



Coronavirus (COVID-19): Full Opening Plan

For the period of national restrictions from 5 November 2020: Please refer to the [appendix](#) at the end of this handbook for details on the new guidance for schools during the period of national restrictions from 5 November 2020.

Full Opening Plan & Staff Handbook

Policy Date: August 2020

Reviewed By: J Callaway & SLT

Updates & Review: Fortnightly review (or following incident, legislation or interim guidance)

Last updated 06.11.2020

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Electronically Signed:

Headteacher : *Mrs J Callaway*

Date: 01.09.2020

Chair of Governors: *Dr C Kidd*

Date: 01.09.2020

The aim of this plan

This document outlines how the school will welcome back all pupils in September and the measures that will be put in place to ensure our school community is safe and supported.

This is a live document that will be reviewed by the headteacher in conjunction with other key stakeholders as and when the situation requires..

Returning to school in September

Preparation for welcoming all pupils back in September will be undertaken by the headteacher and other senior members of staff; however, the governing board retains the responsibility for key decisions and the school's plans will be shared with the board before pupils and staff members return.

The school will work closely with Parents & staff when agreeing the best approaches for the school's circumstances.

Opening the school

From the beginning of the Autumn term, following the completion of relevant risk assessments, we will be welcoming back pupils in all year groups.

In welcoming all pupils back, we will be minimising the number of contacts that each pupil has during the school day, as part of implementing the DfE's system of controls outlined [later](#) in this plan to reduce the risk of transmission.

Risk assessments

Our risk assessment will be revisited and updated before the school opens in September, to consider additional risks and control measures and ensure the safety of all pupils and staff. We will consult with staff as part of the assessment, to ensure everyone's needs are understood and accounted for.

We will also review and update other relevant risk assessments, considering the need for relevant revised controls in relation to the implications of coronavirus. Sensible and proportionate control measures will be implemented to reduce the risk of transmission to the lowest reasonably practicable level.

Pupil 'bubbles'

EYFS: We are no longer required to keep bubbles small and consistent; however, we will ensure reasonable endeavours are made to minimise mixing within the setting, e.g. by using different rooms for different age groups and keeping these groups apart as much as possible.

Whilst unlikely to be the case, if the demand for places at the setting is still higher than current capacity, due to the protective measures in place, it may be necessary to keep the cap on numbers of children attending. Where this is the case, we will prioritise providing places to vulnerable children and children of critical workers, then three- and four-year-olds, followed by younger age groups.

Main School: Consistent bubbles will be used to ensure the risk of transmission is reduced. We will implement small pupil bubbles equivalent to the size of a full class, where possible. If this is not possible, e.g. if the use of small groups would restrict the normal operation of the school, we will organise larger groups instead.

The following control measures will be implemented to ensure bubbles are kept separate from one another whilst at school:

- Large gatherings, such as assemblies, will not take place, class assemblies will take place instead
- Timetables will be organised to ensure bubbles are kept apart and movement around the school site is kept to a minimum.
- Separate classroom / designated areas will be used for different bubbles.
- Break and lunch times will be staggered, with time left in between usage by different bubbles for surfaces in dining areas to be cleaned.
- Changing rooms will not be used. Children will come to school in PE kits to avoid the requirement for changing in school. Coats and bags will be stored in classroom bubble areas.
- Start and finish times will be staggered, to avoid large gatherings outside the school.

Staffing arrangements

EYFS staffing ratios

The staffing ratios set out in the EYFS framework still apply and will be adhered to. The government has disapplied some requirements in relation to qualifications – these are set out in the ‘Early years foundation stage: coronavirus disapplication’s’ guidance. Until these changes are lifted, the setting will continue to:

- Use reasonable endeavours to ensure that at least half of other staff counted in the staff: child ratio, excluding the member of staff who holds a level 3 qualification, hold at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

Staff members and pupils classed as clinically extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable

Pupils and staff considered clinically vulnerable can attend school.

Pupils and staff who are considered to be clinically extremely vulnerable, and received a letter advising them to shield, have been advised that they can return to work and school from 1 August, provided they maintain social distancing. Those who are in these groups will be encouraged to take particular care to practise frequent, thorough hand washing, and ensure frequently touched areas in their home and/or workspace are cleaned regularly.

We will consider how we can be flexible in how members of staff are deployed to enable them to work remotely where possible or in roles in school where it is possible to maintain social distancing.

Pupils and staff who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable can attend school.

Where an individual has been advised to remain at home by their GP or other medical professional, we will support them to continue working or learning from home.

We are aware that individuals from BAME backgrounds are disproportionately affected by coronavirus; therefore, we will be taking action to safeguard at-risk members of the school community and listen to, discuss, and act on their concerns.

Before- and after-school provision

We will consider how such provision can operate alongside our wider protective measures, including keeping pupils within their bubbles where possible. Where it is not possible to maintain these bubbles, we will use small, consistent groups instead.

We will, as far as possible, keep all children irrespective of age in small consistent groups of no more than 15, and meet the relevant ratio requirements.

In light of this, we will ensure that the number of people pupils come into contact with is minimised, just as it would be in school. To help overcome the challenges faced when keeping pupils in small groups, we will frequently review the effectiveness of our grouping arrangements and ensure our records are kept up-to-date with regards to the pupils in attendance and which member(s) of staff they have been assigned to.

