

HR Service: HR Planning Document for the Wider Opening of Schools

The HR Service documents support a range of information provided by Nottinghamshire County Council and should be considered in conjunction with the COVID-19 School Health and Safety Risk assessments. The arrangements and plans in place should be kept under regular review and in the first week this should be done daily. All documents are correct at the point of writing, but government advice is fast changing, and head teachers should check the appropriate government websites for changes daily.

Part 1 – School Staff Audit Checklist and Action Plan

An audit exercise, of your staffing and the school premises, will enable you to determine whether the school can cater for all eligible children, including children of critical workers and vulnerable children of all ages. Head teachers will need to assess the minimum staffing requirement to safely widen opening according to the number of children in school.

Throughout each stage of this process, it is important to keep all staff informed and consult with them and governors to gain their involvement and support. Head teachers are responsible for making these operational decisions and should keep the governing body informed about the arrangements being made. Governors have a responsibility to act as a sounding board in order to test the robustness of the proposed arrangements.

No.	Issue	Who / Action required
1	How many staff do you have available to work in school?	63
2	How many teachers do you have available to work in school?	25
3	How many support staff including teaching assistants do you have available for work in school?	18

4	Do you have a head or deputy available for work in school? *	Either head or Assistant Principal will be on site at all times.
5	Do you have at least one person with paediatric first aid training available for work in school? *	Yes
6	Do you have at least one person with up to date Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) training available to work in school? *	Yes
7	Do you have your SENCo available for work, or an alternative staff member who could take on this role? *	Yes
8	Do you have a caretaker and/or cleaning staff, and if necessary, at least one office staff member available during the school day?	Yes
9	If the answer to questions 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 is no, then you should try to find a solution to this before going further you should consider whether staff members are prepared to undertake a different role to their normal role temporarily and / or contact your EIS Area Lead.	NA
10	<p>Gaps in staffing requirements</p> <p>If you do not have the staff available to be able to cover all the new teaching groups you have created, (more likely for infant schools), you will need to consider possible solution, including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using additional teachers eg supply teachers or teachers on temporary agreed loan from other schools; • Asking suitably experienced teaching assistants who are willing to do so to work with groups under the supervision of a teacher; • Using some senior leadership time to cover groups, although you should as headteacher consider your own workload and that of your senior colleagues to make sure this is manageable, and you have sufficient leadership time remaining. 	NA

	<p>Assume that the staffing model will be one teacher per group (or 2 teachers sharing the week if you have existing jobsharers) - qualified teachers are qualified to teach any primary year group, including early years foundation stage (EYFS)</p> <p>If the school cannot get enough cover in place and an arrangement which enables eligible children to attend focus first on continuing to provide places for priority groups of all year groups (children of critical workers and vulnerable children). Then, to support children's early learning, you should prioritise groups of children as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early years settings – those aged 3 and 4, followed by younger age groups • Infant schools – nursery (where applicable) and reception • Primary schools – nursery (where applicable), reception and year 1 <p>Schools should not plan based on a Rota system, either daily or weekly and should be clear about the number of contingency staff available should staff become unwell.</p>	
11	<p>School routines</p> <p>The DfE Planning guide for primary schools sets out guidance principles for staff (see annex b). Schools should ensure all staff are trained in the new rules and routines, including the use of sanctions and rewards, so that they can support pupils to understand them and enforce them consistently. Staff will need to explicitly teach and supervise health and hygiene arrangements such as handwashing, tissue disposal and toilet flushing. Staff should not be expected to undertake any work for which they have not be appropriately trained.</p>	<p>Annex B has been shared with staff in guidance document.</p> <p>Behaviour policy has been updated and shared with staff.</p>
12	<p>Staff induction</p> <p>For new staff (Including new permanent, temporary and supply / agency staff) – schools should make sure that the Nottinghamshire School Staff Induction Policy is followed for teaching and support staff.</p>	No new staff

