

**COVID-19 Risk Assessment on school wider opening to pupils**  
**School Briefing on undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment**

**Background:**

Schools will be aware that there is a legal requirement under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that policies, procedures and practice operating in school have been assessed to ensure compliance with a set of protective characteristics as outlined below:

- Race
- Disability
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment
- Gender
- Age
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage & Civil Partnership

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) supports schools to provide this assurance, as an EIA is an evidence-based approach designed to help organisations ensure that their policies, practices, events and decision-making processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protection groups from participation.

Since the requirement legally for Schools to have in place an EIA came into effect in 2010, we have as a team developed in conjunction with trade union/ professional association colleagues a baseline risk assessment. Schools will be aware that when as a service we provide a policy or document where we have undertaken some initial consultation with trade union/ professional association colleagues and provide to schools a document for review/ consideration at a school level we will include a EIA to support the implementation of the policy/procedure at school level. The baseline EIA allows schools to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups;
- Foster good relations between different groups.

The baseline template was agreed as an exemplar of good practice with trade union/ professional association colleagues in 2012 and was last reviewed as part of the Equality and Diversity toolkit issued to schools in 2017.

**Current Position:**

We are aware that schools have been / are being asked by trade union/ professional association colleagues for an EIA in relation to their COVID-19 risk assessment.

This baseline EIA noted in this document is taken from the standard EIA what we use to support schools with their policy adoption on draft documents that we provide to you as part of our SLA when we undertake policy/ procedure development alongside trade union/ professional association colleagues. The EIA will also be familiar to those schools who have undertaken a restructure to consider the impact of plans/ proposals on the school workforce.

All are therefore familiar with the baseline template.

### **COVID-19 wider opening to pupils Risk Assessment**

Schools have been asked to consider wider opening to specific year groups of pupils over and above critical worker and vulnerable children/ young people from the 1st June 2020. As part of that process in accordance with Health & Safety law there is a requirement to undertake a detailed risk assessment to assess and consider a number of factors that wider opening of school will pose and what school needs to do to reduce/ mitigate any risks. As part of this process under equalities legislation there is also an additional requirement to consider any impact of wider opening against any employee who may also have a protective characteristic identified within the Equality Act. Additionally, for COVID-19 this also includes those specifically who fall under an additional identified group where they could be more susceptible to the COVID-19 virus, e.g. CEV, CV, BAME. Whilst BAME is covered within the ethnicity consideration within a standard EIA, we have updated the document to reflect the specific reference to BAME and have added CEV and CV as specific / additional areas.

To help schools complete an EIA in these circumstances, this briefing note outlines what should be considered by school in undertaking an EIA against the application of their COVID-19 specific risk assessment on wider opening of school to designated groups of pupils from the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.

**Please note this briefing note provides guidance only and schools MUST complete a school specific EIA adapting the document noted at Appendix 2 (or using their own document) to ensure the relevant criteria/ considerations to minimise any negative impact where this is identified as a potential factor.**

SLA Schools are able to contact the HR Helpline to discuss any queries / talk through their own specific EIA. Non-SLA Schools need to contact their own HR provider directly with any queries.

### **Next Steps for Schools:**

1. Review the EIA at Appendix 1 and consider the commentary therein.
2. Update the EIA at Appendix 2 to complete a school specific EIA and make staff aware that this is in place.

Ask staff for their feedback and once you have done this send a copy of the document to the respective trade unions/ professional association – mirroring the consultation process that you undertook / are undertaking in school with your risk assessment. Once these stages have been completed you will need to append the EIA to the current

COVID-19 risk assessment and ensure the Governing Body are able to approve/adopt this document.

Please remember that if you review your COVID-19 risk assessment where it requires further consultation you will need to review the EIA and include the updated version as part of your ongoing consultation process.