We will ensure that the areas used for before- and after-school provision are thoroughly cleaned before and after use. Shared facilities, e.g. toilets, will also be cleaned more frequently, and the number of pupils using shared facilities at any one time will be limited.

The protective measures in place during before- and after-school provision will reflect the practices enforced in school, e.g. frequent hand washing. This includes the procedures to be followed if a pupil or member of staff becomes unwell with coronavirus symptoms. Individuals will be sent home immediately or asked to self-isolate in a designated room until they can be picked up.

In addition, we will ensure that the space used to host before- and after-school provision is adjusted to maximise social distancing, where required, and other protective measures, e.g. seating will be rearranged to minimise face-to-face contact with others. We will ensure indoor spaces are well ventilated and windows are kept open, where possible.

In response to Government advice that singing, shouting, chanting and conversing loudly may pose a higher risk of potential coronavirus transmission, these risks will be considered before planning such activities. Live performances in front of audiences will not take place at this time.

As the risk of transmission is deemed considerably lower outdoors, we will consider running indoor sessions outside instead, where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Should the school need to temporarily close due to a school outbreak of coronavirus or to follow local lockdown procedures, any before- and after-school provision will cease until further notice.

Reluctance to return to school

All pupils who are not self-isolating or complying with clinical or public health advice to stay at home are expected to attend school.

If staff members or parents of pupils with significant risk factors are concerned, the headteacher will discuss these concerns with the individuals and provide reassurance of the measures in place to reduce the risk in school. We will try, as far as practicable, to accommodate additional measures where appropriate.

Infection control

The school's **Infection Control Policy** will be implemented as appropriate.

Following the completion of a risk assessment, we will work through the DfE's /PHE's system of controls and adopt measures that address the risks we have identified.

Individuals who are unwell

To minimise contact with individuals who are unwell, we will ensure anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus, lives with someone who does, or has tested positive within the last seven days does not attend school.

Updated: If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal taste or smell, they will be sent home and advised to self-isolate **for at least 10 days**, and arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus.

If a pupil is awaiting collection, they will be moved to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on their age and needs, with adult supervision if required. A window will be opened for ventilation. If the pupil needs to use the bathroom during this time, they will be required to use a separate bathroom, which will be cleaned and disinfected before being used by anyone else.

Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms, and any pupils who have been in close contact with them, will not be asked to go home and self-isolate unless they develop symptoms themselves, the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive, or they have been required to do so by NHS Test and Trace.

If a pupil is awaiting collection, they will be moved to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on their age and needs, with adult supervision if required. A window will be opened for ventilation. If the pupil needs to use the bathroom during this time, they will be required to use a separate bathroom, which will be cleaned and disinfected before being used by anyone else.

Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms, and any pupils who have been in close contact with them, will not be asked to go home and self-isolate unless they develop symptoms themselves, the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive, or they have been required to do so by NHS Test and Trace.

To meet our duty to engage with the NHS Test and Trace process, we will ensure that staff members and parents understand that they must be ready and willing to:

- Book a test if they, or their child, are displaying symptoms of coronavirus.
- If they, or their child, were to test positive or contacted by NHS Test and Trace, provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with.
- **Self-isolate for 14 days if they have been in close contact someone who develops symptoms of, or tests positive for, coronavirus.**

The school has received a supply of home testing kits from the DfE. These will only be offered to individuals in the exceptional circumstance that we believe an individual may have barriers to accessing testing elsewhere. Pupils and staff will be encouraged to access a test themselves by visiting a testing site.

- Testing kits will only be provided to adults over the age of 18 or a pupil's parent. We will not be administering testing ourselves.
- The kits will be stored securely at room temperature (5-22°C).
- We will ask parents and staff to inform us immediately of their test results. If a pupil or staff member tests negative, they feel well and no longer have symptoms, they may return to school. If they test positive, they will be asked to self-isolate for at least 10 days and return to school only once they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste.

If we are informed of a positive test result, we will contact our local health protection team (HPT) as soon as possible. We will work with the local HPT to understand the action we need to take – this includes sending people home if they have been in close contact with the confirmed case, based on advice from the local HPT. The situation will be monitored closely, and parents will be advised of our plans via email.

To prepare for this possibility, we will be keeping a record of all pupils and staff members in each group, and any close contact that takes place between pupils and staff in other groups.

Increased hygiene practices

Pupils and staff will be reminded to clean their hands regularly, including when they arrive at school, when they return from breaks, when they move to another room and before and after eating. To ensure this is possible, we will:

- Make handwashing and hand sanitiser stations available across the school.
- Supervise the use of hand sanitiser and support pupils with handwashing if required, e.g. those with complex needs.
- Build these routines into school culture and support them through behaviour expectations, ensuring younger pupils and those with complex needs understand why they must follow them.

We will continue to promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach and ensure there are enough tissues and bins available to support staff and pupils, including those with complex needs, to follow this routine.

Enhanced cleaning measures

Prior to our phased reopening, we developed an enhanced cleaning schedule that was implemented as the school reopened to more pupils and staff. This schedule will remain in place to ensure more frequent cleaning of rooms, shared areas, and frequently touched surfaces and resources.

Pupil groups will not be allocated their own toilets; however, all toilets will be cleaned more regularly than usual.

