



Adult Social Care, Public Health and Hub Children Services

Date: 14 October 2021
Our Ref: STG/
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Re: Recommended controls to manage COVID-19 transmission

Dear Parent / Carer

We are writing to let you know that from Monday 18 October we are advising education settings in Walsall to consider re-introducing COVID-19 secure measures.

For primary (including infant and junior) and special schools this includes;

- Consider re-introducing class bubbles
- Limit staff cross overs
- Consider how you hold all school events e.g. assemblies
- Consider risk and benefit of external visitors
- All non-essential events where parents / carers visit schools are moved to virtual
- No all staff meetings
- Consider staggering lunch and start and finish times
- Wearing of face coverings in communal areas by school staff
- Ensure any visits out of school are to COVID-secure premises
- Consider other COVID-secure controls that were used in the last academic year
- Staff to test themselves for COVID-19 twice a week, and more frequently if they are specifically asked to do so
- Promote vaccination to staff not yet fully vaccinated and boosters as staff become eligible

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases continues to remain high in Walsall, with a gradual weekly increase during the past month. The majority of positive cases are currently in school aged children and young people.

We hope you will understand and support the need for caution at this time. We have taken this decision to ensure that we are providing both pupils and staff with a further layer of protection.

Your school will share any changes with you via their normal communication channels. As soon as the number of positive cases school reduces, these measures will be stepped down again.

How you can help

- To keep education and family life moving in Walsall, here are some practical things you can do:
Keep your child off school and book a PCR test if they have COVID symptoms - high temperature, continuous cough, loss or change to taste or smell) - regardless of how mild. Do not use a lateral flow test and instead book your PCR test online via www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or by calling 119.



- Carry out twice-weekly Lateral Flow Tests at home (children aged 12+ only).
- Book a PCR test for everyone in your household if one member tests positive
- Follow hands-face-space and fresh air. Try to meet outdoors where possible, or if indoors, open windows, wear a face covering in crowded places and wash your hands regularly.

Even if you have had your COVID-19 vaccinations, by making the above part of your routine, you will be helping your school community to continue doing the things they enjoy and help stop the virus spreading.

Whilst the risk of serious illness from COVID-19 is low for children and young people, it is important that we take proactive steps to reduce the spread of infection, bring cases down and minimise further disruption to education.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Kind regards,

Stephen Gunther
Director of Public Health

Sharon Kelly
Director Access and Inclusion

The infographic is a vertical poster with a blue header and a light blue body. The header contains the HM Government logo and the NHS logo. The main title is 'COVID-19 Response: Autumn 2021'. Below the title is a key message: 'The country is learning to live with COVID-19, and the main line of defence is vaccination.' This is followed by a sub-message: 'The following safer behaviours and actions are practical steps you can take to help protect yourself and others.' A central banner reads 'Safer behaviours and actions'. Below this are seven icons with corresponding text: 1. A syringe icon with 'Get vaccinated'. 2. An open window icon with 'Meeting outdoors is safer. If you meet indoors, let fresh air in'. 3. A face mask icon with 'Wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed settings where you come into contact with people you do not normally meet'. 4. A test tube icon with 'Get tested, and self isolate if required'. 5. A bed icon with 'Try to stay at home if you are unwell'. 6. A hand being washed under water icon with 'Wash your hands'. 7. A smartphone icon with 'Download and use the NHS COVID-19 App'. At the bottom, a blue button contains the text 'For more information, visit gov.uk'.

HM Government

NHS

COVID-19 Response: Autumn 2021

The country is learning to live with COVID-19, and the main line of defence is vaccination.

The following safer behaviours and actions are practical steps you can take to help protect yourself and others.

Safer behaviours and actions

- Get vaccinated
- Meeting outdoors is safer. If you meet indoors, let fresh air in
- Wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed settings where you come into contact with people you do not normally meet
- Get tested, and self isolate if required
- Try to stay at home if you are unwell
- Wash your hands
- Download and use the NHS COVID-19 App

For more information, visit gov.uk