13	<p>Communications with staff and feedback</p> <p>Heads should undertake, where appropriate, an online or series of online staff meeting before wider opening from the week commencing 1 June, to take staff through arrangements if possible and to make sure staff are aware of expectations. This should include all staff, where possible, to reduce staff anxiety and to ensure that staff have time to absorb information and arrangements are fully understood by everyone.</p> <p>Head teachers and other senior leaders should be free and present around the school especially during the early part of wider opening. Staff may require additional support and reassurance, and you will be more easily available to pick up on any issues so they can be resolved quickly.</p> <p>Arrange regular opportunities to get feedback from staff on the new arrangements.</p>	<p>Online staff meetings taking place. Due to the large number of staff these have been carried out in appropriate groups.</p> <p>Senior leader on site at all times. Phone numbers shared.</p> <p>Weekly feedback</p>
14	<p>Staff mental health and wellbeing</p> <p>School leaders and the Governing Body should consider the mental health and wellbeing of all staff (including school leaders themselves), and the need to implement flexible working practices in a way that promotes good work-life balance for teachers and leaders. Please visit the Employee Wellbeing section of the Schools Portal for more information about the support available.</p>	<p>Flexible working implemented where possible.</p> <p>Employee wellbeing resources being used. EP wellbeing advice doc shared with staff.</p>
15	<p>Risk assessments (Health and Safety Risk Assessment templates)</p> <p><u>Whole school risk assessments</u> – should involve and be made available to all staff</p> <p><u>Individual risk assessments</u> – should be undertaken where required in line with Health and Safety advice and using the School COVID-19 Individual Risk Assessment. Any current individual risk assessments should be reviewed. Further advice on these matters is available from the Health and safety Team.</p>	<p>Completed and shared with staff.</p>
16	<p>Minimise staff movement between classes</p> <p>Keep your staffing arrangements as consistent as possible. In instances where you do need to deploy staff from other classes, ensure cover is agreed on a weekly basis, not daily, to limit contact with groups.</p>	<p>Staffing allocated to groups and guidance provided re movement of staff in school.</p>
17	<p>Staff training</p> <p>Head teachers should review and set out the timing of new and refresher training required. This</p>	<p>HT to consult with resources and plan when appropriate.</p>

	training should be organised remotely. From 21 May 2020 resources will be available here: http://www.em-edsupport.org.uk/coronavirus-SLT	
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Part 2 – Staffing issues for head teachers to consider as part of the staff audit process

The government has advised that all schools should undertake an audit to determine which staff will be available in school for the week commencing 1 June 2020. This document supports the staff audit process. Staff should be reminded to update the school on changes to their availability / situation.

Category of Staff	Latest Government Advice
<p>Clinically Extremely Vulnerable</p> <p>Staff with a shielding letter from the government or advised by GP or Clinician they are considered clinically extremely vulnerable.</p>	<p>The government has issued guidance and listed health conditions that are classed as clinically extremely vulnerable. People who fall in this group are those with serious underlying health conditions which put them at a very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus. These people will have been contacted by letter from the government or via their GP or Clinician. Head Teachers could request to see this letter to confirm the employee meets the above criteria if they, or the employee, are unsure.</p> <p>Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals continue to be strongly advised to stay at home at all times, to rigorously follow shielding measures to keep themselves safe, to avoid any face to face contact and therefore should not work outside the home. As such, school staff in this position are strongly advised not to attend work. Head teachers should consider whether work can be done from home and arrange for this to be completed.</p>
<p>Employee living in a household with someone who is Extremely Clinically Vulnerable.</p> <p>Staff who have someone in their household who has received a 'shielding letter' and are considered clinically extremely vulnerable.</p>	<p>If a staff member lives in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable, the government advises that they can only attend an education or childcare setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, the government advises those employees should not attend work. They should, therefore, be enabled and supported to work at home, with all options explored.</p> <p>The employee would need to provide written permission from the person shielding for the detail of their letter to be shared with another person's employer.</p> <p>The government have also advised, however, that the rest of the household do not need to start shielding, but they should do what they can to support the person shielding and to carefully follow guidance on social distancing.</p>

