



ADDENDUM TO POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING POLICY

Covid-19 Arrangements for Promoting Positive Behaviour

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INTRODUCTION

The closure of schools in Northern Ireland in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic required young people to remain at home. In August 2020, the Education Restart programme aimed to re-open schools and support pupils to return to full-time education.

As St. Mary's Grammar School re-opens, it does so with an understanding that COVID-19 has created a 'trauma environment' and that the pandemic has potentially impacted significantly on the mental health and well-being of staff, pupils and their family members due to the experiences they may have had during the lockdown period. It is our aim to support the school community in a trauma-informed way.

In re-opening the school, some significant changes have been required in the interests of the health, safety and well-being of the whole school community. This includes, for example, changes to the structure of the school day, daily routines and social and behavioural norms.

To ensure that St. Mary's continues to be a calm, nurturing and supportive learning environment, it is essential that these changes are understood by all members of the school community and that everyone adheres to newly introduced routines and procedures. It is also important that pupils, staff and parents are aware of behaviour expectations established within the context of COVID-19 and that these expectations are met for the safety of everyone within the school community.

The school's existing Promoting Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy remains in place. The principles set out in the policy remain current and should continue to be observed. The content of this addendum document should be read in conjunction with the existing policy. The purpose of this document is to set out clearly for all members of the school community the new procedures and routines introduced to keep everyone safe and to make clear our expectation that all members of the school community will adhere fully to all new safety measures upon the return to school.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES – A TRAUMA INFORMED APPROACH

In preparing for Education Restart 2020, we have been and will continue to be guided by the following key principles:

1. Clear Communication

Clear communication will support and build the confidence of the school community and help to re-establish a sense of familiarity.

2. Clear Behaviour Expectations

Expectations for behaviour upon the return to school will be clearly shared with members of the school community.

3. Clear Demonstration of Routines and Expected Behaviours

Routines and expectations for behaviour will be taught and modelled by all.

4. Prioritisation of Emotional Health and Well-Being

Upon the return to school, the primary focus will be on reconnecting and rebuilding relationships in the interests of promoting the emotional health and well-being of the school community.

5. Mutually Respectful Relationships

The promotion of positive, respectful relationships, showing empathy towards others and contributing to a feeling of safety for all will be a priority.

6. Engagement with Parents / Guardians

Maintaining good relationships and channels of communication with parents/guardians and ensuring that parents receive relevant information will be a priority.

7. Pro-Active and Supportive Approach

Patterns of behaviour will be observed and anticipated risks will be addressed. Where necessary, Risk Reduction Action Plans will be implemented to support pupils.

BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING

Good behaviour is fundamental to the effective functioning of any school. It creates a sense of order which promotes learning and teaching, health and safety and the personal development of pupils. In St. Mary's, we set high standards in terms of behaviour and we expect all pupils to maintain these standards at all times and in all aspects of their personal conduct including:

- in classrooms;
- on corridors;
- in the school canteen;
- around the school grounds;
- when travelling to and from school;
- on educational trips/visits;
- on work placements;
- during sporting events and other extra-curricular activities;
- while representing the school at any event / function;
- any time pupils are in the charge of a member of school staff;
- when wearing the school uniform at any time; and
- while pupils are receiving educational provision arranged on behalf of the school and provided elsewhere other than on the premises of the school e.g. at another school within the Magherafelt Learning Partnership, a Further Education College.

Within the context of COVID-19, good behaviour and the full co-operation of all pupils is even more important, particularly in relation to the changes which have been introduced to keep everyone within the school community safe.

As a school, we will continue to promote positive behaviour for learning. We will celebrate the resilience of pupils in how they deal with the demands of Education Restart and we will continue to praise and reward pupils for good behaviour within school.

On occasions when pupil behaviour is not safe, acceptable or conducive to learning, we will continue to address the issue with pupils in a consistent, fair and proportionate way.

