

**Ambitious About Autism**  
**Risk Assessment – Coronavirus (COVID-19)**  
**Risk Assessment – Ambitious College - West Thames**

## Definitions

“AaA” means Ambitious About Autism and Ambitious About Autism Schools Trust.

## Clarifications

The purpose of this Risk Assessment is to outline risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the actions AaA is taking to manage these risks. This risk assessment covers a specific AaA setting – Ambitious College - and any person entering that setting, regardless of whether they are a learner, parent or guardian, member of staff, volunteer, partner, visitor or contractor.

Separate risk assessments have been drawn up for specific groups of staff and learners. This risk assessment is different in the sense that it is intended to cover the access to and generally understood activities within a particular setting or location.

AaA recognises that some staff are classified as particularly vulnerable. Where appropriate and in accordance with government guidance, separate, individual risk assessment and subsequent adjustments will be made for these staff.

**THIS RISK ASSESSMENT MUST BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE GENERIC ‘SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STAFF’ RISK ASSESSMENT**  
**(\*Please see footnote on final page of this document)**  
**THIS RISK ASSESSMENT IS REVIEWED WEEKLY AND WILL CAPTURE ANY ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES DEEMED NECESSARY AS THEY ARISE.**

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## 1.0 Background

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. Typical symptoms of coronavirus may include a fever and a cough that may progress to a severe pneumonia causing shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. The UK government is updating the official symptoms periodically, as more is learned about the disease.

Generally, coronavirus can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer, and chronic lung disease. Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China. Viruses constantly change through mutation, and so the emergence of new variants is an expected occurrence and not in itself a cause for concern; SARS-CoV-2 is no exception. A diversification of SARS-CoV-2 due to evolution and adaptation processes has been observed globally.

While most emerging mutations will not have a significant impact on the spread of the virus, some mutations or combinations of mutations may provide the virus with a selective advantage, such as increased transmissibility or the ability to evade the host immune response. In such cases, these variants could increase the risk to human health and are considered to be variants of concern. AaA will continue to monitor and react to all new variants of the coronavirus and implement specific controls measures where necessary.

In mid-September of this year, epidemiologists identified new coronavirus variants (or strains) that was markedly different from all the others. The Kent & South African strains have appeared throughout the U.K. By December, British health officials were concerned by how quickly it had spread, and a series of stringent lockdown and travel bans were put into effect. These lockdown measures (tier 4) effect all the venues with AaA.

A vaccination programme for all staff was introduced in February 2021.

AaA will be following new government guidance on home testing & rapid flow testing for bubbles of School pupils and staff.

COVID Response plan Spring 2021 – AaA will be following Government guidance on the lifting of restrictions and the four-step roadmap out of lockdown. Site & Staff risk assessments will be reviewed to decide which activities can restart and which control measures can be removed.

COVID Response plan Spring 2021 – AaA are now entering into stage 3 of the 4-step road map out of lockdown and the control measures reflect this within all COVID risk assessments.

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## 2.0 Latest Information

The links below provides the very latest information from the NHS and UK government websites.

### COVID-19 Response plan – Spring 2021

[COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021](#)

**NHS General COVID-19 Guidance** - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/about-covid-19/>

**NHS COVID-19 Symptoms** - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/community-social-care-ambulance/symptoms-of-covid-19-and-medical-advice/>

### NHS COVID-19 Home testing guidance

[Report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[COVID-19 home test: step-by-step guide \(adults and children\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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**Description of task and specific area being assessed**

Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Ambitious College - West Thames

*This Risk Assessment recognises that in some instances, this may be either extremely difficult or impossible, but where at all possible, social distancing should be practiced.*

Cross Reference: School and College COVID-19 RA, College, life skills Risk Assessments (Individual Learners), AAA social distancing guidelines, AAA use of PPE during Covid, College Health Care Policy, Physical intervention policy.

<b>Name of Assessor: Nicola Hawkins</b>	<b>Reviewed by: Linda Looney/Mark Dixon</b>	<b>Date of Assessment: 26/05/2020</b>
<b>Position Held: Assistant Principal (Operations)</b>	<b>Position Held: Head of College</b>	<b>Review Date: 13/06/2021</b>

**Control Measures in place for whole of the college site to manage the risk of COVID-19 transmission, including A new strain of COVID-19 which has been identified in December 2020. The fast spread of the variant has led to the introduction of tighter coronavirus restrictions in London (tier 4) and South East where our Schools and colleges are situated.**

