

Dated: 15 JULY 2020



STAFF OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE

SPRING COMMON
ACADEMY AMERICAN LANE, HUNTINGDON,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE PE29 1TQ

CONTENTS

1. Next phase – all learners return to school
2. Safer working practice and minimising risk

1. Next phase – all learners return to school

We are following Government plan 'that 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.' Staff will also be expected to fully return to work, unless there are individual exceptional circumstances that are agreed with the employer following individual risk assessment.

There is guidance that puts this plan into context for special schools and other specialist settings:

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

Special schools are expected to offer a place to all their pupils from the start of the autumn term. The above guidance states 'There cannot be a 'one size fits all' approach where the system of controls describes every scenario. Education setting leaders will be best placed to understand the needs of their settings and communities, and to make informed judgements about how to balance delivering a broad and balanced curriculum with the measures needed to manage risk.'

We will be using the 'extended bubble' approach. Each bubble group will contain 3 – 4 classes and will operate as separately as possible from the other bubbles in school. We will have safeguards in place in order that this happens as much as possible within the limitations we have with our school premises and resources. We will continue with good hygiene for all learners, staff and visitors, cleaning regimes and maintaining social distancing where possible.

In particular, Spring Common Academy will follow advice and guidance from the Government contained in:

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

→ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19#work-and-employment-for-those-who-are-shielding>

→ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

→ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care>

→ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-of-children-attending-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-of-children-attending-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

2. Safer working practice and minimising risk

Shielding needs (taken from Government advice on shielding and protecting extremely vulnerable persons from Covid)

'From 1 August the government will be advising that shielding will be paused. From this date, the government is advising you to adopt strict social distancing rather than full shielding measures. Strict social distancing means you may wish to go out to more places and see more people but you should take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household or support bubble. In practice this means that from 1 August (people with shielding needs)

- can go to work, if your role means you cannot work from home, as long as the school is COVID-safe
- Children who are clinically extremely vulnerable can return to their education settings if they are eligible following medical advice and in line with their peers. Where possible children should practice frequent hand washing and social distancing rules.
- can go outside to buy food, to places of worship and for exercise but you should maintain strict social distancing
- Should remain cautious as you are still at risk of severe illness if you catch coronavirus, so the advice is to stay at home where possible and, if you do go out, follow strict social distancing.

The [guidance for the clinically extremely vulnerable](#) group remains advisory. More detailed advice will be updated in this guidance as the changes in advice come into effect on 6 July and 1 August.

Unless the nation sees a significant rise in cases, it is likely that the shielding programme will be paused on 31 July.'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19#work-and-employment-for-those-who-are-shielding>

Therefore we expect all pupils / staff to return to school / work in the autumn term, and to follow the social distancing within the extended bubble system.

To safeguard all, we will adopt the system of controls in the government guidance and explained within our Health and Safety Policy update

for 1 September 2020.

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

Below is the main information we need to take into account in our daily practice within our special settings, taken from the guidance above:

Preventative information and procedures

1. Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend your setting

Ensuring that pupils, students, staff and other adults do not come into the School if they have [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms](#), or have tested positive in the last 7 days, and ensuring anyone developing those symptoms during the day is sent home, are essential actions to reduce the risk in settings and further drive down transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). All settings must follow this process and ensure all staff are aware of it.

If anyone in the setting becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they must be sent home. They must be advised to follow '[Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)', which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 7 days and should [arrange to have a test](#) to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.

If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved to one of the two isolation rooms prepared for this purpose with PPE, by staff who have been trained appropriately in the use of PPE.

If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom must be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.

PPE must be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs). More information on PPE use can be found in the [safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of PPE guidance](#).

As is usual practice, in an emergency, call 999 if someone is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk and follow advice. Anyone with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms should not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital. Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms and any pupils who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home to self-isolate unless they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should arrange a test) or if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive (see below) or they have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace. .

Public Health England is clear that routinely taking the temperature of pupils is not recommended as this is an unreliable method for identifying coronavirus (COVID-19).

2. Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an easy virus to kill when it is on skin. This can be done with soap and water or with hand sanitiser. Staff should support pupils

and students to clean their hands regularly, including when they arrive at the setting, when they return from breaks, when they change rooms and before and after eating.

We will keep under review the frequency of hand washing is best for pupils, students and staff, and incorporate time for this in timetables or lesson plans. Staff working with children and young people who spit uncontrollably may want more opportunities to wash their hands more frequently than other staff. Children and young people who use saliva as a sensory stimulant or who struggle with 'catch it, bin it, kill it' may need more opportunities to wash their hands than children and young people who do not.

3. Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach

The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important, so Schools must ensure that they have enough tissues and bins available to support pupils and staff to follow this routine. As with hand cleaning, staff within the school must ensure younger children and those with complex needs are helped to get this right, and all pupils understand that this is now part of how the School operates. Some pupils with complex needs will struggle to maintain as good respiratory hygiene as their peers, for example those who spit uncontrollably or use saliva as a sensory stimulant. This should be considered in the individual risk assessments in order to support these pupils and the staff working with them and is not a reason to deny these pupils face to face education or wider education experiences.

Public Health England does not (based on current evidence) recommend the use of face coverings in education settings, except where they are already routinely used as part of close contact care as part of an individual risk assessment. This evidence will be kept under review. Face coverings or masks are not required in education settings as pupils and staff are mixing in consistent groups, and because misuse may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission. There may also be negative effects on the delivery of communication and interaction thus having an impact on education delivery. Face coverings are required at all times on public transport (for children over the age of 11) or when attending a hospital as a visitor or outpatient. Other places in the community with larger numbers of people who may not be able to follow social distancing may overtime introduce rules for face covering or masks but that is not required for the school that is Covid -19 secure.

4. Introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents and bleach

Points to consider and implement:

- putting in place a cleaning schedule for the class team that ensures cleaning is generally enhanced and includes
 - more frequent cleaning of rooms or shared areas that are used by different groups
 - frequently touched surfaces being cleaned more often than normal
- different groups do not need to be allocated their own toilet blocks, but toilets will need to be cleaned regularly and pupils must be encouraged to clean their hands thoroughly after using the toilet.

By the end of the summer term, Public Health England will publish revised guidance for cleaning non-healthcare settings to advice on general cleaning required in addition to the current advice on [COVID-19: cleaning non-healthcare settings guidance](#).

5. Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible

Minimising contacts and mixing between people reduces transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This is important in all contexts, and education settings must consider how to implement this within the staff team. Settings must do everything possible to minimise contacts and mixing while delivering a broad and balanced curriculum that provides scope for wider experiences.

The overarching principle to apply is reducing the number of contacts between children and staff. This can be achieved through keeping groups separate (in 'bubbles') and through maintaining distance between individuals. These are not alternative options and both measures will help, but the balance between them will change depending on the ability of those attending the setting to distance, the lay out of the setting, and the feasibility of keeping distinct groups separate while offering a broad curriculum.

We recognise that maintaining distance or forming bubbles could be difficult at times, particularly given the need for staff to administer care support and provide therapies to the children and young people attending. However, the average number of pupils or students attending a special school is much lower than the average number in a mainstream school, and this in itself, will help to limit the number and range of contacts for any individual.

The school will assess their circumstances and look to implement 'bubbles' of an appropriate size, to achieve the greatest reduction in contact and mixing, without unduly limiting the quality or breadth of teaching, or access for support of specialist staff and therapists.

Bubbles should be kept apart from other groups where possible and children and young people that are able should be encouraged to keep their distance within groups. Settings with the capability to do it should take steps to limit interaction, sharing of rooms and social spaces between groups as much as possible.

When using larger groups, the other measures from the system of controls become even more important to minimise transmission risks and to minimise the numbers of pupils and staff who need to self-isolate in the event of a tested case. We recognise that younger children and those with complex needs will not be able to maintain social distancing and the government guidance states it is acceptable for them not to distance within their group.

