



## SOCIAL DISTANCING AND INFECTION CONTROL POLICY

### - Jan. '21 'Restricted Provision' Version

#### STATEMENT OF INTENT

This policy statement outlines the academy's approach to social distancing and infection control measures, in the context of the current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, incorporating guidance published by the Government and relevant health organisations.

Since March '20, the school has been undertaking assessments of risk, related to COVID-19, on a continuous basis. In a variety of different situations (lockdown, rota and full provision), we have implemented a range of rigorous and carefully conceived control measures to limit transmission.

At the beginning of the Spring Term '20/'21 (on 4 January 21), a Government decision was made that, during the period of national lockdown (and with immediate effect), schools should allow only vulnerable students and the children of critical workers to attend. All other students were asked not to attend the school site and to learn remotely until February half term.

Over this lockdown period, staff who are not needed on-site (including for the staffing of the on-site programme, for site maintenance and for the testing programme) have been asked to work at home, where possible. Appropriate social distancing arrangements are in place for staff to come onto the site to work, where required. Clearly, these measures very significantly reduce the risk of infection and transmission.

A revised **COVID-19 Risk Assessment and Action Plan** is in place, building upon the practices that had previously been developed in the summer when planning the return to full capacity. Controls have been strengthened in a number of areas. The risk assessment will be revised continuously in response to new information. This Social Distancing and Infection Control Policy has also been revised to support the implementation of the new action plan. It outlines the steps that will be taken to mitigate the risk of infection spreading and to keep our school community safe.

Given the extremely late timing of the announcement, the document is circulated and published on our website as a working document. Consultation is viewed as a continuous process of communication, review and adjustment. An up-to-date version will always be available on the school website.

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

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, 7 Jan. '21: Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools](#)

[\(More detail can be found in the 'References' section of the COVID-19 Risk Assessment and Action Plan\)](#)

The policy operates in accordance with the following school policies, procedures and checklists:

- COVID-19 Risk Assessment and Action Plan
- Site Cleaning Schedule (COVID-19)
- Site Maintenance Checklist (COVID-19)
- Transport to and from School Risk Assessment (COVID-19)
- Fire Evacuation Procedure (COVID-19)
- Behaviour Policy Addendum (COVID-19)
- Safeguarding Policy Addendum (COVID-19)

(Please note that these will be amended to accommodate the measures in the approved risk assessment and policy document)

## RISK ASSESSMENT

[In consideration of opening the school, from the beginning of the spring term, to vulnerable students and \(as required\) the children of key workers, a revised risk assessment has been conducted to establish the level of risk, both before and after mitigation, and to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to protect students and staff, including through the use of appropriate social distancing and infection control measures.](#) The risk assessment includes the following key areas:

- Safety of the school premises
- Cleaning measures, infection control and the ability to implement protective measures, e.g. social distancing

- Supporting the wellbeing of students and staff (including, in particular, more vulnerable members of the school community)
- Supporting students' learning
- Catering for students with special needs and disabilities
- Safeguarding
- Transport arrangements
- 'Lateral flow' testing and 'track and trace'
- Communication of plans and procedures and required training

### **Minimising the risk to vulnerable people**

The greater level of risk to vulnerable people is considered carefully in the **COVID-19 Risk Assessment and Action Plan**.

#### **Staff**

Clinically extremely vulnerable staff (i.e. those who have been asked, by a specialist health professional, to 'shield') should not come onto the school site during this 'lockdown' period.

Staff who live with clinically extremely vulnerable people may come onto the school site. However, where possible they will be supported to work from home. Where staff need to come onto the school site, they will be supported to do so.

Clinically vulnerable staff (i.e. over 70, pregnant or with specified pre-existing medical conditions) will be encouraged to work from home, where possible. Support will be provided for members of staff who need to come on to the school site and who have concerns about returning to the workplace. [Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff are included in this group, due to the higher than usual risk of transmission and the associated stress-related impact of the situation]

#### **Students**

Clinically extremely vulnerable students, i.e. those who have been asked, by a specialist health professional, to 'shield', should not come onto the school site during this 'lockdown' period.

