

Star

# SPACE PLANNING EXERCISE

**CHECKS AND BALANCES:  
RESPONDING TO COVID-19**

A toolkit to support leaders  
as they reopen schools



# Star Academies - Sample Secondary School

The re-opening of schools is an important step in returning towards a new normality. However, the new normal will need to look and feel quite different if we are to adhere to government guidance on best practice for social distancing and maintaining a safe working environment for pupils and staff. The guidance on this distancing varies but is generally 1.8m (6 feet) to 2m. Whilst a number of these measures may be deemed to be inconvenient to the smooth running of a school, the safety of pupils and staff is essential and they must be closely adhered to. Consideration is given here to a sample 11-16 4FE secondary school and the spatial principles to be considered.

## Arrival and Drop off

Maintaining 2m distancing still applies outside of the school. Temporary markings outside will indicate 2m distancing which must be adhered to at all times.

On arrival at the school, the entrance doors will be open and managed by a member of staff. Pupils must keep moving to their designated class using the one-way system designated on the main circulation routes.

## Corridors and Circulation

Current DfE guidance suggests corridor widths of 1.8m for the majority of places. Maintaining 2m social distancing with pupils able to move in two directions is a huge challenge with this physical constraint and therefore a one-way system is to be introduced to aid

this along with 2m markers on the floors. Pupils and staff will be expected to move in the direction of arrows indicated and the two-metre spacing of markers gives a visual indication of distancing required between individuals

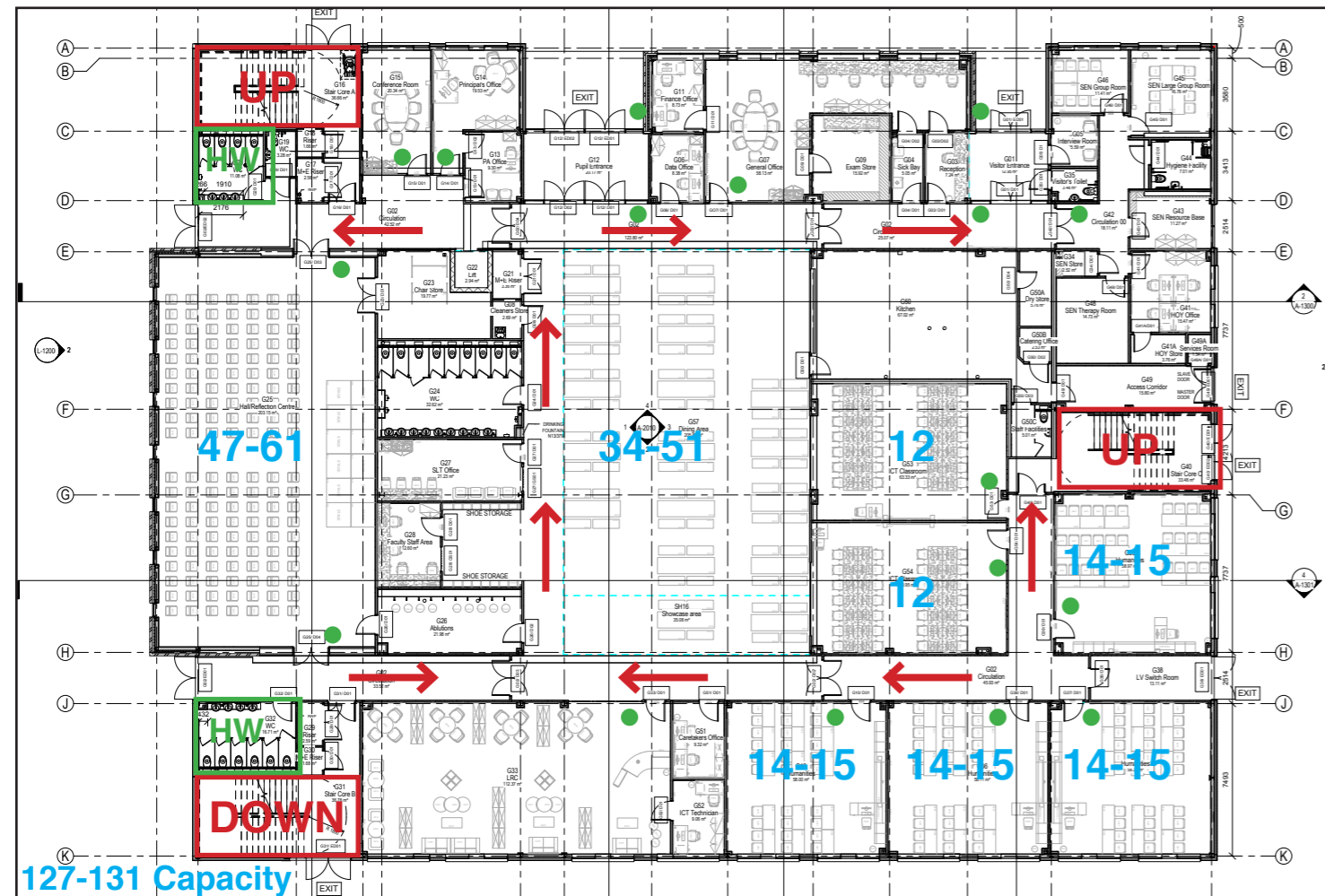
## Breaktime

There is less direct supervision during breaktimes which means that pupils must take additional responsibility in maintaining good social distancing principles. Class finish times should be staggered to minimise the number of people on corridors at any one time and the one-way system on corridors observed at all times. The use of outside space will be the safest areas to maintain social distancing.