To support pupils' re-integration, a range of supports will be implemented such as:

- emotion coaching (if appropriate) i.e. talking with a pupil calmly about their feelings and behaviour and discussing strategies that could help;
- supporting pupils to assess their learning progress, gaps and requirements as a result of school closures and blended learning; and
- offering pupils time to reflect and plan for better choices.

COMMUNICATION

We will ensure that pupils, staff and parents are aware of the new routines and procedures introduced and the expectations for pupil behaviour upon the return to school through:

- relevant presentations to staff during the Staff Development and Training Programme;
- an induction presentation to pupils;
- an information letter to parents/guardians;
- regular reminders to pupils communicated via Form Teachers; and
- signage / signposting throughout the school.

Communication will be age-appropriate and delivered with a sensitive awareness of the concerns and anxieties which may potentially exist in relation to school return and adapting to new school arrangements. The needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities will be considered and addressed by relevant staff such as the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo), Student Health Officer and Learning Support Assistants.

Pupils will be taught that they have a responsibility to keep themselves and others safe, physically and emotionally.

Behaviour expectations will be applied fairly and consistently and pupils will be made aware that consequences will occur for those who do not meet the required standards of behaviour.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the school if they have any concerns or questions in relation to the arrangements in place.

NEW PROCEDURES AND ROUTINES

In the planning and delivery of Education Restart 2020, we have been guided by the information and advice provided by the Department of Education (DE) and the Education Authority (EA), including the guidance contained in the *New School Day* publication and subsequent versions of this guidance including *Education Restart – Guidance for Schools and Educational Settings in Northern Ireland*.

The following information outlines the new procedures and routines:

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

As a school, we will continue to promote good attendance by all pupils. Pupils are expected to attend school every day unless there is an acceptable reason for absence. The procedures contained in the Pupil Attendance and Punctuality Policy, therefore, remain in effect with the following temporary amendments:

- To facilitate the staggered arrival of pupils to school, the school day will now begin at 9.15am. All pupils are expected to be in class by 9.15am. Pupils who are in school before 8.55am should make their way to their Period 1 classroom at 8.55am.
- AM Registration will be completed by Period 1 subject teachers and PM Registration will be completed by Period 5 subject teachers.

Please note that if pupils are feeling unwell or exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19, they must not attend school.

Parents/guardians should continue to contact the school before 9.00am if their son/daughter is going to be absent for any reason and continue to provide an explanation of absence note in the Student Planner on his/her return to school.

CLASSROOM PLAN FOR LEARNING

The school's Classroom Plan for Learning remains in place with the following amendments:

- Upon entering each classroom at the beginning of a lesson, all pupils should sanitise their hands using the hand sanitiser provided and wipe down the desk and chair they have been assigned using the anti-bacterial wipes provided.
- All pupils must sit in the seat assigned to them by the class teacher in line with the classroom seating plan.

It is not acceptable for pupils to sit in any seat other than that to which they have been assigned without the knowledge and consent of the class teacher. This includes any instance when a class is being covered by another member of teaching staff or a substitute teacher.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

It remains our expectation that pupils will continue to maintain the highest standards of presentation in school each day in terms of the school uniform. Pupils are required to wear the full and correct school uniform to school each day. The only exception to this arrangement is on days when pupils are timetabled to have a PE lesson. On these days,

pupils should wear school branded clothing. School sportswear, items of clothing produced by the school's Mini Enterprise Company or plain navy bottoms are permitted. Jeggings or any other item of clothing, including shorts or denim, are not permitted.

HAND SANITISING

Pupils must sanitise their hands upon entering the school building using the hand sanitising stations located at the entrance/exit of each building. Pupils should continue to regularly sanitise or wash their hands throughout the school day.

It is permissible and advisable for pupils to carry their own hand sanitiser with them to school each day.

ONE WAY SYSTEM

A one-way system is now in operation within the school and is clearly signposted. All members of the school community are expected to observe the one-way system at all times, including at the end of the school day. Signage located in each class directs pupils which way to turn when they leave the room.

