



Social Distancing Appendix to Health & Safety Policy

Statement of intent

This policy outlines the school's approach to social distancing measures in light of the current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and how we will adhere to the guidance published by the government and health organisations.

Whilst we are looking forward to opening in September, we understand the concerns of many of our stakeholders, e.g. parents and staff members. That is why we have created this appendix – to outline the steps the school will take to mitigate the risk of infection spreading and, ultimately, ensure the safety of our school community.

We will be consulting parents and staff members to support our decision-making and will be updating this policy in light of updates to government guidance.

Signed by:

_____	Headteacher	Date: _____
_____	Chair of governors	Date: _____

1. Legal framework

1.1. This appendix has due regard to relevant legislation and guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Coronavirus Act 2020
- DfE (2020) 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings'
- DfE (2020) 'Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)'
- DfE (2020) 'Guidance for full opening: schools'

1.2. This appendix operates in accordance with the following school policies:

1.3.

- Bereavement Policy
- Staff Leave of Absence Policy
- Infection Control Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) Full Opening Plan
- Risk Assessment for Full Opening in September

2. Risk assessments

2.1. Before opening in September, a risk assessment will be carried out to ensure sensible measures are put in place to protect staff members and pupils, including appropriate social distancing measures.

2.2. Staff members will be consulted as part of the creation process to ensure everyone's needs are understood and accounted for.

2.3. The risk assessment will address the following areas:

- safety of the school premises
- cleaning measures
- infection control and the ability to implement protective measures, e.g. social distancing
- supporting staff and pupil wellbeing
- supporting pupils' learning
- safeguarding
- communication of plans and procedures

3. Social distancing measures

Use of 'bubbles'

3.1. 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.

3.2. Consistent pupil bubbles will be used to ensure the risk of transmission is reduced. Where possible, and where the normal operation of the school will not be restricted, the size of these bubbles will be equivalent to a year group.

3.3. In younger years, e.g. Years 7, 8 and 9 where we deem it possible, we will implement smaller bubbles equivalent to the size of a full class for the majority of the day. For older year groups,

e.g. Year 10 and onwards, each bubble will contain a whole year group to ensure we are able to deliver the full range of curriculum subjects and allow pupils to receive specialist teaching.

- 3.4. All pupils will be encouraged to maintain a distance within their bubbles.
- 3.5. Pupils will remain in these bubbles and will not mix with others during the school day.
- 3.6. Staff will be permitted to move between bubbles but should continue to follow the school's social distancing measures where possible.
- 3.7. Teaching staff will be asked to maintain a distance from pupils by staying at the front of the class, and away from their colleagues where possible.
- 3.8. Where possible, social distancing measures will be adhered to, including the two-metre rule. Pupils will be seated side-by-side facing forwards – any unnecessary classroom furniture will be removed to facilitate this.

The school day

- 3.9. The Headteacher and other key staff members will review the school timetable and make amendments to reduce movement around the school, such as ensuring separate classroom/ zones and break and lunch areas are used for different bubbles.
- 3.10. Staff, pupils, and parents will be sent a copy of the finalised timetable and will be informed of any changes to this timetable.

Travelling to and from school

- 3.11. Pupil start and finish times will be staggered as follows to maintain social distancing and minimise mixing:

Staggered start and finish times

The first week ONLY will incorporate a phased return of year groups with staggered start and finish times. This will enable us to explain the stringent health and safety precautions we have introduced. The table below indicates the day(s) and time(s) your child will be in school for the first week only.

