

Risk assessments for frontline staff in schools in Salford

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At the start of the pandemic, it was known that there are individuals who are at higher risk of developing the more severe complications from the Coronavirus similar to those who are vulnerable to flu. These vulnerable categories were broadly defined as those eligible for the annual flu jab. More recent evidence shows additional categories for vulnerability such as smoking, high or poorly controlled blood pressure, BAME groups and occupations where there are frequent interactions with members of the public. Inevitably, the impact will be higher where individuals have a number of risk factors, such as BAME with a health condition and those in the higher age brackets.

Risk assessments in the school setting, for categories of workforce within the school, and for individual staff members help to manage these risks for staff and everyone in the setting. The control measures reduce the impact and likelihood of virus transmission; without necessarily removing all the risks. From the staff perspective, this is welcome to protect all frontline workers some of whom may not be aware of their level of risk (from low to significant), and this can bring the sense of control for staff to reduce their personal risk. By accessing support to stop smoking or medical review of their health condition, staff take ownership of their own actions to reduce their risk.

The risk assessment framework

As schools plan for increasing numbers of children accessing the school, head teachers are also considering safe staffing levels and protecting staff in case there is asymptomatic transmission or super spreaders. We have not seen such transmission in schools as that which we have seen in care homes. So, it is a balance of risk that head teachers are considering and have requested Public Health advice.

We have advised a settings-based risk assessment (for the whole school which protects children and staff). The main plank of this is that unwell staff and children with any symptoms should not attend the setting; arrangements for frequent hand hygiene are in place, with social distancing where possible, and appropriate use of PPE as indicated for the different categories of staff. Individual risk assessments if required for staff can be undertaken on the basis of differential impact of the virus and ways to reduce the likelihood of coming in contact with the virus e.g. on the way to school or alternative deployment options. Factors such as age, household circumstances (e.g. shielded person in their household), health conditions, pregnancy, ethnicity and lifestyles can be reviewed singly and in combination.

There will always remain an element of residual risk as it is not possible to control all factors at all times, and staff should take an active role in protecting themselves and others by implementing and monitoring the school risk assessment. For some of our staff, the risk assessment may conclude it is safer for them to work from home or other location that is well managed. If so, they would need to undertake modified or different activities to support the running of the school. This risk assessment framework has been adapted from the suggested framework for NHS employers. Please see figure below.

HOW TO USE THE RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

Employers have a duty of care requiring them, as far as reasonably practicable, to secure the health safety and welfare of their employees. This includes an equitable approach to effective risk management and risk reduction of potential workplace hazards, for all staff which requires:



WORKPLACE ASSESSMENT

- › Take into consideration health care setting i.e. Primary, Community or Hospital setting
- › Review of AGP procedures
- › Potential exposure to SARS-CoV-2 in the workplace
- › Application of an appropriate hierarchy of control measures including:
 - » Elimination if possible
 - » Reduction by hygiene measures,
 - » Safe systems of work
 - » Election and correct use of PPE including training and fit testing

INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT

- › Six factors need to be considered:
 1. Age: Those aged over 70 have already been identified clinically vulnerable
 2. Sex
 3. Clinically vulnerable people: Those with underlying health conditions or co-morbidities
 4. Ethnicity: Those of BAME appear to be at increased risks, particularly aged above 55 or have co-morbidities
 5. Pregnancy in particular those who are over 28 weeks or have underlying health conditions
 6. Disabilities identified which may be the subject of reasonable adjustments

WORKFORCE ASSESSMENT

- › Identify those individuals with increased vulnerability to infection or poorer outcomes from COVID-19.
- › Guidance has identified three categories of vulnerability:
 - » Specific long term health conditions
 - » Older age
 - » Pregnancy
- › Evidence suggests that ethnicity of a BAME background may also be associated with increased vulnerability
- › Evidence of Males being at higher risk with UK Data showing approximately 60% of people being admitted to hospital being Male
- › Availability of appropriate redeployment options

COVID-19 Individual Risk Assessment

Name:

Date:

Workplace:

Contracted Hours:

Role:

Please use this example template to add and/or delete as relevant to the particular staff member and their job role