**Schools HR**

June 2020



## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Guidance on completion of EIA for COVID-19 Risk Assessment**

**DO NOT USE THIS DOCUMENT FOR YOUR RISK ASSESSMENT SEE APPENDIX 2**

**STAGE 1** To be completed during the planning /proposal stage. Further sheets should be added where needed.

1.Name of the change, strategy, project or policy:	COVID-19 Risk Assessment on planned wider opening from XX June 2020
2. School Name, Job Title, Name of individual and the telephone number of staff completing the assessment form:	Name of School Person Completing the form
3. What is the main purpose and outcomes of the change, strategy, project or policy?	Schools should look to reference that the specific objective or purpose of the risk assessment in this section of the EIA – for example is to mitigate against potential impact of COVID 19 as school moves to wider reopening to additional groups of pupils from the 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2020.
4. List the main activities of the policy, project or change (for strategies list the main policy areas).	<p>The Guidance issued on producing a Risk Assessment from the H &amp; S Team covers the following main activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People Management and Communication</li> <li>• Effective Infection Protection and Control</li> <li>• Actions required relating to Premises</li> </ul> <p>You should ensure that the main sections of your school-based risk assessment are identified in this section of the EIA.</p>

5. Who will the project, policy or change mainly impact upon?	The Risk assessment should cover all staff within school		
6. Use the table below to answer:  Do you think that the change/strategy/project/policy in the way it is planned or delivered could have a? A) negative impact on any of the equality target groups? (i.e. it could disadvantage them) or B) positive impact on any of the target groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relations within equality target groups? (Remember that impact might be on a majority group as well as a minority group)			
<p>The guidance below provides some suggested areas schools may wish to consider when completing their EIA, covering the main protective characteristics. In addition, school will need to make specific references to impact on any staff members from the BAME community.</p> <p>Due to there being specific guidance from Government relating to staff groups who may be Clinically Vulnerable (CV) or Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV), it is recommended that any Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) should specifically reference the impact of the risk assessment in such groups of staff in school.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> the risk assessment is specifically in place to mitigate against potential negative impact against such groups during any wider opening of school</p>			
Equality Target Group:	Positive impact – it could benefit	Negative impact – it could disadvantage	Reason/Rationale
Race/BAME	Adhering to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will ensure that School follows current government, H&S and HR advice as to how Race/BAME may impact on who can return to work, the circumstances of such a return and who should still remain at home.	<p>There is no evidence that a risk assessment will have a negative impact on Race/BAME staff groups.</p> <p>A risk assessment, though suitable and sufficient, cannot eliminate all potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff.</p>	HR advice (4/6/20) notes the emerging evidence from NHS England showing that black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities are disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and that this must be taken into consideration as part of developing, and ongoing review, of the school COVID-19 risk

			assessment, thereby mitigating against potential risk.
Religion and Belief	There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on religion/belief.	There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on religion/belief	<b>N/A</b>
Disability	Adhering to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will ensure that School follows current government, H&S and HR advice as to how disability may impact on who can return to work, the circumstances of such a return and who should still remain at home.  See separate CV/CEV section below	There is no evidence that a risk assessment will have a negative impact on disability.  A risk assessment, though suitable and sufficient, cannot eliminate all potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff.	There is clear evidence from NHS England that specific disabilities and illnesses have a disproportionate impact on any COVID-19 infection. Ongoing review of the risk assessment by assessing most recent government / H&S / HR advice will mitigate potential risk.
Gender (and Gender Identity)	<u>Adhering to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will ensure that School follows current government, H&amp;S and HR advice as to how Gender may impact on who can return to work, the circumstances of such a return and who should still remain at home.</u> <del>There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on Gender/Gender Identity</del>	<u>There is no evidence that a risk assessment will have a negative impact on Gender.</u> <u>A risk assessment, though suitable and sufficient, cannot eliminate all potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff</u> <del>There is no evidence that a risk assessment will have a negative impact on Gender/Gender Identity</del>	<u>HR advice (17/6/20) notes the emerging evidence from NHS England showing that men are disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and that this must be taken into consideration as part of developing, and ongoing review, of the school COVID-19 risk assessment, thereby mitigating against potential risk.</u> <b>N/A</b>
Sexual Orientation	There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on sexual orientation.	There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on sexual orientation.	<b>N/A</b>

