**FAQs sheet for COVID in schools:**

Main points:

1. Reporting
2. Actions following COVID cases that are not linked as close contacts
3. Actions following 5 COVID cases (or 5 LFT positives) that **are** linked as close contacts
4. **Reporting Process for September 2021:**

The new guidance has been released for the new school term following step 4 of the roadmap. As such schools have new guidance on how to manage cases of COVID in schools and settings.

These are:

* New thresholds for control measures to be enacted (whichever is smallest):
	+ 5 children, pupils, students or staff, who are likely to have mixed closely (cases are linked to each other), test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period; or
	+ 10% of children, pupils, students or staff who are likely to have mixed closely (cases are linked to each other),, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period

For special schools these are:

* + 2 children, pupils, students or staff, who are likely to have mixed closely (close contact of each other), test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period.

**Reporting to Sandwell MBC (note Sandwell MBC are not informed of outbreaks in our settings by other methods, we need to be informed directly):**

* Schools/ Settings with 5 linked cases or 10% of school (whichever is smallest) to email PHCovid19\_Enquiries@sandwell.gov.uk (available 7 days a week 9am-5pm) for support immediately. We will advise on next steps.
1. Actions following COVID cases that are not linked as close contacts

If you have an LFT positive case or cases that are not linked, await PCR test result before further action.

* If the result is PCR positive then the individual needs to remain off school for 10 days from when their symptoms started (or test date if the individual didn’t have symptoms – if they develop symptoms after the test result their self isolation clock starts again for 10 days from the symptoms).
* Close contacts who are double vaccinated or under 18 years and 6 months do not need to isolate.
* Test and trace should inform all close contacts that they need to isolate, but we are dubious as to how well that will be carried out. As a fail safe it is best that you inform close contacts you are aware of that they need to PCR test immediately. They do not need to isolate as they await a result and anyone who has tested positive in the last 90 days does not need to test again.
* Any close contacts who are not double vaccinated and are not under 18 yrs and 6 months will need to isolate for 10 days from their last contact with the positive individual (if that contact was within the infectious period )
1. Actions following 5 COVID cases (or 5 LFT positives) that **are** linked as close contacts
* Contact PHCovid19\_Enquiries@sandwell.gov.uk (available 7 days a week 9am-5pm) for support immediately. We will advise on next steps.
* If the result is PCR positive then the individuals needs to remain off school for 10 days from when their symptoms started (or test date if the individual didn’t have symptoms – if they develop symptoms after the test result their self isolation clock starts again for 10 days from the symptoms).
* Close contacts who are double vaccinated or under 18 years and 6 months do not need to isolate.
* Test and trace should inform all close contacts that they need to isolate, but we are dubious as to how well that will be carried out. As a fail safe it is best that you inform close contacts you are aware of that they need to PCR test immediately. They do not need to isolate as they await a result and anyone who has tested positive in the last 90 days does not need to test again.
* Any close contacts who are not double vaccinated and are not under 18 yrs and 6 months will need to isolate for 10 days from their last contact with the positive individual (if that contact was within the infectious period)
* Send a letter to inform parents that the school has met the threshold for an outbreak (template available). This includes informing parents and children to watch out for symptoms and to LFT more regularly. Potential next steps that will be carried out at the school.