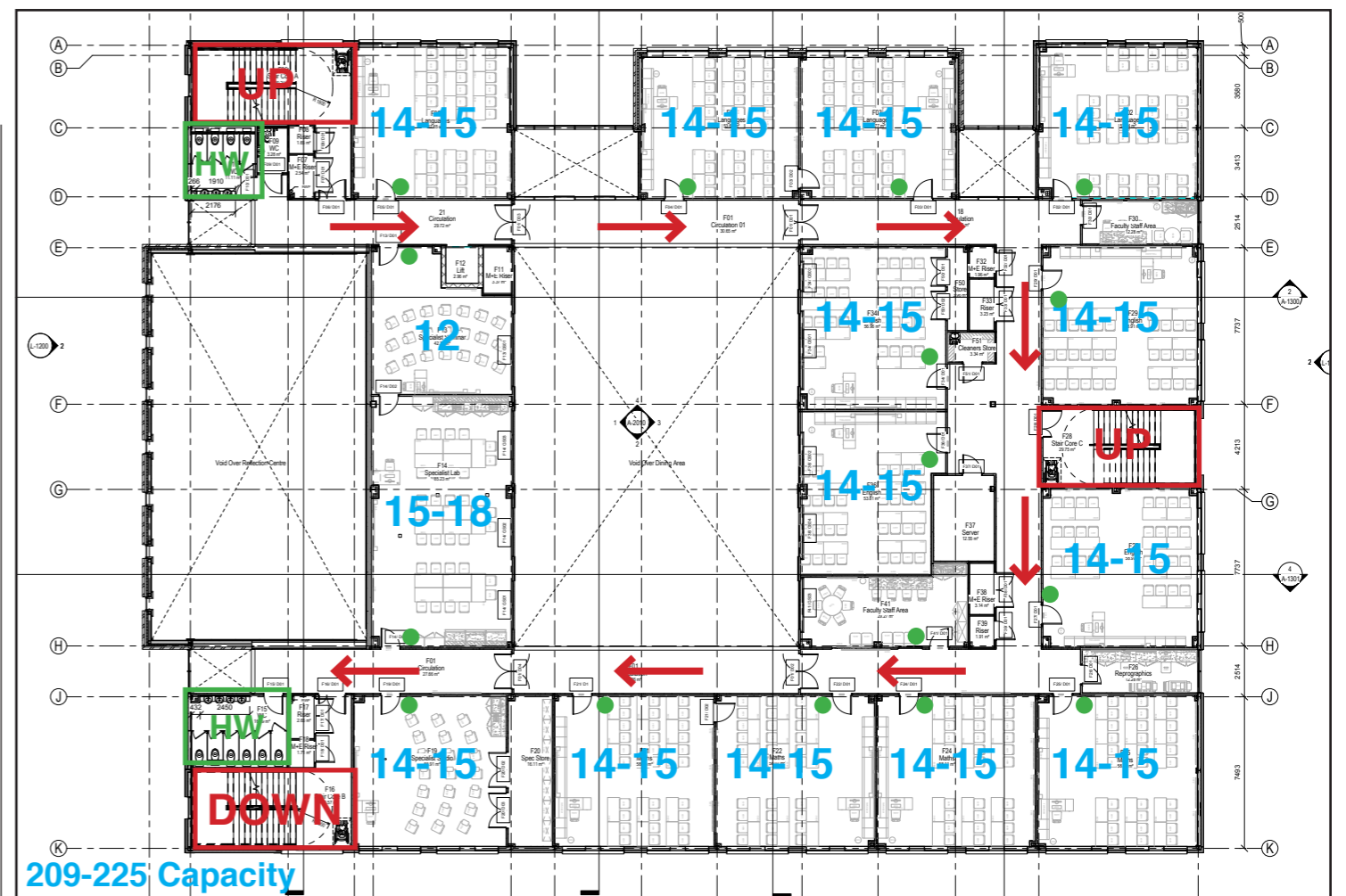
## Dining

One of the most congested areas of the school is the dining space where at peak times occupancy would be expected to be around 1 person per square metre. The new guidelines suggest 1 per 4m<sup>2</sup> will be the maximum allowable occupancy and therefore significant changes will need to be made to the current dining strategy.

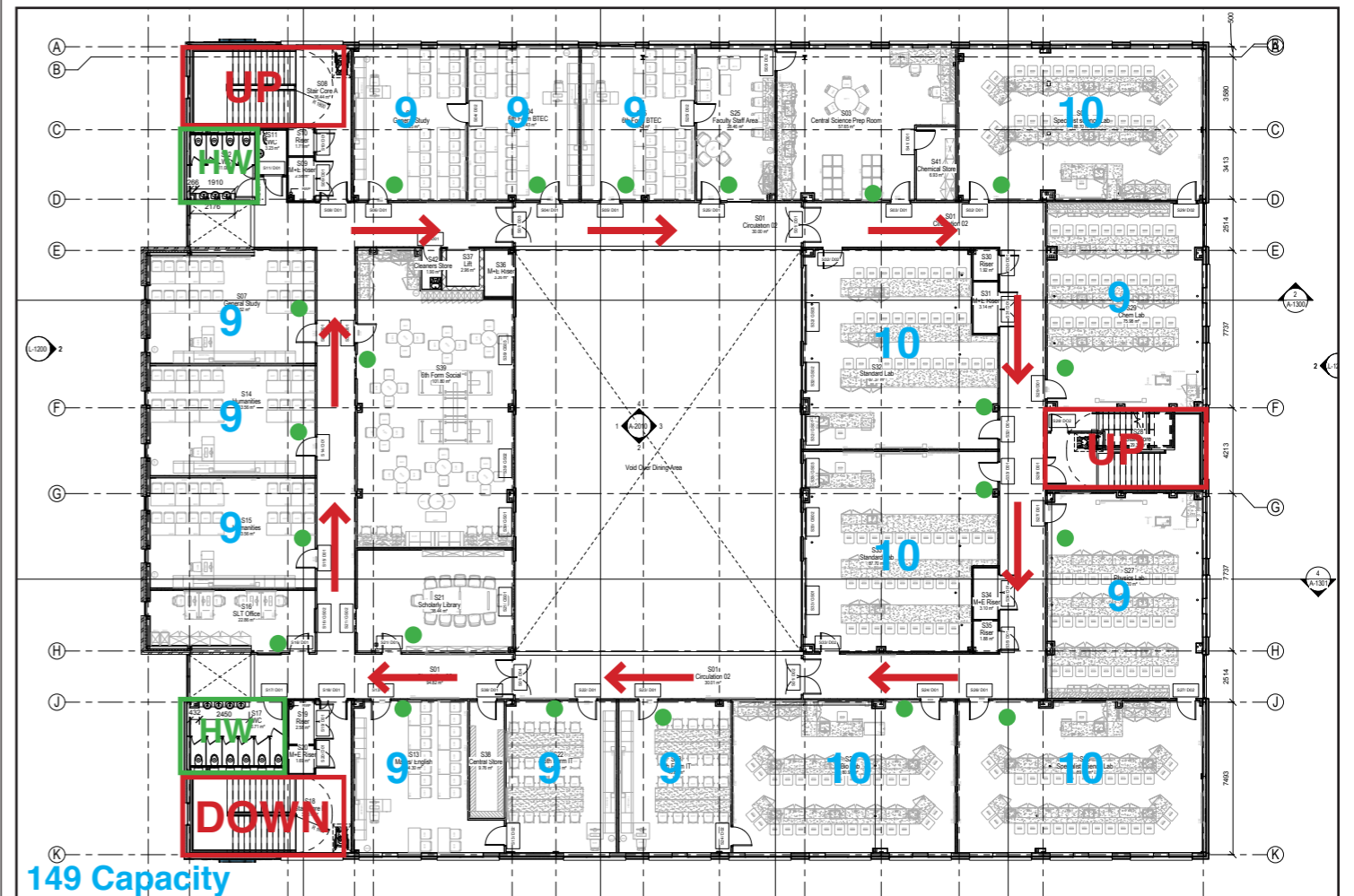
Furniture will demarked with seating positions to maintain safe spacing and queuing for food will require pupils to keep 2m apart. The service of grab bags may therefore make the dining more efficient



