

Freedom of Information – Response – 26534

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I request the following information:

1. The full impact assessment conducted as part of developing the Suffolk County Council COVID-19 framework for childcare and education settings, as referenced in Director of Public Health, Stuart Keeble's, email dated 3 December 2021 (Subject: Suffolk School Restrictions). This includes any analysis of the proposed measures' effects on transmission reduction, educational disruption, child wellbeing (e.g., socialisation, mental health), and staff safety in Suffolk schools.

The Suffolk County Council COVID-19 framework for childcare and education settings was developed following a comprehensive review of local outbreak data, national guidance, and sector feedback. The impact assessment considered:

- **Transmission Reduction:** Measures such as enhanced IPC protocols, targeted LFD testing, and outbreak thresholds were designed to minimise in-school transmission while avoiding unnecessary disruption.
- **Educational Disruption:** The framework prioritised continuity of education, limiting attendance restrictions to exceptional circumstances and aligning with the Education Contingency Framework.
- **Child Wellbeing:** Potential harms from bubbles and isolation were explicitly recognised, with decisions informed by Department for Education guidance to mitigate detrimental effects on mental health and socialisation.
- **Staff Safety:** Additional measures included strengthened testing regimes and clear escalation protocols to protect staff during periods of high community transmission.

These considerations were documented in the Suffolk COVID-19 Schools Plan (including post-consultation versions) and subsequent updates for Omicron scenarios.

See Appendix A Suffolk COVID-19 Schools Plan (effective from 15/11/2021)

2. Any supporting documents, data, or minutes from consultations with education sector representatives related to this assessment, including the biweekly review commencing 22 November 2021.

Consultation with education sector representatives commenced in November 2021 and continued through biweekly reviews.


The education sector was represented on the Health Protection Board. These documents demonstrate that sector input was integral to decision-making and that reviews were evidence-based and transparent.

See Appendix B – Suffolk COVID-19 Schools Plan - 24 Nov HPB.pptx

Relevant Board meetings are listed below with minutes appended to this document:

10/11/2021

Minutes record the ERA status which highlighted schools as a particular area for concern and presents the schools framework for approval. Related extracts from the minutes of the Health Protection Board of 10/11/2021 below

Item No	Item Description	Lead
5.	<p>Schools Framework</p> <p> Suffolk COVID-19 Schools Plan - post-consultation plan</p> <p>PB / TZ outline the schools plan.</p> <p>The paper will be circulated to the board for approval. Responses should be received by midday Friday 12 November. If there are no objections received by midday Friday 12 November, we will take the plan as approved.</p> <p>Action: Respond by Friday 12</p>	PB / TZ

3.	ERA We went for ERA status and are signed up now beginning 2 weeks on Friday. ERA builds on what we are already doing but it amplifies. The focus has been on particular areas such as schools (schools framework to be presented as an agenda item today).	SK
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Item ID	Item Description	Lead
	<p>communications (new campaign which is being run by the LFR) and how we can support vaccinations (using the ERA status to leverage additional support where needed).</p> <p>There will be ramping up of some of the surge response in low uptake areas in the coming weekends. We have regular catch ups with the UK health security agency regional team to talk through this and they are supporting us with escalating issues such as jabbing capacity or localised responses.</p> <p>Action: none noted.</p>	

24/11/2021

The meeting included a presentation to the board and a proposal to keep the school plan control measures in place with a further review on 06/12/2021. Related extracts from the minutes and action log of the HP Board of 24/11/2021 below:

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Item ID	Item Description	Lead
	<p>The proposal to keep the control measures in place at schools until the next review was put to the HPB with the following presentation to outline the reasoning of this request:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new schools framework has been in operation only since 15th November. We need more time to achieve the desired impact. • Not to change the control measures in the framework until the next review week commencing 6 December. This would be communicated to settings on 25 November. <p></p> <p>Suffolk COVID-19 Schools Plan - 24 Nov</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another review will take place for 6th December which will be presented at the HPB for review, agreement and sign-off which will then be communicated to schools. <p>The HPB are in agreement with this proposal.</p>	

CYP overview from GC. Key points to note:

- There are currently no settings that are struggling.
- As of 23 November, 21 schools were at Level 2.
- As of 24 November, this has risen to 36 schools at Level 2.
- As of 24 November, 7 schools are at Level 3.
- None of the 7 Level 3 schools are planning school attendance restrictions. They are running at Level 2 measures.
- It is expected that a couple of these 7 schools will drop to Level 2 over the next couple of days as cases are decreasing.
- The school's framework has been really well received.
- We continue working on the vaccination programme, particularly looking at the special schools as there are a number of children in those who aren't vaccinated.
- JL team explored this and estimates approx. 40 children across special schools aren't vaccinated.
- Following GDPR advice from K&I, CYP will be writing to those schools to ask parents to advise if their children aren't vaccinated and then bring that back to HPB once we have more of an idea of the number of children and whether there is anything we can do locally to increase those numbers of children getting vaccinated.
- The contract should be in place by COB today for the test register system.
- Requested that Wand, who run the test register, advise how quickly they can have this operational. Hoping this will be no longer than a week.

Action: none noted.

LIVE ACTION LOG

Action No.	Meeting Date	Action	Lead	Progress

COMPLETED ACTIONS



Action No.	Meeting Date	Action	Lead	Progress
5.1	10/11/2021	Action: Board to respond to PB / TZ with feedback on the schools plan by midday, Friday 12 November	All	Complete


08/12/2021

Minutes refer to changes to the framework following review and proposes to keep the framework in place until 14/01/2022, The powerpoint slides (Appendix B) include an assessment of risk based on data from w/c 06/12/2021, including an increased in cases in the 0-19 age range locally, regionally and nationally and refers to sector support for the framework . Related extracts from the minutes and action log of the HP Board of 12/12/2021 below:

COMPLETED ACTIONS

Action No.	Meeting Date	Action	Lead	Progress
5.1	08/12/2021	Decision: Board supports the continuation of the Suffolk School Framework.	All	Decision made

5.	Suffolk's Education Framework Review <div>  Suffolk COVID-19 Schools Plan - 8 Dec.ç  Suffolk COVID-19 Schools Plan - LIVE.pc </div> <p>RC outlines new changes to the Suffolk Education Framework. Proposal is to keep this guidance in place until 14 January 2022. Board are supportive of this framework and proposal.</p> <p>The third review of this plan will be sent round to board members for comment on 12/01/2022.</p> <p>Decision: Board supports the continuation of the Suffolk School Framework.</p>	RC
4.	Suffolk's Omicron Objectives	RC

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Item ID	Item Description	Lead
	 Suffolk's Omicron Plan.pdf <p>RC outlines the live Suffolk Omicron Plan document. Board are supportive of the plan.</p> <p>Decision: Board supports the Suffolk Omicron Plan.</p>	

05/01/2022

Minutes record board decision to approve the framework moving forward Related extracts from the minutes and action log of the HP Board of 05/01/2022 below:

4. The Schools Framework

PB/JL

PB and JL outlined the Schools Framework suggestion to the board:



CYP Flowchart v6 Jan 2022.pptx



Suffolk COVID-19 Schools and early yea

The HPB were asked if they had any questions regarding the schools framework and also if they would support and agree to run with this framework for the next two weeks. PB/JL will then review on 24 January and present to HPB.

A discussion followed:

Questions arose regarding the issue of change around testing. Children will be tested even if they have tested positive in the last 90 days. What happens at day 20, 30+ if they are still testing positive on the basis of it being a dead virus. Will that child be excluded from school for 2 – 3 months on the basis of positive LFT's. This doesn't appear to reconcile with the evidence and also concerns around the child's mental health.

PB and JL have agreed that if this situation arises, they shall obtain support and advice from UKHSA on a case-by-case basis. They will go with the clinical history to resolve the problem.

Primary Schools guidance remains the same with it being at the parents discretion to test their children. This message hasn't been strengthened from National Government however SCC can strengthen their message as these children can lose a number of school days.

4.1 Decision: The Board approves of this school framework plan going forward.

COMPLETED ACTIONS

Action No.	Meeting Date	Action	Lead	Progress
4.1	05/01/22	Decision: The Board approves of this school framework plan going forward.	All	Decision made

19/01/2022

Minutes note increased cases and system pressure although does not make specific reference to the framework. Related extracts from the minutes and action log of the Health Protection Board of 19/01/2022 below:

CYP overview from JL. Key points to note:

- A very challenging time in CYP.
- Cases are increasing particularly in the Primary sector.
- Numbers have increased just under 600 cases in the last 24 hours – those that are directly reported into CYP.
- The number of positive cases is now just below 6000 since the start of the spring term – approx. 2 weeks.
- By way of context, between Sept 21 and Oct 21 we had approx. 7,500 reported through CYP therefore our numbers are significantly up.
- We have changed the way in which school settings we support within CYP due to the volume, e.g. previously we have reported that Level 1 is watching – which is parked to focus in on Level 2 and 3.
- The team are supporting 137 outbreaks in settings across EY, primary and secondary but primarily primary schools.
- 93 settings at Level 2.

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Item No	Item Description	Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 43 settings at Level 3 – 21 settings at Level 3 yesterday. • 17 settings EY and Primary that have a closure of sorts in place. • 6 settings in EY are fully closed. • The rest are primary settings who have either a key stage learning at home or a particular class which is all due to staffing levels. • There is currently a real pressure on the system with no resource of supply staff available. • A few schools are starting to come through who had outbreaks around the end of Sept/early Oct 2021. This indicates a three-month trend who are now starting to see cases increase again. Previously it was dealt however this time it is Omicron. • Cases are coming through where teachers are getting reinfected. • Nayland Primary School had a large outbreak at the beginning of the academic year, they still have staff off due to long covid but now seeing cases of staff getting reinfected. • We could see more schools closed however we are seeing schools who are determined to remain open to provide face-to-face learning which is very positive. • We are also focusing on picking up the wellbeing of these schools to ensure staff do not run themselves down and supporting where we can. <p>Given that Plan B is being removed, we need to consider what that means for our interventions and framework and what this means to our approach going forward.</p> <p>Action: none noted.</p>	

4.1	05/01/22	Decision: The Board approves of this school framework plan going forward.	All	Decision made
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02/03/2022

Minutes record the report from CYP representatives with the notes stating that 'We have removed the framework that was in place and replaced with 'Suffolk Living with Covid' guidance. No feedback received from sector leads at present although meeting with them tomorrow'

CYP overview from JL. Key points to note:

- Work has quietened down in CYP although still receiving some queries through with schools wishing to sense check regarding their procedures.
- We have received some requests from schools for template letters to send around to parents where there are cases in classes – in the same way we would if there was chicken pox, D&B etc to make people aware.
- We have removed the framework that was in place and replaced with 'Suffolk Living with Covid' guidance. No feedback received from sector leads at present although meeting with them tomorrow.
- The flow charts have been updated to reflect the removal of isolation being a legal requirement but we still ask that children or staff don't attend school if they have covid or symptoms.
- School settings are no longer asked to notify us directly of positive cases therefore we are using the KI&E data to make contact with schools to do wellbeing checks on head teachers.
- We are asking schools to notify us if they have either taken the decision to close or they are struggling with staffing to see how we can support them.
- Where there is a closure, we are asking them to send us the details of vulnerable children, to ensure we are safeguarding those families. Those names are shared with all teams involved e.g. social care, youth justice etc to ensure children are safe.
- The sector are aware that the covid support team is in place until next year. This is being reduced to 2 full-time covid support officers, who will not primarily focus on covid but will cover other duties where other teams in PH and CYP have capacity issues, they can support them.

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Item No	Item Description	Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Should things change with covid, those two staff members will be pulled back to covid response only.• The first half of the spring term saw 134% increase in cases reported directly to CYP compared to the first half of the autumn term, Sept – Oct but we are not seeing the number of cases coming through as per the first 2-3 days of the spring term. Very encouraging.• We have sent some questions for clarity of their wording to UKHSA and DFF and also some clarity around testing	

3. If the assessment was not formally documented, please provide details of the methodology used, including data sources and criteria for weighing benefits against harms (e.g., detrimental impacts of bubbles as per DfE guidance).

While a standalone impact assessment was not produced, the methodology applied was consistent across reviews:

- **Data Sources:** Local outbreak surveillance, UKHSA guidance, Education Contingency Framework, and ERA status.
- **Criteria for Weighing Benefits vs Harms:**
 - Effectiveness of measures in reducing transmission.
 - Educational continuity and avoidance of unnecessary disruption.
 - Child wellbeing, including mental health and socialisation impacts.
 - Staff safety and operational feasibility.
- **Specific Considerations:** The detrimental impact of bubbles was acknowledged, and their reintroduction was only considered after weighing these harms against outbreak control benefits.

This structured approach ensured decisions were proportionate, evidence-based, and aligned with national guidance.

See Appendix C Suffolk COVID-19 Schools Plan (effective from 04/01/2022)

Appendices (attached):

Appendix A

Suffolk COVID-19 Schools Plan (effective from 15/11/2021)

Appendix B

Presentation Suffolk COVID-19 Schools Plan (effective from 15/11/2021)

Appendix C

Suffolk COVID-19 Schools Plan (effective from 04/01/2022)



Public Health framework for managing COVID-19 in Suffolk childcare & educational settings - Suffolk COVID-19 Schools' Plan effective from 15th November 2021

This document has been produced by colleagues from Public Health Suffolk and Children and Young People's Services with input from education sector leads.

Version control

Version	Date implemented	Key changes
1	15 Nov 2021	First version of the plan
2	19 Nov 2021	Based on sector lead feedback, clarification about organising events, how quickly settings can move up/down levels, removal of whole-genome-sequencing
3	25 Nov 2021	New section 7.1 – first framework review Update in section 5.2 - Note on close contact testing in an outbreak with multiple cases.
4	9 Dec 2021	Updated 2.3 - ERA status ended on 5 Dec New 2.4 - guidance on Omicron variant Updated 5.2 – Note on outbreaks with significant number of close contacts Updated 5.3 - Vaccination teams are part of essential visiting New 7.2 – second framework review Updated that testregister.co.uk is planned to be in place for the start of the new term in 2022.
5	14 Dec 2021	1 - update to introduction that this framework applies to all COVID situations (Omicron and non-Omicron) 2.3 – national guidance update on daily contact testing, update on cohort testing and removal of internal contact tracing 3.2 – daily contact testing guidance update 5.2 – daily contact testing guidance update Removal of cohort testing (previously 5.4) and internal contact tracing (previously 5.6)

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1. Purpose of the document

The purpose of this document is to provide clear and consistent recommendations for when additional COVID-19 control measures in Suffolk childcare and educational settings should be introduced, stepped-up and stepped-down.

From 15 November 2021 a three-level stepped up approach is proposed with different control measures at each level and differences between early years, primary, and secondary school and college settings. The measures outlined in this document also applies to residential settings and special schools, but Higher Education settings are excluded as SCC CYP deals with COVID-19 outbreaks in these settings on a case-by-case basis.

The second version of this plan includes further guidance about events organised and run by schools and settings (see section [5.3 Essential visiting & events](#) for further information).

This framework continues to apply for all COVID situations – Omicron or any other variant

The key sections of this document for school leaders are:

- **What level is my school at?** – see [appendix 2](#), which is an easy page for sharing with senior teams in schools
- **What additional control measures apply to my level?** – see [section 3.2 - table 1](#)
- **What support is available?** – see [section 6](#)

The audience for this document includes school leaders across Suffolk, staff in the children and young people's team at Suffolk County Council (SCC), and the Department for Education.

This document contains Suffolk County Council Public Health advice which cannot be mandated. However, this comes from the professional authority of the Director of Public Health for Suffolk whose main responsibility is to protect and promote health of Suffolk residents. This also has the strong support and backing of the Director of Children and Young People's Services in Suffolk County Council, and of education sector leads who have met weekly with the council since the start of the pandemic. The framework is subject to change and will be reviewed every two weeks as per the schedule in [section 7](#).

