

## HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT

Task/Activity/Person: Re-opening of schools in relation to COVID-19  
Nottage Primary

Date: May 2021  
Assessed By: Corporate Health and Safety Unit  
Review Date: Following any significant change

**Note:**

***This revised risk assessment focuses on COVID-19 and has been undertaken by the Corporate Health and Safety Unit (CHSU) on behalf of schools. It requires completion of the school specific 'Implementation of control Measures' document outlining the specific measures taken to comply with requirements (control measures) in order to enable the local authority and schools to demonstrate due diligence. It must be considered in conjunction with all other pre-existing assessments within the school, and the control measures established in the COVID-19 risk assessment in place since the summer term 2020.***

*The COVID-19 virus is a communicable disease and therefore is primarily assessed and managed by the NHS Wales, Public Health Wales and Welsh Government. Welsh Government has, through a variety of sources, reassessed the current risks to the general public from COVID-19 (including the new variant) and stipulated that, due to the high national transmission rates, learners move to remote learning in order to reduce mobility (and therefore transmission) within society. Schools will remain open for vulnerable learners, children of critical workers and learners undertaking essential examinations.*

***The Welsh Government operational guidance for alert level 4 concludes that the presence of the current variant does not require any additional controls as the risk to staff and pupils is no greater but emphasises the requirement to implement existing controls 'so far as is reasonably practicable' and makes some suggestions as to how this may possibly be achieved. However greater emphasis is placed on implementing control measure in relation to adult to adult interactions.***

*The previous scientific advice and rationale regarding schools outlined in previous versions of this risk assessment still applies and medical understanding and therefore treatment of COVID-19 has progressed to the extent that several vaccines are now being administered, initially on the basis of risk of significant harm.*

*The operational guidance issued by BCBC in conjunction with this assessment has been updated to incorporate the Operational guidance for schools and settings to support limited attendance at alert level 4 - [Welsh Government website](#)*

*Schools actions\* will continue to focus on the following:*

- *Minimising potential for COVID-19 symptomatic people entering/remaining in school*
- *Minimising transmission from personal contact or surface contact (personal/surface hygiene)*

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- Identify specific individuals at enhanced risk eg BAME, >28 weeks gestation, diabetic etc. (implement additional controls with respect to the above)
- Cooperate with NHS/PHW (TTP)

*\*procedures will be amended as appropriate following any change in national guidance or instruction from Public Health Wales (PHW).*

**Any requirement to comply with COVID-19 is in addition to existing legal requirements which must still be complied with.**

Hazard (something with potential to cause harm) *all COVID-19 related	Risk (Who may be harmed & how?)	Risk Level before controls	List control measures:  NB all control measures listed below are required in order to demonstrate compliance with legal requirements and where not completed school must take immediate action to rectify.	Risk Level after controls
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*This risk assessment must be read in conjunction with the **Explanatory Note** (appendix RA 13) and specific guidance contained in the appendices (also containing hyperlinks) and all relevant information then used to complete the school specific 'implementation of control measures' document.*

**Schools MUST NOT implement 'ad hoc' controls without first contacting the Corporate Health and Safety Unit (CHSU) for guidance eg adding Milton to water play troughs may seem plausible (anti-viral) but is hazardous therefore totally inappropriate.**

*Control measures indicated in this assessment must be implemented 'so far as is reasonably practicable' with the exception of procedures relating to actual COVID-19 cases eg positive/symptomatic, self isolation etc. and building related statutory inspections both of which must be fully implemented (absolute duty).*

