

## **POLICY FOR THE RE-OPENING OF PORTLAND PLACE SCHOOL**

### **From 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020**

Approved by: David Bradbury **Date:** 06/07/2020

Next review due by: 25/08/2020

#### **Introduction**

This Policy outlines Portland Place School's response to the UK Government's request for schools to follow a phased re-opening. This follows the outbreak of the disease called COVID-19, which started to spread widely in the UK in February 2020 and where cases seem to have peaked in April 2020. This policy follows the guidelines for the reopening of schools in England, which have been published recently by the UK Government and the Department of Education. This edition of the policy pertains to the full reopening of Portland Place School from 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020 for all years, in line with the government announcement on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020. It will be revised, by the due date given above in light of any changed or additional guidance from government.

The procedures set out in the Appendix are subject to change if there is further advice and guidance from the government, and the relevant medical and educational authorities, issued in due course. The school will remain open unless directed to close by the Government or the Local Authority or by the Governors of Alpha Plus.

If the school is closed, for example due to further lockdown measures announced by the UK Government, the school hopes to stay open to support the children of critical workers (as defined by the government) and vulnerable children depending on advice at the time. If the school is unable to be open for these children, these children will be supported remotely or redirected to where alternative provision can be found.

## **What is Covid-19 / Coronavirus?**

The following is based on information provided by the World Health Organisation and by the UK Government.

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus called SARS-Cov-2. The data published to date suggests that most people infected with this virus experience only mild to moderate illness and that they recover without requiring any special treatment. But the data also suggests that those aged 70+, and those with underlying medical problems such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer, are more likely to develop a serious illness.

It is clear, from the advice published so far, that the most effective way to prevent and slow down transmission of this virus, and therefore create the circumstances where the likelihood of catching this virus in our schools is either low or very low, is for the staff and children to be well informed about the COVID-19 virus, the disease it causes and to understand how it spreads from one person to another. In particular, we are advised to ask staff and children to protect themselves and others from infection by washing their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or using an alcohol-based rub frequently, and to do this not less than 6 times a day and before eating or drinking anything. We are also advised to tell our staff and the children not to touch their face if possible without washing their hands with soap and water first, as described above.

Other than by touch, the virus causing COVID-19 is also known to spread through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes. So we will explain to our staff and children the importance of practising respiratory etiquette (for example, by coughing into a flexed elbow or into a tissue which must then be disposed of carefully – “catch it, bin it, kill it”).

At the time of writing, there are no vaccines or specific treatments for COVID-19. However, there are many ongoing clinical trials evaluating potential treatments. WHO will continue to provide updated information as soon as clinical findings become available.

[www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus](http://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus)

## **Legal framework**

This policy meets the Government guidance set out in:

Guidance for full opening: schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

Coronavirus (COVID19) Implementing Protective Measures in Education and Childcare Settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

DHSC guidance on containing and managing outbreaks

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/containing-and-managing-local-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreaks>

DfE guidance on how schools can plan for tier 2 local restrictions

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-schools-can-plan-for-tier-2-local-restrictions>

Additional scientific guidance can be found here

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/mrc-global-infectious-disease-analysis/covid-19/covid-19-publications/>

## **Context of the school and projected situation (autumn term 2020)**

Portland Place School will have approximately 165 students on roll aged between 10 and 16. Year group sizes will range from 12 (Year 6) to 41 (Year 11).

A normal weekly timetable for students in consists of 30, 55-minute-long lessons. Additional time is allocated to registration/PSHE (30 minutes each morning). The school day starts at 8:30am and ends at 3:45pm with extra-curricular activities taking place between 4pm and 5pm

The School campus consists of four buildings – 56-58 Portland Place (PP), 143 Great Portland Street (GPS) and Harford House, 101 Great Portland Street (HH). Specialist teaching facilities for Science, Drama and Art are located in HH only and for Music in PP only. IT facilities are available on all sites. There are catering facilities in GPS. Classroom/lab capacity varies from 16 -20 across the campus. PP has two distinct entrances/exits. GPS and HH have one entrance/exit at each site. HH has a main stairway, which narrow and confined, with no corridors. GPS has narrow corridors on each floor with a wide, open stairway connecting the floors. There is no outdoor space on any site. Larger space in each site are the Drama Studio (HH) and the halls (GPS, PP).

