

March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

### Returning to School Safely

Further to our letter earlier this week, we are writing to confirm the **key arrangements** that are in place, so that we can further reduce the risk of virus transmission and welcome all pupils safely back to school beginning 8<sup>th</sup> March. This letter summarises our arrangements and also details how you can help us to keep everyone safe.

It is vital that all children return to school to minimise the longer-term impact of the pandemic on their education, wellbeing and wider development. We know however, that some of you may be anxious about returning your child to school at this time. **Please be assured that we are confident the benefits of being back in school far outweigh the very low risk currently posed by the virus in the community.**

#### Primary Phase

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March: All primary pupils to return. A separate letter has already been sent to parents of children.

#### Secondary Phase

Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 11 will return to the secondary phase
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 10 and Year 11 to attend
Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11 to attend
Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 8, Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11 to attend
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> March	All secondary pupils to attend

During the phased return, secondary pupils not in school will continue to be provided with online learning through Microsoft Teams during their normal timetabled sessions. The exception to this are practical subjects including PE, Art, Music and Technology where work will be provided through Teams and Insight.

If there are specific anxieties, we would ask you contact Mrs Skipper for pupils at the Primary Phase, or your child's Head of Year for pupils at the Secondary Phase and we will do our best to resolve these before the 8<sup>th</sup> March.

*Continued ...*

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## **What we are doing to protect and support pupils and staff**

Throughout the pandemic, the school has remained open, and we have always followed or exceeded the Government guidance to ensure the safety of pupils and staff.

### **1. Travelling to and from school**

Following Government advice, we would encourage everyone to walk or cycle to school if at all possible. Guidance says that only members of a household bubble should travel together to and from school, and only one adult from the household should travel with pupils.

If your child uses school transport, this will be running as normal. Pupils will sit in year groups on school transport, to minimise contact between different bubbles. There will be an agreed seating plan for each bus and it will be essential that pupils sit only in their allocated seat. This will ensure that we can identify the direct contacts of individual pupils if we are required to track and trace in the event of an infection. We have already sent you a leaflet from Norfolk County Council outlining measures that are in place to ensure the safety of pupils on school transport, including the requirement for pupils to wear a face covering if they are over the age of 11.

If you use public transport, please refer to the following government guidance [safer travel guidance for passengers](#).

### **2. Face coverings**

It is currently mandatory to wear a face covering in a wide variety of settings, including shops and on public transport.

As you will already be aware, secondary pupils must wear a face covering when using school transport and inside the school building. This is because their bubble will consist of up to 140 pupils, and they will be mixing with a wide variety of different staff.

#### **Our policy in light of the new guidance on face coverings will remain as:**

- All secondary pupils **must have a face covering with them in school and use it whilst inside the building or when unable to maintain safe social distance outside.**
- All secondary pupils **must wear a face covering on school or public transport.**
- Where pupils are medically exempt from wearing a face covering, evidence will already be on file, or if newly exempt, evidence will be required.

At the primary phase, bubbles are smaller and staffing will be more consistent. The wearing of face coverings will therefore not be compulsory at the primary phase, unless the national guidance changes. However, if pupils in years 6, 5 and 4 want to wear a face covering, they may do so.

Pupils will be expected to source their own face covering. This does not need to be a medical grade mask and can be a reusable cotton mask. All we would ask is that there are no designs or motifs that might be considered inappropriate for a school workplace.

The World Health Organisation (<https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-children-and-masks-related-to-covid-19>) previously announced that:

“WHO and UNICEF advise that children aged 12 and over should wear a mask under the same conditions as adults, in particular when they cannot guarantee at least a 1-metre distance from others and there is widespread transmission in the area.”

The World Health Organisation have also provided advice on the types of face coverings, how to choose them, and how to wear them at <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>

When wearing a face covering, please discourage your child from touching the front of their face while they are wearing it and when they remove it. Please also provide them with a plastic bag or suitable receptacle to keep it in while they are not wearing it.

