

Carwarden House

Arrangements for whole school reopening September 2020

small community **thinking big**



Context

Carwarden response to new requirements contained in the DfE guidance published on 2nd July:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings>

- * How we have ensured compliance with revised legal requirements.
- * How we have ‘interpreted’ the guidance for our context - this includes revised protective (control) measures, all logistical arrangements, our curriculum offer & staffing arrangements.

Government guidance for full opening

- * “... all children and young people, in all year groups and setting types, will return to education settings full time from the beginning of the autumn term.”
- * Guidance is in 5 sections: minimising risk, school operations, curriculum, behaviour & pastoral support, assessment & accountability, continuity planning in the case of a local outbreak
- * Guidance stresses the vital importance of all students returning to school ‘sooner rather than later’ for their ‘wellbeing’ and ‘cognitive & academic development’.
- * It recognises that a student’s time in education is ‘key to their preparation for adulthood’ (in-line with our school vision & ethos).

Government guidance for full opening

- * It accepts that it is ‘not possible to ensure a totally risk-free environment’ but that staff working in schools ‘tend not to be at greater risk from the disease than many other occupations’.
- * ‘Given the improved position, the balance of risk is now overwhelmingly in favour of children & young people returning to school’.
- * ‘While COVID-19 remains in the community, this means making judgements at a setting level about how to balance & minimise any risks from coronavirus with providing a full experience for students’.

Government guidance for full opening

- * It states that ‘in welcoming all children & young people back in this autumn,’ we are asked to **‘minimise the number of contacts that a student has during the day as part of implementing the system of controls’**.
- * Every school is required to ‘plan for the possibility of a local lockdown and how they will ensure continuity of education’.
- * It confirms that **if schools follow the guidance they ‘can be confident they are managing risk effectively’**.

Government guidance for full opening

It states –

- * If schools ‘follow this advice effectively, they will effectively minimise risk’.
- * ‘All elements of the systems of control are essential’.
- * ‘the way different settings implement some of the requirements will differ based on their individual circumstances’.
- * School leaders are ‘best placed to understand the needs of their settings & communities, and to make informed judgements about how to balance delivering a broad & balanced curriculum with the measures to minimise risk’.

Government guidance for full opening

- * It requires us to ‘work closely with parents, staff & unions, as we normally would, when agreeing the best approaches for their (our) circumstances’.
- * The Government believes that the ‘conditions are right’ for all students and staff to be back in school but accepts ‘some people will understandably have worries that should be heard and addressed’.

Section 1: Minimising risk

- * In compliance with health & safety law, we will ‘assess risks and put in place proportionate (additional) control measures’.
- * We accept our responsibility as employers to ‘protect people from harm’ and are taking all ‘reasonable steps to protect staff, pupils and others from COVID-19 within the (our) education setting’.
- * We will ‘thoroughly review (our) health & safety risk assessments’ and implement plans for the autumn term that ‘address the risk identified using the systems of control’ set out in the guidance (we are awaiting an agreed template).
- * We are building on our learning to date and practices already developed and will implement any additional control measures to enable a return to full capacity in the autumn term.
- * The systems of control are an adapted form of the protective measures we have successfully implemented from March 17th in our childcare provision.

Section 1: Minimising risk

System of controls - Prevention

We will –

1. **Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring those who have COVID-19 symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school.**
 - * **We will ensure that students, staff and other adults do not come into school if they have COVID-19 symptoms or have tested positive in the last 7 days.**
 - * **Ensure anyone developing symptoms during the day is sent home and advise them to follow 'Stay at home' guidance.**
 - * **Adhere to our current protocols for dealing with an individual who becomes symptomatic during the day whilst they are awaiting collection (including isolation, supervision, use of PPE)**

Section 1: Minimising risk

System of controls - Prevention

We will –

2. Clean hands more often than usual.

- * Support our students to clean their hands regularly (when they arrive, after breaks, when they change room, before & after eating).
- * Provide additional hand washing facilities (e.g. 5 x new sinks in main-site corridors) and provide sanitiser in all rooms and around the school.
- * Ensure adequate supplies of soap, paper towels and hand moisturizer in all rooms.
- * Build hand washing routines into school culture supported by explicit behaviour expectations to help ensure our students understand the need to follow them.

