



The Blue Coat School

## **COVID-19 POLICY**

This COVID-19 Policy was devised by the Head of Pre-Prep in consultation with colleagues in the school.

Date of Next Review: November 2020 or sooner if required

## **COVID-19 POLICY**

### **I. CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS**

#### **1.1**

The School is in the West Midlands East district for Public Health England. The Health Protection Team contact details are: Public Health England, 5 St Philip's Place, Birmingham B3 2PW (T: 0344 225 3560 – Option 2). Out of hours advice: T: 01384 679031. Public Health England will be contacted if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 or if there is an overall rise in suspected cases. The School will act in accordance with their guidance.

#### **1.2**

Tests as part of the NHS Test and Trace process can be ordered by telephone via the NHS on 119. Anyone involved in childcare or education has priority access to testing. Staff and parents must be ready and willing to book a test if they or their child are displaying symptoms. They must also be prepared to provide details of anyone they or their child has been in close contact with if they were to test positive for COVID-19 or if asked by NHS Test and Trace. They must be prepared to self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 or if anyone in their household develops symptoms of COVID-19. School should be informed of the outcome of any test. (See also 3.2 below.)

### **2. BACKGROUND**

#### **2.1**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the School remained open, initially for children of Key Workers and Critical Workers and vulnerable children. As restrictions were gradually lifted the School re-opened to other children. This was initially for children in Nursery (formerly called Transition), Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 with effect from 1 June, 2020. Year 5 returned from 17 June 2020 and Years 2 – 4 from 22 June 2020. A comprehensive Risk Assessment was devised to address the requirements for safe practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was approved by Governors and issued to all staff and was available for all parents on the school website. This was kept under regular review as circumstances changed.

#### **2.2**

The school has complied fully with all Government guidance in respect of the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to do so by ensuring that it keeps abreast of any updates to the guidance or new guidance as and when these are issued.

#### **2.3**

Individual Risk Assessments were completed for all children considered to be at greater risk during a period of enforced closure and phased return. These were reviewed at least every two weeks or sooner if circumstances change. Should the School have to enter a further period of lockdown, either nationally or locally, the requirement for further Risk Assessment for individual children will be re-assessed and Risk Assessments will be devised where necessary.

#### **2.4**

An additional appendix has been added to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and an additional appendix has been added to the Behaviour Management and Exclusions Policy. These appendices set out additional expectations and requirements for the circumstances pertaining to the educational provision at the School due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These Policies are reviewed regularly.

#### **2.5**

Additional policies and procedures have been devised to cover specific aspects of the management of the COVID-19 pandemic. These include: Remote Learning Policy; ICT Acceptable use Policy (Pupils in Pre-Prep); and the COVID-19 Risk Assessment. All relevant School policies have been reviewed ready for the start of the Michaelmas Term to ensure that they reflect changes in practice due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All policies are available on the school website or school intranet.

## 2.6

All staff are expected to ensure that they are fully aware of the COVID-19 Risk Assessment and all School policies and procedures and that they fully comply with them and with this COVID-19 Policy. Staff will be notified of any updates to the COVID-19 Risk Assessment and this Policy.

## 3. PRECAUTIONS

### 3.1

All the precautions and procedures of this Policy and other relevant whole school policies and procedures will be followed to minimise risks to the health and safety of the pupils, staff and others affected by the School's activities and to promote their welfare. These include:

- The completion of all relevant health and safety checks in accordance with the required schedules with any remedial works addressed as required.
- The completion of any additional health and safety checks on a more frequent basis to ensure that practices are as safe as possible and comply with current guidance.
- Ensuring that staff have access to a Designated Safeguarding Lead at all times during the school working day. During a national or local lockdown, access to a Designated Safeguarding Lead might be made remotely.
- Providing support for children completing distance learning work at home through regular contact with staff both remotely and through regular phone calls. This will be required in the event of a national or local lockdown or possibly for any child required to self-isolate or shield. Any child thought to be at risk or in need of additional pastoral support will also be contacted by a member of the pastoral team. A record of the phone calls will be made on iSAMS and these records will be reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) so that any safeguarding concerns can be followed up. Staff members are also required to inform a DSL of any safeguarding concerns they identify.
- Providing support for children returning to school or starting at the school and helping them to adjust to new routines.
- Providing pastoral and mental health support to children as required.
- Active promotion of Online Safety with reminders to children and staff. In the event of a further national or local lockdown, all parents and staff will be required to acknowledge receipt of the Remote Learning Policy and the ICT Acceptable Use Policy and agree to comply with these policies. Links to websites and apps are checked by staff before signposting children to these in their Distance Learning.

