

# **Parkside House School**

## **Social Distancing Policy**



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## **Statement of intent**

This policy outlines the school's approach to social distancing measures in light of the current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and how we will adhere to the guidance published by the government and health organisations.

We understand the concerns of many of our stakeholders, e.g. parents and staff members. That is why we have created this policy – to outline the steps the school is taking to mitigate the risk of infection spreading and, ultimately, ensure the safety of our school community.

We will be consulting parents and staff members to support our decision-making and will be updating this policy in light of updates to government guidance.

## 1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to relevant legislation and guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:
  - Coronavirus Act 2020
  - DfE (2020) 'Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)'
  - DfE (2020) 'Guidance for full opening: schools'
  - DfE (2020) 'Face coverings in education'
  - NHS (2020) 'How long to self-isolate'
- 1.2. This policy operates in accordance with the following school policies:
  - Bereavement Policy
  - Staff Leave of Absence Policy
  - Infection Control Policy
  - Behavioural Policy
  - Coronavirus (COVID-19) Full Opening Plan
  - Risk Assessment for Full Opening in September

## 2. Risk assessments

- 2.1. Staff will have regard to the relevant risk assessments that were carried out prior to the school opening in September.
- 2.2. These risk assessments will be regularly updated in light of any new guidance, and in consultation with staff members to ensure everyone's needs are understood and accounted for.
- 2.3. Individual risk assessments will be conducted for any pupils or staff members who have specific needs or conditions that place them at higher risk, to ensure that their presence on-site is sufficiently safe.
- 2.4. If risk assessments cannot guarantee the safety of these individual pupils or staff members, alternative arrangements will be made to ensure they can remain safe, e.g. remote learning or working, or additional and individually tailored mitigating controls.
- 2.5. These risk assessments will detail up-to-date control measures for risks in the following areas:
  - Safety of the school premises
  - Cleaning measures
  - Infection control and the ability to implement protective measures, e.g. social distancing
  - Supporting staff and pupil wellbeing

- Supporting pupils' learning
- Safeguarding
- Communication of plans and procedures

### **3. Social distancing measures**

#### **Use of 'bubbles'**

- 3.1. In younger years, e.g. Years 7 or 8, where we deem it possible, we will implement smaller bubbles equivalent to the size of a full class. For older year groups, e.g. Year 9 and onwards, each bubble will contain a whole year group to ensure we are able to deliver the full range of curriculum subjects and allow pupils to receive specialist teaching.
- 3.2. All pupils will be encouraged to maintain a distance within their bubbles.
- 3.3. Pupils will remain in these bubbles and will not mix with others during the school day or on subsequent days.
- 3.4. Staff will be permitted to move between bubbles but should continue to follow the school's social distancing measures where possible.
- 3.5. Teaching staff will be asked to maintain a distance from pupils by staying at the front of the class, and away from their colleagues where possible.
- 3.6. Where possible, social distancing measures will be adhered to, including the two-metre rule. Pupils will be seated side-by-side facing forwards – any unnecessary classroom furniture will be removed to facilitate this.
- 3.7. The headteacher will decide whether it is viable to hold lessons or classroom activities outdoors to help with adherence to social distancing measures.

#### **The school day**

- 3.8. The SLT and other key staff members will review the school timetable regularly and will continue to ensure that movement around the school is reduced as far as possible, for example, by ensuring separate classroom areas are used for different bubbles.
- 3.9. Staff, pupils and parents will be informed of any changes to this timetable.

#### **Travelling to and from school**

- 3.10. Pupil start and finish times will be staggered as follows to maintain social distancing and minimise mixing: Pupils will enter from one taxi at a time directed by the outside staff. Pupils will be radioed for one by one directed by staff
- 3.11. Pick up and drop off procedures were communicated to parents in advance of the measures being put in place, and we will continue to communicate if any changes to these procedures are put in place.

- 3.12. Clear signage is displayed highlighting where parents should drop off and pick up their children. School staff are present and visible at the gate

### **Assemblies**

- 3.13. Assemblies will not take be held in large groups.