Both the approaches of separating groups and maintaining distance are not 'all or nothing' options and will still bring benefits even if implemented partially. The School may keep options open and keep children in their class groups for the majority of the classroom time, but also allow mixing into wider groups for specialist teaching, wraparound care and transport. Siblings may also be in different groups. The school aim or be endeavouring to keep these groups at least partially separate and minimising contacts between children and young people to realise public health benefits as it reduces the network of possible direct transmission.

The guidance provides more flexibilities than previously. All teachers and other staff can operate across different classes and year groups in order to facilitate the delivery of the timetable and specialist provision but should minimise the number of interactions or changes wherever possible.

- Measures within the classroom

Maintaining a distance between people whilst inside and reducing the amount of time they are in face to face to contact lowers the risk of transmission. We know that this is not always possible, particularly when working with children and young people with complex needs, or those who need close contact care. Educational and care support should be provided for these children and young people as normal, with other increased hygiene protocols in place (as set out above as a control) to minimise risk of transmission.

Where possible, for example with older children with less complex needs who are able to self-regulate their behaviours without distress, children and young people should also be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff and their peers. This will not be possible for the youngest children and some children with complex needs and it is not feasible in some settings where space does not allow. Settings doing this where they can, and even doing this some of the time will help.

Settings should make small adaptations to the classroom to support distancing where possible. That should include seating pupils side by side and facing forwards, rather than face to face or side on, and might include moving unnecessary furniture out of classrooms to make more space.

- Measures elsewhere

Groups should be kept apart, meaning that settings should avoid large gatherings such as assemblies or collective worship with more than one group. Virtual assemblies online may be a suitable alternative as staff adapt and work differently to achieve the same aims.

When timetabling, groups should be kept apart and movement around the school site kept to a minimum. While passing briefly in the corridor or playground it is low risk, settings should avoid creating busy corridors or potential gatherings especially for entrances and exits. The school shall consider the logistics of staggered break times and lunch times (and time for cleaning surfaces in the dining hall between groups).

- Other considerations

Some children and young people with SEND (whether with EHC plans or on SEN support) will need specific help and preparation for the changes to routine that these measures will involve, so staff should plan to meet these needs, for example using social stories.

Specialists, therapists, clinicians and other support staff for pupils with SEND should provide interventions as usual from September. Supply teachers, peripatetic teachers or other temporary staff can move between settings if they follow the school operational guidance. They should ensure they minimise contact and maintain as much distance as possible from other staff by using prepared areas on the school site... The school will manage visitors to the site, such as contractors, and ensure site guidance on physical distancing and hygiene is explained to visitors on or before arrival and departure. Where visits can happen outside of school or college hours by permission from Head of School, they should. A record should be kept of all visitors and named contacts in case of NHS Test and Trace.

The guidance explains that in circumstances where a child or young person routinely attends more than one setting on a part time basis, for example because they are dual registered at a mainstream school and a special school, the settings should work through the system of controls collaboratively, enabling them to address any risks identified and allowing them to jointly deliver a broad and balanced curriculum for the child or young person. Pupils can now attend both settings. While some adjustment to arrangements may be required, pupils in this situation should not be isolated as a solution to the risk of greater contacts.

For individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pencils and pens, it is recommended that staff and pupils have their own items that are not shared. Classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the bubble; these should be cleaned regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces. Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, such as sports, art and science equipment should be cleaned meticulously between bubbles, or rotated to allow them to be left unused for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different bubbles.

The School will need to make an assessment of the how equipment is cleaned for the delivery of therapies (for example. physiotherapy equipment, sensory equipment), to determine whether this equipment can withstand cleaning and disinfection between each use (and how easy or practical it would be to do so to deliver provision) before it is put back into general use. Where cleaning or disinfection is not possible or not practical, resources will have to be restricted to one user, or be left unused for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between the use by different individuals.