Through the latter half of the 2019-20 academic year, all students had the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive online facsimile of their 'normal' timetable with staff running lessons via Zoom and Teams supplemented by work issued through Firefly. In addition to this, the school maintained its rewards system and online wellbeing. Form tutors and Heads of Year had regular contact with their students. Counselling support remained available for those already accessing it before lockdown and was extended with drop-in sessions for students. Learning support continued for those students who required it and extended to some students who found online learning very challenging. The participation rate has been very high with a robust process for following up on both absentees and apparently present but reluctant participants in lessons.

An offer was made to parents who are key workers for their children to be in school but was not taken up by any family.

A limited selection of extra-curricular activities continued with online individual instrumental lessons, conversational languages tutorials and debating club. Some new online activities were run including a 7-day film challenge and an monologue competition.

Students, parents and staff were given the opportunity to feedback on the online educational experience and a high proportion took the opportunity to do so. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and helped to inform the improvement of the offer and to disseminate best practice of remote working. All three groups will be surveyed again going into the half term break.

The Headmaster also held two online open meetings for parents to join. Only six parents chose to attend and ask questions. The direct feedback was again very positive on the online education being provided.

A plan for re-opening has been devised on the basis of the following principles:

- That the School could re-open in a way that prioritised the safety and wellbeing of students, staff and family members;
- That it met the expectations of Alpha Plus Group senior leaders, the School's leadership, the students, their parents and staff in the quality of educational experience offered and complied with Department for Education advice;
- To establish key operating procedures and parameters for returning to a larger-scale re-opening later in the year that would help to build confidence and foster good will in all key stakeholders.

### **Risk Assessment**

A detailed risk assessment for reopening has been seen and approved by governors and the CEO of Alpha Plus Group.

### **Planning assumptions**

- In-school contact will be arranged on the basis that it passes a threshold of educational benefit in complementing the online teaching;
- The threshold of educational benefit may be determined in terms of academic or pastoral benefit or a combination thereof.
- Wherever possible students will work in bubbles based on their year group, with Years 6 and 7 jointly being considered one bubble.

### **Year groups**

Years 6 and 7 will total approximately 30 students in September 2020. They are mixed for registration and form time and for PE. They are all based in the PP buildings with Year 6 having their own dedicated classroom.

Years 8 and 9 will each have approximately 33 students in September 2020. They have separate lessons throughout. Both year groups are based in the PP buildings.

Year 10 will have approximately 27 students in September 2020. They have separate lessons throughout though setting and options mean groups mix across the curriculum. They are based on Floor 3 of our GPS building.

Year 11 will have approximately 41 students in September 2020. They have separate lessons throughout though setting and options mean groups mix across the curriculum. They are based on Floor 4 of our GPS building.

## **System of controls**

This is the set of actions schools must take in line with the guidance from government. They are grouped into 'prevention' and 'response to any infection' and are outlined in more detail in the sections below.

### **Prevention:**

- 1) Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school;
- 2) Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual. Students will be instructed to do so at each break in the day and whenever they use a bathroom. Hand sanitiser will also be available in every classroom, reception and student access point;
- 3) Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach;
- 4) Introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach. Cleaners will be onsite during the day each day to provide enhanced cleaning services;
- 5) Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible. Classrooms will be laid out with single desks, forward facing and 1, social distancing wherever possible. Rooming will be adjusted to mean lessons are taught in such layouts as often as possible. At changeovers between lessons students will remain in place and teachers move;
- 6) Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). This is likely only when a student or member of staff develops symptoms of COVID-19 and requires supervision until collected.

### **Response to any infection:**

- 7) Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process;
- 8) Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community;
- 9) Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

Headmaster is David Bradbury with overall responsibility for the development, implementation, monitoring and updating of this policy.

All staff are responsible for understanding and implementing this policy where relevant to their role in school, and for seeking clarification through line management of any aspects on which they are unclear.

DSL is Paul Jones, Assistant Head (Welfare), mobile 07986 463615, [paul.jones@portland-place.co.uk](mailto:paul.jones@portland-place.co.uk)

Deputy DSL is David Bradbury, Headmaster, mobile 07387 108980,  
[david.bradbury@portland-place.co.uk](mailto:david.bradbury@portland-place.co.uk)

Risk Assessment is the responsibility of all staff within this framework developed by the Headmaster along with SLT and advice from APG.