Clinically Vulnerable	<p>Clinically vulnerable individuals are those who are at higher risk of severe illness, for example, people with some pre-existing health conditions as set out in the staying at home and away from others (social distancing) guidance. These individuals have been advised to take extra care in observing social distancing and the government also advises that these individuals should work from home where possible.</p> <p>Head Teachers are advised to support these employees to work from home, for example by asking staff to support remote education, carry out lesson planning or other roles which can be done from home. If clinically vulnerable individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the safest available on-site roles, staying two metres away from others wherever possible, although the individual may choose to take on a role that does not allow for this distance if they prefer to do so. In these cases, if more information is required, individuals should be asked to obtain the medical opinion of their GP so this advice can be discussed with their head teacher before returning to school. An individual risk assessment must be carried out and agreed prior to any on site work commencing to determine whether this involves an acceptable level of risk. A template COVID-19 Individual Risk Assessment document is available on the Health and Safety Section of the Schools Portal.</p> <p>It is important to state here that it will be the employee's decision to return to the work situation and if any risk related to coronavirus is deemed unacceptable the employee must not be expected to work in school.</p>
Staff aged 70 or older (regardless of medical condition)	Classed as Clinically Vulnerable – advice as above.
Staff who are pregnant	Classed as Clinically Vulnerable – advice as above.
Staff aged under 70 with an underlying health condition	<p>Classed as Clinically Vulnerable – advice as above.</p> <p>The government has listed health conditions that are included in this category that essentially include anyone instructed to get a flu jab each year on medical ground.</p>
Employee living in a household with someone	If a member of staff lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable, including those who are pregnant, they can attend their education or childcare setting. A template COVID-19 Individual Risk Assessment document is available on the

who is clinically vulnerable	Health and Safety section of the Schools Portal to determine whether this involves an acceptable level of risk. If unacceptable they cannot reasonably be expected to work in school.
Other Circumstances	Head teachers to consider the following issues
Staff who have their own children of pre-school age	<p>All school staff are 'Critical Workers' and so will have provision for their own childcare at schools and nurseries.</p> <p>In the event of an employee having to request to take time off work due to a school or nursery closure, or if the regular carer of the child is ill, time off will be considered by the Governing Body up to a maximum of five days in line with the School's Annual Leave and Leave of Absence Policy. Employees are expected to make every effort to make speedy arrangements so that they can fulfil their work commitments as soon as possible.</p> <p>Where alternative caring arrangements cannot be made and an alternative home working pattern is not feasible, with appropriate approval, the employee should be allowed to stay at home longer (working where possible) whilst the caring arrangements are finalised. Heads are advised to ask the employee to keep the school regularly updated on their availability to work and to reiterate the temporary nature of the time off allowed while alternate childcare is sought.</p> <p>Where parents choose to withdraw their children from schools which remain open to their children, special leave provisions will not normally apply and the employee is expected to be available for work.</p>
Staff with school age children	School staff are Critical Workers and so will have provision for their own childcare at schools and nurseries.
Staff who say that they are "too scared" to return to work and refuse	<p>It is natural that some staff will be worried about coming into school even if the risks for them are very low. Head teachers know their staff best and should work out how to proceed in individual cases. Schools are working in an unprecedented context, and more reassurance and discussion than usual may be required. It is always best, if possible, to work out a sensible way forward in individual cases that acknowledges any specific anxieties, but which also enables the school's responsibilities to be effectively discharged.</p> <p>It is expected that employees will attend work, where and when required, to perform their duties and be flexible to ensure that any disruption to school provision is as limited as possible. If an employee refuses to attend work or refuses to carry out certain duties, head teachers should sensitively ascertain their concerns and take all reasonable steps to</p>

address them. Where there are no grounds for self-isolation and none of the vulnerable categories apply, the fear of contracting the illness is not a sufficient reason for failing to go to work if and when required.

