



# **RISK ASSESSMENT COVID-19**

**AUGUST 2021**



## ST MARY'S SCHOOL ASCOT

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### COVID-19 risk assessment – August 2021

#### References

The Government has published numerous COVID-19 guidance documents since the outbreak began. The list below sets out the key documents which the school has drawn on to write this whole-school risk assessment. Staff should note **Reference A** (Schools COVID-19 operational guidance) which is of particular importance.

- A. [Schools COVID-19 operational guidance](#) published 2 July 2020 and last updated 17 August 2021.
- B. [The use of personal protective equipment \(PPE\) in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including for aerosol generating procedures \(AGPs\)](#) last updated 20 July 2021.
- C. [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings.](#) published 26 February 2020 and last updated 19 July 2021.
- D. [School attendance: guidance for schools](#) published 25 November 2013 and last updated 26 July 2021.
- E. [COVID-19: guidance for the safe use of places of worship](#) published 16 July 2021.
- F. [Working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\): events and attractions](#) published 14 July 2021 and last updated 17 August 2021.
- G. [Contingency framework: education and childcare settings](#) dated 17 August 2021.
- H. [Guidance on coronavirus \(COVID-19\) measures for grassroots sport participants, providers and facility operators](#) published 22 July 2021 and last updated 18 August 2021.

## OVERVIEW

On 19 July 2021 England moved to Step 4 of the roadmap. This marks a new phase in the government's response to the pandemic, moving away from stringent restrictions on everyone's day-to-day lives, towards advising people on how to protect themselves and others, alongside targeted interventions to reduce risk.

As COVID-19 becomes a virus that we learn to live with, the government's view is that there is now an imperative to reduce the disruption to children and young people's education - particularly given that the direct clinical risks to children are extremely low, and every adult will have been offered a first vaccine and the opportunity for two doses by mid-September. The Department for Education's priority, shared by St Mary's, is to deliver face-to-face, high-quality education to pupils. The government reports that the evidence is clear that being out of education causes significant harm to educational attainment, life chances and mental and physical health.

All that said, incidence of the virus in society remains high although the statistics indicate that there is significantly less risk of serious illness and hospitalisation. The school's approach is to continue to follow government guidance which asks us all to be cautious. This risk assessment and the consequent operation of the school will reflect government guidance whilst simultaneously being ready to adapt to changes in the local (<https://www.berkshirepublichealth.co.uk/covid-19-dashboard/?view=cases&location=Windsor%20and%20Maidenhead>) and national picture.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

The start of the Michaelmas term 2021 will represent a major step towards a return of the operation of the school to pre-COVID routines. It is the school's view that, given the virulence of the Delta variant and the consequent significant presence of the virus in society, it is not yet possible to 'switch off' all COVID measures. However, these concerns must be balanced with the reduced numbers of individuals becoming seriously ill, those requiring hospitalisation and, importantly, the reduced numbers of fatalities.

The purpose of this risk assessment is to set out how the school will be organised and run during the Michaelmas term 2021. It remains a live document and will be updated and changed as further guidance is received and as the national and local picture develops. In addition, the school will consult with staff prior to the start of term and will continue to take staff views into account in future iterations of the risk assessment.

## KEY MESSAGES

- The school will operate in line with government guidance – **Schools COVID-19 operational guidance** (Reference A).
- Pupils will no longer be in ‘bubbles’ and mixing across year groups will be permitted.
- The school will no longer be zoned. Pupils will now move to departments for lessons and will not remain in year group zones.
- Face coverings will no longer be compulsory but may be worn by any member of staff or pupil if desired.
- The Staff Refectory will reopen and the Pupil Refectory will revert to normal operation.
- Social distancing will no longer be required by staff or pupils.
- High levels of personal hygiene will continue to be encouraged.
- Additional sanitising measures will continue to be taken across the school site.
- An outbreak management plan (OMP) sets out how the school will operate should there be an outbreak in the local area or in the school.
- Pupils will continue to be tested twice a week in the Asymptomatic Test Site (marquee). Staff will be encouraged to use school provided home test kits twice a week.
- Staff and pupils to be encouraged to keep all school spaces well ventilated at all times.

