

Mearns Castle High School

Protocols for Covid Secure Operation

Last Updated: 10/11/2020

Summary of distancing

It is essential that staff maintain the clearly communicated distancing at all times. 2m from other adults and pupils other than transitory movements (counted as 15 mins max at 1-2m and 1min max at 0-1m). However, transitory movements should be minimised as much as possible as outlined on the first INSET Day to ensure the 2m distancing is maintained. This applies at all times, including – staff undertaking supervision duties, staff supervising fire drills and social times. If departmental meetings/discussions do not allow for adequate space they must take place online or not at all.

Entrance to School

- All pupils and staff will sanitise hands on entry to the building. A hygiene station will be located at each entrance. Pupils should enter the school building by any of the five school entrance points for pupils.
- Pupils should arrive at school wearing full school uniform unless they have PE period 1, in which case they may arrive in their MCHS PE kit. If they have PE last period, they may leave in their kit.
- Pupils should arrive as close to the start of period 1 (8.45am) as possible to avoid congregating and should enter at the point closest to their period 1 class. Warning bells will ring at 8.40am and 8.43am. Pupils should start to make their way to class from 8.40am. Principal Teachers (or a designated member of staff) will open up classrooms and circulate in departments to ensure supervision of pupils if their own teacher is not yet in class.
- School entrances will be supervised each day.

School Uniform Protocols

Usual school uniform protocols will apply.

- The uniform store will be re-organised to ensure a week long quarantine for any used items.
- There is no change to our uniform policy. However, in the event that a class is noticeably cold due to the increased ventilation offered by open windows, the pupil may request that they wear a black hoodie under their blazer.

Pupils must assume uniform is expected as usual but in any classes where it is noticeably cold, the pupil may request the teacher allows this additional clothing to be worn. We are ensuring the building is appropriately heated through the day to avoid the need for this. This provision relates only to parts of the building that are exceptionally cold.

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In Class

- During the time pupils are in class Faculty/Department Risk Assessments/Operational Protocols should be applied.
- Departments will utilise all available capacity to allow the maximum possible distancing between pupils. Where amendments to the timetable may allow increased distancing, this should be discussed and agreed with I. Phillips. Where changes to the profile of classes in a department may increase distancing but have a significant impact on learning and teaching, this should be discussed and agreed with the relevant Year Head.
- On entry to the classroom, pupils should enter immediately (no lining up), collect a wipe to wipe down their work area on arrival. Where access to sinks is available within a classroom the handwashing using soap and water is preferable. Where possible, teachers should spray

the desks between periods and pupils use blue roll to wipe desks. It is recognised that this may limit the ability of teachers to supervise in corridors between classes.

- After interval and lunchtime, pupils should sanitise their hands on entry to the class.
- Pupils should be seated to face the front of the class (not in group formation) and there should be a 2m/6ft teaching zone at the front of the classroom. The teacher's interactions with pupils must either maintain this distance or be brief and transitory in nature (less than a minute).
- Singing and performance involving increased voice projection should not take place, pending the publication of specific guidance. PE should be outdoors where possible with maximum indoor space utilised for changing and changing reduced where possible (e.g. gyms, pupils arriving/leaving in kit at start of day). Subject specific guidelines are released on an on-going basis and should be closely followed.
- Any equipment used by pupils must be washed, wiped down or quarantined for 72 hours in line with departmental protocols. Stationery should not be shared. Sheets of paper should be quarantined for a minimum of 24 hours. Teachers distributing paper etc should ensure they have washed or sanitised their hands first, thereby avoiding the need for quarantine.
- Class activities should be planned to avoid congestion.
- Staff distributing practical equipment should wear disposable gloves where possible. If not, then handwashing should take place before and after equipment distribution and collection. All practical equipment should be washed or fully wiped down following use.
- Teachers should exercise their professional judgement on dealing with pupil requests for a toilet break. Only one pupil should be allowed out at a time with a red permission slip. Pupils should be directed to the nearest pupil toilet to the classroom and instructed to use appropriate hygiene protocols, including 20 seconds of handwashing.
- Pupils should be instructed to sanitise their hands in preparation for exit. At the end of last period, pupils who are school bus users should be allowed to sanitise their hands when exiting the class.
- Pupils will be dismissed from workstations in an orderly and gradual manner.
- At interval, lunchtime and the end of the day S5/6 classes will be dismissed when the class are ready to pack up (within the last 5 minutes of the lesson) and S4 classes will be dismissed 3mins before the bell.

