

Risk assessment (COVID-19 – response to Government guidance updated 07.01.21)

Main DfE guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>



Additional risks faced by the partial opening of schools for vulnerable/critical worker children following national lockdown have been assessed below. Government guidance will change regularly and it is important that the table below is updated accordingly. Please note date of review in brackets next to the 07.01.21 original date of this additional risk assessment.

Government systems of controls:

Prevention:

1. Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have COVID-19 symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school *
2. Where recommended, the use of face coverings in school *
3. Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual *
4. Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach *
5. Introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents *
6. Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible
7. Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)
8. Always keeping occupied spaces well ventilated

* Numbers 1 to 5 and number 8 must be in place in all schools, all the time

Number 6 must be properly considered and schools must put in place measures that suit their particular circumstances

Number 7 applies in specific circumstances

* Not recommended in primary schools – 'year 7 and above' – this risk assessment contains guidance for visitors to the school

Response to any infection:

9. Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process
10. Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community
11. Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice

Numbers 9 to 11 must be followed in every case where they are relevant.

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	Do you need to do anything to control this risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Central					
<p>Increased contact with others (parents/ children) during arrival at school</p>	<p>Interaction between parents and children/groups of children creates higher risk of transmission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear communication with parents and staff regarding arrangements and expected attendance of eligible children at school (vulnerable/critical worker children – click here to view government guidance) • Only one parent/guardian to accompany their child(ren) to/from the school site • SLT on duty to ask parents not to congregate on site or by gates/doorways • Agreed entry points will be _____ with clear signage • Agreed dismissal/collection points will be _____ with clear signage • Staggered arrival times will be _____ * • Staggered collection times will be _____ * • Children who refuse to come on to the school site or who are too distressed to do so will be taken home immediately by their parent/guardian • Parent/guardian to wear face covering during drop off/collection • Children/staff who arrive at school wearing face coverings must remove them at the school gate and immediately wash their hands (remove it without touching face, dispose of in designated bin or place reusable face covering in a sealed plastic bag) • All children and staff must wash hands immediately on arrival <p>* ensure teaching time is not reduced as a result of this measure</p>			
<p>Increased contact with others (parents/ children) during collection at the end of the school day</p>					
<p>Increased contact with others during journey to / from school</p>	<p>Interaction between parents and children/groups of children/members of the public during the journey to / from school creates higher risk of transmission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend no unnecessary use of public transport to / from school • If public transport is used follow current guidance 			

Additional adults on site

Parents/guardians and external visitors on site	<p>Increased interaction creates higher risk of transmission and compromises bubbles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear communication with parents and staff regarding arrangements • No parent/guardian to enter site without a pre-arranged appointment (unless dropping off/collecting) • Visits for new admissions are suspended • Encourage parental communication by telephone • School reception area – consider distance between office staff and visitor avoiding face to face communication where possible. Make use of windows/screens as barrier • Deliveries made to _____ • Office staff to wear gloves when handling parcels • All visitors will receive/view clear guidance on physical distancing, the wearing of face covering in corridors and communal areas, hygiene relevant to the school site upon arrival. Where visits can take place outside of school hours they should • A record will be kept of all visitors to the school site with sufficient detail to support rapid contact tracing if required by NHS Track and Trace 			
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Staffing					
<p>Staff that fall into the 'extremely clinically vulnerable' and 'clinically vulnerable' groups are most at risk following infection</p> <p>Staff capacity / shortage will compromise ability to run educational provision</p>	<p>Insufficient staff / shortage</p> <p>Staff to child ratio – adherence to current national guidelines for class size and safeguarding requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow government guidance regarding these groups Strictly Education HR scenarios to be used by Headteacher 			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headteacher to make all staff aware that should they be travelling to countries that require quarantine upon return, they should allow sufficient time for this guidance to be implemented prior to the return to school on the first day of term Adherence to this risk assessment will ensure that the risk to all staff will be mitigated significantly Headteacher to audit clinically extremely vulnerable staff. Clinically extremely vulnerable staff (as identified by NHS) will follow guidance contained within their letter – tailored to each restriction tier. Shielding advice is currently in place nationally and clinically vulnerable staff are advised to not attend work. <i>All other staff are expected to attend work. DfE bulletin on 7.1.21 confirms: PHE and DHSC advice that based on current evidence schools are not currently considered high-risk settings when compared to other workplace settings. The teaching unions NEU and UNISON withdrew their advice to members regarding unsafe work environments on 6.1.21 and the DfE have confirmed schools can and should be open. In all cases, provision must continue to be made on-site for all eligible children</i> All staff living in a household with some who is clinically extremely vulnerable should continue to attend work unless advised otherwise by an individual letter from the NHS or specialist doctor. Clinically and clinically extremely vulnerable staff (including pregnant women) are working on-site and should continue to maintain social distancing, take particular care to observe good hand and respiratory hygiene and adhere to school risk assessment In event of staff/facility shortages the Headteacher should discuss alternative deployment of staff / site provision with the CEO 			

