

COVID-19 Safety Risk Review

This **Safety Risk Review** document applies to all schools, and outlines some key health, safety and wellbeing hazards for which schools should plan. It links to the controls prescribed by the latest health and safety guidance, and the supports available. It is designed to support the ongoing revision of the [COVID Safe Plan](#), in conjunction with the [School Operations Guide](#).

School leadership should consult with local Health and Safety Representative(s) and Health and Safety Committee(s) (where applicable) to implement the recommended controls as far as reasonably practicable.

The MACS OHS team and Diocesan education offices are available for Principals and School Leaders to contact for information, support and guidance.

Schools are encouraged to use CEVN or their local school incident report process to report hazards, incidents and injuries, as well as escalation for further supports when required.

This plan covers four key areas of risk, listed as 'hazard types':

- Infectious Disease (Infection Prevention and Control) – page 2
- Working Alone, in Isolation or from Home – page 10
- Occupational Violence and Aggression – page 11
- Mental Health and Wellbeing – page 11

See page 16 for the Risk Matrix used to assign a Risk Rating.

| Hazard Type | Hazard Description | Risk Rating | Recommended Controls | Examples of practical solutions | Residual Rating |
|---|---|-----------------|--|---|-----------------|
| <p>Infectious Disease (Infection Prevention and Control)</p> | <p>Additional personnel onsite; personnel may contract disease through social interactions. Congregation of non-school essential personnel.</p> | <p>H</p> | <p>Refer to health and safety measures for return to onsite learning in the School Operations Guide context of COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Promote COVIDSafe Activities:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Adapt, modify or defer higher-risk activities</i> – <i>Reinforce COVIDSafe Behaviours</i> – <i>Managing safe school arrival and departures including multiple entries and consider staggered starts</i> – <i>Ensure physical distancing</i> | <p>Schools are not required to collect, record or hold vaccination information about its workers for them to be permitted to work onsite.</p> <p>Parents, carers and other adult visitors (not performing work) are not required to show evidence of COVID-19 vaccination.</p> <p>Schools are not required to check the vaccination status of external staff at external venues.</p> <p>Upon arrival at the campus or office, staff, students, visitors and contractors to be reminded to ‘stay home if unwell’. They will be asked to confirm if they or anyone at home have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - experienced fever or flu-like symptoms, such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue - experienced shortness of breath - been in close contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19. <p>If upon arrival or during the day anyone exhibits COVID-19 symptoms, they will be immediately isolated. An incident report will be completed and the person encouraged to self-isolate until they can be tested and receive the result.</p> | <p>M</p> |

| Hazard Type | Hazard Description | Risk Rating | Recommended Controls | Examples of practical solutions | Residual Rating |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------------|--|-----------------|
| | | | | <p>Everyone over eight years old must wear a face mask when travelling to and from school on public transport, taxis or ride share vehicles.</p> <p>A face mask must cover the nose and mouth. Face shields, scarves or bandanas do not meet these requirements.</p> <p>All visitors attending schools, including for drop-off and pick-up, are encouraged to maintain good COVIDSafe practices including physical distancing, respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene. It is recommended mask wearing be considered when physical distancing cannot be maintained or when congregating in large groups.</p> <p>Please refer to the <u>School Operations Guide</u> for further information.</p> <p>Circulate the latest advice, including displaying onsite and gate signage. Regularly assess staff in attendance at the workplace to maximise physical distancing and reconfiguration of spaces.</p> <p>Replace higher risk activities with online/virtual alternatives.</p> <p>Exemption for essential workers to return to work following a close / household contact</p> <p>Under these settings, school staff who are household contacts will also need to take the</p> | |

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|-------------|--|-------------|--|--|-----------------|
| | | | | <p>following steps when attending school during their isolation period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertake a daily rapid antigen test for five days and return a negative result prior to • attending work each day and report the result to their school daily (tests will be provided by the school) • always wear a mask, including while teaching and in the company of others, except for when eating or drinking. Using a P2/N95 mask, or TGA-approved P2-equivalent mask, is strongly recommended. • not enter shared break or work areas including staff rooms • when travelling to and from work the staff member must not carpool and should, where possible, avoid public transport • work in areas where transmission risk is lower (outside where possible and safe, or in large, well-ventilated spaces) • other than when attending school, staff must quarantine in accordance with public health requirements • Schools will be supplied with rapid antigen tests and P2/N95 masks, or TGA-approved P2-equivalent masks to provide to staff who are working in this category. | |
| | Being aware of all personnel movements on and off site | H | Establish a process to record the attendance of staff, students, contractors and visitors. | Use of school sign in and out protocols for ALL personnel that enter site. | L |

