

# 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 \(Term 4\)](#).

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 CEM 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.

**New in this revision:** the [School and Early Childhood Infection Prevention and Control During Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) training module (p.4).

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 8
- Occupational Violence and Aggression – page 8
- Mental Health and Wellbeing – page 9

See page 10 for the Risk Matrix used to assign a Risk Rating.

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Risk Rating	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions	Residual Rating
Infectious Disease (Infection Prevention and Control)	Additional personnel onsite; personnel may contract disease through social interactions. Congregation of non-school essential personnel.	H	Refer to health and safety measures for return to onsite learning in the <a href="#">School Operations Guide (Term 2 2021). Updated 3.6.21</a> context of COVID-19: <i>Promote COVIDSafe Activities:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Adapt, modify or defer higher-risk activities</i></li> <li>– <i>School graduations</i></li> <li>– <i>Reinforce COVIDSafe Behaviours</i></li> <li>– <i>Managing safe school arrival and departures including multiple entries and staggered starts</i></li> <li>– <i>Ensure physical distancing</i></li> <li>– <i>Face masks in schools</i></li> </ul>	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.  Replace higher risk activities with online/virtual alternatives.	M
	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 (online or paper based) for ALL personnel that enter site.	L
	Staff and students may contract disease through social interactions.  Physical distancing is unable to be maintained (for example, in specialist school settings).	E	Refer to health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the <a href="#">School Operations Guide (Term 2 2021). Updated 3.6.21</a> context of COVID-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Provision of routine care and first aid</i></li> <li>– <i>Adapt, modify or defer higher risk activities</i></li> <li>– <i>Promote COVIDSafe Activities: Use of school facilities and playgrounds</i></li> <li>– <i>Reduce mixing between groups and create workforce bubbles</i></li> </ul>	Circulate the latest advice, including displaying onsite signage.  Implement the density quotient or cap (i.e. one person per 4sqm) in staff lunchrooms and areas accessed by the public, such as reception. Display signage or posters to reflect the new limit.  Rearrange, remove or cordon off furniture in common areas to ensure physical distancing,	M

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Risk Rating	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions	Residual Rating
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Reinforce COVIDSafe Behaviours: Ensure physical distancing</li> <li>– Practice good hygiene</li> <li>– Avoid interactions in close spaces</li> <li>– Face masks in schools if required</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Physical Distancing poster</a></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>stagger seating so staff are not facing one another on break.</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>	
	<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>	<b>E</b>	<p>Refer to health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the <a href="#">School Operations Guide (Term 2, 2021), Updated 3.6.21</a> context of COVID-19:</p> <p><i>Respond to COVID-19 Risk: Management of an unwell student or staff member</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Reinforce COVIDSafe Behaviours: Stay home when unwell</li> <li>– Required actions for suspected cases of coronavirus in staff</li> </ul>	<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> <p>Communicate and display the isolation procedure for staff and students if they become unwell at school.</p>	<b>M</b>
	<p>Staff and students may spread or contract disease by touching.</p> <p>Lack of awareness of infection control measures.</p>	<b>E</b>	<p>Refer to health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the <a href="#">School Operations Guide (Term 2, 2021), Updated 3.6.21</a> context of COVID-19:– Reinforce COVIDSafe Behaviours</p>	<p>Location of hand sanitiser stations throughout the worksite including entry points and occupied rooms</p>	<b>M</b>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Promote COVIDSafe Activities</li> <li>– Create COVIDSafe Spaces</li> </ul> <p>Training: Certificate completion of Infection prevention and control in schools and early childhood during coronavirus (COVID-19)</p> <p><a href="#">Reduce your risk of coronavirus- Poster</a> <a href="#">Wash your hands regularly - poster</a> <a href="#">Cover your cough and sneeze - poster</a></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 <a href="#">School and Early Childhood Infection Prevention and Control During Coronavirus (COVID-19)</a> training module should be completed.</p> <p>Display appropriate infection control signage/posters.</p>	
	Local supplies of personal hygiene products may be limited. Misuse of hand sanitiser including ingestion.	<b>H</b>	<p>Ensure the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) is obtained from the manufacturer for the hand sanitiser and any additional cleaning products used within the school.</p> <p>Ensure adequate supervision and safe storage of supplies.</p>	<p>Chemicals to be listed on SDS register and SDS located in easily accessible location.</p> <p>Hand sanitisers to be located in fixed positions at entry/exit points in well supervised areas.</p>	<b>L</b>
	Staff and students may contract disease by touching contaminated surfaces.	<b>E</b>	<p>Refer to health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the <a href="#">School Operations Guide (Term 2 2021) Updated 3.6.21</a> context of COVID-19:</p>	<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>	<b>H</b>

