



Covid-19 Update Autumn term 2021

Following the letter that was sent out at the end of the summer term. I wanted to provide an update on the arrangements for the beginning of the Autumn term 2021. The Government is clear that SEN schools should be open, therefore all pupils and staff should attend their education setting.

You will have seen in the press that due to the high rates of COVID infection being seen currently, the Cornwall & Isles of Scilly, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay areas have been moved to an Enhanced Response Area (ERA) by central government. This will be in place for 5 weeks initially but will be reviewed after 4 weeks.

It is important to highlight that Trust Schools and Area Resource Bases will continue to operate and ensure that the wellbeing, health and safety of pupils and staff remains the priority.

To confirm Trust Schools and Area Resource Bases will;

- Continue to review and, where necessary, update risk assessments to support individual pupils and staff circumstances.
- Making sure the system of controls are followed to reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level, including engaging, where appropriate, a testing programme.
- Have a contingency plan in place for any local outbreaks or changes in restrictions.
- Communicating any changes in processes with parents, carers and staff.

To provide reassurance, I thought I would outline the approach that all Trusts Schools and Area Resource Bases will adopt from the beginning of the Autumn Term 2021;

- Minimise contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring they do not attend the setting.
- Although face coverings are not mandatory, they will be used in recommended circumstances for example communal areas.
- Ensure everyone is advised to clean their hands thoroughly and more often than usual.
- Ensure good respiratory hygiene for everyone by continuing to promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.
- Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents.
- Continuing to review and minimise where appropriate contact across the site and maintain social distancing wherever possible.
- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated and deploy carbon dioxide monitors when the Trust receives the allocation from the Government.

If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19 at any time, however mild, please isolate as a household and book a test for the person with symptoms (even if they have already taken a test). Symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- A new, continuous cough, and/or
- A temperature, and/or

- A loss of, or change to, sense of taste and/or smell.

You can book a test through <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119.

If the test is negative, your child can return to school/ARB setting once they are well and have been fever free (without the support of paracetamol or Calpol) for at least 24 hours.

If the test is positive only unvaccinated members of your household over the age of 18 years must self-isolate for 10 days from the date symptoms started. If other household members become unwell they need to extend their isolation period.

Those who are clinically extremely vulnerable should be supported to minimise their contact with other people in the household during this period, regardless of whether others have symptoms or not.

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19

Do

- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- Keep indoor spaces as well ventilated as possible – let the fresh air in, even if for a short period a day
- Participate in twice weekly LFD home testing following national guidelines. Test kits are available from schools and / or local pharmacists.

Further information is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, or they are worsening you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://111.nhs.uk/> or by phoning 111. **For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.**

Trust Schools and Area Resource Bases continue to liaise with Public Health England and to follow Government Guidance. **There is a lot of national information and communication messages which can be confusing and there is a lot of misinformation. It is important that if you are anxious or have any questions, concerns or queries, that you contact your school and the Headteacher will answer any questions, provide support and / or guidance.** School staff will provide regularly, and when required urgent updates should there be positive tests in schools/ARBS and the action that is being taken.

Please follow the usual procedures to report to school if your child will be absent.

Thank you for your ongoing support, patience and cooperation.

Yours sincerely



Guy Chappell
Director
The Special Partnership Trust