

Guidance for Completing a Risk Assessment – COVID-19

Risk assessments should be updated to reflect any changes, whether opening the school for the first time in September or widening staff and pupil occupancy. If the school has remained closed, a risk assessment will be required to ensure the building and people (staff, pupils, contractors, suppliers / delivery drivers, pupils, visitors, etc) health and safety issues have been addressed.

Approach – 5 Steps to Risk Assessment <https://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/controlling-risks.htm>

1. **Identify the hazards**

A hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm or other form of loss.

Consider hazards from arriving at the site boundary whether in a motor vehicle, bicycle or on foot. For the purposes of the Covid-19 risk assessment, you may also need to consider how staff and pupils travel as you may need to adapt your risk controls.

Think about the premises, activities, processes, equipment or substances. Take a logical approach through the areas staff may work such as offices, staff room, classrooms, stores, kitchens and dining halls. Consider the facilities and equipment used and the activities.

Once you have a list, you may need to check other risk assessments, manufacturers' instructions or data sheets for chemicals and equipment, accident or ill-health information, non-routine operations (e.g. maintenance, cleaning operations), or long-term hazards to health (e.g. exposure to bacteria and viruses, exposure to harmful substances, high levels of noise, common causes of work-related mental ill health).

NB: Social distances or cleaning would not be hazards. These should be identified as risk controls measures, so think about your list of hazards.

2. **Decide who might be harmed and how**

Think broadly of anyone who may be affected by your activities and how they respond to hazards. You also need to capture anyone who may be classed as vulnerable.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/mothers/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-understanding-the-impact-on-bame-communities>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

3. **Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions**

Your risk assessment should only include what you could reasonably be expected to know - you are not expected to anticipate unforeseeable risks.

Look at what you're already doing, and the control measures you already have in place.

Once you have recorded the existing controls, look at the potential consequences (worst case scenario) any information available such as accident information to determine the likelihood. You may need additional controls to reduce the score to its lowest level possible.

Likelihood:	1 Very Unlikely	2 Unlikely	3 Fairly Likely	4 Likely	5 Very Likely
Consequences:					
5. Catastrophic	5	10	15	20	25
4. Major	4	8	12	16	20
3. Moderate	3	6	9	12	15
2. Minor	2	4	6	8	10
1. Insignificant	1	2	3	4	5

4. Consider whether additional controls are required

Use your risk rating to identify whether additional action/controls are required (see below matrix.) Use the hierarchy of risk below to consider what controls could be applied.

20-25	Stop – stop activity and take immediate action
15-19	Urgent action – take immediate action and stop activity if necessary, maintain existing controls rigorously
11-14	Action – improve within specified timescale
6-10	Monitor – look to improve at next review or if there is a significant change
1-5	No action – no further action but ensure controls are maintained and reviewed

Ask yourself: Can I get rid of the hazard altogether? If not, how can I control the risks so that harm is unlikely? When you evaluate the precautions, you need to follow the hierarchy of controls <https://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/evaluate-the-risks.htm> –

Hierarchy	Description	Application to COVID-19
Elimination:	Can the hazard be removed? This is the most effective hazard control. For example, if employees must work high above the ground, the hazard can be eliminated by moving the piece they are working on to ground level to eliminate the need to work at heights.	Virtual meetings, home schooling.
Substitution:	The second most effective hazard control , involves replacing something that produces a hazard (similar to elimination) with something that does not produce a hazard E.g. replacing a harmful cleaning substance for a less harmful one.	
Engineering Controls:	The third most effective means of risk control is engineered controls. These do not eliminate hazards, but rather isolate people from hazards. E.g. “ Enclosure and isolation ” creates a physical barrier between personnel and hazards, such as using remotely controlled equipment.	E.g. Physical barriers to direct pedestrians or to prevent or restrict access. Screens to protect staff and pupils. Hands free equipment.
Administrative Controls:	Administrative controls are changes to the way people work. Examples of administrative controls include procedure changes, employee training, and installation of signs and warning labels (such as those in the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System). Administrative controls do not remove hazards, but limit or prevent people’s exposure to the hazards.	E.g. Cleaning regimes. New induction or information film. Safety signs from the boundary and throughout the premises. Staff briefings. Staggering shifts and breaks. Monitoring by managers and reinforcement of procedures.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):	PPE is the least effective means of controlling hazards because of the high potential for damage to render PPE ineffective. Additionally, some PPE, such as respirators, increase physiological effort to complete a task and, therefore, may require medical examinations to ensure workers can use the PPE without risking their health.	E.g. Masks may be worn, unless a person has a respiratory condition where masks may aggravate their condition.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/resources.htm>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

Other Information

Don't forget the **emergency response** that needs to be in place, and changes to fire evacuation or first aid arrangements.

