



GUIDANCE FOR UET ACADEMIES – COVID-19

Updated 3.6.20

Plan, Prepare and Respond to Coronavirus – COVID-19

This interim guidance is based on what is currently known about the transmission and severity of COVID-19.

Sources of guidance from government:

DfE guidance to educational settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Department for Education coronavirus helpline

The Department for Education coronavirus helpline is available to answer questions about COVID-19 relating to education and children’s social care. Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

If you work in a school, please have your unique reference number (URN or UKPRN) available when calling the helpline

Please keep your GIAS contacts up to date

If you work in a school, please take this opportunity to review your contact information in Get Information About School (GIAS). To update your record, please go to the GIAS home page, “Sign in” using your “DfE Sign-in” credentials and select GIAS from your available services here: <https://www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk>

Public Health England

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

We are currently in a phase of preventing the spread of infection. DfE and PHE advice is:

Preventing spread of infection

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

There are general principles anyone can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- washing your hands often - with soap and water, or use alcohol sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport
 - UET Academy action: Ensure that soap is available at all times in bathrooms – check stocks with Head of Estates. Ensure that alcohol sanitiser is available on entry to site and classrooms used.
- covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin. See [Catch it, Bin it, Kill it](#)
 - UET Academy action: Ensure that tissues are available at all times in classrooms and staffrooms – check stocks with Head of Estates
- people who feel unwell should stay at home and should not attend work or any education or childcare setting
 - UET Academy action: Ensure that staff and students who report as feeling unwell with possible corona virus symptoms stay at home and seek advice by ringing 111. Seek a test via GOV.UK and then report back to UET/Academy with outcome– Inform Head of HR of any staff absence so that a register across the Trust can be kept to inform decision making
- pupils, students, staff and visitors should wash their hands:
 - before leaving home
 - on arrival at school
 - after using the toilet
 - after breaks and sporting activities
 - before food preparation
 - before eating any food, including snacks
 - before leaving school
- use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
 - UET Academy action: Ensure that PD lessons regularly reinforce this information and posters about the academies also advise visitors of expectations – check with Head of Estates for support with poster provision

If you are worried about symptoms of a child or colleague, [please call NHS 111](#). Do not go directly to other healthcare environments.

Face masks for the general public, pupils or students, or staff are not recommended to protect from infection, as there is no evidence of benefit from their use outside healthcare environments. **Anyone attending site wearing a facemask must remove it at the gate and place it in a plastic bag for stowing in their own belongings.**

People who have returned from another country by air, boat or train must self-isolate for 14 days. Anyone arriving from the Republic of Ireland, the Channel Islands, or the Isle of Man does not have to enter quarantine. This includes avoiding attending an education setting or work until 14 days after they return.

- **UET Academy action: Ensure that staff and students are advised of these expectations as part of communications updates to students, staff and parents. Ensure that students or staff who have been on foreign travel are advised of these expectations by telephone or email prior to their return to the academy.**

Guidance for academies which experience local spikes in COVID-19 infections identified in their community

To prepare for possible localised community transmission of COVID-19, the most important thing for our academies to do now is **plan and prepare**. As the global outbreak evolves, we should prepare for the possibility of community-level outbreaks. We want to **be ready** if COVID-19 does appear in our communities.

Key steps to take:

- **Review, update, and implement your Critical Incident Policy.** Ensure that communication cascades are up to date and that staff identified as having a role to play are up to date with expectations of their role. Consider identifying 'stand-in' staff should key postholders be absent.
 - Ensure the plan emphasizes common-sense preventive actions for students and staff. For example, emphasize actions such as staying home when sick; appropriately covering coughs and sneezes; cleaning frequently touched surfaces; and washing hands often.
 - Make use of Government PHE information posters and the use of your website and social media channels to regularly update advice.
 - Other health and education professional organizations may also have helpful resources your school can use or share.
 - Ensure handwashing strategies include washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- **Develop information-sharing systems with partners.**
 - Information-sharing systems can be used for day-to-day reporting (provide HR with information such as changes in absenteeism and update the CEO on staff and student numbers and related management implications).
 - Local health officials should be a key partner in information sharing. Use NHS 111 as a first point of contact and then respond to PHE or SCC direct contact as required.
- **Monitor and plan for absenteeism.**
 - Review the usual absenteeism patterns at your academy among both students and staff.
 - Alert local health officials about large increases in student and staff absenteeism, particularly if absences appear due to respiratory illnesses (like the common cold or the "flu," which have symptoms similar to symptoms of COVID-19).

