

COVID-19 Policy

This policy will be regularly updated and reviewed in line with Public Health England (PHE) and Government advice.

To be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Supervision Policy

Rationale

Atelier 21 intend to use this policy to provide precautionary measures to minimise transmission risks of disease in the school during an epidemic or pandemic. It also states ideas for continuity of business if allowed.

Legislation and leading authorities which have guided and influenced this policy are: Coronavirus Act 2020, Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Government Briefings, Public Health England (PHE) and World Health Organisation (WHO). Advice from but not limited to, The Secretary of State, The Chief Medical Officer, Local Authority (LA) and Department for Education (DfE). The policy also has regard to Ofsted and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance where appropriate.

We need to ensure we are doing everything we can to minimise the risk of spread of the virus, in order to protect all members of the community, but particularly the most vulnerable.

Aims

This policy defines and assists the operating arrangements in place within school settings that assures compliance to the Government and leading bodies' requirements with relation to the outbreak of a pandemic such as COVID-19. This information builds upon our current procedures for areas such as Safeguarding, Child Protection and Equality and Diversity, however new practices may emerge as the situation continues. The policy and considerations may evolve and be built upon as the situation deepens and new precautionary measures have been introduced and practices have been reflected upon.

Pupils and Staff

Recommended Government Guidelines instruct that pupils and staff who show symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19) must self-isolate for a period of 7 days. Anyone who has someone in their household displaying the symptoms below should self-isolate for 14 days.

- a high temperature – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
- a new, continuous cough – this means you've started coughing repeatedly
- a loss of taste or smell.

Any pupils/staff who develop symptoms during the school day will need to be sent home and required to self-isolate for 7 days. Those pupils who are unable to go home straight away will be isolated in the first floor Medical Room (F11a). A test will need to be arranged to see if they have COVID-19. All members of the household should self-isolate for 14 days.

If a pupil/staff tests negative, then they can return to school and the household can end self-isolation.

Where a pupil/staff tests positive the rest of the group/bubble will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The rest of the household need not self-isolate unless that pupil develops symptoms.

All staff and pupils should continue to follow general principles of hygiene to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- Washing hands often*;
- Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin;
- avoiding touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands;
- avoiding close contact with people who are unwell;
- cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces;
- if soap and water are not available, using an alcohol-based sanitiser that contain at least 60% alcohol.

* Pupils, students, staff and visitors should wash their hands:

- before leaving home
- on arrival at school
- after using the toilet
- after breaks and sporting activities
- before food preparation
- before eating any food, including snacks
- before leaving school

Visitors and Parents

- Under current guidelines, private tours of the school are organised by the head of school to minimise contact. Only single households will be invited at one time.
- Until further guidance from the government, visitors are not currently permitted on site, except with authorisation from the head of school or school business manager.

- Any visitor coming on site must provide reassurance that they are in good health, and follow guidance on hand washing while on site.
- Parents are asked to contact the school where possible via phone or email, rather than coming into the school.
- Drop off and collection times will be staggered so as to avoid gatherings of households at the beginning and end of the day. Please follow the current UK Government social distancing guidelines as much as possible at these times.

Communication

The school will communicate any change to this policy directly to those affected, via the Main Office, school website, and email. **It is very important that any pupil, member of staff or parent lets the school know as soon as possible if they believe that they may have been exposed to the virus, or if they display any of the symptoms.**

The School Day

The safety of our pupils and staff is our top priority. Consequently, we are taking precautions as advised by the Government and West Sussex County Council guidelines.

Due to the ethos of our school, the sizes of our classes and the space available in Atelier 21, we are confident that pupils will be able to be distanced safely and appropriately if current guidelines are still in place at the beginning of the academic year.

- If pupils are well, then they are all expected to attend school.
- Advice for those displaying symptoms of Coronavirus is listed above.
- If a pupil lives in a household with someone who is extremely critically vulnerable, it is advised that they attend only if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and if they are able to understand and follow those instructions. Please discuss any individual cases and concerns with the head of school.

Using advice from Public Health England we will be putting in place a hierarchy of controls, which creates a safer system where the risk of transmission of infection is significantly reduced. These controls are:

- avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
- frequent hand cleaning and good hygiene practises
- regular cleaning of the school, furniture and resources
- minimising contact and mixing

Alongside good hygiene and cleaning, one of the main protective measures we can take to reduce transmission is to have small groups, or bubbles, within our classes. These bubbles may learn together,

break together and lunch together. Doors will be propped open between classrooms for good ventilation.

