

# Infection control policy

A policy for all employees, pupils, parents, contractors and visitors  
in response to COVID-19

**Review August 2020**

Responsibility for this policy:	Board of Directors (Trustees)
Responsibility for monitoring/evaluation:	CEO, Strategic Operations Manager and Headteachers/Heads of School
Date of original policy:	June 2020
Date of next review:	August 2021 or as required
<i>Tracked changes from original policy:</i>	<i>Identified in green font throughout</i>
Links to other policies:	Health and safety (Trust and school) Safeguarding and Child Protection (Trust and school) Managing staff attendance Various school-level policies related to first aid, allergies and medicines may be wholly or partly superseded by this policy  A number of other COVID-19-related policies are likely to be published in the near future

*Creating futures through our shared values of excellence, partnership and perseverance*

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## 1. Introduction

This policy has been written with specific reference to concerns raised during the COVID-19 pandemic so that actions taken operate at a higher level of infection control than might be expected in normal circumstances. It applies to all employees, pupils, parents, contractors and visitors. It is not a policy which covers all aspects of COVID-19.

### Purpose

- Provide guidance in preparing for and dealing with an outbreak or risk of a contagious illness or virus.
- Give stakeholders confidence in the management of any concerns
- Be attentive and responsive to changing guidance and outcomes locally, regionally and nationally, adapting the policy accordingly.

### Contributing to the Trust's key objectives

The Trust has four key objectives summarised in this diagram, the third and fourth of which – SUPPORT and LEAD – are reflected in this policy.

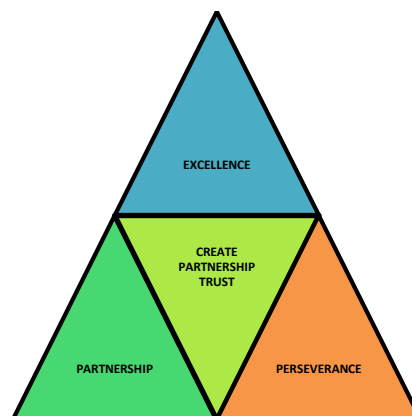


**SUPPORT: early intervention and improved transition** – meeting the needs of pupils so that barriers to learning are quickly identified and removed as soon as possible, especially for the most vulnerable pupils and their families

**LEAD: Staff recruitment, retention, leadership development and succession planning** – *providing a strategic approach which invests in the staff, building their skills so that they, the schools and the Trust strengthen.*

### Contributing to the Trust's values

This Infection Control Policy contributes to our Trust core values: EXCELLENCE (setting the highest possible standards and expectations), PARTNERSHIP (working collaboratively) and PERSEVERANCE (responding to difficult challenges).



## Overall expectations

- All stakeholders across the Trust are expected to adhere to the policy guidance
- Each workplace may add further details of their in-house procedures as an Appendix so that their unique context is catered for
- All employees, including through their professional associations and trade unions, are encouraged to contribute to decisions about the way the guidance is interpreted at different levels – whole school, departmental, classroom, etc.
- All employees and contractors are trained and fully knowledgeable about their role and what they must do if they observe any breaches or if other matters come to their notice which would fall under this policy
- All pupils, parents and visitors receive appropriate, school-level written or verbal guidance

### 1. Transmission of infection

- DIRECT TRANSMISSION: in close contact through, for example, sneezing and coughing
- INDIRECT TRANSMISSION: through, for example, touching contaminated surfaces

We know that we can never ensure zero risk of transmission but this policy and its resulting practice should mitigate that risk so that any transmission of infection is substantially reduced. These include:

- Ensuring that anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms (or has someone in their household with those symptoms) should not attend the school or workplace
- Cleaning hands more often than usual – washing hands for 20 seconds with soap and running water and drying them thoroughly or using alcohol hand rub or sanitiser, ensuring 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 often using standard products such as detergents and bleach
- Minimising human mixing and contact by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (such as staggered break times)

### 2. Personal protective equipment (PPE)

#### What is PPE and why is it important?

Employers have duties concerning the provision and use of PPE at work. This is equipment that will protect the user against health or safety risks and, depending on the workplace, can include helmets, goggles, gloves, high visibility clothing, etc. Making the workplace safe includes providing instructions, procedures, training and supervision to encourage safe and responsible working.

