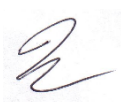


Social Distancing Policy

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School



Approved by:	Mr J Coucill, Chair of Governors 
Lead of Review:	Mr C Jones, Business Manager
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Statement of intent

This policy statement 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.

While we are looking forward to welcoming more of our pupils back, 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 will take 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) 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings'
- DfE (2020) 'Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)'

1.2. This policy operates in accordance with the following school policies:

- Absence Management Policy
- Infection Control Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) Reopening Plan
- Risk Assessment for Reopening After Partial Closure

2. Risk assessments

2.1. Before reopening the school to more pupils, a risk assessment will be carried out to ensure sensible measures are put in place to protect staff members and pupils, including appropriate social distancing measures.

2.2. Staff members will be encouraged to inform SLT of any further needs that need to be accounted for.

2.3. The risk assessment will address 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

Class sizes

- 3.1. The school will continue to offer on-site provision for priority groups including children of keyworkers and vulnerable children.
- 3.2. Until government advice changes, the school will only offer face-to-face support for pupils in Year 10 and Year 12 and very small clusters of Years 7/8/9.
- 3.3. We will operate classrooms to ensure social distancing is maintained for the space available. For year 10 this is a maximum of 15 and for year 12 the maximum is 15.
- 3.4. Pupils will remain in these groups and will not mix with others during the school day or on subsequent days.
- 3.5. There be may be more than one teacher and one TA working with each class.
- 3.6. In the event there is a shortage of teachers, a TA can lead the class under the direction of a teacher.
- 3.7. Social distancing measures will be adhered to, including the two-metre rule, and desks will be spaced as far apart as possible to help this.
- 3.8. Where social distancing is not achievable, e.g. because there are not enough classrooms, the headteacher will liaise with the LA to come to another arrangement.

The school day

- 3.9. The headteacher and other key staff members will review the school timetable and make amendments to reduce movement around the school. Where necessary, some lessons may be cancelled and the timetable restricted.
- 3.10. Staff, pupils and parents will be sent a copy of the finalised timetable and will be informed of any changes to this timetable.

Travelling to and from school

- 3.11. Pupil start and finish times will be staggered as follows to maintain social distancing and minimise mixing:
 - All students will be sent a letter to confirm arrival and departing times.

- Year 10 students will attend on a designated day each week in 3 groups.
- Maximum group size will be 15 to ensure social distancing.
- Each group will arrive at staggered times.
- Each cluster will have a designated entrance.
- Each cluster of students from different year groups will remain together in designated classrooms and play areas.
- Key worker students will continue to be supported from 0815 to 1500hrs in their own distinct group.

3.12. Pick up and drop off points are communicated to parents in advance of the measures being put in place.

3.13. Clear signage is displayed highlighting where parents should drop off and pick up their children.

3.14. Parents are urged to avoid public transport where possible and to encourage their children to walk or cycle to school.

Assemblies

3.15. All assemblies will take place during this period of restrictions from 15th June via Zoom

Staffroom

3.16. The use of the staffroom is discouraged. If the staffroom needs to be used, occupancy will be limited, to stop staff members mixing. The two-metre social distancing should be followed at all times.

Extra-curricular clubs

3.17. There will be no afterschool clubs or extra-curricular activities during this period of restrictions.

Behaviour

3.18. The school's **Behaviour Management Policy** has been amended to include an annex outlining how social distancing will work when implementing the measures in the policy.

3.19. 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.

- 3.20. If a staff member is unable to follow the principles, they should speak to their line manager.
- 3.21. If a pupil is unable to follow any social distancing measures, the headteacher will send that student home.

Transport

- 3.22. The **headteacher** 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.
- 3.23. Pupils and staff are encouraged to walk or cycle to school or be dropped off by a member of their household. If this is not possible, and pupils and staff need to use public transport, they are required to follow guidelines on social distancing.
- 3.24. Pupils and their families will be informed of the new arrangements before they are implemented.

Supporting pupils

- 3.25. The SENCO will review EHC plans and risk assessments to determine whether it is safe for pupils with SEND to return to school, if they have not already been attending.
- 3.26. The SENCO will consider the capacity for the pupil to understand and follow social distancing measures that have been put in place as part of their decision to determine whether a pupil with SEND should return to school.
- 3.27. 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 as we reopen more widely.
- 3.28. The **headteacher** 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**, which contains an annex on coronavirus measures.
- 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 **headteacher** in a **daily morning meeting**.
- 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:

- Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend the school for 7 or 14 days.
- Cleaning hands frequently – 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
- Ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach
- Cleaning frequently touched surfaces using standard products, such as detergents and bleach
- Minimising contact and mixing of pupils and staff by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (such as staggered break times)
- Limiting the number of shared resources that are taken home by staff and pupils
- Discouraging pupils from touching their faces or putting objects in their mouths

4.6. The school will review guidance from the government regularly, and update this policy and other documents, e.g. the **Risk Assessment for Reopening After Partial Closure**, where necessary.

5. Personal protective equipment (PPE)

[We understand that without PPE it is very challenging to ensure staff can carry out their roles safely. The government has confirmed that its stance on PPE in schools is constantly developing – we will update this section as required.]

5.1. Reference to PPE in this section means:

- Fluid-resistant surgical face masks.
- Disposable gloves.
- Disposable plastic aprons.
- Eye protection, e.g. face visor or goggles.

5.2. The government has advised that the majority of school staff do not need to wear PPE beyond what they normally would for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of two metres from others.

5.3. 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 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.

5.4. When using face masks, 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.

5.5. When using PPE, staff members will follow PHE's 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.

5.6. 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.

5.7. 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.

5.8. 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.

5.9. 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.

5.10. In line with government guidance, pupils and staff will be asked to remove homemade non-disposable face coverings when they arrive at school. The wearer will be asked to bring a plastic bag to school to put the face covering into in order to take it home – the wearer must clean their hands once they have removed the face covering. If a staff member or pupil (or their parent) does not want to

remove their face covering while at school, they should speak to the headteacher or the most senior member of staff on site.

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 at least 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 headteacher.