

Our COVID-19 Guidelines for Safe Working

At Science Oxford, we recognise that we are an external visitor and so are a potential vector for the transmission of diseases such as COVID-19 to and from schools. As schools re-open from September, we aim to follow any government guidelines, individual school guidelines and scientific advice to keep our staff, your staff and your students and their families safe.

Government guidelines have considerably relaxed, but risks do remain, and we intend to retain some restrictions on our activities. As such, we have put together the following, matching the government guidelines at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>.

Risk assessment

All our activities are risk assessed and the risk assessments are available from our website. If you are unable to locate an up-to-date risk assessment, please contact us to let us know.

Mixing and 'bubbles'

In line with current government guidelines, we will not be requiring you to enforce bubbles unless local contingency plans are in place. However, some of our activities have an increased risk of contamination between groups by sharing certain equipment, and in such cases, we may not be able to repeat particular workshops on the same day, or on days either side of use of this equipment in another school.

Tracing close contacts and isolation

Science Oxford will never send staff suspected of infection with COVID-19 to a school. If staff were to develop novel symptoms during the school day and suspect that they may have developed COVID-19, they will immediately report to a member of school staff and leave the school as quickly and safely as possible, minimising any further contact.

If we believe a staff member may have contracted COVID-19, or if they are informed that they have been in close contact with a positive case, we will try to arrange a test as soon as possible. We intend to take a precautionary approach beyond what government guidelines may require. If staff experience COVID-19 symptoms or are informed that they have been in close contact with a positive case by Track and Trace, they will follow current government instructions to isolate and test as required.

Science Oxford will not charge a school for any activities cancelled for these reasons.

Face Coverings

Science Oxford staff reserve the right to wear face coverings when they feel it is appropriate, such as when passing through communal areas, or when they need to interact closely with children. We will also follow any policy you have in school requiring use of face coverings, or if you have been advised that they should be worn.

Stepping measures up and down

If your outbreak management plan is activated, then we may need to cancel any pre-arranged visit. If this happens, please contact us as soon as possible.

Science Oxford will not charge a school for any activities cancelled under these circumstances.

Control Measures

1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone

- **Hand hygiene**

Science Oxford staff will always securely carry an alcohol-based hand gel to ensure they can clean their hands whenever appropriate, such as when passing equipment to or collecting equipment from your pupils, even when there is no convenient access to other hand-washing facilities.

Children should arrive at activities having washed their hands in line with your standard school procedures. If there has been any use of equipment in an activity, they should wash their hands after leaving the activity.

- **Respiratory hygiene**

We will promote and model the 'catch it', 'bin it', 'kill it' approach amongst our staff and with all children and adults with whom we work.

- **Use of personal protective equipment**

Please see face coverings section above

2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes

Many Science Oxford activities require the use of equipment that is shared and re-used between groups. All our activities have been reviewed and revised in this regard. Surface transmission remains a relatively low risk vector but we have still reduced risks where possible. We are not always able to clean every piece of equipment between re-use. In activities where equipment is blown into, or may touch lips or parts of the face, we will be ensuring that the equipment is quarantined for 72 hours between re-use, and as such it will not be possible to repeat such an activity during the day, or book it close to the time another school has booked it.

3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated

We will require all spaces used be well ventilated. In many cases, if it is possible to run an activity in your hall or a similar large space, that would be preferred.

4. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19

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Our staff also have access to lateral flow tests and will take one if requested by your school policy, in addition to regular testing of our own. They will self-isolate while awaiting a confirmatory PCR test if these should prove positive.

We also expect that your staff and pupils will be isolating if they experience COVID-19 symptoms or test positive. If this should happen during our visit, please inform us immediately.

Other considerations

As potential visitors to many schools, we recognise that we are an increased potential vector, and must take a more precautionary approach than government guidelines might suggest. We intend to ensure that our staff maintain social distancing, from your children and your staff. This is going to be particularly difficult! We will:

- not greet with a handshake;
- avoid using your staff room if it is busy;
- try to maintain a 2m distance from staff and children ;
 - wear a face covering when needing to interact directly with children;
- follow your guidance on setting up workspaces;
- discuss all of this with you in advance

Where activities take place will also need to be considered carefully – larger spaces such as your hall will be easier to maintain social distancing, and so unless you have particularly large classrooms, we will request use of your hall or other larger space. We will want to carefully consider all of this in advance and will stay in contact with you before our visit.

We will also ensure we contact any schools directly if we suspect a case and would appreciate it if you could contact us proactively to ensure we can react as quickly as possible.

This is a working document. These guidelines will be reviewed regularly and revised as necessary in line with any updated government and scientific advice.

Above all, we will work with you throughout the booking, planning and delivery of any of our workshops and shows to ensure adherence both our own guidelines as described above and to your school's guidelines and policies. We have reviewed and updated our risk assessments in the light of COVID-19 for every activity we offer. Risk assessments can be downloaded from our website or provided on request.