

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Year group closure as a result of a COVID incident

**We are required to protect the identity of the affected family, so we will not be disclosing any details.**

**Why has a whole year group 'or bubble' been told to isolate when there has only been 1 case?**

With any incidents of a positive test result Public Health England 'track and trace' will seek to find as many people that could have potentially been affected and ask them to self-isolate to stop the virus spreading further and to minimise health risk to the wider community. With this in mind, Public Health England advised us that the entire year group bubble should self-isolate as they have shared classrooms, resources and social spaces.

**I have a child in another year group do they need to self-isolate as well?**

The current guidance from Public Health England is that only those in the designated bubble need to isolate, all other children in the household should continue to attend their schools. It is advisable to make sure that there continues to be high levels of hand hygiene in the homes of those isolating. If the isolating child presents with symptoms then the entire household should isolate, and contact [www.nhs.co.uk](http://www.nhs.co.uk) for a COVID test.

**As a parent do I need to take time off work?**

It is down to individual families and households to make decisions about how long their child can be left at home unsupervised. If you have

concerns about your child being at home alone then it is advisable that they are supervised.

### **Why don't all the teachers and staff have to isolate?**

Specialist staff need to move between the student bubbles to deliver high standards of teaching. To keep staff safe, they maintain 2m social distancing wherever possible, and have worn face coverings in corridors when it has not been possible to social distance. We have limited contact with students' resources and materials and use hand sanitiser before and after handling exercise books. We also disinfect the student and teacher desk area after each lesson, and everyone uses hand sanitiser at the beginning of every lesson. These measures have meant that staff can continue to attend the school to deliver lessons.

### **I have other vulnerable people in the household, what should I do?**

Every household will have their own unique set of circumstances. We are not medically trained to give specific advice on individual medical matters. We advise that you speak to 111 or your GP, about your own personal circumstances if you have concerns.

### **How will my child receive their education?**

In the situation where the entire bubble has been required to self-isolate, we are able to deliver live lessons via Google Classroom and Zoom.

### **What else is the School doing to minimise risk?**

At this point we are not aware of any further contamination which has taken place at the School, and Public Health England have confirmed we have taken all appropriate steps.

As a School we are constantly looking at our practices and procedures, and making positive changes to minimise health risk. We will continue to keep our community updated with these modifications as they occur. All classrooms are cleaned at the end of each day, and tables wiped

down after each lesson. There are hand sanitiser stations outside each classroom and students are reminded of the measures they need to take on a regular basis, including hand washing and the wearing of face coverings in crowded areas.

### **How do I get a COVID19 test?**

There are issues with the availability of tests but parents do need to try and book. At the moment, people who turn up the Hospital Emergency Department or Seaton Barracks testing centre without an appointment will be turned away. Search 119 on Google and you will be directed to NHS information about testing.

### **What are COVID19 symptoms?**

Evidence to date has shown that children usually have much milder symptoms and they have tended to pick up the infection from home rather than from school. However, it remains extremely important that any child with symptoms of COVID19 stays away from school, to avoid the risk of spreading infection to others, including the more vulnerable. These symptoms are:

- **high temperature** – feeling hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **new, continuous cough** – coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different from normal

Recently, we have seen a number of children being referred for a Covid19 test in accordance with national guidance.

We are very aware that in Plymouth, as elsewhere, there have been delays in accessing tests. This is a national issue as laboratory capacity for analysing tests is being directed to areas in the country with the highest numbers of COVID-19 cases. Plymouth City Council and other

agencies are doing all they can to work with national agencies to increase the capacity available.

We understand how frustrating this can be, particularly with children returning to school and being asked to stay off school until they can get a COVID-19 test.

However, it is crucial that we keep our schools open, and continue to keep our children and communities safe.

We therefore ask that you continue to follow government guidance and keep your child at home if they have symptoms, and book a test as soon as you are able. You only need to get a test if your child has the symptoms listed above. If your child has these symptoms, it is really important that you do not send them to school. The test is best done in the first 5 days of having symptoms.