Hygiene and cleaning					
<p>Direct and indirect transmission combined with poor hygiene (not washing hands adequately or adhering to respiratory hygiene guidance) will result in a higher infection rate</p>	<p>Children and staff to adhere to increased hygiene (hand-washing, sanitiser, tissues..) and ventilation of spaces to reduce risk of transmission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure sufficient tissues, handwashing supplies and facilities are available with hand sanitiser available in every room and at the school entrance(s) • All children and staff to wash their hands thoroughly upon arrival, before/after eating, after sneezing/coughing and at regular points during the day. Further guidance on handwashing can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus • Supervision of younger children to ensure safe use of hand-sanitiser and correct method for washing hands • Use hand dryers or disposable paper towels to dry hands • Encourage children and staff not to touch their faces • Use a tissue or elbow to cough/sneeze and use bins for waste (emptied regularly) • Engage children in resources such as e-bug and display posters in all rooms and entrances to reinforce expectations for good hygiene and hand-washing. DfE have suggested this series of helpful coronavirus posters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horrid hands • Super sneezes • Hand hygiene • Respiratory hygiene • Microbe mania • Natural ventilation – open windows and internal doors (open high level windows if possible in preference to low level to reduce draughts) • Increased ventilation while spaces are unoccupied (break/lunch) • Mechanical ventilation systems only operated if they serve a single room and are supplemented by an outdoor air supply. They should be adjusted to increase the ventilation rate (to full fresh air where possible) and checked to ensure that normal operation meets current guidance • Follow guidance 			
<p>The virus can be transmitted by touching contaminated surfaces</p>	<p>Children and staff at school – touching contaminated surfaces</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements discussed and confirmed with cleaning contractors • School cleaned at end of each school day • Caretaker to ensure door handles, bannisters, light switches and public areas are disinfected regularly throughout the day • Staff responsible for disinfecting resources used within their own classroom during the day –unnecessary resources should be stored away • Ensure adequate stock of cleaning materials • Supply cleaning materials to each classroom and the caretaker 			
<p>Activity during the school day</p>					

