

**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.

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**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.**

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## 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.

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.

Routine lateral flow testing is carried out at home by any staff working in our settings and continues as per government guidelines.

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 seven days regardless of vaccination status or age.

Since Wednesday 22 December 2021, the 10-day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.

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Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. 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 \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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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, and physical intervention policy, Individual Covid 19 RA for learners and staff that are ECV. College Covid 19 contingency plan And AAA covid position statement.

<b>Name of Assessor: Nicola Hawkins</b>	<b>Reviewed by: Linda Looney</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: 04.02.22</b>

<b>Activity or Area</b>	<b>Risk Identified</b>	<b>Persons at Risk</b>	<b>Control Measures (Mitigating actions and measures taken by AaA)</b>
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) LSC/SLAB will coordinate transport staff at drop-off and collection</li> <li>4) Face coverings must be worn in communal areas in all settings by staff, visitors and pupils/learner in year 7 and above, unless they are exempt</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 Learners to be supported to wash or sanitise hands on arrival into college.</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) Where possible 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> </ol>
Learner Kitchen	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) Ensure a strict and regular cleaning regime, with attention to frequently touched surfaces.</li> <li>3) Any food prepared by learners or staff should only be consumed by those that cooked the food. Food is not to be shared.</li> </ol>

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Outside gym	Risk of contracting COVID-19 – number of staff and learners	Staff, learners	1) Gym equipment to be cleaned regularly after use with anti-bacterial spray.
Outside area- (inner courtyard, garden area)	Risk of contracting COVID-19 – number of staff and learners	Staff, learners	1) Any equipment to be cleaned regularly after use with anti-bacterial spray.
Sensory Room	Risk of contracting COVID-19 – number of staff and learners	Staff, learners	1) Room and equipment to be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
Staff Kitchen and eating areas	Risk of contracting COVID-19 – kitchen surfaces and equipment	Staff, learners	1) Ensure a strict and regular cleaning regime, with attention to frequently touched surfaces. 2) Handwashing facilities are available with soap, to encourage good hand hygiene. 3) Dishwasher to be used to ensure that all equipment is thoroughly cleaned 4) Face coverings must be worn in communal areas in all settings by staff, visitors and pupils/learner in year 7 and above, unless they are exempt
Medical Room- Isolation Room	Risk of contracting COVID-19 – contamination	Staff, learners, visitors	1) Hand sanitiser, antibacterial wipes and disinfectant spray located in each room in use. 2) Ensure a strict and regular cleaning regime, with attention to frequently touched surfaces. 3) Staff supplied with adequate and appropriate PPE (face coverings, gloves, aprons etc.) to support with First Aid and medication administration. 4) All equipment used must be cleaned after use. Medication pots must be cleaned in the dishwasher. 5) The Medication Room will become the isolation room for anyone displaying COVID-19 symptoms. 6) If an individual is suspected of having COVID-19 symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o First Aider and SLT to be informed.</li> <li>o First Aider to take individual's temperature and assess symptoms.</li> <li>o Full PPE must be worn when entering or exiting the room.</li> <li>o Individual must remain in room until safe to leave.</li> <li>o Individuals with symptoms must follow government guidance, self-isolated until PCR test is taken and a negative result is returned.</li> </ul> 7) Room to be thoroughly cleaned using disinfectant and disposable cloths, and well-ventilated after an individual has used this room. 8) All PPE worn is to be removed, placed in a bin liner.
Staff Room and office spaces	Risk of contracting COVID-19	Staff, learners	1) Hand sanitiser, antibacterial wipes and disinfectant spray located in each room in use. 2) Where possible desks are allocated to specific users.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3) Ensure a strict and regular cleaning regime, with attention to frequently touched surfaces.</li> <li>4) Face coverings must be worn in communal areas in all settings by staff, visitors and pupils/learner in year 7 and above, unless they are exempt</li> </ul>
Toilets and bathrooms	Risk of contracting COVID-19 - overcrowding or contamination	Staff, learners, visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ensure strict and regular bathroom cleaning regime, with attention to surfaces people can touch.</li> <li>2) Ensure very regular emptying and replacement of sanitary-related disposal units.</li> <li>3) Ensure ample supply of bathroom and cleaning consumables.</li> <li>4) Ensure very good supplies of soap to support and encourage good handwashing practice.</li> <li>5) Ensure that posters, specifically promoting handwashing are displayed prominently in all toilets and bathrooms.</li> <li>6) Face coverings must be worn in communal areas in all settings by staff, visitors and pupils/learner in year 7 and above, unless they are exempt</li> </ul>
Quiet Room	Risk of contracting COVID-19	Staff, learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) 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.</li> <li>2) PPE is available to staff. To be worn in communal areas but not in classrooms. PPE such as goggles available to use during in escalations with learners that may spit.</li> <li>3) Room and furniture to be cleaned regularly by onsite cleaner.</li> </ul>
Food Management	Risk of contracting COVID-19 – meal preparation and consumption	Staff, learners, visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ensure that staff supporting during mealtimes or food-related learning activities are supplied with adequate and appropriate PPE and wash their hands regularly.</li> <li>2) Ensure that food is not left out or exposed for extended periods. Unfinished food should be promptly discarded.</li> <li>3) No food-sharing between learners and the staff supporting them.</li> <li>4) Where possible, learners will heat up their own food. If not possible, staff will adhere to food preparation guidelines.</li> </ul>
Intimate Support and Behaviour Support	Risk of contracting COVID-19	Staff, learners	<ul 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 as practically possible</li> <li>3) If a learner is known to spit, staff should have access to goggles or visors that can be worn when supporting a learner who displays this behaviour.</li> <li>4) Team Teach techniques to be used as a last resort when individuals are at risk. This is to be conducted in conjunction with physical intervention policy.</li> </ul>
Visitors & contractors	Risk of contracting COVID-19	Staff, learners, visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Refer to updated covid 19 setting guidance.</li> <li>2) Visitors are required to complete a LFT test before entering the service/ on arrival. They are required to wear masks in communal areas in line with AAA guidance.</li> <li>3) SLT will need to be made aware of any onsite visits.</li> <li>4) Visitors and contractors are expected to maintain social distancing measures wherever possible.</li> </ul>

