COVID-19: Operational risk assessment for school reopening

Please note: this risk assessment should be undertaken in conjunction with the guidance on school reopening issued by the DfE

Assessment conducted by:	C Holloway	**Job title:**	Head teacher	**Covered by this assessment:**	Staff, pupils, contractors, visitors, volunteers

Date of assessment:	27.8.21	**Review interval:**	Termly or in line with updates	**Date of next review:**	31.12.2021

Related documents	
Trust documents: See COVID-19 section of website www.watertonacademytrust.org	**Government guidance:** https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/schools-covid-19-operational-guidance

Risk matrix

Risk rating **High (H), Medium (M), Low (L)**		**Likelihood of occurrence**		
		Probable	**Possible**	**Remote**
Likely impact	**Major:** Causes major physical injury, harm or ill-health.	H	H	H
	Severe: Causes physical injury or illness requiring first aid.	H	M	L
	Minor: Causes physical or emotional discomfort.	M	L	L

Areas for concern	Risk rating prior to action (H/M/L)	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Further action/comments	Residual risk rating (H/M/L)
1. Establishing a systematic process of full opening, including government recommended measures					
1.1 Net capacity					
Available capacity of the school is reduced when social distancing guidelines are applied		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	
1.2 Organisation of teaching spaces					
Classroom sizes will not allow recommended layout of desks		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.		The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	
Large spaces need to be used as classrooms		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.		The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	
1.3 Availability of staff and class sizes					
The number of staff who are available is lower than that required to teach classes in school		• Individuals are no longer required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply: • they are fully vaccinated • they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months • they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial • they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons	yes	The Trust and academies will actively promote vaccination of all adults who are eligible.	

Areas for concern	Risk rating prior to action (H/M/L)	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Further action/comments	Residual risk rating (H/M/L)
1.4 Prioritising provision					
Disruption to education has had a varied impact on pupils		• Plans are in place to identify and support additional learning needs • Pastoral and SEND support is deployed wherever possible to support prioritised pupils. • Efforts continue to improve the attendance of all pupils.	yes	Although conditions have altered in relation to operations, the disruption to daily routine must still be taken into account.	
1.5 The school day					
The start and end of the school day create risks of breaching social distancing guidelines		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	. The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	
1.6 Planning movement around the school					
Movement around the school risks breaching social distancing guidelines		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	
1.7 Staff workspaces					
Staff rooms and offices do not allow for observation of social distancing guidelines		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	

Areas for concern	Risk rating prior to action (H/M/L)	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Further action/comments	Residual risk rating (H/M/L)
1.8 Policy/Procedure review					
Existing policies and procedures on safeguarding, health and safety, fire evacuation, medical, behaviour, attendance and other policies are no longer fit for purpose in the current circumstances		• All relevant policies have been revised to take account of government guidance on social distancing and COVID-19 and its implications for the school. • Staff, pupils, parents and other stakeholders have been briefed accordingly. • A revised RA is in place and an Outbreak Management Plan has been shared • Pre-Covid standard operations will be re-instated unless specifically communicated via RAs or Trust advice.	yes		
1.9 Communication strategy					
Key stakeholders are not fully informed about changes to policies and procedures due to COVID-19, resulting in risks to health		• Communications strategies for the following groups are in place: ○ Staff ○ Pupils ○ Parents ○ Governors/Trustees ○ Local authority ○ Regional Schools Commissioner ○ Professional associations ○ Other partners • Consistent message is being delivered throughout the organisation	yes	Ensuring good hygiene for everyone (in line with DfE guidance) will continue to be implemented. Awareness of what will happen if someone has symptoms in school. WAT communicate RA with other professional bodies. Trust website COVID19 section continually updated. Emails used to communicate key/consistent messages to all staff.	
1.10 Staff induction and CPD					
Staff are not trained in new procedures, leading to risks to health		• Staff are now familiar with the good hygiene for everyone practices and therefore additional training is not a requirement. • Procedures relating to health, safety and fire etc. will revert in the main in line with pre-Covid protocols and therefore there is no requirement for additional training other than standard refresher training.	yes	All academies will carry out fire drills within the first 3 weeks of the Autumn term. Share DfE and Trust guidance docs with all staff – ongoing as published or updated.	