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|-------------|---|-------------|--|---|-----------------|
| | <p>Staff and students may contract disease through social interactions.</p> <p>Physical distancing is unable to be maintained (for example, in specialist school settings).</p> | E | <p>Refer to health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the School Operations Guide context of COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Provision of routine care and first aid</i> – <i>Adapt, modify or defer higher risk activities</i> – <i>Promote COVIDSafe Activities: Use of school facilities and playgrounds</i> – <i>Reduce mixing between groups and create workforce bubbles</i> – <i>Reinforce COVIDSafe Behaviours: Ensure physical distancing</i> – <i>Practice good hygiene</i> – <i>Avoid interactions in close spaces</i> <p>Physical Distancing poster</p> <p>Completion of COVID Safe plan</p> <p>Staff who may be medically vulnerable are to seek advice from their medical practitioner regarding onsite attendance.</p> | <p>Circulate the latest advice, including displaying onsite signage.</p> <p>Conduct regular visual inspections of the workplace to check that recommended risk controls are implemented and working effectively.</p> <p>Escalate issues to the regional leadership consultants or the Diocesan office if issues cannot be resolved locally.</p> | M |
| | <p>A confirmed case (or a close contact of a confirmed case) may occur among staff, students or the school community.</p> <p>Persons attending site whilst unwell.</p> | E | <p>Refer to health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the School Operations Guide context of COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Respond to COVID-19 Risk: Management of an unwell student of staff member</i> | <p>Circulate information about COVID related symptoms to all members of the school community.</p> <p>Communicate the need to stay home to staff and students if feeling unwell, are awaiting a test result or have a positive test result.</p> | M |

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|-------------|---|-------------|---|---|-----------------|
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reinforce COVIDSafe Behaviours: Stay home when unwell – Required actions for suspected cases of coronavirus in staff | Communicate and display the isolation procedure for staff and students if they become unwell at school. | |
| | <p>Staff and students may spread or contract disease by touching.</p> <p>Lack of awareness of infection control measures.</p> | E | <p>Refer to health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the School Operations Guide context of COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reinforce COVIDSafe Behaviours – Promote COVIDSafe Activities – Create COVIDSafe Spaces <p>Training: School and Early Childhood Infection Prevention and Control During Coronavirus (COVID-19)</p> <p>Reduce your risk of coronavirus- Poster Wash your hands regularly - poster Cover your cough and sneeze - poster Be a Soapy Hero! - poster</p> | <p>Location of hand sanitiser stations throughout the worksite including entry points and occupied rooms</p> <p>Ensuring rubbish bins are available to dispose of paper towels</p> <p>Ensuring adequate supplies of soap and sanitiser</p> <p>Ensuring staff and students have information on how and when to wash and sanitise their hands correctly</p> <p>Ensure staff are trained in relevant infection control measures. The School and Early Childhood Infection Prevention and Control During Coronavirus (COVID-19) training module should be completed.</p> <p>Display appropriate infection control signage/posters.</p> <p>Consider adjusting how staff and students interact within the built environment to reduce contact with certain surfaces. For example, a simple measure such as keeping a door open will reduce the need for multiple people to touch the door handle.</p> | M |

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|-------------|--|-------------|---|--|-----------------|
| | Local supplies of personal hygiene products may be limited. Misuse of hand sanitiser including ingestion. | H | Ensure the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) is obtained from the manufacturer for the hand sanitiser and any additional cleaning products used within the school. Ensure adequate supervision and safe storage of supplies. | Chemicals to be listed on SDS register and SDS located in easily accessible location. Hand sanitisers to be located in fixed positions at entry/exit points in well supervised areas. | L |
| | Staff and students may contract disease by touching contaminated surfaces. | E | Refer to health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the School Operations context of COVID-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reinforce COVIDSafe Behaviours: Practice good hygiene - Create COVIDSafe Spaces: Keep surfaces clean - Promote COVIDSafe Activities: Use of school facilities and playgrounds - Use of woodwind instruments, singing, voice projection and dance - Cleaning and personal hygiene products | <p>Liaise with local service providers for tailored implementation at specific site/s.</p> <p>Consider adjustment of school timetables and use of specialist rooms and shared facilities.</p> <p>Consider local staggering of break times and separating different classes or year levels when outdoors.</p> <p>Eliminate or minimise using shared equipment at this time. Such items may include shared computers, class sets of teaching and learning materials, and musical instruments. If used, strict hand hygiene should be followed before and after use. Risk can be further minimised with users wiping down items where appropriate, for example using a disinfectant/detergent wipe or cloth.</p> <p>Replace high-touch communal items with alternatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Swapping shared coffee and condiments for single serve sachets - Installing no touch amenities such as contactless taps, rubbish bins and soap dispensers | H |

