



# Merchant Taylors' School

## **Information for Parents**

### **Reopening of Stanfield, Merchant Taylors'**

**Thursday 3 September 2020**

#### **1. Introduction**

Thank you for your support and patience during this time of uncertainty.

We aim to implement Government strategy to the best of our ability whilst adapting it to the needs of the school community. We will continue to follow Government and scientific advice and guidance when making decisions. However, the school prioritises the safety and well-being of our community above all else. We will:

- aim to provide safe opportunities to facilitate social contact
- discuss academic progress with class teachers and enable extra support where necessary, whilst liaising with parents
- help staff identify any necessary amendments to the curriculum to assist pupil progress
- help staff assess the pastoral needs of pupils as we 'physically' return to school.

The Government has stated that there may be further regional lockdowns which could impact on the school provision available, and we will respond to this accordingly should the situation arise. It will necessitate a remote education. This could result in 'last minute' notification for which we apologise in advance.

**Stanfield is committed to ensuring the well-being of our pupils, staff and the school community, and the following guidelines provide a framework for a productive and safe return to school in September for all involved.**

#### **2. Government Guidance**

##### **2.1. Fundamental Health & Safety Protocols**

In line with many current guidelines for safe practice when schools re-open, Stanfield acknowledges the following:

- Children will be in a 'bubble' which will be their class group for the majority of the time, but will allow mixing into year group bubbles where necessary to enable a full offer of education or managing the practical logistics within or around School. For example, set teaching, wraparound care and transport.
- The overarching principle is to reduce the number of contacts between pupils and staff – this will minimise the number who will have to isolate should someone in the group become unwell with COVID-19
- Sharing of rooms / social spaces between bubbles will be minimised with cleaning before any changeover of bubble usage and equipment sanitised at the commencement and end of each lesson
- Measures in place to protect all staff such as social distancing, regulations on hygiene (including coughing/sneezing 'catch it, bin it, kill it' additional tissues/bins available) and sending home anyone (staff/pupils) who develops symptoms (including temperature/new cough/breathing problems, lack of taste or smell) during the school day
- The provision of soap and hot water/sanitiser throughout the School (different buildings) and teaching rooms to enable staff/pupils to wash hands regularly with multiple hand sanitiser 'stations'
- PHE does NOT currently recommend the use of face coverings in schools for primary schools (staff & pupils) or for children under the age of 11 on public transport.
- Any staff / visitors with face coverings must remove them on arrival at school. They must not touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing them. They must wash/sanitise their hands immediately on arrival (as for all pupils) and dispose of the temporary face coverings in a covered bin or place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag which they can take home with them and then wash their hands again before going into School.
- The provision of gloves, aprons and/or face masks as deemed appropriate including when working with children with particular learning needs or if first aid or physical intervention is required
- Rigorous risk assessments to be carried out before school reopens (in line with Government guidelines) and on a regular basis (at least weekly) to review practice with particular emphasis on health and safety
- Recognise the importance of enhanced cleaning arrangements (including toilets/washrooms), deep cleaning prior to school re-opening and at regular intervals from thereon in addition to regular high-quality cleaning in working areas, circulation routes and surfaces such as door handles throughout the buildings. Procurement of resources to this end must be managed efficiently and duties undertaken by staff with appropriate training.
- A requirement that staff and pupils who have COVID-19 symptoms or have tested positive in the last 10 days stay at home
- Staff and pupils who develop COVID-19 symptoms during the school day are sent home. Anyone who develops a new, continuous cough or a high temperature (the school will determine a high temperature to be 37.4c or above), or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell, must be sent home and advised to follow 'stay at home' guidance'

- Active engagement with NHS Test and Trace and monitoring staff and pupil movement around and across the School estate to readily identify potential interaction contacts should the need arise.
- It is a legal requirement to revisit and update risk assessments (Mentioned above).
- Review and amend as necessary, control measures to ensure risk assessments are effective, working as planned and updated appropriately, considering issues identified, or any changes in public health or government guidelines / advice
- Regular hand washing/sanitising is a critical aspect of staying safe, particularly after visiting the toilet.