- Whenever possible we will utilise outdoor space as much as possible for both play and learning.
- Drama and Physical Education sessions will be adapted to reflect current government guidelines and will be constantly reviewed.
- Drop off and collection times will be staggered so as to avoid gatherings of households at the beginning and end of the day. Where possible only one parent should drop off or pick up. Please follow current UK Government social distancing guidelines as much as possible at these times. We will be reviewing the use of the School Minibus to ensure that we can provide a safe travel option.
- Staff will not be wearing PPE during the school day unless in contact with a suspected case of Coronavirus, or unless UK Government guidance changes. If pupils would like to wear a face covering, then that is permitted. If a pupil falls ill with Coronavirus symptoms the member of staff caring for them in the first floor Medical Room (F11a) will wear full PPE.
- It is important that the learning environment at Atelier 21 remains calm. If a pupil chooses to purposefully challenge the guidelines put in place by this policy then initially, as per the Behaviour Management Policy, 'We will identify the unacceptable behaviour while making it clear that the pupil is still valued. The pupil should always reflect on his/her behaviour and identify why mistakes were made.' However, if there is a persistent failure to follow guidelines it may be deemed necessary for a pupil to be subject to a fixed-term exclusion.
- We are aware that the current circumstances can affect the mental health of our pupils, parents and staff. While we will implement recommended procedures for the safety of our community, we will also be understanding and supportive to those struggling with some of the restrictions.
- We will have a regular cleaning routine to ensure that all frequently touched surfaces like door handles, light switches, bannisters, toys, chairs, desks, sinks, toilets and books. Windows and doors will be propped open to aid natural ventilation, bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding.
- We will not be reporting pupils' temperatures at the beginning of the day but will check temperature if a pupil develops symptoms.
- Sun cream should be applied at home before the child arrives at the School. T-shirts covering shoulders and leggings would be preferable to minimise how much top up of sunscreen the Reception staff will do. Sun cream will be reapplied after lunch, and Reception staff will wear appropriate PPE.

Music

There may be an additional risk of infection in environments where pupils are singing and this applies even if individuals are at a distance. To reduce the risk, particularly when pupils are playing instruments or singing in small groups, such as in our music lessons, we will adhere to physical distancing and play outside wherever possible. Our group sizes will be limited to no more than 15, and we will position pupils side-to-side. We do not currently offer brass or wind instruments, but we will avoid the sharing of other instruments, clean instruments with anti-bacterial cleaner and ensure good ventilation. Under current guidelines we will not have singing take place in larger groups such as school choirs and ensembles, or school assemblies.

Staff

- Staff will complete a risk assessment before opening to address any risks from the virus, ensure sensible measures are in place to control risks. (See completed COVID-19 Risk Assessment in risk assessment file)
- Staff to be informed of measures in place and sign a disclaimer to state they have read and understood the school policies and procedures.
- Wherever possible staff should remain with the small group of children, the group of children who they are allocated to and not come into contact with other groups.
- Reception Staff: Emergency revisions to the EYFS may have been implemented which provides some flexibility on ratios and qualifications to make this feasible.
- Staff have been advised by the government not to wear PPE such as facemasks during their day, but Reception Staff should wear PPE at the usual times such as intimate care where necessary and wear disposable gloves and apron if completing one to one care.
- If supporting an ill child, a face mask should be worn if the UK Government social distancing advice cannot be maintained.
- After dealing with an ill child who displayed symptoms the staff member should continue to wear PPE and clean the affected area with disinfectant, then dispose of the PPE in the bin designated for COVID-19 waste.
- All PPE should be removed and disposed of following current government guidelines, the staff member should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds.
- The staff member who supported the unwell child does not need to go home unless they are developing symptoms themselves.
- Social distancing must be maintained during breaks. This will be achieved through a range of strategies including the staggering of breaks and subdivision of spaces allocated to team breaks where possible.
- Staff may be required to be in charge of specific rooms or areas including the outdoors to minimise their contact with surfaces etc. Staff will be responsible to ensure appropriate cleaning takes place and enough ventilation is in the room such as opening windows. If doors are open, ensure the safety of the children is maintained.
- Staff members should avoid physical contact with each other including handshakes, hugs etc.
- Staff to wear fresh, clean clothes for each working day.

- Staff are advised to remove their work clothes before they enter their home and take a shower immediately to remove any germs they may have picked up.
- Equipment used by staff such as stationary, tablets etc. should be allocated to individual staff members where possible and cleaned regularly.

BAME Staff and Pupils and those classed as ‘extremely clinically vulnerable’

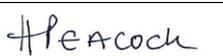
As per Public Health England research and government guidelines, the school understands that BAME staff and pupils and those considered to be ‘extremely clinically vulnerable’ are at higher risk of contracting the virus. We would advise that BAME staff, pupils, pupils’ parents and those considered ‘extremely clinically vulnerable’ refer to the current government advice, which can be found at:

- <https://www.gmcvo.org.uk/Coronavirus/BAMESupport>;
- <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-and-information/>;
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

Any staff, pupil, or other visitor to the school who is classed as ‘extremely clinically vulnerable’ must notify the school prior to attending so that the school is aware and, in addition to the safety measures already in place, can complete an individual risk assessment as necessary.

Supplies, Procurement & Monitoring

- The School should ensure an adequate supply of essential supplies and contingency plans such as additional suppliers are in place to minimise the impact of any shortages of supplies.
- The school will not be able to operate without essential supplies required for ensuring infection control.
- A monitoring system for the usage of PPE is essential to ensure that a supply of stock is available to all who require it as and when required to meet the operational needs of the setting. When stocks are low, other options may be considered, such as the use of washable tabards and facemasks. These items will be washed at a high temperature in accordance with relevant guidelines and separate to any other nursery washing.
- In case the supply of food is interrupted, procedures must be implemented to ensure the appropriate food alternatives are sourced and normal food safety and hygiene processes are followed.
- It may be preferable or the only option to have packed lunches which the children bring in.

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