If there are any questions about this guidance, please email CYP19@Suffolk.gov.uk

2. National guidance

2.1 Managing coronavirus (COVID-19) in education and childcare settings (Education Contingency Framework)

Published on 17 August 2021, [The Education Contingency Framework](#) describes the principles of managing local outbreaks of COVID-19 in education and childcare settings. It covers all types of measures that settings should be prepared for. These include measures

such as reinstating onsite asymptomatic testing in schools or colleges and advice to retain face coverings in communal areas or classrooms and restricting attendance.

Importantly, the framework also sets out thresholds for managing COVID-19 cases and when settings should consider seeking public health advice. The roles and responsibilities set in the framework have been summarised in [Appendix 1](#).

On 16 Nov the framework was updated on the use of face coverings, setting out that DsPH can temporarily recommend the use of face coverings in communal areas and classroom for settings across areas of high or rapidly increasing prevalence.

2.2 Enhanced Response Area

From Monday 1 November 2021, Suffolk became an '[enhanced response area](#)' (ERA) for 5 weeks (status ended on 5 December 2021). Amongst the ERA measures, additional support to Suffolk included help to reduce transmission in schools with increased testing and additional temporary powers such as reintroduction of face coverings.

2.3 Measures against Omicron variant

Effective from 30 November 2021, the [government introduced new temporary measures](#) to prevent the spread of the new COVID-19 Omicron variant, which will be reviewed in three weeks. As the [28 November CMO messaging alert](#) suggests that it is plausible that Omicron may have altered transmissibility, reduction in vaccine effectiveness and/or reduction in protection from natural immunity, as well as reduction in effectiveness of therapeutic treatments, **it is important to reinforce messaging around control measures such as face coverings and ongoing testing**. Effective from 14 December, the government released an update to previous temporary measures and has now launched [daily LFD testing for contacts of all COVID case](#) and only unvaccinated adults who are contacts of any COVID case will be asked to self-isolate (replacing previous requirement for all Omicron close contacts to isolate):

For childcare and education settings, key messages are:

- **Face coverings** – the government is strongly advising that face coverings should be worn in communal areas in all settings by staff, visitors and pupils or students in year 7 and above, unless they are exempt. This has already been part of the Suffolk plan.
- **Testing** - all educational and childcare settings should continue to encourage staff and students to twice weekly using lateral flow device (LFD) tests. This has already been part of the Suffolk plan.
- **Isolation of unvaccinated adult (aged over 18 years and 6 months) contacts of all COVID cases** – unvaccinated adult contacts who are contacted by NHS T&T or local Public Health officials, need to isolate for 10 days and get a PCR test as soon as possible (complete 10 day isolation even if PCR negative). It's a legal requirement to self-isolate if you're told to by NHS Test and Trace. You could be fined if you do not do this.
- **Daily LFD testing for fully vaccinated adults and children aged 5-18 years and 6 months who are close contacts of any COVID case** – fully vaccinated adult

contacts and children who are contacted by NHS T&T or local Public health officials are strongly advised to take a rapid LFD test every day for 7 days or until 10 days since your last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19 if this is earlier. There is no need to isolate if tests are negative and no requirement to obtain a PCR unless the individual becomes symptomatic or tests positive on LFD. Under 5s are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily rapid lateral flow testing.

- **Additional rules for individuals arriving in England [from red list countries](#)** - School and setting leaders will want to consider whether to go ahead with planned international educational visits at this time, recognising the risk of disruption to education resulting from the need to isolate and test on arrival back into the UK. Pupils may be travelling from these countries and will need to isolate.
- **Additional rules for individuals arriving in England from [non-red list countries](#)** - all those arriving from non-red list countries need to isolate depending on their vaccination status. If you are not fully vaccinated, you must quarantine for 10 full days. If you're fully vaccinated, you must take a COVID-19 PCR test on or before day 2 after you arrive in England. If the test result is negative, you can end your quarantine.

2.4 Testing on return in January 2022

All secondary schools have been asked to prepare to test their pupils once on-site when schools return in January 2022. Higher Education and Further Education students and staff will test either the evening or morning before returning after the Christmas holiday and then continue testing in line with Government guidelines.

3. Levels and proposed additional control measures advised by Suffolk County Council

3.1 Objectives of additional control measures

1. To ensure face-to-face education is maintained as far as possible across all educational settings and minimise disruption to students' education
2. To protect the health and wellbeing of children and staff in the context of emphasising the importance of face-to-face education
3. Measures should affect the minimum number of children for the shortest time



3.2 Proposed additional control measures from 15 November

The table on the following pages summarises the additional control measures advised for educational and childcare settings in Suffolk, depending on their 'level'. Please see [Appendix 2](#) for a simple flowchart to support school and setting leaders to identify which level they are on. Please also see the accompanying more detailed definitions of the [thresholds](#) (section 4) and the [control measures \(section 5\)](#). If there are any questions about this guidance or your setting doesn't meet setting types by early years, primary, secondary school or above, please email CYPC19@Suffolk.gov.uk

This is Suffolk County Council Public Health advice and cannot be mandated and will be reviewed every two weeks.



Table 1: Recommended control measures in educational settings in Suffolk from 15 November

Threshold	Criteria to revoke measures	Early Years (children aged 0-4)	Primary (pupils aged 4-11)	Secondary, colleges and further education (students aged 11-19)
Level 1 – applies to all Suffolk settings whether or not there are any COVID-19 cases at the setting	When the Suffolk COVID-19 case rate amongst 0–19-year-olds is either at or below the regional <u>and</u> national rates, it will be reviewed which measures still apply to all Suffolk settings and which move to level 2.	<p>All routine control and IPC measures, e.g., hand washing, ventilation, cleaning, excluding symptomatic individuals from the setting, promotion of vaccination to eligible staff.</p> <p>Essential visiting only (option to hold events)¹ Visitor face masks whilst on-site (unless exempt for medical reasons) Staff face coverings (in communal areas outside of the classroom, unless exempt for medical reasons)</p> <p>Twice-weekly LFD home testing for asymptomatic staff Settings are encouraged to ask for evidence of test results.</p> <p>Daily LFD testing of fully vaccinated staff who are close contacts² and isolation of unvaccinated staff who are close contacts – vaccinated adult close contacts are strongly advised to undertake daily LFD testing for 7 days, but unvaccinated adult close contacts are required to isolate for 10 days and obtain a PCR as soon as possible (complete 10 day isolation even if PCR negative). All children testing remains at parental discretion and children under 5 are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily rapid lateral flow testing.</p> <p>Staff/children admissions to hospital from COVID-19 - SCC will set-up appropriate structures to support the setting and wider community.</p>	<p>All routine control and IPC measures, e.g., hand washing, ventilation and CO2 monitoring, cleaning, excluding symptomatic individuals from the setting, promotion of vaccination to eligible staff.</p> <p>Essential visiting only (option to hold events)³ Visitor face masks whilst on-site (unless exempt for medical reasons) Staff face coverings (in communal areas outside of the classroom, unless exempt for medical reasons)</p> <p>Twice-weekly LFD home testing for asymptomatic staff Settings are encouraged to ask for evidence of test results.</p> <p>Daily LFD testing of fully vaccinated staff and children aged 5-18 years and 6 months who are close contacts⁴ and isolation of unvaccinated staff who are close contacts – vaccinated adult close contacts and children close contacts aged 5-18 years and 6 months are strongly advised to undertake daily LFD testing for 7 days. Unvaccinated adult close contacts are required to isolate for 10 days and obtain a PCR as soon as possible (complete 10 day isolation even if PCR negative). All children testing remains at parental discretion and children under 5 are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily rapid lateral flow testing.</p> <p>Staff/pupil admissions to hospital from COVID-19 - SCC will set-up appropriate structures to support the school and wider community.</p>	<p>All routine control and IPC measures, e.g., hand washing, ventilation and CO2 monitoring, cleaning, LFD testing for staff, excluding symptomatic individuals from the setting, promotion of vaccination to eligible staff and students</p> <p>Essential visiting only (option to hold events)⁵ Visitor face masks whilst on-site (unless exempt for medical reasons) Staff face coverings in communal areas outside of the classroom, unless exempt for medical reasons Student face coverings in communal areas outside of the classroom and on both school transport and public transport, unless exempt for medical reasons</p> <p>Twice-weekly LFD home testing for asymptomatic staff and secondary aged students Settings are encouraged to ask for evidence of test results.</p> <p>Daily LFD testing of fully vaccinated staff and children aged 5-18 years and 6 months who are close contacts⁶ and isolation of unvaccinated staff who are close contacts – vaccinated adult close contacts and children close contacts aged 5-18 years and 6 months are strongly advised to undertake daily LFD testing for 7 days. Unvaccinated adult close contacts are required to isolate for 10 days and obtain a PCR as soon as possible (complete 10 day isolation even if PCR negative). All children testing remains at parental discretion and children under 5 are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily rapid lateral flow testing.</p> <p>Staff/student admissions to hospital from COVID-19 - SCC will set-up appropriate structures to support the school and wider community.</p>

¹ Any events organised by the setting are subject to settings undertaking a thorough risk assessment. See section [5.3 Essential visiting & events](#) on further guidance.

² As identified by NHS T&T or local Public Health officials

³ Any events organised by the setting are subject to settings undertaking a thorough risk assessment. See section [5.3 Essential visiting & events](#) on further guidance.

⁴ As identified by NHS T&T or local Public Health officials.

⁵ Any events organised by the setting are subject to settings undertaking a thorough risk assessment. See section [5.3 Essential visiting & events](#) on further guidance.

⁶ As identified by NHS T&T or local Public Health officials.



Threshold	Criteria to revoke measures	Early Years (children aged 0-4)	Primary (pupils aged 4-11)	Secondary, colleges and further education (students aged 11-19)
Level 2 - setting has met national threshold, but below level 3 threshold <i>For most education and childcare settings (whichever criteria is reached first):</i> 5-14 children, pupils, students, or staff who are likely to have <u>mixed closely</u> , test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period OR 10-29% of a defined group of children, pupils, students, or staff who are likely to have <u>mixed closely</u> ⁷ test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period <i>Special schools and residential settings, and settings with 20 or fewer children, pupils, students, or staff:</i> 2-5 children/staff who are likely to have mixed closely test positive for COVID-19 within a 10 day period	Setting falls below Level 2 threshold definition	As per Level 1 + Any measures agreed at an Incident Management Team meeting or with Suffolk County Council's CYP COVID Support Team to deal with setting-specific COVID-19 incident Settings are not recommended to hold any face-to-face events unless there are exceptional circumstances ⁸ Consider⁹ re-introducing 'bubble' arrangements indoors Consider¹⁰ staggered start and end times to reduce mixing Please contact CYPC19@suffolk.gov.uk for support if required	As per Level 1 + Any measures agreed at an Incident Management Team meeting or with Suffolk County Council's CYP COVID Support Team to deal with setting-specific COVID-19 incident Settings are not recommended to hold any face-to-face events unless there are exceptional circumstances ¹¹ Consider¹² re-introducing 'bubble' arrangements indoors Consider¹³ staggered start and end times to reduce mixing Please contact CYPC19@suffolk.gov.uk for support if required	As per Level 1 + Any measures agreed at an Incident Management Team meeting or with Suffolk County Council's CYP COVID Support Team to deal with setting-specific COVID-19 incident Settings are not recommended to hold any face-to-face events unless there are exceptional circumstances ¹⁴ Consider¹⁵ face-coverings for staff and students <u>in classrooms</u> as well as communal indoor areas. Group/cohort¹⁶ testing if advised by an IMT - where case numbers are very high, an IMT may advise daily or one-off testing for a wider group or cohort . An option of on-site testing may be available if supported by regional operations team at the UKHSA and agreed at the IMT. Please contact CYPC19@suffolk.gov.uk for support if required

⁷ The percentages in threshold definitions apply to a defined group that are likely to have mixed closely (e.g., have 10% of a class tested positive within 10 days) and not the whole school.

⁸ See section [5.3 Essential visiting & events](#) on further guidance.

⁹ Recommendation will be made by Suffolk County Council in discussion with the school on a case-by-case basis, taking into account school specifics.

¹⁰ Recommendation will be made by Suffolk County Council in discussion with the school on a case-by-case basis, taking into account school specifics.

¹¹ See section [5.3 Essential visiting & events](#) on further guidance.

¹² Recommendation will be made by Suffolk County Council in discussion with the school on a case-by-case basis, taking into account school specifics.

¹³ Recommendation will be made by Suffolk County Council in discussion with the school on a case-by-case basis, taking into account school specifics.

¹⁴ See section [5.3 Essential visiting & events](#) on further guidance.

¹⁵ Recommendation will be made by Suffolk County Council in discussion with the school on a case-by-case basis, taking into account school specifics.

¹⁶ The Group/Cohort are not official close contacts of the cases (e.g., a friendship group), but a wider group (e.g., a whole year group) that may be affected and deemed at risk through the risk assessment of the outbreak by SCC and the setting.



Threshold	Criteria to revoke measures	Early Years (children aged 0-4)	Primary (pupils aged 4-11)	Secondary, colleges and further education (students aged 11-19)
Level 3¹⁷ Where despite level 2 actions, chains of transmission are not broken. <i>The likely¹⁸ threshold for most education and childcare settings (whichever criteria is reached first):</i> 15 children, pupils, students, or staff who are likely to have <u>mixed closely</u> , test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period OR 30% of a defined group of children, pupils, students, or staff who are likely to have <u>mixed closely</u> ¹⁹ test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period <i>The likely²⁰ threshold for special schools and residential settings, and settings with 20 or fewer children, pupils, students, or staff:</i> 6 children/staff who are likely to have <u>mixed closely</u> test positive for COVID-19 within a 10 day period	Setting falls below Level 3 threshold definition	As per Level 2 + Settings are not recommended to organise any face-to-face events If chains of transmission are not broken by all above measures, consider²¹ attendance restrictions as last resort - Affected class or group to move to home learning for as short a period of time as possible, but with on-site provision remaining for vulnerable children and key worker children. <u>If you consider your current situation is Level 3, please contact CYPC19@suffolk.gov before taking any action</u>	As per level 2 + Settings are not recommended to organise any face-to-face events If chains of transmission are not broken by all above measures, consider²² attendance restrictions as last resort - Affected class or group to move to home learning for as short a period of time as possible, but with on-site provision remaining for vulnerable children and key worker children. <u>If you consider your current situation is Level 3, please contact CYPC19@suffolk.gov before taking any action</u>	As per level 2 + Settings are not recommended to organise any face-to-face events If chains of transmission are not broken by all above measures, consider²³ attendance restrictions as last resort - Affected class or group to move to home learning for as short a period of time as possible, but with on-site provision remaining for vulnerable children and key worker children. <u>If you consider your current situation is Level 3, please contact CYPC19@suffolk.gov before taking any action</u>

¹⁷ There is no national guidance or specific evidence at what threshold should attendance restrictions be considered. We suggest 15 cases / 30% as a guide which SCC CYP are in agreement. E.g., Cumbria introduce attendance restrictions at higher level 4 - 20 cases / 40%.

¹⁸ Attendance restrictions will be a case-by-case decisions where level 2 actions have not broken the chains of transmission. The 15 cases / 30% of a group threshold acts as a guide and not a strict threshold. If you consider your setting's current situation is Level 3, please contact CYPC19@suffolk.gov before taking any action.

¹⁹ The percentages in threshold definitions apply to a defined group that are likely to have mixed closely (e.g., have 10% of a class tested positive within 10 days) and not the whole school.

²⁰ Attendance restrictions will be a case-by-case decisions where level 2 actions have not broken the chains of transmission. The 15 cases / 30% of a group threshold acts as a guide and not a strict threshold. If you consider your setting's current situation is Level 3, please contact CYPC19@suffolk.gov before taking any action.

²¹ As Suffolk is in an ERA, recommendation will be made by the local operational outbreak management team, including Public Health and Children and Young People Services representatives. Regional schools commissioner will be kept updated.

²² Recommendation will be made by the local operational outbreak management team, including Public Health and Children and Young People Services representatives. Regional schools commissioner will be kept updated.