### 3.2 Safe Working Practices

Safe working practices include:

- **Presence at school** – any adult (staff and parents) or child who has tested positive for COVID-19 or with symptoms of COVID-19 such as a raised temperature; new, persistent cough; or loss of taste or smell or in the case of a child, diarrhoea, vomiting or abdominal cramps, must not attend school or visit the school campus and they must not come into school for at least 10 days. Similarly, adults and children must follow the self-isolation requirements if they are in a household with a person with COVID-19 symptoms or who has tested positive for it. The current requirement is for them to self-isolate for 14 days. If a child or staff member who has attended school becomes unwell with COVID-19 symptoms, they should be tested for the virus. Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 will need to self-isolate for at least 10 days and fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. If anyone has tested positive whilst not experiencing symptoms but then develops symptoms during the isolation period, then the 10-day isolation period should be restarted. The rest of their class (and teacher) will also be required to self-isolate for 14 days and will not be allowed to return to school. No member of staff or child shall return to school if they have COVID-19 until they are fully recovered. The School should be kept informed during any isolation period.
- **Social distancing** with distances of 2m as far as possible as required by the Government. Signage is in place across the campus reminding children, parents and staff of this requirement. Staff and parents are given regular written reminders about social distancing and children are also given verbal reminders. Staff should avoid close face-to-face contact and minimise time spent within 1m of anyone.
- **Close contacts** – for the purpose of NHS Test and Trace, close contacts are defined as direct face-to-face contact with an infected individual for any length of time within 1m, being coughed on, a face-to-

face conversation or unprotected physical skin-to-skin contact; extended close contact (within 1 to 2 m for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual; travelling in a small vehicle such as car, with an infected person.

- **Hand washing** – staff and children are required to wash their hands at regular intervals throughout the day for at least 20 seconds following the Government guidance for handwashing techniques. In particular, they should wash their hands after coughing or sneezing, after using the toilet, before and after handling food and before or after playtimes. Young children are supervised whilst washing their hands to ensure that they do this correctly. Signage is on display around the campus reminding campus users of these expectations. Hand sanitisers are accessible at key locations around the campus, especially where resources might potentially be shared. Additional outdoor sinks are available outside Pre-Prep and also in the Quad.
- **‘Catch It, Bin It, Kill It’** protocols are followed after sneezing or coughing. Signage is on display around the campus to this effect. Tissues have been provided in all rooms and lidded bins have been provided for the disposal of used tissues. Adults and children are encouraged not to touch their faces, eyes, noses or mouths.
- **Face masks** – children and staff may wear face masks in confined spaces if they wish to do so but this is not currently a Government requirement or recommendation. Staff and children should not touch their faces whilst removing face coverings and should wash their hands thoroughly before and after removing the covering. Temporary face coverings should be disposed of in the black bin waste whilst reusable masks should be put in sealable, plastic bags. Any face covering that becomes damp should be removed.
- **Ventilation** – all staff are encouraged to ensure that working spaces are well-ventilated. Windows should be closed at the end of the day to assist the housekeeping staff.
- **Staffing** – where possible, staff will remain within their year group for teaching. However, in line with the current Government guidance, all teachers and other staff can operate across different classes and year groups in order to facilitate the delivery of the school timetable. This has been kept to a minimum when timetabling. Staff should wash their hands between groups or use hand sanitiser, whichever is the more practical.
- **Staff rooms** – social distancing must also be maintained in staff rooms. In Pre-Prep this means that no more than two people should be in the staff room at any one time and in Prep this means that no more than five people should be in the staff room at any one time. No more than two people should be in staff workrooms at any one time.
- **Staff meetings** – these will be held remotely or in rooms where appropriate social distancing can be maintained and with a limited number of people.
- **Class groupings** – with effect from September 2020 and in line with the current Government guidance, the children will be in their class and set groupings for lessons. Teaching spaces for children in Years 1 – 6 have been configured to promote social distancing. This includes the configuration of the desks and tables to be forward facing with children seated side-by-side rather than facing one another. In the EYFS, social distancing is maintained as far as is possible, but it is recognised that young children will play together in close proximity. As far as possible, children are kept in their year groups with any mixing between the year groups kept to an absolute minimum.
- **Classrooms** – as far as is possible, children from different year group ‘bubbles’ will not use shared classroom space. However, this will not always be possible for specialist rooms such as the Media Centre, Saville Music Room and Art Room. Where this is not possible additional cleaning will be implemented.
- **Registration** – registration will be on iSAMS following the normal procedures. Staff should be particularly vigilant at the start of the day to ensure that they are aware of which children have arrived in school. Staff will sign children out from after school provision or from activities to avoid cross-contamination.
- **Collection and drop offs** – designated drop off and collection points have been allocated to avoid congregation of children or adults. These time periods are phased to spread the arrival and departure times. Parents/carers are not allowed into the buildings other than to collect items from Main Reception from behind the protective screen. They are expected to maintain social distancing. Parents have been informed that only one adult should accompany a child at drop off and collection times and that they must not congregate or linger at drop off and collection times.

