



Confederation  
of School Trusts



## Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Trust

### Full opening of schools March 8<sup>th</sup> 2021 a decision-making framework for Trust schools

Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Trust is founded on Catholic Christian values. We are based across the East Anglian counties of Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. As a Trust we recognise the individual identities and circumstances of our member schools whilst seeking to support them at all times and in particular during the Covid-19 pandemic. We also recognise that Headteachers, Heads of School and Executive Headteachers are in the best position to understand how their schools respond to the current situation and the Trust is here to guide them in their decision making and to enable them to carry out those decisions.

As a Trust we are members of the Confederation of Schools Trusts and we have been grateful for the excellent work that they have done in informing, supporting and guiding their members in recent weeks. This document is largely their work and we have adapted it to meet the specific needs of our Trust. As schools are being asked to open more widely, this framework outlines a series of strategic actions for our schools to take before decisions can be made about opening a school more widely in the safest possible way. It does not include all possible actions that could or should be taken in the specific context of each school and it is therefore intended to be adapted to meet the circumstances in which each school operates. It is intended to be a strategic framework to guide decision-making and we have therefore attempted to be concise.

If you follow the **system of controls** set out in annex A of this guidance, you will effectively reduce risks in your school and create an inherently safer environment. CST

**The strategic job now is to ensure a balance of risk – using the system of controls to prevent infection alongside ensuring pupils have a broad and ambitious curriculum.**

The sections in the framework could be used as your governing body agenda. In each case, risks and actions to mitigate risks should be identified and recorded formally by the LGB. These will then be forwarded to the Trust board as the responsible body, legal entity and employer.

We would like to re-assure you that the health and safety of our staff and children will be paramount over the coming weeks while we make best endeavours to serve the needs of our families as they navigate their own routes to eventual normality. Our Trust schools have responded professionally and in good spirit to the conditions they have found themselves in over recent weeks and we feel confident that we are best placed to respond in a balanced way which best meets the needs of all in the weeks to come.

### Approach to risk estimation and management

Some types of control are more effective at reducing risks than others. Risk reduction measures should be assessed in order of priority as set out below; schools should not simply adopt the easiest control measure to implement. Controls should be practical to be implemented and, ideally, should be able to be maintained easily over time. It is critical to remember that it will only rarely be feasible to eliminate individual risks completely. The combination of controls introduced should aim to reduce the risk to as low as reasonably practicable and prioritise structural, environmental interventions over individual level ones. This does not just mean considering risks of transmission, but also balancing these against risks to wider health and well-being and to education. Schools have the flexibility to respond to risks in a way that suits their circumstances while complying with their duties under health and safety legislation. Schools should work through the following steps to address their risks, considering for each risk whether there are measures in each step they can adopt before moving onto the next step:

1. Elimination: stop an activity that is not considered essential if there are risks attached.
2. Substitution: replace the activity with another that reduces the risk. Care is required to avoid introducing new hazards due to the substitution.
3. Engineering controls: design measures that help control or mitigate risk.
4. Administrative controls: identify and implement the procedures to improve safety (for example, markings on the floor, signage).
5. Having gone through this process, PPE should be used in circumstances where the guidance says it is required.

## Decisions and actions to take before opening your schools for all pupils from 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021

