

## Contingency Plan - COVID-19 (Updated 19.08.2021)

Acorn Homes are closely monitoring the ongoing COVID-19 disease, as the situation continues to change rapidly, our top priority remains the health, safety, and well-being of all staff and young people. We are planning for several contingency scenarios and taking informed action to limit the spread of COVID-19, whilst ensuring the continuity of care and education for the young people within our services. With the emergence of new advice, we wish to update all staff on the current contingency plan and ask all staff to support us through following the Company and Government advice issued.

In addition to this general contingency, each department has their own contingency plans, relevant to the Homes/School/ Departments and should be available for all staff it applies to.

Current Government Advice - COVID-19 is an illness that can affect a person's airways. It's caused by a virus called coronavirus; symptoms are:

- Newly developed persistent cough, coughing a lot for more than an hour
- High Temperature, hot to touch on chest or back
- Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

**From 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021** the government have stated If you're fully vaccinated or under 18 years of age, you no longer need to self-isolate after close contact with someone who has COVID-19.

If you are not fully vaccinated you must still isolate for 10 days and if you have symptoms, you must also isolate for 10 days and take a PCR test as soon as possible.

Should you receive a positive PCR result, you must send evidence to you Manager or to Human Resources immediately.

For advice and guidance on individual cases, please contact Katie Brown in Human Resources on Tel: 01843482510 and Mobile: 07854006221.

For any further information on Covid-19 guidelines or to book a PCR Test, please visit the links below:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

### Close Contact

The Department of Health have clarified what is counted as close contact, this is:

Any skin to skin contact.

Being 1 metre apart or closer for more than 1 minute.

Being 2 meters apart for more than 15 minutes.

Please also familiarise yourself with the new Test, Track and Trace guidance which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>

### Symptom-free testing

Rapid-result coronavirus (COVID-19) testing for people who don't have symptoms is still available Kent.

We would urge all staff in this area to take advantage of the symptom free testing in order to keep Acorn Homes as safe as possible.

You can book a test online by following the link below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/protect-kent-and-medway/test-and-trace/symptom-free-testing>

You can still get regular rapid lateral flow tests. You can do this by going to a test site to collect or have them delivered to your home address. You can find out further information by following the link below:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/regular-rapid-coronavirus-tests-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms/>

## COVID-19 Vaccine

Any staff that are yet to have their Covid-19 vaccine can still register and book their Vaccine online. Staff will need to follow the link below. Staff will need their NHS number which they can obtain by calling their GP.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>

## Travelling internationally from England

There are no longer any restrictions on leaving England to travel internationally, however to protect public health in the UK and the vaccine rollout, you should not travel to countries or territories on the red or amber lists.

For details on foreign travel and travel lists please visit the below link;

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure they follow the above advice, minimise the risk of potentially spreading COVID-19 and helping to safeguard those we work with. We ask that staff all staff adhere to the advice given by the government when outside of work and to refrain from social interactions with those that do not form part of your household. This minimises the risk of spread and aims to assist in the safeguarding of all our staff and young people.

Staff who are required to self-isolate must follow the usual Absence & Lateness Procedure by reporting their absence at least two hours before their shift, via a telephone call only. For those having to self-isolate, due to displaying these symptoms, any time in self-isolation will be paid as statutory sick pay (in line with government guidance).

## Company Wide applies to all staff

- Where visitors are necessary, everywhere must have a Covid station set up by their front door entrance, this must include; hand sanitiser and face masks. All visitors must be told to use upon entry. Staff can ask the visitor when their last Covid-19 test was.
- Social distancing should be adhered to, although we accept that this is exceptionally difficult in our sector, where possible a 1-metre distance should be applied between yourself and others.
- Staff should make themselves aware of the hand washing guidance, use of hand sanitiser, and encourage young people to do the same.
- Ensure low stock of PPE (masks / sanitiser etc.) is promptly communicated to head office so this can be provided.
- Any staff member who has additional health needs that may be affected by COVID-19 should ensure their Line Manager is aware.
- All staff are to refrain from attending Head Office unless necessary. If you are required to attend Head Office, it is important you notify Head office of this prior so that we can ensure the number of people in Head Office allows for social distancing.
- Staff training is to remain being booked and attended with strict social distancing and PPE.
- Additional sanitiser has been issued, 1 allocated for each staff member, this should be applied to young people's hands and not given to them to apply A company risk assessment is in place for the use of sanitiser, and masks have been provided.
- Public transport can be used by staff and young people, with the correct measures in place, including face masks and hand sanitiser.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive but aims to provide practical guidance to support every provision.