²³ Recommendation will be made by the local operational outbreak management team, including Public Health and Children and Young People Services representatives. Regional schools commissioner will be kept updated.

4. Threshold definitions & examples

4.1 What level is my school or setting?

Please see [Appendix 2](#) for a flowchart to support school and setting leaders to identify which level they are on.

Moving up levels - as soon as settings believe they have reached the threshold for a level, they should implement the measures applicable to that level. Settings should contact CYP19@Suffolk.gov.uk if:

- the setting is unsure if they meet the level definition
- the setting needs advice on how to implement any of the suggested measures or which of the “consider” measures to choose
- the setting believes that they have reached level 3

Moving down from levels 2 and 3 – this will be decided on a case-by-case basis with the setting and the SCC outbreak management team.

4.2 Definition of “likely to have mixed closely” / “linked” cases

This will be based on a setting assessment of the links between the confirmed cases and usually means that the cases are within a class, form, a set (e.g., Maths, English), known friendship group or a school club where the cases are likely to have been in close contact with each other (see national guidance on [What is meant by a contact](#)).

The setting will be best placed to know to what extent particular students may be mixing with other students outside their immediate form group (e.g., a year group may be relevant in secondary schools).

Importantly, the percentages in threshold definitions apply to **a defined group that are likely to have mixed closely and not to the whole school** (e.g., have 10% of a class tested positive within 10 days? Have 20% of a school club tested positive?).

5. Control measure definitions & examples

5.1 Twice-weekly LFD home testing for asymptomatic staff / students

Settings are asked to increase participation in twice weekly LFD home testing for asymptomatic staff in all settings and secondary aged students, including directly communicating with parents on the importance of regular testing.

Staff and students are asked to do the tests themselves at home (e.g., obtain kits from local pharmacy or [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)) and only attend the setting if their test is negative. Settings are



encouraged to ask staff and students to provide evidence of test results / implement a monitoring process. Suffolk County Council is exploring to support settings with monitoring this by obtaining access for all settings to <https://testregister.co.uk/>, and this is planned to be in place for the start of the new term in 2022.

5.2 Daily LFD testing of close contacts who are vaccinated adults or children

Effective from 14 December, the government released guidance on [daily LFD testing for contacts of any COVID case](#), replacing earlier requirement for all Omicron close contacts to isolate:

- **Isolation of unvaccinated adult (aged over 18 years and 6 months) close contacts of any COVID case** – unvaccinated adult contacts who are contacted by NHS T&T or local Public Health officials, need to isolate for 10 days and get a PCR test as soon as possible (complete 10 day isolation even if PCR negative). It's a legal requirement to self-isolate if you're told to by NHS Test and Trace. You could be fined if you do not do this. Close contact guidance is available on [NHS.UK](#).
- **Daily LFD testing for fully vaccinated adults and children aged 5-18 years and 6 months who are close contacts of any COVID case** – fully vaccinated adult contacts and children who are contacted by NHS T&T or a local Public health officials are strongly advised to take a rapid LFD test every day for 7 days or until 10 days since your last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19 if this is earlier. There is no need to isolate if tests are negative and no requirement to obtain a PCR unless the individual becomes symptomatic or tests positive on LFD. All children testing remains at parental discretion and children under 5 are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily rapid lateral flow testing. Close contact guidance is available on [NHS.UK](#).

Note on close contact testing in an outbreak with multiple cases – there may be scenarios where within an outbreak there are multiple cases and the same close contacts are identified repeatedly (e.g., Student A is close contact of Case 1 on Monday and later also a close contact of Case 2 on Friday of the same week). In these situations where the cases are part of the same outbreak in the same setting, close contacts do not need to “restart” daily testing with every new case in the setting. However, if the close contact who is currently undertaking daily testing becomes a close contact in another outbreak or setting (e.g., Student A becomes a close contact of a new household case), they should restart daily testing from contact with the new case in this new setting.

Settings are asked to increase participation in twice weekly LFD home testing for asymptomatic staff in all settings and secondary aged students, including directly communicating with parents on the importance of regular testing.

Staff and students are asked to do the tests themselves at home (e.g., obtain kits from local pharmacy or [gov.uk](#)) and only attend the setting if their test is negative. Settings are encouraged to ask staff and students to provide evidence of test results / implement a

monitoring process, e.g., by using <https://testregister.co.uk/> which Suffolk County Council has obtained for all Suffolk childcare and educational settings.

5.3 Essential visiting & events

'Essential visitors' to the setting should be considered as any visitor essential to the delivery of education opportunities for children and young people. They may include Health (including immunisation teams or Integrated Community Paediatric Services), Social Care and specialist education teams delivering direct support to children and young people and visits focussed on safeguarding. Ultimately, the decision rests with school and setting leaders, based on their own risk assessments alongside the latest government guidance.

Public health advice about **events run and organised by the setting** (whether these are on-site like a school play or off-site like a carol service in a church building) are based on the level of the setting detailed in the table below (see section [4.1 What level is my school or setting?](#)). We recognise that events are of varied nature and settings will need to consider event-specifics in their risk assessments. For example, sports events between two settings should be considered if both settings are at level 1.

Threshold*	Public Health advice
Level 1	<p>Essential visiting only and option to hold events, subject to settings undertaking a detailed risk assessment of their COVID-19 situation and risk assessment of the event. Some of the control measures settings may want to include are (this is not a prescribed or exhaustive list and exact measures will be decided by the setting, based on the type of the event and setting's risk assessment):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All routine control and IPC measures • Restricting number of attendees • no attendance of positive cases, symptomatic individuals, contacts of positive cases; • enhanced ventilation (e.g., can the event be held outside); • enhanced hygiene measures (such as regular cleaning of high-touch surfaces; ensuring social distancing and reduced mixing as much as possible (e.g., sitting in family groups). • audience and observer face coverings (including when singing); • promoting all attendees to take an LFD test within 48hrs before the event • asking for proof of the negative LFD test result upon entrance. <p>When planning ahead for events, we suggest settings have contingency plans in the event that the number of COVID-19 cases in the rise and a school moves out of level 1 into levels 2 or 3.</p> <p>Please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov.uk if you need further guidance.</p>
Level 2	<p>Essential visiting only, and events are not recommended - as there is an ongoing outbreak, events should only be held in exceptional circumstances. This does not exclude settings recording virtual/zoom events. Please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov.uk if you believe your setting has exceptional circumstances.</p>

Threshold*	Public Health advice
Level 3	Essential visiting only, including no events as there is ongoing on-site transmission. This does not exclude settings recording virtual/zoom events.

*Settings with no known Omicron cases

SCC makes no recommendations about attending **events in the community that are not run by the setting** (i.e., where the setting is not in control of the COVID-19 control measures such as trip to attend a play in a community theatre). These remain school and setting leader decisions, based on their own risk assessments alongside the latest government guidance. Guidance on risk assessments and up-to-date frameworks is available on <https://suffolklearning.com/safety-health-wellbeing/coronavirus-covid-19/>

These are SCC recommendations, which cannot be mandated. The final decision is with settings on what events or activities take place on their premises, in line with their risk assessment and mitigating covid secure measures.

5.4 'Bubble' arrangements

This will generally only be advised in early years and primary school settings as not feasible to introduce in secondary schools on short notice. The SCC recommendation will be taking into account setting specifics, e.g., there will be some settings which will be able to implement most of a bubble approach but may still need to use a visiting teacher between bubbles, with some enhanced protective measures. Bubble arrangements do not restrict attendance - the objective of introducing bubble arrangements is to ensure face-to-face education continues.

Although 'bubbles' are not referenced in the DfE Contingency Framework, the [COVID-19 Schools Operational Guidance](#) is clear that it may become necessary to introduce them:

"You should make sure your contingency plans (sometimes called outbreak management plans) cover the possibility that it may become necessary to reintroduce 'bubbles' for a temporary period, to reduce mixing between groups.

Any decision to recommend the reintroduction of 'bubbles' would not be taken lightly and would need to take account of the detrimental impact they can have on the delivery of education".

5.5 Attendance restrictions

If COVID chains of transmission are not broken by all above measures, attendance restrictions may be considered as last resort - affected class or group to move to home learning for as short a period of time as possible, but with on-site provision remaining for vulnerable children and key worker children.

We also acknowledge that schools may be impacted by non-COVID related staff absences (e.g., seasonal flu) and that it is not always possible to obtain supply staff, which may mean

that settings are temporarily unable to operate safe on-site provision. Where schools are faced with this situation, please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov

6. What support is available to setting leaders

Suffolk County Council's CYP COVID Support Team provide advice and support to all CYP settings. COVID Support Officers will discuss the current situation with the school leader and will advise which level the setting is at.

The CYP COVID Support Officers will also recommend which control measures are appropriate and proportionate and can help setting implement their outbreak management plans. The team also support with stepping up and stepping down any measures and work closely with the Suffolk COVID Response Hub and Public Health Duty Consultant and any testing requirements are requested through the CYP COVID Support Team.

Suffolk County Council is supporting schools with the oversight of twice weekly and daily close contact LFD testing for both students and staff and has obtained county wide deployment of the Test Register (testregister.co.uk).

The COVID Support Officers are also able to advise on any COVID related queries, such as isolation dates, changes in national or local guidance.

The team can be contacted via CYP19@suffolk.gov

7. Review periods for this guidance

Regular bi-weekly review schedule is shown in the table below:

Tasks / week	15-Nov	22-Nov	29-Nov	06-Dec	13-Dec	20-Dec	27-Dec	03-Jan	10-Jan
New measures in place									
Review week 1		1st Review							
Measures based on first review									
Review week 2				2nd Review					
Measures based on second review									
School holidays						school holidays			
Measures based on second review									
Review week 3									3rd review

7.1 22-26 November review week

THE 14 DEC UPDATE IS SPECIFIC TO THE CHANGE IN NATIONAL GUIDANCE AND WE HAVE NOT REVIEWED DATA SUBSEQUENT TO WHAT IS PRESENTED BELOW.

Local, regional, national trends

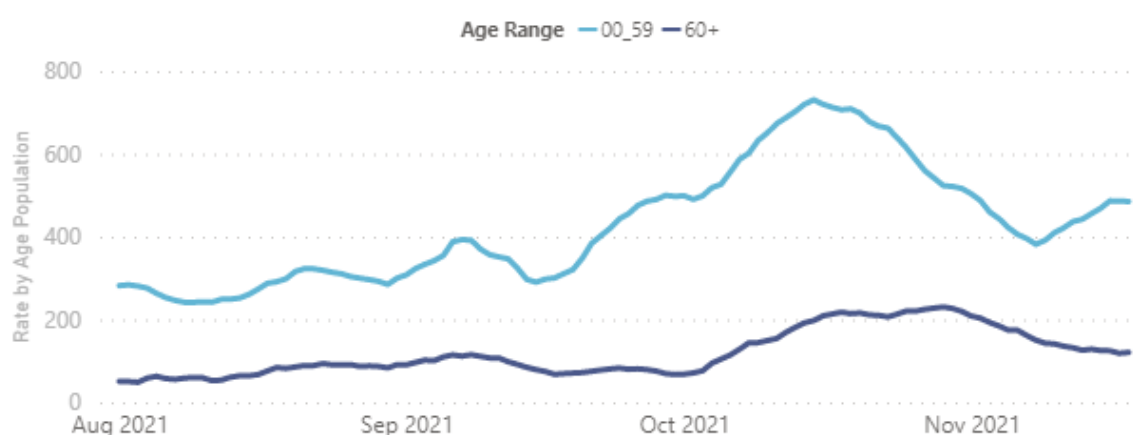
The latest available data (week ending 18 November) shows that Suffolk COVID-19 case rate for ages 0-19 is below the East of England rate and the England rate. However, as shown in both figure 1 and figure 2 trend data, **cases are currently growing locally, regionally and nationally – 16.8% rise in 0-19 Suffolk cases in the week ending 18 November.**

Figure 1 COVID-19 case rates by age band (Suffolk, regional, England) – week ending 18 November

LTLA Name	Ages 0-19 case rate this week per 100,000	Ages 0-19 case rate last week per 100,000	Change in 0-19 case rate (%)	60+ case rate this week	60+ case rate last week	Change in 60+ case rate (%)
Babergh	690.8	638.9	↑ 8.1 %	90.9	159.1	↓ -42.9 %
East Suffolk	677.0	531.9	↑ 27.3 %	120.8	124.2	↓ -2.7 %
Ipswich	532.1	442.9	↑ 20.1 %	95.0	137.5	↓ -30.9 %
Mid Suffolk	749.8	675.3	↑ 11.0 %	126.5	123.5	↑ 2.4 %
West Suffolk	784.7	703.3	↑ 11.6 %	152.7	148.6	↑ 2.8 %
Suffolk	684.9	586.5	↑ 16.8 %	120.9	135.7	↓ -10.9 %
East of England	771.5	579.7	↑ 33.1 %	150.3	171.3	↓ -12.3 %
England	690.5	523.4	↑ 31.9 %	164.3	184.5	↓ -10.9 %

Figure 2 COVID-19 case rate by age group (trends)

Case rate by Age Group



Local situation

The below table summarises how many settings the SCC CYP team are currently aware of in each level of this framework.

Level	Early years	Primary	Middle	AP/SEND	Secondary schools	Total
1	634	185	2	24	43	888
2	0	36	0	0	0	36
3	0	7	0	0	0	7
Total	634	228	2	24	43	931

[data correct as of 24 November 2021]

Review decision

Based on the above key updates, the Health Protection Board agreed at the 24 November meeting not to change the control measures in the framework until the next review on the week commencing 6 November. This will be communicated to settings on 25 November.

7.2 6-10 December review week

Local, regional, national trends and developments

Key messages as of 7 December 2021:

- 0-19 cases continue to grow locally, regionally and nationally (see figure 3 below)
- The Suffolk 0-19 case rate is not statistically different²⁴ from the East of England or the England rate.

Figure 3 COVID-19 case rates by age band (Suffolk, regional, England) – week ending 1 December

LTLA Name	Ages 0-19 case rate this week per 100,000	Ages 0-19 case rate last week per 100,000	Change in 0-19 case rate (%)
Babergh	1,173.9	675.3	↑ 73.8 %
East Suffolk	700.2	719.6	↓ -2.7 %
Ipswich	502.3	493.4	↑ 1.8 %
Mid Suffolk	880.2	819.6	↑ 7.4 %
West Suffolk	967.3	994.5	↓ -2.7 %
Suffolk	803.2	748.6	↑ 7.3 %
East of England	908.6	836.8	↑ 8.6 %
England	780.3	740.5	↑ 5.4 %

Local situation

²⁴ Statistical significance testing results provided by Public Health Suffolk's Knowledge, Intelligence & Evidence team

The below table summarises how many settings the SCC CYP team are currently aware of in each level of this framework. **Compared to previous review week, the number of settings in level 2 and level 3 have slightly increased.**

Level	Early years	Primary	Middle	AP/SEND	Secondary schools	Total (at previous review)
1	634	180	2	23	40	879 (888)
2	0	41	0	1	2	44 (36)
3	0	7	0	0	1	8 (7)
Total	634	228	2	24	43	931

[data correct as of 7/12/2021]

Feedback from sector leads

- Largely positive and sector leads supportive of keeping guidance unchanged
- Mixed feedback on events – Some school leaders supporting events happening and others keen not to hold any.

Review decision

Based on the above key updates, the Health Protection Board agreed at the 8 December meeting not to change the control measures in the framework until 14 January 2022 with Omicron incidents managed by the IMT or similar mechanisms. Due to the holiday break and test-on-return w/c 4 January 2021, next review is planned for w/c 10th January and a virtual HPB on 12th January to review any proposed changes to the framework and agree next steps. This will be communicated to settings on 9 December.

Rationale for the proposal above:

- Increase in 0-19 case rates continues and some increase in level 2-3
- As only one more week of school term left it may not be worthwhile making changes which will take time to implement.

In arriving at the above proposal, we have considered the impact of the proposed measures on the children's' ability to experience face to face education, their safety and wellbeing and the safety of teachers and other support staff.