Where a student eligible to attend the on-site provision lives with a clinically extremely vulnerable person, they may attend school, but parents/carers will need to consider whether it is possible, and advisable, to accommodate them at home. Where there are concerns, support will be provided.

Vulnerable students, who are also 'clinically vulnerable', are expected to attend school. Other eligible 'clinically vulnerable' students (the children of key workers) are entitled to attend school, where necessary. Where parents/carers are concerned and significant risk factors are identified, the school will listen to these concerns and provide reassurance regarding the measures that are being implemented.

## MINIMISING CONTACT WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE SYMPTOMATIC

Individuals who have symptoms, or who have someone in their household with symptoms, are not to come onto the site. Furthermore, anyone who has tested positive in the last ten days must also not come onto the site.

Students/parents (and members of their households) and staff are eligible for testing and are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this service - in order to enable those who test negative to get back to school/work and, for those who test positive, to enable action to be taken to protect classmates and staff. Tests can be booked through the [NHS 'Test and Trace' website \(111 Coronavirus service\)](#), or by calling NHS 119.

## OTHER SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES

A variety of linked social distancing measures have been put in place to support the safety of the school's on-site provision.

### Travel to, and from, school

Parents/carers are asked to encourage their children to walk or cycle, where possible.

Where students and staff use public transport to travel to school, they should follow closely government advice: [DfT, 13 Jan. '21: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safer travel guidance for passengers](#)

Parents dropping off students should stay in their cars. The main car park is used for staff, visitors and contractors.

Students should arrive no earlier than 10 minutes before the start of the school day, i.e. no earlier than 8.20 am.

School-organised home-to-school transport – using our transport providers and/or our own vehicles – have all necessary safety measures in place (including cleaning vehicle thoroughly between trips [and an empty row of seats between the driver and the passengers](#)), as detailed in the **Transport to and from School Risk Assessment (COVID-19)**. Students use hand sanitiser on boarding and, consistent with expectations for travelling on public transport, students, staff and drivers wear a face mask.

There are hand sanitiser stations at each entrance/exit to the school and students are expected to use these as they enter and leave the school.

### Movement around the site

A one-way system is in place (with floor markers) – to support social distancing.

The use of lifts will be avoided, where possible. Where lifts need to be used for particular students/staff, specific risk assessments will be put in place and followed.

Anyone moving around the site (indoors), or situated in an indoor communal area, must wear a face mask (unless they are exempt).

## Grouping students

Over this period, students are kept in class 'bubbles'.

## Break and lunch arrangements

Students remain in their class 'bubbles' and escorted to, and from, specific dedicated outdoor areas for break and lunch times, where they are supervised. When weather is poor, they will spend break and/or lunch periods in their classrooms.

Hand sanitizer stations are positioned in all food serving areas and students will keep socially distanced, and wearing a mask, while they are waiting to get food, which they will then take to their designated areas.

## Classrooms

Classrooms are organised so that students are not facing each other.

Teaching staff (teachers, cover supervisors and TAs) should aim to stay at least 2 m. from the nearest student (and from each other) and should generally stay within the marked out zone.

As appropriate, well-judged choices should be made regarding the positioning of specific students – to facilitate easier access. Alternatively, other rooms may be needed (again, with TA/student social distancing) for some periods of support.

Anyone entering the room during a lesson (e.g. to provide technical support) must (as far as possible) observe social distancing in relation to both students and other staff.

Windows are left open (for ventilation). It is therefore be advisable to wear warm clothing. Some judgement can be exercised in how wide to open a window in a given situation. Where opening windows results in an uncomfortably cold working environment, coats can be worn and/or other sources of heating can be used. Also, doors will be propped open to limit the use of door handles and improve ventilation. Air conditioning is used in rooms that have it, as long as this is on the 'fresh air' setting.

