



St. Joseph's College Covid-19 Handbook

Summary of Planning

Pupils will be taught and looked after in larger year-group clusters from September. There will be very few cross-year group activities like House assemblies. This also means that there will be restricted use of spaces which would otherwise be shared such as playground areas and the Dining Hall.

Those of you who have children in primary school may be familiar with the term 'bubble' being used to group and segregate pupils at this time. Grouping children in this way means that in the event of any confirmed case of COVID-19, close contact with other individuals can be identified easily. In a worst case scenario, a whole year group may need to isolate. Given the structure and organisation of the secondary school curriculum, it is commonplace for these 'bubbles' to be as large as a whole year group. This is because some pupils are in different classes for some subjects, so there will be different class combinations of pupils across one whole year group. Given the nature of secondary education, it is simply not possible to keep smaller class groups together consistently, hence the larger year group 'cluster' arrangement.

Pupils will be assigned separate spaces at break and lunchtime and a one-way system will be in place to avoid 'pinch points'. These measures will allow us to maintain the integrity of each cluster whilst also offering a broad and rich curriculum. All of our plans, while unique to our own school environment, have been made in accordance with the guidance published by the Department for Education at the start of July. For the purposes of this document, the word 'guidance' refers to this published material.

Hierarchy of Controls: COVID-19

We have been continually guided in our planning process by SAGE and the DfE amongst other professional bodies. Specific to the safe reopening of schools, SAGE have outlined 6 key controls (and an additional 3 controls in the event of an infection), which underpin all of our planning. These are:

- **Controlling the transmission of the disease:** minimising contact with children and adults who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school.
- **Ensuring good respiratory hygiene:** promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.
- **Cleaning hands more often than usual:** wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.
- **Enhanced cleaning regimes:** cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products such as detergents or bleach
- **Minimising contact and mixing:** altering as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (such as staggered start and break times).
- **Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).**

Additional controls to support response to potential infections:

- **Response to any infection: engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.**
- **Response to any infection: manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community.**

- **Response to any infection: contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.**

More detail on hierarchy of controls

1. Controlling the transmission of the disease

The first step in reducing the spread of Coronavirus in school relies on the expectation that parents will use their best endeavours to ensure that their child is well enough to attend school. Ultimately, if your child is displaying any of the symptoms below or is feeling generally unwell, you must ensure your child does not attend school:

- **high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

You should consult 111 or the [NHS Coronavirus website](#) for further information on these symptoms. On the first day of absence, you should also ensure that an absence call is made to the school office on 020 8761 1426, detailing the specific reason for absence.

Should my child get a COVID-19 test?

As you might know, displaying any of these symptoms entitles your child to a [test](#). Do not wait for symptoms to develop; the NHS website is clear that you should try to obtain a test as soon as possible.

In addition, if a member of your family falls unwell with suspected COVID-19, again, you **must keep your child off from school**, informing the school of the reason for absence and ensure that your child remains at home for a period of 14 days from the day that symptoms first occurred. This expectation is in line with government guidance and ensures there is minimal risk of transmission into the school environment.

We know that many individuals have the potential to transmit Coronavirus without actually showing significant symptoms. As such, we appreciate your alertness over the coming weeks and your good communication with colleagues at school. Equally, we know that for those who do exhibit symptoms, these can be short-lived and progress quickly; while we want nothing more than for your child to benefit from as much exposure to face-to-face teaching as possible over the coming weeks, it is important we all remain alert and aware of any changes in health concerning members of our own families and that cautious measures are taken to avoid school if there is any level of uncertainty about advice you have received from health professionals.

What happens if a child becomes unwell in school?

If a pupil in school becomes unwell, displaying any COVID symptoms, they will be isolated immediately and sent home. A member of the office staff will make a call home to be collected as soon as is possible and the pupil will be put in isolation until then. The pupil should then isolate for 7 days and seek a test.

In the case of a positive test pupils who have been in close proximity will be informed and the school will follow advice from Public Health England regarding any wider cluster isolation. In accordance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), we cannot share any personal details of pupils (or staff) who have a positive test; we will simply notify parents of the potential contact that pupils have had with a known case through their 'cluster'. Where a pupil or staff member tests negative for COVID-19, they can return to school and fellow household members can end their self-isolation.

Are visitors allowed onsite?