Section 1: Minimising risk

System of controls - Prevention

We will –

3. Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach.
 - * Provide adequate supplies of tissues and bins with lids in all rooms for their disposal.
 - * Follow Public Health England guidance on use of face coverings (not recommended in schools except where they are already routinely used as part of close contact care). However, staff & students will be permitted to wear mask if they feel safer doing so.

Section 1: Minimising risk

System of controls - Prevention

We will –

4. Ensure enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often.

- * Continue to implement our enhanced cleaning schedule (revised COVID-19 specific cleaning procedures by contractors); staff & students regularly cleaning frequently touched surfaces; outside gym, climbing equipment and seating cleaned after use; all shared areas (including toilets) cleaned after use).
- * New PHE guidance expected before end of this term.

Section 1: Minimising risk

System of controls - Prevention

We will –

5. **Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible.**
 - * **We will adhere to the overarching principle in reducing the number of contacts between students and staff through keeping groups separate (in ‘bubbles’) AND through maintaining distance between individuals wherever possible.**
 - * **We will teach in bubbles of no more than 11 students.**
 - * **Each bubble will be allocated their own room not used by anyone outside their group.**
 - * **Bubbles in Y9 to Y11 will be based broadly on ability (groups determined by literacy / numeracy levels), splitting Tutor groups as appropriate but retaining students in their own year groups.**
 - * **Y7 & Y8 students will be taught in Tutor groups (not split according to ability).**
 - * **Students in the 6th Form (including new Y12s) will be taught in their current ability based teaching (planet) groups.**
 - * **All bubbles will be supported by a teacher and at least 1 TA who will teach all aspects of the agreed curriculum offer.**

Section 1: Minimising risk

System of controls - Prevention

We will –

- * **Allocate additional TA 1:1 support where specified & available.**
- * **Where possible, ensure teachers & TAs work with their own Tutor year group.**
- * **Implement routines for student arrivals and departures to minimise contact.**
- * **Routinely check health status of students (but not take temperatures unless they are feeling unwell).**
- * **Support social distancing by introducing a whole school ‘no touch’ policy.**
- * **Encourage staff to maintain a 2 metre distance from all others but where this isn’t possible to try and maintain at least 1 metre and avoid face to face contact (e.g. working beside a student).**
- * **Ensure staff are not required to move between bubbles wherever possible.**
- * **Schedule a minimum of 2 x 15 min. breaks per day for all staff to take individually (limit the number of staff using facilities at the same time).**
- * **Dedicate Fridays afternoons to statutory PPA (including home-learning preparation) – students to leave at 13:00. TAs will continue to complete directed time on Wednesday after school.**
- * **Allow PPA to be completed at home where feasible.**
- * **Require part-time staff to work 2.5 days with a bubble and 1/2 day on PPA (unless otherwise agreed).**
- * **Dedicate 1st - 4th September for staff training on new approach.**

Section 1: Minimising risk

System of controls - Prevention

We will –

- * **Minimise all contact between bubbles – use external exits only (main corridor in main-site not used), stagger break times, eat lunches in classrooms, allocate times for toilet use, create separate areas within playground (consider whole year groups socialising outside and or eating lunch together once a week).**
- * **Allocate specific toilets in 6th Form to bubbles – common room to become bubble classroom – additional toilets planned for both main-site and 6th form.**
- * **Limit and schedule the use of specialist rooms – Food Tech, Science (GCSE groups only), hall (collection of lunch only), PE (non-contact) in classroom or outside to take place during scheduled break times.**
- * **Keep some areas closed – swimming pool, library, Sara’s room, 6th Form diner.**
- * **Close off some doors closed to limit contact in corridors (introduce some one-way systems).**
- * **Maintain social distancing by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) – desks facing forward to minimise face to face working.**
- * **Ensure the library is repurposed for isolating anyone who becomes ill (male staff toilet in corridor reserved for exclusive use for anyone in isolation).**
- * **Provide all students with personal stationary (no sharing) to be kept in bubble classroom – personal pencil case and lever arch folder with variety of paper.**

Section 1: Minimising risk

System of controls - Prevention

We will –

6. Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)

‘Staff in school will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases, including:

- * Where an individual student becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms while at school, and only then if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained**
- * Where a student has routine intimate care needs that involves the use of PPE, in which case the same PPE should continue to be used.’**

Section 1: Minimising risk

System of controls - Response

We will –

7. Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process

The school understands the NHS Test & Trace process and how to contact our local PHE health protection team. We will provide students and staff with a home testing kit if appropriate and available.

