

Further Information from the Department for Education and Frequently Asked Questions

The school's plan for reopening has been guided by the principles put in place by the Department for Education. We have consulted governors, Sapientia Education Trust and external experts in formulating our plan. The DfE guidance has been developed with advice from Public Health England. The system of controls provides a set of principles to effectively minimise risks. The full document can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

The DfE guidance acknowledges that there cannot be a 'one-size-fits-all' approach where the system of controls describes every scenario. They state that school leaders will be best placed to understand the needs of their schools and communities, and to make informed judgments about how to balance delivering a broad and balanced curriculum with the measures needed to manage risk.

Below you will find information taken from the government website which further explains the reasons for the school's approach to reopening in September.

The following information is taken directly from the Department for Education publication (see link to full document above).

Student 'Groups' and the Curriculum:

In this guidance for the autumn term, maintaining consistent groups remains important. In secondary schools, and certainly in the older age groups at key stage 4 and key stage 5, the groups are likely to need to be the size of a year group to enable schools to deliver the full range of curriculum subjects and students to receive specialist teaching. Schools should assess their circumstances and if class-sized groups are not compatible with offering a full range of subjects or managing the practical logistics within and around school, they can look to implement year group sized 'bubbles'. Whatever the size of the group, they should be kept apart from other groups where possible and older children should be encouraged to keep their distance within groups. Schools with the capability to do it should take steps to limit interaction, sharing of rooms and social spaces between groups as much as possible.

The DfE key principles which underpin the advice on curriculum planning state that the curriculum remains broad and ambitious: all pupils continue to be taught a wide range of subjects, maintaining their choices for further study and employment.

All teachers and other staff can operate across different classes and year groups in order to facilitate the delivery of the school timetable. This will be particularly important for secondary schools. Where staff need to move between classes and year groups, they should try and keep their distance from pupils and other staff as much as they can, ideally 2 metres from other adults.

For pupils in key stage 3, the curriculum should also remain broad from year 7 to year 9 so that the majority of pupils are taught a full range of subjects over the year, including sciences, languages, humanities, the arts, physical education/sport, religious education and relationships, sex and health education. For pupils in year 7, it may be necessary to address gaps in English and maths by teaching essential knowledge and skills from the key stage 2 curriculum.

Reducing Contact Between Students:

Schools should make small adaptations to the classroom to support distancing where possible. That should include seating pupils side by side and facing forwards, rather than face to face or side on, and might include moving unnecessary furniture out of classrooms to make more space.

Groups should be kept apart, meaning that schools should avoid large gatherings such as assemblies.

When timetabling, groups should be kept apart and movement around the school site kept to a minimum. While passing briefly in the corridor or playground is low risk, schools should avoid creating busy corridors, entrances and exits. Schools should also consider staggered break times and lunch times (and time for cleaning surfaces in the dining hall between groups).

School Transport:

Pupils on dedicated school services do not mix with the general public on those journeys and tend to be consistent. This means that the advice for passengers on public transport to adopt a social distance of two metres from people outside their household or support bubble, or a 'one metre plus' approach where this is not possible, will not apply from the autumn term on dedicated transport.

The approach to dedicated transport should align as far as possible with the principles underpinning the system of controls set out in this document and with the approach being adopted for your school. It is important to consider:

- how pupils are grouped together on transport, where possible this should reflect the bubbles that are adopted within school
- use of hand sanitiser upon boarding and/or disembarking
- additional cleaning of vehicles
- organised queuing and boarding where possible
- distancing within vehicles wherever possible
- the use of face coverings for children over the age of 11, where appropriate, for example, if they are likely to come into very close contact with people outside of their group or who they do not normally meet

Attendance:

In March when the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was increasing, we made clear no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school.

Now the circumstances have changed, it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development.

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence;
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct.

Pupils who are shielding or self-isolating:

We now know much more about coronavirus (COVID-19) and so in future there will be far fewer children and young people advised to shield whenever community transmission rates are high. Therefore, the majority of pupils will be able to return to school. You should note however that:

- a small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves; or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)
- shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1 August, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding.

Frequently Asked Questions – Our Response

My child is feeling worried about returning to school in September, what can I do?

This is completely understandable, and we will do everything we can as a school to support your child and address any concerns and worries they might have. Below are some suggestions of what to do:

- Encourage your student to keep the two wrist bands they have been allocated with them at all times and to choose the right one for them each day. It is important that if they have chosen 'orange', they must make sure that their wrist band is visible at all times. Staff will be vigilant in ensuring that other students respect the decision made by any child who chooses an orange wrist band, and any violation of the rules will be dealt with in line with our behaviour policy.
- We will be contacting all parents to collect information which would be relevant for us to know about your child and their experiences during lockdown to prepare for September. We would appreciate it if all parents and carers use this electronic form as the method for communicating any concerns you or your child has which it would be useful for the school to know about.
- Once the term has started, if you have any concerns or questions which arise, please contact your child's form tutor in the first instance. If you are unsure who that is, send a clearly marked email with your child's name and form in to office@obhs.co.uk. The office team will make sure that your email is passed on to the relevant member of staff. Our staff can then look at the best way to respond to your concern and support your child effectively.