## **2.2. Measures to reduce contact**

- Grouping pupils together in class groups and where necessary year groups. Measures taken to minimise contact when year group bubble is necessary.
- Avoiding contact between groups
- Older pupils to maintain social distancing as far as is possible
- Younger pupils, acceptance that social distancing is not possible and pupils will not socially distance within their group
- Arranging classrooms with forward facing desks
- Adopting side-by-side interaction where possible to avoid face-to-face interaction
- Staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff as much as possible
- Avoid face-to-face contact and minimise time spent within 1 metre of anyone
- No physical contact between staff, or staff and pupils unless in the event of an emergency (see PPE)
- Avoiding busy entrances & exits, along with crowded corridors and spaces during movement from one room to another which should be kept to a minimum
- Moving unnecessary furniture out of teaching rooms to make more space
- Staggered time frames where possible to minimise the risk of crowding/contact with other bubbles
- No gatherings except for individual bubbles / year group bubble when necessary
- Staff shared spaces to be reconfigured and additional spaces made available
- Parents must not gather at the front of the school or come onto the school site without an appointment
- Only essential maintenance workers/contractors will be on site during the school day and will be briefed regarding the measures in place. Where possible they will work outside school hours (except in an emergency) and any areas will be cleaned afterwards.
- A record will be kept of all visitors
- A record will be kept of where staff have been based throughout the day (using a cross schools' visitors system to capture this information to assist NHS Track and Trace procedures).
- Pupils who attend more than one setting (eg PE) should be risk assessed collaboratively between the schools and follow hand sanitising when departing and arriving at each location.

### 3. The 'New Normal' for School Day to Day Operations

When Stanfield re-opens in September there are a number of issues that will need to be addressed through careful planning and implementation. The following aspects of operational practice are discussed in the next section.

#### **3.1. Transport**

##### **3.1.1. Public transport**

The use of public transport, particularly at peak times, should be kept to a minimum, and an alternative method of travel should be considered. The advice for passengers on public transport is to adopt a social distance of 2 metres from people outside their household or support bubble, or a 1 metre 'plus' approach where this is not possible.

The Department for Transport is asking local authorities to consider travel patterns, availability of vehicles and the use of traffic demand management approaches. Such issues were central to the transport arrangements put in place during the 2012 London Olympics, for example.

##### **3.1.2. School Buses**

From the autumn term this will not apply to dedicated transport provision at the school because pupils travelling on school buses do not mix with the general public on those journeys. We have agreed the following protocol on the buses:

Where possible pupils should be grouped on the buses in line with their 'bubble' in school (colour codes to denote bubbles will be used)

- Pupils should use hand sanitiser upon boarding /disembarking.
- The vehicles should have additional cleaning; pupils should queue and board/disembark in an organised manner where possible
- distancing within vehicles wherever possible; the use of face coverings for pupils over the age of 11, and if they are likely to come into very close contact with people outside their group or who they do not normally meet.

#### **3.2. Attendance: Pupils**

From the beginning of the autumn term the usual school rules concerning attendance will apply to all pupils. The school expects all pupils to return to school at the beginning of the autumn term. Parents have a duty to ensure their child attends school regularly and the school has a responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence as appropriate. Pupils should wear their school uniform **including blazers and ties**; there is no expectation that the uniform should be cleaned any more than usual, or that cleaning should involve any different methods or products.

It is possible that some pupils will still be unable to attend because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves, or because they are a close contact of someone who has COVID-19. Shielding advice will pause on August 1<sup>st</sup>, assuming the rate of community transmission of COVID-19 continues to decline. Pupils who are no longer required to shield but require specialist health care may need to discuss their care with a health professional before returning to school.

Attending school should be a positive transition for most pupils, but we are mindful that some pupils or parents may be reluctant or anxious about returning to school, and to this end, support will be provided to address this. We will put measures in place to support any pupil who has significant concerns from an academic or pastoral perspective, or who is likely to struggle to re-engage. Please advise your class teacher if you have any concerns.

There is an expectation that pupils will behave in a manner commensurate with the safety measures in place, with support from staff and age taken into consideration. A pupil who deliberately ignores any of the measures identified, will be subject to an appropriate sanction. Please refer to the Behaviour Policy for details.

### **3.3. Pupil entry and Exit to the School**

On arrival at School (where 2m social distancing will be in operation on entry) parents must confirm that their child / children DO NOT HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19. This should be confirmed each day of school. Pupils should use the hand-sanitiser facilities before moving to their classroom.

Please see separate letter for arrival and departure times for each year group.

### **3.4. Visitor Entry to and Exit from School**

Parents will not be permitted to enter the school site/Reception unless there is an emergency or when collecting a sick child. The Reception area will not be accessible to parents and all communication should be via telephone or email. Any pupil, staff or visitors, such as suppliers, will not be allowed to enter the school under any circumstance if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus.

### **3.5. Movement Around the School**

A one-way system will be in operation and must be observed by staff and pupils at all times, unless in the event of an emergency or evacuation when established fire safety or lockdown procedures are prioritised, maintaining social distancing as feasible. Pupils will be escorted by their teachers around the School.

