



St Mary  
Magdalene  
Academy

**COVID-19 Prevention:  
Return to School Handbook**

**Primary School September 2020**

This handbook sets out the adjustments and changes being implemented in preparation for the new school year, following the widespread closure of schools in the UK in response to the global pandemic.

This plan for a return to school in September 2020 is based on regular reviews of the guidance issued by the UK Government, including from the Department for Education (DfE). It also draws upon best practice from education systems and advice from around the world. It represents the main outcomes of our risk assessment for the return to school, which itself is regularly updated as guidance is changed.

Please be aware that this guidance may change at short notice; we will write with any changes as soon as they are required.

### **A Summary of the Guidance**

To reopen the Academy to all pupils in September, there are a series of controls with which all schools must comply. In practice this means that:

- Pupils who are unwell with COVID symptoms **must not attend school**
- A pupil with a member of their household showing these symptoms **must not attend school**
- Any pupil who has been notified as a close contact of someone with COVID by the NHS Test and Trace service **must not attend school**

Symptoms consistent with a possible coronavirus infection include:

High temperature (37.8°C or more)

New continuous cough

Loss or change in taste or smell

In any of the above instances you must follow the guidance and self-isolation protocols set out by the government, including the length of isolation and any quarantine regulations related to returning from abroad.

In addition, to further minimise risk:

- Pupils, staff and visitors are required to clean their hands more often than usual
- Pupils, staff and visitors are required to ensure good respiratory hygiene using the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- The Academy will be cleaned more frequently throughout the day
- Contact between year group 'bubbles' will be minimised as far as possible
- We will fully engage with the NHS Test and Trace process for all pupils, staff and visitors
- We will manage any confirmed cases and follow all local health protection team advice
- All staff will receive relevant information and guidance and will work to ensure that all pupils understand and adhere to the processes and protocols in place.

To align with this guidance, we have instituted year phases as bubbles. Year 1, 2 and 3 and Year 4, 5 and 6 to allow for break times and lunch breaks. At all other times in the classroom, they will only be with their class bubble. Each year group will have specific gates and doors for entrance and exit. Contact with other year groups, so far as our building allows, will be kept to the absolute minimum during the school day.

New routines will be introduced to pupils on the first day of term and they will be regularly reminded to ensure that it is fully understood by all.

### **Attendance**

The DfE have stated that from the beginning of the Autumn Term school attendance will become compulsory for all pupils. Shielding advice for all adults and children was paused on 1 August, which means that even 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. Please read the Government's current advice on shielding for more information.

All pupils will be expected to return to school unless they are unwell, self-isolating or have specific permission to be absent, sought from the Headteacher via the attendance officer. If a pupil is required by COVID protocols not to attend school, work will be set on Google Classroom, as directed by the teachers. Pupils in this category who can work from home during this period should continue to do so. If families do not have access at home, they should inform the school so we can make other arrangements.

Parents should use [primaryadmin@smmacademy.org](mailto:primaryadmin@smmacademy.org) or phone **0207 697 0123** address to inform us of any recent international travel to countries on the quarantine list. An up-to-date list of countries with travel corridors can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-corridors>

### **Arrival and Departure**

It is important to prevent large gatherings of people together. Therefore, we will continue the staggered start times we have been using over the last half term. These will be arranged by house groups rather than year groups so that families start and end at the same time. We will not interrogate you about the house your children are in, but it will help us if you *can* follow these times. In the morning, all pupils need to wash their hands before entering the building and therefore you may be asked to wait and queue outside the gate. At the end of the day, staggered exits are less time consuming as children do not need to wash their hands therefore there is a shorter time for dismissal. Registers will close at **9.30am**

	<b>Start time</b>	<b>End time</b>
Africa	8.45 – 8.55	3.15
America	8.55 – 9.05	3.20
Europe	9.05 – 9.15	3.25
Asia	9.15 – 9.25	3.30

## **Parents and Carers**

Throughout this our aim is to have minimal amount of people in the same area for extended periods of time to minimise the risk of contact between adults and different children.

At the **start of the day** you will drop your child at the school gate and not enter the playground. Please make sure you have said your goodbyes before approaching the gate as we need to welcome over 50 pupils every 10 minutes and get their hands washed and directed into the building. A senior member of staff will be on the gate and available to take messages and answer questions you may have. Please respect distances between yourself and them.

At the **end of the day**, parents and carers will enter the playground at their time slot and immediately go to the centre of the playground. From here, staff will be able to spot you and dismiss your child to you. You will not at this time be able to speak with staff as we will be dismissing over 50 pupils every 5 minutes from different year groups.