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Age	Adhering to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will ensure that School follows current government, H&S and HR advice as to how age may impact on who can return to work, the circumstances of such a return and who should still remain at home.	<p>There is no evidence that a risk assessment will have a negative impact on Age.</p> <p>A risk assessment, though suitable and sufficient, cannot eliminate all potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff.</p>	Government Guidance has identified age as a determining factor in identifying some staff as clinically vulnerable (CV) requiring specific measures within the risk assessment.
Pregnancy/Maternity	<p>Adhering to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will ensure that School follows current government, H&amp;S and HR advice as to how Pregnancy / Maternity may impact on who can return to work, the circumstances of such a return and who should still remain at home.</p> <p>Staff who are pregnant – see separate CV section below.</p>	<p>There is no evidence that a risk assessment will have a negative impact on pregnancy.</p> <p>A risk assessment, though suitable and sufficient, cannot eliminate all potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff.</p>	See advice below in relation to staff designated as clinically vulnerable.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on marriage and civil partnership.	There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on marriage and civil partnership.	<b>N/A</b>
Staff groups identified as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV)	Adhering to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will ensure that School follows current government, H&S and HR advice on the working arrangements for staff identified as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV).	<p>There is no evidence that a risk assessment will have a negative impact on staff identified as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable.</p> <p>A risk assessment, though suitable and sufficient, cannot eliminate all</p>	Risk assessment will be under periodic review to take account of updated guidance from Government / H&S / HR as to the safe working arrangements for staff identified as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable.

		potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff.	
Staff groups identified as Clinically Vulnerable (CV)	Adhering to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will ensure that School follows current government, H&S and HR advice on the working arrangements for staff identified as Clinically Vulnerable (CV).	<p>There is no evidence that a risk assessment will have a negative impact on staff identified as Clinically Vulnerable.</p> <p>A risk assessment, though suitable and sufficient, cannot eliminate all potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff.</p>	Risk assessment will be under periodic review to take account of updated guidance from Government / H&S / HR as to the safe working arrangements for staff identified as Clinically Vulnerable.
<p><b>7.a)</b> If you have indicated there is a negative impact on any Equality Target group, answer the following:</p> <p>Is the impact legal/lawful? (i.e. You must ensure that it is not discriminatory under anti-discriminatory legislation). Seek advice from your School link HR Advisor if necessary</p> <p>Is the impact intended?</p>		As the risk assessment is specifically in place to ensure a positive impact this section of the EIA should not be applicable.	
<p><b>7.b)</b> Could you minimise or improve any negative impact? Use the space below to detail how.</p>		As above – this risk assessment should not be recording negative impact	
<p><b>7.c)</b> Is it possible to consider a different policy/strategy/action, which still achieves your aim, but avoids any adverse impact on equality?</p>		The COVID-19 risk assessment is in place to specifically negate any negative impact of a return to school by staff.	
<p><b>7.d)</b> In light of the information on this form; what practical actions would you take to reduce or remove any adverse/negative impact?</p>		The COVID-19 risk assessment is in place to specifically negate any negative impact of a return to school by staff. By ensuring periodic review to take account of most recent advice and guidance from Government / H&S / HR and impact on identified groups will be minimised.	

**STAGE 2 To be completed when assessment and consultation has been carried out in relation to the draft risk assessment**



<b>8.a)</b> As a result of the assessment and consultation completed in Stage 1 above, state whether there will need to be any changes made to the policy, project or planned action.	The risk assessment will be under periodic review to ensure it reflects most recent advice from Government / H&S / HR. Where deemed this requires further consultation then Stage 1 of the school IEA should be reviewed/amended as necessary and Stage 2 completed.
<b>8.b)</b> As a result of this assessment and consultation, does the school need to commission specific research on this issue or carry out monitoring/data collection?	School will need to ensure there is a system in place to monitor and review the risk assessment in light of changing guidance from the DfE in relation to the slow the wider opening of schools until such time as there is no longer a threat from the COVID-19 virus.
<b>9)</b> Have you set up a monitoring/evaluation/review process to check the successful implementation of the policy, project or change?	<b>School should confirm systems are in place for monitoring/review</b>

