Doncaster School for the Deaf



Coronavirus (COVID-19): Full Opening Handbook for Parents

Last updated: August 2020

**Contents:**

[The purpose of this handbook](#_The_purpose_of_1)

1. [Opening the school to all pupils](#_Opening_the_school)
2. [Protecting clinically vulnerable individuals](#_Protecting_clinically_vulnerable)
3. [Attendance](#_Attendance)
4. [Social distancing](#_[Updated]_Social_distancing)
5. [Infection control](#_Infection_control)
6. [Procedure if a pupil becomes unwell on site](#_Procedure_where_a)
7. [Access to testing](#_Access_to_testing)
8. [Uniform](#_Uniform)
9. [The curriculum](#_The_curriculum)
10. [Remote learning](#_Remote_learning_1)
11. [Behaviour expectations](#_Behaviour_expectations)
12. [Safeguarding](#_Sa_feguarding)
13. [Wellbeing](#_W_ellbeing)
14. [Visitors on site](#_V_isitors_on)
15. [School trips](#_School_trips)
16. [Important documents](#_Important_documents)
17. [What can you do to help?](#_What_can_you)

# The purpose of this handbook

Firstly, we would like to thank you for your support and understanding during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. We are now in a position where we are able to open the school to all of our pupils, in line with government advice.

This handbook has been created to provide you with details of the measures that are being put in place to ensure the safety of our school community as we fully open. The handbook aims to answer your questions and bring you up-to-speed with the various changes that have been implemented. We hope that the information within this handbook will reassure you that Doncaster School for the Deafhas taken all the necessary precautions in preparing to welcome all pupils back to school.

We welcome any questions and will do our best to address any of your concerns. Our school office is open from 8:00am until 4:00pm and can be contacted via [secretary@ddt-deaf.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ddt-deaf.org.uk) or 01302386733. Please do not attend the school office in person unless absolutely necessary .

# Opening the school to all pupils

In line with the government’s direction, and following a robust risk assessment process, we have decided to begin to welcome back all pupils from 3rd September 2020.

The government is relaxing its shielding guidelines from 1st August. If your child is classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, and has previously been advised to shield, you can now allow them to return to school.

We will resume our usual opening days and times. Please contact the school office as soon as possible if you have any queries regarding your child’s attendance.

**Risk assessment**

The school has conducted a thorough risk assessment to mitigate the risks of opening fully during the coronavirus pandemic. Our risk assessment covers various aspects of the school premises, cleaning, infection control and social distancing protocols, mental health and wellbeing, access to learning.

The risk assessment is a live document and will be updated as required. A copy of this risk assessment is available from the school office .

# A picture containing clock Description automatically generatedProtecting clinically vulnerable individuals

If your child is considered clinically vulnerable, clinically extremely vulnerable, was previously ‘shielding’, or lives with somebody who was shielding, they are now able to return to school.

If your child is considered clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable, you may wish to contact your child’s GP to discuss whether additional safety measures need to be put in place to ensure it is safe for them to attend school.

If, after speaking with their GP, you decide that your child will need additional safety measures in place to attend school safely, please contact the deputy headteacher via the school office to discuss these arrangements.

# Attendance

Attendance for pupils coming into school will be recorded as normal. We understand that you may be concerned about your child returning to school at this time, but please be assured that the school will do its utmost to keep your child safe. Please feel free to contact the school to discuss attendance and the safety measures in place. The government has announced that penalties for non-attendance will resume, but the school will only implement these as a last resort.

If, at any time, your child cannot attend school due to the necessity to self-isolate, whether this is because they are ill themselves or have been in close contact with someone who is, please let the school know as soon as possible on **secretary@ddt-deaf.org.uk**.You will not be penalised if your child cannot attend due to following clinical or public health advice to stay at home.

The school will continue to notify social workers where children with a social worker do not attend school when theyare expected to.