8. Communications

- Suffolk Headlines – weekly on Tuesdays to Head Teachers and senior school staff. Includes Council updates, COVID-19 advice, and general schools updates.
- Social media - E.G Facebook and Twitter – ad-hoc for major updates to all Suffolk residents or sometimes targeted communication to a geography (e.g., to give COVID-19 advice in an area near a school that might have had an outbreak).

Additional control measure announcements:



- 6 October 2021 - [letter to school and setting leaders from Stuart Keeble, Director of Public Health, and Allan Cadzow, Director for Children and Young People's Services.](#)
- 6 October 2021- [letter for parents and carers which we would ask you to send to the parents and carers of children at your school](#)
- 20 October 2021 – [letter to parents, carers and School Leaders](#)
- 16 November 2021 – Notification of Framework to education and early years settings
- 19 November 2021 – Update to the Framework around events sent to education settings
- 25 November 2021 – Update on current Framework communicated to education and early years settings
- 9 December 2021 – Update on current Framework communicated to education and early years settings

9. Process for approval and implementation of this framework

1. Engagement with SCC CYP team and incorporation of their feedback – week commencing 1 November 2021 - **Complete**
2. Engagement with sector leads and incorporation of their feedback week commencing 1 November 2021 (see [appendix 3](#) for consultation questions) – **Complete**
3. Ensure the resources and plan are in place for the implementation of this framework in discussion with COVID-19 Response Hub - week commencing 8 November 2021
4. Present the final plan to the Health Protection Board for approval - week commencing 8 November 2021 - **Complete**
5. Implementation school and settings leads from 15 November 2021 - **Complete**

10. Frequently asked questions

To support parents and carers with these measures and other COVID-19 related questions, the FAQs on the SCC website have been updated and available via [Latest guidance on coronavirus \(COVID-19\) | Suffolk County Council.](#)

These will be updated every time there is a change to advised control measures.

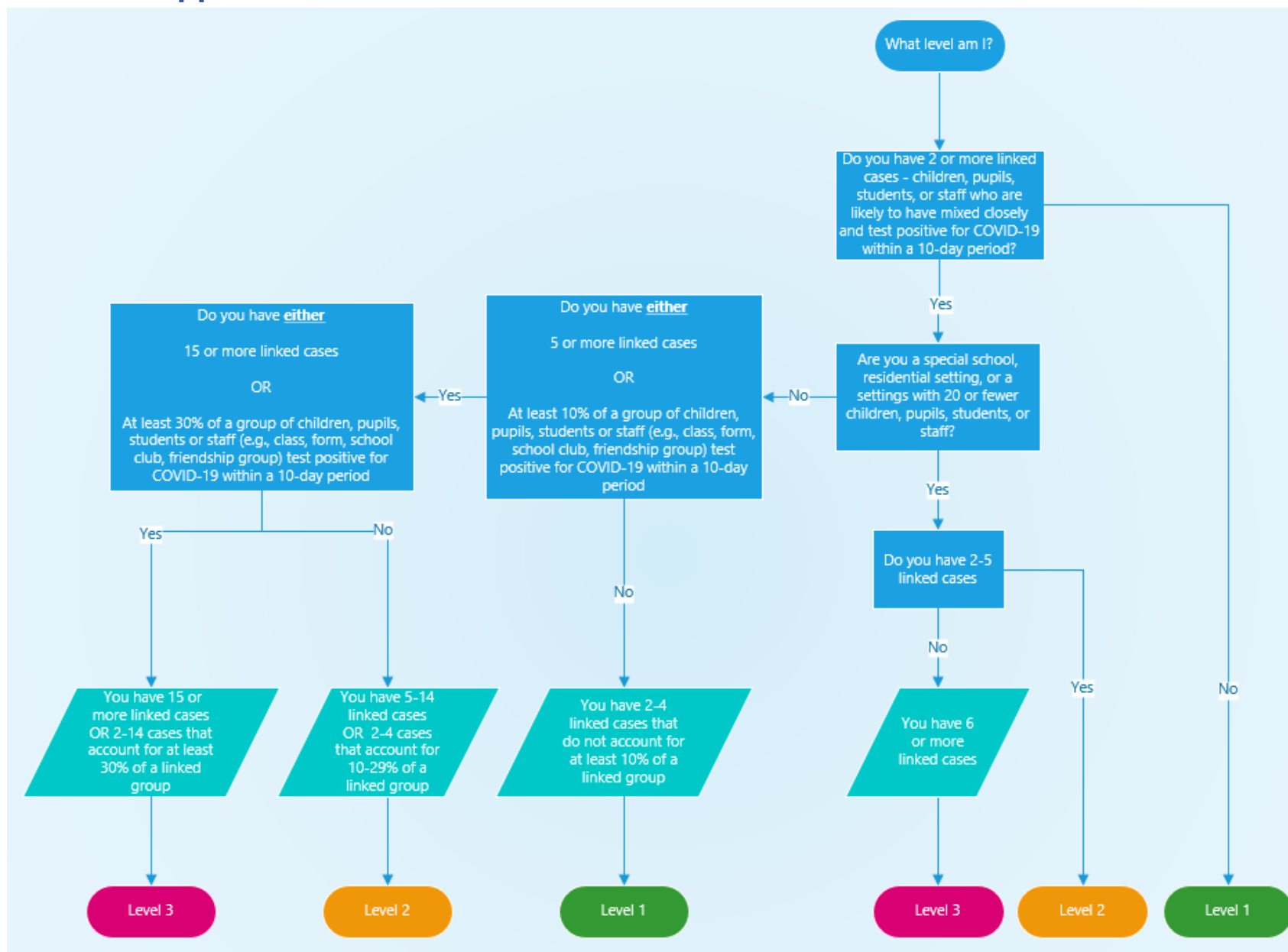
11. Appendix 1: National Education Contingency Framework - Summary of roles and responsibilities

Party	Roles and responsibilities
All education and childcare settings	<p>Have contingency (outbreak management) plans in place describing what they would do if children, pupils, students or staff test positive for COVID-19 and how they would operate if they were advised to reintroduce any measures described in the national contingency framework (including reintroduction of asymptomatic test sites). Follow measures in the Operational Guidance sets out the measures that all education settings should have in place to manage transmission of COVID-19 day to day.</p> <p>Consider taking extra action if the number of positive cases increases substantially. The national thresholds can be used by settings as an indication for when to seek public health advice if they are concerned. All settings should seek public health advice if a pupil, student, child or staff member is admitted to hospital with COVID-19. They can do this by phoning the DfE helpline (0800 046 8687, option 1), or in line with other local arrangements. Hospitalisation could indicate increased severity of illness or a new variant of concern. Settings may be offered public health support in managing risk assessments and communicating with staff and parents.</p> <p>Employers should call the Self-Isolation Service Hub on 020 3743 6715 as soon as they are made aware that any of their workers have tested positive.</p> <p>Provide high-quality remote learning in schools, further education and higher education settings for all pupils and students in cases where they have tested positive and are well enough to learn from home or when attendance at the setting has been temporarily restricted.</p> <p>All settings should continue their strong messaging about signs and symptoms, isolation advice and testing, to support prompt isolation of suspected cases. Settings should also continue to encourage vaccination uptake for eligible students and staff.</p>
Local authorities, directors of public health (DsPH) and PHE health protection teams (HPTs)	<p>Responsible for managing local outbreaks. can recommend measures described in the contingency framework in individual education and childcare settings as part of their outbreak management responsibilities.</p> <p>work with their regional partnership teams (RPTs) to escalate issues from the local level into the central Local Action Committee command structure.</p> <p>DsPH should keep DfE informed of all cases where they are considering recommending ATS for an education setting, via their RPT and RSC. Where they have advised settings to take extra measures, DsPH and HPTs will work closely with their Regional Partnership Teams and keep the situation under regular review. They will inform settings when it is appropriate to stop additional measures, or if they should be extended.</p>
Ministers	Through the Local Action Committee command structure, ministers consider and take decisions on measures on an area-by-area basis in



	<p>light of all available evidence, public health advice and the local and national context.</p> <p>In the event of a major outbreak or VoC that poses a significant risk to individuals on the shielded patient list (SPL), ministers can agree to reintroduce shielding.</p>
RPTs	<p>RPTs support local areas in managing outbreaks and provide advice and insights from across the country to the Chief Medical Officer and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to inform decision making.</p>

12. Appendix 2: Flowchart – What level am I?





13. Appendix 3: Sector Leads consultation

Consultation questions – responses due 5pm on Tue 9 November 2021:

1. Are you in agreement with the objectives outlined in 3.1?
2. Are the definitions of levels outlined in section 3.2, section 4 and the flowchart in appendix 2 of the document clear? In your view, will the settings be able to apply these to identify their level, with the support of CYP team if needed? Please suggest any amendments to provide further clarity.
3. In your considered opinion, is the final level 3 threshold (15 linked cases or 30% of a defined group) about right, too low, or too high? This is the threshold for considering introducing attendance restrictions as a last resort if all other measures within level 2 have not broken chains of transmission.
4. Are the definitions of the additional control measures outlined in section 3.2 and section 5 clear? Please suggest any amendments to provide further clarity.
5. Please provide any general or specific feedback on the document for us to consider before finalising it for implementation

Public Health framework for managing COVID-19 in Suffolk childcare & educational settings – Suffolk COVID-19 Schools' Plan from 15 November 2021

First review: 24 November 2021

Presenters:

Terezija Zermanos, Health and Care Programme Manager, Public Health Suffolk;

Jemma Lynch, CYP Lead COVID Officer & Education Officer

Dr P Badrinath, Lead Consultant for Health Protection & Suffolk COVID enhanced Specialist Team, Public Health Suffolk



Content

- Objectives
- Background
- Framework recap
- Review week data & proposal
- Views from the HPB
- Next Steps



Objectives

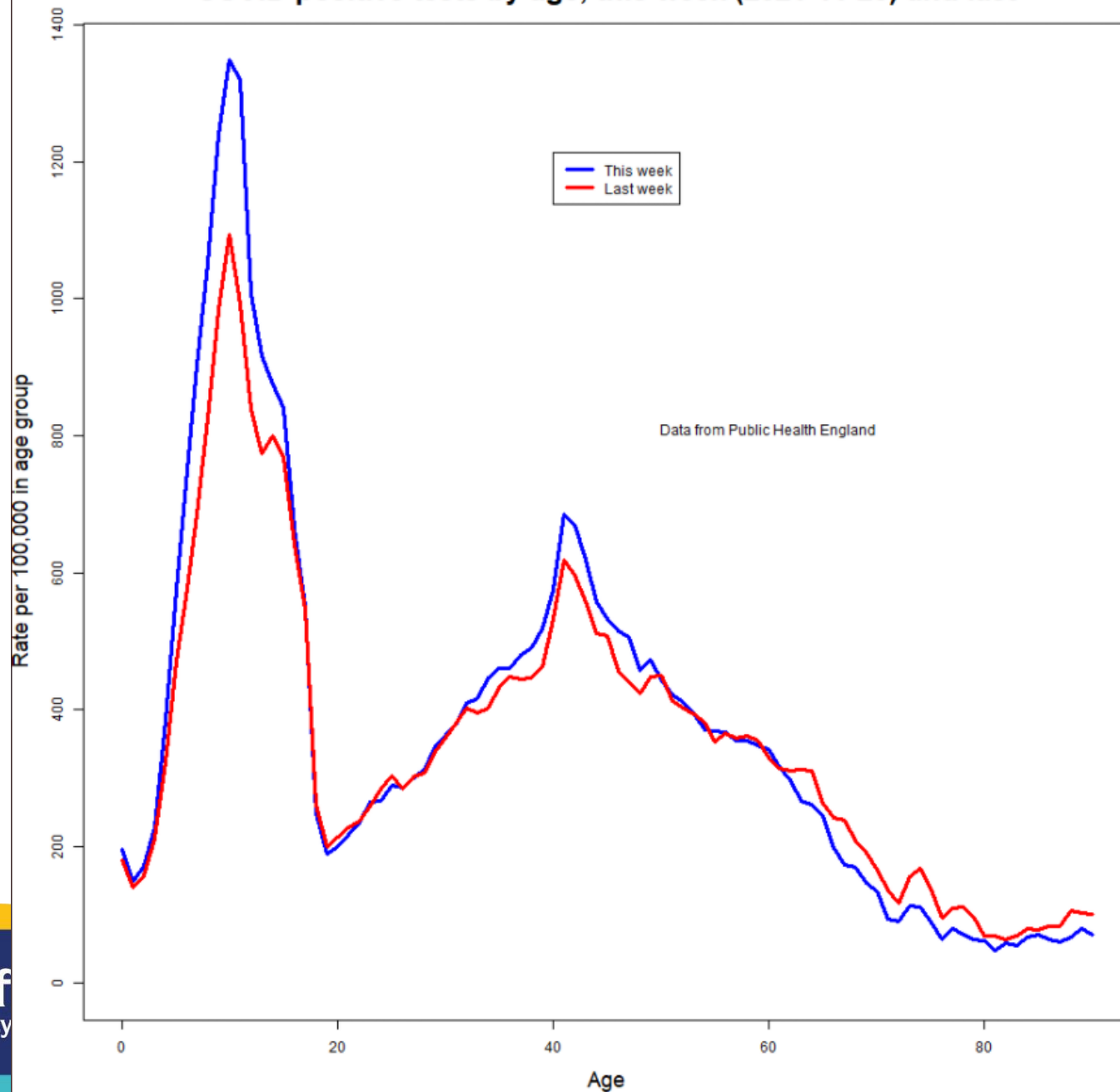
- Present the HPB with updates on the current COVID landscape in childcare and educational setting
- Propose our plan going forward as part of the first review
- Seek HPB views and reach a decision



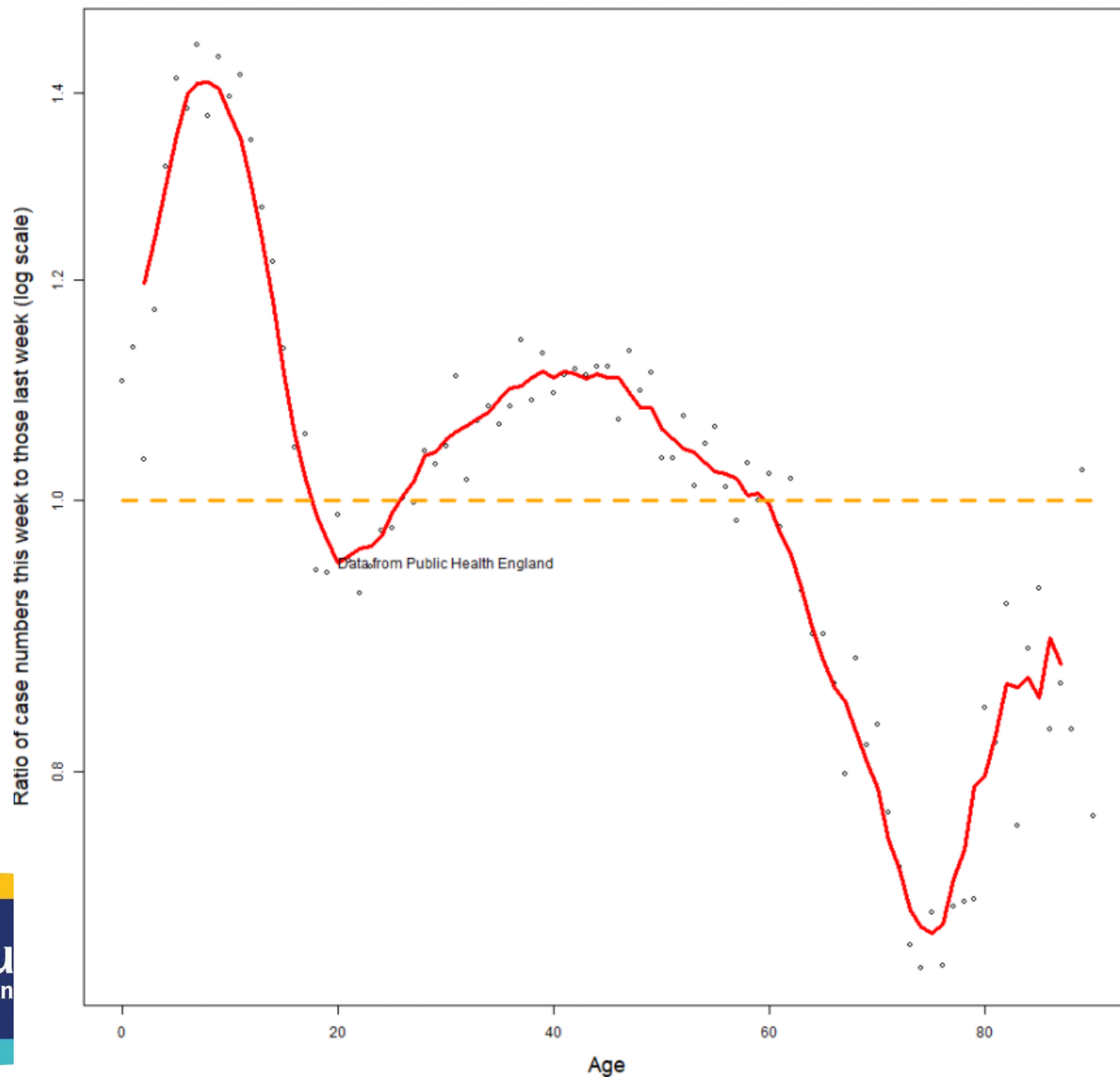
Background

- Three-level Public Health framework for managing COVID-19 in childcare and educational settings – signed-off by HPB on 12 November
- Based on sector lead feedback, a v2 of the plan was implemented on 19 November to mainly clarify recommendations about events
- Plan is to be reviewed every two weeks – this is the first review