Ground Floor Layout - Capacity and Circulation



209-225 Capacity  
First Floor Layout - Capacity and Circulation



149 Capacity  
Second Floor Layout - Capacity and Circulation

\*The diagrams illustrated relate to standardised space types, each school would need to assess their own specific circumstances when assessing distancing measures and space occupancy.\*

# Star Academies - Sample Secondary School

## General Classroom - 14-15 pupils

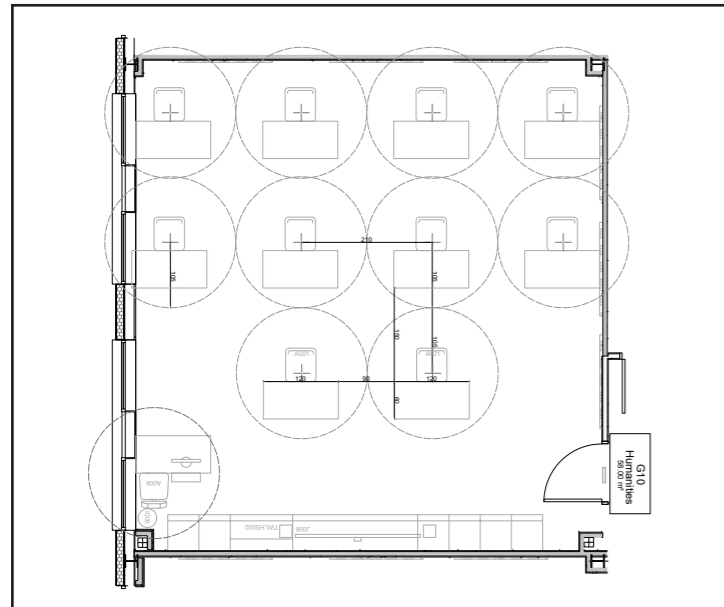
A typical general classroom will generally vary in size from around 55-58m<sup>2</sup>.

If a group of 10 is to occupy one of these spaces, they will be able to be 2.1m from one another which is significantly greater than the current guidance of 2m.

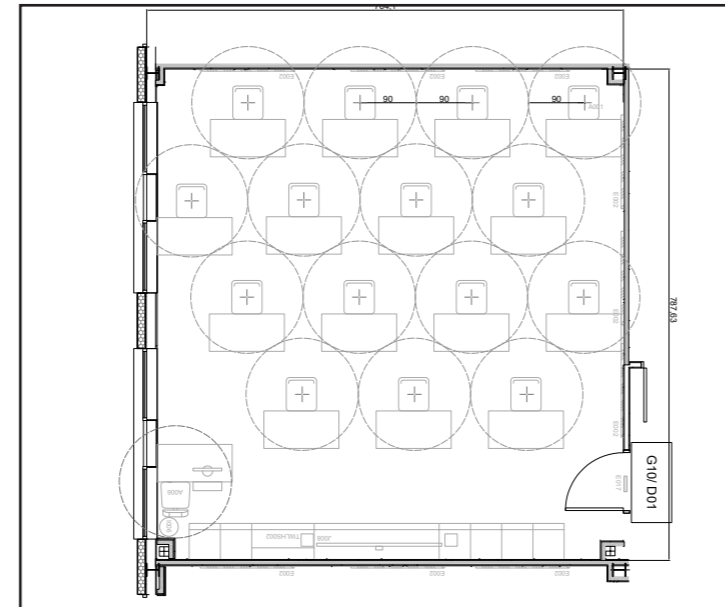
If the 2m social distancing guidance is applied, a group of 14 can be accommodated in a classroom. This ensures all pupils are 2m apart and leaves sufficient space for the teacher circulate at the front of the class and access the whiteboard.

In order to accommodate a group of 15, the social distancing is reduced to 1.8m between pupils.

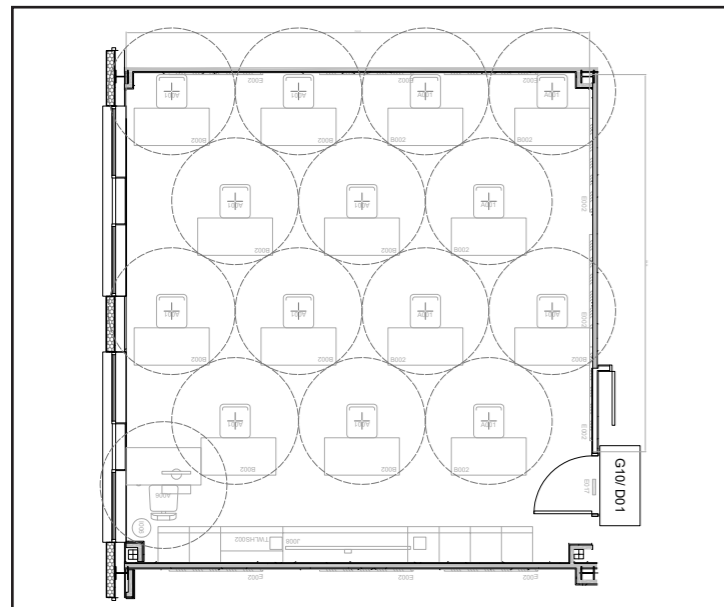
Other layouts such as L-Shaped and Horseshoe layouts have also been tested but these do not provide any additional spaces in classrooms and may have a negative impact on sightlines to the whiteboard at the front of a classroom.