Alphabetical Seating

- Teachers should transition to seat their classes alphabetically. Whilst it does not matter if this starts at the front or the back of the class, for consistency, teachers could utilise the auto-positioning function on Seemis. This organises pupils into alphabetical order horizontally from the back. Teachers could use this as a starting point and amend to fit the physical make-up of the class. Please be aware that it is possible to overlap pupils to fit all pupils into the required space, and then click on the photo to make the image and name appear fully as required.
- Changes to class seating arrangements should take place after a two day break away from the class, such as after a weekend or if the pupils have a two day gap from class during the week.

Face Coverings

- Pupils wear face coverings on entry to school. The school office will take names of pupils without a face covering, provide a temporary one and compile a list for contact home. If parents/pupil support advise the pupil has an exemption then they will be provided with an exemption card.
- Start of P1 – As pupils arrive to class they should be wearing their face covering. Similar to a uniform check – the teacher should check if any pupils do not have a face covering. Any pupil who does not have their face covering should be sent to the school office to collect one and give their details. Pupils with an exemption card are allowed not to wear a face covering and should not be sent.

- At the end of every period, pupils should stand behind chair, put on face covering and then be dismissed gradually and sanitise hands on exit.
- At break time, pupils may remove their face covering when either they have gone outside or they are **seated** for their snack/lunch. They should maintain face coverings whilst in the queue at the Dining Hall and/or Open Area. They should put on face covering if they are moving between areas. They should wear face coverings when going to the toilet.
- All adults/staff will follow the above protocols for movement around the building at class changeover and social time periods.
- S4-6 pupils and their teachers should wear face coverings in class.
- Staff should wear their face covering around the building but may remove it when seated for a socially distanced (2m) tea/lunch break or when seated for work strictly 2m away from anyone else.
- Face coverings in class for S1-3 are not needed as long as distancing between staff and pupils can be maintained. Teachers may choose to request that pupils wear their face covering in a specific class or for a specific activity. This is not mandatory but may be encouraged by the class teacher.

School Library

- Short term book reference/borrowing is temporarily suspended.
- The Library may only be used for planned activities which do not involve book sharing.
- Computers and work stations should be wiped down after each use.
- Longer term, planned book lending must involve a period of quarantine.

Movement/Building

- All building users will keep to the right of corridors during times of congestion. Floor dividers and arrows will be in place to remind all staff and pupils.

To avoid congestion at the crossroad next to the ACE Base we will be operating a new corridor movement strategy to maintain a flow around the corridor and stagger numbers passing through this area.

Pupils should be advised to move as follows (arrows will be displayed outside classrooms)

E Corridor – exit towards school office

F Corridor – Exit towards Social Subjects Stairwell

Science Corridor (including A14-A18) – Exit towards Science Base/ Biology corridor

English Corridor – Exit towards Business corridor

ART/ HE/Music/ Drama (Staff to monitor movement – we can review and adapt if necessary)

RE/ Bus/ Comp/ M Languages (Staff to monitor movement – we can review and adapt if necessary)

- In order to decrease pupil interaction on leaving the school building, teachers should instruct pupils to use the agreed exits identified on the table below.
- All doors (except internal fire doors) should be wedged open to increase ventilation and minimise contact with door handles. In the event of a fire evacuation, door wedges should be removed and the door should be closed (but not locked) by the teacher when the room is emptied. Where possible battery operated devices will be used to hold open internal fire doors.

