

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

RISK ASSESSMENT – COVID19

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| Premises: St Thomas of Canterbury School | Work activity: Reopening of school for pupils January 2021 |
| Assessor: Clare Redmond | Date: 04/01/2021 |
| Employees considered: Yes | Non-employees affected: Yes |
| Out of hours: Yes | Vulnerable persons: Staff / Pupils / Visitors/Wider community |

The latest scientific advice and knowledge is that:

- Children and Young People carry the disease, even if they do so asymptotically
- Children have been in bubbles where no social distancing was possible, nor could it be enforced
- Bubbles have had to close due to illness or positive results from COVID-19 tests
- School staff have caught the virus from children in their bubbles
- School staff have infected their families
- The latest strain of the virus evolved and emerged in Kent and is spreading rapidly through the country and across the world

Hazards/Risks:

1. Number of pupils in a class on any given day.
2. Area is not big enough to allow social/safe distancing to take place.
3. Too many parents congregating at an entrance and not obeying the social distancing rules.
4. Too many pupils attempting to access school at any one time. – drop off and collection points.
5. Contact points - spread of coronavirus through surfaces, packages, books, water bottles, stationery etc.
6. Pupils/ staff become unwell with virus during school day.
7. Pupils and staff moving around the school – narrow corridors.
8. Behaviour of small amount of pupils who may need positive handling
9. Tending to pupils, if they have intimate care needs.
10. The use of inside/outside play equipment and toys by multiple groups.
11. Access to site – too many people coming onto the site.
12. Parents wanting to access school staff in an educational setting.
13. Staff and pupils spreading the virus to vulnerable people at home
14. Outside visitors including deliveries coming onto the school site.
15. Staff in reception area at risk from visitors
16. Possibility of COVID-19 transmission from items such as handbags/backpacks etc
17. Stress and anxiety having a negative impact on staff and pupils mental well-being.

Control measures:

1. Groups/classes will be taught in the same room/area and with the same staff whenever possible, to reduce contact between people and to reduce the risk of transmission. Where possible, children and staff will only mix with their own group (known as 'bubbles') and will stay away from other people and groups. Pupils will be constantly reminded of protective measures such as effective handwashing; staff and pupils will be encouraged to adopt good hand and respiratory hygiene practices (catchit, bin it, kill it). Tables will be facing forward and children will be sat at desks in rows if possible. Staff will be encouraged to abide by 2 metre social distancing rule whenever possible.
2. When pupils are in school they will follow the designated routes and remain within allocated areas. KS2 pupils will eat their lunch in the classroom. Those having school lunches, will have their food brought to them. Pupils will remain with their groups throughout their lunch break, to avoid any mixing with other groups and to reduce the possibility of cross-infection. Any unnecessary furniture will be removed from teaching areas to help teachers keep their distance. There is a one way system in operation.
3. Parents will be asked to drop their children off and pick them up at a given entrance and time; these times will be staggered. To reduce the number of people on site, only one parent will be allowed to accompany pupils to school. The ground will be marked out to ensure parents stand in fixed positions and to help them comply with social distancing protocols. Parents will also be reminded that they cannot gather at entrance gates or doors. Parents may not enter the school. All messages must be delivered by telephone or email. Parents will be asked to leave the site immediately. Signage will be used to remind parents of the protocols they are expected to follow.
4. Pupils will have staggered drop off and collection times. Every entrance will have social distancing markings and pupils must adhere to this as well as parents. Only one parent per family will be allowed to attend school for the purposes of dropping off/collecting their child/ren. Older pupils who may walk to school on their own will also be required to keep to the social distancing protocol; they will need to adhere to the instructions regarding location and timing of drop-off/collection. Parents will be asked to leave the site immediately and, at the end of the day, so will children that walk home on their own.
5. Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned often during the day (by school staff) using standard products such as detergents and bleach. Bins for tissues will be emptied throughout the day. Where possible, all spaces will be well ventilated using natural ventilation (opening windows). Where safe to do so, bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding, doors will be propped open to limit use of handles. Wherever possible, pupils will be seated at the same desk each day. If a member of the school community becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus, the area will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected once that individual has left. Any items not needed in class for teaching purposes will be removed and stored. Cleaners and caretaker will clean areas thoroughly at the end of the day in order for the school to be sanitized for the next working day. Particular attention will be paid to surfaces that the children have touched, such as toys, books, desks, doors, sinks, toilets, light switches, bannisters. Frequent handwashing, using soap and water and following Government guidelines will take place during the school day. Pupils will be supervised to ensure good hand hygiene and frequently reminded how to wash hands. Staff will ensure that toilets do not become crowded by limiting the number of children using the toilet facilities at one time. Particular toilets will be allocated to particular bubbles. Extra paper towels will be provided to ensure thorough drying following hand washing. Children will be provided with named stationery and basic equipment that will be theirs to use solely. Water bottles will be clearly labelled.
6. If a pupil or staff member becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), the person will be isolated in a designated room that is away from all other pupils and staff until they are able to be collected from school. It will be possible to access this room directly from the outside. A separate bathroom has been allocated for use by any person displaying symptoms of COVID-19. SLT must be informed immediately if isolation has been deemed necessary for any individual. PPE should be worn by staff caring for the individual while they await collection and a distance of 2 metres maintained if possible. Anyone who has helped an individual with COVID-19 symptoms should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact. The affected room should be cleaned using normal household disinfectant once the unwell individual has left. Deep cleaning should only happen with appropriate PPE being worn. Individuals being sent home from school after displaying symptoms of COVID-19 will be advised to book a COVID-19 test and self isolate with household members until they receive the results. All staff and pupils attending school will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus and they should be encouraged to request one. All members of the school community will be made aware that if they display any symptoms of COVID-19, they will not be able to attend school. Following a negative test, individuals can return to their setting and the fellow household members can also end their self-isolation. If the individual should test positive for coronavirus, the rest of their group will be informed immediately and encouraged to get a test if they display any symptoms.

