



Infection control policy
St Joseph's and St Gregory's Catholic Primary School
March 2021

The threat of COVID19 infection means that social distancing and infection control is a very important aspect of our school life. Below are described the measures we and our community will take to reduce the risk. In addition to these measure, we expect members of the school community to continue to be considerate to others in how they use the spaces and resources in order to minimise risk of transmission.

In developing these guidelines we have used the government's publication, actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools 30/12/2020.

Essential measures include:

- a requirement that people who are ill stay at home
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene
- enhanced cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible and minimise potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable

Strategies for reducing contacts will include:

- grouping children together (Bubbles)
- avoiding contact between groups
- arranging classrooms with forward facing desks, where appropriate
- staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff as much as possible

System of controls

This is the set of actions we will take. They are grouped into 'prevention' and 'response to any infection.'

Prevention:

1. Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell

Pupils, staff and other adults will not come into the school if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or have tested positive in the last 10 days, and anyone developing those symptoms during the school day will be sent home.

If anyone in the school becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they will be sent home and advised to follow 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection', which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 10 days

and should arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 10 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms. If they have tested positive whilst not experiencing symptoms but develop symptoms during the isolation period, they should restart the 10-day isolation period from the day they develop symptoms.

If a child is awaiting collection, they will be supervised by a member of the senior staff. If possible, they will wait outside. If this is not possible (for example, because of bad weather) they will wait in the meeting room on LPS or the head teacher's office on UPS. The room should be well ventilated and the door closed. The supervising adult should remain close by but need not be in the room unless the child's stage of maturity makes this essential.

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

PPE must be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).

2. Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual

Children and staff will clean their hands regularly, including when they arrive at school, when they return from breaks, when they change rooms and before and after eating. Wash troughs have been installed in playgrounds to facilitate this.

Visitors and staff members accessing school via the main door will use hand sanitiser before touching the Inventory screen, keypad or door handle.

3. Good respiratory hygiene: the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach

Tissues and foot operated bins with lids are provided. Children are taught good respiratory hygiene including hand-washing after coughing or sneezing.

4. Enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often

There will be cleaning of communal areas during the day. Spaces that have been used will also be cleaned daily as part of general cleaning. Teaching staff and children will "clean as they go." Toilets will be cleaned regularly during the day. Dining tables and benches will be cleaned in between groups using them.

For individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pencils and pens, staff and children will have their own items that are not shared. In Early Years, including Year 1, frequently used resource will be rotated to mitigate risk. Classroom based resources, such as books and games, will be used and shared within the bubble; these should be cleaned regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces. Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, such as music, art and science equipment will be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between bubbles, or rotated to allow them to be left unused and out of reach for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different bubbles.

Each bubble has outdoor playground equipment which will be used exclusively by that bubble.

A Sport and PE risk assessment provides detailed information about mitigating risk in this area. A Library and Home Reading risk assessment details the mitigation of risk in transferring books between home and school.

Children should only bring essential items between home and school.

5. Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible

Minimising contacts and mixing between people reduces transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). We will do everything possible to minimise contacts and mixing while delivering a broad and balanced curriculum.

Groups

We aim to apply reduce the number of contacts between children and staff. We will do this partly by keeping groups separate (in 'bubbles') and by maintaining distance between individuals. Both measures will help. Children old enough will be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff where possible.

Throughout the school, the bubble will comprise one year group. This is to enable an effective curriculum to continue. Many of our teaching and learning strategies depend on groups across year groups.

Groups will be kept apart from other groups where possible and older children will be encouraged to keep their distance within groups. Groups will, except in emergencies, use the same toilet facilities and classroom. If they use communal spaces, such as the hall, they will remain as a group and any potential fomites (infective surfaces) will be cleaned when they leave. Use of communal spaces will be timetabled to avoid more than one group being in the same space at the same time.

Full use of technology will be made to allow communal participation in collective worship and other assemblies. On occasion, an appropriate sized group might attend or lead assembly from either of the site halls (with spacing according to current guidelines).

Children will be seated to ensure effective learning can take place, whilst recognising and responding to risk. Unnecessary furniture will be moved out of classrooms to make more space.

During extended care (breakfast club and after school club) children from more than one bubble will be together. Children old enough will be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff where possible. Extended care (including homework club and sports provisions) will continue during the Tier 4 arrangements Jan 2021 and any similar, subsequent local restrictions, so that parents can work without introducing their children to a new infection environment (which may occur if they had to find alternative childcare).

Staff

All teachers and other staff may operate across different classes and year groups in order to facilitate the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum. We will aim to keep this to a minimum. Where staff need to move between classes and year groups, they will try and keep their distance from pupils and other staff as much as they can, ideally 2 metres from other adults. This is not likely to be possible with younger children.

Ideally, adults should maintain 2 metre distance from each other, and from children. This is not always possible, particularly when working with younger children. They will avoid close face to face contact and minimise time spent within 1 metre of anyone. This may not be possible when working with pupils who have complex needs or who need close contact care. These pupils' educational and care support will be provided as normal.

Staff non-contact time will be scheduled so that they can use staff rooms and work rooms while maintaining social distance.

The school day

We encourage parents, staff and pupils to walk or cycle to school if at all possible. When using public transport, people should follow Safer Travel Guidance for Passengers (gov.uk).

The school day will be 8:45-15:15 and classrooms will be open from 8:30 to allow gradual entry of children into school.

- Adults will remain outside the school building when bringing and collecting children except where their presence is essential for settling their child.
- They will bring their child to the class access door at the allocated time and collect in a similar way.
- They will, as far as possible, come alone and remain 2m from other people.
- We encourage adults dropping off and collecting children to wear a face covering whilst on schools grounds.

