St Edmund's School

COVID-19 Risk Assessment for Schools (1st June 2020)

Introduction

The COVID-19 outbreak is dynamic, changing daily, if not hourly, and there are now many agencies providing information almost to the point of information overload.

This COVID-19 risk assessment identifies risks and assesses and describes methods of controlling those risks. We recognise that this risk assessment must be a dynamic process, updated whenever advice, circumstances, or any of the assessed risk factors are seen to have changed.

Rationale

The logic behind these actions, and the need for this note, is the ongoing 'duty of care' the school has for their whole community: governors, staff, parents and pupils.

A 'duty of care' means a legal obligation to ensure the safety and well-being of others. Some duties are established, such as "the teacher and pupil relationship", and "the employer and employee relationship". With COVID-19 schools are having to make difficult and timely decisions in order to fulfil this duty to their pupils, parents and staff.

The test when considering whether a duty has been properly discharged is "what would the reasonable person have done, or not done, in the circumstances of this particular incident?".

For COVID-19 there are three important factors to take into account:

a. *state of knowledge* - the developing knowledge of the virus itself and up-to-date government guidance at the time decisions are made.

b. *seriousness of likely injury* – this will have to be assessed on a case by case basis. For example, if there has been a confirmed case in the school population. A proportionate risk assessment would also have to be taken to identify where the affected individual has been, with whom they had contact and areas they have used. A further concern is for pupils that may be more vulnerable to COVID-19 than others.

c. *Cost and difficulty of taking precautionary measures* - closing schools has had considerable costs and difficulties from furloughing staff, ensuring the provision of education remotely to school fees and examinations.

The School – States of Operation

For the purposes of this risk assessment a number of stages of operation for schools have been considered:

1. Fully Open   Business as usual: no travel or trip restrictions.
2. Open   Business as usual: with caveats – no visitors or trips.
3. Open T   In transition: some teaching in school and some remotely.
4. Open K   Key staff and vulnerable children in school. All other teaching remote.
5. Open R   Teaching is all achieved remotely.
6. Fully Closed   No one on site except residents, security and maintenance staff.

Risk Assessment

Government advice states that "every setting should carry out a risk assessment before opening. The assessment should directly address risks associated with coronavirus (COVID-19), so that sensible measures can be put in place to control those risks for children and staff. All employers have a duty to consult employees on health and safety, and they are best placed to understand the risks in individual settings."

Running the School - Assessing the Risk

Assessing COVID-19 is particularly awkward as the outcome of the risk assessment for one group within a school will have an impact on another: teaching staff, support staff, visitors and contractors (if these groups are allowed access) and pupils of varying age groups and class size.

The overall assessment of risk will require daily revision and should include but not be limited to:

A. Is government advice being regularly accessed, assessed, recorded and applied?
B. Are changes regularly communicated to staff, pupils, parents and governors?
C. Are changes reviewed by governors?
D. Is access to school controlled effectively and are visitor (if allowed) details recorded?
E. Are Social Distancing (SD) and other hygiene rules communicated, understood and applied?
F. Are staff and pupils being reminded and checked to ensure they are complying with hygiene and SD rules?
G. Is there sufficient supplies of hygiene materials and are they well placed?
H. Has the cleaning regime been regularly re-assessed and, if necessary, revised to high risk areas such as toilets, door handles, switches, hand rails and regularly used hard surfaces?
I. What precautions are being used to keep shared teaching equipment (e.g. musical instruments) hygienic?
J. Are high risk areas being regularly monitored (including boarding areas) for hygiene?
K. Are contingency plans in place for the transition to full opening (or re-closing) including rapidly sharing decisions?
L. Are all the risks identified properly mitigated and regularly re-assessed?

In addition to the above, the following will need to be considered for pupils, parents and staff:

M. What SD rules have the school decided? Are they different for various activities (play, games, drama, music) and locations (classroom, playground, boarding house) and have all adhered to these SD rules?
N. What PPE has been recommended and, dependent on risk assessment, what has the school decided to equip staff and pupils? The range of PPE may include:
     a. Masks;
     b. Gloves;
     c. shields (for face or lecterns, desk separators, staff desks);
     d. sanitisers (gel and tisues).

O. Medical. Who has:
   a. Pre-existing medical conditions and are they fully declared?
   b. Have all vulnerable pupils, parents and staff been identified and recorded?
   c. Tested positive for COVID-19 and is it recorded? (for elimination purposes)?
   d. Come into contact with anyone tested positive to COVID-19?
   e. Travelled where: other than home and school? (via app or written diary).
   f. Been sent home with COVID-19 symptoms (a cough, high temperature or shortness of breath)?
P. Have all adhered to the external socialising rules set by the school such as:
   a. shopping;
   b. parties;
   c. games and play;
   d. travel (other than home to school and return).
Q. Are plans being considered for school events including plays, concerts, parent and teacher meetings etc?