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| | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid sharing of equipment such as phones, desks, headsets, offices, tools or other equipment - Provide staff with their own personal equipment, labelled with their name - Removal of reusable shared kitchen sponges/cleaning products to replace with paper towel dispensers <p>For prep and younger student cohorts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - allocate individual zip lock bags for stationary - Removal of fabric/plush style play items | |
| | Contaminated surfaces – general cleaning | E | <p>Refer to health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the School Operations context of COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Cleaning and personal hygiene products</i> - <i>Create COVIDSafe Spaces: Keep surfaces clean</i> <p><u>Enhanced School Cleaning Guideline</u></p> <p>Ensure adequate supplies of cleaning products, including detergent and disinfectant.</p> | <p>Liaise with local cleaning providers on increased cleaning requirements.</p> <p>Shared staff spaces cleaned at regular intervals. Identify high touch surfaces (lift buttons, door and cupboard handles, kitchen counters, touch screens, shared work equipment).</p> <p>Provide information about workplace cleaning schedule and how to use cleaning products.</p> <p>Identify which products are required for thorough cleaning.</p> <p>Monitor supplies of cleaning products and regularly restock.</p> <p>Consider adjusting how staff and students interact within the built environment to reduce contact with certain surfaces. For example, a simple measure such as keeping a door open</p> | H |

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| | Contaminated surfaces – cleaning after a confirmed case | E | CECV Infectious Cleaning Guidelines | will reduce the need for multiple people to touch the door handle. Prior identification of a resource that can provide Infectious Cleaning services in accordance with DH cleaning guidelines. | M |
| | Staff and students may contract disease through the air. | H | Refer to health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the School Operations Guide context of COVID-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Create COVIDSafe Spaces:</i> <i>Promote outdoor air ventilation</i> – <i>Reinforce COVIDSafe Behaviours:</i> <i>Face masks in schools</i> | Install air purification devices in higher-risk areas in such as staff rooms, sick bays, music rooms and other high traffic areas. Turn on mechanical ventilation, where available and practicable, is to run systems during school hours including when rooms are unoccupied, and if possible ideally 2 hours before and after the use of a space. Where available, timers can be used to manage operation. Air conditioners may be used to provide thermal comfort, however if they cannot use outside air, then they need to be used with other ventilation strategies. Using more than one ventilation method creates greater opportunity to create a comfortable learning environment and maximising ventilation. Door jambs should be used to keep air circulating and avoid the need to close and open doors. Rearrange group activities to occur outdoors or in large indoor spaces. | M |

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| | | | | Provide training to staff on good hygiene practices and slowing the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). | |
| | Vulnerable Workforce (higher risk of serious illness). | E | Refer to health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the School Operations Guide context of COVID-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff who may be medically vulnerable | Ensure consultation with your staff, and incorporate into workforce planning. | L |
| | Inadequate confirmed case response | H | Coronavirus reactive closure: steps for principals Coronavirus: School Closure – Reactive Communications Pack School Operations Guide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Respond to COVID-19 Risk: Management of an unwell student or staff member – School site closures – Required actions for suspected cases of coronavirus in staff CECV Covid-19 Response Team | Process communicated to staff in staff meeting | M |
| Working Alone, in Isolation or from Home | The home work environment may cause injury (noise, lighting, thermal comfort, and slips, trips and falls). | M | Refer to the CECV – Agile working guidelines template . | Promote the OHS advice and support to staff. | L |
| | Staff may suffer musculoskeletal disorders by adopting static postures while using laptops, portable devices or personal computers. | M | | Enable reasonable access to available school equipment. | L |
| | Increased isolation (on-site and/or at home) may increase risk of injury. | M | | Proactively plan with staff who have a known pre-existing injury. | L |