WEARING OF FACE COVERINGS IN SCHOOL

All members of the school community are expected to wear a face covering inside the school building, with the exception of inside classrooms and when eating in designated areas. This includes when they are on school corridors, in bathrooms and moving between lessons. Pupils must put on a face covering *before* they enter the school building. That is to say, it is not acceptable for pupils to put the face covering on as they make their way into the building or as they move through the building.

Pupils are permitted to wear a face covering in classrooms if they wish. The requirement for pupils to wear a face covering in a classroom will be at the discretion of each teacher, taking account of factors such as the size of the classroom space and the level of physical distancing achievable within the classroom.

Pupils must put the face covering on at the end of each lesson before entering corridor spaces.

It is a requirement that all pupils have with them a face covering for use each day. Pupils who arrive to school without a face covering may purchase one from the General Office.

It is not acceptable for any pupil to be in school without a face covering, except in cases where medical exemptions apply and parents/guardians have notified the Principal of such medical exemptions.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

At all times, both inside the school building and around the school site outside, pupils are expected to maintain physical distancing. Within classrooms, the level of physical distancing should be the maximum distance possible. On corridors and around the school site outside, pupils should maintain a distance of at least one metre from other pupils. Pupils congregating in close proximity to each other, either inside or outside the school, is not acceptable.

Where possible, pupils must maintain a distance of at least two metres from members of

staff. It is, therefore, not appropriate for pupils to stand close to a teacher's desk.

All classrooms have been configured to provide the maximum level of physical distancing possible between pupils in each classroom.

SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Pupils are expected to maintain the highest standards of behaviour inside and outside of school. This includes while travelling to and from school on school transport.

During travel to and from school on school transport, pupils are now expected to wear a face covering and maintain as much physical distancing as possible on board school buses. Pupils should face forward when travelling on a bus and refrain from turning around to talk to other passengers.

While waiting to board buses on the school site each evening, pupils must adhere to the physical distancing markers in place in the bus boarding area. Pupils must follow the instructions of supervising staff while boarding buses and only move forward to board their bus when invited to do so by staff.

REMOTE LEARNING

In the event that pupils are out of school (e.g. due to school closure / isolation requirements) and work is being provided online, pupils are expected to engage and complete all assigned tasks by given deadlines.

SIMS Behaviour Points will be added for pupils who do not engage in assigned online tasks.

Only those platforms that are recommended by and available via C2K will be used.

Teachers and pupils must only use their school account and not a personal account for online teaching and communication.

Pupils must not share passwords for access to online classrooms with anyone else.

CAFÉ BORDEAUX

Café Bordeaux has been configured to facilitate physical distancing between pupils during meal times.

Café Bordeaux will be open to pupils between 8.15 – 8.55am each morning.

Café Bordeaux will not be open to pupils during break time.

Café Bordeaux will be open for lunch to all pupils on a staggered basis so that pupils remain in 'year group bubbles' during meal times.

Meal times have been allocated as follows:

| YEAR GROUP | MEAL TIME |
|------------|---|
| 8 | 12.00 – 12.20pm |
| 9 | 12.20 – 12.35pm |
| 10 | 12.35 – 12.55pm |
| 11 | 1.30 – 1.45pm (Week 1) / 1.45 – 2.00pm (Week 2) |
| 12 | 1.45 – 2.00pm (Week 1) / 1.30 – 1.45pm (Week 2) |
| 13 | 1.15 – 1.30pm |
| 14 | 12.55 – 1.15pm |

Pupils are not permitted to enter Café Bordeaux outside of the times assigned for their year group. Pupils must observe physical distancing when queueing to enter Café Bordeaux.

When pupils have finished eating in Café Bordeaux, they must clear everything from the table they used, including plates, cutlery and plastic beakers.

Pupils using indoor spaces (e.g. Sports Hall / Assembly Hall) during break and lunch times must only remove face masks to eat. When pupils have finished eating, face masks must be put back on.