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| <p><b>Health and safety</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review health and safety risk assessments ensuring these are based on the Public Health System of Controls in the <a href="#">DfE guidance</a> summarised in <b>annex A</b> below. More information about health and safety risk assessments is set out in <a href="#">annex A</a> of the DfE guidance. Consider using <a href="#">HSE managing risks and risk templates</a>.</li> <li>• Ensure consultation has taken place with all staff and their representatives in line with <a href="#">HSE requirements</a></li> <li>• Ensure statutory site checks are carried out, if require. If buildings are closed or have reduced occupancy, water stagnation can occur. This can increase the risk of <a href="#">Legionnaire’s Disease</a>. Additional advice on safely reoccupying buildings can be found in the Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers’ guidance on <a href="#">emerging from lockdown</a>)</li> <li>• Commission cleaning of all sites using <a href="#">guidance on cleaning non-health care settings</a>.</li> <li>• Review arrangements to ensure good ventilation. Advice on this can be found in Health and Safety Executive guidance on <a href="#">air conditioning and ventilation during the coronavirus outbreak</a>. Refer to the <a href="#">system of controls</a> for guidance on keeping occupied spaces well ventilated.</li> <li>• Agree a policy and procedures should a child or adult fall ill with the coronavirus on site, fall ill having recently been on site and/or if a number of people fall ill related to a particular site (use DfE guidance on the <a href="#">system of controls</a>)</li> </ul> | <p>System of controls in place. Refer to RAG colour coded document.</p> <p>Full risk assessment consultation with staff and all staff updated regularly.</p> <p>RPA audit conducted in August 2020.</p> <p>Statutory site checks carried out by MS.</p> <p>Cleaning schedule in place and protocol shared with cleaning staff.</p> <p>Windows and door to be kept open to promote ventilation, ALWAYS. It has been recommended to staff and pupils that they wear layers to keep warm. Open top windows.</p> <p>Windows and doors to be wide open during break and lunch to air classrooms.</p> <p>A record will be kept of all visitors to the school containing information about contact with adults or children within the school.</p> <p>Laminated guidance for visitor protocol and safeguarding.</p> <p>Stickers given to visitors rather than lanyards.</p> <p>Fixed start and end of day entrance /exit points agreed and shared with staff and parents. Reminders sent to parents.</p> <p>Additional social distancing reminder posters displayed on external notice boards, school entrances, staffroom and office spaces.</p> <p>Hygiene reminder posters to be displayed in all classrooms, staff room and toilets.</p> <p>PPE for adults dealing with children who become unwell with symptoms of coronavirus or where there is a risk of spitting, splashing or vomiting.</p> |
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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure there is a critical path decision making process/ contingency plan in case of a local outbreak.</li> <li>• Assess transport-related health and safety risks and how these can be mitigated.</li> <li>• Review the arrangements for Covid-19 asymptomatic testing, particularly in relation to onsite testing facilities in secondary schools (see the <a href="#">Schools Covid-19 operational guidance</a>). Ensure adequate risk assessments are in place as required by RPA.</li> </ul> | <p>PPE for cleaning an area in which coronavirus is possible or confirmed.</p> <p>Check sufficiency of stores of all cleaning materials order as necessary.</p> <p>Timetables for lunchtimes and breaks shared with all staff. Staff encouraged to eat in outdoor classroom. An additional staffroom established and staffroom numbers reduced further.</p> <p>School sickness management procedures reviewed to include school summary school protocol for Covid 19 symptoms. Written procedures shared with all staff.</p> <p>Exec Head to be immediately advised of any infection of pupils attending school /staff either in school or at home. Current Guidance on testing to be followed.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser at the school entrance and in classrooms. Staff have been given the guidance on Face coverings. Staff recommended to wear face coverings in public areas outside of the classroom, including toilets, staff rooms, shared group areas and when collecting and dropping off the children at the gate.</p> <p>The school has advised parents to wear face masks when dropping off and collecting children.</p> <p>Every classroom will have a First Aid kit.</p> <p>Outside space divided so that groups of pupils do not mix at breaks and lunchtime.</p> <p>HoS – EH – CEO critical path decision making process in case of the need for further closures, or scaling back operations, to address local infections.</p> <p>Should an adult or child fall ill on site they will wait in the Rainbow room with the windows open. If they need the</p> |
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|  |  | <p>toilet they should use the year 6 girls' toilet which will be cleaned and disinfected before anyone else uses it. Any adult who waits with them should wear PPE if they cannot keep a 2 m distance.</p> <p>PPE to be stored in Rainbow room.</p> <p>Pupils will have an individual stationary pack.</p> <p>Any shared items such as bikes and toys will be cleaned daily with disinfectant. Pupils will wash their hands before and after using shared items.</p> <p>Pupils will sit facing the front in years 2 to 6.</p> <p>A record will be kept of all visitors to the school containing information about contact with adults or children within the school.</p> <p>Pupils returning from travel abroad will follow government guidance regarding self-isolating. Parents must inform the school of travel abroad and follow guidance.</p> <p>Children to be encouraged to help with keeping their own equipment clean, as age appropriate.</p> <p>Parents to be signposted and encouraged to read national guidance on methods of transport to/from school.</p> <p>Procedure in place for pupils arriving late to school. Parents to telephone school office and wait in correct zone away from other groups.</p> <p>Reminder to all staff that reading scheme books which are shared between bubbles must be quarantined for 72 hours before they can be returned to the shelves.</p> <p>Reception and Year 1 lunches to be served in the hall on plastic trays. MDSA from class bubble will distribute school lunches from serving hatch to pupil tables. Kitchen to update RA.</p> |
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|                                  |  | <p>Perspex screen between office staff. Window to remain open to ensure ventilation.</p> <p>Staff to take Lateral flow tests at home on Sunday and Wednesday and report to HoS and SBM.</p> <p>See Covid-19 asymptomatic testing Risk Assessment document.</p> <p>Antibacterial wipes will be kept by desks with phones so that can be wiped down before and after use.</p>  |
| <p><b>Pupils and parents</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess parental confidence and ensure processes are in place to communicate clear and consistent expectations around school attendance to families ahead of 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021.</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate support and arrangements are in place for pupils with EHC plans.</li> <li>• Ensure that pupils most at risk of disengagement/most in need of additional support are identified and support is in place.</li> <li>• Audit wider family services supporting mental health, bereavement, domestic violence etc in order to be able to signpost/refer families where required (Public Health England has published <a href="#">guidance on supporting children and young people’s mental health, Every Mind Matters</a> and <a href="#">advice for groups with specific mental health needs</a>).</li> </ul> | <p>School attendance will be mandatory for all pupils from 8<sup>th</sup> March.</p> <p>Communication to parents regarding their duty to secure their child’s regular attendance at school.</p> <p>Pupils with EHC plans contacted and return to school discussed and appropriate arrangements put in place for example, staggered return from 1<sup>st</sup> March offered.</p> <p>Follow LA guidance on management and support of pupils with EHC plans.</p> <p>Audit and review existing lists of pupils most at risk of disengagement/most in need of additional support.</p> <p>Contact made via telephone call to reassure pupils most at risk of disengagement.</p> <p>Continue to signpost and refer families in line with existing practice.</p> <p>Parents bring in forgotten lunch boxes/ instruments to school. Office staff to collect from the school gate. Wear gloves and use outstretched arm. Deliver items to classroom door only.</p> <p>Messages from the office will be given at the classroom door. Office staff will not enter the classrooms.</p> |