General Classroom - 58m<sup>2</sup> - 10 pupils - 2.1m distancing



General Classroom - 58m<sup>2</sup> - 15 pupils - 1.8m distancing



General Classroom - 58m<sup>2</sup> - 14 pupils - 2m distancing

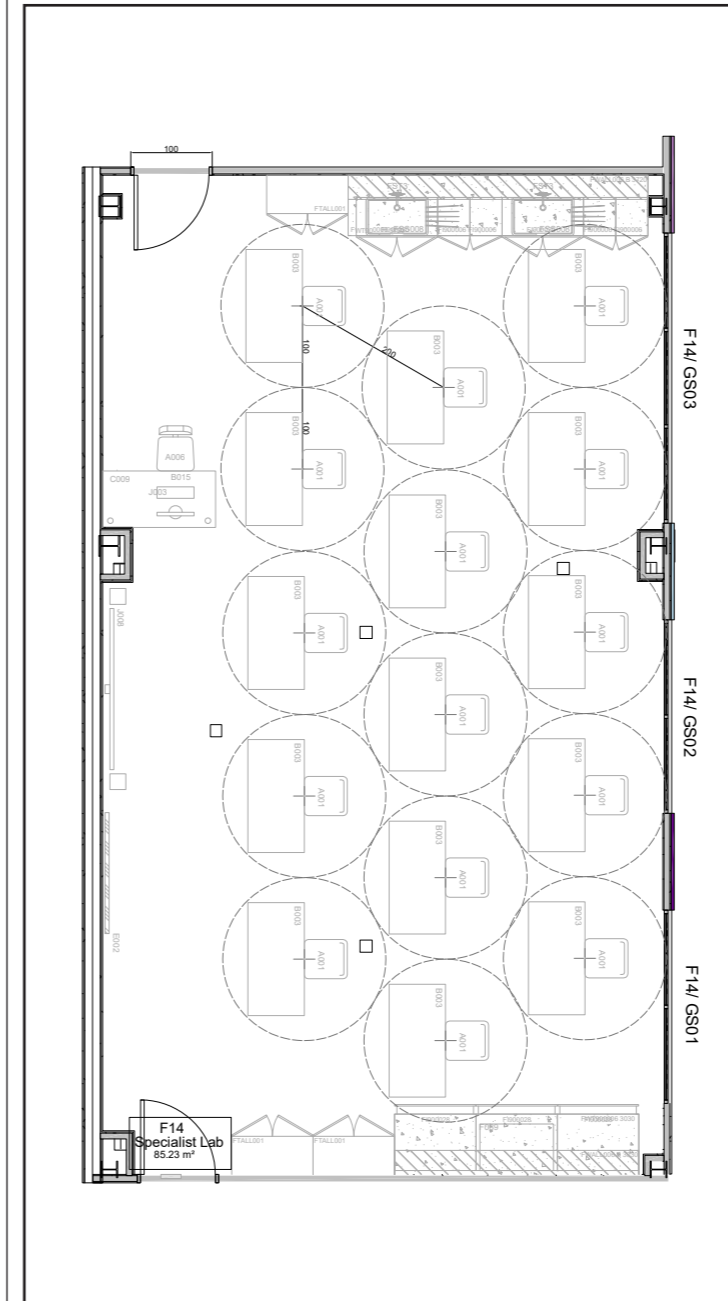
## Large Classroom 15-18 pupils

A typical large classroom with loose furniture such as an art classroom will be around 85m<sup>2</sup>.

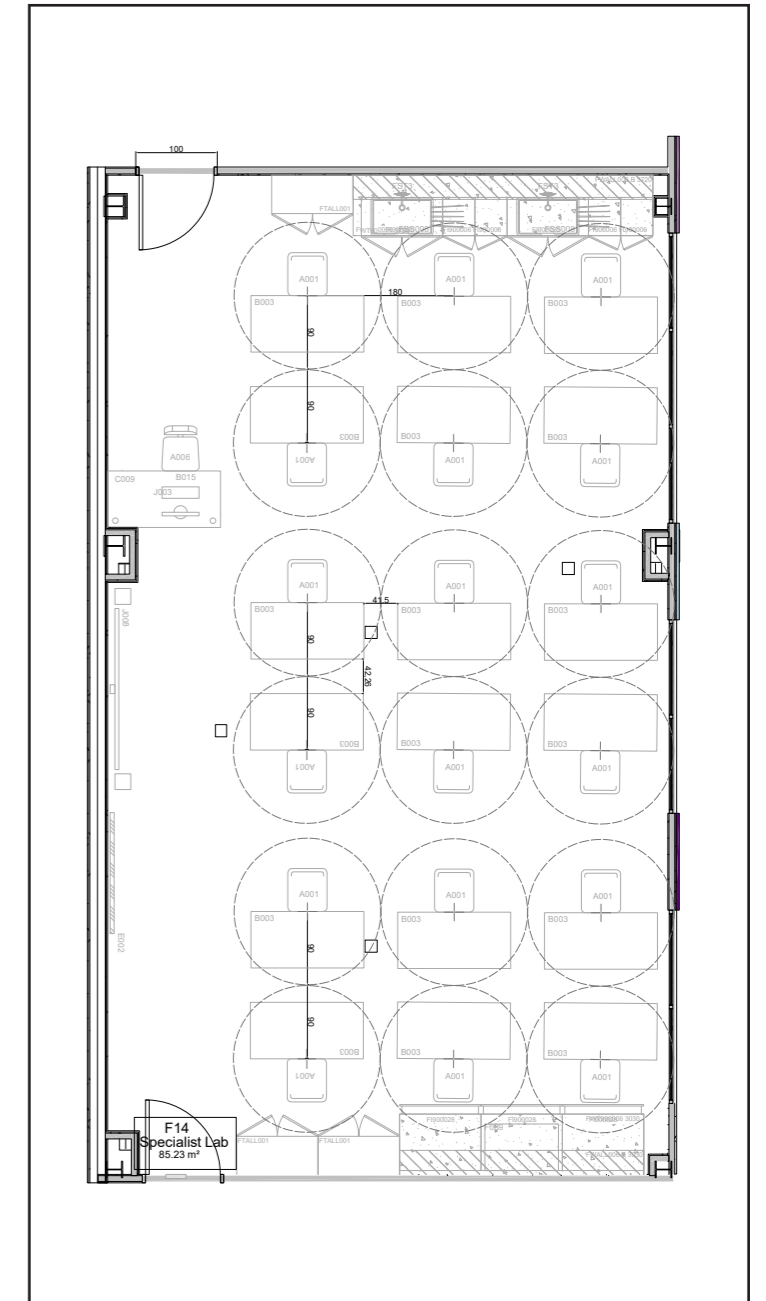
If a group of 15 is to occupy one of these spaces, they will be able to be 2m from one another with sufficient space at the front of the classroom for the teacher to circulate safely.