If your child does not attend when they are expected to and the school has not been notified, you will be contacted to find out why, in line with the school’s safeguarding procedures. We are contacting parents to confirm that the emergency contact details we have on record are correct and to ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

# Social distancing

To reduce the risk of transmitting the coronavirus in our school, social distancing measures will be implemented.We expect pupils to follow these rules; however, we understand that some pupils may be unable to fully understand social distancing principles, e.g. because of their age or needs. Staff will work with all pupils to ensure their safetyand positively reinforce good social distancing behaviour.

**Group arrangements**

To maximise the effectiveness of social distancing we have timetabled so that Pupils stay in their classrooms for lessons as far as possible with teachers moving between classes. We will aim to reduce movement of large groups in corridors and on arrival and departure from the hall.

Our classes are small in size and the whole school is approximately 30 pupils.

* Members of staff will minimise their close contact with pupils and other staff; however, staff will be able to move between groups in order to deliver the full curriculum.
* Frequently-used equipment, e.g. pens, will be provided or may be brought from home so that all staff and pupils have their own – sharing frequently-used equipment should not be necessary.
* Classroom resources, e.g. books, can be shared within groups, but should be cleaned frequently, e.g. at the end of each day or left for 72 hours
* Pupils will wait in taxis on arrival if the hall is busy until any larger groups have moved on. We will contact some parents and transport services about slightly staggered departures from the hall.

We acknowledge that we will face some limitations to the practicality of these arrangements in certain circumstances and will work with all pupils to help remind them of the importance of staying distant. If you are concerned about any of the arrangements listed above, please contact the school as soon as possible to discuss any alternative arrangements.

**Moving around the school**

The school has put in place a one-way system to further reduce the risk of contact

# Infection control

Combined with social distancing, strict infection control measures are an important aspect of keeping all staff and pupils safe and healthy in school. This means that we will be enforcing new rules to ensure that good hand and respiratory hygiene is consistently maintained.

We expect pupils to follow these rules; however, we understand that some pupils may be unable to fully understand infection control principles. Staff will work with all pupils to ensure their safety and positively reinforce good infection control behaviour where necessary.

The school has repeated clear signage to remind all of social distancing and handwashing

Here are some of the key measures that pupils will need to follow:

* Pupils will be instructed to wash their hands at various points throughout the day, including upon entering school, when they change rooms, before and after eating, before and after breaktimes, after using the toilet, and after coughing or sneezing.
* Pupils will wash their hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitiser – younger pupils and pupils with complex needs will be supervised when doing this.
* The school will enforce the ‘catch it, kill it, bin it’ approach to containing coughs and sneezes.
* Pupils who show symptoms associated with coronavirus will sent home to self-isolate for at least 7 days.

Classrooms will have sanitising wipes for use by adults but not sprays .

Water fountains will be wiped regularly by staff in the vicinity, surfaces and door handles wiped throughout the day . Regularly used shared equipment such as photocopiers will be wiped. Staff will also be required to follow stringent infection control measures. Full details of the infection control measures in place can be found in the **Infection Control Policy**.

**Personal protective equipment (PPE)**

The government has recommended that staff and pupils **do notneed** to use PPE in school; however, staff will use PPE if a pupil shows symptoms of coronavirus and a distance of two metres cannot be maintained.

Staff will also wear PPE if they would normally wear it to carry out their role, e.g. where a child requires intimate care or is receiving first aid following an accident or injury.

Following government guidelines, any pupils or staff who come into school wearing a face covering will be instructed to safely remove it upon entering the premises.

**Bringing items into school**

To minimise the risk of potentially transmitting infections between pupils’ households and the school, we ask that pupils do not bring non-essential items from home into school with them – this includes footballs and other similar items.Pupils are able to take items from school, such as books, home with them to aid their education, provided that these items are properly cleaned before and after being in their homes.This equipment can be brought to school:

* Essential medication and medical equipment
* Coats and other essential outdoor wear
* Spectacles and spectacle cases
* Stationery and books
* Washed PE kits
* Mobile phones, taxi games (if required and secured in lockers on arrival )
* Bags
* Bags for residents

If your child needs to bring an item to school that is not listed above, please contact us as soon as possible to discuss arrangements.