COVID positive tests by age, this week (2021-11-20) and last



Effect of age on changing case numbers, week ending 2021-11-17





Change of guard – Badri to Tess





Three-level framework (recap)

Level 1 – all Suffolk settings

Early Years (children aged 0-4)	Primary (pupils aged 4-11)	Secondary, colleges and further education (students aged 11-19)
<p>All routine control and IPC measures, e.g., hand washing, ventilation, cleaning, excluding symptomatic individuals from the setting, promotion of vaccination to eligible staff.</p> <p>Essential visiting only (option to hold events)¹ Visitor face masks whilst on-site (unless exempt for medical reasons) Staff face coverings (in communal areas outside of the classroom, unless exempt for medical reasons)</p> <p>Twice-weekly LFD home testing for asymptomatic staff Settings are encouraged to ask for evidence of test results.</p> <p>Daily LFD testing of vaccinated staff who are household or close contacts of cases – ask staff to continue to attend the setting, undertake a daily LFD test, and take a PCR test on day 5 from first contact with the symptomatic positive case. Settings are encouraged to ask for evidence of test results.</p> <p>Staff/children admissions to hospital from COVID-19 - SCC will set-up appropriate structures to support the setting and wider community.</p>	<p>All routine control and IPC measures, e.g., hand washing, ventilation and CO2 monitoring, cleaning, excluding symptomatic individuals from the setting, promotion of vaccination to eligible staff.</p> <p>Essential visiting only (option to hold events)² Visitor face masks whilst on-site (unless exempt for medical reasons) Staff face coverings (in communal areas outside of the classroom, unless exempt for medical reasons)</p> <p>Twice-weekly LFD home testing for asymptomatic staff Settings are encouraged to ask for evidence of test results.</p> <p>Daily LFD testing of vaccinated staff and primary aged pupils (at parental discretion) who are household and close contacts of cases – ask staff and pupils to continue to attend the setting, undertake a daily LFD test, and take a PCR test on day 5 from first contact with the symptomatic positive case. Settings are encouraged to ask for evidence of test results.</p> <p>Staff/pupil admissions to hospital from COVID-19 - SCC will set-up appropriate structures to support the school and wider community.</p>	<p>All routine control and IPC measures, e.g., hand washing, ventilation and CO2 monitoring, cleaning, LFD testing for staff, excluding symptomatic individuals from the setting, promotion of vaccination to eligible staff and students</p> <p>Essential visiting only (option to hold events)³ Visitor face masks whilst on-site (unless exempt for medical reasons) Staff face coverings in communal areas outside of the classroom, unless exempt for medical reasons Student face coverings in communal areas outside of the classroom and on both school transport and public transport, unless exempt for medical reasons</p> <p>Twice-weekly LFD home testing for asymptomatic staff and secondary aged students Settings are encouraged to ask for evidence of test results.</p> <p>Daily LFD testing of vaccinated staff and secondary aged pupils who are household and close contacts of cases – ask staff and students to continue to attend the setting, undertake a daily LFD test, and take a PCR test on day 5 from first contact with the symptomatic positive case. Settings are encouraged to ask for evidence of test results.</p> <p>Staff/student admissions to hospital from COVID-19 - SCC will set-up appropriate structures to support the school and wider community.</p>

Level 2 – settings meeting threshold

For most education and childcare settings (whichever criteria is reached first):

- **5-14** children, pupils, students, or staff who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period;
- OR
- **10-29% of a defined group** of children, pupils, students, or staff who are likely to have mixed closely test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period

Early Years (children aged 0-4)	Primary (pupils aged 4-11)	Secondary, colleges and further education (students aged 11-19)
<p>As per Level 1</p> <p>+</p> <p>Any measures agreed at an Incident Management Team meeting or with Suffolk County Council's CYP COVID Support Team to deal with setting-specific COVID-19 incident</p> <p>Settings are not recommended to hold any face-to-face events unless there are exceptional circumstances⁵</p> <p>Consider⁸ re-introducing 'bubble' arrangements indoors</p> <p>Consider⁷ staggered start and end times to reduce mixing</p> <p>Please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov.uk for support if required</p>	<p>As per Level 1</p> <p>+</p> <p>Any measures agreed at an Incident Management Team meeting or with Suffolk County Council's CYP COVID Support Team to deal with setting-specific COVID-19 incident</p> <p>Settings are not recommended to hold any face-to-face events unless there are exceptional circumstances⁸</p> <p>Consider⁸ re-introducing 'bubble' arrangements indoors</p> <p>Consider¹⁰ staggered start and end times to reduce mixing</p> <p>Consider¹¹ re-introducing Internal Contact Tracing with close contacts strongly advised to undertake daily LFD testing and seek PCR test on day 5 (as described in level 1 recommendation).</p> <p>Please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov.uk for support if required</p>	<p>As per Level 1</p> <p>+</p> <p>Any measures agreed at an Incident Management Team meeting or with Suffolk County Council's CYP COVID Support Team to deal with setting-specific COVID-19 incident</p> <p>Settings are not recommended to hold any face-to-face events unless there are exceptional circumstances¹²</p> <p>Consider¹³ face-coverings for staff and students <u>in classrooms</u> as well as communal indoor areas.</p> <p>Consider¹⁴ Internal Contact Tracing (where possible) with close contacts strongly advised to undertake daily LFD testing and seek PCR test on day 5 (as described in level 1 recommendation).</p> <p>Consider¹⁶ Group/cohort¹⁸ LFD testing - daily in secondary schools or colleges where case numbers are very high. This should be done for a minimum of 5 days, increasing to 7 days as necessary to ensure the final test is taken on a school day. Or a one-off round of LFD testing for a wider group or cohort in a secondary school. Settings are encouraged to obtain proof of test results / implement a monitoring process. SCC may be able to support on-site testing on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov.uk for support if required</p>

Level 3 – Where despite level 2 actions, chains of transmission are not broken.

The likely threshold for most education and childcare settings (whichever criteria is reached first):

- **15** children, pupils, students, or staff who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period; OR
- **30% of a defined group** of children, pupils, students, or staff who are likely to have mixed closely test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period

Early Years (children aged 0-4)	Primary (pupils aged 4-11)	Secondary, colleges and further education (students aged 11-19)
<p>As per Level 2</p> <p>+</p> <p>Settings are not recommended to organise any face-to-face events</p> <p>If chains of transmission are not broken by all above measures, consider²¹ attendance restrictions as last resort - Affected class or group to move to home learning for as short a period of time as possible, but with on-site provision remaining for vulnerable children and key worker children.</p> <p><u>If you consider your current situation is Level 3, please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov before taking any action</u></p>	<p>As per level 2</p> <p>+</p> <p>Settings are not recommended to organise any face-to-face events</p> <p>If chains of transmission are not broken by all above measures, consider²² attendance restrictions as last resort - Affected class or group to move to home learning for as short a period of time as possible, but with on-site provision remaining for vulnerable children and key worker children.</p> <p><u>If you consider your current situation is Level 3, please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov before taking any action</u></p>	<p>As per level 2</p> <p>+</p> <p>Settings are not recommended to organise any face-to-face events</p> <p>If chains of transmission are not broken by all above measures, consider²³ attendance restrictions as last resort - Affected class or group to move to home learning for as short a period of time as possible, but with on-site provision remaining for vulnerable children and key worker children.</p> <p><u>If you consider your current situation is Level 3, please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov before taking any action</u></p>

Plan 19 Nov update - events guidance

Threshold	Public Health advice
Level 1	<p>Essential visiting only and option to hold events, subject to settings undertaking a detailed risk assessment of their COVID-19 situation and risk assessment of the event. Some of the control measures settings may want to include are (this is not a prescribed or exhaustive list and exact measures will be decided by the setting, based on the type of the event and setting's risk assessment):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All routine control and IPC measures • Restricting number of attendees • no attendance of positive cases, symptomatic individuals, contacts of positive cases; • enhanced ventilation (e.g., can the event be held outside); • enhanced hygiene measures (such as regular cleaning of high-touch surfaces; ensuring social distancing and reduced mixing as much as possible (e.g., sitting in family groups). • audience and observer face coverings (including when singing); • promoting all attendees to take an LFD test within 48hrs before the event • asking for proof of the negative LFD test result upon entrance. <p>When planning ahead for events, we suggest settings have contingency plans in the event that the number of COVID-19 cases in the rise and a school moves out of level 1 into levels 2 or 3.</p> <p>Please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov.uk if you need further guidance.</p>
Level 2	<p>Essential visiting only, and events are not recommended - as there is an ongoing outbreak, events should only be held in exceptional circumstances. This does not exclude settings recording virtual/zoom events. Please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov.uk if you believe your setting has exceptional circumstances.</p>
Level 3	<p>Essential visiting only, including no events as there is ongoing on-site transmission. This does not exclude settings recording virtual/zoom events.</p>



Review periods for the guidance

Tasks / week	15-Nov	22-Nov	29-Nov	06-Dec	13-Dec	20-Dec	27-Dec
New measures in place							
<i>Review week</i>							
Measures TBC							
<i>Review week</i>							
Measures TBC							
School holidays							

Suffolk's ERA status also being reviewing w/c 22 November



Change of guard – Tess to Jemma





First review – W/C 22nd of Nov



Local, regional, national comparison

- The latest available data (week ending 18 November) shows that Suffolk COVID-19 case rate for ages 0-19 is **below the East of England rate and below the England rate.**
- However, **0-19 cases are currently growing** locally, regionally and nationally – 16.8% rise in 0-19 Suffolk cases in the week ending 18 November.



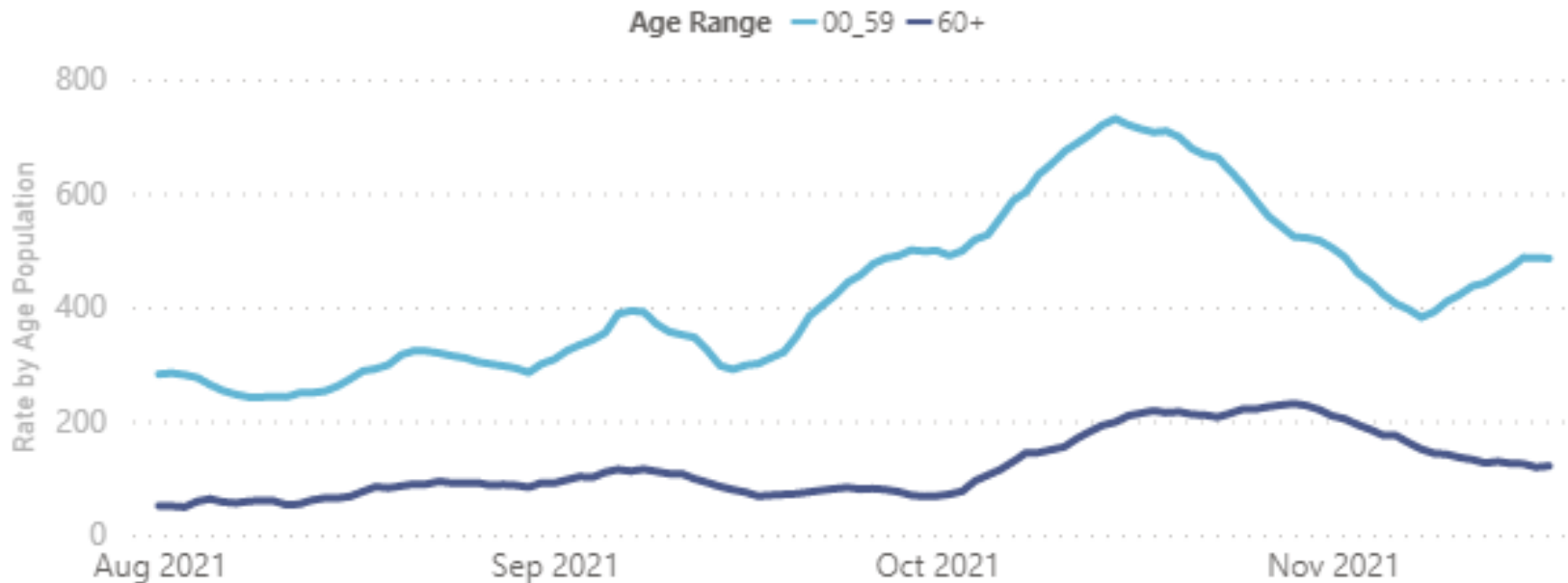
COVID-19 case rates by age band (Suffolk, regional, England) – week ending 18 November

LTLA Name	Ages 0-19 case rate this week per 100,000	Ages 0-19 case rate last week per 100,000	Change in 0-19 case rate (%)	60+ case rate this week	60+ case rate last week	Change in 60+ case rate (%)
Babergh	690.8	638.9	↑ 8.1 %	90.9	159.1	↓ -42.9 %
East Suffolk	677.0	531.9	↑ 27.3 %	120.8	124.2	↓ -2.7 %
Ipswich	532.1	442.9	↑ 20.1 %	95.0	137.5	↓ -30.9 %
Mid Suffolk	749.8	675.3	↑ 11.0 %	126.5	123.5	↑ 2.4 %
West Suffolk	784.7	703.3	↑ 11.6 %	152.7	148.6	↑ 2.8 %
Suffolk	684.9	586.5	↑ 16.8 %	120.9	135.7	↓ -10.9 %
East of England	771.5	579.7	↑ 33.1 %	150.3	171.3	↓ -12.3 %
England	690.5	523.4	↑ 31.9 %	164.3	184.5	↓ -10.9 %



COVID-19 case rate by age group (trends)

Case rate by Age Group





Local situation (as of 23 Nov)

- Outbreaks currently mainly in primary schools
- 21 settings in level 2
- 5 settings in level 3
- All other 931 settings in level 1

Level	Early years	Primary	Middle	AP/SEN	Secondary schools	Total
1	634	228	2	24	43	931
2	0	21	0	0	0	21
3	0	4	0	0	1	5
Total	634	253	2	24	44	957



Views of sector leaders on the proposal



Change of guard – Jemma to Badri





Proposal

- The new Schools framework has been in operation only since 15th of November. Need more time to achieve the desired impact
- Not to change the control measures in the framework until the next review week commencing 6 December. This would be communicated to settings on 25 November.