Areas for concern	Risk rating prior to action (H/M/L)	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Further action/comments	Residual risk rating (H/M/L)
New staff are not aware of policies and procedures prior to starting at the school		• Induction programmes are in place for all new staff – either online or in-school – prior to them starting. • Revised documentation is issued to all new staff prior to them starting.	yes	Risk assessment part of induction process for any new / returning staff / supply staff. Risk assessment sent prior to starting. Briefing information for visitors to site including supply.	
1.11 Free school meals					
Pupils eligible for free school meals do not receive provision during any local lockdown		• Provision for free school meals has been built into the Outbreak Management Plan and practice is now well established.	yes		
1.12 Risk assessments					
Risks are not comprehensively assessed in every area of the school in light of COVID-19, leading to breaches of social distancing and hygiene guidance.		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure. • Risk assessments will continue to be reviewed and altered in line with guidance.		The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management plan Updates communicated to staff via email. RA from ENGIE and ISS received.	
1.13 School transport					
Changes to public transport schedules as a result of COVID-19 adversely affect pupils' attendance and punctuality and do not align with staggered start and departure times		• Academies will no longer be required to stagger start and departure times. • Academies will work with individual families to manage attendance/punctuality expectations in light of any limitations. • EWO is aware of and working with families who are having difficulties in managing attendance		Office staff liaise with leaders regarding attendance and punctuality – work with families and EWO on an individual basis.	

Areas for concern	Risk rating prior to action (H/M/L)	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Further action/comments	Residual risk rating (H/M/L)
2. Investing in safety equipment and health and safety arrangements to limit the spread of COVID-19					
2.1 Cleaning					
Cleaning capacity is reduced so that an initial deep-clean and ongoing cleaning of surfaces are not undertaken to the standards required		• A plan for cleaning staff (including any deep cleans) is agreed with contracting agencies. • There is frequent cleaning and disinfecting of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, particularly in areas of high use such as door handles, light switches and in the reception area, using appropriate products and methods • Pupils and staff have own frequently used equipment e.g. pens/pencils that are not shared	yes	All academies to follow good hygiene for all practices.	
2.2 Hygiene and handwashing					
Inadequate supplies of soap and hand sanitiser mean that pupils and staff do not wash their hands with sufficient frequency		• Academies will remain well stocked and the Trust will monitor any potential shortages and respond accordingly. • Monitoring arrangements are in place to ensure that supplies of soap, hand towels and sanitiser are maintained throughout the day.	yes	Resources regularly reviewed and ordered. Trust procurement audit and purchase arrangements in place.	
Pupils forget to wash their hands regularly and frequently		• Good hygiene for all guidance will ensure: ○ Staff training includes the need to remind pupils of the need to wash their hands regularly and frequently. ○ Posters reinforce the need to wash hands regularly and frequently. ○ School leaders monitor the extent to which handwashing is taking place on a regular and frequent basis. ○ Handwashing takes place on entry to school, prior to departure and at set times throughout the day, before and after eating, after coughing/sneezing. ○ Hand sanitiser is provided in locations where hand washing facilities are not readily available.	yes	Handwashing built into daily routines at regular points during the day for staff and children. Children shown how to hand wash effectively. Hand sanitiser available at points throughout school.	
2.3 Clothing/fabric – NO LONGER APPLICABLE					

Areas for concern	Risk rating prior to action (H/M/L)	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Further action/comments	Residual risk rating (H/M/L)
2.4 Testing and managing symptoms					
Testing is not used effectively to help manage staffing levels and support staff wellbeing		• Guidance on getting tested has been published. • The guidance has been explained to staff • Twice weekly lateral flow tests are encouraged and available via the office. • Changes to guidance around staff isolating will also reduce significantly the risk of insufficient ratios.	yes		

Infection transmission within school due to staff/pupils (or members of their household) displaying symptoms		• Individuals are no longer required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply:
		  ○ they are fully vaccinated
		  ○ they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months
		  ○ they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
		  ○ they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons
		• Robust collection and monitoring of absence data, including tracking return to school dates, is in place.
		• Procedures are in place to deal with any pupil or staff displaying symptoms at school. This includes the use of testing for both staff and pupils and appropriate action, in line with government guidance, should the tests prove positive or negative.
		• Pupils, parents and staff are aware of what steps to take if they display symptoms.
		• A record of any positive COVID-19 test in staff or pupils is reported to the Trust
			yes	HR to provide guidance to Heads and staff on absence reporting, recording and management.
				
				Trust communication to be updated and re-sent to all parents/carers and staff for September (as and when updated).	

Staff, pupils and parents are not aware of the school's procedures (including on self-isolation and testing) should anyone display symptoms of COVID-19 or in the event of a positive case being confirmed.		• Staff, pupils and parents have received clear communications informing them of current government guidance • This guidance has been explained to staff and pupils as part of ongoing communications. • Any updates or changes to this guidance are communicated in a timely and effective way to all stakeholders.	yes	Trust communication to be updated and sent to all parents/carers and staff for September.	