Classrooms should be tidy and uncluttered, with any unnecessary items removed (where there is space to store them elsewhere).

Students will enter classrooms as promptly as possible, to avoid congestion in corridors. At the end of a lesson, there will be a controlled and orderly exit from the room.

Students and teachers / TAs will use hand sanitiser on entry to the room.

Students will not generally wear face masks in lessons. Teachers / supervisory staff may (optionally) wear face masks / PPE.

Students will participate in the same online programme of remote learning as their peers at home.

### **Use of toilet facilities**

Toilet facilities are kept stocked up with soap and hot water is readily available. This is checked regularly throughout the day (as defined by the **Site Maintenance Checklist (COVID-19)**).

The toilets are cleaned regularly throughout the day by cleaning staff, consistent with [PHE, 16 Oct. '20: COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings outside the home](#) and as specified in the **Site Cleaning Schedule (COVID-19)**.

Toilet areas are adequately ventilated.

Expectations regarding the use of toilets, and related hygiene measures, are reinforced through the use of posters. The use of toilet facilities during the break and lunch periods is supervised.

Only two students are allowed to enter into a washroom/toilet area at any time. Students are not generally expected not to use the toilets during the lesson periods.

Water fountains are provided to enable students to fill up water bottles (so that these can be used instead of taps/sinks).

### **Staff break / work areas**

Colleagues who are working in school are asked to use their own teaching bases and to avoid congregating in their departmental work areas. In all circumstances, social distancing should be observed.

Support staff with operational challenges (to achieve social distancing) in their work spaces should discuss these with the Business Manager, who will consider a range of measures that could include: avoiding face-to-face positioning; protective screens; temporary relocation for some; and/or staggered working hours.

Hand sanitisers and cleaning products are available in all office areas.

Wherever possible, visits to offices (from colleagues based elsewhere and other visitors) should be avoided. Contact should be made by telephone and email, wherever possible. Where colleagues do visit an office, they should wear a face mask and ensure that they socially distance.

### **Visitors**

Entry to the Reception Area is controlled, including through the use of social distancing markers. Protective screens are installed around the Reception desk and

entry into the Reception Area is prevented for any unauthorised visitors. The entrance foyer area (especially door handles) is cleaned regularly.

Access points and protection in relation to visitors are reviewed, with times for contractors arranged in such a way that the number on site at any one time is minimised. Access for visitors is limited to essential business only and, where possible, visits are arranged outside of the school day (i.e. students' hours).

A Health Declaration Check is completed (verbally) with each authorised visitor, as a condition of entrance into the school building.

Visitors sanitise their hands on entry and exit, **wear a face mask** and are briefed on Health and Safety protocols, consistent with this policy. Where possible, Health and Safety information is provided in advance of the visit and checked/reinforced on arrival.

For any visitors working closely with students (e.g. specialist support agencies for SEND students), as agreed and risk assessed, PPE is made available (in addition to social distancing measures), as appropriate.

### **Assemblies / large meetings**

There are no assemblies or other large congregations of students or staff until further notice. Face-to-face on-site meetings between staff involve no more than 12 staff in attendance – widespread use is made of video conferencing technology. Social distancing must be observed for any of these small on-site meetings. Meetings of governors and directors are limited to essential business only and are conducted through video conferencing technology.

### **Extra-curricular activities**

No educational trips will be authorised for the spring term.

### **Student behaviour**

A **Behaviour Policy Addendum (COVID-19)** has been put in place, outlining how high expectations for the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community are maintained through the management of students' behaviour. As required, appropriate action is taken to secure social distancing in the interests of safety.

The approach to the management of student behavior, in these circumstances, is compassionate and proportionate, supporting students who may exhibit problematic behaviours as a response to trauma that they may have experienced during the pandemic. Nevertheless, no student can be allowed to create an unsafe environment for themselves and others.

Students are told that they must not touch staff and should keep their distance. They should also avoid contact with their peers.

