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# Cofton Primary School Post-Covid Transition Policy – May 2020

## Rationale

The Covid-19 pandemic will have undoubtedly affected our children and community in many ways. Every family will have had their own unique challenges to face and will indeed have their own apprehensions around the virus and the transition back to school. With there being such uncertainty at present, this is bound to cause anxiety amongst our school community. Therefore, our duty of care to the children means that we must recognise the effects of this pandemic on our children and their families and plan suitable provision for their safe return to school.

## Policy Aims

- To ensure a rigorous approach to safeguarding;

- To assist in the smooth running of school, in order to maintain all stakeholders' safety;

- To provide a consistent approach to cleaning and hygiene routines;

- To provide a safe, calm and organised learning environment for the children;

- To provide support with the emotional and mental health of children, staff and parents;

- To provide a consistent behaviour management approach so that the previous high standard of behaviour can be restored.

## Happy and Successful

In order to be **'Happy and Successful'** at Cofton, we must always:

- **do our best;**

- **be respectful;**

- **take responsibility;**

- **be proud of Cofton.**

**The children will need reminding of our Cofton Values even more than usual.** This should be done:

- At the start of every morning after the register;

- Before the children go to lunch;

- During PSHE lessons and class assemblies;

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- As part of regular whole school assemblies;

- Whenever class teachers/SLT feels this needs reinforcing.

## Safeguarding

Our school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy must be adhered to at all times. Any concerns about children should be **immediately** brought to the attention of a DSL in school ….

Our whole school culture is one where safeguarding is always our biggest priority. Everyone will need to be extra vigilant as the children return to school and alert to any changes in behaviour, appearance or concerning comments. There is no concern too small – if you have even the slightest doubt, record it anyway. Adhering to the other sections of this policy will ensure a smooth transition for the children upon their return to school.

If you are concerned about a member of staff, please also speak with a DSL in school. In addition, a member of the well-being team may be able to provide support.

## Cleaning and Hygiene Routines

In order to maintain a high standard of hygiene around school, the following will take place:

- Regular reminders to children about handwashing, especially when entering school, when returning from breaks/lunch, before eating anything, after visiting the toilet or after sneezing/coughing;

- Encourage pupils to use inside of elbow or a tissue for 'catch it, bin it, kill it' when coughing or sneezing (site staff will ensure tissues are topped up in each classroom daily);

- Staff responsible for cleaning will ensure that a cleaning rota is adhered to where there are more regular cleaning intervals during the school day;

- Staff responsible for cleaning resources will ensure all necessary spaces are regularly stocked with cleaning products (e.g. hand wash, paper towels);

- Staff will follow government guidelines on social distancing rules and encourage the children to do so.

## Staff Training to Inform Ongoing Practice

Staff have been given a wide range of quality, relevant CPD to support them in meeting the diverse and unpredictable needs of the children upon their return to school. This CPD includes:

- Emotion Coaching

- Understanding Children and Young People's Mental Health

- Trauma Informed Attachment Aware Schools (TIAAS)

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- Autism Tier 1 and 2 Training

There are additional supporting documents as an appendix to this policy that will offer further advice and guidance. **All staff will be expected to read these documents and adopt the recommended approaches detailed within them.**

## Preparation and Organisation

Preparation and organisation are key to a successful transition back to school. Children may return to school with heightened anxiety and an inability to regulate their emotions due to the trauma and uncertainty that they will have experienced. **In order to adequately support pupils and reduce their levels of anxiety, it is crucial that children see calm staff who are organised and in control.**

At all times, children will look to the adults in charge for security, certainty, authority and control. It is our responsibility to communicate this through the presentation of a **calm, orderly and organised learning environment;** through our tone of voice, facial expression and body language and through the way that we deal with challenges, including pupils' behaviour.

In order to assist with planning, preparation and organisation, it will be essential to refer to the **Reopening of School – June 2020** document. This can be found in the 'June Reopening' Folder, contained within the main 'Coronavirus Covid-19' Folder, in the R Drive. The guidance/timings within this documentation **must be strictly adhered to at all times**, in order to aid the smooth running of the school day and to maintain everybody's safety.

Other useful documentation is also contained within the 'June Reopening' Folder, which is contained in the 'Coronavirus Covid-19' folder, for you to refer to, including the **latest risk assessment**. **This must also be read and adhered to by all staff at all times,** in order to aid the smooth running of the school day and to maintain everybody's safety.