# Procedure if a pupil becomes unwell on site

It is extremely important that all parents and pupils remain vigilant with regard to preventing, identifying and minimising the spread of coronavirus. We ask, therefore, that you **do not send your child to school if they have any of the following symptoms**:

* **A high temperature** – this means they feel hot to touch on their chest or back
* **A new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if they usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
* **A loss of, or change in, their normal sense of smell or taste** – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

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It is also important that you **do not send your child to school** if somebody in your household has tested positive for, or has symptoms of, coronavirus.

As a precaution, your child must not come into school for **14 days** after coronavirus has been identified in your household, whether confirmed or unconfirmed.

Please notify the school office as soon as possible if your child, or somebody in your household, is showing symptoms of coronavirus and your child cannot come into school. You may be advised to get your child tested for coronavirus and to notify the school of the result. See [below](#_Handover_and_reporting) for information on accessing a test.

If your child becomes unwell at school and shows symptoms of coronavirus, the school will take the following immediate actions:

* Your child will be asked to self-isolate in school using a designated area.
* Your child will be supervised while waiting for collection, where required.
* You will be notified that your child must be picked up as soon as possible.
* You will be encouraged to have your child tested for coronavirus.
* You will be encouraged to engage with the NHS Test and Trace programme.
* Areas your child has occupied will be disinfected as soon as possible.

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If your child is sent home from school to self-isolate, they **must not come into school** for at least 7 days.

If an individual in your child’s class tests positive for coronavirus, **the school will send the individual’s close contacts home** to self-isolate for 14 days. Close contacts include:

* Direct close contacts – anyone in face-to-face contact with the individual for any length of time, within 1 metre – this includes face-to-face conversation, unprotected (skin-to-skin) physical contact, or being coughed/sneezed on.
* Proximity contacts – anyone in extended close contact with the individual, within 1 to 2 metres for over 15 minutes.
* Travelling in a small vehicle, e.g. a car, with the individual.

We will notify you if this is the case and ask that you pick your child up from school as soon as possible. While pupils are awaiting collection, they will remain in their classroom or isolation room and be able to access one toilet.

# Access to testing

All pupils, and members of their households, will be able to access a test if they are displaying symptoms of coronavirus. If your child is displaying symptoms, we would strongly advise that you access a test.

There is information about how you can access a test on the NHS website:<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/>. Where possible, we will provide a home testing kit for you to ensure that your child and other members of your household can easily access a test.

If your child is sent home from school with symptoms and subsequently takes a test, you must inform the school of the results as soon as possible. If the test is negative, your child can return to school when they feel better. If the test is positive, your household will need to continue the self-isolation period. We encourage you to inform the school immediately of test results.

You may also need to engage with the NHS Test and Trace programme, meaning that you need to be ready and willing to:

* Book a test if your child or another member of your household displays symptoms.
* Provide details of anyone your child has been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus or are asked by NHS Test and Trace.
* Allow your child to self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus symptoms or someone who tests positive.

# Uniform

We expect pupils to attend school in full uniform in the Autumn term. We request that uniform is regularly washed/ changed to prevent any infection spread.

# The curriculum

Our focus is to support all pupils’ health and wellbeing and to help them transition back into school life successfully.

To provide all pupils the opportunity to excel and engage with learning, the school will ensure the following:

* Increased outdoor learning, where possible
* Additional support for pupils who are at risk of falling behind
* Provision and contingency plans for remote education

Lessons will work in a similar way to normal as far as possible. Establishing a consistent routine is important

An adequate amount of time will be spent getting pupils up-to-speed on material from the previous term that they may have missed due to partial school closures.

PE lessons will continue to ensure pupils get the exercise they need; however, activities within these lessons will aim to be non-contact.