- **After school care** – Nursery children will be supervised in the Pre-Prep Gym whilst children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will be supervised in their allocated room in The Annexe. Children in Years 3 will be supervised in the School Hall, Year 4 in St Philip's House and St George's House, Year 5 in St Margaret's House and St Monica's House and Year 6 in The Hub.
- **Assemblies** – year group assemblies will be held but no assemblies will be held with children from mixed year groups. Any House assemblies held will be within the year group and will not involve children from mixed year groups.
- **Play spaces** – separate outdoor play spaces have been allocated across the campus to ensure that children from different year groups do not mix outdoors as far as possible. Staff actively promote social distancing when the children are lining up at the end of play times and when children are moving around the campus.
- **Lunch times** – only one year group will eat lunch at a time. Additional dining facilities have been created to facilitate this. Lunch times will also be staggered to facilitate this and to allow appropriate cleaning between sittings. The children (other than Nursery) will be seated side-by-side rather than opposite one another. The staff dining room will not be available for staff to use as this will not meet social distancing requirements.
- **Toilets** – toilet usage has been separated out with toilets allocated to specific groups as far as possible. Where this is not practically possible, staff ensure that children from different groups use the facilities at different times.
- **Resources** – the use of shared resources will be minimised. Children in Reception, Years 1 and 2 will have named sets of essential resources such as crayons, pencils, scissors, number lines and cubes to avoid sharing of resources as far as possible. Children in Years 3 – 6 are expected to bring their own pencil cases to school. All soft toys and toys that cannot be easily washed or cleaned have been removed. Other classroom-based resources should be regularly cleaned along with all frequently touched surfaces. Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles such as sports, art and science equipment should be ideally be rotated to allow them to be left unused for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics). Where this is not practicable, they should be cleaned frequently and thoroughly and always between bubbles. Outdoor playground equipment should be cleaned more frequently. Reading books and library books will be issued for children to take home. Library books will be issued from class or year group sets and visits to the library will be limited to year group bubbles with appropriate intervals in between usage. As far as possible books will be quarantined for up to 72 hours before re-issuing to other children.
- **Cleaning** – in order to facilitate regular and thorough cleaning, all items which are difficult to clean should be removed. All clutter should be removed so that surfaces can be easily wiped.
- **Records** – records are maintained of children and adults who have tested positive for COVID-19 and of those who have been sent home with COVID-19 symptoms so that NHS Test and Trace procedures can be followed. Accurate registers are maintained of all children and adults – see below also.
- **Parent meetings** – these will be carried out remotely as far as possible. Should face-to-face meetings be required then parents will be required to confirm that they do not have COVID-19 symptoms and are not required to self-isolate. Meetings will take place with appropriate social distancing and by appointment.

### 3.3 Music

#### 3.3.1 Class music lessons and ensembles

In line with Government guidance, it is currently considered that there may be an additional risk of infection in environments where people are singing, chanting, playing wind or brass instruments or shouting even if individuals are at a distance. None of these activities will take place in class music lessons, in ensembles, in choirs, in lessons with Visiting Music Teachers, or in any other situation during the first half of the Michaelmas Term but it will be kept under close review as guidance changes.

#### 3.3.2 Visiting Music Teachers

Lessons with Visiting Music Teachers may resume other than those for singing, wind or brass instruments. All Visiting Music Teachers will be required to comply in full with the requirements of this Policy and all other related School policies and the COVID-19 Risk Assessment. They will be expected to ensure that their rooms are well ventilated and that any shared equipment such as a piano, chairs or music stands are

cleaned between pupils. They must wash their hands or use hand sanitiser between pupils. They should be positioned side-by-side with the pupil where possible and where this is not possible, they should be at least 2m apart.