A grid, to record the risks, control measures and outcomes, is at Annex A.

Conclusion

The phrase "a lot of moving parts" has never been so correctly applied to a situation where the risk posed by the virus is dynamic and will remain so. So many different stakeholders of varying ages and health will bring multiple shifting risks which must be considered on a daily basis for the safety of pupils, staff and parents.

The Senior Management Team will continue to review the arrangements that have been implemented and update these as required using their knowledge and experience within the school, as well as due to changes to relevant guidance, in order to ensure a safe and secure school environment.

Annex A

Overall Risk Assessment in the COVID-19 Environment

	Risk	Control Measures	Outcome	Remarks / Re-assessment
A	Is government advice being regularly accessed, assessed, recorded and applied?	Yes. Both Head and Bursar receive regular updates.		
B	Are changes regularly communicated to staff, pupils, parents and governors?	'Useful Information Pack' to be sent out prior to reopening. Regular updates to be provided if required.		
C	Are changes reviewed by governors?	Yes.		
D	Is access to school controlled effectively and are visitor (if allowed) details recorded?	Yes, gates are currently locked until visitor arrives but very few at moment.		
E	Are Social Distancing (SD) and other hygiene rules communicated, understood and applied?	Yes.		
F	Are staff and pupils being reminded and checked to ensure they are complying with hygiene and SD rules?	Yes.		
G	Is there sufficient supplies of hygiene materials and are they well placed?	Yes. Clerk of Works and external cleaning company are re-stocking toilets / washrooms.		
H	Has the cleaning regime been regularly re-assessed and, if necessary, revised to high risk areas such as toilets, door handles, switches, hand rails and regularly used hard surfaces?	Yes. Using external cleaning company and scaling up provison as required.		
I	What precautions are being used to keep shared teaching equipment (e.g. musical instruments) hygienic?	This is mostly limited to photocopiers and computers currently – wiped and cleaned after each use.		
J	Are high risk areas being regularly monitored (including boarding areas) for hygiene?	Boarding areas not in use. High risk areas being regularly cleaned.		
K	Are contingency plans in place for the transition to full opening (or re-closing) including rapidly sharing decisions?	In progress.		
L	Are all the risks identified properly mitigated and regularly re-assessed?	Yes		

B) Pupils, Parent and Staff Risk Assessment in the COVID-19 Environment

	Risk	Control Measures	Outcome	Remarks / Re-assessment
1	Are communication channels working and being reviewed? Email, text, facebook etc	Yes, in constant use. Email system checked daily by Head of IT. During Covid 19 the HM is sending regular briefing letters by email to parents. Weekly Video conference Staff Meeting		
2	Is there a robust feedback and reply system to ensure best practice and two-way communications for pupils, parents, staff and governors?	All SMT are available by email at all times for parents and staff to communicate with. Pupils are able to message their tutors and subject takers daily via the Portal. Governors are copied on main mailings to parents and staff. Extraordinary Board Meetings – in addition to scheduled meetings -have been held on 6/4/20 and 18/5/20. The Chair of Governors is in regular contact with the HM and Bursar and available as required to assist with strategic matters and provide operational feedback.		
3	If there is a governor and / or officer for the school / department nominated to be responsible for COVID-19 matters, are their contact details known and are they on call?	The Chair of Governors co-ordinates all Covid-19 related matters with the Governing Body. The CoG contact details are published on the School website for parents. The Bursar acts as the "Covid-19 Co-ordinator" (available by email/phone). The HM lives on site and therefore easily available for staff and pupils. Parents can contact by email or school telephone through well-established channels. Parents can contact their child's tutor via email as per usual		

		established practice. Staff on site will be provided with a "Useful information Pack" in each classroom.		
4	Is there a system to communicate with parents and staff that have not returned to school for fear of infection?	The HM retains overall control of the communications with parents and staff, with reference to the SMT and Governors, and will provide information about the safe return plans to all stakeholders in advance of 1st June. The Deputy Head and Bursar are nominated as points of contact for parents and/or staff who wish to report dis-inclination to attend in advance. Children expected at School who do not attend will be contacted by their Tutor or one of the Front Office Team. The HM will be alerted to non-atendees on a daily basis and will co-ordinate a suitable approach with the Bursar and Pastoral Heads of Senior and Prep as appropriate.		
5	Who has travelled where: other than home and school? (via app or written diary).	We hope that a contact tracing app will be available but Parents will be asked to inform the school in the "Useful Information pack".		
6	What are, and have the hygiene rules set by the school been adhered to by pupils, parents and staff?	The hygiene rules are communicated to staff and pupils via posters displayed around the School. Teaching staff update pupils personally on a daily basis, and staff will be fully inducted with new routines at the start of term		