Views from HPB

1. Is the HPB in favour of the proposal to keep the current plan in place until next review which is on 6th of December ?



Next steps

- 24 Nov – HPB decision
- 25 Nov – Comms to sector leads
- 6 Dec – Second review week
- 8 Dec – HPB second review sign-off
- 10 Dec - Comms to sector leads
- Continued ongoing support to the sector



Public Health framework for managing COVID-19 in Suffolk childcare & educational settings - Suffolk COVID-19 Schools' Plan effective from 4 January 2022

This document has been produced by colleagues from Public Health Suffolk and Children and Young People's Services with input from education sector leads.

Version control

Version	Date implemented	Key changes
1	15 Nov 2021	First version of the plan
2	19 Nov 2021	Based on sector lead feedback, clarification about organising events, how quickly settings can move up/down levels, removal of whole-genome-sequencing
3	25 Nov 2021	New section 7.1 – first framework review Update in section 5.2 - Note on close contact testing in an outbreak with multiple cases.
4	9 Dec 2021	Updated 2.3 - ERA status ended on 5 Dec New 2.4 - guidance on Omicron variant Updated 5.2 – Note on outbreaks with significant number of close contacts Updated 5.3 - Vaccination teams are part of essential visiting New 7.2 – second framework review Updated that testregister.co.uk is planned to be in place for the start of the new term in 2022.
5	14 Dec 2021	1 - update to introduction that this framework applies to all COVID situations (Omicron and non-Omicron) 2.3 – national guidance update on daily contact testing, update on cohort testing and removal of internal contact tracing 3.2 – daily contact testing guidance update 5.2 – daily contact testing guidance update Removal of cohort testing (previously 5.4) and internal contact tracing (previously 5.6)
6	4 Jan 2022	Updated 2.3 Face covering requirements Table 1, updated to reflected face covering requirements in classrooms. 2.3 Testing – updated to reflected testing on days 6 & 7 for positive cases 2.3 removal of red list criteria and replaced with return travel testing requirements 2.3 removal of reference to measures in relation to Omicron 2.4 changes to 90-day testing when returning in spring term 3.2 update to date of new control measures 5.1 update to the testing notification process to SCC 5.3 removal of reference to Christmas events in settings 5.3 update to recommended times for LFD testing before attending events in settings 5.5 inclusion of updated guidance with regards to vulnerable and key worker children in the event of remote learning
7	11 Jan 2022	Updates to table 1: removal of option for whole school/cohort testing within a secondary setting. Removal of the term 'close' from 'close contacts' to reflect national wording.



8	17/01/2022	Updates to table 1 Level 2, events in secondary schools. 2.3 updates to isolation period from testing days 6 & 7 to days 5 & 6.
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1. Purpose of the document

The purpose of this document is to provide clear and consistent recommendations for when additional COVID-19 control measures in Suffolk childcare and educational settings should be introduced, stepped-up and stepped-down.

From 15 November 2021 a three-level stepped up approach is proposed with different control measures at each level and differences between early years, primary, and secondary school and college settings. The measures outlined in this document also apply to residential settings and special schools, but Higher Education settings are excluded as SCC CYP deals with COVID-19 outbreaks in these settings on a case-by-case basis.

The second version of this plan includes further guidance about events organised and run by schools and settings (see section [5.3 Essential visiting & events](#) for further information).

This framework continues to apply for all COVID situations

The key sections of this document for school leaders are:

- **What level is my school at?** – see [appendix 2](#), which is an easy page for sharing with senior teams in schools
- **What additional control measures apply to my level?** – see [section 3.2 - table 1](#)
- **What support is available?** – see [section 6](#)

The audience for this document includes school leaders across Suffolk, staff in the children and young people's team at Suffolk County Council (SCC), and the Department for Education.

This document contains Suffolk County Council Public Health advice which cannot be mandated. However, this comes from the professional authority of the Director of Public Health for Suffolk whose main responsibility is to protect and promote health of Suffolk residents. This also has the strong support and backing of the Director of Children and Young People's Services in Suffolk County Council, and of education sector leads who have met weekly with the council since the start of the pandemic. The framework is subject to change and will be reviewed every two weeks as per the schedule in [section 7](#).

If there are any questions about this guidance, please email CYP19@Suffolk.gov.uk

2. National guidance

2.1 Managing coronavirus (COVID-19) in education and childcare settings (Education Contingency Framework)

Published on 17 August 2021, [The Education Contingency Framework](#) describes the principles of managing local outbreaks of COVID-19 in education and childcare settings. It covers all types of measures that settings should be prepared for. These include measures such as reinstating onsite asymptomatic testing in schools or colleges and advice to retain face coverings in communal areas or classrooms and restricting attendance.



Importantly, the framework also sets out thresholds for managing COVID-19 cases and when settings should consider seeking public health advice. The roles and responsibilities set in the framework have been summarised in [Appendix 1](#).

On 16 Nov the framework was updated on the use of face coverings, setting out that DsPH can temporarily recommend the use of face coverings in communal areas and classroom for settings across areas of high or rapidly increasing prevalence.

2.2 Enhanced Response Area

From Monday 1 November 2021, Suffolk became an '[enhanced response area](#)' (ERA) for 5 weeks. ERA status ended on 5 December 2021.

2.3 Measures against COVID-19

The government has introduced measures to modify the response to deal with the Omicron variant, these include measures introduced on the 30 November 2021. Effective from 14 December, all vaccinated contacts are to undertake LFD testing for 7 days, however the isolation rules remain for unvaccinated individuals, and they are required to isolate for 10 days. The government released an update to previous temporary measures for the education sector.

For childcare and education settings, key messages are:

- **Face coverings** – the government is strongly advising that face coverings should be worn in communal areas and classrooms in all early years and primary settings by staff and visitors. This has already been part of the Suffolk plan. Pupils, staff and visitors in secondary school setting (year 7 and above, unless they are exempt), are required to wear face coverings in the classroom and communal areas when returning in the Spring Term. The requirement for face coverings in the classroom's has been updated within the Suffolk plan.
- **Testing** - all educational and childcare settings should continue to encourage staff and students to twice weekly using lateral flow device (LFD) tests. This has already been part of the Suffolk plan.
- **Isolation of unvaccinated adult (aged over 18 years and 6 months) contacts of all COVID cases** – unvaccinated adult contacts who are contacted by NHS T&T or local Public Health officials, need to isolate for 10 days and get a PCR test as soon as possible (complete 10-day isolation even if PCR negative). It's a legal requirement to self-isolate if you're told to by NHS Test and Trace. You could be fined if you do not do this.
- **Daily LFD testing for fully vaccinated adults and children aged 5-18 years and 6 months who are close contacts of any COVID case** – fully vaccinated adult contacts and children who are contacted by NHS T&T or local public health officials are strongly advised to take a rapid LFD test every day for 7 days or until 10 days since your last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19 if this is earlier. There is no need to isolate if tests are negative and no requirement to obtain a PCR unless the individual becomes symptomatic or tests positive on LFD. Under 5s



are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily rapid lateral flow testing.

- **Ending isolation for PCR positive individuals** – Individuals who test positive for COVID –19 can end their isolation if they take an LFD test on the fifth and sixth days (or on other consecutive days up to day ten) of their isolation period. If both these LFD test results are negative, and they do not have a high temperature, they will be able to end their self-isolation after the second negative test result. The LFD tests must be taken on consecutive days, but the guidance will no longer stipulate that these tests should be taken at least 24 hours apart.
- obtain a negative LFD on days 5 and day 6 of isolation (. The tests must be taken 24 hours apart. Health and Social Care professionals working in Education settings must take an LFD test on days 8, 9 and 10. Health and Care staff can return to work from day 8 if they continue to test negative on LFD (The tests for day 5 and 6 must be taken 24 hours apart and negative)
- **Traveling from abroad-** Please refer to government guidance for further information:<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-to-england-from-another-country-during-coronavirus-covid-19#travelling-with-children>.

Adults who are fully vaccinated: You must take a COVID-19 test in the 2 days before you travel to the UK. You must have booked and paid for a COVID-19 PCR test to be taken before the end of day 2 after your arrival in the UK (the day of arrival is counted as day 0). You must self-isolate until you receive the result of this.

Adults who are not fully vaccinated: You must take a COVID-19 test in the 2 days before you travel to the UK. You must have booked and paid for a COVID-19 PCR test on day 2 and day 8 after your return to the UK (the day of arrival is counted as day 0). You must self-isolate until either day 10, or until you receive your day 8 PCR test result, whichever is later.

Children aged under 4 do not need to take any COVID-19 travel tests. They must self-isolate on return to the UK until their responsible adult receives their day 2 PCR test result back

Children aged 5 to 17 must have a booked and paid for COVID-19 PCR test to be taken before the end of day 2 after their arrival in the UK (the day of arrival is counted as day 0). They must self-isolate until they receive the result of this.

2.4 Testing on return in January 2022

All secondary schools have been asked to prepare to test their pupils once on-site when schools return in January 2022. Higher Education and Further Education students and staff will test either the evening or morning before returning after the Christmas holiday and then continue testing in line with Government guidelines.

Even if someone has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, they are strongly encouraged to take part in LFD testing on-site via ATS or at home once they have completed their isolation period for their prior infection.



<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2022/01/03/what-to-expect-when-schools-colleges-universities-and-early-years-settings-return-after-the-christmas-break/>

3. Levels and proposed additional control measures advised by Suffolk County Council

3.1 Objectives of additional control measures

1. To ensure face-to-face education is maintained as far as possible across all educational settings and minimise disruption to students' education
2. To protect the health and wellbeing of children and staff in the context of emphasising the importance of face-to-face education
3. Measures should affect the minimum number of children for the shortest time

Proposed additional control measures from 4 January 2022

The table on the following pages summarises the additional control measures advised for educational and childcare settings in Suffolk, depending on their 'level'. Please see [Appendix 2](#) for a simple flowchart to support school and setting leaders to identify which level they are on. Please also see the accompanying more detailed definitions of the [thresholds](#) (Section 4) and the [control measures](#) (Section 5). If there are any questions about this guidance or your setting doesn't meet setting types by early years, primary, secondary school or above, please email CYP19@Suffolk.gov.uk

This is Suffolk County Council Public Health advice and cannot be mandated and will be reviewed every two weeks.

Table 1: Recommended control measures in educational settings in Suffolk from 15 November

Threshold	Criteria to revoke measures	Early Years (children aged 0-4)	Primary (pupils aged 4-11)	Secondary, colleges and further education (students aged 11-19)
Level 1 – applies to all Suffolk settings whether or not there are any COVID-19 cases at the setting	When the Suffolk COVID-19 case rate amongst 0–19-year-olds is either at or below the regional <u>and</u> national rates, it will be reviewed which measures still apply to all Suffolk settings and which move to level 2.	<p>All routine control and IPC measures, e.g., hand washing, ventilation, cleaning, excluding symptomatic individuals from the setting, promotion of vaccination to eligible staff.</p> <p>Essential visiting only (option to hold events)¹ Visitor face masks whilst on-site (unless exempt for medical reasons)</p> <p>Staff face coverings (in communal areas outside of the classroom, unless exempt for medical reasons)</p> <p>Consider merging classes/groups In the event you are unable to operate a class/group safely due to staffing capacity setting to seek support and guidance from CYP COVID Support Team around merging classes/groups Please contact CYPC19@suffolk.gov.uk Twice-weekly LFD home testing for asymptomatic staff Settings are encouraged to ask for evidence of test results.</p> <p>Daily LFD testing of fully vaccinated staff who are close contacts² and isolation of unvaccinated staff who are close contacts – vaccinated adult close contacts are strongly advised to undertake daily LFD testing for 7 days, but unvaccinated adult contacts are</p>	<p>All routine control and IPC measures, e.g., hand washing, ventilation and CO2 monitoring, cleaning, excluding symptomatic individuals from the setting, promotion of vaccination to eligible staff.</p> <p>Essential visiting only (option to hold events)³ Visitor face masks whilst on-site (unless exempt for medical reasons)</p> <p>Staff face coverings (in communal areas outside of the classroom, unless exempt for medical reasons)</p> <p>Consider merging classes/groups In the event you are unable to operate a class/group safely due to staffing capacity setting to seek support and guidance from CYP COVID Support Team around merging classes/groups Please contact CYPC19@suffolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Twice-weekly LFD home testing for asymptomatic staff Settings are encouraged to ask for evidence of test results. Daily LFD testing of fully vaccinated staff and children aged 5-18 years and 6 months who are close contacts⁴ and isolation of unvaccinated staff who are close contacts – vaccinated adult close contacts and children close contacts aged 5-18 years and 6 months are strongly advised to undertake daily LFD testing for 7 days. Unvaccinated adult contacts are required to isolate for 10 days and obtain</p>	<p>All routine control and IPC measures, e.g., hand washing, ventilation and CO2 monitoring, cleaning, LFD testing for staff, excluding symptomatic individuals from the setting, promotion of vaccination to eligible staff and students</p> <p>Essential visiting only (option to hold events)⁵ Visitor face masks whilst on-site (unless exempt for medical reasons)</p> <p>Staff face coverings in communal areas and within the classroom, unless exempt for medical reasons Student face coverings in communal areas and within the classroom and on both school transport and public transport, unless exempt for medical reasons</p> <p>Consider merging classes/groups In the event you are unable to operate a class/group safely due to staffing capacity setting to seek support and guidance from CYP COVID Support Team around merging classes/groups Please contact CYPC19@suffolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Twice-weekly LFD home testing for asymptomatic staff and secondary aged students Settings are encouraged to ask for evidence of test results. Daily LFD testing of fully vaccinated staff and children aged 5-18 years and 6 months who are close contacts⁶ and isolation of unvaccinated staff who are close contacts – vaccinated adult close contacts and children close contacts aged 5-18 years and 6 months are strongly advised to undertake daily LFD testing for 7 days. Unvaccinated adult contacts are required to isolate for 10 days and obtain a PCR as</p>

¹ Any events organised by the setting are subject to settings undertaking a thorough risk assessment. See section [5.3 Essential visiting & events](#) on further guidance.

² As identified by NHS T&T or local Public Health officials

³ Any events organised by the setting are subject to settings undertaking a thorough risk assessment. See section [5.3 Essential visiting & events](#) on further guidance.

⁴ As identified by NHS T&T or local Public Health officials.

⁵ Any events organised by the setting are subject to settings undertaking a thorough risk assessment. See section [5.3 Essential visiting & events](#) on further guidance.

⁶ As identified by NHS T&T or local Public Health officials.