What are the risks?	Who may be harmed?	Controls required	Additional controls	Residual Risk assessment
SHIELDING				
Severe impact of COVID-19	Staff, young people and their household who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable	All clinically extremely vulnerable individuals must shield as directed by government guidelines. COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable	For staff in work, the staff member is not clinically extremely vulnerable, and they do not have any of the conditions that makes them clinically extremely vulnerable. They have not been told by their GP or specialist that they are clinically extremely vulnerable or received a letter. No one in their household is being shielded.	Low (no one being shielded) Moderate (Household member being shielded) Significant (Staff member themselves have been advised to shield – Must stay at home)

What are the risks?	Who may be harmed?	Controls required	Additional controls	Residual Risk assessment
LIKELIHOOD OF COMING IN CONTACT WITH THE VIRUS				
<p>Spread of COVID-19 from person to person</p>	<p>Staff</p> <p>Young people</p> <p>Visitors</p>	<p>School setting:</p> <p><u>Social Distancing, where possible</u></p> <p>You should follow the guidance on staying alert and safe (social distancing)</p> <p><u>Hand Washing</u></p> <p>Hand washing facilities with soap and water in place. Gel sanitisers are readily available.</p> <p>Stringent hand washing taking place.</p> <p>Drying of hands with disposable paper towels.</p> <p><u>Cleaning</u></p> <p>Frequently cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces that are touched regularly particularly in areas of high use such as door handles, light switches using appropriate cleaning products and methods should be undertaken by all staff as relevant to their job role.</p>	<p>School risk assessment is in place. Staff will familiarise themselves with the risk assessment and fulfil their responsibilities within that.</p> <p>Employees to be reminded on a regular basis to wash their hands for 20 seconds with water and soap and the importance of proper drying with disposable towels. Also reminded to catch coughs and sneezes in tissues – Follow Catch it, Bin it, kill it and to avoid touching face, eyes, nose or mouth with unclean hands. Tissues will be made available throughout the workplace.</p> <p>Any additional controls discussed with the staff member?</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>This is dependent on everyone following the measures in the school risk assessment.</p> <p>[Embed the School risk assessment here]</p> <p>Staff will remain up to date with future revisions of the risk assessment.</p>

What are the risks?	Who may be harmed?	Controls required	Additional controls	Residual Risk assessment
<p>Spread of COVID-19 from unwell persons</p>	<p>Staff</p> <p>Young people</p> <p>Visitors</p>	<p>Actions for unwell staff, young people, parents and visitors:</p> <p>By following stringent guidance to not attend the setting if unwell or if someone in their household is unwell, staff, children and parents will be helping the school reduce the risk for themselves and for others. This applies to parents/carers dropping off and picking up children.</p> <p>Staff should stay at home if they are unwell in any way or a member of their household, and staff should let their manager know so they can arrange for a COVID-19 test.</p> <p>Staff are advised to assess symptoms and if any child becomes unwell, they should be sent home.</p> <p>Testing is available for young people, staff and their family members who are displaying symptoms.</p>	<p>All cleaning products are readily available and additional cleaning contractors have been employed within the setting.</p> <p>Testing is available for staff and young people in the school and their household contacts. Should anyone in the household become unwell at home or at school, staff and parents/carers should let the school know so they can arrange for a COVID-19 test.</p> <p>Staff who are unwell will be sent home and advised to follow the stay at home guidance. Line managers will maintain regular contact with staff members during this time.</p> <p>Any additional controls discussed with the staff member?</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>This is dependent on everyone following the measures in the school risk assessment.</p>

