



COVID-19 – a Risk Assessment for returning to school

Introduction

This is a summary of the risk assessment carried out at Emanuel School in advance of the school re-opening fully in 2020.

It should be remembered that 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. The risk assessment will be reviewed on a daily basis to adapt to changing advice and it will be updated as appropriate.

In carrying out the COVID-19 risk assessment the members of the Senior Management Team took responsibility for different sections of the project, depending upon their areas of operation.

Rationale

The logic behind this process is the school's ongoing 'duty of care' that it has for the whole community: pupils, parents, staff and governors

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

Running the School - the Risk Assessment

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. Are there sufficient supplies of hygiene materials and are they well placed?



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- 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 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 (games, drama, music) and locations (classroom, circulation space, refectory, outside areas) 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 tissues).
- 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. Are plans being considered for school events including plays, concerts, parent and teacher meetings etc?

A summary of the results of the full risk assessment is given below.



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	Risk	Required for September?	Lead	Desired outcome
A	Is government advice being regularly accessed, assessed, recorded and applied?	Yes	Bursar	Review and update daily
B	Are changes regularly communicated to staff, pupils, parents and governors?	Yes	HM	Guidance to be sent before start of term
C	Are changes reviewed by governors?	Yes	HM	Board approval of plans - 14/05/2020 for initial and reviewed before start of term
D	Is access to school controlled effectively and are visitors (if allowed) details recorded?	Yes	Bursar	New visitor policy for September 2020
E	Are Social Distancing (SD) and other hygiene rules communicated, understood and applied?	Yes	Deputy Bursar	Clearly understood by all
F	Are staff and pupils being reminded and checked to ensure they are complying with hygiene and SD rules?	Yes	Deputy Head (Pastoral) / Deputy Bursar	Clearly understood by all
G	Is there a sufficient supply of hygiene materials and are they well placed?	Yes	Bursar	Sufficient supplies in place
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	Bursar	Cleaning schedule approved by Bursar and reviewed weekly Fogging with Zoono in place for start of term and monthly
I	What precautions are being used to keep shared teaching equipment (e.g. musical instruments) hygienic?	Yes	Deputy Head	Limited lesson for September and under review
J	Are high risk areas being regularly monitored for hygiene?	Yes	Bursar	Log of cleaning reviewed weekly
K	Are all the risks identified properly mitigated and regularly re-assessed?	Yes	Bursar	Weekly review of RA