

Drinking Fountains and Water Coolers

A consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic will be the need for increased cleaning of frequently touched surfaces. Of high concern are drinking fountains and water coolers as these may be contacted by multiple persons every day and pose an additional risk due to the hand-to-mouth nature of drinking.

Due to the number of drinking fountains and water coolers on the school campus and their frequency of use, it is not feasible for the school to provide a cleaning service that is able to keep up with usage demands. As a result, the responsibility for regular cleaning will fall on individual users in order to protect themselves and others, under suitable supervision where required. Users should wash/sanitise their hands before using drinking fountains and water coolers.

To reduce the potential for cross contamination water fountains will be designated for sole use by a single bubble. Pupils and staff may only use the designated water fountain. Pupils will be taught good Infection Protection and Control procedures to help them understand why these controls have been put in place.

Following teaching on Infection Prevention and Control secondary schools should be able to allow students, as part of the learning to be generally unsupervised during this task, with occasional monitoring in place to check the learning has been effective. Primary schools will need to assess the level of supervision for each year bubble in line with the observed use of the water fountains, especially as younger children are unlikely to clean the frequently touched points adequately.

Standard Covid-19 guidance measures to reduce the spread of the virus (maintain social distancing / regular hand washing / avoid touching your face / cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and throw away once used, or inner elbow if no tissue, then wash hands / self-isolate if displaying symptoms, get tested, and do not come into school until your symptoms have gone) should always be maintained and are the best methods to minimise the spread of the virus.

General Points for Using Drinking Fountains & Water Coolers

- Water fountains have been designated for individual school bubbles
- Hands should be washed or sanitised before use.
- Disposable cups will not be freely provided to minimise the risk of persons touching cups that will be used by others. Users should fill their own mug/cup/bottle from water coolers and drinking fountains.
- Users should not drink directly from drinking fountains.
- Users should wipe down contact points, such as taps, after use to ensure they remain clean for subsequent users.

Signage for display beside Water Fountains / Water Coolers

