

Marlfields Primary Academy

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Policy for Education

Introduction

We are committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all employees, pupils/students and visitors. This policy describes the measures that we have put in place to protect you from the risks of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and the duties that fall upon us.

Scope

This policy applies to all our employees, pupils, contractors and visitors.

COVID-19 Policy Statement

The Trust, Governors and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) recognises that it has a legal duty of care towards protecting the health and safety of its employees and others who may be affected by our activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to discharge our responsibilities, we will:

- Bring this Policy Statement to the attention of all staff;
- Carry out and regularly review risk assessments to identify proportionate and pragmatic solutions to reducing the risk of COVID-19;
- Communicate and consult with our staff on matters affecting their health and safety;
- Comply fully with all relevant legal requirements and government guidance;
- Eliminate risks to health and safety, where possible;
- Encourage staff to identify and report hazards in relation to COVID-19 so that we can all contribute towards improving safety;
- Ensure that emergency procedures are in place at all locations for dealing with the virus;
- Maintain our premises, and provide and maintain safe plant and equipment;
- Only engage contractors who are able to demonstrate due regard to health and safety matters and who are effectively managing the risks from the virus;
- Provide adequate resources to control the risks arising from our work activities in relation to the virus;
- Provide adequate training and ensure that all employees are competent to do their tasks safely;
- Provide information, instruction, training and supervision for employees; and
- Regularly monitor and revise policies and procedures as guidance changes.

This policy statement will be reviewed and revised as necessary to reflect changes to the organisation's activities and any changes to legislation or government guidance. Any changes to the policy will be brought to the attention of all employees.

Signed: 

Dated: 29th June 2020

Name: MARGARET GARTSIDE

Chair of Governors

Signed: 

Dated: 29.6.20

Name: SANDRA ISHERWOOD

Principal/~~Headteacher~~

COVID-19 Responsibilities

The overall responsibility for health and safety and management of the virus rests at the highest management level. However, it is the responsibility of every employee to co-operate in providing and maintaining a safe place of work.

It is important that everyone is aware of their responsibilities and has a clear understanding of their areas of accountability in controlling factors that could lead to ill health, injury or loss and the virus being spread. Line managers are required to provide clear direction and accept responsibility.

We recommend that the following positions are identified as having key responsibilities for the implementation of COVID-19 control measures:

COVID-19 Supervisor

A COVID-19 Supervisor is appointed and ensure that in their areas of control:

- They implement and follow the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Policy;
- They supervise staff to ensure that they work safely, providing increased supervision for new, vulnerable and young workers;
- They communicate and consult with staff on COVID-19 issues;
- They keep themselves up to date with developments and guidance relating to COVID-19;
- Rules are followed by all;
- They encourage staff to report hazards and raise concerns;
- Issues concerning safety raised by anyone are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented and communicated to staff;
- Any safety issues that cannot be dealt with are referred to the SLT for action;
- Safety training for staff is identified, undertaken and recorded to ensure that they are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner;
- Safe systems of work are developed and implemented where needed;
- COVID-19 incidents inside and outside of work are recorded, investigated and reported where needed;
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) is readily available and maintained where appropriate, and relevant staff are aware of the correct use of this and the procedures for replacement;
- Hazardous substances are stored, transported, handled and used in a safe manner according to manufacturers' instructions and established rules and procedures; and
- Regular and effective cleaning takes place.

Line managers

Line managers must ensure that:

- Good communication is in place between management and employees, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes;
- Employees are fully trained to discharge their duties; and
- Where necessary, they look to offer additional support to any employees who are experiencing additional stress outside of work, e.g. bereavement, illness of family members or anxiety about the general safety of their loved ones.

Employees

Employees must:

- Follow any information, instruction, training and supervision provided to them regarding looking after their health, safety and wellbeing (including mental health) during the COVID-19 outbreak; and
- Raise any issues or concerns with their line manager or safety representative where applicable.

Staff carrying out cleaning activities

Staff carrying out cleaning activities must:

- Take reasonable care of their own safety;
- Take reasonable care of the safety of others affected by their actions;
- Observe the safety rules;
- Submit their health and safety policy and relevant risk assessments to us for approval if not employed by the organisation;
- Comply with and accept our COVID-19 Policy;
- Conform to all written or verbal instructions given to them to ensure their personal safety and the safety of others;
- Dress as appropriate for their work activities;
- Use all equipment, safety equipment, devices and protective clothing as directed;
- Avoid any improvisations of any form which could create an unnecessary risk to their personal safety and the safety of others;
- Maintain all equipment in good condition and report defects to their supervisor; and
- Ensure that chemicals are used appropriately and that contact times are followed.

