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## COVID-19 POLICY – April 2021

Ruthin School is committed to ensuring that it complies with all appropriate regulations issued by the UK and Welsh Governments and follows best practice in respect of the management of the school during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The school is proud to be a holder of the Boarding Schools' Association Covid-Safe Charter and follows the requirements therein (where appropriate for Ruthin School). The requirements of the charter are as follows:

### Prior to reopening, school will:

- Conduct all necessary cleaning of school indoor environments, including classrooms, bedrooms, kitchens and bathrooms
- Decide on any regular testing procedures and advise pupils and parents accordingly. Support Covid-19 testing wherever possible
- Evaluate and adapt any medical procedures to ensure compliance with the recommendations of public health bodies
- Ensure that staff do not work (or have contact with pupils) if they have symptoms, have tested positive or have been in contact (within the last 14 days) with anyone who has
- Provide a suitable isolation area to care for pupils who show symptoms and/or test positive
- Train staff in the safe management of boarding houses under new guidance and school procedures and in Covid-19 nursing for appropriate staff
- Advise parents, guardians and agents of the school's policies on contact sports, trips and external matches, school assemblies and the provision of boarding during exeats and October half-term holiday.

### Before departure from home

- Contact each pupil and their family, through their guardian if appropriate, to explain arrangements and answer any questions
- Provide written information on arrival procedures, including restrictions on parents entering the buildings
- For international pupils, confirm the arrangements for collecting the pupil from the point of arrival in the country, transport to school and quarantine procedures
- Provide each international pupil and parent with a letter on school-headed paper confirming those arrangements in line with sponsor requirements
- For international pupils, confirm the arrangements for collecting the pupil from the point of arrival in the country, transport to school and how any required quarantine procedures will be undertaken. Although some schools will wish to take charge of quarantine procedures themselves, other arrangements as agreed with parents, pupils and guardians are acceptable, as long as they comply with the relevant immigration guidance for the country concerned.

### For international pupils upon arrival in the country

- Ensure the pupil is met by a named person, which could be a guardian, who is aware of, and follows, appropriate social distancing guidance
- Ensure that the named person wears a face covering at all times when in proximity to the student in enclosed areas, especially in vehicles unless screens are provided
- Ensure that the journey to school is direct, that the vehicle contains sanitiser and suitable wipes, and that any required toilet stops are conducted in accordance with relevant safety guidelines
- Depending on the length of journey, provide the student with suitable food and drink and ensure that packets, bottles and containers are sanitised before use.

### For all pupils upon arrival at school

- Ensure all changes to routines and all new safety arrangements, which have been previously notified in writing, are fully explained to pupils, with full induction for any pupils new to the school
- Encourage the pupil to contact home shortly after arrival
- Explain the new fire evacuation procedures and conduct a drill soon after arrival
- Ensure the pupil has an opportunity to discuss their fears, worries and concerns with a trusted adult.

### At school

- Require appropriate social distancing in all areas of school
- Guarantee availability of soap and disposable paper towels in all washing areas
- Require regular hand washing by pupils and staff
- Provide hand sanitiser stations at key points in the house and around the campus
- Provide pupils and staff with the opportunity to raise any concerns
- Ensure laundry procedures are clear and safe for staff and pupils
- Ensure appropriate PPE for any staff performing roles which will require it
- Implement enhanced daily cleaning procedures in the boarding houses and school and ensure all relevant staff have appropriate PPE
- Pupils, staff and visitors to wear masks or face coverings (other than for activities where this is not advised) when moving around school and when queueing for meals. **FACE COVERINGS SHOULD ALSO BE WORN IN CLASSROOMS WHERE SOCIAL DISTANCING IS NOT POSSIBLE.**
- Display clear notices explaining new procedures
- Ensure safe occupancy levels of all facilities and areas, including classrooms, dining rooms, bedrooms and bathrooms
- Explain clearly any measures required when pupils are allowed to leave site
- Ensure equipment is not shared between pupils, other than when appropriate cleaning has taken place
- Allocate appropriate recreation areas (inside and outside) for use by designated boarders and ensure they are aware of any new procedures and safe occupancy levels
- Where possible, conduct regular temperature checks of pupils, staff and visitors
- Be very clear that any bullying related to the pandemic will not be tolerated.
  - Outdoor Physical Education and Physical Activity will be prioritised where possible.
  - Activities in Physical Education (PE) lessons and Physical Activity (PA) sessions will be planned to ensure that distance is maximised between pupils and contact minimised.
  - Mixed bubble extra-curricular clubs implemented w/c 26/4 ratio 15:1. Where possible, the same pupils will be with the same adult.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Covid-19 risk assessment, as approved by the Council of Management and managed by the Senior Leadership Team.

The summary of the risk assessment is as follows:

This is a summary of the risk assessment, originally carried out at Ruthin School in advance of the school re-opening fully in 2020. In line with our policy, it is reviewed regularly and updated in the light of further guidance. It has now been updated further in March 2021 to reflect changing circumstances.

It should be remembered that the COVID-19 outbreak is dynamic, changing daily, if not hourly, and there are now many agencies providing information almost to the point of information overload. The risk assessment will be reviewed on a daily basis to adapt to changing advice and it will be updated as appropriate.

In carrying out the COVID-19 risk assessment the members of the Senior Leadership Team took responsibility for different sections of the project, depending upon their areas of operation.

