



Covid 19: What can we expect to be the same or different when we return to school in September?

Parents and students will be well aware that schools had very strict guidance and risk assessments to work with as we grappled with the impact of Covid on day to day schooling over the last 18 months or so. Over the summer, there have been several key changes to the educational guidance; these reflect the wider changes in society that we have been living with for some weeks now. This document is split into 2 sections:

1. A summary of some of the changes in Covid protocols at Bedale High School and some other aspects that will remain in place for the time being.
2. A summary of the latest Department for Education Operational Guidance for schools (so that parents can see what is informing any changes).

Section 1: Protocols in place at Bedale High School

- The one-way system for getting around the school site remains in place.
- There are no longer any year group bubbles. Students will be able to mix in the dining hall and social areas (as we will all be using it at the same time at break and lunch).
- There will no longer be 2 breaks and 2 lunchtimes; there will be 1 break and 1 lunchtime for all students.
- Students or staff who are identified as close contacts of a positive case will no longer need to self-isolate (as long as they meet the criteria listed in Section 2 of this document)...see further details in Section 2.
- Anyone with symptoms, or a positive test result will still need to self-isolate (see Section 2)
- We will maintain the hand-sanitising for students on entry to the classroom, and on entry into the canteen.
- Regular cleaning/sanitising of touch points will continue.
- Face coverings do not need to be worn, but students can still choose to wear them if they feel safer doing so at the moment. Staff can wear them when helping students one to one, or when working closely with them if they wish to. Staff and students can choose to wear them at busy times/in busy spaces at break/lunchtime/transition times if they choose to.
- We will continue to advise staff to maintain the 1m distance from students as much as possible.
- Ventilation remains important. Caretakers will continue to open windows in rooms when they open up school. Staff are asked to ensure that at least one window remains open whenever the room is being used. Doors can also be opened to create a flow/draught where appropriate.
- Staff and students are asked to continue home-testing using the lateral flow tests twice a week up to the end of September when the government will review and update this guidance.
- The 'no-contact' rule between students continues to be in place, as it was before Covid. This refers to students not being physical with each other: playfighting, wrestling etc.
- The Covid base in Room 29 will remain in place for any students who display symptoms in school so that they can wait in there away from others while we get them sent home.
- Students will no longer be able to access their tutor base from 8.30am. They will wait for the school building to open at 8.40am and then make their way to their tutor bases. Form time begins at 8.45am and all students should be in their tutor base at this time.
- The school day will end at 3.05pm.

Section 2: Summary of the key points from the Dept for Education's updated Operational Guidance for Schools *(NB only the points most pertinent to our school have been included here):*

- The priority is to deliver high quality face to face education
- Risk assessments should be regularly updated
- No more bubbles but these may be reintroduced as part of a contingency plan
- No more contact tracing to be done by schools - this will now be done by a NHS Test and Trace
- No more self-isolation for close contacts or those who live in the same house if any of the following applies:
 1. They are fully vaccinated
 2. They are below 18 years and six months
 3. They have taken part in a vaccine trial
 4. They are unable to get vaccinated for medical reasons
(instead close contacts will be contacted by Test and Trace and told to take a PCR test)
- Face coverings are not needed within school but they are expected and recommended on public or school transport
- Face coverings are no longer advised in classrooms or communal areas for staff, students or visitors
- They are still recommended for enclosed or crowded spaces with people you don't normally meet
- We may be advised to wear them again if the number of cases in school starts to rise as part of our contingency planning
- It makes sense to think about taking extra action if the number of positive cases substantially increases in school
- Schools need to have a contingency plan or outbreak management plan outlining what we will do if students or staff test positive for COVID-19 and how we would operate if we were advised to take extra measures to help break chains of transmission
- Such additional measures should be kept to the minimum number of groups possible and for the shortest amount of time possible
- The local authority may assist in these situations and there is also a contingency framework to consult
- Control measures should include the following:
 1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone
 2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes
 3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated
 4. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases
- CO2 monitors will be provided to all settings from September so that we can quickly identify where ventilation needs to be improved
- Students, staff and visitors should not come into school if they have symptoms, if they have had a positive test result, or other reasons requiring them to stay at home due to the risk of them passing on COVID-19 (for example if they are required to quarantine)
- If anyone in school develops COVID-19 symptoms, however mild, you should send them home and they should follow public health advice
- Students and staff should continue to test twice weekly at home until the end of September, when this will be reviewed
- Staff and students with a positive LFD test result should self-isolate in line with the stay at home guidance. They will also need to get a free PCR test to check if they have COVID-19. Whilst awaiting the PCR result, the individual should continue to self-isolate. If the PCR test is taken within two days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test and the students can return to school, as long as the individual doesn't have COVID-19 symptoms
- Schools should maintain their capacity to deliver high quality remote education for any students who need to self-isolate because they have tested positive.

The full guidance can be seen here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/schools-covid-19-operational-guidance>