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			<p>5) Permits to work now require contact details for track &amp; trace and PTWs have been updated to reflect this.</p> <p>6) Visitors and contractors to always wear face masks in communal areas, including corridors &amp; toilets</p> <p>7) Face coverings must be worn in communal areas in all settings by staff, visitors and pupils/learner in year 7 and above, unless they are exempt</p>
Development of symptoms or contracting COVID-19	Risk of transmission of COVID-19	Staff, learners, visitors	<p><b><u><a href="#">See most recent Covid guidance (Covid hub on share point)</a></u></b></p> <p><b>Staff</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Staff will continue to test twice a week at home (Wednesday and Sunday) and record their test results as they had been doing prior to the end of term. The Government has said they will be reviewing the approach to testing at the end of September. All staff <u>must</u> test. <a href="#">College - Testing Planning Summary AC.docx (sharepoint.com)</a></li> <li>2) Anyone displaying symptoms must move to isolation rooms and will be required to go home and undertake a PCR test.</li> <li>3) A member of staff who tests positive should self-isolate as per government guidance.</li> <li>4) AaA provides information, guidance and procedures for staff via the intranet <a href="#">Coronavirus Hub</a>.</li> </ol> <p><b>Learners</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) If a young person is symptomatic – we continue to ask that they stay at home and undertake a test, if they cannot test, we will ask them not to attend college for 7 days.</li> <li>2) If we have a positive case in the college and a young person, <b>regardless of age</b>, is not vaccinated and can't undertake a PCR test and they are deemed to be a direct contact, either by NHS or ourselves, we will ask them not to attend college for 7 days.</li> <li>3) Any learner unable to attend as a result of this will be offered remote learning</li> <li>4) Placing Local Authority informed that learner is at home and family may need additional support.</li> </ol>
Development of negative mental health symptoms	Learners may display behaviours that challenge		<p><b><u><a href="#">PLEASE REFER TO THE GENERIC 'SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STAFF' RISK ASSESSMENT</a></u></b></p> <p><b><u><a href="#">TDT teams to review and revise Behaviour Support Plans for learners</a></u></b></p>
Staff may have questions around COVID-19 or AaA Management or procedures around COVID-19			<p><b><u><a href="#">PLEASE REFER TO THE GENERIC 'SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STAFF' RISK ASSESSMENT</a></u></b></p>

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**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 Justin Davies, Health and Safety Manager, [jdavies@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk](mailto:jdavies@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk)

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Nicola Hawkins (Assistant Principal - Operations)

Version 1.2 Update 21/09/2021

Risk Assessment done: 26 May 2020 by Nicola Hawkins

Review date: 4th January 2022

Last updated: 4th February 2022

Links last checked: 4th February 2022

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