Area for Consideration	Control Measures	Action/Responsibility
Social distancing	There will no longer be a requirement for pupils, staff and visitors to social distance within the school site. Everyone must be conscious that others may wish to retain a degree of social distancing and this must be respected at all times.	All
Face coverings	Face coverings are no longer mandatory although staff, pupils and visitors may wear face coverings at any time. Further detail available in <b>Reference B</b> .	All
	In line with government guidance, in crowded areas individuals are encouraged to wear face coverings. For gatherings of the close school community such as Chapel, we are effectively all one 'bubble' and there will be no compulsion to wear face coverings although individuals may choose to do so. When parents and other visitors from outside of our 'bubble' are invited into the school and gathered together in a 'crowd', they will be encouraged to wear a face covering but there will be no compulsion.	All
	A member of SMET may mandate the wearing of face coverings by pupils for a specific event or at certain times at their discretion.	All
	In line with Government direction, face coverings are required to be worn in minibuses and coaches.	All
Testing	The school will encourage all staff to take Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) prior to INSET and again prior to the first day of term.	
	All staff will be provided with sufficient LFTs for home testing twice per week. Results to be reported to the NHS and the school.	All
	Asymptomatic Test Site (ATS) – the marquee – to continue to be used for the testing of pupils twice each week. Results reported to the NHS and recorded by the school. The government are due to review this requirement at the end of September 2021.	CFE, GKB, PJD
	Samba testing in the infirmary when required – authority for use can be given by any member of SMET or the school nurse.	SMET, school nurses
	Parents and visitors to the school site for specific events (e.g. Open Mornings and Sunday morning Mass) will be encouraged to take a LFT prior to attending the school. For some events, this may be determined to be compulsory and the visitors will be asked to demonstrate on arrival that the test has been taken and is negative.	DAS, CFE, SEY
Symptoms	Staff, pupils and visitors must not come into school if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or if they have tested positive for the virus in the last 10 days.	All
Movement around the school site	Restrictions on movement around the school site (e.g. one way corridors) are no longer in effect and signage has been removed.	All
Morning Chapel and Sunday Mass	Morning Chapel will resume in the Chapel with pupils and staff present.	DAS, CFE
	Communal singing may resume in Chapel – <b>Reference E</b> .	VB, AHR
House and Year Group Meetings	House and Year Group Meetings to resume as pre-COVID-19.	CFE
House teas	House teas will resume although HoH may prefer to host these events outside of their own homes.	HoH
FastVein	School to return to the use of FastVein for registration. FastVein scanners to be added to the Housekeeping sanitisation plan.	CFE, ADW, EC

Area for Consideration	Control Measures	Action/Responsibility
SMASH	SMASH to revert to pre-COVID-19 timings. Normal restrictions of numbers in the shop will resume and pupils from different year groups may enter the shop together.	JED
Academic	The school will no longer be zoned for teaching.	Teaching staff, BEB, TJC
	Classrooms will revert to pre-COVID-19 set up/capacity.	BEB, TJC, ADW
	Perspex screens to be removed from classrooms where they had been provided.	TJC
	Additional classrooms (e.g. Rufus Sewell) will revert to original usage.	TJC
	Classroom ventilation remains important and teachers encouraged to open windows.	Teaching staff, TJC
	Dual mode teaching will remain in place for pupils who are unable to be in school as a result of COVID-19. This will be by exception and not a matter of routine, and only with permission of the Academic Deputy Head or the Pastoral Deputy Head.	BEB, ADW
	Sanitising wipes and gels to remain available in all classrooms. Teaching staff to encourage regular usage by pupils.	EMC, BEB, teaching staff
	Pupils will resume the completion of study in their pre-COVID locations noting the following changes: Y7 remain in R10/11, Y8 in R14/15, Y9 in R1-3 (not R4) and the Junior Library.	BEB/CFE
Pastoral: Boarding areas	Perspex screens to be removed from all offices – staff may request the Estate Manager to return a screen if preferred by any member of staff.	All, TJC
	Restrictions on moving around the boarding areas and visiting other pupils are lifted.	JED/RER
	Use of bathrooms and toilets reverts to the pre-COVID-19 arrangement.	JED/RER
Pastoral: Infirmary	Residential staff and other pastoral staff may now move without restriction between different boarding areas.	JED/RER
	Nurses to triage and care for unwell pupils. PPE available for nursing staff and further training for nurses has been provided by the school on the symptoms of COVID (including those less common), using PPE and caring for someone with symptoms.	JED, school nurses
	Separate “hot” area identified for isolation within the infirmary for potential COVID-19 cases. Routine illnesses to be triaged in the “cold” area.	JED, school nurses
	NHS clinical assessment flowchart for nurses outlining what to do if a pupil presents with COVID-19 symptoms – coordinated by the school doctor in consultation with the Pastoral Deputy Head and the Senior Nurse.	JED, school nurses
	List of vulnerable staff and pupils to be kept by school Senior Nurse and the Pastoral Deputy Head to keep staff updated as necessary.	JED, school nurses
	School nurses trained in use of LFTs and SAMBA machine.	JED, school nurses
	Pupils and staff will be regularly reminded that they must report immediately should they display one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19.	JED, school nurses
Co-curricular	All co-curricular provision will revert to pre-COVID-19 arrangements.	CFE/AFS
Educational Visits	Overseas educational visits can now be planned and run. Trip leaders must discuss all plans with the Director of Co-Curricular and care must be taken to check the official travel list, which is subject to change – green countries can be moved into amber or red during a visit. Trips must comply with international travel legislation and should have contingency plans in place to account for these changes. Trip leaders and the Director of Co-	AFS