### **3.4 PE, Games and swimming**

#### **3.4.1**

Children will be kept in consistent class or year group bubbles for PE and Games. Outdoor sport will be prioritised where possible and contact sports will be avoided. Sports equipment should be cleaned between each use by different year group bubbles. Staff are guided by the current guidelines for individual sports.

#### **3.4.2**

Swimming lessons will not currently resume either as a curricular or extra-curricular activity.

### **3.5 Extra-curricular provision (including dance and drama)**

#### **3.5.1**

Some extra-curricular provision will resume in September. Activities will be in year group bubbles. Providers will be required to comply in full with the requirements of this Policy and any other related School policies in relation to COVID-19. They will also be required to comply with the COVID-19 Risk Assessment in full.

#### **3.5.2**

Dance and drama activities will only take place in year group bubbles and social distancing will be maintained during the activities. Contact between pupils in dance and drama will be prevented as far as possible. Background music will be kept to levels which do not require the teacher or children to raise their voices unduly. Where microphones are used, they will not be shared and they will be cleaned between usage.

### **3.6 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

#### **3.6.1**

A designated room has been set aside for any child who is displaying symptoms of COVID-19 such as a raised temperature, a new persistent cough or loss of taste or smell, or with diarrhoea, vomiting or abdominal cramps. There are separate toilet facilities adjacent to this room. A window should be opened for ventilation. The child will be supervised in this room by a member of staff wearing PPE whilst awaiting collection if a distance of 2m cannot be maintained. The room will be fully cleaned afterwards following current Government guidance. PPE will consist of a fluid-resistant surgical face mask (also known as Type IIR), disposable gloves and a disposable apron. Eye protection should be worn if there is a risk of splashing to the eyes from coughing, spitting or vomiting. PPE must be put on and taken off safely to avoid self-contamination. Face masks must cover both nose and mouth and not be allowed to hang around necks. They must not be touched once put on, except when carefully removed before disposal. They should be changed if they become moist or damaged. They should only be used once and should then be discarded safely. Hands must be cleaned after disposal.

#### **3.6.2**

Gloves are available for use by staff as required.

### **3.7 Cleaning**

#### **3.7.1**

In line with the Public Health England Guidance: COVID-19: Cleaning in non-health care settings outside the home (July 2020), enhanced cleaning regimes are in place. These include an increased frequency of cleaning using standard products such as detergents and bleach, paying particular attention to all surfaces but especially those that are touched frequently such as door handles, light switches, work surfaces, and electronic devices. Wipes and cleaning products are available to all staff including water wipes for

Chromebooks and other technologies. Waste should be disposed of as normal unless it is personal waste from a person who has symptoms of COVID-19.

### **3.7.3**

The minimum Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is disposable gloves and an apron which should be worn for cleaning an area after a person with symptoms of, or confirmed COVID-19 has left the School. Hands should be washed thoroughly for at least 20 seconds with soap and water after all PPE has been removed. All surfaces that a symptomatic person has come into contact with should be cleaned and disinfected, including all potentially contaminated and frequently touched areas such as toilets, door handles, telephones and rails in corridors and stairwells. Disposable cloths or paper roll should be used and disposable mop heads should also be used for all hard surfaces with one wipe in one direction. Appropriate cleaning solutions should be used for any such cleaning. In cases where someone has symptoms of COVID-19, any cleaning waste and personal waste should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full. It should then be put into a second bin bag and tied and secured. It should be safely stored for 72 hours before disposal.

## **4. FIRE SAFETY**

### **4.1**

All the precautions and procedures of Fire Safety Policy and Procedures will be followed including:

- Carrying out a fire drill as soon as possible after the start of the Michaelmas Term.
- Ensuring that one or more competent persons is available during operating hours.
- Ensuring that all emergency exit routes are kept clear and that signage, emergency lighting, fire alarms, fire detectors and fire extinguishers are maintained in accordance with the required maintenance schedule and that these are tested on a regular basis.

### **4.2 Additional Precautions**

#### **4.2.1**

All adults supervising children in any capacity are responsible for ensuring that they know the safe evacuation routes from the classroom in which they are working.

#### **4.2.2**

All adults supervising children are responsible for ensuring that they have an accurate register of the children attending that day. They must also ensure that all the children for whom they are responsible evacuate from the buildings safely and are accounted for in the event of a fire evacuation. If there are any that are not accounted for then this must be reported to a senior member of staff without delay.