Equipment and resources

Classroom-based resources, such as books or games, will be used and shared within pupil groups. Pupils and members of staff will be permitted to take shared resources home, but only where this is deemed beneficial to pupils' education and development.

Resources that are shared between groups, such as art and science equipment, will be cleaned frequently and always between use by different bubbles.

Staff and pupils will be advised that individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pencils and pens, should not be shared and that they should have their own. Pupils will be asked to limit the amount of equipment they bring to school to essentials only, such as coats, books and mobile phones (if appropriate).

Outdoor play equipment will be more frequently cleaned.

Social distancing

Social distancing will be maintained wherever possible. When the school opens fully, the following social distancing measures will be implemented:

- Pupils and staff will be kept in consistent bubbles to reduce the risk of transmission and limit the number of contacts for individuals.
- **EYFS:** We are no longer required to keep children in small, consistent groups and so we may return to normal group sizes; however, will consider how we can minimise mixing within our setting, e.g. using different rooms for different age groups.
- Adults should maintain a two-metre distance from each other and pupils, where possible.
- Where a two-metre distance is not possible, staff should avoid close face-to-face contact and minimise the time spent within one metre of anyone, unless supporting pupils who have complex needs or who need close contact care – this should be provided as normal.
- Pupils who are old enough should be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff and their peers where possible.
- Pupils will be seated side-by-side and facing forwards – any unnecessary classroom furniture will be moved to facilitate this.
- Pupils will be kept in their bubbles for PE, sport and physical activity, contact sports will be avoided, and sports equipment will be thoroughly cleaned between each use by different bubbles.
- The use of outside space will be maximised to support the delivery of the curriculum.
- Large gatherings, such as assemblies or collective worship, will not take place or only be limited to one bubble at a time.
- School timetables will be modified to ensure bubbles are kept apart and movement around the school is minimised, and to avoid creating busy corridors, entrances and exits.
- Break and lunch times will be staggered and time for cleaning surfaces between bubbles will be allocated.
- Shared staff spaces will be adapted to ensure staff can maintain an appropriate distance from each other.
- Start and finish times will be staggered to ensure bubbles are kept apart when they arrive at and leave school.

- Parents will not be permitted to gather at the school gates or come onto the school site without an appointment.
- Staff can move between bubbles but should continue following the school's social distancing measures as much as possible.

EYFS: While we are not required to arrange pupils and staff in small, consistent groups, we will ensure mixing continues to be minimised within our setting by using different rooms for different age groups.

The use of PPE

Public Health England (PHE) does not currently recommend the use of face coverings in schools; however, where face coverings are required, they should be fluid-resistant surgical face masks

PPE will only be used by staff where:

- An individual pupil becomes ill with coronavirus symptoms while at school and a two-metre distance cannot be maintained from them.
- A pupil already has routine intimate care needs that involve the use of PPE.

To dispose of face coverings and PPE from people with symptoms of coronavirus, including people who are self-isolating in school, we will:

- Put the waste in a plastic rubbish bag and tie it when full.
- Place the plastic bag in a second bin bag and tie it.
- Put the bag in a suitable and secure place marked for storage for 72 hours.
- Put the bag in with communal waste after the 72-hour period.

Immunisation providers

We will engage with our local immunisation providers to provide immunisation programmes on site as normal, ensuring these are delivered in line with our control measures.

Premises

The site manager will arrange for any necessary inspections, maintenance work and certification to take place prior to the full opening in September, if these have not already taken place. The usual pre-term building checks will also be undertaken.

Ventilation

To help reduce the spread of coronavirus, focus will be placed on improving general ventilation in the school in line with the HSE's guidance. We will consider ways to maintain and increase the supply of fresh air, e.g. by opening windows and doors.

In the interests of safety, fire doors may be propped open, ensuring that on hearing a fire alarm sounding they are removed and all are removed by the Site Manager by the end of each school day. Considerations will be given to safeguarding also.

Catering

The school kitchens will be opened fully from the start of the Autumn term and will operate safely, in line with government guidance. We will adhere to the legal requirements that apply regarding provision of food to all pupils and staff.

Facilitating infection control and social distancing

The site manager and headteacher will conduct an audit of all areas of the school to establish the layout of furniture and equipment and determine what social distancing measures will need to be changed or put in place before opening.

We will not be making any significant adaptations to the school site to enable us to welcome back all pupils unless required. Following the audit and completed risk assessment of the site, we will determine any small adaptations that are required.

Corridors will be marked for one-way direction and signs provided where required. The school timetable will be altered to minimise contact between pupil groups and movement around the school will be staggered and reduced wherever possible.

Large gatherings, such as assemblies, will be avoided, and breaktimes, lunchtimes, and drop off and collection times will all be staggered to reduce large gatherings and volumes of movement around the school.

The headteacher and other key members of staff will determine which lessons and activities could take place outside. We will also make use of outdoor spaces in the local area to support the delivery of the curriculum.

The site manager will be responsible for ensuring all the necessary actions are taken in advance of the school opening.

Behaviour expectations

Pupil behaviour

The Behaviour Policy will be updated to account for new social distancing rules and other expectations of pupils. The policy will also detail how these rules and expectations will be enforced, bearing in mind that some pupils will not understand the need for social distancing and may find the rules difficult to adhere to. Pupils and their parents will be informed about the changes to the Behaviour Policy ahead of their return to school.