Once you have collected your child/dren, you must immediately exit via the top gate in the playground (which used to be the entrance). This has created a one-way system to ease any crowding around the main entrance. It is important that you do not gather in groups in the playground or at the entrance and exit.

## **Signing in/out and Late Arrival Protocols**

Pupils who are late to school will be signed in by the office and will go straight to class. We hope that all pupils will be on time so that they do not miss the start of lessons.

## **Hygiene**

Pupils will be required to clean their hands more often. On arrival at school, all pupils must clean their hands using the nearest sanitiser or the new hand washing stations in the playground. Pupils should also clean their hands whilst moving around the building and before and after eating

All pupils must practise excellent respiratory hygiene by coughing or sneezing into a tissue which is promptly disposed of in a bin, or, by using their elbow if necessary. Pupils must clean their hands after they cough or sneeze. Posters reminding them of recommended respiratory hygiene and hand-washing techniques will be displayed in bathrooms and around the School.

Good hand hygiene is seen by our medical advisers as a very important and effective way of stopping the spread of the virus.

## **Face Coverings**

Pupils will not be required to wear face coverings when in their year group 'bubbles', but will continue to socially distance from pupils in other year groups around the school. Staff may wear face visors on the school gate and/or face masks when speaking with parents or visitors.

### **Managing any Possible Cases of COVID During the School Day**

The Senior Staff and office team will follow protocols to deal with any suspected cases of COVID. The pupil will be isolated and parents contacted to request that they are collected urgently. Up-to-date Government guidance on getting a test and isolating must then be followed and the test result shared with the school.

Members of staff or pupils who have been in close contact with someone with symptoms are not required to go home to self-isolate unless: they develop symptoms themselves (in which case they should arrange a test); the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive; or they have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace.

### **NHS Test and Trace**

All pupils, staff, and visitors will need to comply with the NHS Test and Trace process. If anyone in your household develops symptoms you must book a test online or by phone and the whole household must comply in full with self-isolation guidelines. The Academy must be kept informed as promptly as possible via the email [primaryadmin@smmacademy.org](mailto:primaryadmin@smmacademy.org)

All pupils, staff and other adults should do the following:

- Not come into school if they have coronavirus symptoms or have tested positive in the last seven days (please contact the school in the usual way to report any absence).
- Book a test if they are displaying symptoms of coronavirus infection. Please inform the school immediately of the results of a test.
- In the event that they test positive for coronavirus, or if asked by NHS Test and Trace, to provide details of anyone in the school community they have been in close contact with.
- Self-isolate for 14 days if other members of their household (including any siblings) develop coronavirus symptoms or test positive for coronavirus.

It is important for parents and staff to inform The Academy immediately of any test result.

- **If someone tests negative:** if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus, 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 others until they feel better. Other members of the household can stop self-isolating.
- **If someone tests positive:** they must stay at home and self-isolate for at least ten days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste. This is because a cough or loss of smell/taste can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. 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.

Once The Academy has been notified of a positive test for COVID we will immediately contact the local health protection team and follow all guidance,

including what actions to take regarding the isolation of other members of the school community.

### **Possible Future Lockdowns and Remote Learning**

Should the School close or require part-close we will revert to remote learning using an online system. Pupils will have further advice and guidance about this when we return to school to ensure they can fully access and utilise the Google Classroom platforms.

### **Mental Health, Wellbeing and Safeguarding**

We understand that many of our pupils will be anxious about returning to school. We will update our website to share resources with families to support at home, staff will receive training on this anxiety and time will be spent in class addressing this as appropriate. If pupils are worried about something or feel they need any extra support, they should speak to their teacher, our Chaplain- Fr Sam or indeed any member of staff they feel comfortable with who can refer them for further support.

### **Minimising Contact and 'Bubbles'**

Pupils will be grouped by year group so that each year forms a 'bubble'. All pupils should minimise their contacts within their 'bubble' and socially distance as much as possible.

In lessons pupils will be seated side by side at desks in the classroom. A seating plan will be in place for each class in each classroom.

On stairwells, an up and down system will need to operate and pupils and staff will ascend or descend in single file. Bathrooms will operate a queuing system and it is important that pupils do not attempt to socialise in bathrooms and follow the good hygiene guidance around handwashing. We will start term by having assemblies remotely online and adapt as needed.