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| <p><b>Workforce and HR</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review your trust’s workforce audit. Some people on this list will remain under the care of their doctor or specialist, who are ‘extremely clinically vulnerable’ and may be advised not to return to the workplace/ school. Assess how many staff remain in this much smaller group and the impact on the workforce. Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are extremely clinically vulnerable is <a href="#">here</a>.</li> <li>• You will need to follow the specific <a href="#">guidance for pregnant employees</a> because pregnant women are considered CV. In some cases pregnant women may also have other health conditions that mean they are considered CEV, where the advice for clinically extremely vulnerable staff will apply.</li> <li>• Assess how many staff may be at increased risk due to protected characteristics and disparities in outcomes. Consider using an Equalities Impact Assessment. Please note that as the employer, you must continue to meet your equalities duties. See the <a href="#">Equality Act 2010 advice for schools</a> for more information.</li> <li>• In light of this assessment, scrutinise how staff will be deployed.</li> <li>• If necessary and applicable in your circumstances, consider using longer assignments with supply teachers and agree a minimum number of hours across the rest of the academic year.</li> <li>• Determine whether staff training is required prior to the full return of pupils in March.</li> <li>• Consider what arrangements might be put in place for staff wellbeing. All employers have a duty of care to their employees, and this extends to their mental health. <a href="#">Education Support</a> provides a free helpline for</li> </ul> | <p>Conduct workforce audit.<br/>Update any existing or create new risk assessments for individual staff as required.<br/>Continue to re assess and evaluate staff workload in relation to wellbeing.<br/>Remind/re-signpost all staff to Employee Assistance Scheme.<br/>Education support:<br/><a href="https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/">https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/</a><br/>Leadership Wellbeing Support:<br/><a href="mailto:leadershipwellbeingsupport@suffolk.gov.uk">leadershipwellbeingsupport@suffolk.gov.uk</a><br/>Give us a shout support:<br/><a href="https://giveusashout.org/">https://giveusashout.org/</a></p> <p>Wellbeing included on CPD agendas.</p> <p>Impact of Covid on safeguarding update for all staff.</p> <p>Meeting between DSL and ADSL’s to review current situation and address new concerns.</p> |
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|  | <p>school staff and targeted support for mental health and wellbeing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) are provided with more time, especially in the first few weeks of after 8<sup>th</sup> March, to help them provide support to staff and children regarding any new safeguarding and welfare concerns and the handling of referrals to children social care and other agencies where these are appropriate</li> </ul>   |   |
| <p><b>Curriculum and timetabling</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutinise the plans for identifying the most important missed knowledge and how this will be covered, within a broad curriculum in all subjects</li> <li>• Ensure the curriculum remains broad and ambitious and that all pupils continue to be taught a wide range of subjects</li> <li>• Ensure that there is a staffing plan and timetable for each school, including any special arrangements where necessary and practicable e.g. staggered starting and ending times of the school day, drop off and collection and/or break and lunch arrangements</li> <li>• Scrutinise the plan for spending the trust's allocation of tuition funding and ensure curriculum alignment and relevant training is in place (Education Endowment Foundation guidance can be found <a href="#">here</a>)</li> <li>• Scrutinise plans for how remote education will be offered where a class, group or small number of pupils need to self-isolate (online learning resources <a href="#">here</a>, Oak National Academy <a href="#">here</a>, technology support <a href="#">here</a>, guidance for parents on supporting home learning <a href="#">here</a>, guidance for parents of children with SEND to support home learning <a href="#">here</a> and EEF best evidence in remote learning can be found <a href="#">here</a> - there is also a</li> </ul> | <p>All subjects will be taught but swimming and educational residential visits are on hold until guidance changes.</p> <p>All subjects will continue to be taught and the curriculum will remain broad and balanced.</p> <p>Key knowledge will be identified at addressed in core subjects.</p> <p>Threshold concepts will be a key focus in foundation subjects.</p> <p>See staffing plans and March reopening schedule detailing staged start and finish times.</p> <p>Remote education via google classroom will offered when a pupil, small group or class need to self-isolate. Work will be available from the day after the school is notified.</p> <p>See EEF document detailing how St Mary's will be spending the catch up funding.</p> <p>Hot meals will be provided these will be eaten in the hall for Reception, Y1. Year 2 and KS2 will eat in their classrooms.</p> <p>Physical activity will take place in class groups, equipment will be thoroughly cleaned between each use. Outdoor physical activity will be prioritised along with maximising distancing between pupils.</p> |