If the 2m guidance is reduced to 1.8m, the occupancy of the classroom can increase to 18.

Once again, horseshoe type layouts have been tested and give the same levels of occupancy.



Large Classroom - 85m<sup>2</sup> - 15 pupils - 2m distancing



Large Classroom - 85m<sup>2</sup> - 18 pupils - 1.8m distancing

# Star Academies - Sample Secondary School

## Large Spaces

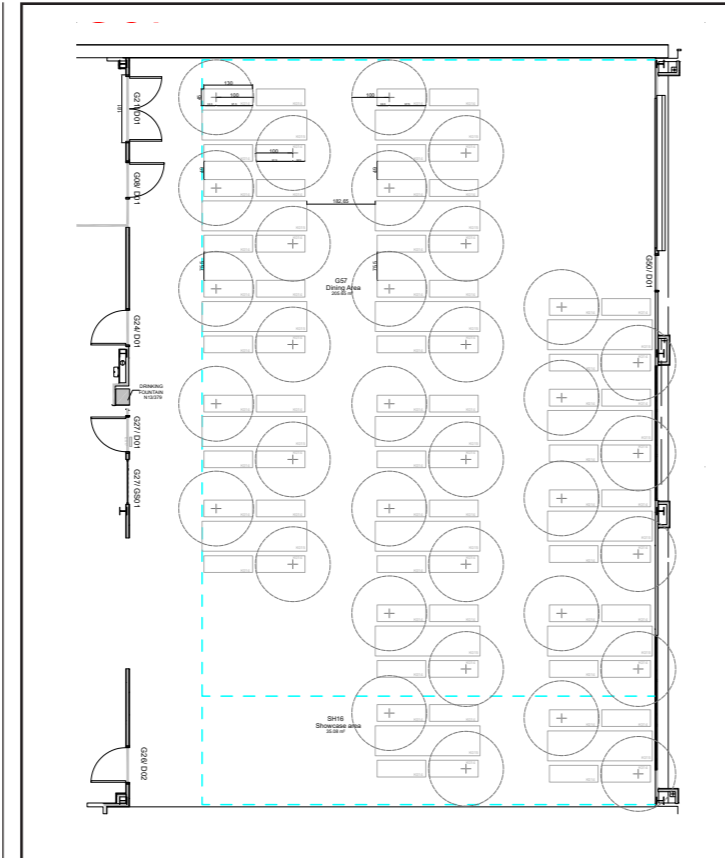
Whilst a typical general classroom will be limited to groups of 14-18, some larger spaces may allow larger group sizes. These have initially been developed around the current 2m social distancing rules.

Using the 2m guidance, the hall space for instance can accommodate a single group of 47. In the instance of these space being used, care must be taken in bringing pupils in to these spaces to reduce the risk of contamination from multiple contacts with surfaces such as door handles and furniture.