Arrangements

From 15th June 2020, in line with current and any new government guidance, we will be welcoming back some of our staff/pupils as follows:

Primary schools – Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6.

This will be in addition to the full-time provision we are offering to priority groups.

Attendance

No one with symptoms should attend our setting for any reason. Eligible pupils/students (including priority groups) will be encouraged to attend, unless they are self-isolating, or they are clinically vulnerable (in which case they should follow medical advice).

If someone in their household is clinically extremely vulnerable, they should only attend if we are able to adhere to stringent social distancing, and the pupil is able to understand and follow those instructions. Families will be instructed to notify us as normal if their child is unable to attend so that staff can explore the reason with them and address barriers together. It is understood that parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time, and we will not be held to account for attendance levels. We will, however, continue to inform social workers where pupils/students with a social worker do not attend.

We will resume taking an attendance register and continue to complete the online Educational Setting Status form, which gives the Department for Education daily updates on how many pupils/students and staff are attending.

Priority groups

We will consider how we integrate pupils/students from priority groups who are attending but are not in any of the transition year groups to ensure we make the right decision for how our pupils/students are supervised, continue to learn and are supported in school.

Staff workload and wellbeing

The Trust, Governors and SLT are conscious of the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff and will, where possible, implement flexible working practices in a way that promotes good work-life balance and supports our staff.

Workload will be carefully managed, and we will assess whether staff who are having to stay at home due to health conditions are able to support remote education, while others focus on face-to-face provision.

We will conduct a staff consultation. Staff are also reminded about the school's Health and Wellbeing Policy and Employee Assistance Programme.

Transport

Staff and pupils/students will be encouraged to walk or cycle to and from school and avoid public transport wherever possible.

Food

To ensure food is available for pupils who attend our educational setting, we will reopen our kitchen(s) and ensure that meals are able to be prepared and served safely. We will provide meals, where required, for all pupils, including those who meet the free school meal (FSM) eligibility criteria.

We will also continue to work with our food providers to offer meals or food parcels for benefits-related FSM pupils not in the setting.

Wherever possible, pupils will be encouraged to bring a packed lunch (except those who meet the FSM eligibility criteria).

Staff should bring their own lunch and ensure that the staff room is kept clean and tidy and dirty dishes are put in the dishwasher (where applicable).

Effective infection protection and control

There are important actions that pupils, their parents and our staff can take during the COVID-19 outbreak to help prevent the spread of the virus.

Although it is difficult to put some of these measures in place in practice in schools, particularly with younger children, protective measures are possible. Hygiene will continue to be important in our school.

Preventing the spread of COVID-19 involves dealing with direct transmission (for instance, when in close contact with those sneezing and coughing) and indirect transmission (via touching contaminated surfaces). A range of approaches and actions will be employed to do this. These can be seen as a Hierarchy of Controls that, when implemented, create an inherently safer system, where the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced. These include:

- Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have COVID-19 symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend our setting;
- Cleaning hands more often than usual – wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly (using disposable hand towels, where possible) or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered;
- Ensuring good respiratory hygiene – promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach;
- Cleaning frequently-touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents; and
- Minimising contact and mixing by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (such as staggered break times).

Notices and posters promoting infection control best practice will be displayed throughout our buildings. The 'Staying COVID-19 Secure in 2020' poster will be displayed in reception.

Personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings and face masks

Wearing a face covering or face mask in educational settings under normal conditions is not recommended by government. Accordingly, we will not require staff or pupils to wear face coverings. Changing our habits, cleaning and hygiene are effective measures in controlling the spread of the virus.

Most of our staff 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 two metres from others. PPE will only be needed in a very small number of cases, including:

- Pupils/students whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs will continue to receive their care in the same way.
- If a pupil becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 while in our setting, a face mask should be worn by the supervising adult, if a distance of two metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the pupil is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a face mask should be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk

assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn.

- If a pupil becomes unwell with non-COVID-19 symptoms, they should be treated as normal with no specific additional PPE requirements.

Shielded and clinically vulnerable pupils

For the vast majority of pupils, COVID-19 is a mild illness. Pupils (0 to 18 years of age) who have been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions have been advised to shield. Therefore, we do not expect these pupils/students to be attending our setting, and they will continue to be supported at home as much as possible. Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) pupils are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. If any of our pupils fall into this category, their parents should follow medical advice.

