EDUCATION RESOURCES

Safe System of Work (SSOW)

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Induction and briefing arrangements

All employees should be made aware of this Safe System of Work (SSOW).

Scope

This SSOW is intended to advise employees of the measures and actions required to minimise the risk of Covid 19 transmission in all educational establishments prior to, during and after the return of pupils in August 2020.

- Heads and other managers must monitor and enforce all of the measures contained within this SSOW, the Education Resources Minimising Covid-19 Exposure Generic Risk Assessment and any additional safety or public health advice.

- Employees must co-operate with managers in the application of workplace safety standards and must follow all the measures set out in this SSOW, associated risk assessments and safety alerts/bulletins.

It must be recognised that there will need to be flexibility in the use of this advice and some variation across areas depending on transmission rates within local communities. For example, given Scotland's current low prevalence, the Government has decided that it is appropriate to unlock restrictions on physical distancing for pupils in schools. However, if rates rise locally, then distancing and greater use of face coverings may be re-introduced.

A zero tolerance of infection symptoms will be in place and staff must follow strict compliance with national and local public health instructions including Test and Protect.

Risk Assessment

This SSOW supplements the information contained in the various Health and Safety Handbooks for Education Resources in the form of risk assessments and safe systems of work. It should be used in conjunction with SLC Risk Assessment "Covid-19 Exposure Minimisation" (Reference "Covid1") and the associated information provided in guidance document GD2 "Health and Safety Risk Assessment Guide Covid-19" available on the intranet. Also Education Resources Risk Assessment "Minimising Covid-19 Exposure – Schools and nurseries Re-opening full time from 11 August 2020 V2". This document supersedes previous SSOW related to SMT return to schools, Employee and Pupil (Childcare) Return and Risk Assessment "Minimising Covid-19 Exposure – Schools Re-opening to Pupils from 11 August 2020 ref Covid-19 SSOW (4) ER

What do we know about the spread of COVID-19?

There are two routes by which COVID-19 can be spread:

- **Directly** from close contact with an infected person (within two metres) where respiratory secretions can enter the eyes, mouth, nose or airways. This risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person who has symptoms.

- **Indirectly** by touching a surface, object or the hand of an infected person that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching own mouth, nose, or eyes.

How long can the virus survive on environmental surfaces?

This depends on several factors, including:

- the type of surface
- exposure to sunlight
- environmental conditions such as temperature and humidity and exposure of the surface to decontamination products e.g. detergents and disinfectants.

Under most circumstances, the amount of infectious virus on any contaminated surfaces is likely to have decreased significantly by 72 hours.

It's known that similar viruses, are transferred to and by people's hands and therefore frequent hand hygiene and regular decontamination of frequently touched environmental and equipment surfaces will help to reduce the risk of infection transmission.

What control measures can be applied within education and childcare settings during national restrictions?

Supporting vulnerable staff
Given current low levels of transmission in Scotland, those previously shielding are now following the same advice as the general population. Arrangements should be put in place for individual circumstances (such as those with underlying health conditions) in line with any specific clinical advice and assessment of risk, particularly where physical distancing cannot always be maintained. Staff should use the South Lanarkshire Council Self-Assessment form to help inform discussion with line managers on these issues.

Further advice on this issue is available from the Council's Personnel Team and at:

- Scottish Governments website - https://www.gov.scot/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance/
- South Lanarkshire Council website - My Works COVID-19 Employee Information https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/200254/employee_information/1871/covid-19_employee_information
- https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19

The concerns within BAME communities must be recognised and individual requests for additional protections should be supported where possible. Care should be taken to ensure that BAME staff, pupils and families are involved in decisions about additional protections.

These may include, where practicable, working from home, extended use of face covering, re-arranging workspace or minimising physical contact.

Staff should use the South Lanarkshire Council Covid-19 Self-Assessment form to inform discussions with their line manager on these matters.

National guidance on supports for those deemed vulnerable is subject to change and fluctuations in transmission rates. Staff deemed vulnerable should stay informed on these issues and review local arrangements accordingly with their line manager.