Expectations of staff

Staff will be asked to adhere to the following basic principles as much as they can:

- Do not come to work if you have coronavirus symptoms, or go home as soon as these develop (informing your line manager), and book a coronavirus test as soon as possible.
- Inform the school of your test results as soon as possible.
- Clean your hands more often than usual with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly, or use alcohol-based hand sanitiser, ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.
- Use the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.

- Avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents and anti-virus products
- Think about ways to modify your teaching approach to keep a distance from pupils in your class as much as possible, particularly close face-to-face support (noting that it is understood that this is not possible at all times).
- Stay at the front of the classroom as much as possible, avoiding calling pupils to the front of the class or going to their desk to check on their work if not necessary.
- Help your class to follow the rules on hand cleaning, not touching their faces, 'catch it, bin it, kill it', etc. This includes updating your classroom displays with posters.
- Limit your contact with other staff members, and do not congregate in shared spaces, especially if they are small rooms.
- Make sure you have read the school's updated Behaviour Policy and know what role in it you are being asked to take.

We understand that following some of the above principles will be extremely challenging, so staff will not face any stringent action if they are unable to follow them. If a staff member is unable to follow these principles, they should speak to their line manager.

Personnel considerations

We are aware that many members of staff will have experienced an overwhelming amount of emotions during the coronavirus pandemic, whether these are related to bereavement, stress, childcare, isolation, or other factors.

Staff will be informed of any updates to policies or protocols surrounding sick pay, sickness absence, infection control measures and changes to their roles or working hours.

Term-time holiday requests

Only staff who are on all year-round contracts are eligible to request leave during term time, unless they are contractually restricted to taking leave during the school holidays. Requests from these members of staff will be managed in line with the Staff Leave of Absence Policy.

We are aware that if staff choose to travel abroad over the Summer holidays, their return travel arrangements could be disrupted due to factors beyond their control in relation to coronavirus. We will take steps to establish whether any members of staff have pre-booked holiday which may lead to a need to quarantine.

Where it is not possible to avoid a member of staff having to quarantine during term-time, we will consider if it is possible to amend their working arrangements temporarily and enable them to work from home. If we are not able to amend working arrangements, we will make the necessary considerations surrounding pay.

Staff on furlough

We expect that all staff who were furloughed during the coronavirus pandemic will return to work in September. If, however, a staff member's income cannot be obtained when the school opens, the school can keep the employee on furlough leave until the scheme ends.

The government has confirmed that furloughed workers can return to work part-time from August 2020, with employers being asked to pay a percentage towards the salaries of furloughed staff. The employer payments will substitute the contribution the government is currently making, ensuring staff continue to receive 80 percent of their salary. The headteacher will discuss any arrangements to bring furloughed staff members back to work part-time with individuals on a case-by-case basis.

The furlough scheme will continue until the end of October 2020.

Recruitment

We will consider any vacancies and recruitment processes once the Autumn term begins.

Supply staff and Peripatetic staff will be able to move between schools, but we will be considering ways to minimise the number of visits to school. If it is necessary to use supply staff and welcome visitors to the school, these individuals will be expected to comply with our arrangements for managing and minimising risk.

Staff training

Before the school opens in September, staff will undergo training to ensure they understand the new ways of working, e.g. in relation to social distancing and delivering the curriculum to pupils both in school and at home, if applicable.

We will also use this time to ensure staff training is refreshed in other relevant areas, such as safeguarding and health and safety.

Curriculum

To ensure all pupils are given the appropriate support to catch up and make substantial progress by the end of the academic year, we will ensure that:

- We teach an ambitious and broad curriculum from the start of term, whilst making use of any flexibilities to create time to cover important missed content.
- We return to the school's normal curriculum in all subjects by the Summer term 2021.
- Curriculum planning is based on the educational needs of pupils, informed by an assessment of pupils' starting points.
- Remote education is integrated into school curriculum planning and pupils are supported to learn from home if they need to.

Early years and Reception

Teachers will focus on the prime areas of learning, including communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, and physical development.

Teachers will also work to assess and address gaps in language, early reading and mathematics. We will ensure we are aware of all updates to the '[Early years foundation stage: coronavirus disapplications](#)', making sure changes to the curriculum are made where required.

We will also consider how all groups of children can be given equal opportunities for outdoor learning.

KS1 and KS2

Our priority will be to identify gaps and re-establish good progress in essential areas, such as phonics and reading, increasing vocabulary, writing and mathematics. The curriculum will remain broad, ensuring the majority of pupils are taught a full range of subjects over the year.

Relationships education, RSE and health education

We will begin delivering the statutory relationships and health education/RSE and health education from the Autumn term, in line with our Relationships and Health Education Policy

Teachers will be trained and supported to deliver content on mental health and wellbeing. More information about how we will support pupil wellbeing can be found in the [Wellbeing support](#) section of this plan.

Learning plan

Assessments

Early years assessments

The EYFS profile will return in 2020/2021 in accordance with its usual timetable.

In 2020/2021, the usual termly assessments and other summative and formative assessment methods will return in accordance with their usual timetables.

The Reception baseline assessment has been postponed until September 2021

Wellbeing support

Members of the school community have experienced overwhelming emotions during the coronavirus pandemic, and we will ensure that everyone continues to feel supported.

