



St Felix Roman Catholic Primary School



Full opening of schools: a decision-making framework for Trust Boards (February 2021)

The Confederation of School Trusts (CST) is the national organisation and sector body for academy and multi-academy trusts. We believe that strong and resilient governance and decision-making are essential to help schools and trusts deal with the current challenging circumstances. We have updated our decision-making framework to reflect the [Schools Covid-19 operational guidance](#).

The framework outlines a series of strategic actions for trust boards to take about the full opening of schools on 8th March 2021. It does not include all possible actions that could or should be taken in the specific context of your trust or your group of schools. It is intended to be a strategic framework to guide decision-making and we have therefore attempted to be concise.

The sections in the framework could be used as your board agenda. In each case, risks and actions to mitigate risks should be identified and recorded formally by the trust board. This is because the trust board is the responsible body, legal entity and employer.

Some of the actions identified in this framework may be delegated to school-level and/or your scheme of delegation may need to be amended for a specified period to give delegations or withdraw delegations, depending on your risk assessment and risk tolerances.

*If you follow the **system of controls** in [Schools Covid-19 operational guidance](#) (summarised at annex A) you will effectively reduce risks in the school or groups of schools and create an inherently safer environment. CST has separately commissioned Browne Jacobson to provide clarity on [directors' liabilities](#).*

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.

Decisions and actions to take before opening your schools for all pupils from 8th March 2021

<p>Health and safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review health and safety risk assessments ensuring these are based on the Public Health System of Controls in the DfE guidance summarised in annex A below. More information about health and safety risk assessments is set out in annex A of the DfE guidance. Consider using HSE managing risks and risk templates. Ensure consultation has taken place with all staff and their representatives in line with HSE requirements 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 Legionnaire’s Disease. Additional advice on safely reoccupying buildings can be found in the Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers’ guidance on emerging from lockdown) Commission cleaning of all sites using guidance on cleaning non-health care settings. Review arrangements to ensure good ventilation. Advice on this can be found in Health and Safety Executive guidance on air conditioning and ventilation during the coronavirus outbreak. Refer to the system of controls for guidance on keeping occupied spaces well ventilated. 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 system of controls) Ensure there is a critical path decision making process/ contingency plan in case of a local outbreak. 	<p>Each class serves as primary bubble but integrates at lunch and break time with those who enter via the same door at the same time. Fixed start and end of day entrance /exit points agreed and shared with staff and parents.</p> <p>Reminder of September protocols shared with Staff including iteration of the importance of masks in communal areas, cleaning and ventilation 24.2.21 Mask use reiterated 2.3.21</p> <p>Full Risk Assessment shared with staff 26.2.21</p> <p>All staff are fully briefed on school H&S protocol documents and receive printed copies for reference. All staff have the opportunity to raise any concerns or queries and clarify understanding. All staff understand the importance of consistent adherence to guidance.</p> <p>Schedule of checks and maintenance have been maintained during lockdown and continue.</p> <p>Deep clean during half term (15-16/2/21)</p> <p>All staff are aware of importance of good ventilation and consider when organising classroom and learning spaces (e.g. school hall)</p> <p>Should an adult or child fall ill on site they will wait in the small den with windows open Flow chart poster for response to symptomatic pupil or staff displayed throughout the school. Small Den for isolation and PPE is stored here. Top corridor boys designated toilet which will be cleaned and disinfected before anyone else uses it. Any adult who waits with them should wear PPE. In the event of a positive test within the bubble DfE/PHE advice sought.</p> <p>A record will be kept of all visitors to the school containing information about contact with adults or children within the school. Contractor protocol shared on arrival</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess transport-related health and safety risks and how these can be mitigated. • Review the arrangements for Covid-19 asymptomatic testing, particularly in relation to onsite testing facilities in secondary schools (see the Schools Covid-19 operational guidance). Ensure adequate risk assessments are in place as required by RPA. 	<p>Additional social distancing reminder posters to be 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> <p>PPE for cleaning an area in which coronavirus is possible or confirmed.</p> <p>Check sufficiency of stores of all cleaning materials regularly and order as necessary – named individual</p> <p>Hand sanitiser at all school entrances and in classroom without access to soap and water.</p> <p>Every bubble will have a First Aid kit.</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>External transport limited to a taxi for 7 pupils – Mask wearing encouraged</p> <p>All staff have access to asymptomatic LFD tests and advised to test twice weekly – Monday and Thursday morning. 96% uptake. Separate risk assessment in place.</p>
<p>Pupils and parents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess parental confidence and ensure processes are in place to communicate clear and consistent expectations around school attendance to families ahead of 8th March 2021. 	<p>Parental engagement throughout lockdown 3 via email/ phone / Teams.</p> <p>Parent consultations w/c 1.3.21 offered to all parents to provide platform to assess parent confidence.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure appropriate support and arrangements are in place for pupils with EHC plans. • Ensure that pupils most at risk of disengagement/most in need of additional support are identified and support is in place. • 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 guidance on supporting children and young people's mental health, Every Mind Matters and advice for groups with specific mental health needs). 	<p>Parent letter sent iterating expectations for March 8th return 24.2.21</p> <p>All EHCP pupils in school throughout lockdown and in school support remains in place.</p> <p>Pupil Progress meetings held to discuss impact of lockdown on vulnerable pupils and strategies in place. EH/HoS/ Class Teachers Update audit of those most at risk of disengagement.</p> <p>HoS engagement with 5 Steps Model to Wellbeing – Anna Freud to maintain and develop in school support for pupils and staff</p> <p>HoS: Domestic Abuse Champion Training undertaken</p> <p>Two members of staff engaged with bereavement service locally</p>
<p>Workforce and HR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 here. • You will need to follow the specific guidance for pregnant employees 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. • 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 	<p>All staff willing to attend the site from 8th March. Many CV members of staff have received the vaccine (24.2.21)</p> <p>Reasonable adjustments in place at request for pregnant colleagues. Individual risk assessments for all staff in higher risk group for health, BAME or over 60 reviewed due to change of national guidelines - 12 member of staff have now received vaccine (3.3.21)</p> <p>E Safety training carried out by staff Jan-Mar 2021</p> <p>Mental Health Awareness Training 19th January 2021</p> <p>All staff safeguarding training is up to date</p> <p>Continue well-being measures already in place.</p> <p>School Advisory Service App available to all staff</p> <p>Education Support Helpline 08000 562 561 24/7</p> <p>Leadership Wellbeing Support : leadershipwellbeingsupport@suffolk.gov.uk Wellbeing included on CPD agendas</p>