We will ensure that staff and parents understand and they need to be ready and willing to:

- * Book a test if they are displaying symptoms and be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them when at school.**
- * Provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for COVID-19 or if asked by NHS Test and Trace.**
- * Self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who develops COVID-19 symptoms or someone who tests positive for COVID-19.**
- * Inform the school immediately of results of a test.**

Section 1: Minimising risk

System of controls - Response

We will –

8. Manage confirmed cases of COVID-19 amongst the school community

- * Take swift action when we become aware that someone who has attended has tested positive for COVID-19.
- * Contact the local health protection team who will carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm close contacts and provide definitive advice on who must be sent home.
- * To support them in doing so, we will keep a record of students and staff in each group (and any close contact that has occurred between staff and /or students outside this group).

Section 1: Minimising risk

System of controls - Response

We will –

9. Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice

- * **If the school has 2 or more confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where COVID-19 is suspected, it may be that we have an outbreak. We will continue to work with the local health protection team and follow any advise on additional action that is required. In some cases this might be a recommendation that a larger number of other students self-isolate – perhaps a whole year group or whole school.**
- * **If an outbreak at our school is confirmed, a mobile testing unit may be dispatched to test others who may have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive. Testing would first focus on the person’s ‘bubble’, followed by their year group, then the whole school setting if necessary.**

Section 2: school operations

Transport

- * Our Local authorities are required to work with us to ensure our students can get to school.
- * The requirements on the public when using public transport do not apply to students using 'dedicated' home / school transport. However, the approach to home / school transport should align as far as possible with the principles underpinning the systems of control set out in the guidance for schools.
- * They are required to consider:
 1. How pupils are grouped together of transport, where possible reflecting the bubbles adopted within school
 2. Use of hand sanitiser upon boarding and/or disembarking
 3. Additional cleaning of vehicles
 4. Organising queuing & boarding
 5. Distancing within vehicles wherever possible
 6. **The use of face covering for students over the age of 11.**

Section 2: school operations

Attendance

- * Attendance is mandatory for all students from the beginning of the autumn term.
- * Parents have a duty to secure that their child attends school.
- * We have the responsibility to continue to record attendance and follow up absence.
- * We have the availability to issue sanctions (e.g. fixed penalty notices) but will NOT do so in cases where there is genuine anxiety from parents about their child attending school due to fears around COVID-19. We will work with them to allay concerns.
- * Where a child is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical or PHE advice to self-isolate, we will make arrangements to immediately offer them remote education (home-learning).
- * We will be mindful of the potential concerns of students and parents who may be reluctant or anxious about returning and put in support to address this. This may involve individual discussions to provide reassurance of the measures we are putting in place to reduce the risk in school.
- * We recognise that some of our students will need preparation for their return to full time school (this may include, part-time returns, visits to the school, the use of social stories).

Section 2: school operations

Workforce

- * Following the reduction in the prevalence of COVID-19 and relaxation of shielding measures from August 1st, the Government expects that most staff will attend their work in school.
- * It remains the case that wider Government policy advises those who can work from home to do so. However, this is not applicable to most if not all school staff whose roles are not conducive to home working.
- * Carwarden is applying the full protective measures in Government guidance and risks to all staff will be mitigated significantly, including those who are extremely clinically vulnerable and clinically vulnerable.
- * We believe this will enable all staff to return to work, although advise those in the most at risk category to rigorously follow the most stringent social distancing & protective measures.

Section 2: school operations

Workforce

- * We will continue to discuss concerns with individual staff, explain in detail the measures we are putting in place to reduce risk and, as far as is practically possible, accommodate additional measures where appropriate.
- * People who live with those who are clinically extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable can attend work.
- * We will continue to assess health & safety risks and how we meet equalities duties in the usual way. This will help to ensure we are meeting our legal obligation to protect all our employees. By rigorously following all steps in the Government guidance we are mitigating the risks of COVID-19 to staff and students.
- * We accept we have a duty of care to all staff and that this extends to their work-life balance, wellbeing and mental health. We will continue to implement the wide range of mechanisms to support staff wellbeing in this respect and recognise that these will be particularly important in the current situation, as some staff may be particularly anxious about returning to work.
- * Our planning builds-in the need to avoid increases in unnecessary and unmanageable workload burdens.