Essential visitors (i.e. health and safety contractors, peripatetic teachers and visitors for essential meetings) will be allowed on site though it is likely that many meetings, including with parents, will be held via Zoom or Google Meets. We are reviewing our position on school events and will update parents as and when the advice to schools changes and the procedures in place for any events that do take place. Safety screens, sanitising stations and safety instructions have been installed in the main reception.

Will temperature tests be taken?

The updated school guidance indicates that temperature tests are not necessary and will not be used on a daily basis for pupils or visitors.

How should my child travel to school?

Pupils are **strongly advised to walk or cycle** to school and avoid public transport where possible. If your child must use public transport, please remember that it is mandatory to wear a face mask. Be aware that there is also a reduced transport service in place which only allows 15 passengers on a single decker bus. We are operating a staggered start to the day to help reduce pressure on the local transport services. KS3 and KS5 students should aim to be at school **no later than 8.00am** so lesson 1 can start promptly at 08.15am. KS4 students should aim to be at school no later than 9:00am so lesson 1 can start promptly at 9:15am. When they come to school students should go to either their zone in the playground, their demarked cluster table in the canteen or, if the weather is inclement, to their P1 lesson room. There will be a staggered end to the day to ensure that pupils leave the school site in an orderly and safe manner.

2. Ensuring good respiratory hygiene

Is 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' still relevant?

Any used towels and tissues should be placed directly in a bin - these are located in every toilet and room of the school for convenience. The principle of catch it, bin it, kill it (as was the case prior to the closure of schools) should be followed at all times. These posters are displayed prominently around school as a reminder of these expectations. All pupils should carry a pack of tissues with them.

Is my child allowed to wear a mask?

Students do not need to wear masks in school but will be allowed to do so in corridors or communal space if they wish to do so (this policy will be regularly reviewed). If a teacher asks you to remove your mask we would expect you to do so without question. Masks should not be worn in lessons as this diminishes the learning experience. Masks should be worn to and from school if using public transport. Masks should be stored securely in a plastic bag.

Staff are only required to wear PPE when undertaking contact first-aid or providing personal care for pupils with a medical or physical need. However, PPE will also be worn by some staff when undertaking practical work that requires close proximity to students or other staff and will also be worn by learning support assistants.

Does my child need to wear uniform?

School uniform, as well as kit for PE and games, should be worn as usual. Enhanced cleaning of changing rooms will be undertaken and students will be allowed to come into school in their PE kit if they have PE lesson 1, and to go home in their kit at the end of the school day if they have PE for their last lesson of the day.

3. Cleaning hands more often than usual

Where and when will pupils wash their hands?

All students should wash their hands immediately on arriving at school at the new sinks in the playground. Sanitising stations have been installed around the school, comprising of alcohol-based gel pumps. Pumps have also been situated in every teaching space across the school. While this can help to reduce the spread of pathogens, parents and pupils are reminded that these are not intended to replace a routine of thorough and regular hand washing. As such, pupils will be **reminded** to wash their hands at regular intervals during the day (during breaks, between lessons, including after using the toilet and before/after eating).

What about equipment that is usually shared?

- All shared equipment will undergo enhanced cleaning prior to being reused.
- To avoid sharing where possible, pupils should arrive at school in September well equipped and prepared for learning and pupils should not lend equipment to each other.
- Pupils must also ensure they bring a water bottle to school. Pupils should also bring a pack of their own tissues.

4. Enhanced cleaning regimes

What does cleaning look like in school?

We have increased the hours and changed the work pattern of our site and cleaning team to ensure that regular and thorough disinfecting and cleaning takes place in high traffic areas or on furniture, handrails and door plates/handles. Our overall cleaning schedule and process has also been altered to ensure that enhanced cleaning can take place at the end of each day.

Students will use the toilets as normal but they should maintain physical distancing in shared spaces where possible and ensure that they wash their hands thoroughly afterwards. Increased cleaning of toilet facilities will also be undertaken.

The whole school site has been 'fogged' using an agent which destroys viruses and will stay active on all surfaces. The school will be fogged every half term providing added protection from the virus.

5. Minimising contact and mixing

What will the timetable be like?

Pupils will receive their timetables on their first day in school and spend some time with their tutor on the morning of the first day. This will give pupils the opportunity to ask any question they might have about the new processes in school. Our key motivation is to ensure that teaching and learning is preserved as far as possible, especially given the time away from school that pupils have experienced. Pupils will notice very few changes on their timetable.

Will the school day be staggered at all?