#### **4.2.3**

As far as possible social distancing will be maintained throughout a fire evacuation. The assembly points will be as set out in the Fire Policy and Procedures but with appropriate social distancing as far as possible, particularly between year group bubbles.

### **4.3 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)**

#### **4.3.1**

A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan will be devised in accordance with the PEEP's Policy where required but with due regard to any additional requirements as set out in this Policy.

## **5. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)**

### **5.1**

The Prep SENCO and the Pre-Prep SENCO will provide support to children with Learning Support needs through the distance learning programme and through individualised remote learning support should there be a further lock down period either nationally or locally. They are also available remotely for staff to consult about specific concerns about children.

## **6. EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)**

### **6.1**

The Statutory Framework for the EYFS, including the responsibilities for safeguarding and caring for the children must be followed. However, some temporary exemptions or amendments to these requirements were set out in the Government guidance issued on 24 April 2020 and updated on 28 July 2020. These will be applicable until the Government stipulates otherwise but potentially at least until 25 September 2020. These can be viewed in full [here](#) but the key changes applicable to the School are:

- The seven Areas of Learning and Development requirements and the 17 Early Learning Goals expectations for the end of Reception should be met as far as possible whilst it is recognised that there may be occasions when it is not possible to provide experiences and activities for all Areas.
- Staffing ratios remain the same. For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, there must be at least one member of staff for every 30 children and for all other classes there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children, where a person with qualified teacher status, early years professional status, early years teacher status or another suitable Level 6 qualification is working directly with the children, then schools must make reasonable endeavours to ensure that at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant Level 3 qualification. Where a person with qualified teacher status, early years professional status, early years teacher status or another suitable Level 6 qualification is not present then there must be at least one member of staff for every 8 children and schools should use reasonable endeavours to ensure that at least half of other staff hold at least a full and relevant Level 2 qualification.
- The School must use its best endeavours to ensure that there is at least one person with a full Paediatric First Aid qualification on site when the children are present. Expiry dates for qualifications can be extended for up to three months and potentially up to 30 September, 2020.

The School has ensured that a suitably qualified person with a Paediatric First Aid qualification has been available at school at all times when children have been present. The qualification requirements for staff have been met by the School at all times.

### **6.2**

Staff will continue to wear appropriate PPE for changing soiled clothing.

## **7. ATTENDANCE**

### **7.1**

As set out above, children should not attend school if they have symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) or if they are self-isolating due to symptoms in their household or a confirmed coronavirus case in their household. Children might also be required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) or because they are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine. Other than a national or local lockdown or following guidance from Public Health England, it is expected that all children will attend school unless they are unwell. In a future lockdown scenario, children who are clinically vulnerable might also be unable to attend. Parents are required to notify the School of their child's absence in line with the normal attendance procedures. Attendance and absence registers are maintained for all children.

### **7.2**

There is an additional register code of 'X' for 2020-21 for children not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19). This code must only be used to record sessions where a pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- Contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England and/or the Department of Health and Social Care;
- Prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

## **8. VISITS and VISITORS**

### **8.1**

Although Government guidance states that educational visits can resume, the School does not intend to take children on any educational visits in the immediate future. Any such visits will have a comprehensive Risk Assessment which includes assessments of any associated COVID-19 related risks. There will be no external visitors such as Visiting Speakers during this period other than any provided remotely under the direct supervision of a member of staff and in line with the Policy for Visiting Speakers. If specialist support workers need to visit school such as Social Workers or Speech and Language therapists then they will be required to confirm that they do not have COVID-19 symptoms and are not required to self-isolate for any reason. They will be required to socially distance from the people they are visiting and come into contact with.

## **9. REMOTE LEARNING**

### **9.1**

The School community is aware that there could potentially be a further local or national lockdown requiring the School to be closed. Teachers will be expected to resume the distance learning provision in that eventuality and guidance has been provided to them on the expectations for a further phase of distance learning. More detailed guidance would be provided as required.

## **10. POLICY REVIEW**

### **10.1**

This Policy will be reviewed as required and, in particular in line with amendments to Government guidance, to ensure that it complies with requirements and to ensure that any changes in practices are accurately reflected. It will be presented to the Governors' Safeguarding, Health and Safety Committee for approval as required. The minutes of this meeting will be presented to a full Governors meeting.