Year group	Entrance	Weds 2/9/2020	Thurs 3/9/2020	Fri 4/9/2020	Leaving Time
Year 7	A Block	8.30	8.30	10.30	3.00
Year 8	B Block			8.35	3.05
Year 9	A Block			8.50	3.10
Year 10	B Block		8.40	10.35	3.15
Year 11	C Block	8.50	8.50	10.40	3.20

The following week, students will then follow the timetable below until social distancing restrictions are lifted by the government:

Year group	Entrance	Arrive	Leave
Year 7	A Block	8.30	3.00
Year 8	B Block	8.35	3.05
Year 9	A Block	8.40	3.10
Year 10	B Block	8.45	3.15
Year 11	C Block	8.50	4.00

- 3.12. Pick up and drop off procedures are communicated to parents in advance of the measures being put in place.
- 3.13. Parents are urged to avoid public transport where possible and to encourage their children to walk or cycle to school. Where public transport is used, parents and pupils are encouraged to follow government guidance on social distancing and other protective measures, e.g. wearing face coverings.

Assemblies

- 3.14. Assemblies will not be held in large groups. Classroom teachers will hold assemblies with the pupils in their bubbles and Heads of Year Virtually using Google Hangouts.

Break and lunchtimes

- 3.15. Pupils will take their break times and lunchtimes with the pupils in their bubble to avoid mixing.
- 3.16. Different areas of the school will be allocated for pupils to take their break and lunchtimes, so we can appropriately distance pupil bubbles.

Year Group	Enter/Exit zone	Teaching zone	Break/Lunch zone	Play Area
Year 7	A Block	Humanities	Canteen	Back MUGA
Year 8	B Block	Art; DT; PE; PA	Sports Hall	Canteen hard area
Year 9	A Block	Maths/Science/IT	Theatre	A Block hard area
Year 10	B Block	MFL/English	MFL/English Hub	B Block hard area
Year 11	C Block	Science/Maths	Science Hub	C Block hard area

- 3.17. The playground will be open so pupils are able to go outside during their lunchtimes; however, they will be required to remain within their bubbles.
- 3.18. Pupil meals will be delivered to their break/lunch area from the canteen.
- 3.19. Pupils will wash their hands before and after eating.

Staffroom

- 3.20. The staff room and other shared staff spaces will be adapted to ensure staff can maintain an appropriate distance from each other.
- 3.21. Additional staff working and break spaces will be created.
- 3.22. Maximum numbers for staff rooms and workspaces have been assessed and signage has been posted on doors.

PE lessons

- 3.23. 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.
- 3.24. On days that students have PE, students will be expected to wear PE kit to alleviate contact in changing rooms.

Extra-curricular clubs

- 3.25. Before deciding whether extra-curricular clubs can go ahead, the Headteacher will consider how such provision can operate alongside the school's wider protective measures, including keeping pupils within their bubbles where possible. Where this is not possible, we will use small, consistent groups instead.
- 3.26. The Headteacher will ask parents to provide their children with their own equipment for participating in sports to minimise sharing and the potential for infection to spread.
- 3.27. Only individual sports, like tennis and badminton, where social distancing can be practised will be played. Contact sports will not be played under any circumstance.
- 3.28. All equipment, e.g. tennis racquets and balls, and areas will be cleaned and disinfected before and after use.
- 3.29. The school reserves the right to cancel any extra-curricular clubs without notice, including while the clubs are in progress, to protect the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff members.

4. Behaviour

- 4.1. The school's Behaviour Management Policy has been amended to include an appendix outlining how social distancing will work when implementing the measures in the policy.
- 4.2. Whilst following social distancing principles is a key priority, we understand that following some of the social distancing principles will be extremely challenging for some staff and pupils. Stringent action will not be applied if there are rational reasons why individuals are unable to follow them.
- 4.3. If a staff member is unable to follow the principles, they should speak to their line manager.
- 4.4. If a pupil is unable to follow social distancing measures, the Headteacher and relevant staff members will discuss whether additional support can be offered to help them do so.