	<p>your equalities duties. See the Equality Act 2010 advice for schools for more information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In light of this assessment, scrutinise how staff will be deployed. • 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. • Determine whether staff training is required prior to the full return of pupils in March. • 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. Education Support provides a free helpline for school staff and targeted support for mental health and wellbeing. • Ensure designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) are provided with more time, especially in the first few weeks of after 8th 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 	<p>Meeting between DSL and ADSLs to review current situation and address new concerns.</p> <p>Tests available for distribution from 22.1.21 from Heads Office – masks to be worn and social distancing maintained. Testing commenced Wed 27th Jan</p> <p>Return of all admin staff on site required with full attendance of pupils – shared office space to be reviewed weekly. Initially second member of staff works elsewhere in the building - Tues-Thurs.</p>
<p>Curriculum and timetabling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutinise the plans for identifying the most important missed knowledge and how this will be covered, within a broad curriculum in all subjects • Ensure the curriculum remains broad and ambitious and that all pupils continue to be taught a wide range of subjects • 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 	<p>Group all classes (pupils, teachers and TAs) into separate phase led operational Bubbles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Bubble 1 Nursery/ Reception o Bubble 2 Years 1/2 o Bubble 3 Classes y3 and Y3/4 o Bubble 4 Classes Y4 and Y5 o Bubble 5 Year 6