- Windows should remain open throughout the day.
- Fans should not be used.
- Communal water dispensers will initially not be in operation within the school building.
- Staff fridges should be used for storage of milk and one Tupperware box for each staff member which is clearly identifies owner (labelled). Bags of items etc should not be left in the fridge and good hand hygiene is essential when accessing items in a shared fridge.
- There should be no shared utensils, e.g. cutlery, mugs etc.
- Staff should not congregate in corridor spaces – it is important that corridor interactions remain transitory. Holding doors is a brief transitory interaction and is permissible.
- Staff should endeavour to use the same toilet facilities and this should be the staff toilet closest to their working location.
- All classrooms and work spaces should be kept ‘clutter free’ to aid effective cleaning.

Practical Subjects

As with all subjects, a department's own protocols should be followed at all times as these have been produced in line with the whole school risk assessment. Guidance will shortly be issued for Home Economics and Music. SSERC guidance helps inform the Science and Technology protocols. PE guidance has been published, and we would note:

- Increasing the number of changing facilities to reduce the number of pupils using them at any one time. Currently schools can make use of their indoor sports facilities for changing.
- Where it is necessary and available, we may utilise appropriate external facilities for changing.
- Ensure that pupils are aware of relevant protocols and their role in the safe delivery of PE e.g. procedures/protocols in the use of changing facilities, no use of showers.
- Relevant PE equipment and areas in changing rooms to be wiped/disinfected at end of each session, with wipes available as required.
- Maintaining pupils in ‘bubbles’ to reduce interactions.

Social Times

- S1/2 pupils will begin Period 3 at 10.25am for 20mins. S1/2 pupils and teachers will then have their interval at 10.45am.
- S1/2 pupils will begin Period 5 at 12.20pm for 20mins. They will begin lunchtime at 12.45pm and complete lunchtime and continue with period 5 at 1.20pm.
- In order to decrease pupil interaction on leaving the school building, teachers should instruct pupils to use the agreed exits identified on the table below.
- The theatre will be available to S1 pupils to eat inside on an on-going basis.
- S5/6 pupils may access classrooms for additional seating at lunchtime. This will be with the class teacher's permission and pupils will be trusted to remain unsupervised. Pupils should be advised how they can access a member of staff if needed.
- Staff should encourage pupils to utilise space available to increase distancing.
- All pupils will be advised it is preferable for them to remain in school for interval and lunch but to follow community protocols when outside of school during the school day.
- S1/2 will not be allowed out of school at social times, as normal.

Visitors

- Parents should not enter the school building (other than in extreme circumstances and by appointment in order that this can be planned).
- Communications may be organised through telephone/email.
- If it is necessary for parents to drop off/collect items from the school office, contact should be made by telephone/intercom and instructions provided.
- Guest speakers/visitors should not be arranged at present. Contributions should be organised through online channels at present and outdoor options may also be appropriate.
- Office protocols for deliveries should be followed at all times.

Staff Activities

- All activities in which staff are asked or invited to participate must allow physical distancing (or access to PPE for those staff supporting pupils where this is not possible).
- Staffrooms/Bases/Storerooms etc should all display a maximum number of users permitted.
- All departmental and school meetings must be conducted in venues which allow the appropriate physical distancing.

Lost Property Protocols

Lost property should either be handled with gloves or the staff member should sanitise their hands before and after handling. Lost property should be bagged and labelled with content and date and handed into the office.

- The uniform store will be re-organised to ensure a week long quarantine for any used items.

Assemblies/Group Activities

- Whole Year Group assemblies should be avoided for the foreseeable future.
- Year Groups could be split into smaller groups to conduct Year Group assemblies – this should be in line with good practice protocols being followed by places of worship.
- Any small group assemblies should be kept as brief as possible.
- Staffrooms/Bases/Storerooms etc should all display a maximum number of users permitted.

Off-site Learning

- School trips are currently suspended. This will be kept under continual review.
- Visits to other locations by pupils for planned programmes of learning are permitted, but should be individually risk assessed and clear guidance given to pupils to ensure appropriate hygiene measures.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Based on Scottish Government advice and Local Authority Risk Assessment, face coverings are not mandatory for building users. Any building user who wishes to wear a face covering is permitted and encouraged to do so.
- Any staff member who is unable to work in line with physical distancing, should have access to a face covering.
- First aiders should have access to the necessary PPE (in line with the First Aid protocols).
- Each department will be provided with hand sanitiser, disinfecting wipes, paper towels and bottles of disinfectant spray. Wipes or sprayed paper towels can be utilised for cleaning of workstations. PTs should distribute these materials and alert the Senior Janitor if supplies require to be replenished.