One of the school's key priorities in relation to wellbeing is ensuring the school community feels safe when we open in September.

Establishing routines

When establishing new routines, all staff will work together as a team to help pupils feel safe, understand the school's expectations, and give them a sense of control.

When organising the timetable for the first few weeks of the Autumn term, we will ensure pupils are allowed time to regularly reset, express and process their experiences of the coronavirus outbreak. Activities such as mindfulness, listening to music or going outside for fresh air will be planned into a regular schedule.

Clear guidelines and expectations will be given to staff, pupils and families for the new routines that will apply from September. These will be adapted as required and any adaptations will be

fully communicated to all members of the school community to ensure they know exactly what is expected of them and have a sense of control.

We understand the importance of positivity during this time and will ensure pupils leave the school every day with a positive mindset. This approach will help them to feel safe and look forward to being at school.

The environment

Pupils will likely be experiencing a range of emotions in relation to returning to school, whether this is excitement or anxiety, so we will ensure they feel safe both physically and emotionally. Staff will work together to decide how to create a warm and welcoming environment which builds a sense of belonging despite the necessity of social distancing measures.

We understand that staff, pupils and families will have experienced many overwhelming emotions during the coronavirus pandemic, and some may have faced loss and trauma. We will ensure that an emotionally safe environment is fostered that nurtures and supports pupils and also focusses on rebuilding and reconnecting.

Learning

To ensure pupils' needs are met and they are able to thrive and learn effectively, we will plan the timetable around a framework that supports pupils to grow.

Teachers will be available if pupils want to talk about any aspect of their learning or emotions they are experiencing.

Communication

We understand that knowing procedures and practices are securely in place will help to alleviate anxiety and build a sense of safety and control; therefore, we will clearly communicate our plans to all stakeholders.

Parents will be sent a handbook prior to their child returning to school that will contain clear guidelines about how the school will operate and expectations. Parents will be asked to share these guidelines with their child so they know what they will be expected to do once they return, which will also give them a sense of safety and control.

Form staff have kept in touch with parents and will make sure they speak to parents on or if possible prior, to the return to school to ensure we know about any other relevant information, e.g. bereavements, illnesses and family challenges. Appropriate support will be put in place to support pupils based on this information.

All staff will be informed of the school's plans and what is expected of them before they return in September to ensure they feel well-informed.

Bereavement

Our school understands that some members of our community may have experienced loss due to coronavirus. We will ensure we have provisions in place to support these members of our school community.

The **Bereavement Policy** has been updated with information regarding how bereavement support will be delivered from September. For pupils, staff and families that remain at home because they are following public health/medical advice, the provisions outlined in the amendment to this policy will continue to be followed.

Pastoral staff and the headteacher are responsible for coordinating the school's bereavement support approach. They will meet to discuss how best to support pupils and staff that have been affected as and when they return to school. Before returning to school, the headteacher will talk to the pupil or staff member about the following:

- Who they can go to for support within the school and externally
- Who within the school community has been informed about the death
- Whether they would like a memorial to be set up within the school

The impact of such news on any other pupils in the school will be considered and direct contact made with them by their class teacher.

The headteacher will check in with staff on a regular basis, and following the news of a death in a school community, to ensure they are supported effectively.

Contact will be maintained with the affected families to ensure they are receiving the support they need.

Wellbeing team

The school has established a wellbeing team that will coordinate support. This includes staff members trained in mental health support, SENCO and DSL, and other key members of staff.

External support

The following external agencies can provide extra support if required:

- CAMHS
- GPs
- Early help referral teams
- Thumbs Up

Staff wellbeing and workload

The governing board and SLT will have regard to staff work-life balance and wellbeing, understanding that some staff members may be particularly anxious about returning. We will ensure staff are aware of the measures we are putting in place to support them and that they are involved in this process.

In the first few weeks of term, a wellbeing survey will be conducted to identify how staff are coping with being back in school, concerns they have and any support they require from the school.

During the Summer term, a survey was also distributed to assess staff workload and the impact this was having on wellbeing. We will revisit the results of this survey and ensure workload is carefully managed when staff return to work.

We will promote a culture of communication and openness with all staff. Support systems will be made clear to all staff to ensure they understand where they can go if they require additional support.

Educational trips and visits

We will resume domestic, non-overnight trips and visits from September.

All trips will be carried out in line with protective measures, including keeping pupils within their consistent groups and the COVID-secure measures that are in place at the destination.

We will also make use of outdoor spaces in the local area to support the delivery of the curriculum.

EYFS: The use of outside space will be maximised, and we may take small groups of children to outdoor public spaces, e.g. parks, as long as a risk assessment deems it safe to do so.

We will follow our usual procedures and conduct full risk assessments in relation to all trips and visits to ensure they can be done safely. As part of these risk assessments, we will consider which control measures need to be used and the wider advice on visiting both indoor and outdoor venues.

Attendance

We expect all pupils to return to school in September; therefore we will resume taking the attendance register from September.

We understand that there may be a small number of pupils still unable to attend in line with public health advice, whether this is due to them having had symptoms themselves, or because they are a close contact of someone who has had coronavirus.

We are also aware that if the rate of disease rises in the local area, pupils who were previously advised to shield may be asked to follow the same steps again until the infection rate reduces.

Any pupils who are unable to attend school for the reasons outlined above will be immediately supported to access remote education.