<u>Working from home</u>

It is acknowledged that the current national view is remote working should remain the default position for those who can do so. Depending on the task and the demands of the service at certain times there may be opportunity within an educational setting for home working.

Where aspects of working from home have been agreed locally, or agreed through Corporate Personnel if required, heads and other managers should take account of the employee's individual health status and:

- Arrange necessary support, equipment, advice and guidance.
- Keep in regular contact with employees working at home
- Ensure employees review the Council's "Remote Working Health and Safety Checklist" and managers carry out any required actions to ensure compliance - refer to SLC Health and Safety GD 3 Creating a Remote Workstation - http://intranet.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/20620/topics_of_interest/300/covid-19

<u>Self-isolation</u>

Anyone showing symptoms of infection or is within 14 days of the day when the first member of their household showed symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19) must not come to work but must follow national guidance on self-isolation.

<u>Physical Distancing</u>

All staff must follow physical distancing measures in place within their own establishment.

What if someone falls ill at work?

If an employee develops a high temperature, a new persistent cough, a loss of, or a change in, normal sense of smell or taste (anosmia) they should:

- Ensure that their manager or supervisor is informed.
- Return home. If this is not possible, they should move to an isolation area where the employee can wait until they are able to leave the workplace.
- Avoid touching anything.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue and put it in a bin.
- Follow Test and Protect guidance. Arrange for a test, follow the guidance on self-isolation and not return to work until their period of self-isolation has been completed.

What about travelling to and from work?

- Good hygiene measures should be followed to minimise transmission across high touch points.
- Physical distancing and other current government guidance (e.g. face coverings) should be followed when using public transport.
- Employees should follow the latest advice form Transport Scotland on Car Sharing and other means of transport. Currently, wherever possible car sharing should be avoided out with household groups. https://www.transport.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/transport-transition-plan/advice-on-how-to-travel-safely/#section-63888

What kind of practical arrangements can be put in place within educational establishments?

Arriving and leaving work

- Hand washing facilities or hand sanitiser must be provided at workplace entrance points.
- Employees must wash hands for 20 seconds using soap and water or hand sanitising gel (either anti-viral or if alcohol based then a minimum 60% alcohol content)
- Employees must avoid touching their face especially the eyes, nose and mouth.
- Signage posted at reception areas reminding employees of the importance of good hand hygiene and observing physical distancing measures.
- Limits on the use of touch-based devices such as keypads as far as practicable.
- Staggered start, finish and break times
- Additional entrance points to further reduce congestion taking account of security and fire arrangements
- Additional parking or bike-rack spaces to help people walk, run or cycle to work

Movement around the building including corridors (both staff and pupils)

- One-way or keep left systems to ensure a good flow of people around the workplace and in stairs and corridors consider using floor markings
- Limit non-essential movement around the building and restrict some areas in consultation with staff.
- Reduce maximum occupancy levels in rooms, lifts and other spaces using signage and markings.
- Ensure staff with limited mobility can access lifts.
- Stairs to be used in preference to lifts for those able to do so.

Workplaces and workstations

- An enhanced cleaning regime will be in place (see below). Cleaning regime information sheet available with establishments. Weekly electrostatic spray, daily clean and during the day high density touch point cleaning.
- Staff should keep workspaces free of clutter to assist enhanced cleaning
- Reviews of office and classroom layouts to maintain physical distancing
- Signage and floor markings to remind employees to regularly wash their hands, use resources provided and maintain physical distancing.
- Avoid sharing desks and other resources. Any shared equipment should be cleaned between use.
- Keep main reception windows closed.
- Visitors to workplaces to be kept to a minimum and access controlled.
- Employees and visitors must not to enter the building if they have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Where safe to do so it is good practice to keep windows and doors open to increase natural ventilation and reduce contact with door handles. Internal fire doors should never be held open (unless assessed and provided with appropriate hold open and self-closing mechanisms which respond to the actuation of the fire alarm system).
- Although Health Protection Scotland regard this as a non-airborne virus we have taken the following industry guidance from REHVA (European Collaboration Network):
    - Ventilation Systems bring air into and extract air out of buildings and therefore should remain active – these have been switched on 24/7.
    - Where air conditioning units cannot be fully fresh air intake these will be switched off.
        - The opening windows or doors in these areas (except fire doors) should be used to regulate heat alongside the ventilation system.
        - Server rooms will remain on as no personnel occupy these spaces.