- Review attendance and sick leave policies. Encourage students and staff to stay home when sick. Use flexibility, when possible, to allow staff to stay home to care for sick family members.
 - Discourage the use of perfect attendance awards and incentives.
 - Identify critical job functions and positions, and plan for alternative coverage by cross-training staff. Keep HR and the CEO informed of plans.
 - Determine what level of absenteeism will disrupt continuity of teaching and learning.

- **Establish procedures for students and staff who are sick at school.**
 - Establish procedures to ensure students and staff who become sick at school or arrive at school sick are sent home as soon as possible.
 - Keep sick students and staff separate from well students and staff until they can leave by establishing a designated isolation room.
 - Provide PPE to staff who support sick students or staff in the isolation room.
 - Provide training in the use of PPE to staff using it.
 - When a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus (COVID-19), they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. All staff and students will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19).
 - Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class/group within their childcare or education setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class/group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.
 - Remember that schools are not expected to screen students or staff to identify cases of COVID-19. The majority of respiratory illnesses are not COVID-19. If a community (or more specifically, a school) has cases of COVID-19, local health officials will help identify those individuals and will follow up on next steps.
 - Share resources with the academy community to help families understand when to keep children home.

- **Perform routine environmental cleaning. (Liaise with Head of Estates)**
 - Routinely clean frequently touched surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, countertops) with the cleaners typically used. Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label.
 - Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (e.g., keyboards, desks, remote controls) can be wiped down by students and staff before each use.

- **Create communications plans for use with the academy community.**
 - Include strategies for sharing information with staff, students, and their families.
 - Include information about steps being taken by the school or childcare facility to prepare, and how additional information will be shared.

- **Review continuity in teaching and learning**
 - Develop mechanisms to check on the quality and quantity of work set via paper support/IT/TEAMS to ensure that:
 - all students have access to appropriate and good quality learning resources and activities
 - introduce web sessions
 - teachers respond to work completed and identify next steps for progress
 - examination practice and preparation is prioritised for Y10 students via some face-to-face provision – no earlier than 15.6.20
 - Consider access for PP students and possible packs for students who will struggle to access IT
 - Consider who will co-ordinate making access to learning, communicating with parents and students about provision and direction of teaching and TA staff working from home – agree who will take over if this person becomes unwell

- **Review effectiveness of working from home**
 - Clarify with all staff what your expectations of working from home are. How do they 'log in' with you to indicate availability or sickness. How and when will you communicate with them during any closure?
 - Clarify your expectations of support staff teams (especially important will be technical teams working on IT -who will step in if IT staff become unwell and IT management becomes an issue?)
See further details in following section relating to IT continuity and support.

Guidance for schools with identified cases of COVID-19 in their community

If local health officials report that there are cases of COVID-19 in the community, schools may need to take additional steps in **response** to prevent spread in the school. The first step for schools in this situation is to talk with local health officials. The guidance provided here is based on current knowledge of COVID-19. As additional information becomes available about the virus, how it spreads, and how severe it is, this guidance may be updated. We may be asked to work closely with local health officials to determine a course of action for schools.

Determine if, when, and for how long your academy may need to be closed – this should be done in discussion with the CEO.

Current guidance suggests that full closure is not needed if a group has a member who develops COVID-19. Ensure that any group of students where a member is tested positive for COVID-19 self-isolate for 14 days. Any staff who came into contact with that group of students should do the same.

Temporarily closing an academy is a strategy to stop or slow the further spread of COVID-19 in communities. During school closure, we may stay open for staff members (unless ill) while students stay home. Keeping facilities open a) allows teachers to develop and deliver lessons and materials remotely, thus maintaining continuity of teaching and learning; and b) allows other staff members to continue to provide services and help with additional response efforts.

We will work in close collaboration and coordination with local health officials to make closure decisions. Schools are not expected to make decisions about closure or cancelling events on their own – liaise with the CEO and PHE. The nature of these actions (e.g., geographic scope, duration) may change as the local outbreak situation evolves.

If an ill student or staff member attended school prior to being confirmed as a COVID-19 case:

- **Local health officials may recommend temporary school closure if a student or staff member attended school prior to being confirmed as a COVID-19 case.** Local health officials' recommendations for the scope (e.g., a single school, a full district) and duration of school closures will be made on a case-by-case basis based on the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 and the specific cases in the impacted community.
- **Schools should work with the local health authorities and other relevant leadership to communicate the possible COVID-19 exposure.** This communication to the school community should align with the communication plan in the academy's Critical Incident Policy plan. In such a circumstance, it is critical to maintain confidentiality of the student or staff member as required by the Equalities Act.
- **If a student or staff member has been identified with COVID-19, school and Trust leaders should seek guidance from local health officials to determine when students and staff should return to schools and what additional steps are needed for the school community.** In addition, students and staff who are well but are taking care of or share a home with someone with a case of COVID-19 should follow instructions from local health officials to determine when to return to school.

