

Ambitious About Autism
Risk Assessment – Coronavirus (COVID-19)
Risk Assessment for Whittington Supported Internship Base Room
Magdala Ave, London N19 5NF

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 **Whittington Supported Internship Base Room** 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 MONTHLY AND WILL CAPTURE ANY ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES DEEMED NECESSARY AS THEY ARISE.

1.0 Background

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. Typical symptoms include fever and a cough that may progress to a severe pneumonia causing shortness of breath and breathing difficulties.

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 (2019-nCov now known as 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.

A vaccination programme for all staff was introduced in February 2021 and staff continue to be encouraged to take up vaccinations as they are offered.

Routine lateral flow testing is carried out at home by any staff working in our settings and continues as per government guidelines. A [separate risk assessment](#) is in place for testing.

On 26 November 2021, WHO designated the variant B.1.1.529 (Omicron) a variant of concern on the advice of WHO's Technical Advisory Group. This decision was based on the evidence presented to the TAG-VE that Omicron has several mutations that may have an impact on how it behaves, for example, on how easily it spreads or the severity of illness it causes.

EU's public health agency warned that Omicron could cause more than half of all new COVID-19 infections in Europe within the next few months, evidence was emerging, however, that vaccines still appear to offer protection against serious illness.

Our current guidance remains in place. In addition to this, any suspected or confirmed close contacts of the Omicron variant will be asked to isolate for 10 days regardless of vaccination status or age. You will be contacted directly and told to isolate by the Track and Trace service and must inform the relevant Head or ELT member immediately if you are in this situation.

All eligible staff and students aged 12 and over are strongly encouraged to take up the offer of the vaccine, including boosters, if they have not already done so. Vaccines are the best way we can protect our pupils/learners and each other against COVID-19. They help protect young people and adults, and benefit those around them.

Face coverings must now be worn again in communal areas in all settings by staff, visitors and pupils/learners aged 11 and above, unless they are exempt.

2.0 Latest Information

General NHS / PHE / GOV COVID-19 Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-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 \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

3.0 Risk Assessment

Activity / Area Hazard Description	Risk Identified	Persons at Risk	Control Measures (Mitigating actions and measures taken by AaA)
Old Nurses Home Main Entrance & Stairs	Risk of contracting COVID-19 - Overcrowding in entrance area and stairs	All Whittington -based AAA staff & learners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Manage entering and exiting the building in such a way as to not allow large groups to enter / leave and staff should only move within the building when stairs and corridors are free.
Base Room Based Work	Risk of contracting COVID-19 from colleagues / others within the base room	All Whittington -based AAA Staff & Learners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Staff are returning to work at The Whittington 2) Display up-to-date posters within the room encouraging regular and proper handwashing. 3) Physically, remove chairs to ensure adequate space is allowed between desks. 4) Provide antibacterial wipes within the room for users to wipe down desks and computers after use. 5) Ensure strict and regular cleaning regime, with particular attention to surfaces and computer equipment. 6) Keep the room well ventilated, keep windows open where possible. 7) Where Face coverings when in communal areas 8) As this is used as an education setting, a CO2 detector will be fitted within this room as per government guidance for teaching spaces.
Development of symptoms or contracting COVID-19	Risk of infecting colleagues / others with COVID-19	All staff / volunteers / visitors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Guidance and procedures in place within AaA for staff to manage the onset of suspected symptoms, or indeed contracting COVID-19. https://ambitiousaboutautism.sharepoint.com/sites/CoronaVirus/ 2) College must follow the COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance. Where If an individual tests negative, they can return to school and the household may end their self-isolation. 3) Introduction of weekly testing in schools and colleges from January 2021, AaA are following the new guidance, which is set out,

			<p>4) asymptomatic-testing-in-schools-and-colleges/coronavirus-covid-19-asymptomatic-testing-in-schools-and-colleges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
Working within the hospital space	Risk of contracting COVID-19 from colleagues / others within the hospital		1) The activity within the hospital is so specific to our learners that it falls outside of this risk assessment. All education-based risk assessment MUST now contain a section on COVID-19 specifically and ensure that this particular risk is specifically assessed.
Development of negative mental health symptoms	Risk of developing negative mental health symptoms associated with the COVID-19 pandemic	All staff working with pupils or learners	PLEASE REFER TO THE GENERIC 'SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STAFF' RISK ASSESSMENT
Staff may have questions around COVID-19 or AaA Management or procedures around COVID-19	Risk of staff not being able to find the information they require	All staff working with pupils or learners	PLEASE REFER TO THE GENERIC 'SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STAFF' RISK ASSESSMENT

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 Justin Davies, Health and Safety Manager, jdavies@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk

Justin Davies

Health and Safety Manager

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