded as an X code.
- If teachers are absent (but well enough to work) they will teach remotely from home, live to their classes via Microsoft Teams with support from a member of staff in the classroom to help facilitate the lesson.

The college will continue to provide Free School Meal vouchers for students eligible for benefits-related free school meals while they are not attending college because of COVID-19 isolation guidelines.

Where vulnerable students are absent due to self-isolation or a bubble/college closure, a member of their School Team, School Wellbeing Officer or Safeguarding Lead will:

- Contact the parent or carer to check-in on a student's well-being and address any needs as appropriate, ensuring any discussions are on the welfare of the student, in particular their ability to access remote learning and well-being support whilst absent.
- Keep in regular contact with the student directly to ensure remote learning is being accessed and that they feel supported whilst absent

Transport

Normal college services will continue to operate unless directed by SYPT or government restrictions. Students on a particular service may be advised to wear a face covering on a service if an outbreak is present in a year group.

Free School Meals

If, in the case of absence due to self-isolation or imposed attendance restrictions, the college will provide Free School Meals support in the form of food parcels or vouchers for students who are eligible.

Safeguarding

The college will review the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy to reflect the local restrictions and remains effective. DSL or their deputies will be on site should restrictions allow.

Communications

Measures being implemented (including duration) will be shared with stakeholders the day before implementation. Priority for communication will be as follows:

1. Between the college ORG – face-to-face
2. With the College Leadership Team – via e-mail for face-to-face
3. With the remainder of staff and the Governing body - via e-mail for face-to-face
4. Parents/carers – via ParentMail

5. Students – via e-mail