### **3. Start and end of the school day**

The following arrangements are in place for the start and end of the school day:

- Primary classes having different entrance and exit routes to school and staggered start and finish times. Please note that we have already sent a separate letter for parents of pupils in our primary phase, detailing specific arrangements for them.
- Secondary year groups having discrete outside areas before school, and moving into tutor bases from 8:45am.
- Year 10 & Year 11 are being dismissed at 3.28pm to move to the buses before Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 at 3.30pm

### **4. Cohorting of small groups (Bubbles)**

Each class at our primary phase will remain in a separate “bubble”, with pupils not mixing with other classes across the school. This will minimise the number of contacts between different people.

Each year group at our secondary phase will remain in a separate “bubble”, with pupils not mixing with other year groups across the school, again minimising the number of contacts between different people.

Those main bubbles may be extended when it is necessary, for example because of wraparound care arrangements with the childcare provider based at the primary phase site, or specialist teaching arrangements. The guidance advises that it is also acceptable for siblings to be in different bubbles.

We continue to follow government advice and the arrangements in place to separate different bubbles. We have also:

- Planned the school day and activities to avoid bubbles from mixing and support distancing within bubbles as much as possible, including making as much use of outside space as possible.
- Ensured resources such as pens and pencils are not shared.

- Ensured that other resources are not shared between bubbles without cleaning.
- Increased our cleaning and disinfection regime.
- Opening windows and doors to increase ventilation inside the building when it is safe and appropriate.

We would ask you to support this by limiting the items your child brings in from home to only essential items.

Educational visits will be assessed to ensure that providers are COVID-19 secure, and there are currently no overnight stays permitted.

## 5. Lunchtime and school meals

We have kept the adjustments to break and lunchtime arrangements to minimise contact between bubbles. This includes:

- Lunches being delivered to primary classrooms.
- Staggered starts to break and lunchtimes at the secondary phase, with year groups having a particular time to use the dining room, and cleaning between each sitting.
- Staggered ends to break and lunchtimes at the secondary phase, to reduce congestion and the likelihood of year groups mixing.
- Additional till points in the secondary dining hall.
- Year groups having discrete allocated outside areas.

## 6. Universal hygiene

Staff are continuing to implement these universal hygiene measures and encouraging our pupils to do the same:

- Washing their hands thoroughly with soap and water often, following the [NHS guidance](#) or using alcohol-based hand sanitiser if soap and water isn't immediately available. Everyone should wash their hands on arrival at school, before eating, after coughing or sneezing, after visiting the toilet, when they get home at the end of the school day, as well as at other regular intervals throughout the day.
- [Catch it, Kill it, Bin it](#) - Covering their mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when sneezing and putting used tissues in the bin straight away. Always washing their hands afterwards. We will be providing tissues and bins in our classrooms and at other places where they are needed in the school.
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose or mouth if they haven't washed their hands first.
- Self-isolating if:
  - They or a member of their direct household has a new, continuous cough and/or high temperature/fever or a loss or change in their sense of taste or smell.
  - Asked to through the NHS test and trace service.
- Going home if they develop symptoms, no matter how mild.

## 7. Cleaning and disinfection

The following enhanced arrangements remain in place:

- We have removed items that are difficult to clean.
- We have identified specific cleaning methods and the times that cleaning and disinfection is needed.
- All touch points that are fixed to the premises such as door handles, taps and toilet flushers have been treated with a long-lasting disinfectant coating, and will also will be disinfected twice a day.

## **8. Health and wellbeing**

- We will ask pupils about how they feel on arrival at school and arrange for pupils to go home where they have symptoms, no matter how mild.
- We will talk to pupils about symptoms and encourage them to tell a member of staff if they feel ill, no matter how mild. We are also keeping vigilant for any signs of symptoms too, and reminding everyone about this regularly.
- Our staff and visitors will not attend if they have symptoms and will go home if they develop symptoms while they are at school.
- If your child is unable to attend because they are complying with clinical advice, or because they are isolating, we will arrange for access to remote education.
- We are very mindful about the anxiety that children and you may be feeling, and we encourage you to talk about those concerns, particularly if your child has been shielding and are now advised this is no longer necessary, or you are concerned about the comparatively increased risk including if you are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background.
- We will talk and listen to children on their return and help them with any anxiety they may be experiencing.
- If your child has a support plan, we will review this plan where it is needed in order to consider any specific requirements that will help them to return to the new school arrangements.

