Hartlepool Aspire Trust
(Catcote Academy & Catcote Futures)

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Policy

Catcote Academy
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Hartlepool Aspire Trust

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Policy

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Reviewer: Lisa Greig   Date: 13.03.20

Approver: Graham Jones   Date: 13.03.20

Issue	AMENDMENT	IMPACT LEVEL	DATE
1	First Issue	High	13.03.2020
2	Second Issue Amendments made in light of new Government guidelines on 16.03.20	High	16.03.2020

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1 Executive Summary

The objective of this policy is to minimise the risk to students and staff during the COVID-19 epidemic. It is consistent with current Government Guidance, but if the guidance changes that will take precedence over the actions in this policy.

It recognises that some of the students of the Trust are among the more vulnerable members of society and so may need additional precautions.

It also recognises that for many of the students, the routine and structure of school / college is extremely important for their wellbeing, so aims to maintain normal routine as much as possible.

The Trust policy in response to the COVID-19 epidemic is summarised below, with details in the rest of this document:

- **Limit Risk to Students**
  - Implement additional **personal hygiene requirements** for staff and students as they move around the school / college (hand washing / sanitising). Face masks will <u>not</u> be used.
  - Limit **Student Travel**
    - Review the risk of trips in the community to avoid social contact.
  - Avoid **Staff Travel** such as conferences, training and meetings that are non-essential.
  - Avoid **all non-essential visitors to School/College**
  - **Parental Choice**: The trust will authorise absence if parents / carers take the view that the risk to a student is minimised by staying away from school / college (for example a particularly vulnerable student).
- **Illness of Staff or Students**
  - If a member of staff or student shows symptoms that would require 'self-isolation' under the current Government guidance, they will be **sent home** to 'self-isolate'.
  - If a member of the household self-isolates, in line with government guidance, the rest of the household should isolate in line with government guidelines.
  - **Sick pay will be paid** to staff who are self-isolating in line with government guidance.
- **School / College Closure**
  - Current Government advice is that blanket school / college closure in response to the COVID-19 epidemic is **not appropriate at this time**, unless advised by the relevant health authorities.
  - The CEO has the **discretion to close one or more of the Trust sites** if in her judgement:
    - The overall staffing absence level is so high that the **safety of students** cannot be guaranteed.
    - The rate of staff or student illness is excessive.

◦ Arrangements will be put in place to ensure that **essential administrative activities** of the Trust (such as finance / payroll/ health and safety) continue so that staff and suppliers continue to be paid.

2 Introduction

The COVID-19 (Coronavirus) epidemic is developing rapidly.   This document sets out the Hartlepool Aspire Trust policy on actions to be taken in response to the epidemic.

It should be noted that any compelling advice issued by central government or the local authority will take precedence over the actions set out in this policy.

3 Responsibilities

The following people have responsibilities under this policy.

3.1 CEO

Assign a member of the senior leadership team to maintain up to date knowledge of the development of the epidemic and the current advice from the Government, Local Authority and NHS (COVID-19 Lead).

3.2 COVID-19 Lead

- Maintain up to date knowledge of the development of the epidemic and the current advice from the Government by subscribing to the relevant information feeds including advice to care homes (as this is advice to another vulnerable group) and monitoring them on at least a daily basis.
- Bring any changes in the recommended actions in response to the epidemic to the attention of the senior leadership team immediately.
- Communicate the requirements for 'self isolation' to trust staff.

3.3 Trust Staff

- Follow the government guidance as advised by the COVID-19 lead on self-isolation if they show symptoms that would require self isolation to report it to their line manager immediately and go home.
- Report any concerns over a student displaying relevant symptoms to the COVID-19 lead or a member of the SLT team immediately.

4 Policy

4.1 Policy Objectives

- The objective of this policy is to minimise the risk to students and staff during the COVID-19 epidemic.
- It takes account of the current Government advice that blanket closure of schools is not appropriate at the current time (16 March 2020) [1].
- It recognises that some of the students of the Trust are among the more vulnerable members of society and so may need additional precautions.
- It also recognises that for many of the students, the routine and structure of school / college is extremely important for their wellbeing, so aims to maintain normal routine as much as possible.

