

## **COVID-19 POLICY**

### **PRIMARY PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THIS POLICY**

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### **LAST REVIEW DATE**

July 2020

### **NEXT REVIEW**

September 2020

Policy Guidance on the reopening of Albemarle Independent College and creating a COVID-19 secure workplace.

### **Purpose of this Policy**

This policy guidance is based on various risk assessments carried out at the College by the Management Team. The main purpose and rationale of the policy guidance are to:

- Explain the main risks that exist for students, staff and visitors
- Outline the changes that will have been made to mitigate the principal risks
- Explain how the changes will be actioned and monitored
- Outline what measures will be in place to allow those who are vulnerable to study/work remotely

This policy guidance document has been critically reviewed by the Management Team and approved for publication. It has assimilated advice from various sources, including government websites, consultancy advice, DfE, Teaching Union guidance and advice from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The College is totally committed to providing a safe and secure environment for students, staff and visitors. Social distancing, hygiene measures, regular testing and classroom/corridor management are at the heart of the policy guidance.

### **Review of this Policy**

The policy will be subject to modification depending on the prevailing scientific and government advice and is subject to constant update. The Management Team will be responsible for updating the policy every two weeks from the date of official publication.

The College intends to re-open from 10th August 2020, with the academic term starting from 10th September, which is when students will be expected to start their studies.

### **Macro Risks Identified:**

From scientific advice it is apparent that the virus has a high rate of transmission and can therefore be easily spread through a population. The key risks appear to be:

1. People being too close to each other and not engaging in accepted social distancing (2 metres); a change in guidance from two metres to one metre may be made in the future depending on prevailing scientific advice
2. Transmission occurring through touching of hard and soft surfaces (e.g. door handles)
3. Transmission through sharing items, including packages, paper, pens, equipment, etc.
4. Transmission occurs from person-to-person via small respiratory droplets, dispersed through sneezing, coughing or when people are in close proximity to one another i.e. less than 1 metre
5. Those from a BAME background show evidence of disproportionate mortality and therefore College individuals within this group should be subject to individual risk assessments
6. Those with underlying health conditions (diabetes, respiratory conditions, compromised immune systems, etc.) all of which are further impacted by BMI and advancing age.
7. Students coming in from other high risk countries
8. Students and staff congregating near the entrance/exits

9. The common rooms, library, and all classrooms (including art, photography and laboratories) pose a risk unless they are re-worked to ensure social distancing
10. Staff and student and student and student interaction and social intercourse are a possible source of transmission during day-to-day operations
11. The sharing of items - including, pens, pencils, board pens, lab coats and equipment are all potential sources of risk transmission
12. Sports activities are strong potential sources of risk (although it should be noted that coronavirus is not transmitted through sweat)
13. Individuals who may not believe or properly comprehend the risk of transmission may flagrantly breach rules and social distancing measures
14. Visitors to the building who do not follow social distancing measures or general guidance
15. Individuals who fail to report any symptoms and enter the College

All of the above are further complicated by the risks from travelling in to College on public transport.

### **Mitigation of Risk Factors**

The mitigation of risk factors is best understood when divided up into key elements:

1. Entrance and visitors
2. Students
3. Staff
4. Traffic management and classroom management
5. Resources for infection control
6. Infection control and hygiene management
7. Key area management
8. Miscellaneous
9. What happens if a student shows symptoms?
10. What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the College?
11. Remote working and learning

Please note that the above are not mutually exclusive and are highly interdependent.

#### **1. Entrance and visitors**

- a. To mitigate the risk of visitors potentially being a transmission threat (personally or through deliveries) all visitors' names and origin of their work place will be logged. All visitors will be offered alcohol-based gels to wash their hands on entry. Visitors will be required to wear face masks.
- b. Deliveries and post will be restricted to the entrance and all DHL parcels and packages will be managed at the entrance. Visitors that have to enter into the main body of the College will be provided with safeguarding and H&S information about practices they must adhere to.
- c. All key meetings will be made in the Meeting Room.
- d. Parents or potential students and their parents/carers can have a tour of the College, but this will take place in the early evenings (where possible) and social distancing will be enforced.

#### **2. Students**

- a. All students must sign up to adhere to conditions based on the policy guidance and any persistent breaches will result in disciplinary action.
- b. Students will be encouraged to wash their hands before eating and not touch their eyes, nose or mouth.

- c. Students will be profiled to determine who may be considered vulnerable in terms of their own health status or for someone in their family. Arrangements will be made to secure their ongoing education if they are unable to physically come to College.
- d. Students must wear face masks in communal areas, although it is not mandatory in the classrooms or Library. Students will be required to wash their hands on entry and hourly wash their hands with alcohol-based gels and sprays that will be made available around the College.
- e. Students arriving from abroad will be required to self-isolate for 14 days.
- f. Staff have given careful consideration to sharing of utensils and protective equipment e.g. science students have their own individual lab coats which are kept in separate bags.
- g. Students using experimental instruments and equipment will be required to use disposable gloves.