### **Break and lunchtimes**

- 3.14. Pupils will take their breaktimes and lunchtimes with the pupils in their bubble to avoid mixing.
- 3.15. Lunch and breaks will be taken in the classroom the pupils are in with that teacher.
- 3.16. The playground will be open so pupils are able to go outside during their breaktimes and lunchtimes; however, they will be required to remain within their bubbles and this will be staggered and always in the presence of a staff member
- 3.17. Lunches will be delivered to the classroom by appointed kitchen staff wearing PPE
- 3.18. Pupils will wash their hands before eating

### **Staffroom**

- 3.19. The staff room and other shared staff spaces will be adapted to ensure staff can maintain an appropriate distance from each other.

### **PE lessons**

- 3.20. Pupils will be kept in their bubbles for PE, sport and physical activity, contact sports will be avoided, and sports equipment will be thoroughly cleaned between each use by different bubbles.

### **Behaviour**

- 3.21. The school's behavioural policy has been amended to include an annex outlining how social distancing will work when implementing the measures in the policy.
- 3.22. We understand that following some of the social distancing principles will be extremely challenging, so staff and pupils will not face any stringent action if they are unable to follow them.
- 3.23. Repeated and deliberate failure to follow social distancing principles, however, will be dealt with in line with the [Disciplinary Policy and Procedures](#).
- 3.24. If a staff member is unable to follow the principles, they should speak to their line manager.
- 3.25. If a pupil is unable to follow any social distancing measures, the SLT and relevant staff members will discuss whether additional support can be offered to help them do so.

## Transport

- 3.26. The school secretary will liaise with the [LA](#) and the school's transport providers to ensure an appropriate plan is in place to protect pupils and staff members who use public transport to get to school.
- 3.27. When organising dedicated school transport, we will consider the following:
  - How pupils are grouped together on transport, ensuring this reflects the pupil groups organised in school as much as possible
  - Use of hand sanitiser upon boarding or disembarking
  - Additional cleaning of vehicles
  - Organised queuing and boarding where possible
  - Distancing within vehicles where possible
  - The use of face coverings for pupils over the age of 11, where appropriate, e.g. if they are likely to come into close contact with people outside of their group
- 3.28. Pupils and their families will be informed of the new arrangements before they are implemented.

## Supporting pupils

- 3.29. The SLT will review EHC plans and risk assessments to determine whether appropriate support is in place for pupils with SEND ahead of their return to school.
- 3.30. The SLT will consider the capacity of the pupil to understand and follow social distancing measures that have been put in place and ensure support is in place to aid in this, e.g. visual aids to explain the importance of social distancing.
- 3.31. When planning for each stage of reintegration, the implications for the wellbeing of pupils, staff and families will always be considered. One of the school's key priorities in relation to wellbeing is ensuring that the school community feels safe when we open.
- 3.32. The SLT will liaise with the LA to discuss what wider support services are available and to secure additional support and early help, where possible.

## 4. Infection control measures

- 4.1. We know that implementing social distancing measures in a school setting is extremely challenging. Therefore, we will also implement robust infection control measures to help ensure the safety of our school community.
- 4.2. Infection control measures are implemented in line with the [Infection Control Policy](#),
- 4.3. All staff members will be briefed on what they can do to mitigate the risk of infection, and they will be reminded of their responsibilities relating to control measures daily by the SLT in the daily briefing

- 4.4. The school will communicate regularly with parents to outline the infection control measures in place and to explain parents' responsibilities in mitigating the risk of infection spreading. This is done to reassure parents and further mitigate the risk of infection spreading.
- 4.5. The following measures will be implemented across the school:
- We will ensure that contact with individuals who are unwell is minimised by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, have someone in their household who does, or have tested positive do not attend school.
  - We will ensure that self-isolation periods are adhered to, e.g. 10 days for those with symptoms or a positive test result, or 14 days for those who are self-isolating as a result of contact with an infected, or potentially infected, person.
  - All pupils and staff will be instructed, and supported where necessary, to wash their hands frequently with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based sanitiser, and encouraged to refrain from touching their faces or putting items in their mouths.
  - Good respiratory hygiene practices, e.g. the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach, will be promoted throughout the school.
  - An enhanced cleaning schedule will be implemented that includes the regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces and frequently used equipment using standard products, such as detergents and bleach.
  - All staff will be provided with visors and will be required to wear face coverings around school
  - Bubbles will be removed if any member of that bubble has come in to contact with a positive Covid Case
- 4.6. To meet our duty to engage with the NHS Test and Trace process, we will ensure that staff members and parents understand that they must be ready and willing to:
- Book a test if they, or their child, are displaying symptoms of coronavirus by calling 119.
  - If they, or their child, were to test positive or contacted by NHS Test and Trace, provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with.
  - Self-isolate if they have been in close contact someone who develops symptoms of, or tests positive for, coronavirus.
- 4.7. We will encourage staff and pupils over the age of 16 to download the NHS COVID-19 app, to streamline the notification process for those who need to self-isolate after coming into contact with a potentially infected person.
- 4.8. Whilst the school does not recommend that pupils under 16 download and use the NHS COVID-19 app, we understand that some pupils may do so. If a pupil under 16 is notified via the app that they must self-isolate, we will follow the

