

COVID-19 Policy

This is a live policy and is updated regularly with the fast changing government guidance.

Introduction

Francis-Hammond Theatre Schools (Now referred to as FHTS) is committed to providing a safe environment for all students, staff and parents. We recognise the importance of advanced planning in order to maintain services and limit the spread of COVID-19 within our setting. By following advice from the DfE, PHE and HSE we will actively work to ensure that the controls we introduce create a safer system whereby the risk of transmission and infection of COVID-19 is substantially reduced.

Infection Control

Effective infection control plays a vital role in minimizing the spread of COVID-19. Understanding how the virus is spread is **key** in preventing it. COVID-19 is spread in the following ways:

- People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus (they may not be showing symptoms).
- The disease spreads primarily from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth, which are expelled when a person with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes, or speaks.
- The droplets are relatively heavy, do not travel far and quickly sink to the ground. People can catch COVID-19 if they breathe in these droplets from a person infected with the virus.
- The droplets can also land on objects and surfaces around the person such as tables, doorknobs and handrails. People can become infected by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

In order to minimize the risk of transmission and infection FHTS will be adopting the following control measures as recommended by the DfE:

- **minimizing contact** with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does or have been advised by NHS Test & Trace to self-isolate, do not attend our setting
- **cleaning hands more often than usual** - wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub/sanitizer ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered
- **ensuring good respiratory hygiene** by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- **cleaning frequently touched surfaces more often than usual** using standard products, such as detergents and bleach
- **minimizing contact and mixing** by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as layout, providing designated areas for bags, and ensuring sufficient space is available to maintain social distancing measures) and class content (such as stopping singing activities and minimizing chanting or activities that would increase the spread of droplets)
- **Ensuring that the venue is well ventilated** by keeping doors and windows open whilst maintaining site security.

Infection Control (continued)

At FHTS we will promote infection control through the methods above, and in addition we will:

- Display posters and information to promote infection control
- Ensure that adequate supplies of cleaning materials are available
- Dispose of waste promptly and hygienically
- Clean hard surfaces (eg door handles) with sanitizer regularly
- Provide tissues and suitable facilities for their disposal.

Procedure for if a child shows symptoms:

Before attending FHTS parents will sign a declaration stating that they will not send their child in if they or anyone in their household has shown symptoms of COVID-19 within the last 10 days.

If a student begins to show symptoms the following actions will take place:

- The student will be placed in a designated First Aid area that is at least 2m from other pupils. This will preferably be in a separate, well ventilated room where the child can be supervised appropriately.
- The First Aider will wear appropriate PPE (a mask, eye protection, apron, and gloves) if a distance of 2m cannot be maintained from the student
- The student's parent's or carer(s) will be called and asked to collect the student immediately.
- Parents or carers will be asked to get a PCR test for their child and to follow NHS guidance moving forwards.
- Parents will need to inform the FHTS manager of the result of the PCR test as soon as possible.
- FHTS will engage with the NHS Test and Trace system and parents will be contacted if necessary.
- The area where the child was waiting will be thoroughly cleaned in line with government guidance on how to clean non healthcare settings.

Closure:

The latest scientific advice is that closing individual settings is of limited benefit in stopping the spread of the disease. However, there may be some occasions when we will have to consider temporarily closing because we have too few staff or we are advised to close by the local authority. We will only do this in the interest of safeguarding the students in our care.

In the event of closure, parents or carers will be notified as soon as possible. The manager will also inform the venue and any other parties necessary.

Advanced Planning:

In preparation for dealing with COVID-19, FHTS will ensure that all contact details for staff, children and parents are up to date.

We will prepare messages of notification for parents and staff, so that they can be distributed as soon as an outbreak occurs.

FHTS will regularly update it's information regarding COVID-19, by checking the latest guidance from DfE and the local authority, and will inform parents and staff of any changes to our emergency plans and procedures.

Managing Risk:

Managing risk is a crucial part of preventing transmission of COVID-19. In order to manage risks associated with COVID-19 we will carry out the following steps:

- A thorough COVID-19 risk assessment will be conducted and reviewed on a weekly basis to ensure that we are operating in line with government guidance.
- The risk assessment will be published on our website and a copy given to parents and our partner schools. This will ensure consistency in risk management, and ensure that there is clear communication with all involved with our organisation.

Useful Contacts & Guidance:

Public Health England (PHE)	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england
PHE Thames Valley Health Protection Team (South East)	0344 225 3861 option 1 to 4 depending on area then option 1
NHS COVID-19	https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/
Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care

This policy was adopted by:	Francis-Hammond Theatre Schools
Date:	June 2021
To be reviewed:	Continuously as government guidance is released.
Signature:	