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|                                       | <p><a href="#">summary</a> of findings and a <a href="#">toolkit</a> to support home learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the approach to physical activity within the school day, ensuring pupils remain in consistent groups where possible, sports equipment is thoroughly cleaned between each use, contact sports are avoided and outdoor sports are prioritised where possible, and large indoor spaces used where not, maximising distancing between pupils and paying attention to cleaning and hygiene.</li> <li>• Review your before and after-school provision and plan whether/ how to restart. And ensure where parents are using external providers, that the school or trust has a plan in place to and consider how such provision will work alongside their wider system of controls, including keeping children within their year groups or bubbles where possible.</li> </ul> | <p>Before and after school sports club will run for one-year group at a time to reduce classes mixing. This will be regularly reviewed.</p> <p>Peripatetic music teachers to teach single class groups, lessons outside weather permitting, stringent social distancing, pupils to handle own instrument only, wash hands before and after lesson.</p> <p>Peripatetic music teachers to hold lessons in the staff room when weather is cold/wet. This will be assessed on a week by week basis. Windows and door open, socially distanced 2m+. Small group sizes of pupils from one class at a time.</p> <p>MDSA's who work at different schools to observe stringent 2m+ social distancing. Wash hands on entry to the building. Wait near the open door of classroom. Do not touch anything in the classroom. Send for an adult from the bubble to administer first aid. Work with the older pupils who can observe social distancing.</p> |
| <p><b>Policies and procedures</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review at least the following policies and procedures and if you have addendums to policies consider whether these need to be amended or removed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health and safety</li> <li>- Child protection and safeguarding (safeguarding and remote education <a href="#">here</a>)</li> <li>- Attendance</li> <li>- Behaviour</li> <li>- Exclusions</li> <li>- Pastoral/Welfare</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | <p>Review current arrangements but only very minor amendments are anticipated.</p> <p>Existing annexations to remain in place. This as a contingency against further short notice closures.</p> <p>Safeguarding update for all staff with a focus on impact of Covid on pupils and families.</p> <p>Allocate additional time for DSL to complete referrals, signpost families.</p>   |