## Residential Homes

The aim of every residential home is to continue providing a high level of care and support to our children and young people. Below outline several guidelines that that our homes **must** follow to reduce the risk of COVID-19 entering the home, however, each provision may consider additional measures to safeguard the home:

- In the event there are positive cases within one of our homes, each home is to have their own contingency plan in place.
- In the event of a positive case which affects the homes, all staff must wear masks and appropriate PPE at all times.
- All visitors to the homes should be provided with the relevant PPE and sanitise upon entry.
- Health and wellbeing practitioners will be providing services to young people, this will include in the location of their office and visiting the homes.
- Under new guidance from Ofsted, use of Physical Intervention can be deemed acceptable in the event a young person is at serious risk from COVID-19 and where it is used to prevent this. Please refer to previous guidance issued by Carol Bradley, Responsible Individual.
- Young people may spend time outdoors and continue with free time. Visits **can** still go ahead depending on individual circumstances.
- When going to retailers / public services, we ask that if you intend to visit you adhere to social distancing, utilise PPE, update your individual contingency and support with risk assessments.
- High traffic areas and surfaces such as tables and door handles are to be disinfected 3 times a day. Bathroom's sinks and toilets are to be cleaned with bleach/bathroom cleaner 2 times a day.
- All staff to discuss how to protect others from coughs and sneezes, with young people.
- Make sure young people are disposing of used tissues in the bin.
- When dropping young people to school, please do not enter the building unless essential.
- In the event a young person becomes infected, no activities are to take place and the young person should self-isolate within the home, as far as possible.
- Staff should be making use of the necessary PPE to protect themselves when cleaning, such as gloves, aprons etc.
- Any staff member or young person who is required to self-isolate should be reported to Head Office to ensure this contingency plan can be updated.
- Staff should talk about COVID-19 with young people, especially advising why this may affect pre-arranged visits or tasks, i.e. visiting grandparents, trips to London.
- Petty Cash will be allocated to all homes via online banking, transfers will be made to the Home Managers for homes that do not already have access to debit card.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive but aims to provide practical guidance to support every home.

## Maintenance

Maintenance will attend the homes as usual. They will continue to follow guidelines regarding adequate hand washing, use of sanitiser and PPE.

- Any emergencies or Health and Safety concerns must be reported via phone or email immediately.
- Any staff member who has additional health needs that may be affect by COVID-19 should ensure their Line Manager is aware.
- Maintenance staff are asked to keep in contact with the Maintenance Manager if further support is required.

## School

The DfE update their advice to schools daily. The school will only be closed if instructed to do so by the DfE, at which point we will be legally obliged to do so, or if staffing levels, due to self-isolation protocols, make it impossible to safely manage the education of students at the school. In the event of a school closure, teaching will be delivered remotely using the range of materials developed by staff and the DfE.

Below outline several guidelines that that school must follow to reduce the risk of COVID-19 entering the premises, Staff are to monitor this to ensure social distancing guidelines are always followed.

- The school's cleaners will ensure high traffic areas and surfaces such as tables and door handles are to be efficiently disinfected.
- Ensure low stock of PPE (masks / sanitiser etc.) is promptly communicated to head office so this can be provided.
- All staff are to discuss how to protect others from coughs and sneezes, with young people.
- Make sure young people are disposing of used tissues in the bin.
- In the event a young person becomes infected, no activities are to take place and the young person should be sent home immediately.
- Use of the school allotment will continue, hand sanitiser is to be available and regularly used on site.
- Any staff member or young person who is sent home should be reported to Head Office to ensure this contingency plan can be updated.
- Staff should talk about COVID-19 with young people, especially advising why this may affect pre-arranged visits.

The school has a detailed risk assessment in place that has been sent to all parents and carers and is available on request.

The school will ensure staff, parents and carers are aware of the following information and relevant arrangements regarding positive cases in the holidays:

- Where a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school, the school should not be contacted. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.
- For the first 6 days after teaching ends, if a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, the school will assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school.
- School staff are not asked to conduct any contact tracing more than 6 days after the final day of teaching.

For the first 6 days after the end of term, the SLT Staff, responsible for contact tracing, will be available between 10am and 12pm to receive notification of positive cases and advise close contacts to self-isolate (this can be done by text or email). The Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline and PHE advice service are available to support the school with any queries about positive cases.

Where pupils are required to self-isolate due to contact with a positive case after the first 6 days following the end of term, schools do not need to be informed about their absence until the first day of the new term.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive but aims at providing some practical guidance to support every provision.

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We ask any staff member, who has concerns, queries, or further suggestions relating to reducing the potential spread of COVID-19 to contact:

Anja Cheeseman - Director (a.cheeseman@ahgroup.org) or Katie Brown – HR Manager (k.brown@ahgroup.org).