- Ensure that all staff actively subscribe to the principles of social distancing / handwashing / cleanliness / appropriate use and application of PPE / use of common resources / use of office accommodation.
- AaA have developed compulsory training resources for staff to communicate and make clear these principles and expectations.
- Handwashing posters on display.
- Social distancing posters on display.
- Social distancing will be encouraged by the management teams on both sites and discussed in morning briefings.
- The use of ‘bubbles’ is being implemented where practicably possible.
- PPE is available in line with AaA PPE guidelines.
- AaA approach to social distancing has been shared within the college to the staff team.
- Cleaners are based on site and follow a strict cleaning regime, with attention to frequently touched surfaces.
- Visitors to the college are restricted to those that are critical and agreed by a Senior Manager and must be able to produce evidence of a negative LFT result taken within 48 hours of the visit.
- One-way walking system has been introduced in the college building and is supported by directional posters.
- Floors and circulation spaces are marked with 1-meter distances to support social distancing.
- To ensure ventilation, windows will be opened, and doors will be propped open wherever possible.
- Alcohol gel and handwashing facilities are available throughout the college.
- Radios are in use by the staff team.
- Handwashing will be planned within the timetable to support regular handwashing and the development of these skills by our learners.
- Bins to be emptied throughout the day.
- Staff of our Schools and colleges to wear face coverings in communal areas such as corridors, toilets, etc. Please refer to the Coronavirus information hub, face coverings information for staff page for further information.
- A separate risk assessment is in place for testing and can be found at [COVID19 Testing CONEL & WTC.doc \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

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- All CEV Staff in will have had their personal risk assessments reviewed before returning to the school after easter term.
- All CV staff will have their RA updated and shared with them before returning to working in the School.
- [Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19](#)

Activity or Area Hazard Description	Risk Identified	Persons at Risk	Control Measures (Mitigating actions and measures taken by AaA)
Communal areas of the College: corridors, entrances	Risk of contracting COVID-19	Staff, learners, visitors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Alcohol gel dispensers have been placed at all entrances to the college to be used by everyone entering.</li> <li>2) All staff and learners entering and exiting the building are required to wash or sanitise their hands.</li> <li>3) Storage of bags and use of lockers have been moved where possible to ensure social distancing.</li> <li>4) LSC/SLAB will coordinate transport staff at drop-off and collection to remind them to adhere to social distancing.</li> <li>5) Implementation of a one-way system as detailed above.</li> </ol>
Vehicle drop-off areas	Risk of contracting COVID-19 – overcrowding in entrance area	Staff, learners, visitors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Radios to be used to stagger entrance and exit to the college, minimising the amount of people transitioning into the college at once. Supporting staff should wait until they are called to collect or drop off.</li> <li>2) An LSC/SLAB to stand at each entrance and coordinate at the beginning and end of the day to ensure maximised social distancing of learners and external staff.</li> <li>3) Learners to be supported to wash hands on arrival into college.</li> <li>4) Observe current social distancing guidelines of 1m+</li> <li>5) Stagger drop-off and collection times.</li> <li>6) Ensure that transport arrangements cater for any changes to start and finish times</li> </ol>
Classrooms	Risk of contracting COVID-19 – number of staff and learners	Staff, learners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Hand sanitiser, antibacterial wipes and disinfectant spray located in each room in use.</li> <li>2) Individual Learner pencil cases and workbooks allocated to reduce cross contamination.</li> <li>3) Ensure a strict and regular cleaning regime, with attention to frequently touched surfaces.</li> <li>4) Lunches to be eaten in classrooms where possible. To heat food, LSC/SLSC to stagger access to the learner kitchen by group for use of microwave.</li> <li>5) Ensure that the same teacher(s) and other staff are assigned to each group and, as far as possible, these stay the same during the day and on subsequent days.</li> <li>6) Ensure that wherever possible pupils use the same classroom or area of a setting throughout the day, with a thorough cleaning of the rooms at the end of the day, seating students at the same desk each day if they attend on consecutive days.</li> <li>7) Face coverings are not required to be worn in classrooms by staff or pupils.</li> </ol>