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|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider whether enhanced safeguarding and welfare provision needs to be put in place – plan for the potential increase in disclosures and welfare needs including mental health</li> <li>• Amend procedures for fire drills</li> <li>• Assess whether any other trust and/or school-based policies and procedures need to be reviewed and amended</li> <li>• Consider whether any delegations in your scheme of delegation need to be amended or stood down</li> </ul>  | <p>Changes to KCSIE 2020 and January 2021 update will be implemented.</p> <p>Continue with current procedure for fire drills. 3m+ between each class's assembly point.</p> <p>Fire drill to be carried out at the beginning of each term.</p>  |
| <b>School kitchens, supply chains and contracts</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutinise plans to reopen school kitchens and compliance with the <a href="#">guidance for food businesses</a> on COVID-19</li> <li>• Reactivate and amend catering and/or cleaning contracts, including bringing staff out of furlough where necessary if this has not already been done</li> <li>• Reactivate supply chains if this has not already been done</li> <li>• Ensure there is free school meals provision over the holiday period</li> <li>• Check suppliers know and understand the system of controls and hygiene arrangements</li> <li>• Agree approach to any scheduled or ongoing building works in relation to safety</li> </ul> | <p>The expectation is that all furloughed staff including those employed by external providers will return to work.</p> <p>See risk assessment from vertas.</p> <p>FSM provision for over the holidays has been made using vouchers by SBM.</p> <p>No adults will enter the school site without prior arrangement from the school.</p> |
| <b>Communications</b>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and agree communications to staff, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arrangements for keeping staff and pupils safe</li> <li>- Staff deployment and attendance expectations</li> <li>- Curriculum and timetabling</li> <li>- Workload and wellbeing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | <p>Updated documentation shared with all staff. Opportunity for Q&amp;A.</p> <p>Letter to parents/carers detailing attendance, uniform, curriculum, transport, dropping off and picking up and visiting the school.</p>  |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training</li> <li>• Plan and agree communications to parents/carers, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attendance expectations</li> <li>- Uniform expectations</li> <li>- The curriculum</li> <li>- Transport</li> <li>- Dropping off and picking up</li> <li>- Parents/ carers visiting the school</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Agree the frequency of communications with parents or delegate to school-level</li> </ul> | <p>Staff business meetings (information sharing - briefings etc.) should continue to be held remotely.</p> <p>Staff CPD sessions can be face to face when 2m distancing is possible. This will be in the school hall at St Mary's.</p> <p>Training to be reviewed – webinars attended where possible.</p> <p>The expectation is that all schools return to regular staff CPD sessions over time.</p> <p>PPA time may be taken in school or at home.</p> <p>School newsletter will continue to be published weekly.</p> <p>For the first half term class teacher to send an end of week parent mail to sum up the week for parents. This is to ensure that parents remain involved in their child's education and bridge the gap between home and school while parents cannot enter the school grounds.</p> |
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## Annex A: The Public Health System of Controls

*The system of nine controls is the set of actions schools MUST take, grouped into 'prevention' and 'response to any infection.'*

*There is a lot of detailed guidance about the system of controls including how to group children, measures within the classroom, measures elsewhere and measures for arriving at and leaving school. Schools must work through the system of controls, adopting measures in a way that addresses the risk identified in their assessment, works for their school, and allows you to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. If you follow the guidance set out here, you will effectively reduce risks in the school or groups of schools and create an inherently safer environment.*

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| <p><b>A. Prevention</b></p> | <p>You must always:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Minimise contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring they do not attend the school.</li> <li>2) Ensure face coverings are used in recommended circumstances.</li> <li>3) Ensure everyone is advised to clean their hands thoroughly and more often than usual.</li> <li>4) Ensure good respiratory hygiene for everyone by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.</li> </ol> |
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|  | <p>5) Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents.</p> <p>6) Consider how to minimise contact across the site and maintain social distancing wherever possible.</p> <p>7) Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.</p> <p>In specific circumstances:</p> <p>8) Ensure individuals wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary.</p> <p>9) Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing, where available.</p> |
| <p><b>B. Response to any infection</b></p> | <p>You must always:</p> <p>10) Promote and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.</p> <p>11) Manage and report confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community.</p> <p>12) Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice</p>   |