Students do not generally wear face masks during lessons. However, inside the school buildings (other than for exemptions), they will be required to wear a face mask. Face masks must be worn responsibly.

### **Student attendance**

Students are only able to attend school where they are eligible – through meeting the criteria for vulnerability and/or as the child of a key worker. There is a clear expectation that vulnerable students should attend (unless there are very specific, and agreed, circumstances). The children of key workers are asked only to take up places where this is really necessary, in order to allow the school to manage capacity, including staffing for remote learning.

### **Supporting and safeguarding students**

We aim to ensure that students' emotional needs are well supported, and will provide pastoral/counselling support, as required.

The Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) programme gives timely coverage of issues relating to mental health and wellbeing. Additional sessions are also provided to highlight important safe working issues in relation to online working.

We continue, and enhance, programmes to support vulnerable students with rebuilding friendships, social engagement and equipping students to respond to issues relating to COVID-19.

Staff should be alert to any safeguarding concerns and follow procedure, in line with the Safeguarding Policy and **Safeguarding Policy Addendum (COVID-19)**.

The SENCO reviews EHC plans and linked risk assessments to determine what support will be needed for individuals to return to school under this model of provision and, in some cases, whether it is safe to return to school. Students' views, the views of parents/carers and, as appropriate, specialist views are taken into account

### **Supporting and safeguarding staff**

We encourage staff to give an early indication of specific pressures, difficulties and issues concerning work-life balance - directly to the Business Manager or Head of School. Line managers are also consulted, as appropriate, regarding staff deployment and welfare issues. A counselling support service is also available to staff. Furthermore, colleagues are able to access the [Education Support Partnership](#), as a further/alternative source of support and guidance.

Where colleagues have concerns about coming onto the school site, their views will be taken seriously, together with any medical advice. An Occupational Health Service referral will be made, as appropriate. Where it is judged appropriate for the member of staff to come onto the site, reasonable adjustments will be put in place. Where staff are able to work from home, they may be prioritised for home working. [The duty to protect the mental, as well as physical, health of staff is recognised and the approach outlined above reflects this].

Staff are given guidance in how to ensure safe online teaching and learning practice.

## **Fire safety**

Revised arrangements are in place. These are outlined in the **Fire Safety Evacuation Procedure (COVID-19)**.

## **OTHER INFECTION CONTROL MEASURES**

Robust infection control measures have been put in place in the interests of the safety of the school community. The following measures are implemented:

### **Cleaning hands frequently**

All site users are encouraged to wash hands regularly and thoroughly (for 20 seconds at a time with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly) and/or to use hand sanitiser, ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered. Specifically, all site users are required to use hand sanitising gel on entrance to, and exit from, the site.

Furthermore, all students and teaching staff are required to use hand sanitising gel at the start of each lesson period. [The gel will be situated on a table near the entrance to the classroom door and staff will supervise students' use of this]. Hand sanitiser is also available in all other frequently used indoor spaces, including the library, staff room and offices/work areas. Furthermore, sanitising stations are also positioned in food service areas.

Students are discouraged from touching their faces, or putting objects in their mouths. Posters and rolling digital displays reinforce good hygiene measures.

### **Ensuring good respiratory hygiene**

The 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' approach is promoted throughout the school, including through the use of posters and rolling digital displays.

A good supply of tissues is supplied in each classroom. Foot-operated pedal bins are also situated in each classroom and in other high usage areas around the site. These bins are emptied each day.

Disposable gloves and disinfectant wipes/spray are available in each classroom (in case anyone sneezes).

### **Cleaning the site**

We ensure that our cleaning contractors follow carefully the published guidance on cleaning (infection prevention and control) – [PHE, 16 Oct. '20: COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings outside the home](#)

An enhanced cleaning schedule (the **Site Cleaning Schedule (COVID-19)**) is implemented, including definition of responsibilities, methods, frequency and in which circumstances an additional clean is needed.