ISBA
Independent schools vary widely in terms of their size, pupil population, location, provision and practice. Documents are offered as guidance only, in order to help schools prepare their own in a way that suits their own circumstances and reflects the needs of their own community, and the ISBA and our partners who have assisted in production of the documents accept no liability for any claims or losses arising from their use. Before using documents from the ISBA library, and particularly after adapting them, schools should take specific legal advice.

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7	Are all staff trained and regularly updated in COVID-19 symptoms, SD and how these rules apply to teaching?	All staff are reminded of the symptoms of C-19 and the requirements for SD via posters around the School and by emails from the Bursar/or Deputy Head. All staff have been asked to watch a Covid 19 training / information video prior to returning to school on 1st June.		
8	Is school transport operating to reflect SD, hygiene, PPE and cleaning arrangements?	The buses will not be operational on 1st June. When operational, the School's drivers will receive training to observe SD and hygiene requirements and will be provided with sufficient PPE and cleaning materials. The number of passengers on vehicles will be reduced from usual operational limits to ensure SD requirements.		
9	How is registration throughout the day managed including temperature / health checks?	Registration will be done alongside temperature checks at morning drop off (before the parents leave the site). Pupils or staff reporting C19 symptoms are to be directed to the Surgery where they will be assessed by the School Nurse.		
10	Are transit spaces (corridors), social zones (car parks, common rooms, playgrounds) configured to SD rules?	All areas used by pupils and staff on site will be configured with SD in mind.		
11	Are learning and games spaces configured to SD rules?	All areas used by pupils and staff on site will be configured with SD in mind		
12	Are different age groups catered for in terms of timetabling, length of the school day and exposure to other age groups.	The current group of children returning to school have been catered for with a school day from 9am-2pm. Each group will remain separate from each other.		
13	Is there a system in place to deal with bereavements, trauma, anxiety, behavioural issues?	Pastoral team available School Nurse on site. School Counsellor available and other external resources.	Need Bereavement Policy.	

C) Pupil and Staff - Safety Risk Assessment in the COVID-19 Environment

		Risk	Control Measures	Outcome	Remarks / Re-assessment
1		Have safeguarding, code or practice, and staff handbook policies been updated, regularly reviewed and shared?	Safeguarding document has been updated and shared with staff by DSL		
2		Is the DSL and ADSL easily contacted and their contact information known to all?	DSL details are well known. They are available either on site or by email/telephone daily.		
3		Is there a COVID-19 specific policy that includes medical responses, SD, teaching, socialising, feeding, well-being etc?	No. Updates have been made to individual policies where necessary.		
4		Are class sizes reduced and kept together in their "bubble" (minimising contact with others) and properly supervised? (14.5.20)	Arrangements have been made to reduce the size of the group and provide a consistency of teaching staff. The groups will be segragated and supervised at all times.		
5		Should the needs of each age group and class be considered separately in terms of support, activities and facilities? (14.5.20)	Yes consideration has been given to each separate group.		
6		Are staff having sufficient down time / rest during the working day / week? (14.5.20)	Yes. Shorter days planned for foreseeable future.		
7		How are new staff and pupils inducted and has the registration and recruit process been adapted to ensure compliance?	There are currently no new staff starting. The Registrar is looking at ways of adapting the recruitment process to comply with SD measures and Gov guidance.		
8		Are sporting, play and SD rules clear to staff and puils?	The Head of Sport will adapt any sporting activity to ensure no contact and compliance with SD rules.		
9		Are drama, dance and music activities applying SD rules?	There is currently no drama and dance and music is via video and online learning.		
10		How are staff meetings and staff rooms regulated in terms of space, equipments, resources (copiers, kettles, biscuits etc) timings, SD and purpose?	Staff meetings take place via Zoom. An additional Staff Room has been set up in the Bernard Shaw room so staff can use both this space and the usual Common Room. Both should be used		