Non-compliance (due to extended closure ) with:  1. building related statutory	<i>Ill-health (frequent occupiers), safety related eg fire risks</i>	<b>Significant risks – unacceptable without implementing achievable</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School head or senior person to inspect logs prior to start of term to ensure compliance with 1 and 2 opposite eg fire, asbestos, legionella. (See appendix RA12)</li> </ul>	<b>Utilisation of all the control measures listed opposite – "so far as</b>
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inspections / tests.  2. Additional tests required as per corporate landlord instructions -		/ "best practice" control measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate landlord to ensure that all 'contracted out' building related inspections / tests have been undertaken – eg water sampling (Legionella).</li> <li>where applicable it must be ensured that appropriate procedures have also been maintained for lifts, hoists, swimming pools, laboratory/design technology dust/fume extraction systems etc.</li> </ul>	<p>is reasonably practicable" within individual schools will reduce risk to an acceptable level.</p> <p>Welsh Government acknowledges that measures currently available cannot totally eliminate the risks from COVID-19</p>
<u>Transmission</u> Symptomatic persons entering school	All persons transmission of disease.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance on symptoms, self-isolation requirements etc. is available and is communicated by schools / BCBC to staff/parents through various media (see appendices RA 10/11)</li> <li>All staff to be vigilant for colleagues, pupils and visitors displaying symptoms.</li> </ul>	
Asymptomatic persons entering school	All persons transmission of disease.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Essential visitors and those who can be accommodated safely ie no more than 2 etc only - movement of peripatetic/relief staff to be minimised</li> <li>All visitors to adhere to personal hygiene / social distancing procedures and minimise movement around school.</li> <li>Staff able to self-administer lateral flow test twice weekly (TBA)</li> <li>Masks to be worn when entering the grounds and premises</li> </ul>	
Use of contaminated "face coverings"	Transmission of virus		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff and pupils to remove contaminated face covering before entering school building and either place in plastic bag and retained by themselves or disposed of in school supplied bin</li> </ul>	
Persons becoming *unwell	All persons transmission of virus.		School to provide an appropriate designated room for isolation (preferably with fresh air provision) while awaiting transportation home. PPE for use by staff <u>if required</u> and instruction for staff in procedures to be adhered to.	

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<p>or symptomatic while at school.  <i>*required to follow school isolation procedure due to possibility of experiencing non-typical symptoms.</i></p>			<p><i>(See appendix RA 9)</i></p> <p><i>Following removal from school staff are required to obtain a COVID-19 test and inform school head of the outcome. NB continue self-isolation if COVID-19 test was negative but symptoms persist.</i></p> <p><i>Parents are encouraged to do the same for pupils (otherwise the pupil must self-isolate for 10 days* and any relative (sibling) must do the same for 10 days* - *or longer if symptoms persist – the time periods specified may be subject to change.</i></p> <p><i>School must inform the PHW Test, Trace, Protect (TTP) team should they believe that the criteria for outbreaks (cluster / incident) has been met.</i>  <i>(See appendix RA 8)</i></p>	
<p>Transmission          NB all listed control measures are inter-related therefore co-contributors to the overall effectiveness of risk reduction.</p>	<p><i>Person to person</i></p>		<p><i>Hand hygiene is particularly important and should be done immediately upon entering school and at various specified times throughout the school day. Soap and warm water is the most effective means but alcohol gel can be used where this is not readily available.</i></p> <p><b><i>Alcohol gel is both an irritant (eyes) and flammable its use therefore must be carefully considered particularly in relation to its storage and unsupervised use by immature pupils.</i></b></p> <p><i>(See appendices RA13 and 7)</i></p>	
<p>Transmission continued...</p>			<p><i>Respiratory hygiene focusses on the catch it, bin it, kill it approach (ordinary bins are suitable) and indoor respiratory generating activities eg singing / Physical Education (PE) must be restricted to individual class 'bubbles'.</i></p>	

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<p>Some schools face specific challenges with regard to pupil behaviour / physical interaction and although the use of PPE has been advocated for some scenarios schools must evaluate options utilising additional educational guidance (not just health and safety).</p>	<p>Person to person</p>		<p>Social distancing is utilised to help reduce the potential for personal contact and direct inhalation of another's expelled air etc. schools must implement the measures outlined in the appendices and/or alternative measures (so far as is reasonable), where realistically viable in individual schools. Under 11s are currently exempt See appendix RA 13</p> <p><i>Staggered/ flexible start and finish times to minimise social contact</i></p> <p><i>Where social distancing cannot be maintained staff in primary schools are required to wear face coverings as are staff and learners in comprehensive schools along with visitors. –The local authority has determined that Fluid Resistant Surgical Masks (FRSM) Type IIR (FRSM) should now replace the previously provided World Health Organisation (WHO) fabric standard face coverings for all school <b>staff</b>.</i></p> <p><i>This means that FRSM should now be worn in the following situations by <b>all staff</b> in <b>all schools</b> from <b>22 February 2021</b>:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. in all internal and external communal areas; and</i></li> <li><i>2. in all other areas (including teaching spaces/classrooms) where social distancing cannot be maintained.</i></li> </ol> <p><i>Learners should also wear a WHO standard fabric face covering in the two scenarios outlined above.</i></p>	
	<p>Poor air circulation</p>		<p>'Bubble groups' consisting of specified sets of individuals are used in schools to compensate for the reduction in social distancing and should be implemented by schools as far as is reasonable. Bubble groups increased from classes to year groups May 17<sup>th</sup> 2021</p> <p>Natural ventilation via windows or vents should be used as far as possible. Where centralised or mechanical ventilation is present, recirculatory systems</p>	