Threshold	Criteria to revoke measures	Early Years (children aged 0-4)	Primary (pupils aged 4-11)	Secondary, colleges and further education (students aged 11-19)
		<p>required to isolate for 10 days and obtain a PCR as soon as possible (complete 10-day isolation even if PCR negative). All children testing remains at parental discretion and children under 5 are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily rapid lateral flow testing.</p> <p>Staff/children admissions to hospital from COVID-19 - SCC will set-up appropriate structures to support the setting and wider community.</p>	<p>a PCR as soon as possible (complete 10 day isolation even if PCR negative). All children testing remains at parental discretion and children under 5 are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily rapid lateral flow testing.</p> <p>Staff/pupil admissions to hospital from COVID-19 - SCC will set-up appropriate structures to support the school and wider community.</p>	<p>soon as possible (complete 10-day isolation even if PCR negative). All children testing remains at parental discretion and children under 5 are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily rapid lateral flow testing.</p> <p>Staff/student admissions to hospital from COVID-19 - SCC will set-up appropriate structures to support the school and wider community.</p>
<p>Level 2 - setting has met national threshold, but below level 3 threshold</p> <p>For most education and childcare settings (whichever criteria is reached first):</p> <p>5-14 children, pupils, students, or staff who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period</p> <p>OR</p> <p>10-29% of a defined group of children, pupils, students, or staff who are likely to have mixed closely⁷ test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period</p> <p>Special schools and residential settings, and settings with 20 or fewer</p>	<p>Setting falls below Level 2 threshold definition</p>	<p>As per Level 1</p> <p>+</p> <p>Any measures agreed at an Incident Management Team meeting or with Suffolk County Council's CYP COVID Support Team to deal with setting-specific COVID-19 incident</p> <p>Settings are not recommended to hold any face-to-face events unless there are exceptional circumstances⁸</p> <p>Consider⁹ re-introducing 'bubble' arrangements indoors</p> <p>Consider¹⁰ staggered start and end times to reduce mixing</p> <p>Please contact CYPC19@suffolk.gov.uk for support if required</p>	<p>As per Level 1</p> <p>+</p> <p>Any measures agreed at an Incident Management Team meeting or with Suffolk County Council's CYP COVID Support Team to deal with setting-specific COVID-19 incident</p> <p>Settings are not recommended to hold any face-to-face events unless there are exceptional circumstances¹¹</p> <p>Consider¹² re-introducing 'bubble' arrangements indoors</p> <p>Consider¹³ staggered start and end times to reduce mixing</p> <p>Please contact CYPC19@suffolk.gov.uk for support if required</p>	<p>As per Level 1</p> <p>+</p> <p>Any measures agreed at an Incident Management Team meeting or with Suffolk County Council's CYP COVID Support Team to deal with setting-specific COVID-19 incident</p> <p>Settings are not recommended to hold any face-to-face events unless there are exceptional circumstances¹⁴</p> <p>Please contact CYPC19@suffolk.gov.uk for support if required</p>

⁷ The percentages in threshold definitions apply to a defined group that are likely to have mixed closely (e.g., have 10% of a class tested positive within 10 days) and not the whole school.

⁸ See section [5.3 Essential visiting & events](#) on further guidance.

⁹ Recommendation will be made by Suffolk County Council in discussion with the school on a case-by-case basis, taking into account school specifics.

¹⁰ Recommendation will be made by Suffolk County Council in discussion with the school on a case-by-case basis, taking into account school specifics.

¹¹ See section [5.3 Essential visiting & events](#) on further guidance.

¹² Recommendation will be made by Suffolk County Council in discussion with the school on a case-by-case basis, taking into account school specifics.

¹³ Recommendation will be made by Suffolk County Council in discussion with the school on a case-by-case basis, taking into account school specifics.

¹⁴ See section [5.3 Essential visiting & events](#) on further guidance.



Threshold	Criteria to revoke measures	Early Years (children aged 0-4)	Primary (pupils aged 4-11)	Secondary, colleges and further education (students aged 11-19)
children, pupils, students, or staff: 2-5 children/staff who are likely to have mixed closely test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period				
Level 3¹⁵ Where despite level 2 actions, chains of transmission are not broken. The likely¹⁶ threshold for most education and childcare settings (whichever criteria is reached first): 15 children, pupils, students, or staff who are likely to have mixed closely , test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period OR 30% of a defined group of children, pupils, students, or staff who are likely to have mixed closely¹⁷ test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period The likely¹⁸ threshold for special schools and residential settings, and settings with 20 or fewer children, pupils, students, or staff:	Setting falls below Level 3 threshold definition	As per Level 2 + Settings are not recommended to organise any face-to-face events If chains of transmission are not broken by all above measures, consider¹⁹ attendance restrictions as last resort - Affected class or group to move to home learning for as short a period as possible, but with on-site provision remaining for vulnerable children and key worker children. <u>If you consider your current situation is Level 3, please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov before taking any action</u>	As per level 2 + Settings are not recommended to organise any face-to-face events If chains of transmission are not broken by all above measures, consider²⁰ attendance restrictions as last resort - Affected class or group to move to home learning for as short a period as possible, but with on-site provision remaining for vulnerable children and key worker children. <u>If you consider your current situation is Level 3, please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov before taking any action</u>	As per level 2 + Settings are not recommended to organise any face-to-face events If chains of transmission are not broken by all above measures, consider²¹ attendance restrictions as last resort - Affected class or group to move to home learning for as short a period as possible, but with on-site provision remaining for vulnerable children and key worker children. <u>If you consider your current situation is Level 3, please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov before taking any action</u>

¹⁵ There is no national guidance or specific evidence at what threshold should attendance restrictions be considered. We suggest 15 cases / 30% as a guide which SCC CYP are in agreement. E.g., Cumbria introduce attendance restrictions at higher level 4 - 20 cases / 40%.

¹⁶ Attendance restrictions will be a case-by-case decisions where level 2 actions have not broken the chains of transmission. The 15 cases / 30% of a group threshold acts as a guide and not a strict threshold. If you consider your setting's current situation is Level 3, please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov before taking any action.

¹⁷ The percentages in threshold definitions apply to a defined group that are likely to have mixed closely (e.g., have 10% of a class tested positive within 10 days) and not the whole school.

¹⁸ Attendance restrictions will be a case-by-case decisions where level 2 actions have not broken the chains of transmission. The 15 cases / 30% of a group threshold acts as a guide and not a strict threshold. If you consider your setting's current situation is Level 3, please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov before taking any action.

¹⁹ As Suffolk is in an ERA, recommendation will be made by the local operational outbreak management team, including Public Health and Children and Young People Services representatives. Regional schools commissioner will be kept updated.

²⁰ Recommendation will be made by the local operational outbreak management team, including Public Health and Children and Young People Services representatives. Regional schools commissioner will be kept updated.

²¹ Recommendation will be made by the local operational outbreak management team, including Public Health and Children and Young People Services representatives. Regional schools commissioner will be kept updated.



Threshold	Criteria to revoke measures	Early Years (children aged 0-4)	Primary (pupils aged 4-11)	Secondary, colleges and further education (students aged 11-19)
6 children/staff who are likely to have <u>mixed</u> <u>closely</u> test positive for COVID-19 within a 10 day period				

4. Threshold definitions & examples

4.1 What level is my school or setting?

Please see [Appendix 2](#) for a flowchart to support school and setting leaders to identify which level they are on.

Moving up levels - as soon as settings believe they have reached the threshold for a level, they should implement the measures applicable to that level. Settings should contact CYP19@Suffolk.gov.uk if:

- the setting is unsure if they meet the level definition
- the setting needs advice on how to implement any of the suggested measures or which of the “consider” measures to choose
- the setting believes that they have reached level 3

Moving down from levels 2 and 3 – this will be decided on a case-by-case basis with the setting and the SCC outbreak management team.

4.2 Definition of “likely to have mixed closely” / “linked” cases

This will be based on a setting assessment of the links between the confirmed cases and usually means that the cases are within a class, form, a set (e.g., Maths, English), known friendship group or a school club where the cases are likely to have been in close contact with each other (see national guidance on [What is meant by a contact](#)).

The setting will be best placed to know to what extent particular students may be mixing with other students outside their immediate form group (e.g., a year group may be relevant in secondary schools).

Importantly, the percentages in threshold definitions apply to **a defined group that are likely to have mixed closely and not to the whole school** (e.g., have 10% of a class tested positive within 10 days? Have 20% of a school club tested positive?).

5. Control measure definitions & examples

5.1 Twice-weekly LFD home testing for asymptomatic staff / students

Settings are asked to increase participation in twice weekly LFD home testing for asymptomatic staff in all settings and secondary aged students, including directly communicating with parents on the importance of regular testing.

Staff and students are asked to do the tests themselves at home (e.g., obtain kits from local pharmacy or [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)) and only attend the setting if their test is negative. Settings are



encouraged to ask staff and students to provide evidence of test results / implement a monitoring process. All Primary and Secondary settings have access to Test Register where pupils and staff are encouraged to upload their LFD results. Where settings do not wish to use this platform for notifying SCC of results, please continue to use the online reporting form. Early Years settings should continue to notify SCC of positive cases via the online form. www.testregister.co.uk

5.2 Daily LFD testing of close contacts who are vaccinated adults or children

- Effective from 14 December, the government released guidance on [daily LFD testing for contacts of any COVID case](#), **Isolation of unvaccinated adult (aged over 18 years and 6 months) close contacts of any COVID case** – unvaccinated adult contacts who are contacted by NHS T&T or local Public Health officials, need to isolate for 10 days and get a PCR test as soon as possible (complete 10-day isolation even if PCR negative). It's a legal requirement to self-isolate if you're told to by NHS Test and Trace. You could be fined if you do not do this. Close contact guidance is available on [NHS.UK](#).
- **Daily LFD testing for fully vaccinated adults and children aged 5-18 years and 6 months who are close contacts of any COVID case** – fully vaccinated adult contacts and children who are contacted by NHS T&T or a local public health officials are strongly advised to take a rapid LFD test every day for 7 days or until 10 days since your last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19 if this is earlier. There is no need to isolate if tests are negative and no requirement to obtain a PCR unless the individual becomes symptomatic or tests positive on LFD. All children testing remains at parental discretion and children under 5 are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily rapid lateral flow testing. Close contact guidance is available on [NHS.UK](#).

Note on close contact testing in an outbreak with multiple cases – there may be scenarios where within an outbreak there are multiple cases and the same close contacts are identified repeatedly (e.g., Student A is close contact of Case 1 on Monday and later also a close contact of Case 2 on Friday of the same week). In these situations where the cases are part of the same outbreak in the same setting, close contacts do not need to “restart” daily testing with every new case in the setting. However, if the close contact who is currently undertaking daily testing becomes a close contact in another outbreak or setting (e.g., Student A becomes a close contact of a new household case), they should restart daily testing from contact with the new case in this new setting.

Staff and students are asked to do the tests themselves at home (e.g., obtain kits from local pharmacy or gov.uk) And only attend the setting if their test is negative. Settings are encouraged to ask staff and students to provide evidence of test results / implement a monitoring process, e.g., by using <https://testregister.co.uk/> or the SCC online form.

5.3 Essential visiting & events

'Essential visitors' to the setting should be considered as any visitor essential to the delivery of education opportunities for children and young people. They may include Health (including immunisation teams or Integrated Community Paediatric Services), Social Care and specialist education teams delivering direct support to children and young people and visits focussed on safeguarding. Ultimately, the decision rests with school and setting leaders, based on their own risk assessments alongside the latest government guidance.

Public health advice about **events run and organised by the setting** (whether these are on-site events) are based on the level of the setting detailed in the table below (see section [4.1 What level is my school or setting?](#)). We recognise that events are of varied nature and settings will need to consider event-specifics in their risk assessments. For example, sports events between two settings should be considered if both settings are at level 1.

Threshold*	Public Health advice
Level 1	<p>Essential visiting only and option to hold events, subject to settings undertaking a detailed risk assessment of their COVID-19 situation and risk assessment of the event. Some of the control measures settings may want to include are (this is not a prescribed or exhaustive list and exact measures will be decided by the setting, based on the type of the event and setting's risk assessment):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All routine control and IPC measures • Restricting number of attendees • no attendance of positive cases, symptomatic individuals, contacts of positive cases. • enhanced ventilation (e.g., can the event be held outside). • enhanced hygiene measures (such as regular cleaning of high-touch surfaces; ensuring social distancing and reduced mixing as much as possible (e.g., sitting in family groups). • audience and observer face coverings (including when singing). • promoting all attendees to take an LFD test as close to the event as possible, at least within 24 hours. • asking for proof of the negative LFD test result upon entrance. <p>When planning for events, we suggest settings have contingency plans if the number of COVID-19 cases in the rise and a school moves out of level 1 into levels 2 or 3.</p> <p>Please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov.uk if you need further guidance.</p>
Level 2	<p>Essential visiting only, and events are not recommended - as there is an ongoing outbreak, events should only be held in exceptional circumstances. This does not exclude settings recording virtual/zoom events. Please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov.uk if you believe your setting has exceptional circumstances.</p>
Level 3	<p>Essential visiting only, including no events as there is ongoing on-site transmission. This does not exclude settings recording virtual/zoom events.</p>

or



SCC makes no recommendations about attending **events in the community that are not run by the setting** (i.e., where the setting is not in control of the COVID-19 control measures such as a trip to attend a play in a community theatre). These remain school and setting leader decisions, based on their own risk assessments alongside the latest government guidance. Guidance on risk assessments and up-to-date frameworks is available on <https://suffolklearning.com/safety-health-wellbeing/coronavirus-covid-19/>

These are SCC recommendations, which cannot be mandated. The final decision is with settings on what events or activities take place on their premises, in line with their risk assessment and mitigating covid secure measures.

5.4 'Bubble' arrangements

This will generally only be advised in early years and primary school settings as it is not feasible to introduce these in secondary schools at short notice. The SCC recommendation will be considering setting specifics, e.g., there will be some settings which will be able to implement most of a bubble approach but may still need to use a visiting teacher between bubbles, with some enhanced protective measures. Bubble arrangements do not restrict attendance - the objective of introducing bubble arrangements is to ensure face-to-face education continues.

Although 'bubbles' are not referenced in the DfE Contingency Framework, the [COVID-19 Schools Operational Guidance](#) is clear that it may become necessary to introduce them:

"You should make sure your contingency plans (sometimes called outbreak management plans) cover the possibility that it may become necessary to reintroduce 'bubbles' for a temporary period, to reduce mixing between groups.

Any decision to recommend the reintroduction of 'bubbles' would not be taken lightly and would need to take account of the detrimental impact they can have on the delivery of education".

5.5 Attendance restrictions

If COVID chains of transmission are not broken by all above measures, attendance restrictions may be considered as last resort - affected class or group to move to home learning for as short a period as possible, but with on-site provision remaining for vulnerable children and key worker children [Children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

We also acknowledge that schools may be impacted by non-COVID related staff absences (e.g., seasonal flu) and that it is not always possible to obtain supply staff, which may mean that settings may need to consider merging classes or groups before considering any remote offer. Where schools are faced with this situation, please contact CYP19@suffolk.gov

6. What support is available to setting leaders

Suffolk County Council's CYP COVID Support Team provide advice and support to all CYP settings. COVID Support Officers will discuss the current situation with the school leader and will advise which level the setting is at.

The CYP COVID Support Officers will also recommend which control measures are appropriate and proportionate and can help setting implement their outbreak management plans. The team also support with stepping up and stepping down any measures and work closely with the Suffolk COVID Response Hub and Public Health Duty Consultant and any testing requirements are requested through the CYP COVID Support Team.

Suffolk County Council is supporting schools with the oversight of twice weekly and daily close contact LFD testing for both students and staff and has obtained county wide deployment of the Test Register (testregister.co.uk). Education settings can continue to notify SCC of cases via the online form. Early Years settings should continue to notify SCC via the online form. <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=7GqcEEZQIUqPPIT2O6GK9M89C28BpbhHgRBWn4BLnXFUME5GOFVGNDFXMDFaRTNSQk5HU0s1WDJXUi4u>

The COVID Support Officers are also able to advise on any COVID related queries, such as isolation dates, changes in national or local guidance.