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/first-aid-certificate-coronavirus.htm>

<https://www.resus.org.uk/media/statements/resuscitation-council-uk-statements-on-covid-19-coronavirus-cpr-and-resuscitation/covid-community/>

<https://www.resus.org.uk/media/statements/resuscitation-council-uk-statements-on-covid-19-coronavirus-cpr-and-resuscitation/covid-paediatrics/>

If you control many similar workplaces containing similar activities, you can produce a '**model**' **risk assessment** reflecting the common hazards and risks associated with these activities. Involve your workers, so that you can be sure that what you propose to do will work in practice and won't introduce any new hazards.

5. Record and review your significant findings

The findings should be communicated.

Risk assessments should be reviewed periodically, when there are changes – people (such as new staff or access is provided to the public), premises or equipment, processes or procedures, the law, government or industry guidance or when there has been an accident or incident.

Risk Assessment Example – COVID-19

Name of Assessor	G Bourgade	Date	04/01/21
Time		Work area	BIRKDALE HIGH SCHOOL
Task being assessed	Reopening of School and lockdown implementation	Work activity	All school related activities
Review date	8/12/20	Assessment No	
Signature			

Step 1 - What is the hazard?	Step 2a - Who might be harmed?	Step 2b - How might people be harmed?	Step 3a - Existing risk control measures?	Step 3b - Existing risk rating			Step 4a - Additional controls, if required?	Step 4b - Target risk rating			Step 5a - Action/ monitored by whom?	Step 5b - Action / Monitored by when?
				L	C	R		L	C	R		
<i>A hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm or other form of loss.</i>	<i>E.g. Staff, agency staff, contractors, suppliers and delivery drivers, pupils, visitors, public. Also - high risk (clinically extremely vulnerable), moderate risk (clinically vulnerable), including pregnant women, staff aged 70 and over, anyone with specific chronic pre-existing conditions or a low immune system and BAME staff (where risk of death is significantly higher if they contract Covid-19).</i>	<i>This column should deal with harm or loss could include: Poor ill health or fatality due to exposure to harmful bacteria and viruses; Anxiety due to fear of exposure or new procedures and behaviours. NB: For some hazards, the harm or loss may be damage to property, financial loss, reputational damage, temporary closure of a building or service.</i>	<i>Existing risk control measures are the controls you have in place and may include: Staggered arrival (written timetable) of staff arrival and departure from the premises, considers public transport overcrowding and public parking.</i>	<i>Likelihood</i>	<i>Consequence (Currently, this will always be 5)</i>	<i>L+C =?</i>	<i>Additional controls are the outstanding actions or controls that need to be implemented: Signs will be displayed around premises. If controls have been implemented they can be added to the 'existing control' column.</i>				<i>Monitoring may include observations, inspections, a safety walk around and could be carried out by any appointed staff member.</i>	<i>E.g. Monthly, weekly, daily, every hour, every Tuesday morning. This should be appropriate to the hazard.</i>
Template:												
Transmission of COVID-19 from travelling to and from school.	Staff, agency staff, contractors, suppliers and delivery drivers, pupils, visitors, public.	Poor ill health or fatality due to exposure to harmful bacteria and viruses. Anxiety due to fear of exposure or new procedures and behaviours.	Consideration is given to staff and pupils and anyone else arriving at the premises. There is no current need for dedicated school bus line. 90% of students are staying home and students coming in are mostly making their own way or dropped by parents/carers. Infection prevention measures in place on public transport. Vehicle access, delivery spaces, car parking and pedestrian access for everyone maintains social distancing, as much as possible. Drop off and collection of pupils is reduced to a minimum due to current lockdown and over 90% of students remaining at home One-way routes are in place where social distancing is	3	5	15	SEE PLAN	2	5	10	Head Teacher LM PW KA	weekly