## Learning Environments and Expectations

Our interactions with the children and the learning environments will be a crucial factor in rebuilding a **safe, calm and organised space** for the children. **We must not assume that the children will automatically feel safe and secure in school; it may take time to build this up again with some children. Our actions and organisation will re-teach the children that school is a place of safety.** Promoting calmness at the start of the day and throughout will support children with this. How the morning starts will set the tone for how the rest of the day will be. All staff should:

- Ensure that all resources needed are organised, prepared and ready for use **BEFORE** the children enter school at 8.45am;

- Have the right resources open on the board **BEFORE** the children enter school at 8.45am (this will include: register, Walk to School, School Grid

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[meals], Class Charts [behaviour] and learning resources for morning lessons);

- Display a visual timetable on the board so that all children know how the day will be structured in advance;

- Ensure that individual resources are ready and available for use (e.g. ear defenders, now and next boards, sensory objects, individual visual timetables);

- Use increased visual support to help all children feel secure (e.g. Widgit symbols);

- Tidy the safe space in the classroom and make sure this is fit for purpose and ready to use;

- Reconnect with the children by greeting each individual with a smile at the classroom door, ask how they are and make them feel welcomed into school (there will be support staff and DSLs available to provide additional support to those children in need);

- Encourage the children to hang their coats and bags up quickly and to start their morning work quietly, staying in their seats (they will need to be given everything that they need on the table so they will not need to get out of their seats);

- Have morning work ready on the table for the children to start **quietly** as they enter the classroom;

- Play some calming music quietly in the background during registration and SODA;

- Have a twice daily check in with the children as part of morning and afternoon register time. Give the children plenty of opportunities to talk about how they are feeling so that others in the class are aware and offer support where necessary;

- Ensure that the classroom is tidy and organised at the beginning and end of each day. Some children may have found this Covid-19 period away from school quite chaotic. **Therefore, a tidy and organised learning environment will be crucial to put them at ease.** A tidy classroom means tidy minds.

Due to our prioritising of positive emotional health and mental well-being and our anticipation that gaps in learning are likely to have increased, **there should <u>not</u> be a focus on any new learning**. In order to restore children's confidence, and to ensure they have secure foundations for future learning, **it is vital that prior learning is revisited, re-activated and consolidated when the children are ready to do so**. When children are ready to revisit the curriculum, it is important that learning is thoughtfully differentiated so that all learners have the opportunity to make good

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progress based on their starting points. Staff should refer to the continuum bands and teaching and learning ideas to support differentiation for pupils with SEND.

Time spent outside learning will be of great value and will also contribute greatly to the emotional wellbeing of pupils.

## Supporting Emotional/Mental Health and Positive Behaviour

Supporting emotional and mental health of children will be essential to a successful return to school and is directly linked to the behaviour of children**. This should be prioritised over academic attainment and progress**. Many of the actions in the previous section will support positive emotional and mental health in school. In addition, we will:

- Stay calm with children, regardless of their behaviour, as this is essential to rebuild trust and maintain positive relationships. Staff will need to have the utmost patience with children during this transition period;

- Increase PSHE activities to **at least once per day** as this will be hugely beneficial (this does not need to be an entire PSHE lesson but could include the reading and sharing of an emotional literacy text, circle time activities, mindfulness related work, etc…);

- In terms of the curriculum on offer, as well as at least daily PSHE, there will be regular Forest School, PE, Gardening and Computing sessions. These will help to support emotional and physical wellbeing;

- Accentuate the positive! Most of our interactions with children need to be positive. Reinforcing positive behaviours is a reminder to those who are displaying negative behaviour of what you are looking for;

- Make good use of stickers, praise pads and post cards home. Remember to use marbles for a whole class reward;

- Ensure that individual star charts are completed at the end of every day, reminding children of The Always Club reward;

- Promote the use of the Worry Box and Toot Toot, even more, as a way to communicate any worries or concerns;

- Follow the existing behaviour policy but with more flexibility as this may be needed during this time of transition (e.g. more time or warnings on one stage before moving to the next one, more discussion around expectations, etc…);

- Spend time reinforcing expected behaviours and incorporating this into PSHE/ class assembly time;

- Ensure that any individual provision plans and/or IBP's are adhered to and reviewed half termly;

- Agree with the children how the safe space should be used and utilise this space in a way that will benefit the children who need it most;

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- Allocate a well-being mentor in the class so that children have a named peer to talk to if they would like (these well-being mentors will receive training from a DSL);

- Remind Year 6 children that they can still use Kooth at home if their parents have given their permission.

DSLs will continue to work with parents that need additional support and refer to the appropriate external agency. **It is vital to inform a DSL if you have concerns about a family <u>immediately</u> so that early help can be provided.**

Staff should prioritise their own mental health and seek support from colleagues when needed. This can include a member of the well-being team or a member of SLT. The Employee Assistance Programme is also available for all staff to use (Tel: …). In addition, the Educational Psychology Team can also provide additional support. Staff can email: … to request support. Organising time, prioritising tasks, working effectively with colleagues and asking for support will contribute towards more balanced and positive well-being.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Cofton Mental Health and Well-Being Policy.

**<u>Authors:</u>**

P Poleon and H Bray - May 2020

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