Shielded and clinically vulnerable adults

Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals are advised not to work outside the home. The government has strongly advised people who are clinically extremely vulnerable (those with serious underlying health conditions which put them at very high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and who have been advised by their clinician or through a letter) to rigorously follow shielding measures in order to keep themselves safe. Staff in this position are advised not to attend work.

Clinically vulnerable individuals who are at higher risk of severe illness (for example, people with some pre-existing conditions) have been advised to take extra care in observing social distancing and should work from home where possible. We will endeavour to support this, for example by asking staff to support remote education, carry out lesson planning or other roles which can be done from home. If clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) individuals cannot work from home, they will be offered the safest available on-site roles to ensure that they can stay two metres away from others wherever possible, although the individual may choose to take on a role that does not allow for this distance if they prefer to do so. If they have to spend time within two metres of other people, we will carefully assess and discuss with them whether this involves an acceptable level of risk.

Living with a shielded or clinically vulnerable person

If a pupil or a member of staff lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, they can attend our setting.

If a pupil or staff member lives in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable, it is advised that they only attend our setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of pupils, they are able to understand and follow those instructions. This may not be possible for very young children and older children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we will work with those expect those individuals to come to an arrangement. They will be supported.

Class or group sizes

We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary-age children cannot be expected to remain two metres apart from each other and staff. We will therefore work through the hierarchy of measures set out above which, in summary, includes:

- Avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms;
- Frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices;
- Regular cleaning of settings; and
- Minimising contact and mixing between cohorts.

We appreciate that it is still important to reduce contact between people as much as possible, and we will achieve this and reduce the transmission risk by ensuring pupils and staff, where possible, only mix in a small, consistent group and that small group stays away from other people and groups.

Public Health England (PHE) is clear that if early years settings and schools do this, and crucially if they are also applying regular hand cleaning, hygiene and cleaning measures and handling potential cases of the virus as per the advice, then the risk of transmission will be lowered.

Where we can keep pupils in small groups two metres away from each other, we will do so. While in general groups will be kept apart, brief, transitory contact, such as passing in a corridor, is deemed to be low risk.

For primary schools, classes will normally be split in half, with no more than 15 pupils per small group and one teacher (and, if needed, a teaching assistant). If there are any shortages of teachers, then teaching assistants will be allocated to lead a group, working under the direction of a teacher. Vulnerable children and children of critical workers in other year groups will also be split into small groups of no more than 15. Desks will be spaced as far apart as possible.

Where we cannot achieve these small groups at any point, we will discuss options with our Trust and Local Authority.

Planning and organising

Prior to welcoming our pupils and staff back, we will:

- Refresh our risk assessment and other health and safety advice for pupils and staff considering recent government advice, identifying protective measures (such as the things listed below). Also ensure that all health and safety compliance checks have been undertaken before opening.
- Organise small class groups, as described in the 'class or group sizes' section above.
- Organise classrooms and other learning environments such as workshops and science labs for those groups, maintaining space between seats and desks where possible.
- In refreshing the timetable:
 - Decide which lessons or activities will be delivered;
 - Consider which lessons or classroom activities could take place outdoors;
 - Use the timetable and selection of classroom or other learning environment to reduce movement around the school or building;
 - Stagger break times (including lunch) so that all pupils are not moving around the setting at the same time;
 - Stagger drop-off and collection times;
 - Plan parents' drop-off and pick-up protocols in a way that minimises adult-to-adult contact; and
 - Consider how best to supplement remote education with some face-to-face support for pupils/students.
- In addition, where there are childcare or early years groups in the setting, we will:
 - Consider how to keep small groups of pupils together throughout the day and avoid larger groups of pupils mixing; and
 - Consider how play equipment is used, ensuring that it is appropriately cleaned between groups of pupils using it and that multiple groups do not use it simultaneously.
- Remove unnecessary items from classrooms and other learning environments where there is space to store it elsewhere.
- Remove soft furnishings, soft toys and toys that are hard to clean (such as those with intricate parts).
- Consider how pupils arrive at our setting, and reduce any unnecessary travel on coaches, buses or public transport where possible.