Yes. The KS3 and KS5 students (Years 7, 8, 9, 12 and 13) will start at 8:15am and finish at 2:35pm. The KS4 (Years 10 and 11) students will start at 9:15am and finish at 3:35pm. Break times and Lunch times will also be staggered. The guidance accepts that pupils across year groups will mix at some points and passing in the playground and corridors is considered low risk.

What is the school environment like?

A one-way system has been installed around the school, this is marked clearly with arrows to signal movement direction. Lesson change overs need not be staggered owing to the one-way system of circulation in place around the school. Although the guidance does not stipulate the requirement for 2m distances (in classrooms or in corridors) to be maintained, these serve as a helpful visual reminder to promote physical distancing. In school, pupils are expected to move sensibly around the newly configured one-way system in place. All transitions between lessons will be supervised by staff along the route. However, the expectation will be very much on student to follow this one-way system 'by consent' to help keep everyone as safe as possible. Year 7 and 8 students will line up on the playground in their area before each lesson of the day to help maintain safe movement around the school. Hand sanitising units have been placed in all classrooms so students can clean their hands before every lesson.

How will groups be organised?

Teaching groups will be maintained within year group clusters. The newest guidance stipulates that 2m distances between pupils are not necessary but classrooms have been setup to ensure that pupils face the front in rows so as to maximise the space in each classroom as much as possible.

How will break and lunchtimes be organised?

Students will use the canteen or cafe as year groups. We will be offering hot food but for the first few weeks of school these will only be available in pots for students to grab and go. In the event of wet weather, pupils should listen carefully to staff instructions; students will be directed to designated covered spaces.

6. Where necessary, wear appropriate PPE

As mentioned, pupils do not need wear PPE although they may wish to wear a face mask to and from school, in corridors and in social spaces. When staff are administering First Aid or doing some practical teaching PPE will be worn.

7. Response to infections

Parents must ensure they remain in good contact with the school if their child or any member of their family is presenting with symptoms of coronavirus. In the event that a pupil has symptoms, as mentioned in Section 1 of this booklet, you must book a test immediately and self-isolate for a period of 7 days. 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.

The guidance is clear that it is only necessary for close contacts of a person (potentially other pupils or staff) to self-isolate in the event of a positive test (i.e. not when the results of a test are pending). The school will only take this action when necessary and in conjunction with advice from the local Public Health England team. The only exception is when a known contact starts to develop symptoms.

If a test is 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.

How will the school work to try to contain any cases?

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 school in this situation to guide us through the actions they need to take. Based on the advice from the health protection team, we will 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. The guidance is clear that 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 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.

What will happen in the event of a national, local, or school lockdown?

The school is well prepared for any future lockdown though we hope that we will not be affected by further periods of distance learning. Further detail will be provided in the event of any potential lockdown.

Hand-washing and Sanitising are crucial throughout the school day



This is as important now as it was at the start of the pandemic. Please wash or sanitise hands regularly during the school day.

Additional hand-wash stations have been provided in the school playground to assist with regular handwashing. Each unit has a soap dispenser and paper

Wall mounted sanitiser stations have been installed in all classrooms and in key areas around the school.

Travelling to School

Where at all possible, please avoid using public transport to travel to school. Consider walking or cycling as preferred options and plan your route accordingly.

Anyone cycling to school must wear a helmet for the entire duration to and from school. A suitable lock (such as a D-Lock) should be used to secure your bike in the bike sheds provided.

Scooters (including electric ones), skate boards and the like and not appropriate means of transport and should not be used to or from school.

Students are not to use the shops at Crown Point before or after school.

Covid Face Masks

Government guidance currently states that students do not need to wear face masks in school.

However, we are very conscious that some students will be very used to wearing masks in crowded areas and may feel more comfortable wearing one in corridors and larger shared spaces around the school. If they wish to wear a mask between lessons and in larger shared spaces, a plain (preferably washable) mask may be used. **Masks will not be allowed in the classroom during lessons unless students are directed to by members of staff and must be removed if requested by any member of staff.**

Travelling around school

When travelling around the school, please observe and follow the arrows and signage at all times. Many corridors are now one way. This must be observed at all times. It may be inconvenient, but it is important that we maintain a good flow of traffic around the school without 'bottlenecks' and students moving in close proximity in different directions. In a few areas, it is not possible to keep the corridor to one way, so keep left in single file and keep moving in these areas to prevent a build-up of people.