### **Rationale**

The logic behind this process is the school's ongoing 'duty of care' that it has for the whole community: pupils, parents, staff and governors

A 'duty of care' means a legal obligation to ensure the safety and well-being of others. Some duties are established, such as "the teacher and pupil relationship", and "the employer and employee relationship". With COVID-19 schools are having to make difficult and timely decisions in order to fulfil this duty to their pupils, parents and staff.

The test when considering whether a duty has been properly discharged is "what would the reasonable person have done, or not done, in the circumstances of this particular incident?".

For COVID-19 there are three important factors to take into account:

- a. *state of knowledge* - the developing knowledge of the virus itself and up-to-date government guidance at the time decisions are made.
- b. *seriousness of likely injury* – this will have to be assessed on a case by case basis. For example, if there has been a confirmed case in the school population. A proportionate risk assessment would also have to be taken to identify where the affected individual has been, with whom they had contact and areas they have used. A further concern is for pupils that may be more vulnerable to COVID-19 than others.
- c. *Cost and difficulty of taking precautionary measures* - closing schools has had considerable costs and difficulties from furloughing staff, ensuring the provision of education remotely

### **Running the School - the Risk Assessment**

Assessing COVID-19 is particularly awkward as the outcome of the risk assessment for one group within a school will have an impact on another: teaching staff, support staff, visitors and contractors (if these groups are allowed access) and pupils of varying age groups and class size.

The overall assessment of risk will require daily revision and should include but not be limited to:

- A. Is government advice being regularly accessed, assessed, recorded and applied?
- B. Are changes regularly communicated to staff, pupils, parents and governors?

- C. Are changes reviewed by governors?
- D. Is access to school controlled effectively and are visitor (if allowed) details recorded?
- E. Are Social Distancing (SD) and other hygiene rules communicated, understood and applied?
- F. Are staff and pupils being reminded and checked to ensure they are complying with hygiene and SD rules?
- G. Are there sufficient supplies of hygiene materials and are they well placed?
- H. Has the cleaning regime been regularly re-assessed and, if necessary, revised to high risk areas such as toilets, door handles, switches, hand rails and regularly used hard surfaces?
- I. What precautions are being used to keep shared teaching equipment (e.g. musical instruments) hygienic?
- J. Are high risk areas being regularly monitored for hygiene?
- K. Are contingency plans in place for the transition to full opening (or re-closing) including rapidly sharing decisions?
- L. Are all the risks identified properly mitigated and regularly re-assessed?

In addition to the above, the following will need to be considered for pupils, parents and staff:

- M. What SD rules have the school decided? Are they different for various activities (games, drama, music) and locations (classroom, circulation space, dining hall, boarding houses, outside areas) and have all adhered to these SD rules?
- N. What PPE has been recommended and, dependent on risk assessment, what has the school decided to equip staff and pupils? The range of PPE may include:
  - a. Masks;
  - b. Gloves;
  - c. shields (for face or lecterns, desk separators, staff desks);
  - d. sanitisers (gel and tissues).
- O. Medical. Who has:
  - a. Pre-existing medical conditions and are they fully declared?
  - b. Have all vulnerable pupils, parents and staff been identified and recorded?
  - c. Tested positive for COVID-19 and is it recorded? (for elimination purposes)?
  - d. Come into contact with anyone tested positive to COVID-19?
  - e. Travelled where: other than home and school? (via app or written diary).
  - f. Been sent home with COVID-19 symptoms (a cough, high temperature or shortness of breath)?
- P. Testing – has the school adopted testing procedures in line with government guidance?
- Q. Are plans being considered for school events including plays, concerts, parent and teacher meetings etc?

A summary of the results of the full risk assessment is given below.

Risk	Required for Sept?	Lead	Desired outcome	Update (if any)
Is government advice being regularly accessed and assessed, also taking into account scientific guidance. Actions should be recorded and applied?	Yes	Bursar	Review and update daily	Guidance changes regularly
Are changes regularly communicated to staff, pupils, parents and trustees?	Yes	HM	Guidance to be sent before start of term and at significant other times (re-opening)	Updates to parents on regular basis
Are changes reviewed by trustees?	Yes	Bursar	Board approval of plans initially - 14/05/2020 for initial and reviewed before start of term. Update approval needed for April 2021	CoM asked by email for comments and to approve amendment, if possible
Is access to school controlled effectively and are visitors (if allowed) details recorded?	Yes	Bursar	New visitor policy implemented from September 2020	Visitor policy still enforced.
Are Social Distancing (SD) and other hygiene rules communicated, understood and applied?	Yes	Bursar	Clearly understood by all	Regular reminders sent to staff
Are staff and pupils being reminded and checked to ensure they are complying with hygiene and SD rules?	Yes	SLT	Clearly understood by all	Wearing of masks in circulation areas by all required.
Is there a sufficient supply of hygiene materials and are they well placed?	Yes	Bursar	Sufficient supplies in place	Regular supplies acquired
Has the cleaning regime been regularly re-assessed and, if necessary, revised to high-risk areas such as toilets, door handles, switches, hand rails and regularly used hard surfaces?	Yes	Bursar	Cleaning schedule approved by Bursar and reviewed weekly  Fogging with Zoono in place for start of term and monthly	Regular review of cleaning needs – Zoono was extended to April 2021 and under review
What precautions are being used to keep shared teaching equipment (e.g. musical instruments) hygienic?	Yes	SLT	No lessons so far but under review	
Are high risk areas being regularly monitored for hygiene?	Yes	Bursar	Log of cleaning reviewed weekly	Continual cleaning of touch plates, etc.
Are all the risks identified properly mitigated and regularly re-assessed?	Yes	Bursar	Weekly review of RA	

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Bursar, 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021