Communication

We will communicate our plans as follows:

- Telling pupils, parents, carers or any visitors, such as suppliers, not to enter our setting if they are displaying any symptoms of COVID-19;
- Telling parents that if their child needs to be accompanied to our setting, only one parent should attend;
- Telling parents and young people their allocated drop-off and collection times and the process for doing so, including protocols for minimising adult-to-adult contact (for example, which entrance to use);
- Making it clear to parents that they cannot gather at entrance gates or doors, or enter the site (unless they have a pre-arranged appointment, which will be conducted safely);
- Where appropriate, engage parents and pupils in educational resources/posters such as e-bug and PHE;
- Ensure parents and young people are aware of recommendations on transport to and from our setting (including avoiding peak times);
- Talking to staff about the plans (for example, safety measures, timetable changes and staggered arrival and departure times);
- Communicating as early as possible with contractors and suppliers that will need to support our maintenance (for example, cleaning, catering, food supplies, hygiene suppliers, etc.); and
- Discussing with cleaning contractors or staff the additional cleaning requirements and agreeing additional hours to allow for this as appropriate.

When open

We will keep pods together where possible and:

- Ensure that pupils are always in the same small groups each day, and different groups are not mixed during the day, or on subsequent days.
- Ensure that the same teacher(s) and other staff are assigned to each group and, as far as possible, these stay the same during the day and on subsequent days.
- Ensure that wherever possible, pupils use the same classroom or area of our setting throughout the day, with a thorough cleaning of the rooms at the end of the day. We will seat pupils at the same desk each day if they attend on consecutive days.

For cleaning and hygiene:

- Follow government guidance on cleaning, including:
 - Cleaning an area with normal cleaning products after someone with COVID-19 has left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people;
 - Wearing disposable gloves and aprons for cleaning (these will be double-bagged, stored securely for 72 hours, then thrown away in the regular rubbish after cleaning is finished);
 - Using disposable cloths, first clean hard surfaces with warm soapy water, then disinfect these surfaces with normal cleaning products (paying particular attention to frequently-touched areas and surfaces, such as bathrooms, handrails, stairwells and door handles);
 - Where an area has been heavily contaminated, such as with visible bodily fluids, from a person with COVID-19, use protection for the eyes, mouth and nose, as well as wearing gloves and an apron; and
 - Washing hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds, and after removing gloves, aprons and other protection used while cleaning.
- Ensure that sufficient handwashing facilities are available. Where a sink is not nearby, we will provide hand sanitiser in classrooms and other learning environments.
- Clean surfaces that pupils are touching – such as toys, desks, chairs, doors, sinks, toilets, light switches and bannisters – more regularly than normal.
- Ensure that all adults and pupils:
 - Frequently wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly;

- Wash their hands on arrival at the setting, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing;
- Are encouraged not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose; and
- Use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste ('catch it, bin it, kill it')
- Ensure that help is available for pupils who have trouble cleaning their hands independently.
- Consider how to encourage young children to learn and practise these habits through games, songs and repetition.
- Ensure that bins for tissues are emptied throughout the day.
- Where possible, all spaces will be well ventilated using natural ventilation (opening windows) or ventilation units.
- Prop doors open, where safe to do so (bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding), to limit the use of door handles and aid ventilation.
- Get in touch with public sector buying organisation partners about proportionate supplies of soap, anti-bacterial gel and cleaning products if needed.
- Confirm to staff and parents that there is no need for anything other than normal personal hygiene and washing of clothes following a day in our setting.

Reduce mixing within our setting by:

- Accessing rooms directly from outside (where possible).
- Use one-way circulation in our corridors.
- Staggering breaks to ensure that any corridors or circulation routes used have a limited number of pupils using them at any time.
- Staggering lunch breaks – pupils will clean their hands beforehand and enter in the groups they are already in. Groups will be kept apart as much as possible and tables will be cleaned between each group. Where this is not possible, pupils/students will have their lunch in their classrooms.
- Ensuring that toilets do not become crowded by limiting the number of pupils who use the toilet facilities at one time.
- Noting that some pupils will need additional support to follow these measures (for example, routes round school marked in braille or with other meaningful symbols, and social stories to support them in understanding how to follow rules).

Use outside space:

- For exercise and breaks.
- For outdoor education, where possible, to limit transmission and more easily allow for distance between pupils and staff.
- Outdoor equipment will not be used unless we are able to ensure that it is appropriately cleaned between groups of pupils using it, and that multiple groups are not allowed to use it simultaneously.