Symptomatic Pupils & Staff

- Current advice on Covid-19 symptoms should be accessed at www.nhsinform.scot
- Teacher suspects pupil symptoms could be covid related. Teacher requests pupil sanitises their hands and goes to school office. They should not be accompanied unless there is a concern they require support. If so, supporting pupil must maintain 2m distance. The teacher should not assume the symptoms are covid related until this is confirmed.
- Pupil should report to school office who will confirm if symptoms are covid related.
- If the symptoms are covid related – high temperature, new continuous cough, loss/change of taste/smell - the school office will provide a mask and request pupil attend the isolation room. Office will print the pupil timetable and confirm with them the rooms they have been in so far that day.
- Office staff will alert janitors to undertake a spray of each location and request that pupils are displaced. It should be clear there is no need for alarm and this is a precaution. A spray of the isolation room will take place when the pupil has departed.

- Office will alert Year Head who will contact parent and request the pupil is collected (if under 16) or that they are allowed to go home (if over 16 and the parent is unable to collect). If no Year Head is available a member of office staff will contact the parent. Given the pupil is displaying covid-related symptoms, the pupil (and siblings) should self-isolate until the test result is confirmed. Test can be booked through www.nhsinform.scot Pupils/parents will be reminded that symptomatic pupils must not visit any locations and should only use public transport as a last resort (with appropriate face covering).
- Office will alert Environmental Health that a symptomatic pupil has been sent home.
- If testing shows a positive case, this will be reported immediately to ERC Education HQ, Environmental Health and the Health Protection Team who will advise on next steps.
- Staff who become concerned that they are experiencing potential symptoms of Covid-19 should contact I. Phillips or a member of SLT by telephone (preferably their own mobile telephone, if not ensure phone is wiped) and should leave the building as soon as possible. SLT will then request Facilities Management undertake a protective spray of the room utilising appropriate PPE.
- On reporting potential Covid-19 symptoms, staff should arrange a Covid-19 test through www.nhsinform.scot, if they have any difficulty arranging one themselves they should alert the school office. The staff member must continue to self-isolate until the results of the test are confirmed.

Information Management

Following any positive diagnosis for a member of staff, the colleague should immediately alert I Phillips (out of hours, please contact him on his mobile) and then await contact from S Clark to undertake a school contact tracing discussion. This information should remain confidential. The staff member will confirm any close contacts with S. Clark. It is obviously crucial that staff have followed the protocols on distancing at all times on an on-going basis.

The staff member should then confidentially confirm with their Line Manager/PT if they are well enough to work/self-isolating or if they are now absent through ill health. If the staff member is self-isolating and therefore working from home, they should confirm arrangements for working from home with their PT/Line Manager, this may include live lessons to ensure continuity of learning for classes, activity upload to Teams/Classroom, instructions for cover teachers being sent in, assessment of pupil work and/or other development activities agreed with the PT/Line Manager. The staff member should liaise with their PT on any resources/materials required to assist home working during the self-isolation period.

Following any positive pupil diagnosis, the SLT will follow the protocols advised by ERC and NHS Test and Protect. Staff will be informed that contact tracing is underway and will be kept informed weekly of the extent of positive cases within the school. It is recognised that individual staff will be concerned about the potential for positive cases to have worked within their classrooms, however, it is not possible to share details of the specific pupil or staff member who this relates to.

Test and Protect

Following difficulties with the functioning of the Test and Protect app due to the nature of movements within school buildings, such as phones being left in staff bases etc ERC advise Bluetooth should be turned off during the school day. Contact tracing can be undertaken through school processes.

Exit from School

In order to decrease pupil interaction on leaving the school building, teachers should instruct pupils to use the agreed exits identified on the table below.

- The main school exits will be supervised each day.
- Pupils will be instructed not to congregate at exits of the school or in the school grounds but to make their way home immediately.