school's procedure for managing cases of coronavirus in the same way as for pupils 16 and above.

- 4.9. We will ensure that all pupils and staff are aware that the use of the COVID-19 app does not replace or change the requirement of individuals to social distance.

## **5. Personal protective equipment (PPE)**

- 5.1. Reference to PPE in this section means:

- Fluid-resistant surgical face masks (also known as Type IIR).
- Disposable gloves.
- Disposable plastic aprons.
- Eye protection, e.g. face visor or goggles.

- 5.2. Staff will wear face coverings in all areas of the school, e.g. corridors, where the ability to remain two metres from others cannot be guaranteed.

- 5.3. Pupils will be instructed that they must wear face coverings in communal areas, e.g. corridors, where the ability to remain two metres from others cannot be guaranteed, unless exempt

- 5.4. In the case of local lockdown, face coverings will be worn by all pupils and staff in communal areas, e.g. corridors unless exempt

- 5.5. In accordance with government guidance, PPE will be provided to staff in the following circumstances:

- Where staff are caring for pupils whose intimate care needs already require the use of PPE.
- Where a pupil becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus at school and requires direct personal care until they can go home, a fluid-resistant surgical mask should be worn by the staff member caring for the pupil if a distance of at least two metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the pupils is necessary, the staff member should wear disposable gloves, a disposable apron, and a fluid-resistant surgical mask. Where there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, e.g. from coughing, eye protection should be worn.
- PPE will be provide to all staff for general use at PHS

- 5.6. When using face coverings, staff will ensure the masks:

- Cover both the nose and mouth.
- Do not dangle around the neck.
- Are not touched once put on, except when carefully removed before disposal.

- Are changed once they become moist or damaged.
  - Are only worn once and then discarded, if not reusable.
  - Are carefully removed and placed in a sealable plastic bag if reusable.
- 5.7. When using PPE, staff members will follow guidelines on putting on and taking off equipment. PHE's infographics will be displayed in areas of the school where PPE is likely to be used.
- 5.8. The safety of our staff is paramount, so additional risk assessments will be conducted to determine whether PPE is required for other tasks and activities, and we will do our utmost to ensure staff are provided with the PPE they need.
- 5.9. Where the wearer of PPE does not have coronavirus symptoms, the equipment will be placed in a refuse bag and be disposed of as normal domestic waste.
- 5.10. PPE that has been worn by, or near, someone with coronavirus symptoms will be disposed of by:
- Putting it in a plastic rubbish bag and tying it when full.
  - Placing the rubbish bag in a second rubbish bag and tying it.
  - Putting it in a suitable container and secure place marked for storage for 72 hours.
- 5.11. Waste will be stored safely and securely kept away from pupils. Waste will not be put in communal waste areas until it has been stored for at least 72 hours. This waste does not require a dedicated clinical waste collection.
- 5.12. The headteacher will liaise with the LA about procuring PPE.

## **6. Communication**

- 6.1. All social distancing measures will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders, including pupils, parents, staff, visitors, suppliers and contractors.
- 6.2. Staff will be informed of all relevant plans, including safety measures, timetable changes and staggered arrival and departure times, and will have opportunities to discuss training on the new measures.
- 6.3. Staff will be engaged regularly to get their feedback on the arrangements that are in place.
- 6.4. Visual aids will be placed around the school to remind our community of the measures that we have put in place.

## **7. Monitoring and review**

- 7.1. This policy will be reviewed weekly and after the release of additional government guidance.
- 7.2. All updates made to this policy will be communicated to all staff members and parents by the head teacher