The monitoring of the implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the SLT.

The site team is supervised by Vicki Bromley, Finance & Operations Manager.

### **Teaching and learning**

Before returning to school, students and parents will receive a detailed written briefing on procedures and expectations when they are in school, particularly highlighting the infection control measures (1m social distancing, hand washing, cough/sneeze etiquette), and reminding them of the school's standards regarding behaviour and engagement. This will be supplemented by form group briefings in week beginning 7<sup>th</sup> September.

### **SEND**

The Assistant Head (Student Support) maintains regular contact with parents and students of our most needy students, including those with EHCP.

The SEND teams also provide ongoing CPD to staff on adapting teaching and learning to better support dyslexic students and those with other SEND.

### **Attendance**

Full attendance by all students is expected each day as per normal. From 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020 those considered extremely critically vulnerable, and previously advised to shield, are allowed and expected to return to school.

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy will be subject to monitoring and review on a regular basis to reflect any internal change, legislative and regulatory requirements and to ensure that health and safety standards are maintained.

### **Procedures**

See Appendix 2: government guidance on infection and Appendix 3: Physical adaptations of school space.

### **Staff training**

All staff will receive training prior to the opening of the school. They will also receive relevant information, instruction and/or training to ensure that they work safely and have the necessary skills to carry out the job in which they have been employed.

Training records will be maintained for all staff who will be required to sign the training record to confirm that they have received such information, instruction and/or training. Training records will be held in personnel files.

All staff have been provided with the following on-line training from the Virtual College:  
<https://www.virtual-college.co.uk/courses/prevent-covid-19-free-training>

All staff have been provided with detailed information and posters are displayed throughout the school, e.g.

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

Online training for all staff returning to school in week beginning 15<sup>th</sup> June through the Virtual College will be required to be complete with certificates filed with the Headmaster's PA by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> June.

In house briefings will then take place in week beginning 8<sup>th</sup> June with a detailed document issued on the Monday and a Zoom Q&A briefing on Wednesday of that week. A record of attendance will be kept.

### **Controls**

Certain subjects present additional challenges by the practical nature of the work – Art, Design Technology, Music, PE and Science.

### **Art and Design Technology**

Wherever possible students do not share tools and equipment. At the end of each lesson, any items used are cleaned with disinfectant wipes before being stored away. Large single items, e.g. standing drill/saw, to be cleaned after each use.

### **Music**

Vocal ensembles and the playing of woodwind and brass instruments potentially increase the risks of transmission by requiring more breathing out.

Individual instrumental lessons for brass, woodwind and vocals can only take place in a hall or classroom where good ventilation and 2m distancing between teacher and student can be maintained.

Vocal groups are limited to twelve people and can only rehearse in PP Hall.

### **PE**

Fixtures will be resumed in line with the Westminster and ISA leagues and using their safe practice guidelines.

PE lessons will be based on those sports considered safe for resumption due to the degree of innate social distancing. These include, but may not be limited to, cricket, athletics, football (with no headers or throw-ins), table tennis, gym and dance work. Outdoor spaces will be used wherever possible. Students participate in year groups so are already in their bubbles for PE. High contact sports, e.g. rugby, will not be played until further guidance allows.

## **Science**

We recognise and accept the key role practical plays in the effective learning of science. However, at this time, experiments should be performed by teacher demonstration only in most cases. The GCSE courses do require students to have carried out themselves certain specified experiments. These can go ahead as planned provided each student has their own set of apparatus for use and that any shared resource is cleaned using disinfectant wipes between each use.

## **Timetable**

Wherever possible timetabled rooming will be changed to allow year groups and classes to stay within a small number of rooms within the school, e.g. Year 10 lessons being taught on Floor 3 in GPS.

This is not possible for use of the specialist facilities for Science, Art, Drama, DT and Music which will require some movement between buildings.

The HH building that houses Science, Art, Drama and some DT will have a modified timetable to mean only one year group in the building at a time, minimised movement through the building and staggered starts of lessons to help manage this. HH has the most restricted space of any of the PPS buildings.