Outdoor playground equipment should be more frequently cleaned. This would also apply to resources used inside and outside by wraparound care providers. It is still recommended that children and young people limit the amount of equipment they bring into the setting each day, to essentials such as lunch boxes, hats, coats, books, stationery and mobile phones. Bags are allowed. Pupils and teachers can take books and other shared resources home, although unnecessary sharing should be avoided, especially where this does not contribute to pupil education and development. Similar rules on hand cleaning, cleaning of the resources and rotation should apply to these resources.

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

The majority of staff in education settings 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 child or young person becomes ill with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms while at schools, and only then if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained
- where a child or young person already has routine intimate care needs that involves the use of PPE, in which case the same PPE should continue to be used or that specified by health.
- Specialist aerosol generated procedures once it is deemed safe for these extremely clinically vulnerable children to return to school by Community Paediatricians through the 'Return from the shield protocol'.

When working with children and young people who cough, spit or vomit but do not have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, only any PPE that would be worn as part of their care and treatment, should be worn.

Response to any infection

7. Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process

We will ensure that staff members and parents and carers understand that they will need to be ready and willing (where at all possible) to:

- book a test if they are displaying symptoms - staff and pupils must not come into the setting if they have symptoms, and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them when at the setting - all children and young people can be tested, including children under 5, but children aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit.
- provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test and Trace

- Self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or advised by NHS Test and Trace in case of any Coronavirus (Covid -19) outbreak.

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test (where at all possible). Tests can be booked online through the [NHS website](#), or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet. Essential workers, which includes anyone involved in education or childcare, have priority access to testing and results are swift.

Settings should ask parents and staff to inform them immediately of the results of a test:

- if someone tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating (they could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu - in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better - other members of their household can stop self-isolating)
- if someone tests positive, they should follow the [Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#) and must self-isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell or taste (this is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone - the 7-day period starts from the day when they first became ill - if they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal, and other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days).

8. Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school and college community

Settings must take swift action when they become aware that someone who has attended has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). Settings should contact the local health protection team (PHE)/ This team will also contact schools directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) attended the school - as identified by NHS Test and Trace.

The health protection team will carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact and proximity with the person during the period that they were infectious, and ensure they are asked to self-isolate.

The health protection team will work with schools in this situation to guide them through the actions they need to take. Based on the advice from the health protection team, settings must send home those people who have been in close contact and proximity with the person who has tested positive, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person when they were infectious. Close contact means:

- direct close contacts - face to face contact with a case for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin to skin)
- proximity contacts - extended close contact (within 1-2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with a case
- travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person.

The health protection team will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home and how the School may proceed to handle the critical incident. To support them in doing so, the School keep a record of pupils and staff in each group, and any close contact that takes places between children and staff in different groups (see section below for more on grouping pupils). This should be a proportionate recording process but capture all proximity contacts to enable the school to contain the transmission. The School will not need to ask pupils to record everyone they have spent time with each day or ask staff to keep definitive records in a way that is overly burdensome.

A template letter will be provided to schools, on the advice of the health protection team, to send to parents and staff as required for Public Health to provide information in case of any outbreak. The School will not share the names or details of people tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) unless essential as requirement to protect others for public health reasons as this overrides the GDPR duty.

Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the child, young person or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms or a member of the household begins symptoms. If someone in a class or group that has been asked to self-isolate develops symptoms themselves within their 14-day isolation period they should follow '[Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)'. They should get a test, and:

- if the test delivers a negative result, they must remain in isolation for the remainder of the 14-day isolation period - this is because they could still develop the coronavirus (COVID-19) and become unwell within the remaining days.
- if the test result is positive, they should inform the School immediately, and must isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms (which could mean the self-isolation ends before or after the original 14-day isolation period) - their household should self-isolate for at least 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms, following '[Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)'

The School expect information to be provided from parents and carers of positive test results for public health and to support containment in the community including the school.

Further guidance is available on [testing and tracing for coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

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 coronavirus (COVID-19) is suspected, they may have an outbreak, and must continue to work with their local health protection team who will be able to advise if additional action is required.