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2.5 First Aid/Designated Safeguarding Leads					
The lack of availability of designated First Aiders and Designated Safeguarding Leads puts children's safety at risk		• Changes to self-isolation guidance have reduced significantly the risk of staff shortages in the identified areas.	yes		
2.6 Medical rooms					
Medical rooms are not adequately equipped or configured to maintain infection control or there is not a dedicated medical room in school		• Practice and provision is now well established across all academies. • Social distancing provisions are in place for medical rooms. • Additional rooms are designated for pupils with suspected COVID-19 whilst collection is arranged. • Procedures are in place for medical rooms to be cleaned after suspected COVID-19 cases, along with other affected areas, including toilets. • Appropriate PPE is available within the medical room	yes	Room is identified and designated as a medical room and can be used to isolate a person displaying symptoms whilst awaiting collection.	
2.7 Communication with parents					
Parents and carers are not fully informed of the health and safety requirements for the return of children to academies in September.		• As part of the overall communications strategy referenced in this document, parents are kept up to date with information, guidance and the school's expectations on a regular basis using a range of communication tools. • A COVID-19 section on the Trust website has been created and is regularly updated.	yes	Up to date communications sent to parents at regular intervals. Signposting to available information.	
Parents and carers may not fully understand their responsibilities should a child show symptoms of COVID-19		• Key messages in line with government guidance are reinforced on a regular basis via all communication channels.	yes	Signposting - ongoing communication through text messaging/school website ongoing welfare calls.	

Areas for concern	Risk rating prior to action (H/M/L)	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Further action/comments	Residual risk rating (H/M/L)
2.8 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)					
Provision of PPE for staff where required is not in line with government guidelines		• Government guidance on wearing PPE is well understood, communicated and sufficient PPE has been procured. • Those staff required to wear PPE (e.g. SEND intimate care; receiving/handling deliveries; cleaning staff) have been instructed on how to put on and how to remove PPE carefully to reduce contamination and also how to dispose of them safely. • Staff are reminded that wearing of gloves is not a substitute for good handwashing.	yes	Appropriate PPE is available for staff providing intimate care. PPE continually audited and reordered when necessary.	
2.9 Ventilation					
Buildings are not adequately ventilated		• Schools will be furnished with Carbon Dioxide detectors via the DfE • Areas with less natural ventilation to be more closely monitored • All classrooms will open windows and doors when conditions permit • Children to be encouraged to bring jumpers/cardigans in all weathers, to allow windows to be open without pupils becoming excessively cold • SLT to complete H&S walks to ensure appropriate ventilation is in place where possible	Yes	Carbon dioxide detectors to be used when provided to provide an assessment of the ventilation/CO2 levels of various areas of the school building.	
3. Maximising social distancing measures					
3.1 Pupil behaviour					
Pupils' behaviour on return to school does not comply with social distancing guidance		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	
3.2 Classrooms and teaching spaces					
The size and configuration of classrooms, teaching spaces and cloakrooms does not support compliance		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	

Areas for concern	Risk rating prior to action (H/M/L)	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Further action/comments	Residual risk rating (H/M/L)
3.3 Movement in corridors					
Social distancing guidance is breached when pupils circulate in corridors		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	
3.4 Break times					
Pupils may not observe social distancing at break times		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	
3.5 Lunch times					
Pupils may not observe social distancing at lunch times		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	
3.6 Toilets					
Queues for toilets and handwashing risk non-compliance with social distancing measures		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	
3.8 Reception area					
Groups of people gather in reception (parents, visitors, deliveries) which risks breaching social distancing guidelines		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	

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3.9 Arrival and departure from school					
Pupils and parents congregate at exits and entrances, making social distancing measures difficult to apply		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	
3.10 Transport					
The use of public and school transport by pupils poses risks in terms of social distancing		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	
3.11 Staff areas					
Staff rooms and offices do not allow for observation of social distancing guidelines		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	
4. Continuing enhanced protection for children and staff with underlying health conditions					
4.1 Pupils with underlying health issues					
Pupils with underlying health issues or those who are shielding are not identified and so measures have not been put in place to protect them		• Shielding is no longer advised clinically extremely vulnerable people are advised, as a minimum, to follow the same guidance as everyone else. The use of rapid lateral flow tests will continue to help identify individuals with COVID-19. This along with other infection prevention and control measures shall help manage the spread of the virus and will also help keep safe those who are clinically extremely vulnerable and their families.	yes		