Section 2: school operations

Workforce

- * **As would usually be the case, all staff and students will need to be available to return to school from the start of the autumn term.**
- * **We ask that staff and parents are mindful of that obligation when planning holidays (particularly those abroad) during the summer break.**
- * **There is an increased risk that where people travel abroad, their return arrangements could be disrupted due to factors beyond their control in relation to COVID-19, such as the potential for reinstatement of lockdown measures in the place they are visiting. We request staff and parents to consider these risks carefully before booking holidays out of this country.**

Section 2: school operations

Safeguarding

- * We will revise our safeguarding & child protection policy to reflect the return of all students from September.
- * We will endeavor to provide DSLs more time, particularly in the first few weeks of term, to help them provide additional support to staff and students regarding any new (and emerging) safeguarding & welfare concerns and the handling of referrals to social care and other agencies as appropriate.
- * Communication with our school nurse remains important for safeguarding and supporting student wellbeing.

Section 2: school operations

Catering

- * **Our kitchen will be fully open from early in the autumn term to provide meals to all students who want them, including those who are eligible for free school meals.**
- * **Our catering contractors will comply with the guidance for food businesses on COVID-19.**
- * **We have recently heard that our CIF bid for the complete refurbishment of the school kitchen was successful and this work is being planned to be completed during the summer break.**

Section 2: school operations

Estate

- * **Prior to opening in September all the usual pre-term building checks will be undertaken to ensure the school is safe.**
- * **All advice & guidance on safely reopening buildings (rooms) that have been closed or had reduced occupancy will be followed.**
- * **Adequate / increased ventilation in all rooms will remain a priority.**

Section 2: school operations

Educational visits

- * **Domestic overnight and overseas educational visits will not take place next term.**
- * **From the autumn term other visits (community learning) for individual bubbles can resume, including trips connected with a students preparation for adulthood. This may include travel training or making use of local outdoor spaces. Normal risk assessments will include COVID-19 specific risk mitigation planning.**
- * **Work Experience placements and college link courses will not take place next term.**

Section 2: school operations

Extra-curricular provision

- * **We will look to resume breakfast club later in the autumn term but strictly taking place within bubbles.**
- * **Mixed bubble lunch-time clubs will not recommence next term.**
- * **We continue to ‘signpost’ parents to available summer holiday childcare and activity programmes local to their homes.**

Section 3: curriculum

- * The guidance requires us to teach an ‘ambitious and broad curriculum in all subjects from the start of the autumn term’ but use flexibility to ‘create time to cover important missed content’.
- * We need to consider how all subjects can contribute to the ‘filling of gaps in knowledge’ (e.g. emphasis on reading, IT skills).
- * **Our curriculum will be substantially modified for the start of the year with teaching prioritised to address significant gaps in student knowledge and their social, emotional & mental health needs.**
- * We have the aim of returning to a full ‘normal’ curriculum by the summer term 2021.

Section 3: curriculum

- * **Our curriculum planning will be informed by an assessment of all pupil's starting points in September (making effective use of regular formative assessment) – we need to understand and address the 'gaps'.**
- * **Whilst RHSE becomes compulsory from September, schools are now expected to start teaching this by at least the start of the summer term 2021.**
- * **We aim to cover all teaching subjects within each of our 5 Golden Strands, though prioritising gaps / lost learning in literacy & numeracy.**
- * **We will look to give students extra support to catch up on any subject content that has been missed during lockdown.**

Section 3: curriculum

- * **We aim to offer students the usual full range of accreditation opportunities in Summer 2021.**
- * **We believe regular physical activity is an important factor in supporting our students within our Recovery Curriculum. Regular physical activity will be facilitated through break time PE activities for all students.**
- * **Wherever possible these activities will take place outdoors and only in bubble groups to minimise COVI-19 risks associated with exercise.**

Section 3: curriculum

- * We will develop a detailed plan for the effective use of the Government 'catch up' grant. This will be used to address individual student needs, including SaLT, travel training, EP time and other small group and individual interventions (possibly related to learning deficits).
- * If appropriate, we look at utilising funding for the 'National Tutoring Programme' to support the academic progress of our most disadvantaged & vulnerable students through the provision of one-to-one tuition (possibly delivered virtually).
- * The Government do not anticipate students repeating a school year though in a small number of individual cases it may be appropriate to have their current school placement or EHCP extended (decided by LA).