Classrooms	Exit arrangements
E1 – E6, F7, F8, F9	Fire Exit at the end of the E (Social Subjects) corridor
F1 – F6, F8 – F15	Main Entrance
D2 – D18	Main Entrance
C6 – C15	Down stairs to Fire Exit at Main Entrance end of Science corridor
C3 – C5	Down stairs to Fire Exit at PE end of Science corridor
C1 – C2, Downstairs Drama Studio, D1	Exit at S6 Base door
A1 – A5	Fire Exit at PE end of Science corridor
A6 – A15	Fire Exit at Main Entrance end of Science corridor
T3-T4	Fire Exit at Main Entrance end of Science corridor
T1 – T2	Fire Exits within classrooms
A16 – A18	Main Entrance
B12 – B15	Main Entrance
B1 – B11	Back door at end of English corridor
Support for Learning and Personal Development	Main Entrance
PE	Nearest exit to work area / changing room

School Bus Protocols

Pupils should sanitise their hands before use of the school bus. At the end of the day school bus users may use the class sanitiser, their own or the units positioned at the school entrances/exits. Pupils will be advised to maintain the same seats on the bus where possible.

Responding to concerns/suggestions

A School Recovery Group will be formed and will meet weekly after school for 30mins. It will be comprised of the SLT, trade unions, a PT, a Teacher, a Support Assistant, Senior Business Support Assistant, Senior Janitor, Pastoral/Wellbeing link. It will maintain an overview of the implementation of protocols and the on-going monitoring of school response. Updated Risk Assessments, school calendar plans and review protocols will be discussed by the group.

Staff questions will be compiled into a single 'Q&A' live document with responses added and viewable by all staff.

The Action List will be maintained and updated as a live document and will be viewable by all staff.

Volunteer Safety Marshalls will be sought from each corridor. These colleagues will observe implementation of protocols in their area and pass on any immediate concerns to SLT and any on-going concerns/suggestions to any member of the School Recovery Group.

Trade Unions will be invited to send a representative to the School Recovery Group and will be an important on-going link between staff and management.

Clubs/Extra Curricular

These may commence but the specific arrangements should be carefully considered. Organising staff should consider all protocols above and complete the Extra Curricular Risk Assessment form located in:

S:\All Staff\Staff Information\Coronavirus

School Trips – the guidance below has been issued by East Renfrewshire Council

Domestic & Non-residential:

In the autumn term, if schools wish they can resume non-overnight domestic educational visits, as long as all risk assessments and information gathering is comprehensive and the benefits of going on this trip outweighs the risks. Areas to be looked at closely and risk assessed are the risk assessments from places to be visited, are there controls sufficient, is the trip in or outdoors, how will you travel there, is public transport necessary? Will other schools or members of the public be there at the same time. Hygiene measures, grouping of the party and social distancing between adults will all have to be considered and documented within the risk assessment.

Schools should also assess whether the pupils undertaking the trip have the capacity to be compliant with the anti COVID-19 measures in place at the venue(s) being attended during the excursion

Residential:

The risk of transmission on a school trip which includes an overnight stay away from the place of normal residence, is seen to be greater than the risks associated with a day trip. This is due to children, young people and adults from different families and households mixing and sharing facilities. This risk is reduced if the groups remain separate, but it is still seen to be greater than that associated with non-residential trips.

Separately, we know that where local outbreaks occur, areas can be shut down at short notice. Should pupils be visiting such an area when that happens, this may result in them having difficulties leaving the residential setting.

Therefore residential domestic school trips are therefore not recommended at this time, as the risks of transmission on a residential school trip are seen to be greater than the potential benefits to children and young people.

International educational visits

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office continue to advise against all but essential travel to most countries, except for a number of destinations with whom the UK Government has agreed a reciprocal air bridge policy. The arrangement is subject to change at short notice, meaning that people who travelled in good faith to countries on the “no quarantine” list, are subjected to a change of policy while out of the UK, meaning they have to quarantine for 14 days on their return.

As a result, we continue to advise against schools undertaking international visits at this time.