<p>Direct and indirect transmission within communal areas (classrooms / corridors...) could result in a higher infection rate.</p>	<p>Children (vulnerable/critical worker children) and staff at school.</p> <p>Social distancing in schools guidance to be followed. Social interaction/ distancing in classrooms and other learning environments.</p> <p>The overriding principle of the school is to reduce the number of contacts between children and staff by the creation of consistent 'bubbles'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No class size larger than 15 • Defined groups ('bubbles') to be created and communicated • Minimise contact between groups throughout the day. The same member(s) of staff will be assigned to the group each day and the group should not change on subsequent days (guidance states teachers and other staff can work across different groups where necessary) • The same room/area should be used by each group every day • Staff and primary aged children will not be required to wear PPE. Guidelines will be adhered to when administering first aid or intimate care (see appropriate section below) • Children will be seated at the same desk each day with their own supply of essential stationery. Avoid face to face seating arrangements and where possible adopt a forward facing desk arrangement • Staff to maintain social distancing wherever possible learning time. This may include avoiding close face-to-face contact, minimising time spent within 1m • Rooms to be well ventilated with windows open (and doors if safe to do so – consideration of fire safety) • Resources cleaned between use by different groups of children or left for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between the use by different groups • Limit use of resources between groups and limit resources available • Minimise movement of resources between school and home and unnecessary sharing should be avoided. Similar rules on hand cleaning, cleaning of the resources and rotation should apply to these resources (as above) • Consider which resources/furniture can be put away to aid cleaning. Particular attention to soft furnishings as these cannot easily be cleaned • No assemblies will take place where this requires multiple groups to congregate (permissible for defined groups to meet) • Use of shared spaces is limited to essential activity and the area/resources are cleaned before/after a new group uses it • PE lessons should be non-contact and limited to the children in one group • Outdoor sports prioritised where possible, and large indoor spaces used where it is not, maximizing natural ventilation, distancing between pupils and paying attention to cleaning and hygiene • Schools must only provide team sports on the list available here • Musical activities involving singing, wind or brass instruments should use outside space where possible or limited to groups of 15 when inside, avoiding face to face positioning and ensuring good ventilation. A large room with as much space as possible is recommended. Keep school bubbles consistent and separate. 			
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	<p>Children and staff at school.</p> <p>High traffic areas such as corridors, changing rooms and shared facilities create an increased risk of transmission.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access classrooms from an external door where possible • One-way circulation in place where possible • Stagger breaks, lunchtime, entry/exit times and toilet breaks to avoid overcrowding in corridors at these times 			
	<p>Staff – offices and use of the staffroom. Interaction, shared surfaces and equipment increases chance of transmission. Social distancing guidance to be followed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff room and office usage staggered/arranged to limit occupancy – staff will not congregate without adherence to social distancing measures • Maximum number of ____ staff to use staffroom at one time • Frequent cleaning of shared areas (including frequently touched surfaces, kettles, fridge doors...) • Office space arranged to reduce face to face working / interaction and to ensure sufficient space between colleagues (support staff to work within defined bubble) 			
<p>Increased interaction creates higher risk of transmission. The virus can be transmitted by touching contaminated surfaces</p>	<p>Children and staff – touching contaminated surfaces or coming into close contact with others when using shared toilet facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stagger toilet breaks to ensure facilities do not get overcrowded • Allocation of toilet and washroom facilities for each bubble(s) • Regular cleaning of door handles/chains during the day • Handwashing facilities and supplies available and use encouraged • Thorough cleaning at the end of the school day by contractor 			

Direct and indirect transmission will result in a higher infection rate.	Break and lunchtime activity increases the possibility of interaction and risk of transmission. Social distancing in schools guidance to be followed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign a zone to each group and ensure these are adhered to during break and lunchtime (avoid contact between groups) Staggered break-times will be _____ Staggered lunch-times will be _____ Kitchens must comply with guidance for food business on COVID-19 Catering arrangements agreed with contractor and kitchen staff to adhere to both the school risk assessment and the contractor risk assessment Headteacher to determine cold/hot meal offer and use of dining facilities – add detail here if relevant to risk assessment... 			
	Peripatetic teachers/ temporary staff (i.e. SEND) who have permission to enter the site increases the risk of transmission. Social distancing in schools guidance to be followed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist therapists, clinicians and other support staff for pupils with SEND will provide interventions as usual and should maintain distance and minimise contact from all children and staff during their visit Peripatetic staff should maintain distance and minimise contact from all children and staff during their visit Dedicated space for instrumental lessons will require cleaning following each lesson and space to enable 2m distance and appropriate ventilation Volunteers may be used to support the work of the school. They should adhere to measures set out within this risk assessment 			
Compromising groups ('bubbles') Creates higher risk of transmission	Increased interaction between individuals from different groups (bubbles) during breakfast/after school care and extra-curricular activities – higher risk for these children/staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools should resume breakfast/after-school provision for vulnerable/critical worker children where possible Schools should keep children within year groups or bubbles during extra-curricular activities If maintenance of bubbles is not possible schools should use small consistent groups Contact sports should not take place 			
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) pupils in high transmission areas are at increased risk due to new variants	Attendance at school increases the risk for CEV pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Tier 4 areas (and national coverage in line with current government restrictions) shielding is currently in place and children deemed CEV are advised not to attend school 			