### **3.6. Break times**

#### **3.6.1. General**

- Break and lunch times will be staggered with each 'bubble' being allocated an area of the playground. Pupils will not be able to use the climbing frame equipment.

- Pupils will not be allowed to socialise or mix with pupils from other ‘bubbles’ during the day.
- Pupils must provide their own washable water-bottle, snacks (no nuts), which will be eaten at their desk or outside, weather permitting.

### **3.6.2. Lunch time Arrangements**

We have discussed various options for the lunch service with Chartwells and have concluded that the most efficient system will be to cater for each class group bubble in either a section of the dining room, or in their classroom, depending on their timetable. If using the dining room each bubble will be followed by a clean down of tables and hard surfaces before allowing the next class group to dine. The School has provided Chartwells with the class sizes and this will allow them to plan the service. We have put in place a schedule for lunch to fit into the current timetable.

The menu will be a simple with no self-service options for example the salad bar will not be available instead this will be replaced with prepacked salads. Prepacked bento boxes will be provided for pupils to eat in the designated areas.

### **3.6.3. Morning & Afternoon Breaks (as directed by staff)**

Each bubble will have a designated area and these spaces can also be used at lunchtime with staggered times for break and lunch, as appropriate.

## **3.7. Fire Drill/Emergency Evacuation**

In the event of an emergency or drill, pupils should exit via the nearest door maintaining their distance as far as possible from other groups. They should assemble on the playground as usual, but endeavour to maintain 2 metre distancing between class groups as lined up; Pupils should face forwards as they line up – the return to school after the drill should be supervised carefully to ensure that bubbles do not mix and that pupils return in single file. This will require groups to be dismissed sequentially to avoid crowding and following the one way system. Staff will direct the children at all times to ensure the safety of all pupils.

## **4. Health and Safety Procedures**

We have undertaken thorough Risk Assessments. This includes smaller group sizes, keeping groups away from each other as much as possible, establishing rigorous cleaning regimes, one way systems and processes for managing suspected cases. Obviously with larger numbers of pupils and adults in one place, your child cannot be as safe as at home, but he/she will be as safe as we can manage in the circumstances. We cannot guarantee there will not be Covid-19 cases at the School.

### **4.1. First Aid / Test & Trace**

First Aiders, located throughout the school site, will be available throughout the day and PPE will be kept in the medical room for use when administering dressings or any close contact

is required. A designated room on both sites will be the isolation areas should anyone develop symptoms during the school day: PPE will also be available for those caring for an individual in isolation. Parents will be notified and asked to collect their child, should this be the case. Staff must take into account the Risk Assessment or School Guidance communicated prior to the school re-opening, and subject to any further updates as advised by SMT.

It is a requirement that the school understands the NHS Test and Trace process and how to contact the local Public Health England protection team. Staff and parents/carers will need to be ready and willing to book a test if they are displaying symptoms and staff & pupils must not come into school if they have symptoms and must be sent home to isolate if they develop them in school. All pupils can be tested, but any pupils aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit. Staff, parents/carers will need to provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for COVID-19 or if asked by NHS Test and Trace. Staff and parents/carers must self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who develops COVID-19 symptoms or someone who tests positive for COVID-19. It is anticipated that by the autumn term, all schools will be provided with a small number of home testing kits that they can give directly to parents/carers collecting a pupil who has developed symptoms at school, or staff who have developed symptoms at school. Advice will be provided alongside these kits. Staff and parents must inform the school immediately of the results of a test; if someone tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to COVID-19 they can stop isolating. They could still have another virus such as a cold or flu, in which case they should avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of the household can stop isolating; if someone tests positive, they should follow the 'stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection' and must continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell/taste (anosmia). This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. The 10 day period starts from the day when they first become ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of the household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.

The school must take swift action if they are aware that someone who has attended has tested positive for COVID-19. The school must contact the local health protection team. This team will also contact the school directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 attended the school – as identified by NHS Test and Trace. The health protection team will carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the person during the period that they were infectious, and ensure they are asked to self-isolate. The health protection team will work with the school in this situation to guide them through the actions they need to take. Based on the advice of the health protection team, the school must send home those people who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person when they were infectious.

Close contact means direct close contacts, face-to-face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin); proximity contacts, extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual; travelling in a small vehicle (like a car) with an infected person.

The health protection team will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home. To support them in doing so, the school will keep a record of pupils and staff in each group, and any close contact that takes place between pupils and staff in different groups. A template letter will be provided to the school, on the advice of the health protection team, to send to parents and staff if needed. The school will not share the names and details of people with COVID-19 unless essential to protect others.

Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless pupil or member of staff who is isolating subsequently develops symptoms. If someone in a class or group that has been asked to self-isolate develops symptoms themselves within their 14-day isolation period they should follow 'stay at home' guidance. They should get a test. If the test delivers a negative result, they must remain in isolation for the remainder of their 14-day isolation period. If the test result is positive, they should inform their school immediately, and must isolate for at least 10 days for the onset of their symptoms. Their household should self-isolate for at least 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had the symptoms and follow 'stay at home' guidance. The school will not request evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting pupils or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

If the school has 2 or more confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where COVID-19 is suspected, there may have been an outbreak, and the school will continue to work with the local health protection team who will be able to advise the school if additional action is required. This could result in larger numbers of pupils self-isolating or perhaps a whole year group. It is anticipated that the school's implementation of the controls as outlined, will reduce the need for whole school closure, unless advised to do so by the health protection team. In the event of an outbreak at the school, a mobile testing unit may be dispatched to test others who may have been in contact with the person who has tested positive. Testing will first focus on the person's class, followed by their year group, then the whole school, if necessary.

#### **4.2. PPE**

In line with current scientific advice and guidance, pupils and staff at primary schools are not required to wear face coverings/masks at school. Staff administering physical support to a pupil, perhaps if they are unwell or have an injury, will wear appropriate PPE; PPE kit is kept in the Medical Room and isolation room and appropriate First Aid staff support will be available throughout the school day. However, if Government guidelines are modified we will update this guidance and advise you of any new measures being taken as and when.

### **5. Classrooms and Lessons**

### **5.1. General Classroom protocol**

- All pupils will work from their desk at all times. With the younger children, where this is not appropriate and the children are unable to keep to social distancing measures, the children will be kept in their bubble.
- Pupils will remain in their class 'bubble' for the majority of the time, year group bubble where necessary for full education offer or logistical necessity, throughout the day, including at break/lunch which will be closely supervised. When in class bubbles, pupils will be socially distanced as far as is possible. Weather permitting, pupils will be encouraged to spend break/lunchtime outside where there will be demarcated areas for different groups to maintain 2m social distancing where feasible.
- Rooms will be as well ventilated as possible
- Movement around the school for toilet breaks will be strictly supervised with a specified number of pupils allowed in the toilet blocks at any one time and toilets allocated as appropriate.
- In many areas there will be a marked one-way system operating in the corridors
- Increased hand washing will occur throughout the day. Pupils will be reminded not to touch their eyes, nose or face.

During the week pupils will remain in the same class 'bubble' or group, and in their own classroom as far as possible. Any change of rooms eg ICT suite, the areas will be cleaned between use by different 'bubbles'.

### **5.2. Expectations of Behaviour**

Our COVID-19 Code of Conduct will be shared with the pupils and will be reflected in the revised Behaviour Policy. It will also be visible in classrooms and around school. It is essential the pupils follow these rules, which will include expectations around walking about the school, hygiene and handwashing, break and lunchtime routines.

## **6. Curriculum and Learning**

### **6.1. Teaching Rooms/Resources**

Staff will prioritise the management of teaching spaces and how they interact with pupils. It is very important that teaching rooms are well ventilated, and senior staff should be advised if this is not possible or causes any concern. They should not circulate the room during the lesson unless the room space is very large. It is likely that most lessons will be led from the front of the classroom and pupils will not move around unnecessarily. Please note that 'shouting' is considered high risk, so activities involving this should be avoided.

For individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pens and pencils, it is recommended that staff and pupils have their own items that are not shared. For infant children each class will have equipment provided and this will be kept within the bubble. For juniors, pencil cases may be brought in and items must not be shared. Classroom based resources can be used and shared within the bubble; these should be cleaned regularly, along with frequently touched surfaces. Each room will have a supply (tub) of wipes for this purpose. Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, such as sports, art, computers, and science equipment should be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between bubbles, or rotated to allow them to be left unused and out of reach for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different bubbles.

Outdoor equipment will need to be cleaned more frequently. It is still a recommendation that pupils limit the amount of equipment they bring into school each day to essentials such as water bottle, hat, coat, books, stationery (juniors); bags are allowed. Pupils and teachers can take books and other shared resources home. Cleaning of these resources should apply as above.

### **6.2. Curriculum**

The intention is for all year groups is to return to the normal school curriculum in all subjects. Most pupils have engaged very well with the remote learning experience over the last academic year and they have made progress. For some pupils, there will be a need to plug some gaps in knowledge and skills. Remote education may need to be an essential component in the delivery of the school curriculum for some pupils, alongside classroom teaching, and for all pupils in the event of a local lockdown.

