

Information

for parents and carers

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Introduction

We are very much looking forward to seeing your child back in school in September. Schools are not just places of learning, but a vital source in children's lives for friendship, play, routine, socialisation and stability. I know that many children have missed being in school and our staff are really looking forward to welcoming them all back.

In planning for the full reopening of CST schools, we have followed the guidance from the Department for Education and Public Health England, as well as best practice disseminated from local schools. Risk assessments for all schools have been fully reviewed by staff in schools and Health and Safety experts and approved by CST's board of trustees. They are published on school websites for your information. Further information for parents is also available on the DfE website at [gov.uk/backtoschool](https://www.gov.uk/backtoschool) including specific [guidance for parents](#).

We will continue to engage with you via questionnaires and emails in the autumn term to gauge your views and ask that you continue to be sensitive to the very challenging circumstances that we are all in. The health, safety and wellbeing of all our community members is our utmost priority and we are committed to working in partnership with yourselves as parents and carers, as well as children and staff, to ensure that all schools are safe environments and we can continue to deliver the best possible provision for all children.

In the suspected case of coronavirus, it is important that you follow the advice in section 2. In particular:

1. Stay home: do not send your child to school if they, or someone in their household, are displaying symptoms of coronavirus
2. Book a test if they are displaying symptoms
3. Provide details of anyone they have been in contact with if they test positive or if asked by NHS Test and Trace
4. Self-isolate if they have been in contact with someone who develops coronavirus symptoms or tests positive for coronavirus.

1.

Arrangements for learning

1.1 School attendance

Our expectation is that children are in school full time from the start of September and attend in the same way as they did before the outbreak. Children need consistency, even more so after the changes and upheaval this year and it is vital that they return to school - for their educational progress, wellbeing and for their wider development. We very much appreciate your support as their parents and carers in ensuring that they know what is expected and that they are receiving all the benefits that school can provide. We will be recording attendance and following up absence from the start of the new academic year as we would normally do.

Government shielding advice for all students means that the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. See the guidance on [shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable](#) for the current advice. Some pupils no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school in September (usually at their next planned clinical appointment).

If you or your child have concerns about returning to school because you consider they may have other risk factors, please discuss these with the Headteacher, class teacher, tutor or relevant staff member. The same applies to children with specific needs or who will require additional help and preparation to adjust to changes to routines, please discuss these with school staff at the start of term. There will be a range of support available including additional catch-up provision as well as existing pastoral and support services and resources. Schools will also continue to work closely with other professionals as appropriate to support your child's return to school.

1.2 Arrangements for learning

All of our schools are different and have put in place specific arrangements for preventing infection and limiting social contacts on site. Please take note of these arrangements before your child returns to school and ensure that they understand and are confident with the new school environment. All children will be expected to wear school uniform as normal although there may be specific requirements for what your child needs to bring in terms of water bottles, lunches and equipment so that they are only bringing essential items to school. Where relevant, your school will also be in touch regarding breakfast club and after school provision from September onwards.

1.3 Expectations for children

Children in all year groups will be given age appropriate advice and guidance from teachers and support staff with the expectation that they will:

- Wash or disinfect their hands at the start of the day, before and after morning, lunch and afternoon breaks and before eating.
- Stay within their designated indoor and outdoor zones for both lessons, play time/ break time and any other designated times.
- Stay with their class or year group in these designated areas.
- Return to their classrooms following the instructions of the supervising teachers.
- Avoid all unnecessary physical contact such as hugging, play wrestling etc.

All schools have an appendix to their behaviour policy that covers requirements and expectations during this period and which is designed to ensure that the health of other staff and children is not compromised by poor behaviour and conscious decisions not to follow hygiene and health and safety advice. Headteachers will make sure that these new rules and changes are communicated with you. Pastoral leaders may be in touch with individual families in preparation for return to school to discuss specific behavioural action plans for some students.

2.

Health & Hygiene: What you need to do

2.1 When to keep your child at home

Please do not send your child to school if they or anyone in their household are displaying any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms. Please follow [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#) and [arrange to have a test](#). If your child or a member of their household develops symptoms during the isolation period, they should restart the 10 day isolation period from the day they develop symptoms.

2.2 Onset of symptoms at school

If any child becomes unwell whilst in school with the symptoms of coronavirus including a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they will be sent home and must follow [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#), which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 10 days and should [arrange to have a test](#) to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). Other members of their household (including any siblings) should also self-isolate in line with the guidance. Please collect your child as soon as possible if the school contacts you.

2.3 Testing

If your child or any members of their household are displaying symptoms, [arrange to have a test](#). Tests can be booked online through the [NHS testing and tracing for coronavirus website](#), or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet.

There are a number of drive-in and walk-in testing locations in and around Bristol or tests can be sent out in the post. All children can be tested, including children under 5, but children aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit.

Please inform the school immediately of the results of a test. If the child/household member tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating. They could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still best

to avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of their household can stop self-isolating.