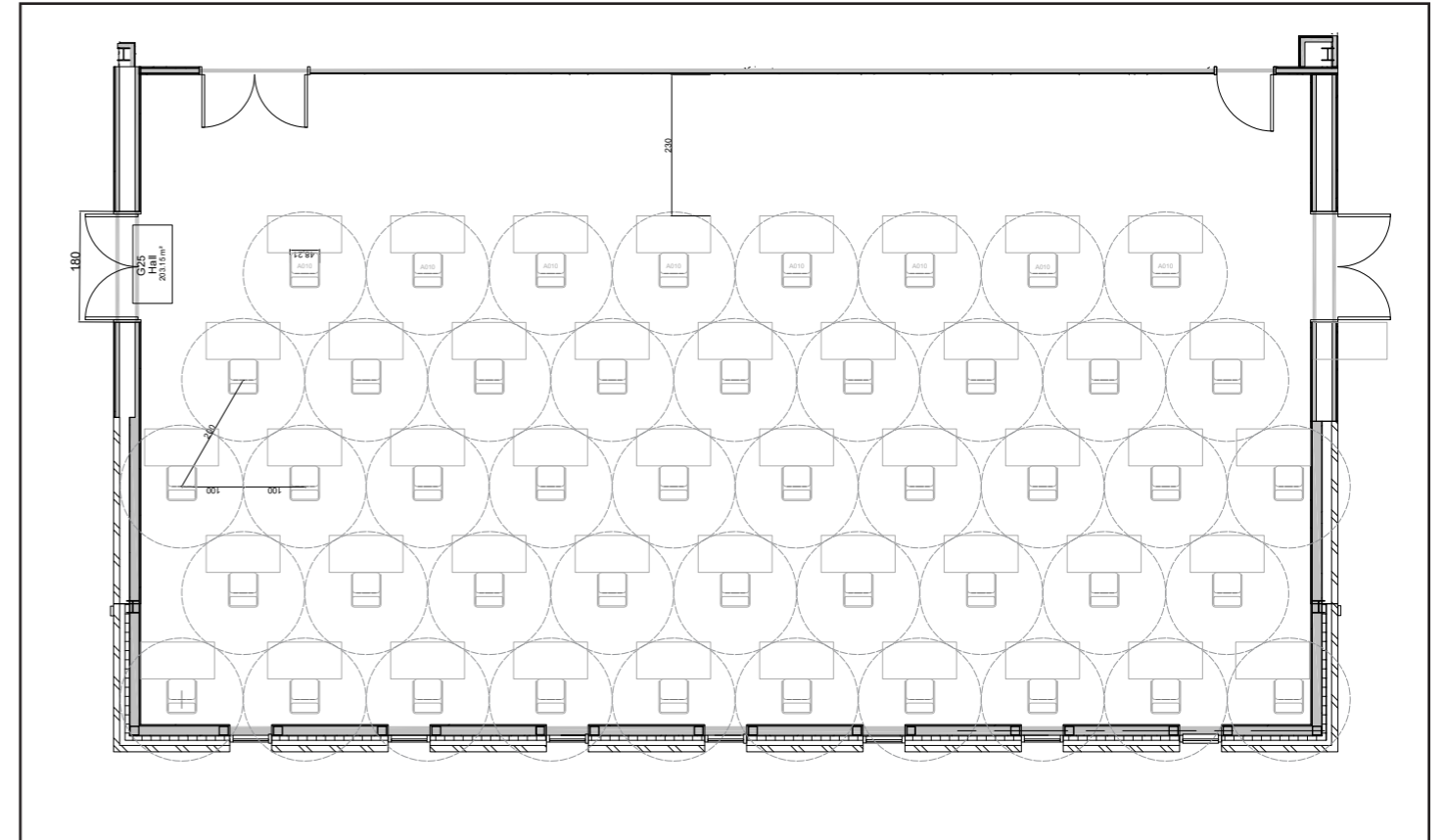
## Dining Spaces

Without moving furniture, the dining space offers capacity of 34 pupils. If the benches are rotated, the capacity can be increased to 51. Given the fixed nature of the seating, distancing must be below 1.8m to increase the capacity further

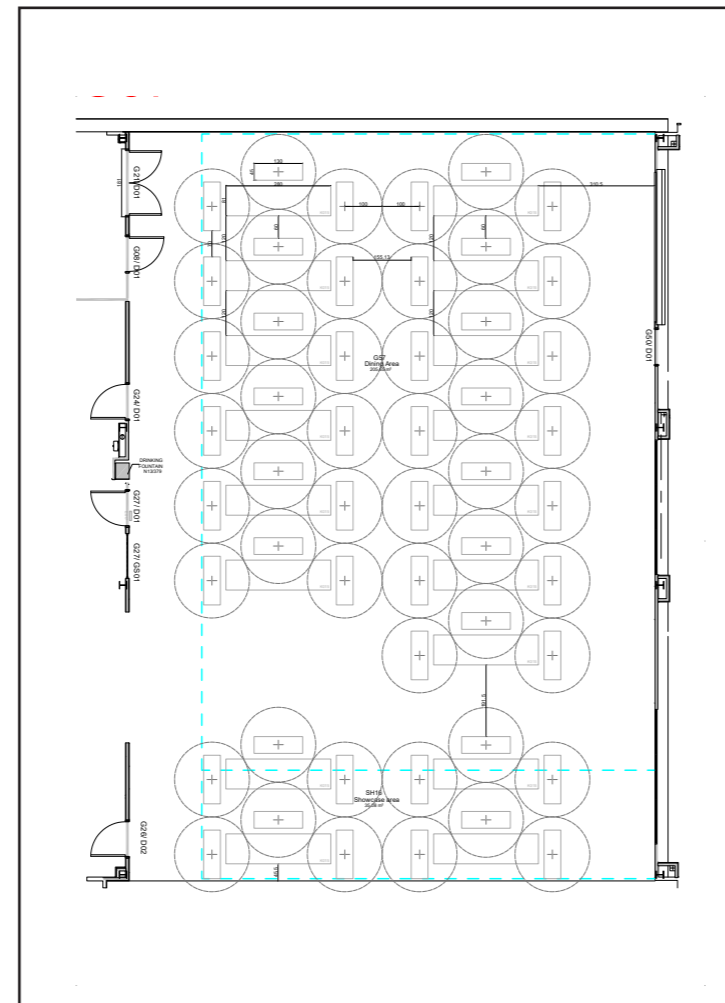
Given the revised capacity of the space and the risks associated with the serving of food whilst maintaining social distancing, it is likely that a grab bag system will be used, offering 1 or 2 choices to students each day with minimal use of the servery. The alternative is for pupils to eat in a classroom.