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|---|--|-------------|--|---|-----------------|
| | | | | Establish protocols for regular check-ins with staff. | |
| Occupational Violence and Aggression | Online, over the phone or other remote threatening or aggressive behaviour by students, parents/carers, school staff or other members of school community. | H | Refer to local Occupational violence or Codes of conduct. If required, create or update occupational violence policies and procedures using the following CECV templates and the Safe and Sound Practice Guidelines : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent-school relationship code of conduct template Managing challenging and aggressive behaviours procedure template Complaints policy template In the event of mental health and wellbeing concerns, utilise the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and contact your local Diocese or regional office with further queries. If required, create mental health and wellbeing policy using the following CECV template: Mental wellbeing policy template | Ensure onsite staff are ready to manage the resumption of onsite learning. | M |
| | On-site violence, bullying or harassment by students, parents/ carers, school staff or other members of school community. | H | | Encourage parental and community support and understanding in the transition between learning from home and return to onsite learning. | M |
| | Staff experiencing stress or anxiety stemming from exposure to increasing onsite or online occupational violence and aggression from parents. | H | | Set expectations for behaviour with the school community, and promote appropriate ways for parents to raise their concerns. | M |
| | | | | Discuss extra supports or strategies for staff who engage with anyone known to present a risk. Encourage staff to report incidents, de-brief, and seek escalated support (e.g. through EAP) if required. | M |
| Mental Health and Wellbeing | Staff experiencing changes to workload (increase/decrease) from modifications in tasks and priorities. | H | In the event of mental health and wellbeing concerns, utilise the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and contact your local Diocese or regional office with further queries. | Consult (check-in) with your staff on how they are managing with the current situation, encourage managers to be flexible, and support meetings in outdoor spaces and remote contact between colleagues. | M |
| | Balancing non-work-related demands (e.g. caring responsibilities). | H | | | M |
| | Staff experiencing stress or anxiety regarding increased engagement with parent/carers in the delivery of learning from home. | H | | Have regular conversations to provide as much clarity and flexibility as possible about tasks, | M |

| Hazard Type | Hazard Description | Risk Rating | Recommended Controls | Examples of practical solutions | Residual Rating |
|-------------|---|-------------|--|---|-----------------|
| | Staff experiencing disengagement and low morale regarding clarity of tasks, team roles and evolving priorities. | H | <p>If required, create mental health and wellbeing policy using the following CECV template:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental wellbeing policy template <p>Video and telephone counselling are available via the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for all staff and their immediate family members.</p> <p>Contact your Diocesan office for further information regarding the Employee Assistance Programs available for your Diocese.</p> <p>Information, resources and webinars to support staff are available at: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Wellbeing Resources</p> | priorities and the way work can be delivered (e.g. adapt, modify or defer high risk activities). | M |
| | Staff experiencing uncertainty, stress, and anxiety from multiple transitions in modes of teaching and learning delivery, and return to onsite arrangements. | M | | When a transition occurs either to or from remote learning, consider how best to enable staff to respond to the transition and adjust their planning to suit. | M |
| | Staff experiencing uncertainty and anxiety about the COVID-19 risks to their personal health (especially if working onsite). | E | | Talk with staff about how they can limit screen time and consult with staff about strategies for managing emails. | M |
| | Staff experiencing isolation and changes in levels of support from leaders and colleagues as a result of the changed arrangements. | H | | Encourage staff to take scheduled screen breaks | M |
| | Aggravation of stress caused by pre-existing conditions (e.g. existing mental health conditions, disabilities, vulnerable cohorts and staff on leave, including Workers' Compensation or sick leave). | E | | Encourage staff to take wellbeing time. | H |
| | | | Consider pausing the introduction of any new initiatives or additional professional development activities | | |
| | | | Limit meeting duration and record meetings to enable flexibility in attending | | |
| | | | Encourage staff to use EAP and other supports and resources available. | | |
| | | | Ensure there are adjusted return to work strategies for people on sick leave or Workers' Compensation. | | |

Risk Matrix

| Consequence | Description |
|-------------|--|
| Negligible | No treatment required |
| Minor | Minor injury requiring first aid treatment |
| Moderate | Minor injury requiring treatment by doctor |
| Significant | Serious injury requiring specialist medical treatment or hospitalisation |
| Severe | Loss of life, permanent disability or multiple serious injuries |

| Likelihood | Description |
|---------------|--|
| Very Unlikely | Will only occur in exceptional circumstances |
| Unlikely | Not likely to occur in normal circumstances |
| Possible | May occur at some time |
| Likely | Expected to occur at some time |
| Very Likely | Expected to occur regularly under normal circumstances |

| | | Consequence | | | | |
|------------|---------------|-------------|-------|----------|-------------|--------|
| | | Negligible | Minor | Moderate | Significant | Severe |
| Likelihood | Very Likely | M | H | E | E | E |
| | Likely | M | M | H | E | E |
| | Possible | L | M | M | H | E |
| | Unlikely | L | L | M | M | H |
| | Very Unlikely | L | L | L | M | M |

Risk Level = L-Low, M-Moderate, H-High, E-Extreme.