

## **Addendum to Risk Assessment – 4<sup>th</sup> January**

### **Context**

After the Christmas break the reduced number of children in school allowed for additional safety measures to be put in place to reduce the possibility of infection crossing bubbles, and between children and staff within the same bubble. A temporary limit of 15 children in each class has been imposed under the guidance of the local authority, but I would estimate this to be on the upper end of numbers for the new safety systems. It may be that this number needs to be reduced further if high numbers negate the new measures.

### **New Risk Factors**

- In the absence of guidance, I made the decision in the Autumn Term to prop fire doors open to reduce formic transmission but guidance now provided advises against this so they are now closed. This has the impact of dramatically reducing ventilation, which can be seen by the classrooms becoming much warmer.
- Virus mutation has increased the infectiousness of the virus.

### **Change to Lunchtime Procedure**

The new lunchtime rota now makes lunchtime just about able to fit into the available time. Space between the different bubbles is now much larger due to having empty tables between groups in the hall. Changed routes into and out of the hall have now separated the two corridors so children from one side don't use the corridor on the other. These measures reduce the chance of infection crossing bubbles.

### **Change to Classroom Seating**

Seating for Classes 3,4 and 5 should ensure there is one child on each desk and distance between desks maximised. Class 1 and 2 should make use of the additional room created by fewer children to maximise the distance between staff and children whenever possible.

### **Change to Toilet Rota**

The smaller groups now mean that the class needs less time on each rota cycle. With the time reduced, each class gets an additional number of time slots. The new timetables will be emailed to you and copies put up on the toilet doors. This should also help to minimise the number of children using

the disabled toilet, which is one of the few remaining ways there can be cross infection between bubbles.

### **Change to Playtime Systems**

Few children now mean it becomes possible to have multiple groups on the playground at the same time as long as they maintain social distance between bubbles. This enables staff to reduce the burden of increased breaks, by sharing duties. However, first aid must be done by adult from same bubble.

### **Additional Measures**

#### **Ventilation**

Closing the corridor fire doors has had the effect of dramatically reducing the ventilation in the classrooms. Although this has had the positive effect of increasing the temperature, it has had the negative effect of dramatically reducing ventilation. The only way to compensate for the closed doors is to open the windows more. You must now open the windows in your room as wide as possible and keep the temperature at about 16 degrees. Sorry about this one. I'd love to keep you all warm, but I have to keep you safe instead.

Fire doors to the outside must be closed.

There is some helpful guidance in new document about ways you can stay a little warmer, but does cut down on usable space as it can involve moving seating away from windows.

#### **First Aid**

The guidance in the Autumn Term to remove the requirement for PPE for first aid incidents. The new variant means this is now too risky, so first aid must be given in gloves and face covering as a minimum. Goggles and face shield advised but not compulsory due to difficulty with both steaming up during first aid. Extra care should be taken if child is crying and older children should be encouraged to face away from first aider.

#### **Close Contact**

Close contact should be avoided or minimised whenever and wherever possible.

The main area to avoid close contacts is with colleagues. You should not be going into the classroom of any bubble other than you own without face covering, and the same rule applies to Kathryn's office due to much lower ventilation than my room. My room is ok as long as I have windows and door open and the fan on between us.

Face coverings and visors are not compulsory, but are now strongly advised.

Close contacts can be reduced in the following ways:

- Use of Teams to send messages instead of doing face to face
- Drop printed documents in trays instead of handing someone something
- Keep a mental note of how long you are spending with a contact through the course of the day (contact is cumulative)
- Wear face covering and / or visor in corridors or shared areas.
- Don't be fooled into believing that once you have had contact with someone, additional contact doesn't matter. It does!

### **Formic (Surface) Transmission**

Care must be taken when touching surfaces that others will then touch afterwards. If school hand sanitiser is used, the advice is to wash hands and reapply sanitiser immediately after touching share surface. If sanitiser is not used the advice is to wash hands before and after touching surfaces. This is not normally possible for things like fire doors in corridors, but should be possible for:

- Water heater lever in staff room
- Photocopier
- Computer in PPA room or library
- Fridge door
- Dishwasher
- Sandwich maker
- Toaster
- Toilets

### **Dealing with Isolated Child in School**

Increased infectivity means national guidance must be followed, with the addition of FP2 masks for dealing with child while waiting for parents. If possible, the room should be vacated by class after isolation to enable adult to sanitise child's table and chair in class.

## **Lateral Flow Tests**

We will shortly have access to 30 minute lateral flow tests. We have no set procedure in place for these yet, but once we get them I will consult with staff about their use.

## **Summary**

It is important that we capitalise on the reduced numbers of children in school to introduce these new measures, whilst tightening up the procedures we have had in place for a long time. The measure of our success will simply be how long we can stay open for critical workers / vulnerable children and how well we prevent infections from crossing bubbles.

We have seen on a country wide scale that existing measures have not been enough to curtail the new variant, so we can be assured that if we do what we did in the Autumn, the outcome will not be good. We have to raise the bar in every area to be successful.