In some cases, health protection teams may recommend that a larger number of other pupils self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure - perhaps the whole site or year group. If settings are implementing controls from this list, addressing the risks they have identified and therefore reducing transmission risks, whole setting closure based on cases within the setting will not be necessary, and should not be considered except on the advice of health protection team.

In consultation with the local Director of Public Health, where an outbreak in a setting is confirmed, a mobile testing unit may be dispatched to test others who may have been in contact with the person who has tested positive. Testing will first focus on the person's class, followed by their year group, then the whole setting if necessary, in line with routine public health outbreak control practice.

Local, school measures:

Entry and exit to school (inc. staff)	Class groups and activities	Using physical spaces
Ensure that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school	Use new class lists for September as the basis for extended, dept bubble groups which operate as separately as possible from the other bubble groups	Staggering break and lunch times to prevent overlap between bubbles
Staff and pupils to use hand gel upon arrival and departure. Staff must sign in on entry to school and sign out to exit the school site.	Staff will work with the same extended bubble group throughout the day and use the same rooms	Reducing transitions and movements within the building Staff to send whole group into corridors only when they have checked it is clear.
Pupils stay in bus until collected	Consider activities and where possible avoid games/activities that involve close contact Whole school assembly / celebrations will continue to be held virtually.	Staggered break times for staff with cleaning surfaces in between Staff use EBB first floor for breaks STAFF MUST MAINTAIN DISTANCE IN STAFF ONLY AREAS
Pupils enter the building through the entry point designated for their bubble group.(see appendices)	Equipment should not be shared between bubbles, and where possible, not between individuals	Specified toilets for each bubble group. Staff must use the staff toilet nearest their base room only and should clean after use.
Pupils who walk to school with Parents or carers will be allocated a drop off and collection time. They will queues socially distanced at the 2 side entrance gates until requested to enter	Avoid the use of soft toys if possible Sensory diet provision will be conducted using equipment in classrooms as part of bubbles unless identified through individual risk	Lunches will be served and eaten in pupil bubble classrooms or allocated spaces.

<p>the site by the senior teacher on car park duty.</p> <p>Parents and Carers will be requested to maintain appropriate social distancing whilst in a queue and not to create gatherings on site or outside the school site.</p>	<p>assessment.</p> <p>Home contact book should be handled once in the morning and afternoon by staff each day.</p>	
	<p>First aiders based in each bubble where at all possible</p>	<p>Fire evacuation doors and evacuation points are noted for each bubble on the appendices map provided.</p>

If a pupil has behaviours (including a likely need for physical intervention, or spitting for sensory or behavioural needs) or care/medical needs the expectation is that the pupil attends unless they display symptoms. Their individual risk assessments may need review, and the ways of working with behaviour that challenges, or sensory needs changed. Physical intervention will be used where reasonable proportionate and necessary, as per School behaviour policy. However, if the young person is displaying symptoms, then the pupil is to be sent home for a test as any other young person and strategies used to prevent the use of any physical Intervention.

In addition to the risk reduction measures in the above table, the following measures will be in place as risk prevention controls:

- Handwashing facilities will be allocated and access to hand washing with soap and water or sanitiser in classrooms and other school environments.
- All areas will be well ventilated including toilets.
- Laptops and ipads should be cleaned **before** and **after** use with a **damp**, disinfectant soaked cloth
- Weekly deeper cleans to disinfect all surfaces and objects in the room
- Where safeguarding allows please pin doors open (unless these are fire doors) to minimise use of handles and contact transmission
- Specialist rooms and areas will be rotated between "bubbles" on different days or cleaned between sessions. They will be thoroughly cleaned after each day's use in addition.
- Try not to touch hard surfaces unnecessarily - use your elbow or cuff over your hand
- Advice is that staff shower when you get home. Wash your clothes and wear clean clothes each day.
- Regular cleaning of high traffic/touch areas such as door handles, telephones and touch screens

Policy agreed on: _____

Signed on behalf of the Trustees _____

Committee: _____

Author: _____

Review date (optional): _____

Website Y/N