Meeting Rooms and other common areas

- Use remote working tools (e.g. MS Teams) to limit in-person meetings.
- Make use of larger free or outdoor space
- Hygiene and distancing signage / markings in areas where regular meetings take place.
- Numbers of participants attending meetings should be minimal.

- Weekly and daily cleaning undertaken. In addition hand sanitiser/anti-viral wipes available.
- Review room layouts to maintain physical distancing
- Weekly and daily cleaning, with personal responsibility during the day, e,g, wipes.

Hygiene Facilities

- Hand washing facilities in the form of soap and running hot water must be provided.
- Hand sanitising gel (either anti-viral or if alcohol based then a minimum 60% alcohol content) must also be provided within offices, reception areas and throughout the building. Care should be taken in practical areas where naked flames can present an ignition risk. Soap and water is preferred in these areas.
- Soap and hand sanitiser gel will be replenished as necessary to ensure there is an adequate supply.
- Staff should use paper towels provided rather than hand dryers.
- When applying hand sanitiser gel allow the gel to dry fully before commencing work activities.
- Restrictions on the number of people using toilet facilities at any one time. Signage posted to provide specific guidance.
- Enhanced cleaning regimes established for toilet facilities particularly door handles, locks, toilet seats, flush and waste receptacles will be in place.
- Bins will be emptied regularly
- Signage posted to raise awareness of good hand hygiene; in particular handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing frequency, avoid touching your face and to cough or sneeze into a tissue which is binned safely or into your arm if a tissue is not available.
- Where staff use shower and changing facilities, clear guidelines on use should be established to ensure they are kept clean and clear of personal items and physical distancing guidelines are met.

Staffroom and other welfare areas

- It is recommended that staff bring their own prepared meals, drinks and utensils from home
- Water dispensers can be used with care and those doing so should sanitise their hands before and after use. To reduce usage, staff and pupils should bring their own filled bottle each day which can be topped up during the day if required. Direct access by primary aged children should be avoided. Supervision may be necessary.
- Kettles, microwaves, toasters and other kitchen equipment and furniture can still be used provided staff adopt regular cleaning. Otherwise they may be removed from use.
- Staggered break times to avoid congestion.
- Hand cleaning facilities or hand sanitising gel (either anti-viral or if alcohol based then a minimum 60% alcohol content) should be available in staffrooms
- Review room layouts to maintain physical distancing
- Signage posted to make employees are aware the rules in place regarding welfare arrangements.

Deliveries

- Cleaning procedures to be established for goods and merchandise entering the workplace.
- Delivery drivers should have clear guidance on using toilets and other facilities
- Enhanced hand hygiene regime for employees who handle goods and merchandise.
- Restrict non-business deliveries, for example, personal deliveries to employees.

Visitors

- Members of the public or visitors should be discouraged from visiting the premises for business purposes until further notice. Instead, members of the public or visitors should be encouraged to use alternative

methods of communication to contact the council which avoid the need for face-to-face contact such as e-mail, online services or telephone.

▪ In circumstances where members of the public do visit the premises the following additional measures should be adopted:

- Guidance on physical distancing and hygiene should be explained to visitors on or before arrival. This can take the form of visual aids, signage or before arrival via e-mail, telephone or internet.
- Strict application of physical distancing guidelines at the building entrance and inside the premises. This can be achieved with the use of signage, floor markings and tape.
- Control of numbers of persons entering the building at any one time e.g. 'one in, one out'
- Use of signage, floor markings and barriers as appropriate to designate entry/exit points, one-way / keep left systems
- Keep windows closed at reception areas where employees interact directly with members of the public and other visitors
- Minimise the numbers of employees who interact with the public and the duration of these interactions.
- Enhanced regime of cleaning of surfaces in public areas and office equipment
- Limiting visitor times to a specific time period
- Make a record of all visits by asking them to sign the visitor book. When signing in visitors should use their own pen.
- Contractors undertaking maintenance or other work should contact the school first to discuss the most appropriate times, ideally out with the school day.