			difficult. Barriers, tape and markings on the ground will inform everyone of distances and routes. Parents / carers will not be permitted to congregate at school gates and signage will be in place to remind everyone of the 2-metre distance rule. Staff, pupils and parents / carers are expected to adhere to the safety measures including the wearing of masks on all public transports. Emergency access routes will be maintained.									
Exposure to Legionella. Fire hazards arising from poorly maintained equipment, protection, and prevention systems. Fire or smoke spread Falls from height	Staff, agency staff, contractors, suppliers and delivery drivers, pupils, visitors, public.	Ill health, fatality, or other loss such as property damage due to exposure to legionella bacteria, asbestos release, unsafe services. Ill health, fatality, or property damage due to lack of fire protection and prevention controls, leading to fire spread or poor evacuation measures. Pest infestation such as rodents and nesting birds leading to contamination of harmful bacteria.	A building risk assessment is in place. All statutory and mandatory compliance checks have been undertaken, and records maintained – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hot waters systems flushed (Legionella Management Plan). Cold waters systems are maintained. Testing of fire door mechanisms, fire protection and prevention systems, panic and accessible toilet alarms, Asbestos disturbance or deterioration, Gas supply, Ventilation (mechanical and natural), Fixed wiring and portable appliance testing, Lifts (if scheduled tests are due during the past 6 months) and Pest controls are checked and maintained. kitchen equipment cleaned and checked where appropriate (full clean cycles). Toilet and shower facilities may be restricted. Hand-dryers are not isolated but paper towels are also available. Fire doors must remain closed. Emergency access routes must be maintained. Meeting room doors and windows are opened to ventilate space where safe i.e. risk of smoke and fire travel or falls from open windows has been assessed. A trained first aider and fire warden will always be on site.	2	5	10	Consult with caretaker / contractor management company to confirm position of building maintenance and statutory requirements. Contractors and suppliers must communicate with staff prior to entry to premises and share risk assessments. SEE PLAN Fire evacuation drills should be carried out at the start of each new term. Muster points have been repositioned to maintain social distancing between bubbles	1	5	5	Head teacher and caretaker	Visual check of documentation, certificates, before opening school or widening occupancy to staff or pupils.
Transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated waste.	Staff, agency staff, contractors, suppliers and delivery drivers, pupils, visitors, public.	Poor ill health or fatality due to exposure to harmful bacteria and viruses.	Lidded bins are available throughout for disposing of tissues and other waste immediately. Waste management procedures are in place for handling, double bagging, etc. A 72-hour waste holding area is available (IDENTIFIED LARGE BIN IN OUTSIDE BIN AREA) for storing potentially contaminated waste.	3	5	15	SEE PLAN	2	5	10	PW, Head Teacher, Heads of Departments.	Weekly safety tours and inspections to monitor facilities and behaviours.
Transmission of COVID-19 due to lack of engineering control resources or PPE.	Staff, agency staff, contractors, suppliers and delivery drivers, pupils, visitors, public.	Poor ill health or fatality due to exposure to harmful bacteria and viruses. Anxiety due to fear of exposure or new procedures and behaviours.	Staff and pupils with shielding letter from 5/01/21 will stay at home. Anyone who is a confirmed case or possible contact with a confirmed case is instructed to stay at home. Home working and home schooling arrangements are in place. Work areas and activities will not re-open if adequate controls cannot be implemented. 2 metres distancing with be maintained at all times where reasonably practicable. Where this is not reasonably practicable, changes to entry and exit routes, one way circulation routes, screens and other mitigations are safely installed. Hand sanitising and hand washing stations are positioned	4	5	20	SEE PLAN Consult with caretaker or other appropriate staff member / team to confirm layout and mitigation arrangements. Check the screens and changes to routes are not	2	5	10	Head teacher, PM, and PW	Observation and safety tours to ensure good condition and remains in place / PPE being worn.