Uniform

Pupil uniform

During the Summer term, certain provisions outlined in the School Uniform Policy were relaxed; however, from the beginning of the Autumn term, we will return to this policy and expect all pupils to comply.

Parents will not be required to wash pupils' uniform any differently or more frequently than they usually would.

Staff dress code

We expect all staff to follow the dress code when they return to work in September. Staff will not be required to wash their clothes any differently or more frequently than they usually would.

Transitions

Pupils new to Reception

We have ensured steps were taken to allow us to build effective relationships with pupils and their families prior to their transition, e.g. through virtual meetings with parents.

The following actions have been undertaken/are ongoing to support pupils as they start school:

- Information sharing with nurseries will be facilitated during the Autumn term, where this has not taken place already.
- Families have been offered opportunities to get to know the school prior to the pupil starting.
- The information we share with parents will be accessible to all – we will develop written communications and conduct online meetings and phone calls.
- A Child Friendly Guide To Avalon School has been provided to pupils to show them what they can expect when they come to the school.

Transition between other classes

Some pupils did not return to the school before the start of the 2020/2021 academic year.

Where this is the case, and pupils were not able to spend time with their previous teacher or in their previous classroom, the new class teacher has been touch with pupils and their parents to begin building relationships prior to their return to school.

School leavers

Unfortunately, it was not possible for traditional leavers events to take place; therefore, we will consider ways that pupils can be invited back so that they are able to say goodbye and mark this transition. We will share these plans in advance with pupils as appropriate.

Support for new pupils with SEND

The SENCO will ensure contact is made with the previous school's SENCO so that they receive detailed information about pupils with SEND before they move into the school. The SENCO will arrange for contact to be made with pupils and their families to reassure them that the support they receive will be continued when they move to their new school.

Support for parents

As part of any transition, we will aim to establish relationships with pupils and their families to ensure they feel welcomed, valued, and informed.

Safeguarding

Ensuring safeguarding arrangements remain effective and updated in response to changes while the school transitions to opening fully is a key priority.

Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy was updated during the partial closure to include provisions for keeping pupils safe until all pupils return to school. As we move to open fully, our policy will be reviewed to determine whether it reflects the current ways of working and the requirements of 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE) 2020, which comes into force in September.

We will continue to ensure that:

- The best interests of pupils always come first.
- If anyone in the school has a safeguarding concern about a pupil, they act immediately.
- A DSL or deputy DSL is always available.
- Unsuitable individuals are not permitted to work with pupils or come into contact with pupils whilst on site.
- Pupils who remain at home, e.g. due to self-isolation, are protected when they are online.

Identifying and supporting newly vulnerable pupils

We will continue to take steps to closely monitor, identify and support pupils as they return to school, accounting for the fact that some pupils may not usually be considered 'at risk'.

The DSL and their team will be given time and support to enable them to organise and manage their workload effectively. This will include re-engaging with external agencies and ensuring staff, pupils and pupils' families are informed of any services whose work practices may have changed due to the lockdown period.

Safeguarding training will be refreshed for all staff before the school opens fully to ensure everyone is able to respond appropriately to disclosures from pupils and identify signs that could indicate a pupil has experienced significant harm, e.g. changes in behaviour. This training will be provided in the form of full school training. The training will reflect the updates included in KCSIE, particularly in relation to domestic abuse and extra-familial risks including Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE) and county lines.

KCSIE includes a particular emphasis on mental health, which will be key to support for pupils at this time. The definition of safeguarding has changed to include mental health explicitly. Staff will need specific training to support this. We will ensure staff are aware that it will take time for pupils to re-establish their relationships with staff and to process their experiences of lockdown. This means that it may take time before pupils are able to share their experiences. Staff will be reminded that **just because a disclosure is not immediate, it does not make it less valid or important.**

Pupils may also express any trauma they have experienced through their behaviour. We will ensure staff are aware of the link between safeguarding and mental health, emphasising that mental health issues can sometimes be indicators of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

A safe place will be provided for pupils to discuss concerns about their experiences of lockdown and make disclosures where necessary.

SEND support

Assessing risks to pupils with SEND returning to school

All pupils with SEND, including those with EHC plans, will be expected to attend school from the beginning of the Autumn term alongside their peers.

The school will consider whether any pupils with SEND will need specific support to prepare for the changes of routines that the return to school or routines within school will involve.

Providing SEND support

Staff, including TAs and specialist staff, will be deployed to provide pupils with the necessary support while they remain within the required bubble groups. Any redeployments will not be made at the expense of supporting pupils with SEND.

The SENCO, in collaboration with other key members of staff and agencies, is responsible for coordinating the school's SEND support as it opens fully. Specialist staff, therapists, peripatetic teachers and other support will be allowed to move between schools to support pupils and provide interventions as usual, whilst trying to maintain a distance from other staff.

Support for individual pupils

We are aware that pupils with SEND will have had a variety of experiences. While many pupils with an EHC plan will have been attending school on site for some or all of the lockdown period, others will not. There will be many pupils identified as needing SEND support who will have been learning from home throughout this period. There will also be those who were not on the SEND register before the partial closure of the school, but whose experiences during this period will mean that they are now in need of additional SEND support – we recognise that many of these pupils will be those with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.