### **3. Staff**

- a. All staff have received training to ensure that they fully understand the procedures that are put in place and instructing information should they come across someone who feels ill in their class or the College in general.
- b. Staff will be kept informed of all up-dates and/or adjustments to existing contractual obligations
- c. Staff will be asked to be sensible in their use of staff rooms and resource rooms to ensure social distancing
- d. Staff must wear a mask or face shield in the communal areas of the College.
- e. All Reception staff and those in frequent contact with students will be required to wear full face visors.
- f. Teachers will be asked to keep doors open when students enter and leave and not to share board pens or other equipment.
- g. College trips will be risk assessed.
- h. Staff will be asked to wipe down keyboards or computer terminals where possible.
- i. Staff should not impose their own social distancing measures if they compromise fire safety e.g. putting a chair at the entrance of the room or any other form of blockage that could inhibit the movements of students in the case of a fire alarm or any other emergency.
- j. All UCAS and PT meetings will be conducted using Zoom until further notice.
- k. All Parents Evening meetings with Staff will be conducted using Zoom until further notice.

### **4. Traffic Management and Classrooms**

- a. All people moving from one room to another must give way to people climbing the stairs to minimise human traffic on the stairwells.
- b. Signs will be available to provide instructing information.
- c. Doors should be kept open wherever possible; strict consideration will also be given to ensure that fire safety is not compromised.
- d. Signs, posters and hazard tape will be in situ to ensure that everyone is clear as to what is expected of them and how they should move around the College and what basic behaviour is expected and required.
- e. Classrooms will be reconfigured where possible to allow students and staff to observe the 1 metre social distancing rule.
- f. All classrooms will contain approved posters and relevant instructing information. Students will also be asked to follow social distancing when waiting to enter a classroom.

## **5. Resources for Infection Control**

- a. The College has purchased PPE equipment. It has asked staff to wear full face visors when interacting with students. The use of PPE equipment will not, however, be compulsory, but strongly recommended.
- b. All keyboards will have wipes and users will be encouraged to use these wipes to prevent transmission from touching keyboards.
- c. Gels and sprays – sanitisers will be made available all over the College as well as disinfectant sprays.
- d. Deep cleaning and the sterilizing of hard surfaces will take place daily.
- e. The use of signage to highlight social distancing and other forms of posters, stickers and instructing information will be made available.
- f. Staff and students will be required to wear disposable gloves where appropriate

## **6. Key Area Management**

The Management Team has identified the following areas of the College as problematic and in need of careful risk management:

- The library
- The Staff Room and Common Room
- Front Office and Reception Area
- Laboratories, art & photography room
- Toilets

Specific arrangements and individual risk assessments will be made for each of these areas.

- a. Library – the digitisation of books has reduced the risk of infection
- b. The Staff and Common Room will be reconfigured to comply with social distancing
- c. College toilets – users will be encouraged to comply with social distancing and the use of paper, disposable towels, instead of using hand driers.
- d. Specific hygiene protocols will be enforced for those functioning inside laboratories, art and photography rooms. Students will not be allowed to share items (including lab coats, eye protection equipment, etc.) and the use of disposable gloves would be encouraged during Biology, Chemistry and Physics practical work.
- e. All of the critical College areas will be subject to additional hygiene measures and deep cleaning on daily basis.

## **7. Monitoring and evaluation of efforts**

- a. It is critical that staff and the Management Team are all united in their determination to ensure compliance and implementation of the policy guidance.
- b. Members of staff will be appointed with specific roles and responsibilities to oversee that compliance is achieved and that students, staff and visitors respect what conditions have been put in place to make a safe working environment.
- c. The Management Team will meet regularly to review the situation, both within the College and the external public environment, based on scientific advice. This may result in our scaling up or down elements of the policy guidance.
- d. If a second spike occurs, then we will be fully guided by the DfE and government advice at the time.
- e. Inspections will occur throughout the day by staff in areas of concern to check compliance with hygiene and social distancing, and reports will be made to senior staff.

## **8. Miscellaneous issues**

- a. Every effort must be made to work closely with the City of London Authority to ensure compliance.
- b. Ensure that staff are familiar with symptoms caused by hay fever, pollen allergies and the common cold and not to confuse these with COVID-19
- c. That where in doubt, staff should invoke the precautionary principle – act when there is doubt and unclear evidence to a specific threat.

## **9. What happens if a student shows symptoms?**

If a student becomes unwell with symptoms of suspected coronavirus then the following procedure should be followed.

- a. A fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult if a distance of two metres cannot be maintained.
- b. If contact with the child or young person is necessary, then disposable gloves, a disposable apron and a fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn.
- c. If anyone in an education or childcare 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 and advised to follow the COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection guidance
- d. If a student is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation.
- e. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.
- f. If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.
- g. PPE should be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of two metres cannot be maintained.
- h. In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.
- i. If a member of staff has helped someone with symptoms, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, a test is available) or the child subsequently tests positive. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell.
- j. Cleaning the affected area with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

## **10. What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the College?**

- a. When a student or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus (COVID-19), they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for NHS recommended number of days, and arrange to have a test to see if they have COVID-19. They can do this by visiting NHS.UK to arrange or contact NHS 119 via telephone if they do not have internet access.
- b. All staff and students who are attending the College will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus, and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario.
- c. Where a student or staff member tests negative, they can return to the College.

- d. Where student or staff member tests positive, they will need to self-isolate for the required 14 days, and take another test at the end of this period.
- e. As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England's local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise Colleges on the most appropriate action to take.
- f. In some cases a larger number of other children, young people may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole class, site or year group. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the College will not generally be necessary.

### **11. Remote working and learning**

- a. The College is now in normal operation operation and it wants to strongly convey the message to all stakeholders that it is open for learning, and following best practice with regard to this detailed policy guidance.
- b. If a student is self-isolating, arrangements will be made for that student to receive missed work as soon as possible. They will be treated as absent from the lesson.