			<p>throughout the premises. Signs are fixed throughout the building as a reminder of socially distancing rules and the need for maintaining good hand and respiratory hygiene i.e. washing of hands, use of sanitiser and tissues. Where PPE is deemed necessary due to potential exposure, then it will be worn. Where it cannot be worn, for health reasons, then other measures will be considered by senior staff. Masks are to be worn by all visitors, pupils and staff in communal areas.</p>				compromising fire safety requirements					
Transmission of COVID-19 in reception areas, circulation and communal spaces.	Staff, agency staff, contractors, suppliers and delivery drivers, pupils, visitors, public.	<p>Ill health or fatality due to exposure to harmful bacteria and viruses.</p> <p>Anxiety due to fear of exposure or new procedures and behaviours.</p>	<p>For track and trace purposes, names and contact numbers of anyone attending the premises are being held for 21 days. Masks are to be worn by all visitors, pupils and staff in communal areas. Maximum occupancy levels are agreed and restrictions are in place for all staff, pupil and visitor areas – classrooms, offices, stores, kitchens, staff rooms, kitchen areas and equipment and shared equipment such as photocopiers and printers, etc. Water fountains are deactivated but filling stations remain operational. Staff and pupils from different bubbles are required to stay 2 metres apart at all times. Pupils within bubbles are encouraged to stay 2 metres apart if practical at various points including toilets, vending machines, dining halls, entrance and exit routes. Lifts are restricted to 1 person. Exceptions include where carer support is being provided or if persons are from the same household. Priority is given to disabled persons using the lift. Staff and pupils are not permitted to congregate in communal areas. Conversations are to be kept to a minimum. 2 metre distance rules are maintained when moving away from school property to smoke. Smokers are to be reminded of risks of contaminating others for cigarette waste.</p>	4	5	20	SEE PLAN	2	5	10	KA, LM, and Head Teacher	Observation and safety tours by HT.
Transmission of COVID-19 in operational spaces such as offices, classrooms, halls.	Staff, agency staff, contractors, suppliers and delivery drivers, pupils, visitors, public.	<p>Ill health or fatality due to exposure to harmful bacteria and viruses.</p> <p>Anxiety due to fear of exposure or new procedures and behaviours.</p>	<p>Layouts for staff and pupil areas consider social distancing. All unnecessary items are removed from classrooms including soft furnishings which may be hard to clean. Staff are not working less than 2 metres from each other, or face to face. All soft furnishings and unnecessary furniture has been removed and stored safely. Non-essential personal items have been removed and a clear desk policy is in place. Staff are not to make non-essential trips around building and are discouraged from having face to face meetings. Emails, telephone calls and virtual meeting attendance will be used as much as possible for in-house and out of school communications. Masks are to be worn by all visitors, pupils and staff in communal areas. Visitor and parent meetings are only allowed with social distancing in place, where absolutely necessary and unavoidable and by appointment only. Work areas are cleaning at the start and end of each day. Lesson plans, play activities and assemblies are reviewed with social distancing in mind.</p>	4	5	20	SEE PLAN	2	5	10	LM, PW and Head Teacher	Observation and safety tours by HT. Weekly discussions with staff.

			<p>Consideration is given to the ability of pupils to socially distance and arrangements are in place for the supervision of this.</p> <p>Outdoor space will be used where appropriate. Pupil areas including classrooms are arranged considering the hierarchy of controls. Social distancing will be maintained where possible. Close face to face communication is discouraged. It is recognised that pupils sitting next to each other may risk cross contamination on desks, and when chatting face to face.</p> <p>The programme of study is reviewed and extra support is available for pupils based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the number, age and stage of development of pupils on site. the frequency of pupils' attendance and the resources for pupils who may attend irregularly. Pupils with special education needs. <p>Cleaning regimes are in place. High contact points, are cleaned frequently throughout the day</p>									
Transmission of COVID-19 due to activities	Staff, agency staff, contractors, suppliers and delivery drivers, pupils, visitors, public.	<p>Poor ill health or fatality due to exposure to harmful bacteria and viruses.</p> <p>Anxiety due to fear of exposure or new procedures and behaviours.</p>	<p>Specific risk assessments are undertaken for anyone who is vulnerable. All Clinically Extremely Vulnerable staff and pupils will stay home from 05/01/21.</p> <p>Masks are to be worn by all visitors, pupils and staff in communal areas. Some masks may be worn in lessons with prior approval. Staff and pupils are expected to maintain good personal hand and respiratory hygiene.</p> <p>Handwashing is frequently encouraged, including on arrival at school, with soap and running water for 20 seconds or alcohol rub if no handwashing facilities are available. Staff will assist pupils who may need assistance to wash their hands. Pupils are encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and then discard the tissue in a lidded wastepaper bin. Disposable tissues are provided for pupils.</p> <p>Consideration is given to the level of communication, sharing of space and equipment required and are kept to a minimum as much as is reasonably practicable.</p> <p>Consideration is given to play and other equipment to ensure it is appropriately cleaned between different groups of children using it.</p> <p>Staff and pupils do not share pens, paper or any other objects.</p> <p>There are limitations on the amount of books / resources to be taken home.</p>	3	5	15	SEE PLAN	2	5	10	SLT, PW, HOD and Head Teacher	Observations, safety walks through operational areas, weekly discussions with staff.
Transmission of COVID-19 due to visiting another location.	Staff, agency staff, contractors, suppliers and delivery drivers, pupils, visitors, public.	<p>Poor ill health or fatality due to exposure to harmful bacteria and viruses.</p> <p>Anxiety due to fear of exposure or new procedures and behaviours.</p>	<p>No site visits and off-site meetings. Remote working / meeting tools are used where possible.</p> <p>All off-site visits are cancelled except home visits (socially distant) by pastoral staff for safeguarding purposes and deliveries of materials to students.</p> <p>Public transport is avoided where possible.</p> <p>Meetings numbers are to be kept to a minimum and social distancing is observed where remote solution not possible. Paperwork is sent via electronic means either before or after the visit. Minutes are distributed electronically.</p> <p>In a case of non-compliance, staff cease the visit immediately and report issues to their Head Teacher.</p>	3	5	15	SEE PLAN	2	5	10	SLT, DP And Head Teacher	Observations, safety walks through operational areas, weekly discussions with staff. Incident reporting and investigation.