Section 3: pastoral support

- * **We understand students may have experienced a variety of emotions in response to the COVID-19 outbreak such as increased anxiety, stress or low mood.**
- * **Not all students will have had the opportunities to adjust to new routines in school whilst attending our childcare provision.**
- * **Many student will require support to re-adjust to being back in school, some will have enjoyed being at home and be reluctant to return and a few may be showing signs of more severe anxiety or depression.**
- * **We anticipate that exposure to adversity and trauma over the period of the pandemic may lead to an increase in SEMH concerns for some students.**

Section 3: pastoral support

- * **Our Recovery Curriculum places appropriate and specific emphasis on:**
 1. **Supporting the rebuilding of friendships and social engagement**
 2. **Addressing and equipping students to respond to COVID-19 issues**
 3. **Supporting students with strategies to improve their physical, emotional and mental wellbeing**
- * **From the start of the autumn term at least 1 hour per day will be dedicated to student wellbeing and support activities – ‘Recovery Time’.**
- * **We will draw on external support for individual students where issues are identified that require additional and/or specialised support.**

Section 3: behaviour

- * We will update our behaviour policy to include clear & consistent expectations of student conduct within our new school arrangements. Any changes made will be directly related to ensuring COVID-19 protective (control) measures are consistently implemented.
- * Clear, reasonable & proportionate expectations of student behaviour will be communicated to staff, students and parents with clarity on the consequences for poor behaviour or deliberately 'breaking the rules'. This is particular to movement around the school, contact with other bubbles and new hygiene rules.
- * We understand prolonged absence from school, lack of routine and exposure to trauma during the past months (e.g. bereavement) may lead to an increased incidence of poor behaviour for some students.

Section 4: Assessment & accountability

- * Routine Ofsted inspections remain suspended for the autumn term (intended to restart in January 2021).
- * Inspectors will visit a sample of schools to discuss how they are managing the return to school of all their students.
- * Ofqual will launch a consultation on proposed adaptations to 2021 exams shortly but we are planning for our students to access the full range of accreditation opportunities next year.
- * Normal requirements for staff to assess, record and report on individual student progress are reinstated from the beginning of next term.
- * For the first few weeks we will use Spring Term 2020 targets but aim to establish revised targets for the autumn term based on an assessment of where each student is on return by the end of September.
- * Y7 & Y12 'baseline' assessment will take place as usual.

Section 5: contingency planning for outbreaks

- * **We are required to have the capacity to offer immediate remote education to all students who are required to self-isolate or required to remain at home due to a local lockdown.**
- * We need to consider how we continue to improve the quality of our home-learning offer and have a contingency plan for remote education by the end of September.
- * Our plan should include arrangements to access online & offline resources and video teaching linked to our revised curriculum expectations.
- * We will use online tools that allow for interaction, assessment & feedback.
- * We will continue to provide printed resources for students who do not have suitable online access.

Section 5: contingency planning for outbreaks

- * Specific expectations on teaching students remotely are included in the guidance and the Government is exploring making a ‘temporary continuity direction’ in the autumn term to provide additional clarity to schools, students and parents as to what remote education should be provided.
- * We will continue to explore the effective use of the wide range of resources (e.g. from the DfE, Oaks Academy) to augment our home-learning offer.
- * **We will continue to recognise the critical importance of helping to keep all our students safe online.**

Consultation

- * It is the school's legal requirement to consult with all our employees (and union representatives) in relation to these proposals.
- * Many unions are due to publish advice and guidance on school reopening. We will continue to use all union advice to inform our planning.
- * As ever, we want all those in school to be involved in assessing workplace risks and contributing to our plans and policies to mitigate these.
- * We are committed to collaborative working and look to continue creating our culture of transparency, trust and joint problem solving – particularly important in these unprecedented times.