



Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust

Critical Incident (Coronavirus) Policy

This policy is a mandatory policy for all Vine schools and must be implemented with no amendments.

**"I am the vine; you are the branches.
If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit"
(John 15:5)**

The Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust	
Approved by:	The Vine Schools Trust
Signature:	Tim Rose Chairman
Date:	5 March 2020

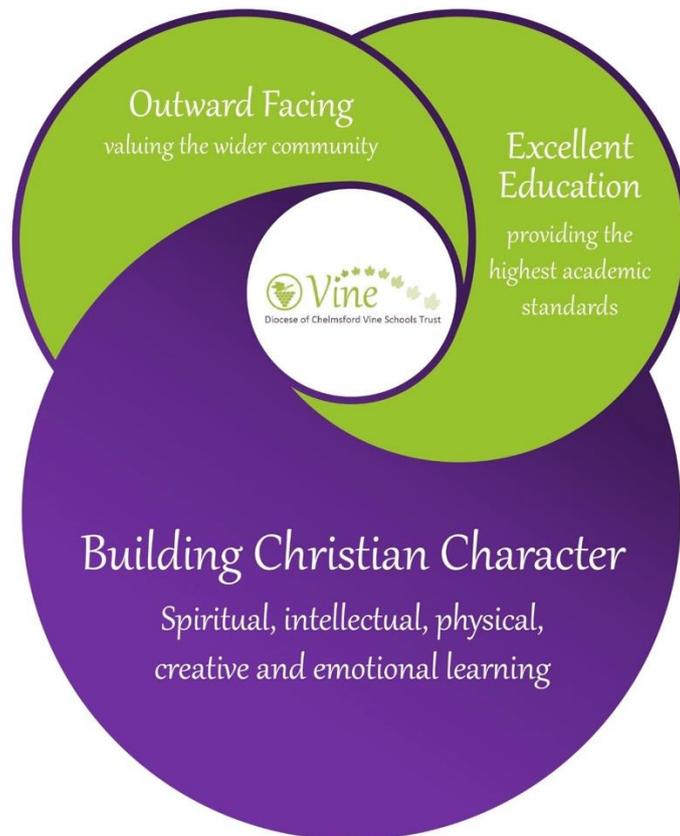
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Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust

Vision & Values

V Valuing every person
I Inspiring great teaching
N Nurturing academic excellence and Christian Character
E Excelling, unlocking great potential



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1. Introduction

- i. The Vine Schools Trust is committed to the safety of pupils, staff members and visitors on its schools' premises recognises that whilst is paramount, it is sometimes out of the control of the school.
- ii. In an emergency, staff members at a Vine Schools Trust School will endeavour to take all reasonable actions in order to ensure the safety of its pupils in consultation with the CEO.
- iii. The procedures outlined in this policy aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils, staff members and visitors, by responding to critical incidents such as the Coronavirus as quickly and efficiently as possible.

2. Information about the virus

- i. A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020.
- ii. The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 and 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, it is unlikely that they have been infected.
- iii. The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has COVID-19 infection:
 - a. cough
 - b. difficulty in breathing
 - c. fever
- iv. Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease. There is no evidence that children are more affected than other age groups – very few cases have been reported in children.

3. How COVID-19 is spread

- i. From what is known about other coronaviruses, spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within 2 metres) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.
- ii. Droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes (termed respiratory secretions) containing the virus are most likely to be the most important means of transmission.
- iii. There are 2 routes by which people could become infected:
 - a) secretions can be directly transferred into the mouths or noses of people who are nearby (within 2 metres) or could be inhaled into the lungs
 - b) it is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface or object that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching a doorknob or shaking hands then touching own face).
- iv. There is currently no good evidence that people who do not have symptoms are infectious to others.