## APPENDIX 2

### Guidance on completion of EIA for COVID-19 Risk Assessment

#### Stage 1 – CONSULTATION

1. Name of the change, strategy, project or policy:	COVID-19 Risk Assessment <del>planned wider opening from XX June 2020</del>
2. School Name, Job Title, Name of individual and the telephone number of staff completing the assessment form:	<a href="#">The Grove School, Mrs Derries, Headteacher, 01289 306 390</a>
3. What is the main purpose and outcomes of the change, strategy, project or policy?	<a href="#">The risk assessment has been updated in line with government policy and with support from Northumberland county councils HR department to ensure that all pupils can safely return to work</a>
4. List the main activities of the policy, project or change (for strategies list the main policy areas).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">People Management and Communication</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Effective Infection Protection and Control</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Actions required relating to Premises</a></li></ul>
5. Who will the project, policy or change mainly impact upon?	All employees within school.
6. Do you think that the change/strategy/project/policy in the way it is planned or delivered could have a  A) negative impact on any of the equality target groups? (i.e. it could disadvantage them) or B) positive impact on any of the target groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relations within equality target groups? (Remember that impact might be on a majority group as well as a minority group)	

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Equality Target Group:	Positive impact – it could benefit	Negative impact – it could disadvantage	Reason/Rationale
Race/BAME	By adhering to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment ensures that we follow current government, H&S and HR advice as to how Race/BAME may impact on those who can return to work, the circumstances of such a return and who should still remain at home.	There is no evidence that our risk assessment will have a negative impact on Race/BAME staff groups.  Our risk assessment, though suitable and sufficient, cannot eliminate all potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff.	We continue to receive HR advice updates and monitor the emerging evidence from NHS England showing that black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities are disproportionately affected by COVID-19.  Where additional advice becomes available this will feed into the ongoing review of our COVID-19 risk assessment, thereby mitigating against potential risk.
Religion and Belief	There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on religion/belief.	There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on religion/belief.	There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on religion/belief but will monitor this as part of the ongoing review of our risk assessment.
Disability	By adhering to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment ensures that we follow current government, H&S and HR advice as to how Disability may impact on those who can return to work, the circumstances of such a return and who should still remain at home.	There is no evidence that our risk assessment will have a negative impact on disability.  Our risk assessment, though suitable and sufficient, cannot eliminate all potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff.	We have taken into consideration the advice provided from Government, in addition to HR and H&S in formulating our covid-19 risk assessment. Taking account of the clear evidence from NHS England that specific disabilities and illnesses have a disproportionate impact on any COVID-19 infection.

	See separate CV/CEV section below.		Where additional advice becomes available this will feed into the ongoing review of our COVID-19 risk assessment, thereby mitigating against potential risk.
Gender (and Gender Identity)	<p><u>By adhering to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment ensures that we follow current government, H&amp;S and HR advice as to how Gender may impact on those who can return to work, the circumstances of such a return and who should still remain at home.</u></p> <p><u>There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on Gender Identity</u></p> <p><del>There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on Gender/Gender Identity.</del></p>	<p><u>There is no evidence that our risk assessment will have a negative impact on Gender.</u></p> <p><u>Our risk assessment, though suitable and sufficient, cannot eliminate all potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff.</u></p> <p><u>There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on Gender Identity</u></p> <p><del>There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on Gender/Gender Identity.</del></p>	<p><u>We continue to receive HR advice updates and monitor the emerging evidence from NHS England showing that Men are disproportionately affected by COVID-19.</u></p> <p><u>Where additional advice becomes available this will feed into the ongoing review of our COVID-19 risk assessment, thereby mitigating against potential risk.</u></p> <p><del>There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on Gender/Gender Identity but will monitor this as part of the ongoing review of our risk assessment.</del></p>
Sexual Orientation	There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on sexual orientation.	There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on sexual orientation.	There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on sexual orientation but will monitor this as part of the ongoing review of our risk assessment.

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Age	<p>Adhering to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will ensure that we follow current government, H&amp;S and HR advice as to how age may impact on who can return to work, the circumstances of such a return and those who should still remain at home.</p>	<p>There is no evidence that our risk assessment will have a negative impact on age.</p> <p>Our risk assessment, though suitable and sufficient, cannot eliminate all potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff.</p>	<p>We have taken into consideration the advice provided from Government, in addition to HR and H&amp;S in formulating our covid-19 risk assessment. We recognise that age may be a determining factor in identifying some staff as clinically vulnerable (CV) requiring specific measures and support identified within our covid-19 risk assessment.</p> <p>Where additional advice becomes available this will feed into the ongoing review of our COVID-19 risk assessment, thereby mitigating against potential risk.</p>
Pregnancy/Maternity	<p>Adhering to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will ensure that we follow current government, H&amp;S and HR advice as to how Pregnancy / Maternity may impact on who can return to work, the circumstances of such a return and who should still remain at home.</p> <p>Staff who are pregnant – see separate CV section below.</p>	<p>There is no evidence that our risk assessment will have a negative impact on pregnancy.</p> <p>Our risk assessment, though suitable and sufficient, cannot eliminate all potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff.</p>	<p>We recognise that Pregnancy is a determining factor in identifying applicable staff as clinically vulnerable (CV) requiring specific measures and support identified within our covid-19 risk assessment.</p> <p>Where additional advice becomes available this will feed into the ongoing review of our COVID-19 risk assessment, thereby mitigating against potential risk.</p>