What arrangements are in place for pupils?

Our approach to pupils returning in August 2020, in partnership with Trade Union and Health and Safety colleagues, is detailed in the Minimising Covid-19 Exposure General Risk Assessment and falls across three key areas:

Personal Hygiene

For example:
- Clear guidance and age appropriate instruction on hand washing / sanitising
- Provision of personal resources to be kept in school
- Clear instruction for pupils showing symptoms

Environmental Hygiene

For example:
- Enhanced cleaning regime using the most up to date methods
- Start back kits for schools including PPE
- Arrangements for quick response and full clean if positive case confirmed

Physical Distancing

For example:
- Measures to decrease the amount of physical interactions
- No large gatherings
- Maximum use of outdoor space

It should be noted that, given the current low prevalence of infections in Scotland, the Scottish Government has eased some restrictions on physical distancing for pupils in school. Should this prevalence increase locally however, additional controls may require to be introduced including blended learning and reconfiguring classrooms. This will be discussed fully with school management teams and other stakeholders and all staff informed of any changes.

Other Health and Safety Arrangements

Heads and managers will provide staff with full information on local arrangements for:
- Reporting concerns and seeking advice
- Schools reopening – including general risk assessment
- Good quality dialogue with staff, parents and pupils on progress
- Test and Protect
- Fast access to Covid-19 testing for staff and pupils
- Any enhanced surveillance programmes adopted by the school

Wellbeing

All staff should be fully aware of the supports available to them including those via the Council's Employee Assistance Scheme.

First Aid

- Provide first aid to a person who may become injured due to a work activity per revised guidelines, including protection of both the injured person and the first aider(s) and appropriate PPE required – additional detail provided to First Aiders..
- Sanitation and cleaning provisions are in place afterwards including handwashing.
- First aid cover and qualifications during COVID-19 outbreak refer to - https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/first-aid-certificate-coronavirus.htm
- Amend the First Aid Assessment where necessary and review at appropriate intervals.

Fire Evacuation

- Heads have been asked to review fire evacuation arrangements to take account of physical distancing. Any changes to the existing arrangements will be communicated to all staff and pupils.
- Review fire evacuation arrangements (EFAP) and (PEEPs) to ensure control measures are adequate.
- Ensure an adequate number of Fire Controllers are available.

Cleaning Regime

Heads and managers will ensure enhanced cleaning arrangements are implemented across all workplaces, particularly in communal areas and at touchpoints including:
- Welfare facilities including toilets, sinks, taps etc.
- Door handles and push plates.
- Food preparation areas including electrical appliances.
- Telephone equipment.
- Desks.
- Keyboards, photocopiers and other equipment.

Effective means of cleaning these areas/items will involve the use of Covid Guard Solution, anti-viral wipes (or equivalent) or alcohol-based wipes with a minimum alcohol content of 60%.

Suspected case of COVID-19 in the workplace

If there has been a known or suspected case of COVID-19 in the workplace the following guidance should be referred to: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings

Face coverings

Adults in schools do not need to wear face coverings as long as they can maintain two metre distancing. Where adults cannot keep two metre distance, are interacting face-to-face and for about 15 minutes or more, face coverings should be worn.

Note that a face covering is not the same as a medical face mask. If a face covering is worn it is important the following measures are followed:

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and after removing it.
- Avoid touching the face or face covering as it could become easily contaminated.
- The face covering should be changed if it has been touched.
- Practice good standards of hand hygiene.
- The face covering should be changed and washed daily.
- If the material is washable, wash it in line with manufacturer's instructions at a minimum water temperature of 60C. If it's not washable, dispose of it carefully in the normal waste stream.
- Continue to practice physical distancing.

Communication

It is important that Heads and other managers engage with all employees and their representatives to ensure that these measures are adopted effectively and consistently.

Further support and advice

Further support and advice on managing this risk is available locally from Education Support Services Co-ordinators, Trade Union representatives and from the Council's Health and Safety Team.