

Statement from Wendy Burke Director of Public Health North Tyneside Council

Woodlawn School is following national government guidance for schools when a positive COVID-19 case is confirmed in a pupil or staff member. North Tyneside Council's public health team is supporting Woodlawn School with advice and guiding action around any suspected cases, confirmed cases or outbreaks in school through protocols that have been agreed with Public Health England.

The measures Woodlawn School have implemented such as maintaining high standards of hygiene inside and outside classroom settings, grouping pupils in 'bubbles' and maintaining social distancing where appropriate are the most effective ways to prevent the virus and keep everyone safe and to therefore ensure that all pupils have access to high quality education that enables them to thrive and progress.

When a positive COVID-19 case is confirmed at any time in the school, senior leaders carry out a comprehensive risk assessment with a member of staff from the Council's public health team to identify any pupil or staff who may have been a close contact with the confirmed case. National definitions of close contacts are used in this process.

*If your child is **not identified as a close contact** of the confirmed case you will not need to make any change to your usual routine and it will be safe for your child to continue to attend school.*

*If your **child is identified as having been in close contact** with the affected case they need to **stay at home and self-isolate for 14 days**, in line with government guidance. Other members of the household can continue normal activities provided your child does not develop symptoms within the self-isolation period.*

The evidence from the Chief Medical Officer identifies that the balance of risk is strongly in favour of children attending school and that serious illness or death in children and teenagers from COVID-19 is extremely rare. Therefore, it is really important that all children continue to attend school (unless asked to self-isolate) for their educational progress, for their wellbeing and for their wider development.