The team can be contacted via CYP19@suffolk.gov.uk

7. Review periods for this guidance

Regular bi-weekly review schedule is shown in the table below:

Tasks / week	15-Nov	22-Nov	29-Nov	06-Dec	13-Dec	20-Dec	27-Dec	03-Jan	24-Jan
New measures in place									
Review week 1		1st Review							
Measures based on first review									
Review week 2				2nd Review					
Measures based on second review									
School holidays						school holidays			
Measures based on second review									
Review week 3								3rd Review	4th review

7.1 22-26 November review week

Local, regional, national trends

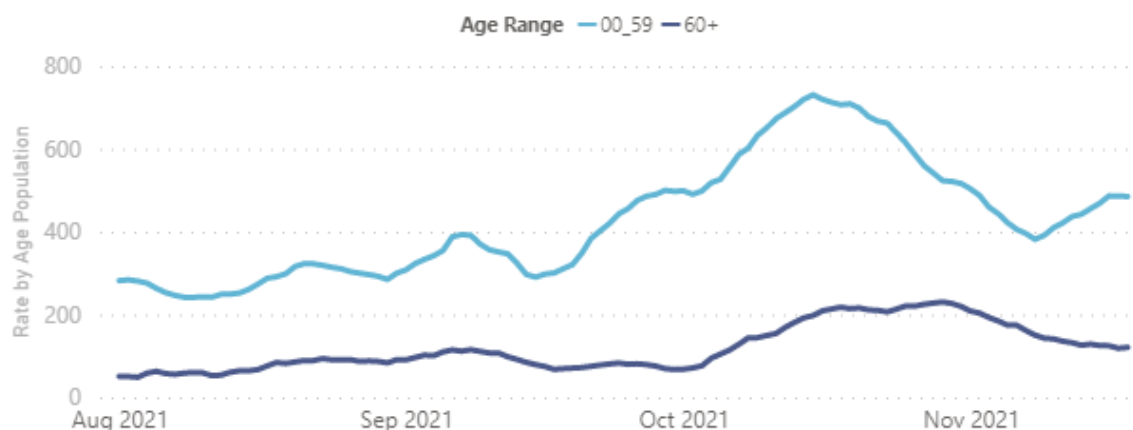
The latest available data (week ending 18 November) shows that Suffolk COVID-19 case rate for ages 0-19 is below the East of England rate and the England rate. However, as shown in both figure 1 and figure 2 trend data, **cases are currently growing locally, regionally and nationally – 16.8% rise in 0-19 Suffolk cases in the week ending 18 November.**

Figure 1 COVID-19 case rates by age band (Suffolk, regional, England) – week ending 18 November

LTLA Name	Ages 0-19 case rate this week per 100,000	Ages 0-19 case rate last week per 100,000	Change in 0-19 case rate (%)	60+ case rate this week	60+ case rate last week	Change in 60+ case rate (%)
Babergh	690.8	638.9	↑ 8.1 %	90.9	159.1	↓ -42.9 %
East Suffolk	677.0	531.9	↑ 27.3 %	120.8	124.2	↓ -2.7 %
Ipswich	532.1	442.9	↑ 20.1 %	95.0	137.5	↓ -30.9 %
Mid Suffolk	749.8	675.3	↑ 11.0 %	126.5	123.5	↑ 2.4 %
West Suffolk	784.7	703.3	↑ 11.6 %	152.7	148.6	↑ 2.8 %
Suffolk	684.9	586.5	↑ 16.8 %	120.9	135.7	↓ -10.9 %
East of England	771.5	579.7	↑ 33.1 %	150.3	171.3	↓ -12.3 %
England	690.5	523.4	↑ 31.9 %	164.3	184.5	↓ -10.9 %

Figure 2 COVID-19 case rate by age group (trends)

Case rate by Age Group



Local situation

The below table summarises how many settings the SCC CYP team are currently aware of in each level of this framework.

Level	Early years	Primary	Middle	AP/SEND	Secondary schools	Total
1	634	185	2	24	43	888
2	0	36	0	0	0	36

3	0	7	0	0	0	7
Total	634	228	2	24	43	931

[data correct as of 24 November 2021]

Review decision

Based on the above key updates, the Health Protection Board agreed at the 24 November meeting not to change the control measures in the framework until the next review on the week commencing 6 November. This was communicated to settings on 25 November.

7.2 6 – 10 December 2021 review

Local, regional, national trends and developments

Key messages as of 7 December 2021:

- 0-19 cases continue to grow locally, regionally and nationally (see figure 3 below)
- The Suffolk 0-19 case rate is not statistically different²² from the East of England or the England rate.

Figure 3 COVID-19 case rates by age band (Suffolk, regional, England) – week ending 1 December

LTLA Name	Ages 0-19 case rate this week per 100,000	Ages 0-19 case rate last week per 100,000	Change in 0-19 case rate (%)
Babergh	1,173.9	675.3	↑ 73.8 %
East Suffolk	700.2	719.6	↓ -2.7 %
Ipswich	502.3	493.4	↑ 1.8 %
Mid Suffolk	880.2	819.6	↑ 7.4 %
West Suffolk	967.3	994.5	↓ -2.7 %
Suffolk	803.2	748.6	↑ 7.3 %
East of England	908.6	836.8	↑ 8.6 %
England	780.3	740.5	↑ 5.4 %

Local situation

The below table summarises how many settings the SCC CYP team are currently aware of in each level of this framework. **Compared to previous review week, the number of settings in level 2 and level 3 have slightly increased.**

Level	Early years	Primary	Middle	AP/SEND	Secondary schools	Total (at previous review)
1	634	180	2	23	40	879 (888)

²² Statistical significance testing results provided by Public Health Suffolk's Knowledge, Intelligence & Evidence team

2	0	41	0	1	2	44 (36)
3	0	7	0	0	1	8 (7)
Total	634	228	2	24	43	931

[data correct as of 7/12/2021]

Feedback from sector leads

- Largely positive and sector leads supportive of keeping guidance unchanged
- Mixed feedback on events – Some school leaders supporting events happening and others keen not to hold any.

Review decision

Based on the above key updates, the Health Protection Board agreed at the 8 December meeting not to change the control measures in the framework until 14 January 2022 with Omicron incidents managed by the IMT or similar mechanisms. Due to the holiday break and test-on-return w/c 4 January 2021, next review is planned for w/c 10th January and a virtual HPB on 12th January to review any proposed changes to the framework and agree next steps. This was communicated to settings on 9 December.

Rationale for the proposal above:

- Increase in 0-19 case rates continues and some increase in level 2-3
- As only one more week of school term left it may not be worthwhile making changes which will take time to implement.

In arriving at the above proposal, we have considered the impact of the proposed measures on the children's' ability to experience face to face education, their safety and wellbeing and the safety of teachers and other support staff.

7.3. Week ending 29 December 2021 review

Local, regional, national trends and developments

The latest available data (week ending 29 December 2021) shows that the Suffolk COVID-19 case rate for ages 0-19 is below the East of England rate but above the England rate. Cases in 0-19s have fallen in Suffolk in the most recent week of data, however this coincides with the start of school holidays where there has been reduced testing in 0-19s. Case rates generally have been rapidly climbing since the start of December 2021.

Figure 4 COVID-19 case rates by age band (Suffolk, regional, England) – week ending 29 December

LTLA Name	Ages 0-19 case rate this week per 100,000	Ages 0-19 case rate last week per 100,000	Change in 0-19 case rate (%)
Babergh	1,205.1	997.3	↑ 20.8 %
East Suffolk	1,209.0	1,284.4	↓ -5.9 %
Ipswich	936.3	1,281.1	↓ -26.9 %
Mid Suffolk	1,061.8	1,271.4	↓ -16.5 %
West Suffolk	858.8	876.0	↓ -2.0 %
Suffolk	1,049.3	1,149.5	↓ -8.7 %
East of England	1,207.6	1,247.6	↓ -3.2 %
England	1,030.7	984.2	↑ 4.7 %

8. Communications

- Suffolk Headlines – weekly on Tuesdays to Head Teachers and senior school staff. Includes Council updates, COVID-19 advice, and general schools' updates.
- Social media - E.G Facebook and Twitter – ad-hoc for major updates to all Suffolk residents or sometimes targeted communication to a geography (e.g., to give COVID-19 advice in an area near a school that might have had an outbreak).

Additional control measure announcements:

- 6 October 2021 - [letter to school and setting leaders from Stuart Keeble, Director of Public Health, and Allan Cadzow, Director for Children and Young People's Services.](#)
- 6 October 2021- [letter for parents and carers which we would ask you to send to the parents and carers of children at your school](#)
- 20 October 2021 – [letter to parents, carers and School Leaders](#)
- 16 November 2021 – Notification of Framework to education and early years settings
- 19 November 2021 – Update to the Framework around events sent to education settings
- 25 November 2021 – Update on current Framework communicated to education and early years settings
- 9 December 2021 – Update on current Framework communicated to education and early years settings
- 4 January 2022 – update on the current Framework [based on DfE guidance published on the 2 January 2022](#) communicated to education and early years settings

9. Process for approval and implementation of this framework



1. Engagement with SCC CYP team and incorporation of their feedback – week commencing 1 November 2021 - **Complete**
2. Engagement with sector leads and incorporation of their feedback week commencing 1 November 2021 (see [appendix 3](#) for consultation questions) – **Complete**
3. Ensure the resources and plan are in place for the implementation of this framework in discussion with COVID-19 Response Hub - week commencing 8 November 2021
4. Present the final plan to the Health Protection Board for approval - week commencing 8 November 2021 - **Complete**
5. Implementation school and settings leads from 15 November 2021 – **Complete**
6. **Framework updated based on national guidance and will be shared with Health Protection Board on the 5th of January**

10. Frequently asked questions

To support parents and carers with these measures and other COVID-19 related questions, the FAQs on the SCC website have been updated and available via [Latest guidance on coronavirus \(COVID-19\) | Suffolk County Council](#).

These will be updated every time there is a change to advised control measures.

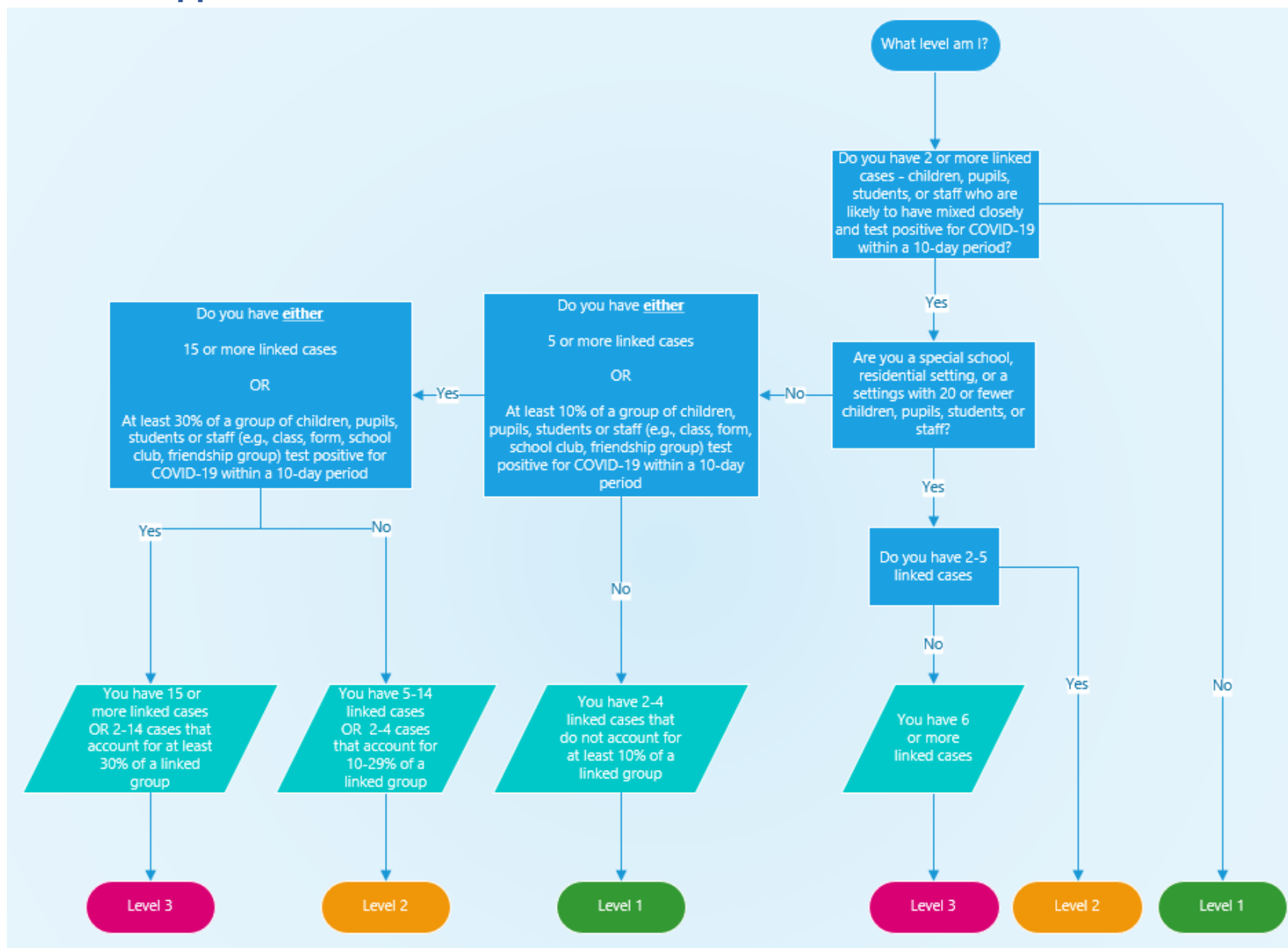
11. Appendix 1: National Education Contingency Framework - Summary of roles and responsibilities

Party	Roles and responsibilities
All education and childcare settings	<p>Have contingency (outbreak management) plans in place describing what they would do if children, pupils, students or staff test positive for COVID-19 and how they would operate if they were advised to reintroduce any measures described in the national contingency framework (including reintroduction of asymptomatic test sites). Follow measures in the Operational Guidance sets out the measures that all education settings should have in place to manage transmission of COVID-19 day to day.</p> <p>Consider taking extra action if the number of positive cases increases substantially. The national thresholds can be used by settings as an indication for when to seek public health advice if they are concerned. All settings should seek public health advice if a pupil, student, child or staff member is admitted to hospital with COVID-19. They can do this by phoning the DfE helpline (0800 046 8687, option 1), or in line with other local arrangements. Hospitalisation could indicate increased severity of illness or a new variant of concern. Settings may be offered public health support in managing risk assessments and communicating with staff and parents.</p> <p>Employers should call the Self-Isolation Service Hub on 020 3743 6715 as soon as they are made aware that any of their workers have tested positive.</p> <p>Provide high-quality remote learning in schools, further education and higher education settings for all pupils and students in cases where they have tested positive and are well enough to learn from home or when attendance at the setting has been temporarily restricted.</p> <p>All settings should continue their strong messaging about signs and symptoms, isolation advice and testing, to support prompt isolation of suspected cases. Settings should also continue to encourage vaccination uptake for eligible students and staff.</p>
Local authorities, directors of public health (DsPH) and PHE health protection teams (HPTs)	<p>Responsible for managing local outbreaks. can recommend measures described in the contingency framework in individual education and childcare settings as part of their outbreak management responsibilities.</p> <p>work with their regional partnership teams (RPTs) to escalate issues from the local level into the central Local Action Committee command structure.</p> <p>DsPH should keep DfE informed of all cases where they are considering recommending ATS for an education setting, via their RPT and RSC. Where they have advised settings to take extra measures, DsPH and HPTs will work closely with their Regional Partnership Teams and keep the situation under regular review. They will inform settings when it is appropriate to stop additional measures, or if they should be extended.</p>
Ministers	Through the Local Action Committee command structure, ministers consider and take decisions on measures on an area-by-area basis in



	<p>light of all available evidence, public health advice and the local and national context.</p> <p>In the event of a major outbreak or VoC that poses a significant risk to individuals on the shielded patient list (SPL), ministers can agree to reintroduce shielding.</p>
RPTs	<p>RPTs support local areas in managing outbreaks and provide advice and insights from across the country to the Chief Medical Officer and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to inform decision making.</p>

12. Appendix 2: Flowchart – What level am I?





13. Appendix 3: Sector Leads consultation

Consultation questions – responses due 5pm on Tue 9 November 2021:

1. Are you in agreement with the objectives outlined in 3.1?
2. Are the definitions of levels outlined in section 3.2, section 4 and the flowchart in appendix 2 of the document clear? In your view, will the settings be able to apply these to identify their level, with the support of CYP team if needed? Please suggest any amendments to provide further clarity.
3. In your considered opinion, is the final level 3 threshold (15 linked cases or 30% of a defined group) about right, too low, or too high? This is the threshold for considering introducing attendance restrictions as a last resort if all other measures within level 2 have not broken chains of transmission.
4. Are the definitions of the additional control measures outlined in section 3.2 and section 5 clear? Please suggest any amendments to provide further clarity.
5. Please provide any general or specific feedback on the document for us to consider before finalising it for implementation