## **Remote learning**

From the experience of early 2020 during the wider lockdown, Portland Place School put in place very effective measures for remote learning using Firefly, MS Teams, Zoom, Hegarty Maths, Showbie and Century Tech. Should the need arise again during the academic year 2020-21 we know we can very effectively transition back to remote learning.

Should a student have to spend an extended period away from school, having contracted COVID-19 or for other reasons, they can continue with their education remotely through the tools listed above. The only element that will not be routinely available is the face-to-face Zoom/Teams contact.

## **Appendix 1: Guidance for staff**

All staff are expected to be in school and working their regular hours, 08:00 – 17:00 as per contracts of employment. From 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020 those considered extremely critically vulnerable and previously advised to shield, are allowed and expected to return to work. The school will adapt roles and expectations for staff in this group on a case-by-case basis to ensure they can work with appropriate safeguards. This can include remote working in extreme cases.

Staff will receive training before a return to school as detailed above.

Staff will be encouraged to walk or cycle to school wherever possible. The area around the school has adequate cycle storage space for staff to use.

## **Appendix 2: Government guidance on infection**

### **What happens if someone becomes unwell at an educational or childcare setting?**

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough, a high temperature and/or a loss of the sense of taste or smell in an education or childcare setting, they must be sent home and advised to follow the [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection guidance](#).

If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age of the child and with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.

If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else. PPE should be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as a child with complex needs).

In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If a member of staff has helped someone who was unwell with a new, continuous cough, a high temperature and/or a loss of the sense of taste or smell, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves (and in which case, a test is available) or the child subsequently tests positive (see 'What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in a setting?' below). They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. Cleaning the affected area with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. See the [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance](#).

### **What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in a setting?**

When a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. All staff and students who are attending an education or childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus, and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario.

Where the child, young person or staff member tests negative, they can return to their setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation. Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class or group within their childcare or education setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless

the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

## **Appendix 3: Physical adaptations of school space**

### **Key points**

- One way system in operation in PPS entry point is no. 58;
- Circulation will be up in no. 58 and down in no. 56;
- All students to arrive to no. 58 and either tap in or manually sign in via Entrysign;
- All staff to tap in or manually sign in via Entrysign;
- Lunch will be one-hour and operate as three services;
- Single file on stairs with two steps free in between people;
- 1m+ social distancing adhered to at all times by staff and students;
- Staffrooms and staff offices will be supplied with hand sanitiser and cleaned during the working day.

### **To be actioned in advance**

- Cleaning of all buildings by JR&Co;
- Signage to be displayed including but not limited to:
  - Toilets – Only Two Students At A Time;
  - Staircase – Keep Two Steps Apart At All Times;
  - One way system – arrows;
  - “Catch it, bin it, kill it” posters clearly evident;
- Classrooms to have desks and chairs removed leaving only the number of places possible with 1m social distancing;
- Room 11 to have floor markings for student placement, 1m apart;
- Room 2 to be used as a medical (isolation) room if needed – sign to be displayed accordingly – with access to toilets nearby;
- Library to have chairs removed leaving only the number of places possible with 1m social distancing;
- Anti-bacterial pump dispenser to be placed in each room;
- Disinfectant wipes in each room;
- Anti-bacterial pump dispensers to be strategically placed throughout the buildings;
- Catering manager to provide RA to be linked to school RA;
- Anti-bacterial pump dispenser placed inside main entrance at each building;
- Reinstate daily waste collection from outside PPS from 03.09.20;
- Reinstate daily waste collection from outside GPS from 03.09.20;
- Reinstate daily waste collection from outside HH from 03.09.20;
- Monthly water monitoring commencement;
- Procure PPE – masks and gloves – available for staff and students who wish to use them whilst travelling to/from school;
- Separate Registrar and Marketing Manager desks and rotate MM desk to allow for social distancing (desks will no longer be allowed to be face to face);

### **To be actioned once open**

- Daily - Site team to top up anti-bacterial stations at the end of each day.
- Daily - Cleaners to disinfect touch points during the day in addition to daily clean at the end of each day.
- Daily – Weather permitting, windows should be opened in rooms being used – site team to check at the end of each day and close windows.