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Transmission continued...			<p><i>should be adjusted to full fresh air, if this is not possible systems should be operated as normal (filters changed by corporate landlord or contractor only). Desk fans etc. can be used to enhance air circulation where fresh air supplies are available eg openable windows/doors.</i></p>	
	Via inanimate objects		<p><i>Touching of inanimate objects will be minimised eg leaving doors open where possible, removal of non-essential items including items that are impractical to clean.</i></p> <p><i>Possession of personal belongings within school will be minimised</i></p> <p><i>Frequency of cleaning regimes will be enhanced and focus on communally touched surfaces eg handles, handrails, taps / drinking stations.</i></p> <p><i>Disinfection cleaning procedures are used where required eg after isolation of a COVID-19 symptomatic person (including presence of body fluids). Where required rooms will be disinfected using a bio-misting (fogging) machine.</i></p> <p><i>Where appropriate, cleaning can take the form of an area or item being left for 48 hrs or if plastic - 72 hrs between use, and UV in outdoor situations.</i></p> <p><i>(For specific guidance see Appendix RA6)</i></p> <p><i>NB cleaning requirements are less stringent when applied to unique “bubble groups” which enables, for example, the use of water play troughs following standard cleaning procedures.</i></p>	
	Individuals at enhanced risk		<p><i>Individuals classified as <b>clinically extremely vulnerable</b> are advised that up to and including 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, they should not attend work/school. However, as of 1<sup>st</sup> April they can attend school under certain conditions – see revised RA5 for further guidance .</i></p>	

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			<p><i>Additional individual risk factors have been identified and a Workforce Assessment Tool has been developed nationally and schools should promote its use by individuals. If, following self assessment, an individual considers themselves to be at enhanced risk they must discuss this with school which will evaluate as above.</i></p> <p><i>The same considerations will be required where someone attending school lives with a person falling into any of the above categories. (See appendix RA5)</i></p>	
Stress	<i>Personal / professional concerns, ill health</i>		<p><i>The temporary but ongoing changes to personal and professional lifestyles can result in some individuals developing symptoms of stress. A variety of support mechanisms is available via BCBC eg 1:1 discussions with manager, wellbeing resources (see <a href="#">Bridgenders web pages</a>) and educational staff can also access specific support eg education and support partnership, education workforce council. See appendix RA4</i></p> <p><i>NB.- for advice on pupils' mental wellbeing see <u>operational guidance for schools and settings to support limited attendance at alert level 4</u></i></p>	
Unmanaged educational visits			<p><i>No Educational visits will be taken at this time.</i></p> <p><i>(See appendix RA3/RA2)</i></p>	
	<i>Ill-health amongst</i>		<p><i>Where 'clusters' or 'incidents' are suspected they will be reported to the</i></p>	

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Uncontrolled / unidentified local outbreak of COVID-19	occupiers / others		<p><i>Regional multi agency Test Trace Protect (TTP) Team – this could be by contact tracers / contact advisors, others eg GP or <b>educational settings/local authorities directly.</b></i></p> <p><i>Schools and the local authority will provide all necessary assistance to TTP teams and act upon any recommendations made. See appendix RA8</i></p>	
Failure to modify existing risk assessments/ procedures	<i>Ill-health (frequent occupiers), safety related eg fire risks</i>		<p><i>Actions taken with respect to COVID-19 may require modification and or clarification to existing assessments – schools to consider possible implications and instruct staff accordingly eg Revised HSE guidance on delivery of first aid (particularly resuscitation) – (see appendix RA3)</i></p> <p><i>Implementation of one way systems in corridors are not to be enforced during fire evacuations if they were to increase evacuation times.</i></p>	
Failure to maintain statutory inspections during any subsequent school closure (lockdown).	<i>Ill-health (frequent occupiers), safety related eg fire risks</i>		<p><i>Should the need arise to re-enter lockdown, schools must continue to undertake all building related statutory inspections, testing etc. <b>unless</b> the government introduces more stringent restrictions prohibiting even essential work in schools.</i></p> <p><i>Corporate landlord will issue advice on re-opening / recommissioning procedures following easing of lockdown and actual requirements will depend upon duration of school closure.</i></p>	

**Key**

	<b>High risk</b>
	<b>Medium Risk</b>
	<b>Low Risk</b>

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