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Learner Kitchen	Risk of contracting COVID-19 – number of staff and learners	Staff, learners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) A maximum of 17 people are allowed in this room at any one time and each learner should use a separate cooking station.</li> <li>2) Using tape to define 1 metre distance zones.</li> <li>3) Hand sanitiser, antibacterial wipes and disinfectant spray located in each room in use.</li> <li>4) Ensure a strict and regular cleaning regime, with attention to frequently touched surfaces.</li> <li>5) Any food prepared by learners or staff should only be consumed by those that cooked the food. Food is not to be shared.</li> <li>6) Use disposable cutlery and crockery for all learners and staff eating food on the premises.</li> <li>7) Face coverings are not required to be worn in classrooms by staff or pupils.</li> </ol>
Sensory Room	Risk of contracting COVID-19 – number of staff and learners	Staff, learners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Only 1 learner and 1 staff member at any one time.</li> <li>2) Room and equipment to be cleaned and disinfected after each use.</li> </ol>
Staff Kitchen and eating areas	Risk of contracting COVID-19 – kitchen surfaces and equipment	Staff, learners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ensure a strict and regular cleaning regime, with attention to frequently touched surfaces.</li> <li>2) Handwashing facilities are available with soap, to encourage good hand hygiene.</li> <li>3) Use disposable cutlery and crockery for staff eating food on the premises.</li> <li>4) Area will have limited tables for lunch and these areas will be zoned, staff must adhere to social distancing. Lunch breaks will be staggered.</li> </ol>
Medical Room- Isolation Room	Risk of contracting COVID-19 – contamination	Staff, learners, visitors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Only 1 learner and 1 staff member administering medication permitted in the room. Two staff may dispense before the learner arrives and then one to administer.</li> <li>2) Hand sanitiser, antibacterial wipes and disinfectant spray located in each room in use.</li> <li>3) Ensure a strict and regular cleaning regime, with attention to frequently touched surfaces.</li> <li>4) Staff supplied with adequate and appropriate PPE (face coverings, gloves, aprons etc.) to support with First Aid and medication administration.</li> <li>5) All equipment used must be cleaned after use. Medication pots must be cleaned in the dishwasher.</li> <li>6) The Medication Room will become the isolation room for anyone displaying COVID-19 symptoms.</li> <li>7) If an individual is suspected of having COVID-19 symptoms: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. First Aider and SLT to be informed.</li> <li>b. First Aider to take individual's temperature and assess symptoms.</li> <li>c. Full PPE must be worn when entering or exiting the room.</li> <li>d. Individual must remain in room until safe to leave.</li> <li>e. Individuals with symptoms must self-isolate for 10 days according to government guidance. Household members must self-isolate for 10 days.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

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			<p>8) Room to be thoroughly cleaned using disinfectant and disposable cloths, and well-ventilated after an individual has used this room.</p> <p>9) All PPE worn is to be removed, placed in a bin liner, double bagged and put in the yellow bin. The bin must be emptied during the cleaning process.</p>
Staff room and office spaces	Risk of contracting COVID-19	Staff, learners	<p>1) Zoning of desk spaces within the office areas to discourage colleagues using multiple desks.</p> <p>2) Hand sanitiser, antibacterial wipes and disinfectant spray located in each room in use.</p> <p>3) Phones and computers are to be cleaned throughout the day.</p> <p>4) Where possible desks are allocated to specific users.</p> <p>5) Ensure a strict and regular cleaning regime, with attention to frequently touched surfaces.</p> <p>6) Ensure areas are ventilated, opening windows, and propping open doors wherever possible. AC units not to be used if area can be naturally ventilated.</p> <p>7) Ensuring seating arrangements are 1 metre distance apart.</p> <p>8) Limit the number of staff in staff rooms and offices to ensure social distancing.</p> <p>9) Use disposable cups in staff tea-point areas.</p> <p>10) Remove any soft furnishings that are hard to clean.</p> <p>11) Face coverings to be worn in communal areas.</p>
Toilets and bathrooms	Risk of contracting COVID-19 - overcrowding or contamination	Staff, learners, visitors	<p>1) Ensure strict and regular bathroom cleaning regime, with attention to surfaces people can touch.</p> <p>2) Ensure we limit the number of learners in toilets in each instance.</p> <p>3) Ensure very regular emptying and replacement of sanitary-related disposal units.</p> <p>4) Ensure ample supply of bathroom and cleaning consumables.</p> <p>5) Ensure very good supplies of soap to support and encourage good handwashing practice.</p> <p>6) Ensure that posters, specifically promoting handwashing are displayed prominently in all toilets and bathrooms.</p> <p>7) Staff to manage numbers in toilets such that social distancing can be observed.</p>
Quiet Rooms	Risk of contracting COVID-19	Staff, learners	<p>1) To ensure that the minimum amount of staff is supporting within the quiet room.</p> <p>2) During escalations, staff in charge need to dynamically risk assess the amount of people required to support the learner safely and reduce this where possible.</p> <p>3) PPE is available to staff.</p> <p>4) Room and furniture to be cleaned after use.</p>
Food Management	Risk of contracting COVID-19 – meal preparation and consumption	Staff, learners, visitors	<p>1) Ensure that staff supporting during mealtimes or food-related learning activities are supplied with adequate and appropriate PPE and wash their hands regularly.</p> <p>2) Zoning of dining and teaching space to encourage and reinforce social distancing where possible.</p> <p>3) Remove or rearrange furniture where possible to ensure adequate space is allowed between learners and learning activities.</p>