COVID-19 symptoms

Risk of direct transmission and high infection rate	Children or staff presenting symptoms will pose a significant risk of transmission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all children, staff and other adults who have coronavirus symptoms (or who have someone in their household who does) or who have tested positive in the last 10 days must not enter the school site (follow government guidelines for self-isolation) • Staff are informed of / kept up-to-date with the symptoms of possible coronavirus infection • Any child presenting symptoms during the day will immediately be referred to the dedicated first aid room / office. Staff act in line with infection control policy and ensure that any unwell children wait in an area that can maintain a 2m distance from others whilst they wait to be collected. Minimise contact with other children or staff. If they need to the toilet whilst waiting to be collected, schools should allocate a separate toilet if possible. Area must be cleaned thoroughly and disinfected immediately after departure from the site and before being used by anyone else • Staff must wear appropriate level of PPE when dealing with care of a symptomatic child / adult if a distance of 2m cannot be maintained (see current government guidelines regarding gloves, face mask and apron) • Staff must wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap and running water after contact with anyone who is unwell • Parents contacted immediately by an appropriate member of staff • Self-isolation guidance will be adhered to following display of symptoms or contact with a confirmed case (following testing). Symptomatic individuals should arrange to have a test (click here) for government advice • Self isolation of those in contact with a confirmed case (following testing) to be adhered to (use government guidance) • Headteacher informed and guidelines adhered to regarding reporting 			
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First aid					
Medical and intimate care requires close proximity to a child, increasing risk of transmission	Staff treating children for first aid or dealing with intimate care needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff must wear appropriate level of PPE when dealing with first aid or intimate care of a child if a distance of 2m cannot be maintained (see current government guidelines regarding gloves, face mask and apron) • Minimum of one pediatric first aid trained member of staff and DSL on site 			

Fire and evacuation of the school building					
Fire / need to evacuate the school building – immediate risk from fire hazard and increased risk of transmission at muster point	Children and staff on site (all will operate in new areas / zones and will need to be reminded of our process, procedure and routes to be used when evacuating the building)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear communication with all staff • Agree zone/muster point and social distancing arrangements • Fire drill to be held during the first week of any change to these arrangements 			

Response to any infection					
High risk of infection	Any one in close contact with a confirmed case will have been at high risk of infection and will need to follow government guidelines immediately:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear communication of NHS Test & Trace process with staff and parents • Pupils, staff and other adults must not come into school if they have symptoms or have tested positive in at least the last 10 days • Parents and staff to understand the need to be ready and willing to book a test if they are displaying symptoms. They must not enter the school site with symptoms and children/staff will be sent home immediately if symptomatic at school • Tests can be booked online through the NHS website or by calling 119 (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/) • Parents and staff must inform the Headteacher immediately of a test result <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If negative, they feel well and no longer have COVID related symptoms they can stop self-isolating and can return to school and members of their household can stop self-isolating (once government guidance adhered to). The only exception to this is where an individual is separately identified as a close contact of a confirmed case – requirement to self-isolate for 14 days following date of contact ○ If positive follow government guidance • All staff to provide details of any party they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for COVID-19 or if asked by NHS Test & Trace • Government guidance regarding self-isolation must be adhered to following close contact • Headteacher to immediately contact DfE helpline following awareness of a positive test – Call 0800 046 8687 (Mon-Fri 8am to 6pm and Sat-Sun 10am to 4pm) * • Follow DfE guidance and risk assessment from this point (definitive advice will be given by this team on who must be sent home and a template letter will be provided for staff/parents if required). • Names and details of children/staff with COVID-19 must not be shared unless essential to protect others 			
	<p>Response to any infection:</p> <p>8) engage with the NHS Test and Trace process</p> <p>9) manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community</p> <p>10) contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice</p> <p><i>Numbers 8 to 10 must be followed in every case where they are relevant.</i></p>				

*previously local health protection team 0344 225 3861

Risk assessment completed by: _____ (Headteacher)