		accordance with SD measures and there is a supply of santiser and wipes available for shared equipment (hot water, photocopier, fridge etc).		
11	Are all security, CCTV and access systems regularly checked, updated and (where necessary) re-coded?	Yes – Bursar and Head of IT.		
12	Are drop-off and pick-up procedures, in/out routes shared, understood and applied?	Drop off times for the Years returning on 1st June are staggered. Drop off in different carparks for different years. Arrangements for escorting younger children to classroom door, adhering to SD measures, in place. These will be communicated via "Useful Information pack".		
13	Are transit spaces (corridors), social zones (common rooms / playgrounds) configured to SD rules?	All areas used by pupils and staff on site will be configured with SD in mind.		
14	Do classrooms reflect SD layout, PPE, screening and regular cleaning rules?	All areas used by pupils and staff on site will be configured with SD in mind. PPE is provided where applicable and daily cleaning is carried out as well as additional cleaning of high contact areas or of toys for younger years.		
15	Have unnecessary items been removed from classrooms and other learning environments? (14.5.20)	Nursery, Reception and Year 1 teachers have removed any unnecessary items from their classrooms. Year 6 are being taught in open spaces – hall and drama studio.		
16	Are soft furnishings, soft toys and toys that are hard to clean been removed? (14.5.20)	Yes these have all been removed.		
17	Can staff manage, whilst in the transition phase, both in school and remote learning?	RMAT to coordinate.		
18	Are assemblies, break times, drop-off and collection times sufficiently well staggered? (14.5.20)	Yes and separate areas designated for break times.		
19	Are meal times de-conflicted, reflecting SD in the servery and dining hall whilst providing sufficient nourishment?	Meals to be served in take-away boxes delivered to the classroom or to the field if weather permits.		

20	What are the risks of providing breakfast and after school clubs? (14.5.20)	These will not be provided at this point as we will be unable to maintain consistency of groups.		
21	What vulnerable staff and children are in school / home, is medical advice being followed and are they properly supported? (14.5.20)	List maintained by Surgery.		
22	Is pupil and staff mental health and wellbeing properly considered with individual needs identified and supported? (14.5.20)	Deputy Head Pastoral Prep monitoring staff wellbeing. Communication to all staff re access to school counsellor and EAP. Weekly Pastoral meetings via video in place for the Senior School as well a weekly pupil wellbeing survey. Half termly pastoral meeting in place for Prep School. Tutors see pupils twice a week and feedback concerns to Deputy Head Pastoral.		
23	Where activities have been re-scheduled is SD working and are the timings sufficient?	No extra-curicular activities to be run at present.		New addition 12.5.20

D) Medical Risk Assessment in the COVID-19 Environment

	Risk	Control Measures	Outcome	Remarks / Re-assessment
1	Is the science of risk understood e.g. less severe symptoms in adults, younger children less likely to become unwell, small class sizes will help? (14.5.20)	Information included in 'Useful Information Pack'		
2	How effective are the hygiene rules? Is "catch it, bin it, kill it" still publicised and applied? (14.5.20)	Yes		
3	Is there anyone in addition supervising the normal first aid trained staff?	First Aiders are the Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Office staff. One nurse on site during the initial phased reopening commencing 1st June.		
4	Are there sufficient medical staff to deal with temperature testing, isolating suspect COVID-19 cases, outside appointments and normal medical issues?	Yes for current numbers of pupils returning.		
5	If temperature testing or taking other precautions that require new equipment, do operators have the appropriate training and has it been recorded? (14.5.20)	School nurse to provide training to staff responsible for using the new non-contact thermometers.		
6	Have medical policy, procedures and appropriate response to spectrum of medical issues been revised and shared?	First Aid and Infection Control Policy has been reviewed and amended with Covid 19 Addendum. This has been shared with staff and parents.		
7	Is the medical room(s) properly equipped?	School Surgery is fully equipped and the room with the toilet and bed will be used in the event of Covid-19 symptomatic patients.		
8	What has the school decided is the level of PPE required for pupils and staff and are they trained as to their purpose, use, care and disposal?	In accordance with the guidance 12.5.20 staff and pupils will not be required to wear face masks. Gloves will not be needed but regular hand washing and sanitising will be encouraged. Surgery and Nursery staff will have face masks, gloves and aprons available for close contact and personal hygiene assistance. There will be a face shield available in Surgery in case of a patient with Covid 19 symptoms.		