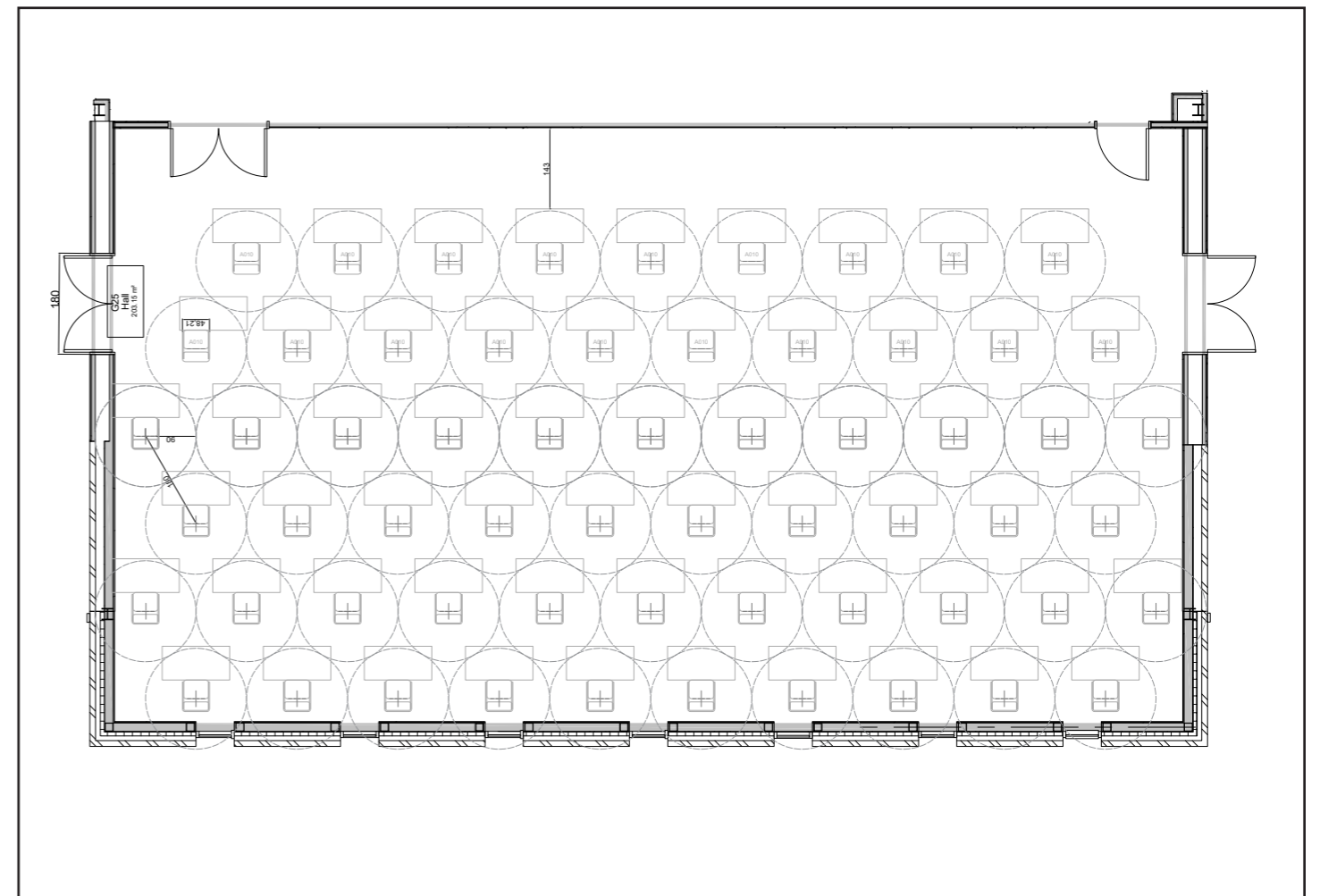
Dining Area - 34 pupils - 2m distancing



Hall - 200m<sup>2</sup> - capacity 47 pupils - 2m distancing



Dining Area - 51 pupils - 2m distancing



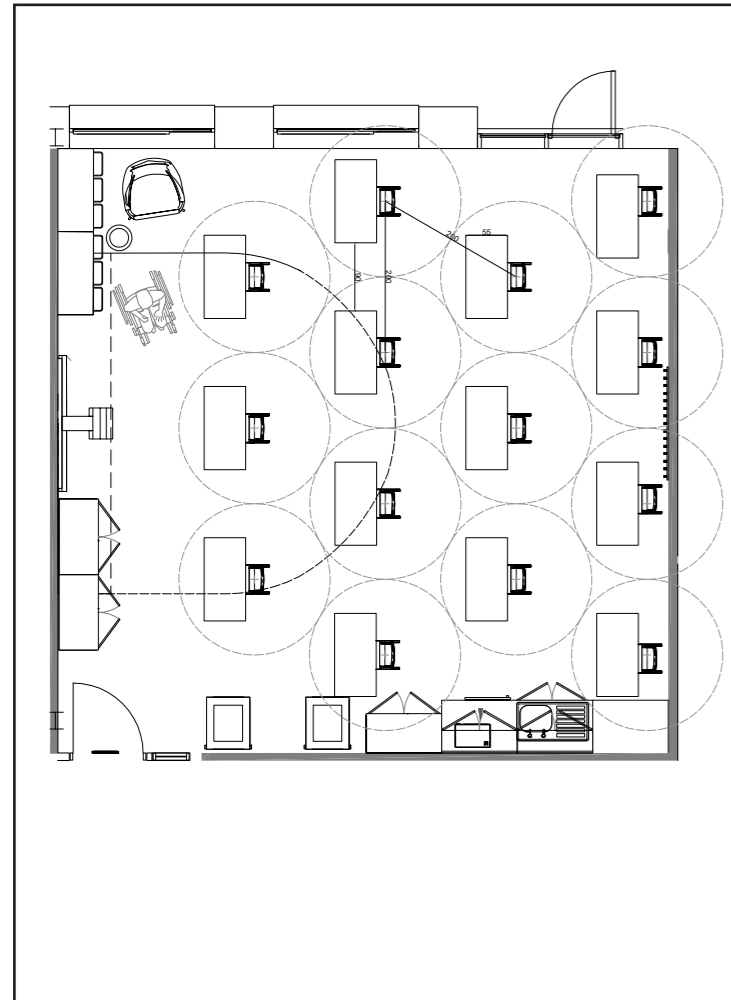
Hall - 200m<sup>2</sup> - capacity 61 pupils - 1.8m distancing