If the test is positive for coronavirus please provide details to NHS Test and Trace of anyone who the child/household member has been in close contact with. Please follow the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#) and continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if the child does not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste. 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 became ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.

Please also be prepared to self-isolate if your child has been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace.

2.4 Arriving and leaving school

Parents and carers will not be permitted to enter any of the school buildings unless there is an exceptional circumstance (such as picking up a sick child) or they have made a prior appointment. If a parent/carer must be on the school site, they must follow the social distancing measures that are in effect.

The school will inform parents and carers about the procedures to follow for morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up including designated drop-off or pick-up areas where appropriate. As a general guideline, we kindly ask parents and carers to maintain social distancing from students, staff and other parents and carers on the way to school and outside the school site. Wherever possible only one parent or carer should drop off and pick-up to help ease congestion around school sites. Please also ensure prompt pick-up and drop-offs at the designated time and location. Students who cycle or walk to school on their own are asked not to arrive too early and not to stay on the school site when school is finished. Children who are not in timetabled activities must not be on the school site at any time.

Given the concerns around the use of public transport, we would encourage children and their families to walk or cycle to school as far as possible. Where your child relies on public transport to get to school, and cannot walk or cycle, the [safer travel guidance for passengers](#) will apply. Your child may be asked to use a regular seating plan on this transport (to reflect where possible the bubbles that are used within school), and measures will be put in place to ensure vehicles are cleaned regularly and boarding is managed.

Face coverings are required at all times on public transport (for children over the age of 11). Secondary schools will communicate their expectations for face coverings on public transport and dedicated school transport. There will also be clear guidelines for the removal and storage or disposal of face masks upon arrival at school sites.

2.

Health & Hygiene: Measures in place

3.1 Handwashing and hand sanitizer

We will follow the DfE and Public Health England guidelines which stress the importance of handwashing including cleaning hands more often than usual - washing hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and drying them thoroughly or using alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.

Children will be asked to wash their hands frequently throughout the school day following these guidelines. Handwashing routines will be built into the school day and there will be frequent communication around the importance of the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach. There will be hand disinfection stations at the entry/exit points to the buildings. Children are encouraged to use these stations if handwashing facilities are not easily available.

3.2 Social distancing

The government's guidance for opening in September is based around minimising contact and mixing between individuals and maintaining social distancing wherever possible, but also acknowledges that this is not always possible, particularly when working with younger children. Key principles are:

- in primary schools, children are likely to be in separate year or phase group 'bubbles' as far as possible throughout the day.
- in secondary schools, there will be a focus on social distancing and mixing between different year groups will be kept to a minimum, subject to the layout of each school and the feasibility of keeping distinct groups separate whilst offering a broad and balanced curriculum.

Each school's layout and plan for the school day has been designed to follow these principles. In addition, in order to implement social distancing, there will be floor markings or directional signs to direct the flow of foot traffic in the school buildings. Children will be asked to follow these. The schedule and use of different play areas for outdoor breaks and lunch breaks will be adjusted to permit a minimum number of children and teachers in an area.

3.3 Use of masks and gloves

We understand that some parents and carers may feel they would like their child to wear a mask. The DfE announced on 25th August that it has revised its guidance on face coverings for staff and children in Year 7 or above in England. As a result secondary schools will take additional measures for face coverings in areas where transmission of the virus is high. Elsewhere secondary schools will have the discretion to require face coverings in communal areas (not including classrooms) if they believe that is right in their particular circumstances. Secondary schools will be in touch with parents and carers with the specific arrangements for your child's school depending on the age range and site considerations and we will continue to review this if there are further changes to Public Health England and DfE guidance in the coming months. Beyond the situations outlined above, staff will only be required to wear masks and gloves in a small number of situations such as administering first aid, providing intimate care or supporting a child if they become unwell with symptoms of the coronavirus whilst at school.

3.4 Cleaning

All areas of the school, including desks and chairs as well as all shared areas are regularly cleaned. Additional and frequent disinfection will be done daily following the best practice guidelines. Throughout the school day there will be more frequent cleaning of shared areas and surface/ frequently touched items such as handrails, doorknobs, switches, sinks, toilets, etc. Some items such as soft furniture and pillows that cannot be deep cleaned daily will be removed from the classrooms. Each classroom will be equipped with disinfectants and cleaning materials. At the start or the end of the school day, a thorough cleaning of the school buildings, classrooms and all shared areas will be completed.

3.5 Confirmation of a diagnosis in the community

If a member of staff or a student is confirmed as having tested positive for COVID-19, we will immediately contact the local health protection team. 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 for 14 days. The health protection team will also provide definitive advice on who should be sent home - depending on the child's age and school arrangements this could include other children in their class or bubble. 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 the steps at 2.1 and 2.3 above.

If, as part of the national test and trace programme, other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England's local health protection teams will advise if additional action is required including asking larger numbers of other pupils to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure. Similarly if there is a local outbreak in the region we will again closely follow the advice from the Department for Education and Public Health England.

Thank you in advance for your help in implementing these measures and we look forward to seeing your child in September.