EATING OUTSIDE

To reduce the number of pupils in Café Bordeaux and inside the school building during lunch time, pupils are now permitted and encouraged to eat outside. Pupils should maintain their regard for the school environment, refrain from throwing litter on the ground and make use of the litter bins provided around the school.

Pupils taking food out of Café Bordeaux are not permitted to take steel cutlery outside but should use the disposable cutlery provided.

USE OF BATHROOM FACILITIES

All pupils are expected to uphold the highest standard of personal hygiene at all times. This includes the washing of hands after the use of toilet facilities. Pupils are not permitted to loiter / congregate in bathroom facilities in the school. Pupils must ensure that bathroom facilities are not overcrowded at any one time.

COUGHING / SNEEZING / SPITTING

Pupils are strictly forbidden from deliberately coughing, sneezing or spitting towards another person. Spitting of any kind is unacceptable.

Pupils should observe appropriate hygiene measures when coughing or sneezing, including the use of a tissue or the elbow crease to cover their mouth and nose and reduce the spread of germs. Pupils should follow the ‘Catch It, Bin it, Kill It’ guidance in relation to the use and disposal of tissues.

SHARING ITEMS BETWEEN PUPILS

Pupils are not permitted to share any item, object or personal possession with another member of the school community. This includes pens, pencils, equipment, water bottles etc.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PUPILS WHO FEEL UNWELL

Pupils who feel unwell during the school day should attend the Medical Room with the permission of a member of staff. Any pupil who begins to experience any symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day should report immediately to the Student Health Officer.

ADDRESSING PUPIL CONCERNS

Any pupil who experiences worry, anxiety or concern in relation to any issue should speak to their Form Teacher or Head of Year.

Other members of staff are also available to address any concerns raised by pupils, including:

- Senior Pastoral Leaders
- Student Health Officer
- School Safeguarding Team
- School Counsellor

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PUPILS WHO DO NOT ADHERE TO NEW SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Pupils should remain mindful that “we are all in this together” and that any new routines or procedures which have been introduced by the school are in the interests of keeping everyone safe. It is, therefore, the moral and civic responsibility of every pupil to co-operate fully with all new arrangements.

Pupils who do not adhere to new school routines and procedures may receive an appropriate sanction, in line with the school’s Sanctions Framework.

Pupils who persistently neglect to observe or choose to ignore school routines and procedures may face additional sanctions which could include suspension or, in extreme circumstances, expulsion.

In the event that pupils are out of school (e.g. due to school closure / isolation requirements) and work is being provided online, pupils are expected to engage and complete all assigned tasks by given deadlines.

SIMS Behaviour Points will be added for pupils who do not engage in assigned online tasks.

Only those platforms that are recommended by and available via C2K will be used.

Teachers and pupils must only use their school account and not a personal account for online teaching and communication.

Pupils must not share passwords for access to online classrooms with anyone else.

EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

A whole-school approach will be taken to promote emotional health and well-being and will involve all members of the school community actively working together in partnership to achieve this outcome. Pupil emotional health and well-being will be addressed through:

- curriculum delivery (e.g. Personal Development Programmes);
- pastoral contact time (e.g. daily Registrations);
- the creation of an environment where pupils and staff feel safe and happy;
- the promotion of positive relationships throughout the school community;
- providing opportunities for pupils to build self-esteem, develop confidence and cope with change;
- supporting the development of emotional literacy and resilience to help pupils understand and find ways to promote their own health and wellbeing;
- regular sharing of information with pupils about looking after their mental and emotional health and well-being e.g. Take 5 message;
- referral, as appropriate, to relevant internal or external personnel e.g. Student Health Officer, Safeguarding Team, School Counselling Service etc.
- provision of relevant information / literature on the Pupil Health and Well-Being stand;
- lesson planning;
- talks/discussions;
- raising awareness of how and where support can be accessed; and
- developing supportive networks and promoting self-care.