Area for Consideration	Control Measures	Action/Responsibility
	Curricular have a responsibility to ensure that adequate travel insurance is in place for all visits. <b>Reference – A.</b>	
Minibuses and Coaches	In line with Government direction, face coverings are required to be worn in minibuses and coaches.	All
Sport	To ensure safe provision of sport, the Director of Sport will continue to follow guidance from each individual sport's National Governing Body – <b>Reference H.</b>	AFS/GSE
Socials	Socials between different schools can now take place. The teacher in charge of a social should request LFTs are taken in a 24-hour window by all pupils and staff attending from other schools.	AFS/JED/RER
Pupil return	Pupils must not come into school if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or if they have tested positive for the virus in the last 10 days.	CFE
	The school will provide all pupils the opportunity to take LFTs prior to mixing with other pupils. The Asymptomatic Test Centre to be activated for pupils (staggered arrival times) on Sunday 5 September and again on 6 and 7 September for new Year 7s and 9s.	CFE/GKB
	Pupils to remain socially distanced from other pupils/parents until they have received a negative result. Following a negative test, trunks will be dropped off by parents to designated year group areas as coordinated by the Pastoral Deputy Head and the Estates Manager.	CFE, JED, GKB
	Parents wishing to enter the school building and meet with Heads of House will be requested to take a LFT in the 24 hours prior to arriving on site and to respect social distancing with Heads of House.	CFE
	Parents whose daughter/s have travelled beyond the Common Travel Area during the 10 days prior to the return to school (since 26 August 2021) must comply with government regulations about testing and quarantine and complete the school's International Travel Declaration Form before returning to the school site.	CJE
	A bespoke programme for the reception of the new girls into school will be organised by the Registrar and Senior Deputy Head.	CFE, SY
Exeats	Exeats (floaters and planned) to resume.	CFE, All
	London bus to be reintroduced from the first exeat.	CFE, PJD, KJH
	Leaving site permitted in accordance with the normal rules for different year groups., but pupils must follow social distancing guidelines and wear face coverings wherever necessary.	JED, RER
Pet Shed	Pet sheds reopened with no restriction on pupils from different year groups mixing.	JED
Playground	Playground reopened with no restriction on different year groups mixing.	JED, RER
Safeguarding	School's safeguarding policy and procedures revert to the pre-COVID-19 stance.	JED, All
Hygiene	<p>Expectations to ensure good hygiene made clear to pupils by staff, and modelled by staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the catch it, bin it, kill it guidance to minimise the risk of airborne contamination.</li> <li>• Make use of the tissues and bins that are readily available throughout the school. These are regularly checked and restocked.</li> <li>• Wash hands regularly for 20 seconds with soap and water. Extra handbasins have been installed and will be retained whilst the virus remains a threat so that they are readily available around the school site.</li> </ul>	All

Area for Consideration	Control Measures	Action/Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain good ventilation in indoor spaces.</li> </ul>	
	Alcohol hand gel readily available around the school site in classrooms and other areas, such as the refectories.	EC
	Disinfecting wipes readily available for use by pupils and staff to wipe down equipment and surfaces.	Teaching staff, EC
	Handwashing or the use of hand sanitiser is essential before lessons, at lunch time, and directly after lessons, and before and after eating or drinking.	All
Staff designated vulnerable or extremely vulnerable	Staff who are designated clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable will be expected to work from the school site. Any individual who is concerned about this arrangement should immediately discuss it with their HoD and the Senior Deputy Head/Bursar.	All
Pupils designated vulnerable or extremely vulnerable	Pastoral Deputy Head, Heads of House and infirmary staff will work with parents to put in place any bespoke additional measures to safeguard clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable pupils taking into account government advice and school doctor's advice.	JED, HoH & school nurses
Communicating expectations to pupils	The school will brief all pupils at the start of term on how the school will operate and expectations of pupils particularly with regard to hygiene.	DAS, CFE, JED
	Academic and residential staff are required to monitor pupils' compliance with the risk assessment measures and report to their Heads of Department any concerns.	Academic and residential staff
	Pupils are encouraged to directly contact the Senior Deputy Head, Pastoral Deputy Head, Academic Deputy Head or their Heads of House with any concerns as soon as possible.	CFE, JED
Reducing the risk of visitors bringing the virus into the school	<p>Expectations at Reception are made clear to visitors (including parents) by signage and reception staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No entry if a visitor is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 10 days.</li> <li>No entry if they or a member of their household are self-isolating or quarantining.</li> <li>All visitors must wash hands upon entry into school.</li> <li>All visitors to record their contact details upon arrival at the school to fulfil NHS Test and trace requirements.</li> <li>Any pre-arranged visitors are told not to come to the school should they exhibit any of the symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever, a new, persistent cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell.</li> </ul>	PJD
	Contractors are invited to allow the school to take their temperature prior to starting work. If temperature is raised, the contractor will be invited to leave site.	TJC
	A Perspex screen to be retained at Reception.	TJC, PJD
	Parents will be permitted into the school buildings as per pre-COVID-19 arrangements.	PJD, HoH
Large gatherings involving visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large gatherings that involve visitors such as Open Mornings, alumnae events, Sunday Mass will now be permitted.</li> <li>It is possible that visitors, if gathered closely together such as in the Chapel, may be invited to wear masks.</li> <li>Visitors will be asked to take LFT in advance of coming to the school site.</li> </ul>	DAS, CFE
Housekeeping	Deep cleaning of the entire school site has taken place prior to the reopening of the school in March 2021 and in anticipation of the new term in September 2021.	EC