4. Preventing spread of infection

- i. There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus.
- ii. There are general principles anyone can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:
 - a) washing your hands often - with soap and water or use alcohol sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport
 - b) covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin. See [Catch it, Bin it, Kill it](#)

- c) people who feel unwell should stay at home and should not attend work or the school
- d) pupils, staff and visitors should wash their hands:
 - i. before leaving home
 - ii. on arrival at school
 - iii. after using the toilet
 - iv. after breaks and sporting activities
 - v. before food preparation
 - vi. before eating any food, including snacks
 - vii. before leaving school
- e) use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- f) avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- g) avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- h) clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- iii. if you are worried about your symptoms or those of a child or colleague, please call NHS 111. Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment
- iv. Always check any updates and see further information on the [Public Health England Blog](#) and the [NHS UK website](#).

5. What to do if children or staff become unwell and believe they have been exposed to COVID-19 (either through travel to a [specified country or area](#) or contact with a confirmed case)

- i. **Call NHS 111**, or 999 in an emergency (if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk), and if appropriate, explain which country they have returned from in the last 14 days. You can do this on their behalf if this is easier. People who become unwell should be advised not to go to their GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.
- ii. Whilst you wait for advice from NHS 111 or an ambulance to arrive, try to find somewhere safe for the unwell person to sit which is at least 2 metres away from other people. If possible, find a room or area where they can be isolated behind a shut door, such as a staff office or meeting room. If it is possible to open a window, do so for ventilation. They should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the bin. If no bin is available, put the tissue in a bag or pocket for disposing in a bin later. If you don't have any tissues available, they should cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow. The room will need to be cleaned once they leave.
- iii. If they need to go to the bathroom whilst waiting for medical assistance, they should use a separate bathroom if available.
- iv. Make sure that children and young people know to tell a member of staff if they feel unwell.

6. What to do if a case of COVID-19 (pupil or staff) is suspected in the school

- i. If anyone has been in contact with a suspected case, no restrictions or special control measures are required while laboratory test results for COVID-19 are awaited. **There is no need to close the setting or send other learners or staff home.** As a precautionary measure, the NHS are currently testing a very large number of people who have travelled back from affected countries, the vast majority of whom test negative. Therefore, until the outcome of test results is known there is no action that staff members need to take apart from cleaning specific areas.
- ii. Once the results arrive, those who test negative for COVID-19 will be advised individually about return to education.

7. What to do if a case of COVID-19 (pupil, student or staff) is confirmed in the school

- i. The school will be contacted by the local Public Health England Health Protection Team to discuss the case, identify people who have been in contact with them and advise on any actions or precautions that should be taken. An assessment of the school will be undertaken by the Health Protection Team with relevant staff. Advice on the management of pupils or students and staff will be based on this assessment.
- ii. The Health Protection Team will also be in contact with the patient directly to advise on isolation and identifying other contacts and will be in touch with any contacts of the patient to provide them with appropriate advice. Advice on cleaning of communal areas such as classrooms, changing rooms and toilets will be given by the Health Protection Team and is outlined later in this document.
- iii. If there is a confirmed case, a risk assessment will be undertaken by the school with advice from the local Health Protection Team. **In most cases, closure of a school will be unnecessary**, but this will be a local decision based on various factors such as establishment size and pupil mixing.
- iv. **If it appears advisable to close the school**, then at the earliest opportunity the headteacher or deputy should contact the CEO phoning her mobile number to discuss and come to the appropriate conclusion. Text *Urgent Coronavirus* if a call is not answered.

8. How to clean a school where there were children, students or staff with suspected cases of COVID-19

- i. Coronavirus symptoms are similar to a flu-like illness and include cough, fever, or shortness of breath. Once symptomatic, all surfaces that the suspected case has come into contact with must be cleaned using disposable cloths and household detergents, according to current recommended workplace legislation and practice.
- ii. These include:
 - a) all surfaces and objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids
 - b) all potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as toilets, door handles, telephones
 - c) Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time in (such as corridors) but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids do not need to be specially cleaned and disinfected. If a person becomes ill in a shared space, these should be cleaned as detailed above.
- iii. In some circumstances the headteacher in consultation with the CEO and the local Public Health England Health Protection Team Health England will decide it is necessary for the school to be closed and a 'deep clean' to be urgently arranged.
- iv. If and when a school is to be closed the Vine Schools Trust marketing company should be informed and their support arranged for responding to any media interest.

9. Further information

This policy has been written in line with the Department for Education COVID-19: Guidance for education settings. More details are available from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>