SUPPORT: REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

In St. Mary's, we understand that, at certain stages in a child's or young person's school life they may struggle to access, or manage within, the typical provision offered by the school as a result of:

- Social, Behavioural, Emotional and Well-Being Needs (SBEW) and/or;
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

School staff will be supported by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) to implement the school's Special Educational Needs Policy and be guided by existing/new Individual Education Plans/Education and/or Health and Care Plans.

In responding to the needs of pupils in a trauma-informed way, we will, first and foremost, consider behaviour as a form of communication. Behaviour that challenges will not be seen as a choice, but as communication of an unmet need. The school community will strive to understand the function behind the behaviour and offer support.

Reasonable adjustments may include, but are not limited to:

- preparing pupils for new routines e.g. a visit to the school/video/visuals/leaflet;
- identification of a key member of staff to act as point of contact who will provide support when needed;

- additional support at break and lunch time;
- adapted resources;
- liaising with EA Support Services, e.g. Autism Advisory and Intervention Service, Psychology Service, Post-Primary Behaviour Support and Provisions; and
- liaising with external agencies as appropriate e.g. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Social Services, Health and Social Care Trust, Family Support Hub.

Support may also include responding to ongoing concerns together with the pupil to:

- review, amend and implement support strategies and, through consultation with school staff and parent/guardian, agree a plan which is in line with Special Needs Code of Practice and the school's Special Educational Needs Policy;
- complete, if appropriate, a Risk Assessment and develop a Risk Reduction Action Plan (RRAP). This should be drafted in consultation with staff, pupil, parent/guardian and supporting agencies to identify and target support to address the presenting SEW; and
- address serious health-related issues of non-adherence to COVID-19 measures, such as coughing and spitting at others through the implementation of a RRAP.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

When appropriate support has been implemented, monitored and reviewed but a pupil's SEW continues to present significant challenges, a short period of suspension may be considered in conjunction with the development of a risk assessment or RRAP, as appropriate.

As part of a planned return to school following a suspension, parents/guardians will be requested to attend a meeting with the Principal (or his/her representative) to agree the implementation of the RRAP. If, when all appropriate supports and guidance have been implemented and reviewed, a pupil continues to exhibit unacceptable, inappropriate or challenging behaviour, the Principal may consider arrangements to formally suspend a pupil for a fixed period or, as a last resort, to move towards expulsion proceedings. Further details of the arrangements for the suspension and expulsion of pupils may be found in the school's Scheme for the Suspension and Expulsion of Pupils.

SAFE HANDLING: USE OF PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

While it is unlikely that school staff would choose to use physical intervention within the current context of COVID-19, there may be times when physical intervention is deemed necessary as per Article 4 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 which enables a member of staff to prevent a pupil from:

- a. committing an offence;
- b. causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- c. engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

The school's policy on the Use of Reasonable Force / Safe Handling remains in place but in any situation requiring physical intervention within the context of COVID-19 staff will:

- be aware of possible risk of infection if they physically intervene, contrasted with the risk of not intervening;
- act in accordance with Public Health and Government guidelines on COVID-19;
- focus on early intervention as a preventative measure alongside de-escalation strategies and reducing 'triggers' to manage risk;
- only use physical intervention as **a last resort**, ensuring that their actions are reasonable and proportionate and in the best interests of the pupil;
- continue to explore alternatives that maximise safety and minimise harm when risky behaviours occur;
- maintain accurate records of physical intervention according to the school's Reasonable Force/Safe Handling Policy; and
- act to maintain the care, welfare, safety and security of all members of the school community.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors, in consultation with the Principal, to regularly review and, as necessary, amend these arrangements throughout the time that schools continue to manage challenges presented by COVID-19. These arrangements may be reviewed in response to:

- information and guidance provided by the Department of Education, Education Authority, Public Health Agency, the Government or any other relevant organisation;
- learning emerging from school situations, experiences or observations; and
- feedback from pupils, staff and/or parents/guardians.

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|----------------|------------------------------------|
| SIGNED: | Principal |
| SIGNED: | Chair of Board of Governors |
| DATE: | |

St. Mary's

Grammar School, Magherafelt.

