

Coronavirus (COVID-19): risk assessment – DECEMBER 2021

Name of School: St. Joseph's Catholic Middle School, Hexham

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|
| Assessment conducted by: Gavin. R. Simpson | | Covered by this assessment: Pupils, Staff, Visitors, parents and contractors |
| Date of initial assessment: 30 TH NOVEMBER 2021 | Review interval: Bi-Weekly | Date of next review: 14 TH DECEMBER 2021 |

For the purpose of this risk assessment, we have used the term 'coronavirus' to refer to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

UPDATE – 30TH NOVEMBER 2021:

- This risk assessment is being updated because of the new Omicron variant of COVID-19.
- Early indications suggest this variant may be more transmissible than the Delta variant and current vaccines may be less effective against it. A rapid rise in infections in South Africa has been attributed to the spread of this new variant of COVID-19.
- Cases of COVID-19 in the wider Northumberland area are currently **418 / 100,000** people (up from 410 / 100,000 last week).
- Cases of COVID-19 in the town of Hexham, and the surrounding areas, are currently **495 / 100,000** people (up from 378 / 100,000 last week).

This risk assessment must be treated as a living document, please review bi-weekly to ensure that control measures remain appropriate for infection rates in school.

| Activity/ Situation | Step 4 reopening - September 2021 | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|-------------|--------------------------|---------------|-----------|--------------|
| Persons at Risk | ● Pupils | ● Employees | ● Visitors | ● Contractors | ● Parents | ● Volunteers |
| Hazard(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Awareness of policies and procedures ✘ Inadequate Cleaning ✘ Staffing & Spread of Coronavirus to Staff, CYP and Families, Visitors and Contractors ✘ Site User Developing Symptoms ✘ Inadequate Hand Washing/Personal Hygiene ✘ Inadequate Personal Protection & PPE ✘ Visitors, Contractors & Spread of Coronavirus ✘ Inadequate Ventilation ✘ Fire and Intruder Alarms and Emergencies, Including Lockdown ✘ School Activities | | | | | |
| Risk rating | | | Likelihood of occurrence | | | |

| | | Probable | Possible | Remote |
|---------------|---|------------|------------|------------|
| Likely impact | Major Causes major physical injury, harm or ill-health. | High (H) | High (H) | Medium (M) |
| | Severe Causes physical injury or illness requiring first aid. | Medium (M) | Medium (M) | Low (L) |
| | Minor Causes physical or emotional discomfort. | Medium (M) | Low (L) | Low (L) |

| <u>Risk Rating</u> | <u>Guidance and control measures</u> | <u>How has the control measure been implemented</u> | <u>In place (Yes/No/Outstanding)</u> <u>If outstanding add to action plan</u> | <u>Risk Rating following Action</u> |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| | | | | |

Prevention

| | | | | |
|----------|--|---|------------|---------------|
| H | <p>Due to increasing COVID-19 cases, both locally and nationally, we want to limit transmission of COVID-19 on our school premises. To do this, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers will be required to update and submit their seating plans as Track and Trace are reintroducing the 10 day isolation period for anyone who has been a “close contact” of anyone diagnosed with COVID-19.• All our KS3 pupils, who arrive at school on public transport, will be asked to wear a face covering on their journey to and from school.• Any staff who arrive at school on public transport will be asked to follow Government advice and to wear face coverings at all times on public transport.• Staff and KS3 pupils will be reminded of the importance of testing twice weekly, using the provided lateral flow tests.• Any visitors to school, will be required to have their temperature checked and show evidence of a recent negative test result. If they do not have this, the visitor will be required to take a LFT before they enter the main school building.• All KS3 pupils and staff will be required to wear face coverings in communal areas (unless they are exempt)• Assemblies and Collectives Worships, where the school gathers in the school hall, will be postponed and carried out online. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear signposting for staff within school. Posters displayed around school and in the playground• Regular communications with parents• Staff all aware of signs and symptoms which may be linked to COVID | YES | MEDIUM |
|----------|--|---|------------|---------------|