# Remote learning

Although all pupils can now return to school, we must make sure we are prepared to deliver education in any eventuality, including local lockdowns. We also need to have provision in place for pupils to learn remotely if they are sent home to self-isolate. We understand that each family’s circumstances and ability to access to learning material for their children differs, which is why we are committed to doing all we can to help pupils who are learning at home.

The school will continue to provide pupils with access to learning via paper based work posted , zoom and online platforms.

We advise all parents to make every effort to ensure that their child has access to and completes the learning materials provided. We understand that this in itself poses its own unique challenges and, therefore, encourage you to contact your child’s teacher via email, or the SLT if you are experiencing any problems.

# Behaviour expectations

To ensure the school remains a safe place, we have made the decision to enforce additional rules with regards to social distancing and infection control. Pupils are expected to follow these rules. These rules include:

* Partaking in additional hand washing.
* Minimising close contact, where possible.
* Minimising contact with those outside of their bubble, where possible.
* Not lingering in corridors, stairwells and other communal places.
* Not spitting, biting, or displaying other behaviours that put others at risk.
* Putting soiled tissues in a bin.
* Queuing to use school facilities, where required.
* Keeping to their classroom .

Pupils who purposefully behave contrarily to these measures and put others at risk will be disciplined in line with our Positive Behaviour Policy.

We understand, however, that these measures may be difficult to follow for some pupils. The school will, therefore, consider each situation individually and work with pupils to educate them on the importance of social distancing and infection control measures and reward positive behaviour.

# Safeguarding

Our Safeguarding Policy was updated at the beginning of the lockdown period to account for a change in provision while the school was partially closed. This policy has been updated again to reflect that we are opening to all pupils. A copy of this policy is available on the school website and from the school office .

We will need to know if your child has experienced any changes regarding their welfare, health and wellbeing that we need to be aware of as they return to school. We need to know this information so we can put the appropriate support in place for your family. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) , Mrs Lana Cook , will work to speak to parents; however, if you need to report any changes, please contact the DSL directly.

# Wellbeing

One of our key priorities as we fully open the school is ensuring pupils are given the wellbeing support they need.

Pupils will be able to communicate with staff face-to-face in school to discuss how they are feeling. Staff members will be on hand to support pupils themselves or to direct them to external support that may be required.

If you are concerned about your child’s wellbeing or wish to discuss the support available in school or externally, please contact SLT via the school office.

# Visitors on site

Visitors will only be allowed into any school buildings where it is absolutely necessary, e.g. for essential building works or to provide essential support to a pupil – this also applies to parents.

Parents that need to come into school are requested to make an appointment first.

# School trips

The government has advised that school trips abroad do not go ahead until further notice – this may mean that school trips are delayed or cancelled. Overnight trips also cannot go ahead at this time, but non-overnight domestic trips can take place, provided that adequate safety measures can be followed.

If we need to go on a planned school trip, we will inform you of this and the risk assessment in place. Parents may decide that they do not want their child to attend and alternative arrangements will be made.

# Important documents

A number of school policies and procedures have been created and updated to reflect the provisions that are in place during the coronavirus pandemic, including the following:

* Full Opening Plan
* Social Distancing Policy
* Risk Assessment for Full Opening in September
* Infection Control Policy

These documents can be obtained from the school office and will be added to the website

# What can you do to help?

The support and understanding from our pupils’ parents is vital when ensuring the school is a safe and happy environment. Helping your child understand the importance of infection control, good hygiene and social distancing is just one way you can help us minimise the risk of coronavirus transmission.

Here are a few additional actions you can take to help keep everyone safe:

* Remain vigilant for the symptoms of coronavirus
* Keep your child at home if they develop symptoms
* Ensure your child washes their hands before they leave for school and after they return home
* Communicate with school staff digitally instead of in person, e.g. via email
* Positively reinforce good social distancing and infection control behaviours and be a role model to all pupils