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Risk Rating	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions	Residual Rating
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Reinforce COVIDSafe Behaviours: Practice good hygiene</li> <li>– Create COVIDSafe Spaces: Keep surfaces clean</li> <li>– Promote COVIDSafe Activities: Use of school facilities and playgrounds</li> <li>– Adapt, modify or defer higher risk activities: Sport and recreation</li> <li>– Use of woodwind instruments, singing, voice projection and dance</li> <li>– Cleaning and personal hygiene products</li> </ul>	<p>Consider local staggering of break times and separating different classes or year levels when outdoors.</p> <p>Replace high-touch communal items with alternatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Installing no touch amenities such as contactless taps, rubbish bins and soap dispensers</li> <li>- Avoid sharing of equipment such as phones, desks, headsets, offices, tools or other equipment</li> <li>- Provide staff with their own personal equipment, labelled with their name</li> <li>- Removal of reusable shared kitchen cleaning products to replace with paper towel dispensers</li> </ul>	
	Contaminated surfaces – general cleaning	E	<p>Refer to health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the <a href="#">School Operations Guide (Term 2, 2021)</a>. Updated 3.6.21 context of COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Cleaning and personal hygiene products</li> <li>– Create COVIDSafe Spaces: Keep surfaces clean</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Enhanced School Cleaning Guideline</a></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>	H

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Risk Rating	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions	Residual Rating
			Ensure adequate supplies of cleaning products, including detergent and disinfectant.	Identify which products are required for thorough cleaning.  Monitor supplies of cleaning products and regularly restock.	
	Contaminated surfaces – cleaning after a confirmed case	<b>E</b>	<a href="#">CECV Infectious Cleaning Guidelines</a>	Prior identification of a resource that can provide Infectious Cleaning services in accordance with DHHS cleaning guidelines.	<b>M</b>
	Staff and students may contract disease through the air.	<b>H</b>	Refer to health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the <a href="#">School Operations Guide (Term 2, 2021). Updated 3.6.21</a> text of COVID-19:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Create COVIDSafe Spaces:</i> <i>Promote outdoor air ventilation</i></li> <li>– <i>Reinforce COVIDSafe Behaviours:</i> <i>Face masks in schools if required</i></li> </ul>	Where possible: enhance airflow by opening windows and adjusting air conditioning.  Making sure that windows and air conditioning are set for optimum air flow at the start of each workday or shift. Do not have air conditioners on recirculate.  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.  Face masks if required and if the individual wishes to wear one.  Provide training to staff on the correct use and disposal of face coverings and PPE, and on good hygiene practices and slowing the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).	<b>M</b>

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Risk Rating	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions	Residual Rating
	Vulnerable Workforce (higher risk of serious illness).	E	Refer to health and safety advice for return to onsite learning in the <a href="#">School Operations Guide (Term 2 2021) Updated 3.6.21</a> context of COVID-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff who may be medically vulnerable</li> </ul>	Ensure consultation with your staff and incorporate into workforce planning.	L
	Inadequate confirmed case response	H	<a href="#">Coronavirus reactive closure: steps for principals</a>  <a href="#">Coronavirus: School Closure – Reactive Communications Pack</a>  <a href="#">WorkSafe Victoria notification</a>  <a href="#">School Operations Guide (Term 2 2021) Updated 3.6.21</a> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond to COVID-19 Risk: Management of an unwell student or staff member</li> <li>School site closures</li> <li>Required actions for suspected cases of coronavirus in staff</li> </ul>	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).	H	Refer to the <a href="#">CECV – Agile working guidelines template</a> .	Promote the OHS advice and support to staff.	M
	Staff may suffer musculoskeletal disorders by adopting static postures while using laptops, portable devices or personal computers.	H		Enable reasonable access to available school equipment.	M
	Increased isolation (on-site and/or at home) may increase risk of injury.	H		Proactively plan with staff who have a known pre-existing injury.  Establish protocols for regular check-ins with staff.	M

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Risk Rating	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions	Residual Rating
<b>Occupational Violence and Aggression</b>	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 <a href="#">Safe and Sound Practice Guidelines</a> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent-school relationship code of conduct template</li> <li>Managing challenging and aggressive behaviours</li> </ul>	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
	Staff experiencing stress or anxiety regarding increased engagement with parent/carers in the delivery of learning from home.	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. If required, create mental health and wellbeing policy using the following CECV template:	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.
<b>Mental Health and Wellbeing</b>	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 workforce bubbles, outdoor spaces and remote contact between colleagues.	M
	Balancing non-work-related demands (e.g. caring responsibilities).	H			M
	Staff experiencing disengagement and low morale regarding clarity of tasks, team roles and evolving priorities.	H	If required, create mental health and wellbeing policy using the following CECV template:	Have regular conversations to provide as much clarity and flexibility as possible about tasks, 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	M			M



Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Risk Rating	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions	Residual Rating
	teaching and learning delivery, and return to onsite arrangements.		Video and telephone counselling are available via the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for all staff and their immediate family members.	Encourage staff to use EAP and other supports and resources available.	
	Staff experiencing uncertainty and anxiety about the COVID-19 risks to their personal health (especially if working onsite).	<b>E</b>			
	Staff experiencing isolation and changes in levels of support from leaders and colleagues as a result of the changed arrangements.	<b>H</b>	Contact your Diocesan office for further information regarding the Employee Assistance Programs available for your Diocese.	Ensure there are adjusted return to work strategies for people on sick leave or Workers' Compensation leave.	<b>M</b>
	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).	<b>E</b>	Information, resources and webinars to support staff are available at: <a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19) Wellbeing Resources</a>		<b>H</b>

## 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.