#### DfE guidance

We follow DfE guidance with regard to PPE, **recognising that advice can change according to local circumstances.**

- Wearing a visor or face mask is neither expected nor recommended **but employees or parents who wish to wear a face covering in communal areas may do so.**
- **Employees wearing a face covering must be able to demonstrate their understanding of the hygiene expectations and protocols around the wearing and disposal of masks. Other people must not be placed at risk.**
- **Employees working directly with pupils should generally not wear face masks, although in extreme cases (eg where a pupil might spit or where the employee is highly anxious) a visor may be worn.**
- **The Trust does not expect pupils to wear masks or visors. Should parents insist that a child wears mask, there will need to be a conversation with the family to explore the nature of and reasons for their anxiety.**
- If an employee has been directed to wear a mask for specific clinical reasons, this should be notified to the Headteacher/Head of School/CEO and formally recorded on a risk assessment.

The majority of employees will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2m from others. PPE is only required in a small number of cases including:

- pupils whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs
- pupils or adults who become unwell in school with symptoms of COVID-19 and require direct personal care until they can return home.

In these cases, if a distance of 2m cannot be maintained, the supervising adult should wear a fluid-resistant surgical face mask.

If contact with the unwell pupil or adult is necessary, then disposable gloves, a disposable apron and fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult.

If the risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes (such as from coughing, spitting or vomiting) then eye protection should be worn.

PPE is readily available in our schools. Should there be any spike in diagnosed cases of COVID-19, the school or Trust will review the use of PPE alongside other arrangements for infection control.

### 3. Class and group sizes and staff ratios

#### The hierarchy of measures

The Trust and its schools recognise the challenges of social distancing with young children. As guided by the DfE, each school applies the following hierarchy of measures:

- Avoiding contact with anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19
- Frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices
- Regular cleaning
- Minimising contact and mixing (pupils and adults)

If these measures are consistently applied, the risk of transmission will be lowered.

- All places of work (the schools and Create Central offices) should try to ensure 2m distance if possible. While in general, groups should be kept apart, there is low risk if there is brief transitory contact (such as passing in a corridor).
- Each school makes its own plans for the grouping of pupils based on the type of buildings, numbers of entrances and exits, dining arrangements, etc. This is recorded formally in the whole school risk assessment and shared with all staff.
- Clear arrangements are also in place for office-based employees.

#### Key stage 1 and Key stage 2

- If there is any shortage of teachers, then two support staff may lead the group, under the direction of a middle or senior leader.
- Tables/chairs should be spaced as far apart as possible.
- The curriculum should enable social distancing to be maintained.

#### Early years (Reception)

- The school must use its *reasonable endeavours* to ensure that least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification
- The curriculum should enable social distancing to be maintained.
- The school must use its *best endeavours* to ensure that one person with a Paediatric First Aid (PFA) certificate is on site when pupils are present. If they are unable to do so, a full written risk assessment must be carried out and the school must ensure that at the least someone is present who has a general First Aid at Work or an Emergency PFA certificate.

#### Staff meetings and training

- All employees (except in the most rare of circumstances – and with medical evidence) are expected to be back in school from September 2020 but arrangements for staff meetings and training should follow previous guidance using where possible, web-based meetings (eg Microsoft Teams or Zoom).

- All employees are expected to be fully aware of the visual arrangements in school (such as lining up, protocols for communications with parents).
- The school should check how many employees have PFA certification and plan for appropriate numbers to be trained as soon as possible.
- The school or office should check how many employees have a First Aid at Work certificate and plan for appropriate numbers to be trained as soon as possible.

#### 4. A healthy environment

- All unnecessary items should be removed from classrooms (if there is space to store it elsewhere) including soft toys and furnishings and any toys that are hard to clean.
- Employees should take home all personal belongings.
- All work surfaces in offices, classrooms and corridors must be kept free of clutter so that they can be easily cleaned.
- Displays, labels and posters should be removed if they collect dust, can't be wiped clean or can be easily touched.
- Posters and signs relating to infection control and COVID-19 should be laminated as far as possible so that they can be easily cleaned.
- The Create Central Team, with support from the Strategic Operations Manager, will work with the schools to ensure that protocols are established for cleaning, catering, food supplies or contractors on site, to check the contractor's own risk assessments for working on site and to monitor the quality of their work.
- All spaces should be well ventilated with open windows or ventilation units.
- Doors should be propped open if they are not fire doors but only after full consideration of health and safety and safeguarding requirements.
- Where possible, the access of adults and pupils to all parts of the school should be limited so that full use is made of all entrances and exits.
- Occupancy of all rooms (including halls, dining rooms and offices should be limited).
- One-way circulation systems should be established.
- If possible, starting and finishing times and breaks should be staggered.
- Access to toilets should be supervised and staggered.
- Where possible, as much outside space should be used for as much of the day as possible – for breaks, outdoor learning and physical exercise.
- Outdoor equipment should only be used if it can be cleaned between groups of pupils using it.