If schools are closed, schools can consider the following steps:

- **Temporarily cancel extracurricular group activities and large events**
 - Cancel or postpone events such as after-school clubs, field trips, and sporting events.
- **Discourage students and staff from gathering or socializing anywhere**
 - Discourage gatherings at places like a friend's house, a favourite restaurant, or the local shopping centre.
- **Ensure continuity of education**
 - Review continuity plans, including plans for the continuity of teaching and learning. Implement e-learning plans, including digital and distance learning options as feasible and appropriate. Guidance documents on how to use Microsoft Teams for education in a remote setting have been drawn up and placed in the COVID-19 folder in the Management Centre of One Drive. Decide which of these you will communicate out. If you are less confident in using Teams then email solutions are advisable. Ensure that you communicate your e-learning plans to staff, students and parents. Liaise with Head of IT for further support where needed.
 - Students at NA who use loan devices should be considered for permission to take these devices home to work on.
 - Where you are using Microsoft Teams DSLs will still need to monitor Harassment Policy to ensure students are not breaching appropriate use and content. Who will do this if your DSL is sick – ensure that stand in staff are trained on this function.

- A guide has been added into the COVID-19 folder which gives guidance to staff on how to use the new Office Mobile Client to aid worksheet creation which has Office Lens integration. Staff would be able to download an App to their phone/ipad which can take a photo of a textbook page or worksheet and convert it into a word document. This can then be emailed or set in Microsoft Teams Assignments.
 - If you agree to staff using Microsoft Teams Webcam for lessons or recording a lesson for students to watch at any point you will need to ensure that staff understand the following protocols:
 - Attire must be professional – in common with staff code of conduct workwear
 - The background which the webcam will pick up should not be inappropriate or provide information which is personal. Blurring of the background is possible in Teams.
 - Determine, in consultation with DfE/Ofqual:
 - What arrangements will be for coming GCSE examinations
 - How to convert face-to-face lessons into online lessons and how to train teachers to do so
 - How to triage technical issues if faced with limited IT support and staff
 - How to encourage appropriate adult supervision while children are using distance learning approaches
 - How to deal with the potential lack of students' access to computers and the Internet at home.
- **Ensure continuity of meal programs**
 - Consider ways to distribute free school meals to students who are entitled to them. Liaise with Head of Estates for decisions with catering providers.
- **Ensure continuity of communication/access to IT**
 - Review and communicate how parents can keep in contact with the academy. You may have to close reception, who will monitor and answer email queries, who will send out mass communication notifications, can you do this remotely?
 - Schoolcomms (STBA) and Groupcall (NA & CHA) can be used to contact parents/staff during a closure via text etc – this can be provided at home with secure logins for those who are authorised. Identify to Head of IT who you wish to authorised – think of stand-ins too.
 - All but designated staff will be restricted to using our Microsoft environment – Remote Desktop access will be restricted – please ensure that you communicate to IT staff which you wish to have access. Our systems cannot cope with large numbers of staff logging in to this access so all but the most senior team and possibly senior pastoral staff should have this access.
 - Microsoft Teams can be used for mass communication, e.g. Newcastle Academy Staff Team. You might consider adding new channels to the teams regularly to help with topics of interest, such as COVID-19 responses, FAQs, etc. Consider identifying a communications team to lead on this.
 - Other than at STBA at present, all school communications for telephony are fully cloud based, so all staff with a phone listing in the directory can use the Software client on iOS or Andriod and make free calls to parents/staff/anywhere during the lockdown, and beyond. STBA is due to have this function enable in April – when Head of IT will send out guidance on its use to STBA staff. See the current guidance sheet in COVID-19 folder

- Consider instituting a well-being communication routine to keep in touch with all staff – to maintain morale, check on well-being and ensure that staff who may be vulnerable or isolated for any reason are supported.
- IT staff will use the Teams Shift app to provide a rota of cover during extended school closure so that they can share the burden and cover absences and maintain IT systems and operations.

- **Ensure Safe and Well Checks are maintained for vulnerable students**
 - Attend EDC have agreed to continue to make safe and well checks on vulnerable students – please ensure that you allocate a lead for maintaining this contact with Attend.

- **Ensure that you continue to monitor and respond to GDPR requirements**
 - If you suspect or are alerted to any data breaches please ensure that staff are aware to contact the Principal, the Data Protection Officer (Sophie Dutton-Johnson) and (if IT based) the Head of IT (John Dooley). Ensure that you also contact the CEO.