Areas for concern	Risk rating prior to action (H/M/L)	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Further action/comments	Residual risk rating (H/M/L)
4.2 Staff with underlying health issues					
Staff with underlying health issues or those who are shielding are not identified and so measures have not been put in place to protect them		• Shielding is no longer advised clinically extremely vulnerable people are advised, as a minimum, to follow the same guidance as everyone else. The use of rapid lateral flow tests will continue to help identify individuals with COVID-19. This along with other infection prevention and control measures shall help manage the spread of the virus and will also help keep safe those who are clinically extremely vulnerable and their families.	yes		
5. Enhancing mental health support for pupils and staff					
5.1 Mental health concerns – pupils					
Pupils' mental health has been adversely affected during the period that the school is closed and by the COVID-19 crisis in general		• There are sufficient numbers of trained staff available to support pupils with mental health issues. • There is access to designated staff for all pupils who wish to talk to someone about wellbeing/mental health. • Wellbeing/mental health is discussed regularly in PSHE/ assemblies/pupil briefings (stories/toy characters are used for younger pupils to help talk about feelings). • Resources/websites to support the mental health of pupils are provided. • External / professional advice sought where concerns escalate	yes		
5.2 Mental health concerns – staff					
The mental health of staff has been adversely affected by the COVID-19 crisis in general		• Staff are encouraged to focus on their wellbeing. • Line managers are proactive in discussing wellbeing with the staff that they manage, including their workload. • Staff briefings and training have included content on wellbeing. • Staff have been signposted to useful websites and resources.	yes	SLT responsibility to check on welfare of all staff. HR to support where required.	
Working from home can adversely affect mental health		• Unless an outbreak occurs and the Management Plan is implemented, working from home will not be an every-day occurrence	yes		

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5.3 Bereavement support					
Pupils and staff are grieving because of loss of friends or family		• The school has access to trained staff who can deliver bereavement counselling and support. • Support is requested from other organisations when necessary.	yes	Advice from outside agencies as appropriate.	
6. Operational issues					
6.1 Review of fire procedures					
Fire procedures are not appropriate to cover new arrangements		• Fire procedures will revert to pre-Covid arrangements and regular fire drills will take place to refresh the understanding of staff and children	yes	Evacuation practise scheduled. Estates sign off.	
Fire evacuation drills - unable to apply social distancing effectively		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure.	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan.	
Fire marshals absent due to self-isolation		• Changes to self-isolation guidance have reduced significantly the risk of staff shortages in the identified areas.	yes		
6.2 Managing premises on reopening after lengthy closure – CURRENTLY NOT APPLICABLE					
6.3 Contractors working on the school site					
Contractors/supply staff and other external agencies on-site whilst school is in operation may pose a risk to social distancing and infection control		• Social distancing guidelines have now been removed and bubbles will not be the normal operating procedure. • COVID-19 risk assessments/operation plans for key contractors have been provided and checked by estates and SLT • An assessment has been carried out to see if any additional control measures are required to keep staff, pupils and contractors safe. • Assurances have been sought from the contractors that all staff attending the setting will be in good health (symptom-free). • In addition to arrangements for COVID-19, normal contractor procedures are being applied and have been updated in light of COVID-19 (including contractor risk assessments and method statements, and contractor induction). • Visitor badge is clearly visible at all times	yes	The only case where social distancing will be in place is during an identified outbreak. Previous arrangements will then be applied in line with the Outbreak Management Plan. Guidance in place for visitors on site. Visitor book / forms updated. Trust estates team have delivered toolbox talks to all contractors. All visitors to read school risk assessment / visitor guidance and share their risk assessments with school. Assurance that contractors will not visit site without an appointment.	

Areas for concern	Risk rating prior to action (H/M/L)	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Further action/comments	Residual risk rating (H/M/L)
7. Extended Provision					
7.1 Breakfast and After School Club Provision					
Measures applied through the school day may be different to those at extended provision leading to increased risk of transmission		• Measures for wraparound provision and clubs will fall in line with those taken during the school day.	yes		
8. Contingency Planning for Outbreaks					
8.1 Responding to local outbreak					
Delay in responding increases risk of transmission within the setting (case confirmed on site)		• An Outbreak Management Plan is in place; this contains clear guidance in relation to what constitutes an outbreak. • Trust monitoring will continue and advice relating to outbreaks will be communicated to academy leaders where appropriate.	yes		
Communication channels cause delay in informing stakeholders		• An Outbreak Management Plan is in place; this contains clear guidance in relation to what constitutes an outbreak. • Trust monitoring will continue and advice relating to outbreaks will be communicated to academy leaders where appropriate.	yes		
Local lockdown results in return to remote education		• An Outbreak Management Plan is in place; this contains clear guidance in relation to what constitutes an outbreak. • Trust monitoring will continue and advice relating to outbreaks will be communicated to academy leaders where appropriate.	yes		

Additional Risk Assessments are in place for:

- Individual staff/pupil who has been identified as CEV (clinically extremely vulnerable) or EV (extremely vulnerable)
- Individual risk assessments linked to supporting children with behavioural needs e.g. spitting