



St Michael's School

Annex to First Aid Policy – COVID-19

SCOPE: This Annex applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage

Response to COVID-19

COVID-19 is a serious infectious illness caused by a new strain of coronavirus which emerged in China at the end of 2019. The first cases of infection appeared in the UK in January 2020. A pandemic was declared by the World Health Organization in March around the time of the first UK deaths caused by the virus.

The virus is transmitted by close contact, mainly through droplets which are spread when an infected person coughs or breathes.

The main symptoms of COVID-19 infection are fever, tiredness and dry cough. Most people recover without needing special treatment. However, a small percentage can become seriously ill and develop difficulty breathing. This is particularly dangerous for people with weakened immune systems, for older people and for those with long-term conditions, such as diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.

During the pandemic people who are infected are required to self-isolate themselves in their homes for a set period of time. Other methods to prevent the virus from spreading include “social distancing”, which requires people to keep their distance from others not in their immediate household and non-essential workers being asked to stay at home.

Introduction

There are increased risks of COVID virus transmission during provision of first aid and CPR. This Annex details the measures to be to improve the safety of first aiders while at the same time maximizing the effectiveness of resuscitation attempts.

The COVID-19 virus is known to be present in human secretions and its presence in droplets whenever an infected person coughs or exhales is thought to be its principal mode of spread. The administration of rescue breaths during CPR, even with a face shield, carries an obvious risk, as do chest compressions which cause an exhalation from the victim's lungs.

Safe Systems of Work

Where possible, all contact with persons should be carried out while maintaining social distancing measures – a distance of at least 2 meters (6 feet). Where this is not possible, other methods should be applied, using measures such as physical barriers and alternative working practices and, as a final measure, the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) based on risk assessment, where other safe working systems alone may not be feasible or may be insufficient to mitigate the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Hygiene measures

The best way to protect yourself and others is through rigorous cleaning, personal hygiene and regular hand hygiene. An increased frequency of cleaning and disinfection of all surfaces and equipment, using standard household cleaning and disinfection products, is recommended.

After contact with any child or adult clean your hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser at the earliest opportunity. This advice is applicable to all situations, regardless of whether there was close contact or the minimum 2-meter social distancing was maintained.

Avoid touching your mouth, eyes and nose.

There are no additional precautions to be taken in relation to cleaning your clothing or uniform other than what is usual practice.

What to do if you are required to come into close contact with someone as part of your first responder duties

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Where it is not possible to maintain a 2 meter or more distance away from an individual, disposable gloves, masks and a disposable plastic apron are recommended. Disposable gloves should be worn if physical contact is likely to be made with potentially contaminated areas or items.

Clean your hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol sanitiser before putting on and after taking off PPE. In all circumstances where some form of PPE is used, the safe removal of the PPE is a critical consideration to avoid self-contamination. Use and dispose of all PPE in the yellow bio-hazard sacks found in the medical room and Nursery.

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)

If you are required to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), you should conduct a risk assessment and adopt appropriate precautions for infection control.

In adults, it is recommended that you do not perform rescue breaths or mouth-to-mouth ventilation; perform chest compressions only. Compression-only CPR may be as effective as combined ventilation and compression in the first few minutes after non-asphyxial arrest (cardiac arrest not due to lack of oxygen).

Cardiac arrest in children is more likely to be caused by a respiratory problem (asphyxial arrest), therefore chest compressions alone are unlikely to be effective.

If a decision is made to perform mouth-to-mouth ventilation in asphyxial arrest, use a resuscitation face shield where available.

Should you have given mouth-to-mouth ventilation there are no additional actions to be taken other than to monitor yourself for symptoms of possible COVID-19 over the following 14 days. Should you develop such symptoms you should follow the advice on what to do on the NHS website.

Providing assistance to unwell individuals

If you need to provide assistance to an individual who is symptomatic and may have COVID-19 (that is any individual with a new, continuous cough and/or high temperature), move the child or adult into the Woodlands Room, which has been identified as the 'Isolation Room'. Ask others who are not involved in providing assistance to stay at least 2 meters away from the individual.

Cleaning the area where assistance was provided

Cleaning will depend on where assistance was provided. It should follow the advice for cleaning in non-healthcare settings. Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time in (such as corridors) but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids can be cleaned in the usual way. However, all surfaces that a symptomatic individual has come into contact with must be cleaned and disinfected.

If there has been a blood or body-fluid spill

Keep people away from the area. Use a spill-kit if available, using the PPE in the kit or PPE provided and which can be found in the Medical Room follow the instructions provided with the spill-kit. If no spill-kit is available, place paper towels/roll onto the spill, and seek further advice from emergency services when they arrive.

Contacts of the person you have assisted

Advise anyone who had close contact with the individual that if they go on to develop symptoms of COVID-19 (continuous cough, fever), they should follow the advice on what to do on the NHS website.

What to do if you become unwell

If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, however mild, you will need to stay at home for 7 days. Refer to the advice on the NHS website and the Stay at home guidance.

Annex Approval

This Annex has been agreed by the SMT and Chair of Governors but has not been formally ratified by the governing body and should be treated as a working document.

Diana Howers

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