**Covid-19 Guidelines – September 2021**

**ARRANGEMENTS FOR BROOK STREET CENTRE FROM 6 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**19+ ADULT LEARNING COURSES**

The college is closely monitoring the current situation relating to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and, as a matter of routine, we are following updates provided by the Government’s Department of Health and Social Care and Public Health England.

Adult learning classroom sessions will resume from September following government guidance that it is no longer necessary to keep students in consistent groups (‘bubbles’). This means that bubbles will not need to be used in education settings from the autumn term.

However, we want to keep all learners and staff safe and will be keeping our current Covid safety procedures in place at our Brook Street site. This means that social distancing and the one-way,  keep-left system at entrances, exits, in communal areas and on stairs will remain in place and applies to staff, learners, supported people and visitors. Lifts and toilets will remain single use with one person at a time using them.

We will also be following our enhanced cleaning regime for all communal areas including classrooms, offices and shared equipment as well as frequent touchpoints and toilets. Hand sanitizer stations will continue to be positioned at entrances and exits and throughout the building. Please use them.

Effective ventilation is also crucial to prevent the virus from spreading and infecting people and we will be keeping windows and doors open (unless fire doors) whilst attempting to ensure that people remain at a comfortable temperature but it is always a good idea to make sure you are warmly-dressed when you come into college.

The government has removed the requirement to wear face coverings in law but expects and recommends that they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces where an individual may come into contact with people they do not normally meet.

With the current prevalence of the virus in our communities, all staff, learners, supported people and visitors will be expected to continue wearing face masks or face coverings in communal areas including corridors, lifts and toilets, unless they are medically exempt. We also strongly advise that face masks continue to be worn by adults in classrooms as class numbers are not currently planned to be limited as they were until July this year.

**YOU MUST NOT COME INTO THE COLLEGE IF YOU HAVE TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID OR IF YOU HAVE COVID SYMPTOMS, EVEN IF YOU HAVE HAD TWO COVID VACCINATIONS (YOU’RE DOUBLE JABBED).**

If you have one or more of the symptoms on this list, it could be a sign that you have Covid:

* Sneezing
* A runny nose
* A new cough
* A high temperature (fever)
* Losing your sense of taste or smell
* A headache
* Feeling very tired
* A sore throat

The symptoms of the Delta Covid variant can be very similar to a head cold in the early stages so you should not attend college if you have any of these symptoms.

You must stay at home and **get a free PCR test** and stay at home while you wait for your result. If you are positive and you have Covid, you must stay at home as long as NHS Test and Trace tell you to.  After that time and if you feel well with no symptoms, you must ring the College and speak to a Manager before you can come back to College.

Even if you have no symptoms, but you’ve been close to someone who has Covid, you can still get a  free PCR test.

**Click here to find our more information and to book a PCR test: https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test**

If someone you live with has tested positive for Covid but you have no symptoms, you do not have to self-isolate and stay at home IF you have had 2 Covid vaccinations. If you haven’t had two vaccinations, you must stay at home and get a PCR test if you get symptoms.

**GET A RAPID LATERAL FLOW TEST (LFD) IF YOU DON’T HAVE COVID SYMPTOMS BUT YOU HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID.**

This test is for people who DON’T HAVE any symptoms of COVID-19

Sometimes people with Covid can be asymptomatic – they don’t have any symptoms or feel ill, but they can still pass the virus to other people.

All adults in England can order free packs of 7 tests to use at home or get a test at a rapid lateral flow test site near you. You get a result in around 10 minutes. Research shows rapid tests are 99.9% accurate. This means the chance of getting a false-positive result (where the result shows as positive but is actually negative) is extremely low.

If you’re coming into college, we recommend that you take a rapid lateral flow test twice a week to avoid spreading the virus because even if you feel fine and have no symptoms because you could have Covid and could spread it to others. If your test result is negative, you can continue to attend college.

Of course, if you test positive on the lateral flow test, you must self-isolate, stay at home and book a PCR test (see above). If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test and is negative, it overrides the lateral flow test result and if you feel well and have no symptoms of Covid, please ring the college to speak to a manager about coming back to your course.

**To order free lateral flow tests to use at home, click here: https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests**

You must report your lateral flow test result whether it is positive or negative.

**To report your lateral flow test result, click here: https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result**

**GET A COVID-19 vaccination**

Safe, effective vaccinations are being offered to everyone aged 18, whether you’re registered with a doctor or not. They are available at local sites run by GPs or community pharmacies, at larger vaccination centres, walk-in sites and in some hospitals. More information on how to get a vaccine can be found on the NHS website.

**Click here: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/**

**STUDY PROGRAMMES**

As COVID-19 becomes a virus that we learn to live with, there is now an imperative to reduce the disruption to young people’s education – particularly given that the direct clinical risks to children are extremely low, and every adult has been offered a first vaccine and the opportunity for 2 doses by mid-September.

There are three key changes from Monday 6th of September:

1.Mixing and ‘bubbles’ – learners will be able to move around the college and mix with their peers from other vocational groups

2.Tracing close contacts – Close contacts will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace. Education settings are no longer expected to undertake contact tracing.

3.Face coverings – Face coverings are no longer advised for learners, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas. Wearing a face covering a personal choice and people may continue to use a face covering if they wish.

So, what will stay the same?

Coronavirus hasn’t gone away so there will still be a need for learners to follow basic measures to avoid the spread of the virus:

* Testing remains important in reducing the risk of transmission of infection within schools and colleges. For households to continue regular rapid flow testing twice each week
* Ensuring good hygiene including frequent and thorough hand cleaning and the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach.
* Maintaining appropriate cleaning regimes.
* Keeping occupied spaces well ventilated.
* Following public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19
* Supporting young people’s mental health and wellbeing.

**DAY OPPORTUNITIES CENTRES**

From Monday 6 September 2021, Day Opportunities continues to remain open to help the people we support and their parents/carers. There will be some restrictions in place but we will continue to deliver our services in line with the current recommended practice including infection control processes and personal protective equipment (PPE), regular testing, maintaining social distancing and good ventilation.   We have taken a number of steps to ensure everyone is kept as safe as possible and to adhere to government measures. The support offered is a combination of  face-to-face sessions within our hubs as well as regular appropriate contact via the phone or online.  This will continue to help protect against the rising cases and ensure supported individuals, staff and volunteers remain cautious in line with the local government advice.

**WHAT YOU NEED TO DO TO AVOID CATCHING AND SPREADING THE VIRUS**

* **Get vaccinated against Covid**
* **Keep indoor spaces well ventilated**

**Wear a facemask in indoor settings with people you don’t normally come into contact with**

* Wash**hands frequently with soap and water or use a sanitiser gel**
* **Catch coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues**
* **Throw away used tissues and then wash your hands. If you don’t have a tissue, use your sleeve**
* **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands**
* **Avoid close contact with people who are unwell**