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			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4) Ensure that food is not left out or exposed for extended periods. Unfinished food should be promptly discarded.</li> <li>5) No food-sharing between learners and the staff supporting them.</li> <li>6) Use disposable cutlery / crockery in learner eating areas across all bubbles and dining locations.</li> <li>7) Where possible, learners will heat up their own food. If not possible, staff will adhere to food preparation guidelines.</li> </ol>
Intimate Support and Behaviour Support	Risk of contracting COVID-19	Staff, learners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Those providing personal care should follow the intimate support guidance in the college healthcare policy, as well as AaA Guidance on PPE use during COVID-19.</li> <li>2) Those supporting learners who may require physical intervention as a last resort should use appropriate PPE.</li> <li>3) Staff have full access to PPE to use during the day including face coverings. If a learner is known to spit, staff should have access to goggles or visors that can be worn when supporting this behaviour.</li> <li>4) Team Teach to be conducted in conjunction with physical intervention policy.</li> </ol>
Visitors & Contractors	Risk of contracting COVID-19	Staff, learners, visitors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Restrict external visitors from entering the education settings. Only those with a critical reason may attend.</li> <li>2) Visits to site will need to be agreed by a member of SLT and must be able to produce evidence of a negative LFT result taken within 48 hours of the visit.</li> <li>3) Restrict contractor attendance to critical and compliance-related work only, ensuring that work is undertaken when learners have left site or where possible out of hours.</li> <li>4) Visitors required to sign a COVID-19 disclaimer and leave their contact details before entering the building.</li> <li>5) Visitors and contractors are expected to maintain social distancing measures wherever possible.</li> <li>6) Visitors and contractors are only able to work on site if they have the required PPE. Gloves and face coverings will be provided if not.</li> <li>7) Permits to work now require contact details for track &amp; trace and PTWs have been updated to reflect this.</li> </ol>
Development of symptoms or contracting COVID-19, including the new strains of COVID19	Risk of transmission of COVID-19	Staff, learners, visitors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Anyone displaying symptoms must move to isolation rooms and will be required to go home and self-isolate for 10 days. Households must self-isolate for 10 days.</li> <li>2) The following must be informed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. SLT</li> <li>b. Parents/carers/guardians/emergency contacts</li> <li>c. Placing Local Authority informed that learner is at home and family may need additional support.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3) Learners and staff have been placed in 'bubbles' – guidance for staff on ways of working will be available.</li> <li>4) Staff should not mix between bubbles if possible. Try and ensure that the same teacher(s) and other staff are assigned to each group and, as far as possible, these stay the same during the day and on subsequent days.</li> <li>5) AaA provides information, guidance and procedures for staff via the intranet <a href="#">Coronavirus Hub</a>.</li> <li>6) Staff and learners will have access to testing and will be encouraged to do so.</li> <li>7) College must follow the <a href="#">COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance</a>.</li> </ol>

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			<p>8) If an individual tests negative, they can return to school and the household may end their self-isolation.</p> <p>9) If an individual tests positive, the class or bubble must be sent home to self-isolate for 10 days.</p> <p>10) As part of the national test and trace program, if other cases are detected within the cohort or setting, Public Health England's local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise the most appropriate course of action. In some cases, a larger number of other children or young people may be asked to self-isolate as a precautionary measure. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.</p> <p>11) AaA have implemented Lateral flow testing of bubbles of pupils and staff, see guidance</p> <p>12) AaA implemented a roll out of vaccinations for staff in Feb 2021, 2<sup>nd</sup> Jabs are planned for late April/early May</p> <p>13) AaA have implemented twice weekly home testing programme, specific plan can be found here <a href="#">College - Testing Planning Summary AC.docx (sharepoint.com)</a></p>
Development of negative mental health symptoms			<a href="#">PLEASE REFER TO THE GENERIC 'SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STAFF' RISK ASSESSMENT</a>
Staff may have questions around COVID-19 or AaA Management or procedures around COVID-19			<a href="#">PLEASE REFER TO THE GENERIC 'SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STAFF' RISK ASSESSMENT</a>

#### Additional, related Risk Assessments.

Should parties outside of Ambitious About Autism or Ambitious About Autism School Trust require copies of additional Risk Assessments to which this Risk Assessment relates, please request this from Mark Dixon, Head of Property & IT, [mdixon@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk](mailto:mdixon@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk).

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Nicola Hawkins (Assistant Principal- Operations)

Version 1.13 updated 27/04/21

Risk Assessment done: 26 May 2020 by Nicola Hawkins

Review date: 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Last updated: 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Linked last checked: 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

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