Head teachers should, however, take the employee's circumstances into account, alongside the needs of the school, when deciding whether there are grounds for the employee to work from home. It is important to sensitively discuss these issues with the employee as soon as possible with the aim of resolving the concerns. It is not possible to give blanket advice and discussions may involve;

- Sharing the whole school risk assessment;
- Undertaking an individual risk assessment, if appropriate (eg if there is a medical condition that is not covered in the government's vulnerable categories);
- Detailing all the measures that have been put in place to reduce the risks in school for everyone;
- Updating the whole school stress risk assessment, if appropriate, and sharing this with the individual;
- Offering additional welfare support via the [Welfare Support](#) pages on the Schools Portal;
- Advising the employee of the 24-hour Care First counselling service helpline. The freephone telephone number to access this service is **0800 174319**;
- Advising the employee to seek advice from their GP and obtaining a fit for work note if required;
- Consideration of a referral to Occupational Health, particularly in relation to specific health conditions; and
- Possible considerations of a time limited phased return to full hours, temporary part-time/reduced hours return, buddying support from colleagues who have already been working in school during the pandemic or an alternate role in school where social distancing can be more easily accomplished.

All these will need consideration as to feasibility and appropriateness in line with the needs of the school and numbers of pupils returning. Please note that for staff who work flexibly at home there should be no detriment to pay as a result of these changes, even on a temporary basis, unless an employee asks, and the governing body agree a temporary increase or decrease in working hours.

Head teachers and individual employees will want to avoid situations where an employee refusing to come to work may be subject to disciplinary action for unauthorised absence. An employer could also stop paying an employee who refuses to attend work on the basis that the employee is failing to perform their part of the contract. The school

	<p>are advised, however, that this should be the position of last resort and all reasonable efforts should be made by head teachers to find an appropriate way forward with their staff.</p> <p>Head teachers should explain the individual's contractual obligations and the consequences of refusing to work, and if there is still no change in the individual's position, immediate advice should be sought from the HR Service so that school leaders can take decisions to find an appropriate way forward in their individual circumstances.</p>
Staff member or someone in their household has symptoms.	<p>If an employee has symptoms, they should report them in accordance with school procedures and not attend work. They should be advised to follow the latest government advice concerning self- isolation. The employee should also be advised to arrange for a test line with the Public Health England advice previously issued relating to testing.</p> <p>The absence should be recorded on the self-isolation pro-forma and the BMS Payroll System as appropriate.</p>
What if an employee is caring for someone or lives in a house with someone who has or may have coronavirus?	<p>If an employee is caring for someone or who lives in a house with someone who has or may have coronavirus they should be advised to follow the latest government advice concerning self- isolation.</p>
What if an employee doesn't want to use public transport ie get on a bus to work in case other passengers have coronavirus, can they stay off work?	<p>No. If someone is fit and well, they are expected to be available for work, either in school, if required and attend work as normal or to work at home during any continued school partial closure, if appropriate. It is an individuals' responsibility to make their way to work. If they do not wish to travel by public transport, they need to follow government advice and make alternative travel arrangements at their own expense.</p>

Part 3 – Staff Availability Checklist

Heads should use these questions sensitively to help identify staff who fall within the particular categories, as defined by the government and outlined above. This will help with planning staff availability once schools re-open to a wider pupil cohort:

1. Clinically Extremely Vulnerable – Have any staff members received a shielding letter, or been instructed to self-isolate for 12 weeks by an NHS professional? Has the employee confirmed receipt of a Gov.UK letter and the date have they been told to self-isolate until?
2. Clinically Extremely Vulnerable – Do any staff members live in households with someone who has received a shielding letter, or been instructed to self-isolate for 12 weeks by an NHS professional? Has the employee confirmed receipt of a Gov.UK letter and the date the person living in the household has been told to self-isolate until?
3. Clinically Vulnerable – Do any staff members have health conditions that fit into those defined by the government as clinically vulnerable?
4. Clinically Vulnerable – Do any staff members live in households with someone who is classed as clinically vulnerable?
5. Covid-19 Symptoms – Are any staff members self-isolating with symptoms of Covid-19 or because a household member has symptoms?
6. Non-Covid-19 Symptoms – Are any other staff currently absent or have any planned absences due to other reasons (maternity/illness/parental leave etc)?
7. Do any staff members have childcare or caring responsibilities, and can they make arrangements to be able to return to work when required?

The answers to these questions will give heads a clearer picture of which staff members are available for work. If there are issues with staff numbers supply/agency staff could be utilised alongside discussions with those members of staff who fall in categories 3 & 4.

These questions should be considered on a regular basis as some of the answers may change over time, particularly questions 5, 6 and 7.