	<p>ending times of the school day, drop off and collection and/or break and lunch arrangements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 here) • 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 here, Oak National Academy here, technology support here, guidance for parents on supporting home learning here, guidance for parents of children with SEND to support home learning here and EEF best evidence in remote learning can be found here - there is also a summary of findings and a toolkit to support home learning. • 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. • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Bubble structure to determine all timetabled school routines and activities, including staggered start and end to school day etc. As per protocols for Sept 2020 • Plan for deployment of MDS in identified and consistent phase led bubbles maintained as per Sept. • Information confirming March 2021 start and end of day entrance /exit points and timings shared with staff and parents 24.2.21 <p>Recovery curriculum based on formative assessment in weeks up to Easter. Year-end tests used for Y5 and Y6 and end of March. Focus on key priorities until first half term and review. Year end assessments planned for June for Y1-6. EYFS assessments as per Profile. No statutory assessments to be submitted</p> <p>Catch Up Sessions for KS1 and UKS2 resume 9th March focusing on identified weakness</p> <p>All subjects will be taught but swimming and educational residential visits are on hold until guidance changes</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> <p>Sports club reopening postponed until April due to limitations of space with Wraparound provision</p> <p>Hot grab and go offer to be adopted as per September to ensure maximum benefit from universal infant and free school meals.</p> <p>Packed lunches can be brought from home</p> <p>Pupils dine in three sittings 11:45 12:15 12:40 in the Hall – cleaning of tables/touchpoints in between. Outdoor areas zoned and bubbles the same as arrival and departure. Benches moved to outside Y6 to provide outside eating area in good weather.</p>
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<p>Policies and procedures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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"> - Health and safety - Child protection and safeguarding (safeguarding and remote education here) - Attendance - Behaviour - Exclusions - Pastoral/Welfare • 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 • Amend procedures for fire drills • Assess whether any other trust and/or school-based policies and procedures need to be reviewed and amended 	<p>Review current arrangements but resume Sept parameters</p> <p>Lateness Protocols – Pupils arriving after their gate has closed to ring the bell on the central gate and await admin staff to escort to class.</p> <p>Protocols for contractors</p> <p>Remote Learning Policy remains in place</p> <p>Remote Learning Audit</p> <p>Visitor protocols – details stored for two weeks with permission</p> <p>Covid Coordinator – Andi Registration Assistant – Admin Staff as per rotaed days</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider whether any delegations in your scheme of delegation need to be amended or stood down 	
School kitchens, supply chains and contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutinise plans to reopen school kitchens and compliance with the guidance for food businesses on COVID-19 Reactivate and amend catering and/or cleaning contracts, including bringing staff out of furlough where necessary if this has not already been done Reactivate supply chains if this has not already been done Ensure there is free school meals provision over the holiday period Check suppliers know and understand the system of controls and hygiene arrangements Agree approach to any scheduled or ongoing building works in relation to safety 	<p>The expectation is that all furloughed staff including those employed by external providers will return to work on March 8th. See risk assessment from Vertas.</p> <p>FSM provision for over the lockdown made using Edenred vouchers. Self isolating families can receive parcels through school catering</p> <p>No adults will enter the school site without prior arrangement from the school.</p> <p>Magic Wand retained for 2020-21 cleaning contract</p> <p>Fruit and Veg scheme for KS1. Additional handwashing / gloves for distribution of larger pieces of fruit.</p> <p>The same protocol in operation during Wraparound</p> <p>Vertas added to contact list in case of positive test as per their request and staff invited to be part of LFD testing.</p> <p>Cleaning and Wraparound providers invited to be part of LFD testing. 1 refusal</p> <p>Catering provision unchanged</p>
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and agree communications to staff, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrangements for keeping staff and pupils safe Staff deployment and attendance expectations Curriculum and timetabling Workload and wellbeing Training Plan and agree communications to parents/carers, including but not limited to: 	<p>Risk Assessment shared with Trust 26.2.21 / Staff, Governors and Parents 3.3.21 / Website 3.3.21</p> <p>Staff and parent letters sent 24.2.21</p> <p>Information published on website 24.2.21</p> <p>The expectation is to continue with regular staff CPD sessions – initially via Teams.</p> <p>PPA time on Wednesday morning, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoon in Large Den/Studio - 22.3m²</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance expectations - Uniform expectations - The curriculum - Transport - Dropping off and picking up - Parents/ carers visiting the school • Agree the frequency of communications with parents or delegate to school-level 	<p>HoS meets with Exec Head at least weekly and attends weekly Trust Head Operations Group Zoom</p> <p>Parent Consultations via video call w/c 1.3.21</p> <p>Monthly newsletters to parents reiterate expectations and share changes.</p> <p>Weekly parish newsletters shared with whole school community.</p>
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Decisions and actions to manage the financial and educational impacts and regulatory and accountability environments

Financial impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure additional cost pressures due to COVID-19 have been identified and an end-of-year forecast which factors them in has been produced for the board • Assess whether schools in the trust are eligible for financial support (DFE has published guidance on the financial support schools and trusts will receive to reimburse them for exceptional costs incurred during COVID-19. These relate to increased premises-related costs; support for free school meals for eligible children who are not attending school and where those costs are not covered by the FSM national voucher scheme and additional cleaning costs) • Assess impact on reserves and review reserves policy • Assess impact on three-year financial strategy • Explore additional sources of income • Review policy and procedures related to fraud (see Fraud Control in Emergency Management: COVID-19 UK government guide)
Educational impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep educational impacts under review – ensure a trust-wide plan is in place to assess educational impacts, specifically gaps in learning, and that the plans address these in the short and medium term (see curriculum section above)
Regulatory environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the new regulatory requirements in the Academies Financial Handbook which came into force in September 2020 (summarised in annex B below) • Agree a plan for internal scrutiny.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree the arrangements for external audit and associated returns. • Keep under review the statutory timescales for returns that have been paused or deferred - ESFA published guidance on reducing burdens which includes a full list of returns that have been cancelled, paused or deferred
Accountability environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the arrangements for school and trust accountability and the performance management policy in the light of how school and trust external accountability will be handled. Please note that guidance states that teachers must not be penalised during the appraisal process or any subsequent pay progression decisions because of the decision to restrict pupil attendance at schools. • Performance tables were not published for the 2019 to 2020 academic year. DfE will not judge schools on data based on exams and assessments from 2020. DfE will not publish data based on exam and assessment results from summer 2021 on school and college performance tables. Read coronavirus (COVID-19): school and college accountability to see what this means for accountability in 2019 to 2020 and 2020 to 2021.

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.

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