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any face-to-face meetings with parents will revert to an online or telephone conversation format for the foreseeable future. All staff and KS3 pupils will be required to continue with their twice weekly tests (Sundays and Wednesdays). Room ventilation is necessary and will be closely monitored. In addition to this, we now have the Carbon Dioxide detectors in every room to monitor the quality of the air and air-flow. We will aim to reduce different year groups mixing indoors, as much as possible. However, we are not reintroducing “bubbles” at this moment in time. | | | |
| H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In England, all secondary-school pupils are being asked to take two lateral flow tests (LFT) at school - three to five days apart. Schools are testing for Covid just before term starts and staggering the return of pupils to manage this. They have been contacting parents to seek consent and inform them of arrangements. Those testing positive will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace and instructed to isolate for 10-days. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All secondary aged pupils (Y7 and Y8) will be tested twice before they return to school. This will be properly managed and pupils given an appropriate time to arrive. The testing will be managed and overseen by school staff. The testing rooms will be B1 and B2 when pupils return in January 2022. | | |
| H | <p>Limit transmission by prevention of symptomatic people on site by ensuring nobody with the following is permitted to enter the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high temperature a new, continuous cough a loss or change to your sense of smell | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear signposting for staff within school. Posters displayed around school and in the playground Regular communications with parents Staff all aware of signs and symptoms which may be linked to COVID | Yes | Low |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|-----|-----|
| H | <p>Reduction in group sizes and maintaining bubbles is no longer required.</p> <p>However, in case of a local outbreak you may be required to reintroduce control measures to limit mixing in school</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children will remain in classes rather than bubbles. Classes do not exceed 34 ● Where possible classes will remain individual for the majority of the school day (apart from maths). ● If classes are together there will be clear divides between different classes and any areas used will be well ventilated or outside where possible. ● Accurate records of any mixing of classes will take place ● We will continue with a staggered arrival at school to ensure children can flow | Yes | Low |
| | | <p>easily without a build-up of congestion of parents or children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We will continue to use various entrance and exits across school and encourage parents to use a one-way system | | |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|-----|-----|
| H | <p>Isolation of contacts will be carried out by NHS Test and Trace, though you may be asked to identify contacts in the case of a local outbreak.</p> <p>You will need to have control measures in place to be able to identify contacts to NHS Test and Trace if asked. These are likely to be close friendship groups or immediate classroom contacts.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class teachers will continue to record any seating arrangements in the classroom. This will include any changes to groupings throughout the day. • Where possible these will be shared with staff in the office. | Yes | Low |
| | <p>Face coverings are no longer mandatory in schools, but are being strongly encouraged to worn in communal areas by staff and KS3 pupils.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to ask parents to wear face masks on dropping and collecting children from the school building. • Staff will be asked to continue to wear face masks when working within 1m of a child and in all corridors and public spaces | Yes | Low |
| H | <p>Hand hygiene</p> <p>Frequent and thorough hand cleaning should now be regular practice. You should continue to ensure that pupils clean their hands regularly. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to ask children to wash hands on entry to school and at regular intervals during the day. This will be interspersed with the use of hand sanitiser where appropriate. • Posters supporting children on how to do this properly will be displayed around school | Yes | Low |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff will model for the children the correct way to wash hands and regularly remind children to do so. | | |
| H | <p>PPE</p> <p>PPE beyond what is required for your normal day to day job is no longer required unless very close contact is required with somebody displaying symptoms of Covid-19.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to provide PPE for all staff and it would encourage it to be used if deemed appropriate. | Yes | Low |
| H | <p>Cleaning</p> <p>You should put in place and maintain an appropriate cleaning schedule. This should include regular cleaning of areas and equipment (for example, twice per day), with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to have our regular cleaning in school. Throughout the day staff will be aware of key touch points in school especially in the classroom e.g. door handles and any shared equipment e.g. PE Staff will be responsible for any shared items that they use/touch across school and be asked to wipe surfaces after use e.g. kettles/staff room equipment, telephones | Yes | Low |
| H | <p>Ventilation</p> <p>When your school is in operation, it is important to ensure it is well ventilated and that a comfortable teaching environment is maintained.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Windows within classrooms will remain open within reason. Doors into the corridors will also remain open Where areas contain more than one class then windows and doors will remain fully opened | Yes | Low |

All classrooms now have the Carbon Dioxide detectors and it is important that all staff use these devices to ensure that there is adequate ventilation in all rooms. Suggested guidance states that anything above 1,000 PPM is not satisfactory.

You should identify any poorly ventilated spaces as part of your risk assessment and take steps to improve fresh air flow in these areas, giving particular consideration when holding events where visitors such as parents are on site, for example school plays.

Mechanical ventilation is a system that uses a fan to draw fresh air, or extract air from a room. These should be adjusted to increase the ventilation rate wherever possible and checked to confirm that normal operation meets current guidance and that only fresh outside air is circulated.

If possible, systems should be adjusted to full fresh air or, if this is not possible, then systems should be operated as normal as long as they are within a single room and supplemented by an outdoor air supply.

Where mechanical ventilation systems exist, you should ensure that they are maintained in accordance with the manufacturers' recommendations.

Opening external windows can improve natural ventilation, and in addition, opening internal doors can also assist with creating a throughput of air. If necessary, external opening doors may also be used (if they are not fire doors and where safe to do so).

- Areas which have limited windows e.g. the hall, will always have external and internal doors open
- Any aircon/fan systems will be adjusted accordingly to ensure that air is circulated.
- The opening of windows will be monitored as we move into the colder season in order to ensure the comfort of children and staff.