Area for Consideration	Control Measures	Action/Responsibility
	The Housekeeping team will continue to provide an enhanced housekeeping and sanitising service across the school site. Temporary staff engaged for COVID-19 have been retained to allow Housekeeping to continue to provide a sanitising service in the afternoons and at weekends.	EC
	Increased emphasis on sanitising all surfaces and touchpoints such as door handles, push plates, keyboards, toilets and staircase handrails. See <b>Reference C</b> .	EC
	In addition to sanitising wipes and the use of normal household detergents and bleach (in accordance with government guidelines) for sanitising, the school has procured a number of disinfectant spray machines (known colloquially as ‘fogging devices’) which enables larger surface areas to be cleaned quickly. Selected staff have been trained to use these devices such that the important contact time between the surface and the chemical is achieved.	EC
	The laundry will return to normal pre-COVID-19 operation.	EC
	The Housekeeper is responsible for the procurement and restocking of sanitising resources and related PPE; this includes two packets of wipes per classroom and one sanitising gel per classroom.	EC
	If a pupil is a suspect COVID-19 case or a confirmed case then Housekeeping will be immediately informed and all identified risk areas will be deep cleaned/sanitised. If Housekeeping is not available, the area(s) will be sealed off temporarily.	CFE, JED, GKB, EC
	The laundry from a pupil who is a suspect COVID-19 case or a confirmed case will be double bagged with a red outer bag. This will then be washed in accordance with government guidelines.	EC, JED, RER, Residential staff
Waste disposal	Contaminated waste or suspect contaminated waste will be double bagged and placed in a designated container for 72 hours in the Estates yard. It will then be disposed of in the normal manner.	EC, JED, RER, TJC
Catering	The use of the pupil and staff refectories will return to pre-COVID-19 operation.	CFE, JC
	The chef brigade bubbles will no longer be in use.	JC
	Staff are requested to encourage all pupils to wash their hands prior to every meal and to lead by example.	All
Estates: Ventilation	Staff will maximise ventilation in all spaces within the school to minimise risk of virus spreading.	
	Estates Manager has reviewed all spaces across the school with a view to maximising natural ventilation.	
Estates: Lifts	Restrictions on the use of lifts (one person at a time) are now lifted.	All staff
Fire safety procedures	Whilst the portakabins and marquee remain on site the school fire assembly point remains in the athletics track D closest to the school.	All staff
	The easing of circulation by holding open fire doors with equipment linked to the fire alarm system will continue.	GKB, TJC
	All pupils to be briefed and shown the fire assembly point by residential staff during their first evening at St Mary’s with additional guidance given by tutors in week 1 of the Michaelmas term.	CFE, JED, Residential staff
	New staff were also be briefed on the fire assembly point as part of Staff INSET.	GKB
Outbreak Management Plan (OMP)	The school will draft an OMP to guide decision making should there be an increase in the COVID-19 threat either nationally or locally. See <b>Reference G</b> . This document will be available to staff on request.	SMET
Consultation and concerns	This document is a ‘live’ document which can and will be adjusted during the term as lessons are learnt and staff, pupil and parent feedback is received and considered.	CFE

Area for Consideration	Control Measures	Action/Responsibility
	Should the systems we have in place not function as they should, the school would wish to be able to address promptly any issues and so staff are encouraged to promptly contact directly the Senior Deputy Head, Pastoral Deputy Head, Academic Deputy Head or the Bursar with any concerns.	All
	If staff are not content with any COVID-19 secure measures and their concerns are not properly dealt with after they have been raised both informally and formally, the school has a Whistleblowing Policy in the Staff Employment Manual.	All