What are the risks?	Who may be harmed?	Controls required	Additional controls	Residual Risk assessment
<p>Spread of COVID-19 by occupation in schools and other community settings</p>	<p>Staff</p> <p>Young people</p> <p>Visitors</p>	<p>Categories of staff risk assessments</p> <p>PPE in mainstream schools is not required unless dealing with a child who becomes unwell on the premises.</p> <p>Classroom staff are advised to manage social distancing as far as practicable. PPE is not required.</p> <p>Office staff are advised to manage social distancing as far as practicable. PPE is not required.</p> <p>School transport do not require PPE and are advised to check before picking up children, young people or staff that they are well and no symptoms.</p> <p>Cleaners are advised to wear PPE as normal practice. Full PPE is required when cleaning the space where a symptomatic person has been</p> <p>Kitchen staff are advised to follow their usual practice for food hygiene – additional PPE is not required.</p>	<p>Stock of PPE is available in the school and staff have been trained on correct fitting of fluid resistant masks, donning and doffing.</p> <p>Managers will ensure there is a readily available supply of PPE and replenish as required</p> <p>Updated guidance will be provided via DFE and public health and will be disseminated as received.</p> <p>Internal communication channels and cascading of messages through line managers will be carried out regularly to reassure and support employees in a fast-changing situation.</p> <p>Line managers will offer support to staff who are affected by Coronavirus or have a family member affected.</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>This is dependent on everyone following the measures in the school risk assessment.</p> <p>Low should full PPE not be in use (e.g. short-term instances where being coughed on by a suspected COVID-19 patient or giving emergency assistance without PPE). This is on the basis that more than half of those unwell symptomatic persons in the community setting are testing negative for COVID-19.</p> <p><i>Note: The guidance on contact tracing is currently under review.</i></p>

What are the risks?	Who may be harmed?	Controls required	Additional controls	Residual Risk assessment
Spread of COVID-19 for job roles regularly in contact with symptomatic persons or COVID-19 patients	Staff Patients	<p>More stringent PPE with fit testing is required to protect staff dealing with symptomatic COVID cases.</p> <p>For health and care staff whose job role includes aerosol generating procedures (AGP), more stringent PPE is required that includes FFP3 respirator and visor.</p> <p>For staff (e.g. NHS staff/nurses/ambulance/others) who usually work in NHS settings where there are COVID suspected or COVID positive cases, full PPE is required at all times.</p>	<p>Access to the different levels of PPE in addition to standard infection control procedures.</p> <p>People working in professional roles who have correctly used Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as part of their employment, such as health and social care workers and cleaners, are not considered to be a contact.</p>	<p>Moderate should full PPE not be in use (e.g. short-term instances where being coughed on by a suspected COVID-19 patient or giving emergency assistance without PPE).</p> <p>Low where full PPE is used.</p>
Spread on the way to school and back	Staff Young people	<p>For shared transport, organised groupings of staff and young people to remain in their bubble as far as possible. This will restrict the numbers of people with whom there is day to day contact.</p> <p>Walking/cycling are active healthy ways to travel to school. National guidance recommends use of cloth masks on public transport. If so, staff should remove the mask before entering the school and place in their personal bags stored safely away from others</p>	<p>Unwell persons are advised to stay away from school.</p> <p>In all circumstances, record keeping by the school and staff regarding the organized groupings (bubbles) each day and of shared transport will assist with contact tracing.</p>	<p>Low where active travel or individual journeys.</p> <p>Low where shared travel is for known groupings who are well.</p> <p>Low where social distancing is maintained on public transport.</p>

What are the risks?	Who may be harmed?	Controls required	Additional controls	Residual Risk assessment
IMPACT OF COMING IN CONTACT WITH THE VIRUS				
Severe complication of COVID-19	Clinically vulnerable staff	<p>Staff are aware that the local authority have advised staff in the vulnerable category to work from home where possible. However, staff can request to return to work following obtaining advice from their GP.</p> <p>Vulnerable staff should not act as First Aiders for unwell persons.</p> <p>Vulnerable staff should manage their own condition and refrain from coming to school when unwell with their pre-existing condition.</p> <p>Vulnerable staff, more than others, should adhere to social distancing measures, good hand hygiene and cleaning routines, and aware when and how to use PPE provided.</p> <p>Vulnerable staff are aware that the risk of contracting COVID-19 cannot be eliminated and attendance at work is on 'Best Endeavours', or part time working, or on-call to cover gaps in rota.</p>	<p>Should anyone in the workplace display symptoms vulnerable staff must refrain from coming to work until confirmation that testing has been completed and results received.</p> <p>If staff develop any symptoms, they must immediately isolate and be tested for COVID-19 and seek further medical advice. Staff are aware of how to request a test.</p> <p>If staff develops any symptoms related to their pre-existing condition or otherwise unwell, they must leave the workplace and seek immediate medical attention.</p> <p>Vulnerable staff may work from home and equipment will be provided for them to do so.</p>	<p>Moderate to Significant</p> <p><i>The 'clinically vulnerable', i.e. with underlying health conditions should be rated as moderate / significant risk (depending on how well the condition is being managed at that time).</i></p> <p>Conditions to discuss may include (but are not exhaustive to);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diagnosed hypertension (high blood pressure) • cardiovascular disease • diabetes • chronic kidney disease • liver disease • chronic obstructive airway disease • severe asthma • neurological disease