Even within these groups, pupils' experiences will not have been uniform. To ensure pupils receive the appropriate support, the SENCO will ensure they have a clear understanding of the experiences of pupils during the closure period. This will be done in a number of ways, including speaking to pupils and their parents and getting in touch with any external agencies that have been supporting pupils.

All pupils, including those with SEND, will be given catch up support to promote their progress.

Rebuilding relationships

All pupils, and particularly those with SEND, will need time and space to re-establish their relationships with staff and their peers. For example, those pupils that have remained at school will have to adapt to more pupils being around them, and those pupils that remained at home will have to adapt to the transition from online relationships to face-to-face relationships.

Upon their return to school, relationships between staff and pupils and pupils and their peers will also be impacted due to social distancing measures. We will make sure that this change in relationships is explained to pupils with SEND, whilst also understanding that these pupils may require repeat explanations.

Staff deployment will be kept as consistent as possible to help rebuild relationships. Support staff will be given time with pupils to build relationships away from learning expectations. Class teachers and TAs will also be given time with their pupils to rebuild relationships.

We are aware that pupils with SEND may have experienced feelings of rejection and fear during this time and that these feelings may be communicated physically. This behaviour will be managed in a supportive rather than corrective manner.

Re-establishing routines

The re-establishment of routines for pupils with SEND will be vital, bearing in mind that routines when the school opens more widely will involve staggered starts and other changes.

Routines will be made clear to all pupils with SEND and time will be needed for them to embed and understand the changes. Visual timetables will be made to support pupils' understanding of routines. We will consider whether additional breaks for movement to support self-regulation and the management of change are required.

Re-establishing expectations

The expectations of pupils for areas such as their behaviour and how they act around school will be different, e.g. pupils will be expected to adhere to some form of social distancing rules. We understand that it may be more challenging for pupils with SEND to meet these expectations.

We will clearly set out our expectations to all pupils and ensure pupils with SEND are provided with learning aids, e.g. picture books, to support their understanding.

Restarting learning

Pupils will have had different learning experiences during the partial closure – this means they will be in different places academically and teachers will need to build on where each pupil is.

Teachers and support staff will be responsible for establishing the current level of learning for pupils with SEND. Formal assessment will not be used to establish the current learning levels of pupils with SEND, as this could add to pupils' anxieties around re-entering formal education. The SENCO will work with class teachers and support staff to develop the most appropriate methods of establishing pupils with SEND's current learning level.

For many pupils with SEND, they will need to revisit and re-engage with a lot of their previous learning and skills; therefore, class teachers will plan this work specifically for pupils that require it.

Sensory issues

For many pupils with SEND, a key issue as they return to school will be the management and regulation of sensory issues. Pupils that have been at school during partial closure will have become used to the site being quieter, while those who have been at home will be used to only being around a few people. Pupils will have to readjust to being around more people, noise and movement. We understand that during this adjustment period, pupils with SEND may express their discomfort through emotional and physical outbursts. The SENCO and other key staff will consider how this behaviour will be managed and how pupils will be supported – this will include the following measures:

- Flexibility with fidgeting and movement will be allowed (while considering social distancing measures) to support pupils to self-regulate and manage sensory overload.

- Calm and safe spaces will be allocated throughout the school where pupils can go to if they are experiencing sensory overload.
- The school's policies for the management of emotional and physical outbursts will be reviewed to ensure they are supportive of pupils while keeping staff and all pupils safe.

Annual reviews of EHC plans

- The SENCO will be given extra time and support to manage reviews, as required.
- To maintain social distancing measures, reviews will be held virtually.
- Clear decisions will be made about information gathering and staff will note whether information is from before or after the partial closure period.
- The SENCO will identify which meetings are the highest priority (e.g. pupils needing a change in placement and those with a significant change of need) and focus on these meetings.

Parents will be engaged to ensure the school can fully understand pupils' experiences during and after the partial closure of the school

Suppliers and procurement

Reviewing supply chains

The SBM and headteacher will review all of the school's supply chains to assess their performance, effectiveness and resilience during the coronavirus pandemic, and to determine what measures need to remain in place or change before the school opens in September.

Public transport

We will continue to encourage parents, staff and pupils to walk or cycle to school if possible, or travel in a car instead. If the use of public transport is necessary, we will encourage individuals to use it outside of peak times – we will introduce staggered start times to support this.

When using public transport, all pupils and staff are required to follow the guidelines on social distancing and wear a face covering at all times.

Pupils and staff will be instructed not to touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing them and to wash their hands immediately on arrival at the school. Disposable face coverings will be disposed of in a covered bin, and reusable ones will be placed in a plastic bag that can be taken home. Once face coverings have been stored or disposed of, pupils and staff will be required to wash their hands before going to their classroom.

Procedures for local lockdown

In the event of local lockdown, we may be required to close to all but vulnerable children and children of critical workers.

Parents will be informed of any changes to their children's attendance immediately.

If we are unable to open for pupils in priority groups for any reason, we will work with the LA to agree the most appropriate solution.

Remote education

If a local lockdown occurs, or a group or small number of pupils need to self-isolate, we will offer immediate remote education to all pupils who are at home.

We will gauge how well pupils are progressing using questions and assessments and set clear expectations for pupils on how often teachers will check their work. Teachers may adjust the pace or difficulty of remote education, or revisit material in response to these assessments.

Pupils who do not have suitable online access will be provided with printed resources, such as textbooks and workbooks.