Will my child be able to wear their face-covering and gloves around the school site?

Government advice states that students might choose to wear a face-covering when travelling on the bus, but that on entry to the school site, it is the school's responsibility to guide the student through the safe removal of their face covering and thorough sanitising of their hands.

- If the face-covering is disposable, the student must dispose of the face-covering in the bins provided and thoroughly sanitise their hands using the sanitising station provided before entering the site.
- If the face-covering is a reusable one, the student must bring a plastic bag to place the mask into before placing into their school bag. They will then be required to thoroughly sanitise their hands using the sanitising station provided before entering the site.

The school will be adhering to all of the guidance regarding hand sanitising stations and frequency. Students need to sanitise their hands thoroughly and regularly using the stations provided rather than wear gloves.

My child will be in Year 11. What is going to happen to regarding their final exams next summer?

As with earlier key stages, it is likely that pupils in key stage 4 and 5 will need extra support to catch up on any content they have missed, but the school curriculum may be less flexible given the requirements of qualification specifications.

To ensure exams and assessments next summer are as fair as possible, and take into account any public health requirements and the wellbeing of students, [Ofqual is currently consulting on proposals for next year](#), and will confirm its decisions as soon as possible to allow time for schools to prepare. There has been mention of the summer exams being moved slightly later in the academic year (from May to July), but schools have received no confirmation of this currently.

The school will be in further contact as and when we receive any information regarding any decisions made by the exam boards on course content. Unless we hear otherwise, teachers will need to continue to deliver the full course content ready for the exams. Teachers have been planning carefully over the summer to ensure that they have identified priorities and make effective use of the time available to cover all that is required. They have considered carefully the elements of the course already delivered (in Year 10), the work set over lockdown, and the remaining time in Year 11.

Will the canteen be open and serving food at break and lunchtimes?

During social time, each year group will be assigned an area in which to socialise. This area will include duty staff; access to food via either the canteen, the snack shack or a trolley service; and a designated toilet. As a result, travelling outside of these areas will only be permitted at the start and end of social time when students make their way to or from their lessons. As detailed above, travel around the school site will follow a strict one-way policy at all times.

My child usually has access to breakfast before school, will Breakfast Club still be open? Students who receive free-school meals will be able to access take-away breakfast items from the canteen before school as usual. There will be social distancing enforced to manage student queues and entrance and exit to the canteen. Once students have collected their breakfast, they will need to follow the one-way system in place to their designated Year group area (before 8.40am) or to their first lesson (after 8.40am).

Will my child still be able to access and use their school locker?

Lockers will be available around the school site. Our intention is that by September the school lockers will be organised according to the Year group social zones. The sharing of lockers is not permitted.

Will extra-curricular activities be running in the Autumn Term?

While we would love to be able to run a full programme of extra-curricular activities from September. However, this will not be possible as we would be unable to maintain our Year group 'bubbles' and separate social spaces if we did so. In addition, it is unclear when it will become possible to resume sporting fixtures with other schools. This means that sadly, until further notice, we will not be running any of the following: after school/ lunchtime sports clubs, music ensembles and clubs (choir/ jazz band etc.), drama clubs and school play rehearsals. In addition, it will not be possible to run any of the other lunchtime clubs we have previously offered.

Once the Autumn Term is underway, if staff feel that they are able to offer a club or enrichment opportunity to a single year group – and that this would generate enough interest and attendance to make it viable – we will update students and parents with further information.

Will students attend assemblies as normal?

We will not be holding any whole year group assemblies from September until further notice. We may combine more than one tutor group (from the same year group) and hold their tutorial in the Main School Hall. While the government guidance indicates that social distancing between students within a group/ bubble is not expected, we will ensure that all of the space available within the hall is well utilised as this will allow for student chairs to be well-spaced; and we will ensure that the space is well-ventilated.

How will Practical Subjects such as PE, Science, Art, Music, Design and Technology, and Food and Nutrition run safely?

Practical subjects which make use of specialist equipment (Science, Art, Design and Technology, and Food and Nutrition, for example) will continue to be timetabled in order to ensure that students have access to a broad and balanced timetable. Where students are required to use the equipment (paints/ drawing pencils in Art or tools in Technology) the equipment will be cleaned thoroughly at the end of the lesson in line with guidance.

