

Frequently asked questions from parents

These were the most common questions asked by parents in our recent survey.

70% of respondents said they would send in their children once their questions were answered.

If you have any further questions you are welcome to email school office and the Head will reply.

There are four groups of questions and answers

- A. Social distancing and “social bubbles”
- B. Teaching and learning
- C. Distanced/virtual learning
- D. Hygiene and cleaning
- E. Risk assessment

A. Social distancing and “social bubbles”

Can you ensure social distancing in class, break and lunch?

Yes – the class size will be a maximum of ten, with all desks at 2 metre distance. Social distancing will be enforced at entry. Break will be staggered and in a small, isolated area. There will be no lunch. This will be explained to students in the progress interview week and parents will be asked to sign a new Home School Agreement.

Will the children stay in the same classroom with the teachers being the ones who move around rather than the children?

Yes – year 10 will always use the same classroom

Year 12 will have one classroom for each subject. They will use only one classroom each day.

No-one will leave their “bubble

How will the bubbles be selected?

Year 12 – their teaching groups (up to a maximum of 10) and 3 teachers

Year 10- groupings based on provisional tiers of entry to the year 11 exams

I wouldn't want my child moving around the school, would they be in 1 room from the start to end of day including lunch and breaks?

Children will be in one room from the start to the end, with a staggered, supervised break. They will remain in their “bubbles” at break.

How will "social bubbles" be monitored?

The Head and Deputy Head will take the role of “Compliance Officer” each day, monitoring staff and student compliance with the agreed risk assessment.

Will there be one-way systems in place throughout the school, including toilets, with clear signage directing / stopping entry, exits etc.

There will be clearly marked one-way systems within the two separate bubbles – one for year 10 and one for year 12. Year 10 will not come into contact with year 12 at any point. The children of key workers in years 7,8,9 also have a separate zone- the same zone that has been used since lockdown began.

If a child or close family member is diagnosed with Covid 19 what are the plans for contact tracking?

Parents will be asked in advance to sign a Home School Agreement with an agreed and consistent approach to this. Any child showing symptoms in school will be isolated and sent home. If confirmed by testing, all members of their bubble (staff and students) will isolate for 14 days.

What measures would be taken to ensure anyone with symptoms does not enter the 'bubble', i.e. pre-entry questionnaires?

All parents will be asked to complete a Covid-19 Home School Agreement in advance, which includes advice on distancing before arrival, at school and on the way home. All parents will receive a telephone call to discuss this.

Would the small social bubble groups be based on friendship groups? My child would feel more anxious about returning if the small group had no close friends.?

Year 12 groups will be the same as their normal timetable – up to a maximum of 10

Year 10 groupings will be based on their tier of entry.

B. Teaching and learning

Will it be actual learning as it was pre-coronavirus?

We will be teaching formal lessons, focussed on the exam curriculum - assessing progress, filling gaps and explaining next steps, to supplement the virtual curriculum

Would it be possible to identify some targets and areas to work on over the summer holidays?

Yes – year 10 and 12 students will receive targets from their 3 teachers and their progress interviewers.

Will they be taught by their current teachers who knows what ability they have to ensure a smooth transition back in this important year.

Safety comes first. To enforce the social bubbles we cannot guarantee that students will be taught by their class teacher. Year 10 will be taught by subject specialists. Year 12 will be taught by one of their class teachers.

Could parents be kept up to date with how much impact this has had on the GCSE curriculum and how can it be caught up so it doesn't have a detrimental impact on results?

Yes – the purpose of returning to school is to assess progress, fill gaps and plan next steps. This information will be shared with students.

What about the practical subjects eg. GCSE art or photography? How could these be taught?

The principle we will operate to is that students will not share any equipment and will maintain social distancing. All teaching has to operate within those restrictions so some activities will not be possible. Art rooms can be used by year 12 as they are in the P block.

Will staff be teaching from behind screens or masks?

No. Government advice is that PPE is only used for first aid, or for dealing with an individual who might be affected. You can see the government guidance for schools at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings-including-the-use-of-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

C. Distanced learning / virtual learning

Can you provide “face to face” time virtually ie Zoom or Microsoft Teams as it has been used for our workplace successfully during the current lockdown?

Progress interviews can take place virtually if a student is unable to come into school.

Could you use teams or zoom instead of coming to school, teachers and children can share screens and ask questions as they would in a classroom?

Schools have been told not to use Zoom for security reasons. Other video conferencing software presents safeguarding issues. We are currently working on an increased number of broadcasted lessons, videos and the option for audio feedback to students. This provision has already begun in some subjects and will quickly broaden out across the curriculum.

The school day

How will students travel to school?

The advice is not to use public transport or school buses, if at all possible.

We have been asked to stagger start and finish times to avoid rush hour.

We have been informed that Mersey Travel will operate buses, with social distancing.

If your child must use a school bus you must inform school in advance.

Would the schooling be full time and normal school hours?

Year 12 will come in for 3 hours per week of each subject they study,

Year 10 will come in for 3 hours total, of English, Maths and Science each week.

Students may also be invite to further one-to-one progress interviews.

Would school start and leaving time be staggered to prevent lots of students around the school entrance area?

Yes. Start and finish times are staggered to avoid breaking the social bubbles and to avoid rush hour traffic.

Will leaving classroom times be staggered to ensure reduced numbers in corridors?

Yes, and children will use only one room.

Hygiene and cleaning

**Can there be prescribed times and allotted areas for each social bubble for hand washing?
Will hand gel be available?**

Every classroom will have hand gel, tissues, wipes and additional equipment for dealing with suspected infection. Students will wash their hands on entry to the school, after using the toilet and after break.

Will chairs, tables etc be cleaned after each class session?

Yes.

Will there be sanitizer available? Will students/staff need to wear masks and gloves?

Sanitizer will be available at all times, in every room. DFE advice is that students and staff do not need to wear masks and gloves, except to give first aid. Full PPE is available in every room for such eventualities.

Will temperatures be taken on way into school?

No – DFE guidance says that is not appropriate.

Will the school increase their cleaning of touch points and children hand was between lessons?

A one-way system will be enforced on corridors. All touch points will be cleaned daily. Children will not move between lessons because they will remain in one room. Each classroom has sanitizer to apply regularly.

Are the school toilets/sinks going to be in a hygienic state?

Yes. In addition to daily cleaning, they will be inspected every hour by the Compliance Officer (Head or Deputy Head) and a cleaner will always be on site.

Risk Assessments

Will parents have sight of the Risk Assessment prior to the children being required to attend the school?

Yes – the full risk assessment will be published on the school website and the key points are summarised in the “Further Information for Parents and Students” document.

Will the Risk Assessment recommendations / methodology be adhered to and will this be checked / audited by senior school management?

The Head or Deputy Head will be the Compliance Officer checking on toilets every hour and checking that staff and students are following guidelines.

Government/Medical advice re schools and children only refers to primary school pupils and pupils at the beginning of secondary education. There appears to be no advice re 6th form students, i.e. Young adults of 16 to 18 years. I presume that they are just as vulnerable to infection as the whole adult population

School now has specific advice for year 10 and 12 and our risk assessment is based on that advice. You can see the advice at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

Scientific advice suggests that secondary age students are less at-risk in school than primary-age students. You can see this information at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/885631/Overview_of_scientific_advice_and_information_on_coronavirus_COVID19.pdf