Expectations of pupils will depend on their age, stage of development, and any SEND.

Attendance

Attendance during the local lockdown will be recorded in line with the coronavirus-related measures.

No one displaying symptoms of coronavirus will be allowed to enter the school site.

Pupils with SEND

In the case of local lockdown or renewed partial closure of the school due to a coronavirus outbreak, the school will need to recommence the provision of remote learning. Where this is the case, we will ensure support additional support is in place to help pupils with SEND to access remote education.

Personnel considerations

We will ensure the wellbeing of staff is considered and discuss with them the impact of local lockdown measures.

During the period of lockdown, we will assess the staffing capacity required and assess our needs as a school.

Where staff are clinically vulnerable, or extremely clinically vulnerable, we will work with staff to determine whether it would be safer for them to work from home or at school. If they are comfortable with being in school, we will ensure stringent protective measures are implemented and followed. We are aware that shielding measures may be re-enforced, and will support staff to work from home where this is the case.

Infection control

When operating at a limited capacity, we will continue to follow the stringent infection control measures that are outlined [earlier in this plan](#).

Extra-curricular provision

Extra-curricular provision will only operate when it is deemed practical and safe to do so, and in accordance with all government guidance and the school's protective measures.

Communication

Our plans to open and all associated procedures will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders, including pupils, parents, staff, visitors, suppliers and contractors.

Parents will be informed of:

- The protective steps the school is taking to ensure pupils are safe.
- New timetable arrangements, including start and finish times.
- The processes for drop-off and collection.
- The educational resources that can be accessed from home, if their child is following public health/medical advice and will not be returning to school immediately.
- Recommendations in terms of transport to and from the school.
- Safety measures that will be implemented, e.g. social distancing.
- Expectations of pupils in terms of behaviour and attendance.

These arrangements will be communicated via the Full Opening Parent Handbook. Parents will be expected to share this information with their children.

Staff will be informed of all relevant plans, including infection control measures, timetable changes or changes to their role and expectations of them, and will be given the opportunity to address any specific concerns. Staff meetings and training days will take place before the school opens, to take staff through all of the arrangements. Staff will be engaged regularly to get their feedback on the arrangements that are in place.

Cleaning staff/contractors will be informed of the new cleaning requirements and additional time for these to be completed will be agreed.

Monitoring and review

This plan will be reviewed continually in line with guidance from the government and PHE.

Any changes to the plan will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Appendix – Period of National Lockdown Between 5 November and 2 December

During the period of national lockdown between 5 November and 2 December, this appendix outlines the measures that apply. Please note that some of the measures outlined in the wider handbook do not apply at this time.

2. National intervention

During the period of national lockdown, the DfE's 'contain framework' of tiered restrictions for schools will not apply.

System of controls on site

The school will remain open for all pupils during the period of national restrictions. The school will continue to undertake risk assessments and implement the [system of controls](#) set out in this handbook.

3. Protecting clinically extremely vulnerable individuals

Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable will be advised to work from home, where possible, and not attend the school site. Staff who fall into this group will have been identified through a letter from the NHS or from their GP, and may have been advised to shield in the past.

Any staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable should talk with the Headteacher about how they will be supported.

All parents will be advised to speak to their child's GP or specialist clinician if they have not already done so, to ascertain whether their child should still be classed as clinically extremely vulnerable. Any pupils who are still considered clinically extremely vulnerable will be advised not to attend school whilst national restrictions are in place. Pupils will be supported to learn remotely at home, while this is the case.

Clinically vulnerable individuals will continue to attend the site as normal, in line with current guidance.

4. Infection control

Based on this guidance, we have decided that staff and visitors will not be required to wear face coverings when moving around communal areas of the school, including corridors and staircases. Due to the negative impact on communication and the reduced risk of transmission, face coverings will not be worn in classrooms.

Face coverings / transparent visors will be required to be worn by staff (unless exemptions apply) managing drop off and collection of children. Parents are required to wear face coverings (unless exemptions apply) during drop off and collection of children at school, as advised by WBC.

5. The curriculum

We will continue to provide music, dance, and drama in school, in line with the existing safety precautions set out in our Infection Control Policy and relevant risk assessments.

As it is important for pupils to remain active where possible, we will ensure our PE, sport and physical activity provision is delivered in line with the existing infection control measures.

We will only provide team sports listed on the [return to recreational team sport framework](#). There will be no competition between different schools during this period.

During sport activities, pupils will be kept in consistent groups and equipment will be thoroughly cleaned between each use by different groups. Outdoor sports will be prioritised, and large indoor spaces (the school hall) will be used where this is not possible. We will maximise natural ventilation, ensure distance between pupils, and ensure we conduct enhanced cleaning and hygiene measures.

6. Transport

Staff will be encouraged to walk or cycle when travelling to and from school where possible, and to plan ahead and avoid busy times and routes on public transport. Staff and pupils are permitted to travel in and out of local areas to deliver and access education.

7. Before- and after-school care

We will continue to offer before- and after-school clubs where it is reasonably necessary to support parents to work, search for work, or undertake training or education, or where the provision is being used for the purpose of respite care. These arrangements will operate within our existing infection control measures.

8. Monitoring and review

We will keep this appendix under constant review and update it in line with any new or updated guidance released by the government or local leaders.