5. Transport

- 5.1. The SENCO will liaise with the LA and the school's transport providers to ensure an appropriate plan is in place to protect pupils and staff members who use public transport to travel to school.
- 5.2. Pupils and staff are encouraged to walk or cycle to school or be dropped off by a member of their household. If this is not possible, and pupils and staff need to use public transport, they are required to follow guidelines on social distancing and wearing face coverings.
- 5.3. When organising dedicated school transport, we will consider the following:

- how pupils are grouped together on transport, ensuring this reflects the pupil groups organised in school as much as possible
- use of hand sanitiser upon boarding or disembarking
- additional cleaning of vehicles
- organised queuing and boarding where possible
- distancing within vehicles where possible
- the use of face coverings for pupils over the age of 11, where appropriate, e.g. if they are likely to come into close contact with people outside of their group

5.4. Pupils and their families will be informed of the new arrangements before they are implemented.

6. Supporting pupils

6.1. The SENCO will review EHC plans and risk assessments to determine whether appropriate support is in place for pupils with SEND ahead of their return to school.

6.2. The SENCO will consider the capacity for the pupil to understand and follow social distancing measures that have been put in place and ensure support is in place to aid in this, e.g. visual aids to explain the importance of social distancing.

6.3. When planning for each stage of reintegration, the implications for the wellbeing of pupils, staff, and families will always be considered. One of the school's key priorities in relation to wellbeing is ensuring that the school community feels safe when we open.

6.4. The SENCO will liaise with the LA to discuss what wider support services are available and to secure additional support and early help, where possible.

7. Infection control measures

7.1. We know that implementing social distancing measures in a school setting is extremely challenging. Therefore, we will also implement robust infection control measures to help ensure the safety of our school community.

7.2. Infection control measures are implemented in line with the Infection Control Policy, which contains an appendix on coronavirus measures.

7.3. All staff members will be briefed on what they can do to mitigate the risk of infection, and they will be reminded of their responsibilities relating to control measures regularly.

7.4. The school will communicate regularly with parents to outline the infection control measures in place and to explain parents' responsibilities in mitigating the risk of infection spreading. This is done to reassure parents and further mitigate the risk of infection spreading.

7.5. The following measures will be implemented across the school:

- Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, have someone in their household who does, or have tested positive within the last 7 days do not attend the school for 7 or 14 days (see government guidelines).
- Cleaning hands frequently – wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser 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 using standard products, such as detergents and bleach
- Minimising contact and mixing of pupils and staff by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (such as staggered break times)
- Ensuring individual and frequently used equipment (e.g. stationery) is not shared and that classroom-based resources (e.g. books) are only used and shared within bubbles. Resources that must be shared between groups, e.g. art equipment, will be cleaned frequently and always between use by different bubbles.
- Discouraging pupils from touching their faces or putting objects in their mouths

7.6. 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 if they have been in close contact someone who develops symptoms of, or tests positive for, coronavirus

7.7. The school will review guidance from the government regularly, and update this policy and other documents, e.g. the Risk Assessment for Full Opening in September, where necessary.

8. Personal protective equipment (PPE)

8.1. Reference to PPE in this section means:

- fluid-resistant surgical face masks (also known as Type IIR)
- disposable gloves
- disposable plastic aprons
- eye protection, e.g. face visor or goggles

8.2. The government has advised that the majority of school staff do not need to wear PPE beyond what they normally would for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of two metres from others.

8.3. In accordance with government guidance, PPE will be provided to staff in the following circumstances:

- Where staff are caring for pupils whose intimate care needs already require the use of PPE.
- Where a pupil becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus at school and requires direct personal care until they can go home, a fluid-resistant surgical mask should be worn by the staff member caring for the pupil. If contact with the pupils is necessary, the staff member should wear disposable gloves, a disposable apron, and a fluid-resistant surgical mask. Where there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, e.g. from coughing, eye protection should be worn.
- If a request from a pupil, parent or member of staff is agreed by the Headteacher.

