



Managing Safe Staff Numbers during the Covid-19 Pandemic

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT:

Purpose: This policy sets out how for staff and governors how the reduced staffing, as a result of Covid-19, can be managed at Daventry Hill School to ensure a safe environment for students.

The aim is to ensure that the strategies and approaches are used effectively so that everyone can work together to ensure students remain in school for the most amount of time and return quickly following any class closures.

Written by Gareth Ivett, January 2022

Agreed by Governors

SIGNED
Review Date:

DATE
January 2023

Contents

Rationale and Aims

Legislation and Guidance

Parameters to guide decisions

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The Headteacher

Senior Leaders

Other school staff

Monitoring Arrangements

Links with other policies

Appendix 1: Letter to inform affected parents of a class closure

Appendix 2: Letter to inform unaffected parents of a class closure (whole school)

Rationale and Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure a consistent approach is applied when making decisions about the potential closure of any part of the school, due to staffing, on Health and Safety grounds.

Leaders will always endeavour to keep students at school for face-to-face learning as they recognise that this is in the best interests of all.

When a decision must be made to close a class, or classes, this will be done for the minimum amount of time necessary. Leaders recognise that students may need additional support when returning to face-to-face learning following a class closure, this will be guided by the school's recovery curriculum.

If a class must be closed, for Health and Safety, then an education will be provided to all students affected as outlined by our Remote Learning policy.

DfE Covid19 Operational Guidance

Schools Covid-19 operational guidance (January 2022)

Schools subject to the remote education temporary continuity direction are required to provide remote education to pupils covered by the direction where their attendance would be contrary to government guidance or legislation around COVID-19.

Schools should work collaboratively with families and put in place reasonable adjustments so that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can successfully access remote education

Parameters to guide decisions

To guide decisions about the safe working numbers of staff, the school has been divided into curriculum phases and faculties for support. For each phase, it has been identified the number of substantive staff required to ensure all children are kept safe and receive face-to-face education (see below).

Foundations for Learning	17.5	Learning to be me	11.5	My Place in the World	11	Skills for Life	15	Foundations for the future	4.5
--------------------------	------	-------------------	------	-----------------------	----	-----------------	----	----------------------------	-----

Faculties include Teaching, Site, Administration, Pastoral and Leadership. Absence rates in each of these faculties are discussed at the beginning of each day to ensure the support the safe operation of the school is facilitated by these faculties.

Should the absence within a curriculum phase meet this threshold, then this will be a trigger for a strategy meeting of senior leaders to discuss measures at their disposal to safely offer face to face education. Factors for discussion at that meeting will be

(but not limited to) a range of safety factors, the availability of temporary staff, the role that absent staff members hold, needs of individual students in the affected phase, impact on families, previous class closures.

A decision may be made to move a class to remote education if the resources available to school leadership do not enable students to be supported safely on site.

It is recognised that families will need as much notice as possible for this to happen and so leaders will endeavour to inform parents at least the day before closure takes place, however recognise that in some cases this may not be possible.

Leaders recognise the importance of relationships, knowledge of individual needs, knowledge of curriculum and medical training. For these reasons staff may be moved across classes within a curriculum phase to help manage absence, however they will not be moved across curriculum phases.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governing body will be kept informed of any closures and are responsible for monitoring that this is being done within the guidelines from the Department for Education and the school policy.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring the policy follows the guidelines provided by the Department for Education and that it is adhered to consistently.

Any decisions to close a class, on the ground of Health and Safety, should be approved by the Headteacher.

Senior Leaders

Senior Leaders are to ensure that information concerning the staff absence is recorded and communicated effectively to the Headteacher in a timely manner.

They are to adhere to this policy when making recommendations for closure to the Headteacher.

Other school staff

There is an expectation for all staff to notify the school of any absence, this should be done by no later than 7.30am the morning of the absence. Should the absence continue, then staff should notify the school by 3.30pm the day before.

Should a member of staff test positive for Covid-19 then they should inform the school immediately along with the date they are expected to come out of isolation. Should their symptoms persist and they are unable to return following the period of isolation then the school should be updated of this in line with the staff absence procedures.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy should be reviewed in line with any change in guidelines from the Department of Education. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.

Links with other policies and documents

This policy is linked with the Staff Absence policy, Remote Learning policy, Covid-19 Outbreak Management Plan, Preventing and Managing Sickness including Outbreaks, Health and Safety Policy and Early Years Policy.

Appendix 1: Letter to inform affected parents of a class closure

(insert date)

Dear Families,

Re: Class Closure due to High Levels of Staff Absence

I am writing to inform you that we have had to make the decision to close your child's class.

This decision has not been taken lightly as we have always made every effort to ensure that we continue to provide consistent face to face education, however this decision has been enforced on the grounds of health and safety. Within your child's curriculum phase we have abnormally high levels of staff absent from work, which leaves us unable to provide a safe learning environment at this time with appropriate levels of student support.

We have scrutinised projections for staff return to work in an attempt to minimise the amount of time that face to face education is disrupted. This is an approach that we will always take.

This closure will start on (insert start date) and last until (insert end date), with the children due to return on (insert return date).

During this time a remote education will be provided by a teacher. This education will primarily be provided through Class Dojo but please speak to the class team if you require an adaptation to this to meet the needs of your family.

We apologise for the inconvenience this causes and look forward to your child's return.

Kind Regards



Gareth Ivett
Headteacher

Appendix 2: Letter to inform unaffected parents of a class closure (whole school)

(insert date)

Dear Families,

Re: Class Closure due to High Levels of Staff Absence

I am writing to keep all families informed that we have had to make the decision to close a class within the school due to staff absence.

This decision has not been taken lightly as we have always made every effort to ensure that we continue to provide consistent face to face education, however this decision has been enforced on the grounds of health and safety.

Within the curriculum phase of the affected class, we have abnormally high levels of staff absent from work, which leaves us unable to provide a safe learning environment at this time with appropriate levels of student support.

We have scrutinised projections for staff return to work in an attempt to minimise the amount of time that face to face education is disrupted. This is an approach that we will always take.

During this time a remote education will be provided by a teacher for the affected students. Although this does not directly affect your child, we wanted to keep you up-to-date with the strategies applied the school to keep everyone safe.

Kind Regards



Gareth Ivett
Headteacher