#### 5. Cleaning and hygiene

- Cleaning routines must follow government guidance with regard to non-healthcare settings: (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>)
- Sufficient handwashing facilities must be available (with hand sanitiser where possible) if a sink is not available.
- Surfaces and objects that are handled by pupils should be cleaned more regularly than normal (toys, books, desks, chairs, doors and handles, sinks, taps, toilets, light switches, bannisters etc).
- Adults and pupils must know how to wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry them thoroughly following the guidance on hand cleaning: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>
- Parents should be asked to ensure that their child goes to the toilet before coming to school and washes their hands thoroughly at home.

- Parents are asked to walk their child to school and ensure they do not touch anything on the way.
- Pupils and staff should wash their hands on arrival at the school or the workplace; before and after eating; after using the toilet; after breaks and sporting activities; after sneezing, coughing or blowing their nose; before leaving school.
- Pupils and staff are encouraged not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose.
- Pupils and staff are advised to use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and to dispose of tissues using the *catch it, bin it, kill it* approach.
- All pupils should be initially supervised washing their hands and this should continue for those who find it difficult to clean their hands independently.
- Tissue bins should be emptied and cleaned regularly.
- Doors which are not propped open will need to be cleaned regularly.
- Employees are generally not expected to clean but supplies of soap, wipes and disinfectant (and hand sanitiser if available) should be stored in each working space.
- There is no need for anything other than personal hygiene and washing of clothes following a day in school.
- Staff are welcome to bring in their own sanitiser or soap for their personal use but this should not be shared with others – particularly pupils – and should not be left where pupils might access it unsupervised.
- Staff are encouraged to clean their personal equipment regularly (mobile phones, tablets, keyboards, bank and loyalty cards, etc) and, where possible, to avoid using cash for payments.
- Teachers and support staff are asked to be mindful of what pupils are wearing each day and parents should be asked to change their child's clothes daily.
- Stationery and other equipment should not be shared.
- Items from a pupil's home or shared resources sent home should be reviewed by the school and a decision made at school-level about what is appropriate.
- Practical lessons can go ahead if equipment can be cleaned thoroughly and the room is occupied by the same pupils in one day or properly cleaned between cohorts.
- Employees using public transport to get to work should be mindful of the government's guidance on safer travel: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel--guidance-for-passengers>
- If someone has become unwell ([see 8 below](#)), cleaning the area they inhabited with normal household disinfectant after they have left, will reduce the risk of passing the infection to other people. See government guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>
- All spillages of blood, faeces, saliva, vomit, nasal and eye discharges should be cleaned up immediately using a product which is both a detergent and a disinfectant so that it is effective against bacteria and viruses and suitable for use on the affected surface. Mops should never be used. Instead paper towels should be used and clinical waste discarded appropriately

## 6. Food and drink

- Schools will make their own arrangements for school catering depending on the numbers of pupils, availability of catering staff and the length of the school day.
- Handwashing should take place before and after eating.
- Schools will make their own arrangements for pupils to have a mid-morning snack. If it is provided by the school, then appropriate hygiene guidance must be adhered to (such as handling or washing). If pupils bring a snack from home, then the school's healthy eating guidelines should be followed.
- Employees are encouraged to bring their own food and to take home any remaining food or containers, rather than leaving them in the staffroom fridge.

- Employees are encouraged to bring and use a cup, plate and cutlery from home and to take them home at the end of the session.
- If school or office cups, plates and cutlery are used, they must be put into a dishwasher immediately.
- Employees who empty a dishwasher must wash their hands thoroughly first.
- Employees should avoid any food sharing (such as boxes of biscuits or sweets) especially anything that is unwrapped.