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| | <p>You should balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature.</p> | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|

| | | | | |
|----------|--|---|------------|------------|
| <p>H</p> | <p>Managing cases of Covid-19 within school</p> <p>If anyone in your school develops COVID-19 symptoms, however mild, you should send them home.</p> <p>For everyone with symptoms, they should avoid using public transport and, wherever possible, be collected by a member of their family or household</p> <p>If a pupil is awaiting collection, they should be left in a room on their own if possible and safe to do so. A window should be opened for fresh air ventilation if possible. Appropriate PPE should also be used if close contact is necessary.</p> <p>The household (including any siblings) should follow the PHE stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.</p> <p>Anyone who identified as close contact of someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 is required to isolate for a period of 10 days.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff have a clear understanding of COVID symptoms. This will be regularly updated in accordance with DFE/Public Health Guidelines • Information will be communicated to parents regularly regarding the procedures which we would follow in school should we have a child with symptoms • The disabled toilet near the main entrance will remain as the isolation room should it be needed | <p>Yes</p> | <p>Low</p> |
|----------|--|---|------------|------------|

| | | | | |
|----------|---|--|------------|------------|
| <p>H</p> | <p>Admitting children who are displaying symptoms</p> <p>In most cases, parents and carers will agree that a pupil with symptoms should not attend the school, given the potential risk to others. If a parent or carer insists on a pupil attending your school, you can take the decision to refuse the pupil if, in your reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection with COVID-19. Your decision would need to be carefully considered in light of all the circumstances and current public health advice</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear understanding between parents and school on what are symptoms and when school will not admit pupils. This will be communicated regularly to all parents. • This will be reviewed in accordance with guidance from the DFE and Public Health. • Advice will be sought from the appropriate authorities should we be uncertain about a child's symptoms. | <p>Yes</p> | <p>Low</p> |
| <p>H</p> | <p>Asymptomatic Testing</p> <p>Staff and students should continue to test twice a week until the end of September using home lateral flow testing kits.</p> <p>Staff and pupils with a positive LFT test result should self-isolate in line with the stay at home guidance. They will also need to get a free PCR test to check if they have COVID19.</p> <p>Whilst awaiting the PCR result, the individual should continue to self-isolate.</p> <p>If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will be encouraged to continue taking twice weekly lateral flow tests • Guidance will be shared with staff regularly in order to support a consistent approach across school • Should staff have a positive LFD test they will isolate immediately and obtain a PCR test. Staff will remain in isolation pending the result of the PCR test. | <p>Yes</p> | <p>Low</p> |

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| | test and the pupil can return to school, as long as the individual doesn't have COVID-19 symptoms | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| H | <p>Clinically Extremely vulnerable children and young people</p> <p>All CEV children and young people should attend their education setting unless they are one of the very small number of children and young people under paediatric or other specialist care who have been advised by their GP or clinician not to attend.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support will be given to families with CEV children | Yes | Low |
|---|---|---|-----|-----|

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| H | <p>Clinically Extremely vulnerable staff</p> <p>Clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) people are no longer advised to shield but may wish to take extra precautions to protect themselves, and to follow the practical steps set out in the CEV guidance to minimise their risk of exposure to the virus.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently we have no CEV staff in school but we would make adjustments accordingly, should this situation change | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|-----|-----|
| H | <p>Educational Visits</p> <p>Given the likely gap in COVID-19 related cancellation insurance, if you are considering booking a new visit, whether domestic or international, you are advised to ensure that any new bookings have adequate financial protection in place.</p> <p>We continue to recommend you do not go on any international visits before the start of the autumn term. From the start of the new school term you can go on international visits that have previously been deferred or postponed and organise new international visits for the future.</p> <p>You should be aware that the travel list (and broader international travel policy) is subject to change and green list countries may be moved into amber or red. The travel lists may change during a visit and you must comply with international travel legislation and should have contingency plans in place to account for these changes.</p> <p>You should speak to either your visit provider, commercial insurance company, or the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) to assess the protection available. Independent advice on insurance cover and options can be sought from the British</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational visits in school will continue as pre COVID with the added risk assessment around COVID • Staff will liaise closely with the intended venue to ensure that they have robust risk assessments in place which include COVID risks • We are aware that school visits may be subject to change in line with guidance from the DFE and Public Health. We will ensure that this is communicated clearly to parents when booking visits | Yes | Low |
|---|---|--|-----|-----|

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| | <p>Insurance Brokers' Association (BIBA) or Association of British Insurers (ABI). Any school holding ATOL or ABTA refund credit notes may use these credit notes to rebook educational or international visits.</p> <p>You should undertake full and thorough risk assessments in relation to all educational visits and ensure that any public health advice, such as hygiene and ventilation requirements, is included as part of that risk assessment. General guidance about educational visits is available and is supported by specialist advice from the Outdoor Education Advisory Panel (OEAP).</p> | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|