



Ribblesdale
High School

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Ribblesdale High 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, in relation to the safe operation of the school during the C19 pandemic. 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.

This policy will be updated in light of updates to government guidance.

Signed by:

_____ Headteacher Date: November 2020 _____

_____ Chair of governors Date: November 2020 _____

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)'**
 - **DfE (2020) 'Guidance for full opening: schools'**
- 1.2. This policy operates in accordance with the following school policies and documents:
 - **Bereavement Policy**
 - **Staff Leave of Absence Policy**
 - **C19 related staff absence flow chart**
 - **Child Protection & Behaviour Policies**
 - **Risk Assessment for Full Opening in September**
 - **Full School Re-opening Guides**

2. Risk assessments

- 2.1. Before opening in September, a risk assessment was carried out to ensure appropriate measures are put in place to protect staff members and pupils, including appropriate social distancing measures. The risk assessment will be subject to regular review and its provisions to close monitoring and quality assurance.
- 2.2. Staff members will be consulted as part of the creation process to ensure everyone's needs are understood and 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

Use of 'bubbles'

- 3.1. 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. Pupils will remain in these bubbles and will not mix with others during the school day.
- 3.3. Staff will be permitted to move between bubbles but should continue to follow the school's social distancing measures where possible. The number of bubbles to which staff members are linked will be restricted.
- 3.4. Teaching staff will be asked to maintain a 2 metre distance from pupils by staying at the front of the class, and remaining 2 metres away from their colleagues wherever possible.
- 3.5. Pupils will be seated side-by-side facing forwards – any unnecessary classroom furniture will be removed to facilitate this.
- 3.6. 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

- 3.7. The headteacher and other key staff members will review the school timetable and make amendments to reduce movement around the school, ensuring separate areas are used for different bubbles.
- 3.8. Staff, pupils and parents will be sent details of arrangements for delivery of the curriculum (full school reopening guides) and will be informed of changes to these arrangements.

Travelling to and from school

- 3.9. Pupil finish times will be staggered to maintain social distancing and minimise mixing.
- 3.10. Parents are urged to avoid public transport where possible and to encourage their children to walk or cycle to school. Where public transport is used, parents and pupils are advised to follow government guidance on social distancing and other protective measures, e.g. wearing face coverings.

Assemblies

- 3.11. Assemblies will not take be held in large groups. Classroom teachers may hold assemblies with the pupils in their bubbles. Where it is desirable to share the same materials / messages across larger cohorts, assembly content will be organised remotely.

Break and lunchtimes

- 3.12. Pupils will take their breaktimes and lunchtimes with the pupils in their bubble to avoid mixing.

- 3.13. Different areas of the school will be allocated for pupils to take their break and lunchtimes, so we can appropriately distance pupil bubbles.
- 3.14. Pupils are able to go outside during their breaktimes and lunchtimes; however, they will be required to remain within their bubbles.
- 3.15. Pupils will collect their meals from their allocated dining area in their bubbles.
- 3.16. Lunches will be staggered to ensure time can be allocated between each group for cleaning dining areas and surfaces.
- 3.17. Pupils will wash/ sanitise their hands before eating.

Staffroom

- 3.18. The staff work rooms and other shared staff spaces will be adapted to ensure staff can maintain an appropriate distance from each other. There should be no more than 5 staff in a room at one time. Facilities will be provided for staff to make refreshments. Insulated cups will be provided to staff to minimise contact.

PE lessons

- 3.19. Pupils will be kept in their bubbles for PE, sport and physical activity, sporting activities will be planned in accordance with government guidelines, and sports equipment will be rotated / thoroughly cleaned between each use by different bubbles.

Extra-curricular clubs

- 3.20. Before deciding whether extra-curricular / enrichment activities can go ahead, the headteacher will consider how such provision can operate alongside the school's wider protective measures, including keeping pupils within their bubbles where possible.
- 3.21. The school reserves the right to cancel any extra-curricular clubs without any notice, including while the clubs are in progress, to protect the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff members. In the event this happens, staff members will practice social distancing while they wait for pupils to be collected.

Behaviour

- 3.22. The school's Behavioural Policy has been amended to reflect and work within our Safe School protocols.
- 3.23. We understand that following some of the social distancing principles will be extremely challenging, so staff and pupils will be supported to follow them.
- 3.24. If a staff member is unable to follow the principles, they should speak to their line manager. Serious and / or deliberate breaches of social distancing may result in disciplinary sanctions.
- 3.25. If a pupil is unable to follow any social distancing measures, the headteacher and relevant staff members will discuss whether additional support can be

offered to help them do so. Serious and / or deliberate breaches of social distancing may result in disciplinary sanctions.

Transport

- 3.26. The headteacher will liaise with the LA and the school's transport providers to support the safe use of public transport to get to school.
- 3.27. 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 and wearing face coverings.
- 3.28. Wherever possible, pupils and their families will be informed of the new arrangements before they are implemented.

Supporting pupils

- 3.29. The SENCO 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 SENCO will consider the capacity for 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.
- 3.32. 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, if required.

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. 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 as necessary by the headteacher in a twice-weekly morning meeting.
- 4.3. The school will communicate 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.
- 4.4. The following measures will be implemented across the school:
 - **Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, have someone in**

their household who does, or have tested positive within the last 7 days do not attend the school for 7 or 14 days (following the latest government guidelines).

- **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.**
- **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 lunchtimes).**
- **Ensuring individual and frequently used equipment (e.g. stationery) is not shared and that classroom-based resources (e.g. books) are only used and shared within bubbles. Resources that must be shared between groups, e.g. art equipment, will be rotated / cleaned frequently and always between use by different bubbles.**
- **Discouraging pupils from touching their faces or putting objects in their mouths.**

4.5. 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.**
- **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.**

4.6. The school will review guidance from the government regularly, and update this policy and other documents, e.g. the Risk Assessment for Full Opening in September, where necessary.

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. 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 pupil 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, (whether classed as PPE or not) 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 (in the case of single use masks).**
 - **Are changed once they become moist or damaged.**
 - **Are only worn once and then discarded (single use masks).**
 - **Reusable masks should be washed daily once worn.**
- 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. Any potentially contaminated 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 in the classroom. 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.
- 5.11. All pupils and staff will be issued with two three-ply, plain black, adjustable reusable face masks which must be worn on dedicated school transport, on public transport and in corridors and congested areas.

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. A Microsoft Forms can be used to report concerns and staff will be supported by an independent H&S representative on the school staff.
- 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 termly 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.