			See CV section below in relation to staff designated as clinically vulnerable.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on marriage and civil partnership.	There is no evidence that our risk assessment will have a negative impact on marriage and civil partnership.	There is no evidence that COVID-19 may impact on marriage and civil partnership but will monitor this as part of the ongoing review of our risk assessment.
Staff groups identified as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV)	Adhering to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will ensure that we follow current government, H&S and HR advice on the working arrangements for staff identified as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV).	There is no evidence that our risk assessment will have a negative impact on staff identified as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable.  Our risk assessment, though suitable and sufficient, cannot eliminate all potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff.	Our Covid-19 risk assessment will be under ongoing review to take account of updated guidance from Government / H&S / HR as to the safe working arrangements for staff identified as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable.
Staff groups identified as Clinically Vulnerable (CV)	Adhering to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will ensure that we follow current government, H&S and HR advice on the working arrangements for staff identified as Clinically Vulnerable (CV).	There is no evidence that our risk assessment will have a negative impact on staff identified as Clinically Vulnerable.  Our risk assessment, though suitable and sufficient, cannot	Our Covid-19 risk assessment will be under ongoing review to take account of updated guidance from Government / H&S / HR as to the safe working arrangements for staff identified as Clinically Vulnerable

		eliminate all potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff.	
<p><b>7.a)</b> If you have indicated there is a negative impact on any Equality Target group, answer the following:</p> <p>Is the impact legal/lawful? (i.e. You must ensure that it is not discriminatory under anti-discriminatory legislation). Seek advice from your School link HR Advisor if necessary</p> <p>Is the impact intended?</p>	<p>As we have a risk assessment in place specifically to ensure a positive impact this section of the EIA is not applicable.</p>		
<p><b>7.b)</b> Could you minimise or improve any negative impact? Use the space below to detail how.</p>	<p>As above – this risk assessment is not recording a negative impact</p>		
<p><b>7.c)</b> Is it possible to consider a different policy/strategy/action, which still achieves your aim, but avoids any adverse impact on equality?</p>	<p>We have a COVID-19 risk assessment in place to specifically negate any negative impact of a wider opening of school on our staff.</p>		
<p><b>7.d)</b> In light of the information on this form; what practical actions would you take to reduce or remove any adverse/negative impact?</p>	<p>Our COVID-19 risk assessment is in place to specifically negate any negative impact of a wider opening of school on our staff. By ensuring periodic review we are considering most recent advice and guidance from Government / H&amp;S / HR and impact on identified groups is therefore minimised.</p>		

## PART 2 - CONCLUSION

<p><b>8.a)</b> As a result of the assessment and consultation completed at Stage 1 above, please note any changes made to the policy, project or planned action.</p>	<p><a href="#">The risk assessment will be under periodic review to ensure it reflects most recent advice from Government / H&amp;S / HR. Where deemed this requires further consultation then Stage 1 of the school IEA should be reviewed/amended as necessary and Stage 2 completed.</a></p>
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8.b) As a result of this assessment and consultation, does the school need to commission specific research on this issue or carry out monitoring/data collection?	<u>School will ensure there is a system in place to monitor and review the risk assessment in light of changing guidance from the DfE in relation to the slow the wider opening of schools until such time as there is no longer a threat from the COVID-19 virus.</u>
9) Have you set up a monitoring/evaluation/review process to check the successful implementation of the policy, project or change?	<u>The school will review all risk assessments on a monthly basis, or more often if and when new guidance is issued by the DfE</u>
Signed:	On behalf of the Governing Body
Name:	
Role:	
Date:	

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