4.2 *Limit Risk*

4.2.1 Hygiene Precautions

- Students and Staff will be required to follow the government advice on regular hand washing as being the best method of avoiding transmission of the virus.
- Hand sanitiser and tissues will be deployed around Trust premises.
- Signs and posters will be used to remind staff and students to use them
  - Where possible students will be involved in the design and manufacture of the signs to improve ownership of the issue by students.
- Hand washing routines will be made part of the normal routine of moving around school / college, so it is 'just what we do when we come into a class room' etc.
- Face masks will not be worn unless explicitly advised by the Government / Local Authority or NHS as this would be a significant change from normality for the students which would be very distressing for many of them.

4.2.2 Student Travel

- There should be no foreign travel until further notice.
- There should be no indoor community visits in order to reduce social contact.
- Review arrangements for home-school transport with the LA to manage the risks to students.

4.2.3 Staff Travel

- Staff not attend non-essential external events such as conferences, meetings and training or information exchange visits to other schools / colleges until further notice.

4.2.4 Visitors to School / College

- Avoid all non-essential visitors to School/College
- General information exchange visits to school/college should be cancelled to minimise the exposure of our students.
- Other visitors to school can be admitted provided:
  - The visit is essential for the education, health or wellbeing of a student.
  - The visit is to carry out essential urgent maintenance on trust property – non-urgent maintenance should be carried out when students are not present in school / college.
  - The visitor is not showing any symptoms that would require 'self isolation' under the current government guidance.
  - The visitor follows the hand washing / sanitisation requirements.

4.2.5 Parental Choice

- The Trust recognises that some parents / carers may judge that the risk to a student will be minimised if they do not attend school / college. This is most likely to be the case for those students at highest risk from COVID-19.
- Where this is the case the Trust will authorise the absence.

4.3   *Illness of Member of Staff or Student*

4.3.1   Sending Home Staff or Students who become ill

- If a member of staff or student becomes ill, the symptoms will be assessed against the current Government advice.
- If the symptoms are consistent with a requirement to 'self isolate' the member of staff or student will be sent home.
- If a member of the household self-isolates, in line with government guidance, the rest of the household should isolate in line with government guidelines.

4.3.2   Sick Pay

- Sick pay will be paid to staff who are self-isolating in line with the Government advice and this policy.

4.4   *School / College Closure*

- Current (16 March 2020) Government advice is that blanket school / college closure in response to the COVID-19 epidemic is not appropriate at this time, unless advised by the relevant health authorities.
- The CEO (or nominated Deputy or Assistant Head) has the discretion to close one or more of the Trust sites if in her judgement:
    - The overall staffing absence level is so high that the safety of students cannot be guaranteed.
    - The rate of staff or student absence is such that the virus appears to be being transmitted in the school, despite the additional precautions specified in Section **Error! Reference source not found.**.

4.4.1   Staffing Levels

- The safety of our students while in school / college is our overriding priority.
- The varying needs of our students means that it is not possible to specify a simple number of staff that are needed to ensure the safety of our students.
- The ability of us to ensure the safety of all our students will be assessed on a 'per class' basis daily, considering the following:
    - Numbers of students expected to attend that day.
    - The numbers of the normal teaching and support staff for that class who are expected to be at work.
    - The potential to re-deploy suitably qualified and experienced staff from other classes to support those classes with a shortage of staff.
    - The ability to keep students safe and provide school meals etc.
- If in the judgement of the CEO (or nominated deputy or Assistant Head), there are insufficient staff to ensure the safety of all students, one or more classes will be closed for a period and the students sent home.
    - The choice of which class(es) to close will be based on the relative staffing shortfall and the risk to COVID-19 of the affected students.
    - Classes with students at highest risk from COVID-19 will be closed in preferentially.

4.4.2 Administrative Staff

- It is necessary to maintain many of the administrative, health and safety, maintenance and IT functions of the Trust, even if the school / college is closed completely (for example finance / payroll / health and safety/IT to ensure that staff and suppliers continue to be paid)
- If there is significant staff absence in the administrative functions, precautions to reduce the risk of not meeting the essential requirements will be implemented such as:
  - Separating key personnel into different offices
  - Some staff working from home.

5   Review Period

This policy shall be reviewed every day and revised if necessary. The document will be approved by the CEO.

6   Definitions / Abbreviations

Term	Meaning

7   Records

The following records are produced as a result of implementation of this Policy:

Description	Form Number	Retention Period	Storage Location

8   References

[1]   Government COVID-19 advice web site