Scheduling of breaks and lunchtime will be planned to ensure good spacing of children across available facilities including the dining halls and playground spaces.

Visitors

Supply teachers, peripatetic teachers and/or other temporary staff or volunteers can visit the school. They will minimise contact and maintain as much distance as possible from other staff and children. Specialists, therapists, clinicians and other support staff for pupils with SEND will provide interventions as usual.

Where meetings can take place virtually or outside, that should be the preference. If inside, a well ventilated room, where participants can observe good social distancing, will be used.

Where visits can happen outside of school hours, they will. All visitors will sign in using Inventory (the school signing in system). Guidance on physical distancing and hygiene will be explained to visitors on or before arrival.

Visitors should access school via the main door and will use hand sanitiser before touching the Inventory screen, keypad or door handle.

During the Tier 4 January 2021 restrictions and any subsequent local restrictions of a similar nature, volunteers who need to work in school as part of their education will continue to come to school. Visitors who provide a necessary part of children's curriculum entitlement will be able to come to school.

Home visits

While the COVID19 pandemic is still a national concern, Early Years practitioners who make home visits (as part of the usual transfer programme for welcoming and settling children into our school) and those involved in welfare visits will observe the following measures:

- Parents and carers will be asked, specifically, whether they are comfortable with practitioners visiting their home

- Parents and carers will be asked, before practitioners enter, whether any members of the household are feeling unwell or have symptoms of coronavirus.
- Practitioners will clean their hands (by sanitiser) before and after visiting a house
- While in the house they will avoid touching any surfaces
- They will avoid direct contact with members of the household and will stay 2m, if possible, from any adult member
- Practitioners will wipe any toys, books or writing implements used in between visits to households
- Practitioners should politely refrain from accepting drinks or other refreshment from parents or carers

Face coverings

If children or staff choose to use face coverings on their journey to school, they will remove them on arriving at school. They must not touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing them. They must wash their hands immediately on arrival (as is the case for all), dispose of temporary face coverings in a covered bin or place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag they can take home with them, and then wash their hands again before heading to their classroom.

Singing, dancing and assemblies

Group separation will be maintained during assemblies. Microsoft Teams will be used to allow whole school or phase assemblies.

Where children are participating together, they will, as far as possible, be distanced from each other and facing in the same direction. Adults should also face in the same direction. This is so that, if individuals are talking, chanting or singing, droplet infection is less likely. The younger children may not do this, as is consistent with their bubble behaviour.

Assemblies will often include hymns and songs with signing or actions. Children can join in with these rather than being required to sing. Individuals may spontaneously sing. Gentle singing with social distancing is very low risk. Those leading assemblies will encourage signing and will find opportunities to use gentle humming and very quiet chanting, as alternative expressions of praise, together with active listening to recorded music.

The same approach to singing may be taken in other curriculum areas.

Vigorous exercise, including dancing can take place outside or in halls where there is lots of space and ventilation and children are well-spaced. Exercise in classrooms (e.g. 5-a-day and Maths transitions) may be important for mobility and mental alertness but teachers should ensure good spacing and ventilation and should choose the more gentle routines that will not lead to significantly increased respiratory aerosols and droplets.

6. Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)

PPE will only be needed in a very small number of cases, including:

- where an individual child or young person becomes ill with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms while at schools, and only then if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained
- where a child or young person already has routine intimate care needs that involves the use of PPE, in which case the same PPE should continue to be used (e.g. changing)

Response to any infection

1. engage with the NHS Test and Trace process

We will engage fully with the NHS Test and Trace process and contact our local Public Health England health protection team through Bedford Borough, if necessary.

Staff members and parents/carers must be ready and willing to:

- book a test if they are displaying symptoms. Staff and pupils must not come into the school if they have symptoms, and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in school.
- provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test & Trace
- self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. Parents, carers and staff must inform the school immediately of the results of a test:

If someone tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating and return to school. They could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better.

If someone tests positive, they should follow the 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection' and must continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste. This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. The 10-day period starts from the day when they first became ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 10 days.

2. Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community

We will follow Bedford Borough protocols when we become aware that someone who has attended has symptoms of or has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). This will include working with the local health protection team. This team will contact us directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) attended the school – as identified by NHS Test and Trace.

The health protection team will work with us, in this situation, to guide us through the actions we will need to take.

The health protection team will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home. To support them in doing so, we will keep a record of pupils and staff in each group, and any close contact that takes places between children and staff in different groups. This will not be an overly burdensome system.

We will not share the names or details of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) unless essential to protect others.

Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the child, young person or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms. If someone in a class or group that has been asked to self-isolate develops symptoms themselves within their 10-day isolation period they should follow 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection'. They should get a test, and:

- if the test delivers a negative result, they must remain in isolation for the remainder of the 10-day isolation period. This is because they could still develop the coronavirus (COVID-19) within the remaining days.
- if the test result is positive, they should inform their setting immediately, and must isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms (which could mean the self-isolation ends after the original 10-day isolation period). Their household should self-isolate for at least 10 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms, following 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection'

We will not require evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

3. Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice

In the unlikely event that an outbreak is centred at our school, we will cooperate fully with the local health protection team's advice.

In some cases, health protection teams may recommend that a larger number of other pupils self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole site or year group. If schools are implementing controls from this list, addressing the risks they have identified and therefore reducing transmission risks, whole school closure based on cases within the school will not generally be necessary, and will not be considered except on the advice of the health protection team.

In consultation with the local Director of Public Health, if an outbreak in school is confirmed, a mobile testing unit may be dispatched to test others who may have been in contact with the person who has tested positive. Testing will first focus on the person's class, followed by their year group, then the whole school if necessary, in line with routine public health outbreak control practice.