Cleaning prioritises surfaces that are touched by multiple people – photocopiers, door handles, table/counter tops, computers (including mice/keyboards), whiteboards,

light switches, telephones, chairs, bannisters, specialised equipment for SEND students, toilets, toilet handles, sinks, taps, etc.

Cleaning substances are risk assessed. Dirty water is disposed of safely and there is a designated locked area for cleaning products.

We monitor carefully the standard of cleaning and keep in close liaison with the cleaning company's management team.

Approved cleaning products are provided in all communal areas – classrooms, library, office spaces, reception desk, first aid bay, toilets etc. These areas are cleaned by the cleaning contractors, taking into account high incidence touching surfaces and multiple users, consistent with, [PHE, 16 Oct. '20: COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings outside the home](#) but also allowing colleagues to be responsive and to take further measures, as they wish.

### **Use of resources and equipment**

Resources can be shared but they must subsequently be cleaned (wiped down with disinfectant) before use by a student in a different class 'bubble', or stored and rotated so that they are unused for a period of 48 hours before their next use (72 hours for plastics).

Students should bring their own pencil cases with all the equipment they need.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) / waste disposal**

Reference to PPE in this section means: fluid-resistant surgical face masks; disposable gloves; disposable plastic aprons; and eye protection, e.g. face visor or goggles.

The Government has advised that the majority of school staff do not need to wear PPE routinely, beyond what they would normally use for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of two metres from others. [Where staff wish to use PPE, they are allowed to do so, but they must demonstrate that they are able to use it correctly.](#)

In accordance with DfE guidance, PPE is provided to staff [\(who are expected to use it\)](#) in the following circumstances:

1. Where staff are caring for students whose intimate care needs already require the use of PPE
2. Where a student becomes unwell on site - with symptoms of Coronavirus - 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 student. 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.

When using PPE, staff follow PHE's guidelines on putting on and taking off equipment. PHE's infographics will be displayed in the medical area. Before using PPE, colleagues

should watch this [short video](#). Any queries/questions should be directed to the First Aid Officer or the Business Manager.

When using face masks, staff ensure that 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 whenever they become moist or damaged.
- Are only worn once and then discarded.

PPE is disposed of by putting it into the plastic bag inside a closed pedal bin. The bin bag is taken out of the pedal bin by the site staff and placed inside another bag ('double bagged'). The waste is stored safely and securely kept away from students. It is not put out for refuse collection for at least 72 hours. This waste does not require a dedicated clinical waste collection.

Additional risk assessments are conducted to determine whether PPE is required for other tasks and activities.

PPE supplies are available from the reception desk and in each classroom. Gloves, aprons and surgical masks will be available.

Ensure that any waste from the lateral flow testing centre is 'triple bagged' and stored / disposed of securely and safely (according to guidelines).

### **On-site development of symptoms**

A protective screen is installed around the first aid bay.

If someone becomes unwell on site, with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they are sent home (by a senior member of staff). Where this is a student, parents are contacted. A contactless thermometer is used to inform the judgement regarding COVID-19 symptoms.

Where a student needs to be collected, they are moved to a dedicated room (B10), where they can be isolated – behind a closed door, with ventilation. (If it is not possible to isolate them, they are moved to an area that is at least 2 m. away from other people).

If the person needs the toilet, they should use a separate toilet, which should then be locked and subsequently deep-cleaned before further use.

In any situation where a 2 m. distance cannot be maintained, first aid staff wear PPE (disposable gloves, apron, disposable face mask and eye protection).

Where a parent/carer collects their child from school, they wait in their car, while the student is escorted by the first aider (at a safe distance) to them. Where they are not in a car, there will be an agreed meeting point, outside of the school buildings.

In the case of an emergency, 999 is called.

Where a member of staff has helped someone who was unwell with COVID-19 symptoms, they do not need to go home themselves, unless they also develop symptoms (in which case, a test is available), or the person subsequently tests positive. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds.

