

Summary of considerations in advance of proposed reopening of schools on Monday 1 June 2020

Since the Prime Minister's announcement concerning the proposed reopening of schools on Sunday 10 May, and in light of the Department for Education guidance issued on Monday 11 May and Thursday 14 May, the St Thomas Aquinas Executive Team members have worked with the 21 Headteachers from across the Trust to produce a detailed Risk Assessment (RA). The RA applies to all of our schools, and is accompanied by *school-specific protocols* which related directly and exclusively to each individual school. These individual protocols are based around each school's physical environment, facilities available, entrances, exits, building layouts and so on.

In all cases, our RA and the school protocols follow the guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE) and Public Health England (PHE). We will not deviate from this advice.

Listed below are the key, broad areas we have considered in developing the extensive, detailed RA for our schools. This is not an exhaustive list, but is shared (principally with and for parents and carers) to provide reassurance. Should you have any questions which are specific to your child's school, please contact the school to discuss them with school leaders.

1. Controlling and preventing any potential spread of the virus

- We have ensured that all schools are fully aware of how to deal with any suspected case of the virus including: the immediate actions to take; the communications necessary; how to access testing for staff & the information to share about testing with parents/carers; how to arrange for the 'deep clean' needed.
- We have ensured that all schools are clear on who should and should not be permitted onto the school site including staff, pupils, parents, contractors and visitors.
- Careful consideration has been given to any communal areas, and new ways of working have been introduced to ensure that regulations are adhered to.
- Clear instructions will be given, and constantly reinforced, to pupils around safety with particular emphasis on handwashing. In our primary schools there will be periodic supervision of pupils' handwashing.
- There will be minimal sharing of any resources and, in most cases, resources will not be carried between home and school for this initial period of time.

2. Social distancing

- Wherever possible, pupils and staff will maintain a 2 metre distance between each other whilst in school. The DfE has recognised that there will inevitably be situations in school settings in which this is not possible. As such they have issued a 'hierarchy of measures' which we will be following:
 - Avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
 - Frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices

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- Regular cleaning
- Minimising contact and mixing
- Class sizes will be reduced to a maximum of 15 pupils who will remain together each day, and will work with a very limited number of adults (typically not more than 2 each week). The DfE refers to this as a 'bubble'. Bubbles will be kept at least 2 metres apart from each other at all times, including at break and lunchtimes.

3. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Most staff will not be wearing PPE as the DfE guidance is clear that it is not required for the majority of activities in a school setting. Some staff *may* use PPE, and staff *will* use it if a pupil they are supervising becomes ill, if the member of staff has to provide first aid to a pupil, or if a member of staff is providing intimate care for a child. The Trust is providing PPE packs to each of our schools for these three, specific purposes.

4. Food & catering

- All kitchens in our schools have 5* hygiene certificates and we will maintain this highest standard of cleanliness.
- Breakfast services in our schools (where applicable) will be provided only within the bubble groups referred to above. If pupils are eating in halls or canteens, all tables and chairs will be cleaned in between uses.
- Where possible our schools will provide hot food, but this will not involve daily choices from serveries; rather it will be provided in disposable containers and eaten, wherever possible, with disposable cutlery. If hot food cannot be provided in this way, schools will provide cold, pre-packed food.
- Queueing will be avoided wherever possible and, if it is necessary, social distancing will be applied.

5. Visitors

- No non-essential visitors will be permitted to access the school site. Essential visitors would include contractors carrying out routine maintenance and Health & Safety work.
- Should parents/carers need to contact the school this should be done **by telephone or email unless it is an absolute emergency**. With the greatest of respect to all, parents/carers will be refused access to the site if the school considers their visit to be non-essential.

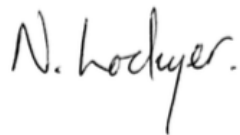
6. Cleaning & hygiene

- Since the start of the lockdown, only small numbers of pupils and staff have been in school. This has given the opportunity for cleaning teams to fully clean, then shut off significant parts of the building. As such, we begin reopening with very clean and hygienic school environments.
- Clear cleaning advice has been given to all school Premises Officers from the Trust's Business Services Director including: increasing the number of daily cleans; focusing specifically on areas of increased movement and increased physical contact (e.g. stairways); ensuring that cleaning stocks are well supplied.
- Wherever possible (and paying careful attention to fire regulations), doors will be propped open to both increase ventilation, but more importantly to reduce the number of surfaces pupils and staff need to touch.

7. "Normal" Health & Safety procedures

- The safeguarding of our pupils has always been, and remains, the highest individual priority for our trust and all of our schools. We have had to modify our safeguarding processes during this period of school closure to meet the new ways of working, and we will continue to assess and modify them to ensure that we keep our young people as safe as they can possibly be.
- In addition to all of the extra measures we are taking in light of the COVID-19 situation, all usual Health & Safety checks and procedures will be taking place as they normally do. These include, but are not limited to: water hygiene tests; electrical tests; fire drills & other evacuation procedures; routine maintenance and servicing of equipment and systems; and, detailed staff training in relation to a wide range of issues.

In recognition of the rapidly-changing landscape we are currently working in, we will be reviewing our RA on Friday 12 June which is the end of the second week back after half-term.



N Lockyer
Chief Executive Officer

21 May 2020