### **6.3. Physical Activities**

Contact sports will not take place, but some physical activities will be possible subject to the measures outlined in this document. Pupils will be kept in consistent groups and sports equipment will be cleaned thoroughly between each use by different individual groups. Outdoor sport will be prioritised where possible, and large indoor spaces where it is not, maximising distancing between pupils and paying scrupulous attention to cleaning and hygiene. Physical activities are potentially high risk: sweating, panting.

### **6.4. Extra-Curricular Provision /Wraparound Care**

Extra-curricular activities will be offered for year groups where possible, with pupils within this group socially distanced (class bubbles) as far as is possible. Further details on the provision for the Autumn term will be sent at the beginning of term.

Breakfast Club and Aftercare will continue to operate as in the summer term, ie for the pupils of key workers. Protective measures will be taken and pupils will be kept in their Year groupings. Breakfast Club and Aftercare provision will be reviewed at half term, with a view to extending to more children if possible.

### ***6.5 Vulnerable Children/SEN***

Mrs Jones and Mrs Rogers will oversee the support for SEND/vulnerable pupils including any interventions required to prepare them for the changes to routine. During any close contact sessions, social distancing should be adhered to, specifically face-to-face contact and minimise time spent within 1 metre of anyone.

## **7. Pastoral Care**

### ***7.1. Well-being***

It is anticipated that there will be a range of wellbeing issues associated with the return to school from lockdown measures. Many members of the school community will have been affected directly by the virus – perhaps with elderly relatives being shielded or might be grieving the loss of a friend or close relative; others will be scared because they too have underlying health issues and they are ‘mentally’ torn between their sense of duty to the school and prioritising their health and wellbeing. Staff and pupils will need time to adjust to the ‘new normal’ – the emotions and feelings common at the beginning of a new term will be magnified many times over, given the circumstances. For some pupils and staff, working from home was a preferable lifestyle, even if only in the short term. It will take some time to resume the ‘old normal’ which, in all probability, is more likely to transition into a ‘new normal’ that leaves old practice in its wake.

### ***7.2. Sense of Loss***

There will be a whole-school sense of loss concerning key events that have had to be cancelled, as well as staff farewells that may not have taken place, particularly in relation to long-standing colleagues. There will be parents and family members of staff colleagues who have lost their job or their employment status is at best vulnerable or uncertain.

Some families will be worrying about loved ones who are in other parts of the country or abroad; holidays and family occasions such as weddings cancelled.

**Please advise the class teacher if you have any concerns regarding your child’s transition to the full re-opening of school in September**

## **8. Guidance for Parents**

- We need to limit the number of people entering the building via Reception and parents are asked to contact school via telephone or email to make enquiries.
- Teachers will not be available to speak face to face with parents at any point in the school day – including before school. There may be opportunities at the end of the day when the pupils are dismissed should there be an urgent matter, but please

keep this to emergencies only and we advise for other matters and for confidentiality you contact the teacher through email.

- Replies to parental queries will be delayed given the circumstances
- Teachers will be contactable via their school email but we request that parents only contact teachers if an issue is of high importance.

## **9. Parental Code of Conduct**

Parents and carers must adhere to the following rules put in place to keep all adults and children as safe as possible and limit the potential for spreading Covid-19.

1. Following Government and medical advice, your child will be expected to adhere to social distancing at school as far as is possible, depending on age, and wash their hands frequently, using soap and water to reduce the chances of transmission of the virus. We expect your support and understanding for this.
2. You agree to your child having their temperature checked if they become unwell during the school day and if advised by a First Aider / appropriate to safeguard other pupils, staff or visitors.
3. One adult only to the school entrance areas / gates.
4. If any member of the household is displaying symptoms of Covid-19 your son/daughter is not permitted onto the site and the school must be kept informed of test results, prior to him/her being allowed back.
5. If your son / daughter starts to develop symptoms whilst at school, he /she must be collected within an hour of notification being received. Pupils should then be tested for Covid-19 along with all other members of the household following current Gov / Public Health England guidance.
6. In the instance of a positive result for Covid-19 you will agree to the tracking and tracing of this information to minimise risk to others.
7. Results from the test are to be shared with school, whether positive or negative. Until the results have been shared, your son/daughter must isolate at home with all members of their household.
8. Drop off /collect your son/daughter at the specified time following the times that will be sent to you in due course.
9. Social media will not be used to circulate information on any individual/s personal medical circumstances / conditions if such instances occur, and all parents will respectfully keep any sharing of such Covid-19 information confidential at all times.
10. Information will be uploaded to the parent portal, firefly, where communications from the School will be posted. Please refer to the information on firefly before contacting School with your query.