#### 7. If someone becomes unwell

- If a pupil or adult becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 – a new continuous cough or a high temperature or a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), s/he must be sent home and advised to follow government guidance for households: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>
- A room should be put aside for a pupil or adult awaiting collection, preferably with an external door. There should be appropriate adult supervision for pupils. Ideally a window should be opened for ventilation.
- If it is not possible to move the pupil or adult to a specific medical room, s/he should be at least 2m away from other people.
- If the adult or pupil who is unwell needs to use the toilet while waiting to be collected, s/he should use a separate bathroom.. The toilet and bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly using standard cleaning products before it can be used by anyone else.
- Employees or other adults should wear PPE if they cannot maintain a 2m distance while caring for a pupil awaiting collection.
- In an emergency, a 999 call should be made if the pupil or adult is seriously ill or life is at risk. It is not appropriate to take the injured person to a GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or hospital.
- If an employee has helped someone with symptoms, s/he does not need to go home unless s/he develops symptoms herself/himself (in which case s/he can be tested) or the person who was unwell subsequently tests positive. S/he should wash her/his hands thoroughly with soap and running water for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell.
- Cleaning the area the unwell person has left with normal household disinfectant (see 6 above) will reduce the risk of passing the infection to other people.

#### 8. Dealing with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19

- When a pupil or adult develops symptoms compatible with COVID-19 s/he should be sent home, advised to self-isolate for seven days and arrange to have a test by visiting NHS.UK: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus>
- Contact can also be made by phone to NHS 119
- Members of her/his household should self-isolate for fourteen days.
- All staff and pupils will have access to a test if they display symptoms.
- If the test is negative the pupil or adult can return to the school or workplace and members of her/his household can end their self-isolation.
- If the test is positive, the rest of the class or group within their school or workplace should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for fourteen days. The other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the pupil or adult they live with in that group suddenly develops symptoms.
- All pupils and adults and members of their households are eligible for testing if they display symptoms of COVID-19. All our employees are regarded as *essential workers*. Testing can be booked by an employee directly or through the school or Trust via an online digital portal.
- We expect that the national test and trace programme will be in place to investigate further. The policy will be updated as further information becomes available.



## Self isolation when a household member develops symptoms

Any employee or pupil whose household member develops symptoms should not attend the workplace and should self-isolate for 14 days, taking the following steps:

- Inform the school or office of the reason for absence; ie the household member is symptomatic
- The household member with symptoms should arrange to be tested
- If the result of the test is positive, 14 days isolation must be completed by the whole household
- If the result of the test is negative, the self-isolation ends for household members provided they have not developed symptoms during the isolation period and the employee or pupil can return to the school or workplace
- If the employee or pupil who is self-isolating develops symptoms during the self-isolation period, they should arrange to be tested and self-isolate for 10 days from the onset of the symptoms

### 9. Taking temperatures

It is not necessary to routinely take the temperatures of pupils or staff. The practice is not reliable and our employees are generally not qualified to undertake this activity or make health diagnoses.

### 10. Attendance at the school or workplace

#### Advice and guidance

- The Trust is following the guidance provided by government departments and Public Health England. We also take legal and HR advice from our Trust solicitors.
- The Trust has planned for the full opening of our schools with detailed risk assessments to ensure that they are safe for all stakeholders.
- The Trust is fully aware of the rapidly changing nature of this advice and we are remaining ever-vigilant so that our policy and procedures can be adapted as necessary.

#### Return after lockdown

- All employees have completed self-assessments and any concerns have been discussed in depth with the Headteacher/Head of School to ascertain whether the employees is part of a *clinically vulnerable* group and to make good provision and reasonable adjustments for safe working spaces.
- The decision around how and where an employee from a *clinically vulnerable* group will work will be decided by the Headteacher/Head of School/CEO/DCEO in line with Trust policies and a genuine aim to promote a healthy and safe environment for everyone.
- Information on this can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>
- And: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing#clinically-vulnerable-people>
- An employee or pupil who lives with someone who is *clinically vulnerable* including those who are pregnant, can attend their school or workplace.
- An employee or pupil who lives with someone who is *clinically extremely vulnerable*, as set out in the guidance may only attend the school or workplace if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of pupils, that they can understand and follow those instructions: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

#### Parents, contractors and visitors

- The number of adults in school other than employees should be kept to a minimum.

- Where possible communication should be made by phone, email or online conversations and meetings.
- Parents should receive clear guidance from the schools in terms of drop-off and collection of their children, and communications with staff.
- Parents who would like to speak to a member of staff must make an appointment so that the number of adults in school is minimised.
- Meetings should be held in safe spaces using social distancing.
- Contractors must demonstrate stringent risk assessments for working on site – checked by the Strategic Operations Manager for the schools.