Aggressive or abusive behaviours	Staff, agency staff, contractors, suppliers and delivery drivers, pupils, visitors, public.	Physical or psychological harm from aggressive or abusive behaviours.	Policies, procedures, and arrangements are reviewed and amendments have been communicated. All H&S incidents and accidents are reported via the health and safety reporting system.	3	5	15	SEE PLAN	2	5	10	(Named manager for each area) And Head Teacher	Weekly discussions with staff. Incident reporting and investigation.
Transmission of COVID-19 from infected persons	Staff, agency staff, contractors, suppliers and delivery drivers, pupils, visitors, public.	Contamination from direct contact leading to ill health or fatality due to exposure to harmful bacteria and viruses. Anxiety due to fear of exposure or new procedures and behaviours.	Anyone displaying symptoms of COVID-19 are not to enter the premises and will be sent home to self-isolate. Senior staff are to be informed if any staff or pupils have been in the company or environment of anyone displaying symptoms. The Head Teacher reports cases under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 where required, notifies Public Health and reports via the Health and Safety incident and accident reporting system. Poor mental and physical health and wellbeing is monitored by staff. First aiders use appropriate PPE. Casualties may also be required to wear face masks. <i>(For Adult CPR - The UK Resuscitation Council and Voluntary aid organisations advise against mouth to mouth and advise chest compressions only are administered. For Infant and Child CPR – Mouth to mouth may be required. Rese aid should be available. First aiders should familiarise themselves of the arrangements).</i>	4	5	20	SEE PLAN Testing is available and must be arranged by each individual where needed.	2	5	10	(Named manager for each area) And Head Teacher	Weekly discussions with staff. Incident reporting and investigation.
Transmission of COVID-19 from infected persons due to general and clinical activities on the asymptomatic testing site	Staff, agency staff, contractors, pupils.	Contamination from direct contact leading to ill health or fatality due to exposure to harmful bacteria and viruses. Anxiety due to fear of exposure or new procedures and behaviours.	A separate Risk assessment is produced specifically for this activity All staff trained and guidance followed External contractors with medical experience and expertise brought in to oversee and deliver with school staff support Consent sought for all testing Volunteers only to support testing process	4	5	20	See separate RA and implementation plan	2	5	10	Headteacher, LM, PD	Review after each session
Transmission of COVID-19 from infected persons due to new variant	Staff, agency staff, contractors, suppliers and delivery drivers, pupils, visitors, public.	Contamination from direct contact leading to ill health or fatality due to exposure to harmful bacteria and viruses. Anxiety due to fear of exposure or new procedures and behaviours.	All staff reminded of observing all infection prevention measures 2m social distancing observed at all times due to space made available	4	5	20	All staff able to deliver core functions from home are encourage to do so 90% of students are educated at home thus limiting most interactions in school Staff in school allocated own area, roles reviewed to limit cross infection	2	5	10	Headteacher	Weekly discussion and monthly review
Negative impact of lockdown on quality of education, health and wellbeing	Staff and pupils	Poor mental or physical health Reduced life chances	Delivery model focused on live interaction to increase pupils' engagement. Processes and staff time allocation to follow up lack of engagement Time given to staff at Inset day to prepare for changes Guidance and training communicated Staff views recorded through anonymous survey	3	4	12	Practices reviewed weekly to assess impact of changes and changes put into place Separate RA and remote education plan produced for forced closure	2	4	8	Headteacher and DHT	weekly