The area where the person has been, and all surfaces with which the person has been in contact, should be cleaned with disinfectant. Gloves and an apron should be worn (as a minimum). Where an area has been heavily contaminated, such as with visible body fluid, protection for eyes, nose and mouth should also be used. Public areas where a symptomatic person has passed through, and spent minimal time (and are not visibly contaminated) can be cleaned as normal.

Disposable cloths/mop heads and/or paper towels should be used for cleaning, with an approved disinfectant.

Waste from possible cases is put in a pedal bin, collected and double bagged by the site team (as for other waste). It is kept for 72 hours and then disposed of with normal waste.

### **Management of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school setting**

Anyone who presents on the school site with COVID-19 symptoms is sent home and should self-isolate for 10 days. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days.

Staff and students who are symptomatic should get tested. In these circumstances, parents can access testing for their child using the 111 online Coronavirus Service; the school can book testing for staff through a dedicated online portal.

Where the student, or member of staff, tests negative, they can return to school and the members of their household can end the self-isolation.

Staff who have helped someone with symptoms, and students who have been in 'close contact' with them, do not need to go home to self-isolate, unless they themselves develop symptoms (in which case, they should arrange a test), or if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive, or they have been requested to do so through 'Test and Trace'.

Everyone who has been in contact with someone who has been unwell, with COVID-19 symptoms, should wash their hands thoroughly (for 20 seconds) with soap and running water, or use hand sanitiser.

### **Management of confirmed cases**

Parents/carers are asked to inform the school, without delay, of the results of a COVID-19 test via the designated email address: [covid@chaseterraceacademy.co.uk](mailto:covid@chaseterraceacademy.co.uk)

Any individual confirmed case is reported to the Local Authority Response Team. In these circumstances, the school will conduct a rapid risk assessment to establish a list of 'close contacts' with the person over the period that they were infectious and these 'close contacts' (students and/or staff) will be invited to take part in the on-site

'rapid testing' (lateral flow) seven-day programme (see below), or else they will be sent home to self-isolate for 10 days.

Where several cases are detected (through the national 'Test and Trace' Programme') in the school, or in the local area, the Local Authority Response Team will advise on further action.

### **'Lateral flow' testing<sup>1</sup>**

On-site 'lateral flow' testing is now available. The tests have lower sensitivity than laboratory tests, but they are better at picking up cases when a person has higher viral load, and are more contagious. A testing centre has been set up and staff and volunteers have been trained to administer these tests.

Staff coming onto the site are now invited to get tested (weekly) and staff from neighbouring primary schools are also invited to use this facility. Students attending the on-site provision are invited to take two tests (three to five days apart).

Subsequently, where 'Test and Trace' identifies someone as a 'close contact', it will be possible for them to stay on site, if they take daily tests for seven days, with negative outcomes. Where someone tests positive, they must self-isolate, and take a laboratory PCR test, only returning if the outcome is negative.

[See the **COVID-19 Risk Assessment and Action Plan** for further detail on control measures]

## **COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING**

All social distancing and infection control measures are communicated to all relevant stakeholders, including students, parents/carers, staff, visitors, suppliers and contractors. All members of the school community are reminded regularly of their responsibilities.

Staff are informed of all relevant plans, including safety measures and, as required, are trained on the new measures. They are encouraged to provide continuous feedback on the arrangements that are in place.

Students receive detailed reinforcement of expectations in lessons.

Visual aids around the school remind our school community of the measures in place, and the expectations with regard to social distancing and infection control.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy (and the **COVID-19 Risk Assessment and Action Plan**) is reviewed continuously by the Executive Headteacher, in consultation with the Head of School and other senior staff. The review is informed by feedback from site users and parents/carers.

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<sup>1</sup> This is subject to final authorisation from the Local Authority

Updates made to this policy are communicated to staff and parents/carers. The Executive Headteacher also liaises regularly with the Chair of the Trust Board and the Chair of Governors and will keep directors of the Trust and members of the Governing Body well-informed of any significant developments in relation to provision and the risk management process.

Stuart Jones; 14 Jan. '21