For shared rooms:

- Use halls, dining areas and internal and external sports facilities for lunch and exercise at half capacity. If class groups take staggered breaks between lessons, these areas can be shared as long as different groups do not mix (and especially do not play sports or games together) and adequate cleaning between groups is in place.
- Stagger the use of staff rooms and office area to limit occupancy.

Reduce the use of shared resources:

- By limiting the amount of shared resources that are taken home, as well as limiting exchange of take-home resources between pupils/students and staff.
- By seeking to prevent the sharing of stationery and other equipment where possible. Shared materials and surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected more frequently.

- Practical lessons will go ahead where equipment can be cleaned thoroughly, and the classroom or other learning environment will be occupied by the same pupils in one day or properly cleaned between cohorts.

Adjust transport arrangements where necessary, including:

- Encouraging staff, parents and pupils to walk or cycle to the setting where possible.
- Ensuring that transport arrangements cater for any changes to start and finish times.
- Ensuring that transport providers do not work if they or a member of their household are displaying any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Ensuring that transport providers, as far as possible, follow hygiene rules and try to keep distance from their passengers.
- Taking appropriate actions to reduce risk if hygiene rules and social distancing is not possible, for example when transporting pupils/students with complex needs who need support to access the vehicle or fasten seatbelts.
- Communicating revised travel plans clearly to contractors, Local Authorities and parents where appropriate (for instance, to agree pick-up and drop-off times).

What happens if someone becomes unwell at our setting?

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in our setting, they will be sent home and advised to follow government guidance for households with possible COVID-19 infection.

If a pupil is awaiting collection, they will be moved, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age of the child and with appropriate adult supervision if required. A window will be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, we will move them to an area which is at least two metres away from other people.

If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they will use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom will be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.

PPE will be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of two metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).

In an emergency, we will call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk.

If a member of staff has helped someone who was unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they will not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves (and in which case, a test is available) or the child subsequently tests positive (see 'What happens if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in our setting?' below). They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. We will clean the affected area with normal cleaning products after someone with symptoms has left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

What happens if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in our setting?

When a pupil or staff member develops symptoms compatible with COVID-19, they will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for seven days. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. All staff and pupils/students who are attending our setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of COVID-19 and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario.

Where the pupil or staff member tests negative, they can return to our setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation.

Where a pupil or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class or group within our setting will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the pupil or staff member they live with subsequently develops symptoms.

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, the local Health Protection Team (Local Authority) will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise us on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases, a larger number of other pupils/students may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole class, site or year group.

To continue monitoring transmission, staff and pupils/students in all settings will be eligible for testing if they become symptomatic, as will members of their households. A negative test will enable children to get back to education, and their parents to get back to work. In the event of a child or member of staff testing positive for COVID-19, the relevant group of people within the school with whom the child has mixed closely (their cohort) should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days.

Taking pupils' temperatures

We will not take pupils' temperatures every morning and parents and carers will not be required to either. Routine testing of an individual's temperature is not a reliable method for identifying COVID-19.

We will reiterate to parents the need to follow the standard national advice on the kind of symptoms to look out for that might be due to COVID-19, and where to get further advice. If anyone in the household develops a fever or a new continuous cough, they are advised to follow the government guidance (which states that the ill person should remain in isolation for seven days and the rest of the household for 14 days).

Testing

Pupils:

All pupils/students eligible to attend our setting, and members of their households, will have access to testing if they display symptoms of COVID-19. This will enable them to get back into education, and their parents or carers to get back to work, if the test proves to be negative. To access testing, parents will be able to use the NHS 111 online service if their child is aged five or over. Parents will be able to call 111 if their child is aged under five.

Staff:

Access to testing is already available to all essential workers – this includes anyone involved in education. We will, where necessary, book tests through the online portal. There is also an option for employees to book tests directly on the portal.

Supporting pupils with complex needs

We will follow government guidance for special schools, specialist colleges, Local Authorities and any other settings managing pupils with education, health and care plans, including those with complex needs where appropriate.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Policy Acknowledgement Form

Please read the notes below and then sign this form.

Clearly, we will do all in our power to ensure the health and safety and welfare of all our staff and we look to our employees to abide by the standards laid down.

We have formulated our Coronavirus (COVID-19) Policy to outline our policy and procedures in relation to COVID-19.

You must read the information contained in this policy and adhere to the requirements at all times.

Please discuss any queries you may have with your line manager and sign this form.

I have read the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Policy and understand and accept its contents.

Signature:		Date:	
Print Name:			