## **9. Supporting each other**

Your continued support to help us achieve these standards in our school is vital. Please role model the hygiene behaviours that apply when you are at home and encourage your children to follow them. Please ensure that:

- Only the following items are brought to school: Bags, lunchboxes, hats, coats, books, PE kit and stationery. We ask pupils not to share their belongings with other pupils.
- Your child washes their hands before coming to school and on arriving home. Please support and encourage them to follow good hand and respiratory hygiene at all times.
- Your child wears their school PE kit instead of their normal school uniform if they have a PE lesson on that day. Timetables are available on INSIGHT so that you know when your child has PE. Please note that PE kit should then be machine washed on the same day after it is worn.

## **10. Educating and supporting**

We will be reminding pupils about Covid-19 and infection prevention in school, at home and in their community in an age appropriate way. Pupils can also become advocates for infection prevention by talking to others about how to prevent the spread of viruses.

We have updated our behaviour policy to cover the new arrangements and site rules that we have put in place. We will ensure that we take a consistent approach to reinforcing behaviour.

## **11. Symptoms and isolation**

- If a pupil feels ill while they are at school, we will keep them safe and move them away from others in a designated room while they wait to be collected. We will not leave a pupil who is ill where they are not safe to be left alone. In an emergency, we will call the emergency services, and we will continue to provide first aid for emergencies as we normally do. Staff will wear Personal Protective Equipment if a pupil develops symptoms or requires first aid and we need to be in close contact with them.
- Please collect your child as soon as you can if we ask you to. We will contact you if they become ill with either a temperature, a change to their sense of taste or smell, or a new, continuous cough. Please help us by booking a test at a centre and letting us know the results as soon as you receive them.
- Please let us know if any member of your household develops symptoms as soon as you can. This means we will need to move your child into separate room while they are waiting to be collected to protect others in their bubble. You will then need to follow normal household isolations arrangements. Please arrange for a test to ascertain whether it is COVID-19 and share the results with the school, so that we can communicate any necessary actions to other parents. Your privacy will be maintained when we do this.
- Please ensure that you follow isolation arrangements if any member of your household develops symptoms.

Further information can be found here: [Just one norfolk](#)

## **12. COVID-19 Testing**

We will be arranging testing for those students who have had consent from their parents, using the Lateral Flow Testing materials provided by the government. This testing consists of three tests in school, where supervision and training are given, followed by distribution of the home test kits to those students. Students will have their first test on the day they return to school and their remaining two tests will take place before Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March. The guidance indicates that only students that have had three supervised tests may use the home testing kits and should continue to complete two tests per week at home. The results of these tests will need to be returned to the school.

### **12. Action we will take if someone from the school has a positive test**

If someone tests positive from the school, then we will work with the local Health Protection Team from Public Health. We will advise you in the event that someone has tested positive where it means that your child needs to isolate for 14 days. If your child is not part of the same main or extended bubble then it is unlikely that they need to isolate.

## **13. Meetings and visitors**

Wherever possible, meetings between yourself and the school should take place by telephone or using Microsoft Teams.

Only absolutely essential in person meetings will take place. Should this be required, the school will make specific arrangements with you. We will only meet with one parent if this is the case. Please do not come into school unless you have an appointment.

We have safe arrangements for essential visitors who need to come onto site, such as maintenance contractors.

We have put key information about Covid-19, including our agreed Risk Assessment, on our website, and will review our arrangements in line with any required changes and advise you where needed. If you have any further queries, please contact us by telephone or email.

Thank you for your understanding, co-operation and continued support.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming everyone back to school again and to some normality.

With best wishes.



Robert Martlew  
Headteacher



Stuart Wilson  
Deputy Headteacher



Kate Atkins  
Head of Primary Phase

