



MOSA –Covid-19 Q and A discussion document - Update August 2020

MOSA Council circulated a 'Question and Answer' document on 29th May 2020 and a Covid-19 Update on 15th July 2020.

We had hoped to have further discussions at this stage with PHE about the return to school for pupils in England, Wales and NI (schools returned recently in Scotland) but have been unable to make contact with those we spoke to before at PHE. This is probably due to the axing of PHE and the transfer of responsibilities to the new National Institute for Health Protection (NIHP). We are therefore working from the same information that is publicly available to you all.

The current GOV.UK guidance is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-isolation-for-residential-educational-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-isolation-for-residential-educational-settings>

<https://schoolsweb.buckscc.gov.uk/covid-19-corona-virus-latest-advice/covid-19-health-safety/>

https://schoolsweb.buckscc.gov.uk/media/47296/phse-schools-faq-edition1-19_06_2020.pdf

In the absence of communication with PHE, MOSA Council members have been sharing experiences and thoughts which we wanted to share with you. There are few areas of certainty to deal with and as we represent so many diverse schools (full boarding school, day school and mixed for example) it is not possible to give you clear answers, but here are some shared thoughts and questions for you to consider prior to the return to school.

As ever the MOSA forum will be the best way we can share information and experiences between us all. If you know of MOSA members who are not part of the forum please encourage them to request to join by sending an email to mosaforum-subscribe@yahoogroups.co.uk. You may also like to consider buddying up with schools in your area who share PHE or testing areas to share local knowledge?

Do you know where your local test site is should a pupil, or staff member, become unwell? How will you arrange transport there? Are Guardians available and ready to take pupils home prior to the test, or whilst awaiting results, or after a positive result?

Have you looked for contact details of your new NIHP Team or will the previous PHE number still be the point of access? (we don't know the answer either as yet, but it's worth checking and exploring this early on)

Do you now have sufficient supplies of PPE and cleaning materials? Do you have a reliable source once term begins to replenish stocks? Whilst the links below will not provide you with PPE, they may help you to understand requirements and help you to set standards for cleaning in school health centres.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/infection-control/>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878750/T2_poster_Recommended_PPE_for_primary_outpatient_community_and_social_care_by_setting.pdf

Has your school arranged private mass antigen or antibody testing of pupils or staff? How will you respond if asked clinical questions about those results?

Have your overseas pupils arrived early for quarantine? Are they staying in school or with Guardians until term starts? What plans are in place to provide support if one of those pupils becomes unwell?

Is the school arranging temperature checks on arrival, or at times during the day? Is this for clinical reasons or for reassurance of the school community?

How will you allow pupils to access the Health Centre? Do you have separate entrances and exits for suspected covid patients? Is the Health Centre the right place to see these patients or does this risk transporting the virus across campus? Are there better places in school that could be used? Is it possible for you to set up a red, amber and green system? Will you have open access or only by appointment? Will you be using telephone calls and / or video calls to screen who needs medical help?

Do you have a clear flowchart detailing what happens when someone becomes unwell that is visible to all staff? Are staff being briefed in these details during inset time before term starts?

What is your escalation plan? Who informs parents of positive tests? Is there any reason you could not send an unwell pupil home e.g. Shielding family member? It may be worthwhile considering personal escalation plans for any particularly vulnerable pupils. i.e. Shielding family members, diabetics, immune-compromised pupils.

We recognise that this is going to be an extremely difficult period of time for medical teams in schools. There will inevitably be large amounts of anxiety in pupils, staff and parents, especially at the start of term. People will look to us for answers when there may be no clear way forward. MOSA as a collective have decades of experience in working in Independent Schools, and we would encourage you to tap into that knowledge via the forum. Whilst there may still be no easy answers there is strength in numbers, and we will do everything we can to support our members over the coming months.

MOSA Council