### **Cleaning**

Additional cleaning routines are in place, both during the day and in the early mornings. Risk assessment of spaces and activities has given careful consideration to the use of cleaning products, as well as to the spaces/ equipment/items regularly used during the day, such as any door handles which are still in use. Clear protocols are in place should any area require a swift deep clean due to a possible or confirmed case, and cleaning staff will work in specific areas, rather than across the entire site.

### **Break, Lunch and Water Fountains**

In the playground, at both break and lunchtime, pupils should socialise only with pupils from their own year group or within their phase. Breaks and lunches are split into phases and tables and chairs will be cleaned inbetween. There will be some equipment available and this will be cleaned between use as we did in the Summer term. At present pupils cannot use the climbing frames.

Outside drinking fountains **have been removed** in order to minimise contamination, so pupils **must** bring a water bottle to refill at one of the internal taps. Please ensure water bottles are labelled with names. Pupils must not share food or drinks.

### **Books, Equipment, Stationery and Personal Items**

Pupils in older year groups will have their own stationery packs to use. Younger children in Reception and Year 1 will continue to share equipment through play, but staff will clean at the end of the day.

Resources that are shared between classes, such as sports, computing, music, art and science equipment will be cleaned frequently, and a supply of cleaning products will be in each of these spaces.

Staff may provide books and worksheets for pupils to use, as necessary. Staff will take work in for assessment, sanitising their hands when handling pupil books. However, we will be reexamining our marking policy.

We ask that pupils do not bring unnecessary personal items.

### **Sport and Clubs**

Our staff are closely following specialist guidance so that PE lessons and some sports team practice can take place with cleaning and hygiene protocols in place, within year group bubbles. Unfortunately, at the time of writing, competitive fixtures are not allowed to take place in a school environment. We will continue to review this situation in line with DfE and governing body guidance and communicate directly with all concerned.

### **PE**

Pupils should wear their school PE kit all day on a PE day.

### **Music**

Choirs, orchestras and music groups require specific protocols. Singing in particular has particular protocols. We will be working through this to see if we can still find opportunities to do so.

### **After school clubs**

We are currently awaiting guidance for after school clubs and will update you as soon as possible.

### **Specialist Individual Lessons**

Instrumental or voice lessons, counselling appointments and other bespoke sessions will continue to run but will follow protocols on social distancing and hygiene.

### **Fire Evacuation and Lockdown Protocols**

We do not intend to hold a whole-school fire drill, but instead to complete these in year group 'bubbles'. All fire safety measures that are normally in place in the school remain in place. The only time all pupils would be together at the evacuation point would be in the case of an actual alarm, in which case immediate risk to life is the most important factor.

## **Transport & Travel**

### **Public Transport**

The Government expects that public transport capacity will continue to be constrained in the Autumn Term and are requesting its use by pupils is kept to an absolute minimum, particularly in peak times. TfL has asked that all pupils who are able to consider alternative methods of travel including walking and cycling should do so.

### **Cycling and scooters**

There are some limited bike racks in school for bicycles to be safely throughout the day for those pupils wishing to cycle. All those cycling should wear a cycle helmet. We also have space for scooters. Please ensure these are collected daily.

### **Cars**

Parking is very limited near the Academy and we have always discouraged parents from dropping off and collecting close to school because of the congestion for the neighbouring community. Islington has chosen to enforce their School Streets scheme from 3 September 2020. vehicles will not be permitted to Lough Road and Bride Street from Monday to Friday between the times of 8.00am-9.00am and 3.45pm-4.45pm during term time unless they have been given an exemption. Car-sharing between different households should be avoided unless pupils are in the same family.

### **School Events and Parents' Evenings**

At least initially, the Academy will seek to minimise the number of individuals outside regular staff and pupils who are on the school site. We plan to stream or record some of our usual events and will send further information out closer to the time about the arrangements for or alternatives to Parents' Evenings. Please refer to the school website for the most up-to-date information.

### **Individual Parental Meetings**

Wherever possible, communication should be by phone or by email. Should a meeting be required on a face-to-face basis these meetings will take place after school only in a space where social distancing can be maintained between the staff member(s) and parent/pupil.

### **Visitors to the School**

Initially visitors to the School will be kept to a minimum, and all will be expected to comply with and adhere to the School's COVID mitigation measures. This includes external speakers, peripatetic staff or teachers from other schools. All visits to the school will be by appointment only and external adults will be required to wear a mask. We kindly ask that parents also observe this and do not come into the school site unless by prior arrangement.