8.4. When using face masks, staff will ensure the masks:

- cover both the nose and mouth
- do not dangle around the neck

- are not touched once put on, except when carefully removed before disposal
 - are changed once they become moist or damaged
 - are only worn once and then discarded
- 8.5. When using PPE, staff members will follow PHE’s guidelines on putting on and taking off equipment. PHE’s infographics will be displayed in areas of the school where PPE is likely to be used.
- 8.6. The safety of our staff is paramount, so additional risk assessments will be conducted to determine whether PPE is required for other tasks and activities, and we will do our utmost to ensure staff are provided with the PPE they need.
- 8.7. Where the wearer of PPE does not have coronavirus symptoms, the equipment will be placed in a refuse bag and be disposed of as normal domestic waste.
- 8.8. PPE that has been worn by, or near, someone with coronavirus symptoms will be disposed of by:
- putting it in a plastic rubbish bag and tying it when full
 - placing the rubbish bag in a second rubbish bag and tying it
 - putting it in a suitable container and secure place marked for storage for 72 hours
- 8.9. Waste will be stored safely and securely kept away from pupils. Waste will not be put in communal waste areas until it has been stored for at least 72 hours. This waste does not require a dedicated clinical waste collection.
- 8.10. In line with government guidance, pupils and staff will be asked to remove homemade non-disposable face coverings when they arrive at school. The wearer will be asked to bring a plastic bag to school to put the face covering into in order to take it home – the wearer must clean their hands once they have removed the face covering. If a staff member or pupil (or their parent) does not want to remove their face covering while at school, they should speak to the Headteacher or the most senior member of staff on site.
- 8.11. The Headteacher will liaise with the LA about procuring PPE.

9. Communication

- 9.1. All social distancing measures will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders, including pupils, parents, staff, visitors, suppliers, and contractors.
- 9.2. Staff will be informed of all relevant plans, including safety measures, timetable changes and staggered arrival and departure times, and will have opportunities to discuss training on the new measures.
- 9.3. Staff will be engaged regularly to receive their feedback on the arrangements that are in place.
- 9.4. Visual aids will be placed around the school to remind our community of the measures that we have put in place.

10. Monitoring and review

- 10.1. This appendix will be reviewed at least **monthly** and after the release of additional government guidance.

- 10.2. All updates made to this policy will be communicated to all staff members and parents by the Headteacher.

11. Changes to procedures following reopening

- 11.1. In light of the changes to government guidance, increases in the self-isolation of pupils in schools in Sandwell and the implementation of a local lockdown, the school has made the following changes to our procedures within school:

- Pupils are required to wear face coverings at all times, including to and from school, unless in classrooms or eating or drinking.
- If your child has a medical condition that means they cannot wear a mask, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can issue them with an exemption lanyard.
- Staff are required to wear face coverings at all times, unless in classrooms/offices or eating or drinking.
- Parents and visitors are required to wear face coverings to enter the building, and for the duration of their visit
- Y7, 8 and 9 will bubble in form groups, including break times and lunchtimes
- Y10 and 11 in be in year bubbles. All subjects are taught in sets. However, pupils will be clustered with members of their form in each class.
- Y10 and 11 will bubble with their form groups at break and lunchtimes.
- Pupils in all year groups will not to be allowed to be in groups of more than 6 when outside at break and lunchtimes
- Where an individual in the school community tests positive for coronavirus, the headteacher will contact the DfE helpline immediately (0800 046 8687).

12. Changes following reopening in March 2021

- 12.1. In light of the changes to government guidance following the January 2021 lockdown, the school has made the following changes to our procedures within school:

- Pupils are required to wear face coverings at all times, including to and from school, unless eating or drinking.
- If your child has a medical condition that means they cannot wear a mask, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can issue them with an exemption lanyard.
- Staff are required to wear face coverings at all times, unless in offices or eating or drinking.

- 12.2. The school will be putting in place testing in school for the first two weeks for reopening from the 8th March. Following this period, pupils will be offered rapid lateral flow tests to take at home. The full details of this testing will be provided through the school website, emails and text messages to parents and carers.