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| <p>7. Staff will monitor pupils when attending school to ensure where practical all school guidelines are being followed. Reminders will be given to pupils and staff to keep to the rules. Staggered break times and lunchtimes will be adhered to at all times. Lunch will be brought to the children. A timetable for the use of all learning environments will be used to ensure the safe movement of pupils and staff around school. Classes will not mix with other classes, thus reducing the contact between pupils. Outside play will be in class groups in designated areas which will be coned off. Movement around the school will be kept to a minimum. Shared rooms, such as the staff room and offices will have posters/reminders of social distancing guidelines. The school will operate a one way system.</p> |
| <p>8. The government guidance reinforces the need for schools to be calm and disciplined environments, where everyone follows the rules. This is even more important in this current climate. Individual risk assessments will be carried out for any child who has needed restraining in the past or has exhibited challenging behaviour. If they are too great a risk, they may not be permitted to return to school and advice will be sought from the LA. Any child who needs positive handling will be sent home immediately. PPE will be available for staff who need to positively handle children. During the COVID-19 emergency, if a child is unable to participate appropriately at school, respecting social distancing and the need for individual groups to stay apart for example, then that child may be asked to stay at home and engage with the distance learning materials until they are ready to return to school. The school's behaviour policy has been updated to reflect the new protective measures, rules and routines. Parents will be informed of the expectations regarding behaviour and the consequences of the updated policy not being followed.</p> |
| <p>9. PPE will be issued to staff who need to tend to intimate care needs and for those who are dealing with illness in pupils or in staff. PPE will consist of aprons / gloves / face masks.</p> |
| <p>10. The use of shared resources should be avoided wherever possible. Outside areas will be zoned off using cones where designated classes will go for their break and lunchtimes. Outdoor equipment should not be used unless it is appropriately cleaned between groups using it. Multiple groups will not use the equipment at the same time. All small toys will be sterilized in Milton at the end of the day.</p> |
| <p>11. Parents will not have access to the school building. Parents have been requested to contact the school office by telephone or email if they wish to speak to a member of staff, if they have a query or if they wish to leave a message. The school site will be restricted to school staff and essential outside agencies who have been requested to attend. No visitors will have access to the school building without prior arrangement. To reduce the number of people on the school site, parents and visitors will not be allowed to drive onto the site.</p> |
| <p>12. If parents wish to speak to school staff, they can contact the school office by telephone or email and an appointment will be made for a telephone consultation. To protect the whole school community and to limit the risk of virus transmission, no face to face appointments will take place at this time, unless in exceptional circumstances and authorized by the Head teacher</p> |
| <p>13. If a child or member of staff lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable, the government guidance indicates that they can attend their education setting. They should inform a member of SLT so that risk assessments can be carried out, on an individual basis, following consultations. Staff meetings are at present suspended.</p> |
| <p>14. The control of visitors to the school site will be through an appointment system. No visitors will be allowed on site unless they follow the social distancing protocols, handwashing guidance and respiratory hygiene practices set out in Government guidance. Wherever possible, cardboard-packaged deliveries will be left for at least 24hours prior to handling. Items packaged in plastic or metal containers will be left for 72 hours prior to handling, if possible. All persons unpacking items should wash their hands thoroughly, using soap and water, following handling of goods.</p> |
| <p>15. Office staff will be instructed not to open the glass screens in the reception area when dealing with visitors, pupils and staff. Signage will be present to indicate this is current practice.</p> |
| <p>16. All staff will be required to safely store handbags and backpacks away from pupils to help limit the risk of viral spread within the school. Pupils will be allowed bags in school but they must be kept in the allocated area away from other bubbles. Named stationery will be provided to pupils. Pupils will be able to bring packed lunches into school but these will need to be stored in the same allocated area each day. Staff access to the staffroom facilities may be restricted. Soft toys and furnishings have been removed.</p> |
| <p>17. We have systems in place, including trained staff to identify children and staff who may be suffering from trauma, stress and anxiety. We have access to external agencies and aim to support those identified with a range of strategies including (but not limited to) 1:1 conversations, counselling and therapy where appropriate. Staff will be reminded of 'Education Support' – a charity providing mental health and wellbeing support services for all staff working in education (free and confidential helpline: 08000 562 561) Individual risk assessments will be carried out for any staff identified as more vulnerable e.g pregnant, underlying health issues etc.</p> |
| <p>Do these suffice: YES/NO/PARTIALLY (All in line with government guidance but we cannot guarantee everyone's safety – this new strain of coronavirus is a particular concern)</p> |

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| Do specific Regulations apply? If so, what are they? |
| The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 |
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| Are they being applied? YES /NO/PARTIALLY |

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| Further controls required: | |
| https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings | |
| https://www.gov.uk/guidance/COVID-19-covid-19-information-for-the-public | |
| https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/COVID-19-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings | |
| https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2 | |
| https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19 | |
| https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19 | |
| https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing#clinically-vulnerable-people | |
| https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings | |
| https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance | |
| https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings | |
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| Review date: This document will be reviewed weekly and in line with any new guidance. | |
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| Signed: C Redmond | Date:04/01/2021 |