# Star Academies - Sample Primary School

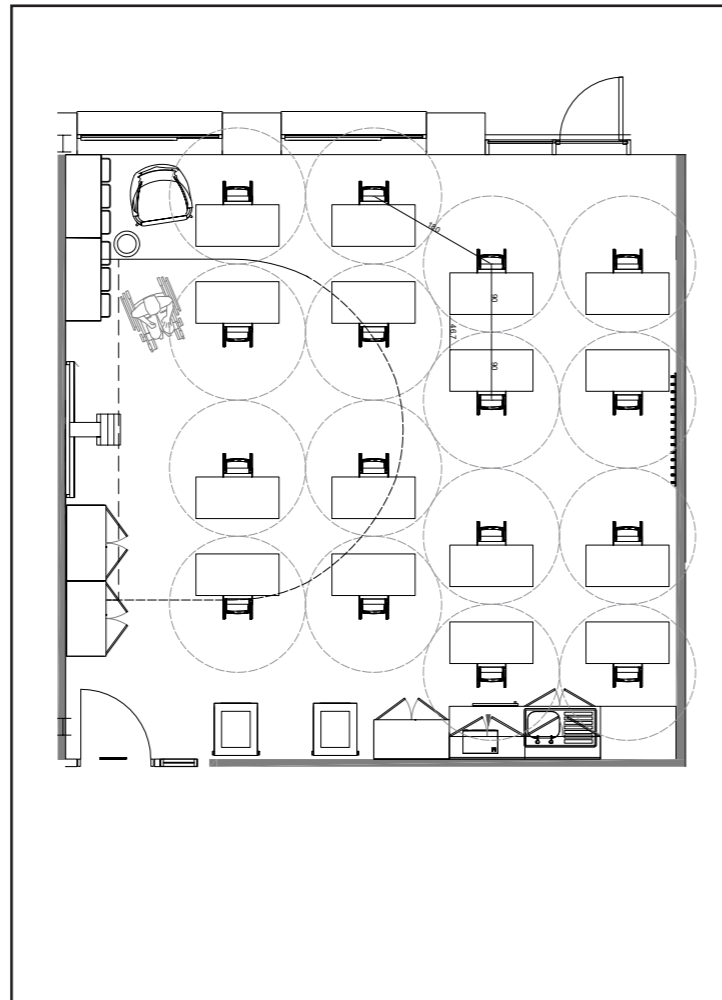
## General Classroom - 14-16 pupils

In a primary school setting, the general classrooms and dining spaces are a slightly different size and will have a different capacity.

A 62m<sup>2</sup> classroom gives 14 spaces at 2m distancing and 16 pupils at 1.8m.



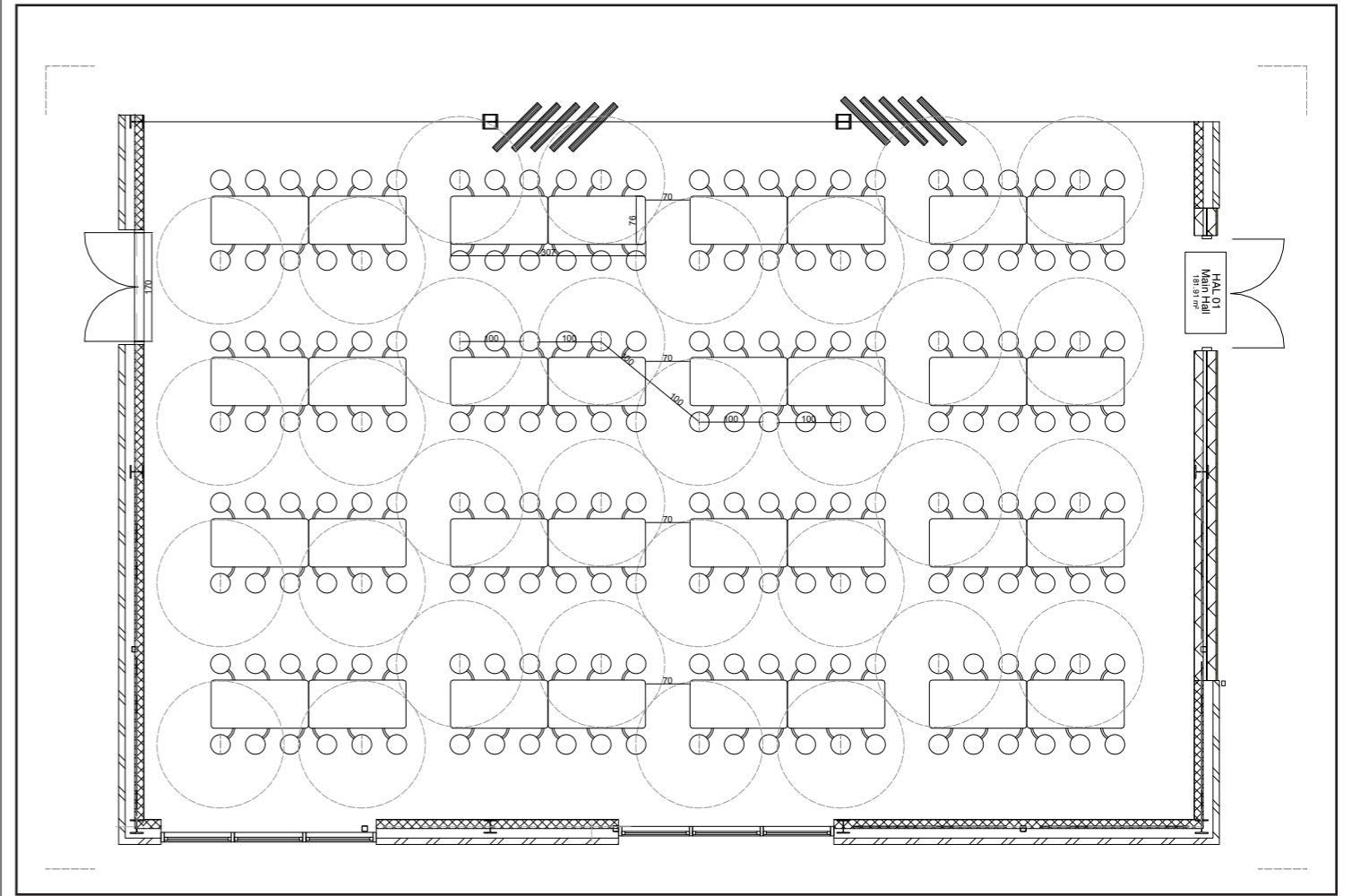
Primary Classroom - 14 pupils - 2m distancing



Primary Classroom - 16 pupils - 1.8m distancing

## Dining - 32 pupils

Dining is somewhat constrained by typical fixed seating systems used in primary schools which give 32 spaces at 2m distancing. Increasing the capacity further would require pupils to sit closer than 1.8m.



Primary Dining - 32 pupils - 2m distancing

"The diagrams illustrated relate to standardised space types, each school would need to assess their own specific circumstances when assessing distancing measures and space occupancy."