9	Do the sickness management rules need to be re-stated and the "don't come to work if you are ill" understood. (14.5.20)	SMT to ensure this is communicated to all regularly by newsletter, email and staff meetings.		
10	As different age groups have different risk profiles is each group (staff and pupils) risk assessed? (14.5.20)	Different age groups have been taken into account when planning the return and classrooms / equipment arranged as appropriate, in accordance with guidance.		
11	Is the school aware of all pre-existing medical conditions?	Request for update of medical details for staff and pupils sent September 2019. Staff and pupils intending to attend school during the transition period to provide details to Surgery in advance.		
12	Who has tested positive for COVID-19 and is it recorded? (for elimination purposes)?	Surgery to maintain a confidential list and share with HM and Bursar.		
13	Who has come into contact with anyone tested positive to COVID-19 and is it recorded?	Surgery to maintain a confidential list and share with HM and Bursar.		
14	Who has been sent home with COVID-19 symptoms (a cough, high temperature or shortness of breath)?	Details are maintained on Engage Portal medical records. Separate register will be maintained in Surgery for easy ID.		
15	Is there regular dialogue with those that have suffered from COVID-19 and / or are isolated at home?	Surgery to maintain regular contact.		
16	Who is shielding another family member and/or who has a condition that precludes their attendance at school? (14.5.20)	Bursar/Surgery to maintain a list of staff and pupils affected.		
17	Is proof required for shielding and of individual conditions? (14.5.20)	Not currently.		
18	If there is a separate area for temperature testing, holding and isolation areas and are they easily identified and regularly cleaned?	Yes – Surgery.		
19	Is temperature testing safe, reflecting SD rules, recorded and kept appropriately?	Achieved by using infra-red thermometers.		
20	If emergency services are called is there a (revised?) well understood procedure, RV and cleared routes in and out?	Procedures remain the same.		
21	Are staff and pupils regularly supervised and checked to ensure they are	SMT and Bursar to undertake		

		Control Measures	Outcome	Remarks / Re-assessment
	complying with hygiene rules and the use of PPE?	regular compliance checks. Reminders given on how to use any PPE and hand and respiratory hygiene measures .		
22	If essential work is required on site are contractors properly registered, inducted supervised and temperature checked?	Yes, usual access requirements undertaken. Visitors register in school office and ID issued.		
23	Do medical staff have the appropriate PPE, cleaning materials and training?	Yes, on order		
24	What is the policy on washing school clothes so as to prevent infection?	Any soiled clothes will be bagged and labelled to go home with pupil as previously.		

Boarding Risk Assessment in the COVID-19 Environment

	Risk	Control Measures	Outcome	Remarks / Re-assessment
1	Are boarding policies and procedures updated, regularly reviewed and communicated?	No boarders will be on site until full lifting of SD measures.		
2	Are all security and access systems regularly checked, updated and re-coded?			
3	Do boarding staff have the appropriate PPE, cleaning materials and training?			
4	Are separation and socialising rules adhered to in the boarding house?			
5	Are fire instructions and new procedures reviewed, understood and rehearsed?			
6	Are there sufficient rooms to isolate pupils (and staff)?			
7	Does the staff to pupil ratio reflect SD rules? This should include medical and emotional support.			
8	If bed space has been reconfigured are there still sufficient bathroom facilities?			
9	Are all clothes and bed linen washed regularly and at appropriate setting (65°)?			
10	Are boarders equipped with authorised equipment to stay-in touch with parents?			

Support Staff Risk Assessment

	Risk	Control Measures	Outcome	Remarks / Re-assessment
1	Are support staff briefed on changes regularly?	Majority of support staff are currently on furlough. Those in school are briefed when changes are made.		
2	Do support staff have the appropriate PPE, cleaning materials and training?	Access to cleaning materials and PPE if required.		
3	Are cleaning regimes reviewed and inspected regularly and conforming to revised hygiene rules?	Yes. Adjustments to schedule made as required.		
4	Are all security and access systems regularly checked, updated and re-coded?	Yes.		
5	Have reconfigured areas, zones and routes hampered fire exits and routes?	No.		
6	Are fire and other emergency procedures reconfigured, routes clear and regularly inspected?	Yes.		

Facilities Management Risk Assessment

	Risk	Control Measures	Outcome	Remarks / Re-assessment
1	Heating system including fuel levels sufficient?	These all form part of our usual, regular testing programme. Electrical testing is currently in progress, Fire Alarm and equipment testing is booked for half term, no industrial laundry machines on site, waste is being emptied regularly, pest services recorded and vehicles appropriately maintained.		
2	Gas supply, venting and valves?			
3	Have air conditioning ducts and units been checked and reviewed?			
4	Electrical tests up-to-date including emergency lighting and PAT?			
5	Water testing for temperature, flow and legionella in date for test?			
6	What is the status of the swimming pool and are appropriate measures in force?			
7	Fire alarm panel, system and extinguishers in date and serviced?			
8	Laundry washers and dryers serviceable, able to cope with demand, temperature requirements and have sufficient washing products?			
9	Have waste procedures been reviewed?			
10	Are pest control services recorded, deficiencies identified and actioned?			
11	School vehicles fully registered, insured, maintained and stocked with appropriate hygiene materials if they are to be used?			