In order to reduce risk, teachers in subjects such as Science, Design and Technology, Food and Nutrition, and Art will need to increase the frequency of demonstrations as a teaching strategy – allowing for students to watch and experience the process rather than try it themselves.

PE lessons:

PE lessons are timetabled as usual. As the students take part in PE lessons with other students from within their year group and the government have made it clear that students within a group may have contact with one another. Students will be able to change together in the changing rooms and participate in the practical activities planned. The extended lesson time will allow for teachers to allow sufficient time for students to get changed without having to rush unnecessarily. As with all teaching spaces, there will be access to a hand sanitising station: all students will be required to sanitise their hands at the start and end of their PE lessons. The PE department have worked hard to plan a curriculum which reduces the risk for students. This will mean that lessons will contain far more individual and paired drills and activities. It will not be possible initially for students to participate in game situations involving contact. All equipment used will be cleaned thoroughly in line with guidance.

Music Lessons:

Schools are currently awaiting further information from the DfE regarding Music lessons within schools. Based on the current guidance, we are confident that we should continue to timetable Music for all KS3 students and those who have selected it as an option at KS4. Based on the recommendations published by the DfE, we will create and use outdoor teaching spaces while the weather permits to allow for students to participate in singing activities as usual. As with other practical subjects, the format of the lesson will undoubtedly involve more demonstration from

the teacher and teacher-led learning; and all specialist equipment will be cleaned thoroughly in line with guidance between lessons.

Below is a compulsory set of actions which every school must take. They are grouped into 'prevention' and 'response to any infection' and are outlined in more detail on the website linked at the top of this section.

Prevention:

- 1) minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school
- 2) clean hands thoroughly more often than usual
- 3) ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- 4) introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach
- 5) minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible
- 6) where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

Numbers 1 to 4 must be in place in all schools, all the time.

Number 5 must be properly considered and schools must put in place measures that suit their particular circumstances.

Number 6 applies in specific circumstances.

Response to any infection:

- 7) engage with the NHS Test and Trace process
- 8) manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community
- 9) contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice

Numbers 7 to 9 must be followed in every case where they are relevant.

Further information for students, parents and carers for Response to Infection (compulsory points 7-9)

7: Engage with the NHS Test and Trace Process:

Schools must ensure they understand the NHS Test and Trace process and how to contact their local [Public Health England health protection team](#). Schools must ensure that staff members and parents/carers understand that they will need to 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. All children can be tested, including children under 5, but children aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit
- 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 and 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. Tests can be booked online through the NHS [testing and tracing for coronavirus website](#), or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without

access to the internet. Essential workers, which includes anyone involved in education or childcare, have priority access to testing.

The government will ensure that it is as easy as possible to get a test through a wide range of routes that are locally accessible, fast and convenient. We will release more details on new testing avenues as and when they become available and will work with schools so they understand what the quickest and easiest way is to get a test. By the autumn term, all schools will be provided with a small number of home testing kits that they can give directly to parents/carers collecting a child who has developed symptoms at school, or staff who have developed symptoms at school, where they think providing one will significantly increase the likelihood of them getting tested. Advice will be provided alongside these kits.

Schools should ask parents and staff to inform them 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. 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. Other members of their household can stop self-isolating.
- 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 7 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 7-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 14 days.

8: Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community:

Schools must take swift action when they become aware that someone who has attended has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). Schools should contact the local health protection team. This team will also contact schools 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 carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the person during the period that they were infectious, and ensure they are asked to self-isolate.

The health protection team will work with schools in this situation to guide them through the actions they need to take. Based on the advice from the health protection team, schools must send home those people who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person when they were infectious. Close contact means:

- direct close contacts - face to face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin)
- proximity contacts - extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

The health protection team will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home. To support them in doing so, we recommend schools keep a record of pupils and staff in each group, and any close contact that takes places between children and staff in different groups (see [section 5 of system of control](#) for more on grouping pupils). This should be a proportionate recording process. Schools do not need to ask pupils to record everyone they have spent time with each day or ask staff to keep definitive records in a way that is overly burdensome.

A template letter will be provided to schools, on the advice of the health protection team, to send to parents and staff if needed. Schools must 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 14-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 14-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 7 days from the onset of their symptoms (which could mean the self-isolation ends before or after the original 14-day isolation period). Their household should self-isolate for at least 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms, following [‘stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection’](#)

Schools should not request evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

Further guidance is available on [testing and tracing for coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

9: Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice:

If schools have two or more confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where coronavirus (COVID-19) is suspected, they may have an outbreak, and must continue to work with their local health protection team who will be able to advise if additional action is required.

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 should not be considered except on the advice of health protection teams.

In consultation with the local Director of Public Health, where an outbreak in a 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.