What are the risks?	Who may be harmed?	Controls required	Additional controls	Residual Risk assessment
<p>Other factors that may also increase risk of severe disease</p>	<p>Smoking, high blood pressure, obesity, age, ethnicity, disability, pregnancy</p>	<p>Age <i>Older people aged 65+ are deemed to be at moderate risk. Those below age 65 are classed as lower risk.</i></p> <p>BAME background <i>BAME background have higher risk than others in the general population. BAME workers aged 55+ are deemed to be at moderate risk. Those below age 55 are classed as lower risk.</i></p> <p>Disability <i>Physical or learning disability may be associated with other health conditions or difficulties with social distancing</i></p> <p>Pregnancy <i>Pregnant women over 28 weeks gestation should be regarded as significant risk and under 28 weeks as moderate risk.</i></p> <p>Lifestyles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Obesity</i> • <i>Smoking</i> • <i>Recent High blood pressure measurement</i> 	<p>Individual risk assessments should consider ways to increase their personal resilience to the virus (e.g. support to stop smoking, lifestyles support, medical review if needed) and ways to reduce the likelihood of contact with symptomatic individuals (such as on the way to school).</p> <p>In all circumstances, record keeping by the school and staff regarding the organized groupings (bubbles) each day and of shared transport will assist with contact tracing.</p>	<p>Low: Where there are no additional risk factors.</p> <p>Moderate to Significant risk The additional factors which make individuals fall into the moderate or significant risk group include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnancy • Age and ethnicity • Disability • Obesity with BMI of 40 or above. • Smoking • High blood pressure <p>Significant risk Three or more of these factors in combination, OR Two of these factors with a pre-existing health condition (see clinically vulnerable above)</p>

Sign off

Following the completion of their individual risk assessment and consideration of all factors highlighted, it should be agreed by the line manager and the individual that they fall into one of the following groups;

Highlight the level of residual risk and agreed actions. Delete the other rows. On review, please record the date actions were completed.

Risk stratification	Action required
Low risk	Able to continue to work with young people and members of the public in front facing work (in line with social distancing and infection control requirements for their job role). Access health and wellbeing support, including support to stop smoking and lifestyles advice (See sources of help) Access training 1:1 or in a group on Personal Protective Equipment and Fit testing (in line with infection control requirements for their job role).
Moderate risk	Medical review for long term conditions, including medication review as needed. This is to manage the condition. Medical advice regarding fit to work sought from occupational health/GP as relevant Access health and wellbeing support, including support to stop smoking and lifestyles advice (See sources of help) Access training 1:1 or in a group on Personal Protective Equipment and Fit testing (in line with infection control requirements for their job role). Social distancing where possible and in any case, avoid large groups of staff, clients, patients, or the public. Document groupings for day to day contact with set bubbles in the classroom and transport. Staff to remain with known bubbles. Organise staff rotas for Best Endeavours, part time and on-call for clinically vulnerable staff Work away from high risk areas with COVID positive or suspected individuals. If this is not possible for the job role, consider home working or other duties in managed alternative location.
Significant risk	Home working only Review the risk assessment monthly especially following medical management and advice. Staff may move to moderate risk level following medical and lifestyles interventions.

Date:

Signatures:

Sources of further help:

Own GP, [Salford Health Improvement Service](#), [Salford City Council Health and Wellbeing Programme](#), [Vivup](#) (Select Salford City Council), [Silvercloud](#).

Advice from the Salford Public Health Team: 0161 793 3585, Email: PHSecretary@salford.gov.uk, OR Health Protection Nurses: 0161 793 3599.