



National Drama Planning document

Supporting a safe return to School in September

This document is designed to empower and support our members returning to the classroom in September.

Part 1: Giving you and ‘Drama’ a voice

On the 28th of August the Department of Education, in its [Guidance for full opening: Schools](#), set out its updated plans to ensure all year groups will return to school full-time from the beginning of the autumn term. They identify that there cannot be a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach. Placing the emphasis on school leaders being best placed to understand the needs of their school and communities. With an expectation that schools and trusts will work closely with parents, staff and unions in agreeing best approaches for their circumstances.

With the key principles that underpin their advice on curriculum planning being:

- education is not optional: all pupils receive a high-quality education that promotes their development and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.
- the curriculum remains broad and ambitious: all pupils continue to be taught a wide range of subjects, maintaining their choices for further study and employment.
- remote education, where needed, is high quality and aligns as closely as possible with in-school provision: schools and other settings continue to build their capability to educate pupils remotely, where this is needed.

Therefore, schools need to consider the following points if considering revising their school curriculum for the academic year 2020 and 2021:

- Teach an ambitious and broad curriculum in all subjects from the start of the autumn term, but make use of existing flexibilities to create time to cover the most important missed content: Up to and including key stage 3, prioritisation within subjects of the most important components for progression is likely to be more effective than removing subjects, which pupils may struggle to pick up again later. In particular, schools may consider how all subjects can contribute to the filling of gaps in core knowledge, for example through an emphasis on reading
- Aim to return to the school’s normal curriculum in all subjects by summer term 2021: Substantial modification to the curriculum may be needed at the start of the year, so teaching time should be prioritised to address significant gaps in pupils’ knowledge with the aim of returning to the school’s normal curriculum content by no later than summer term 2021.
- Plan on the basis of the educational needs of pupils: Curriculum planning should be informed by an assessment of pupils’ starting points and addressing the gaps in their knowledge and skills, in particular making effective use of regular formative assessment (for example, quizzes, observing pupils in class, talking to pupils to assess understanding, scrutiny of pupils’ work) while avoiding the introduction of unnecessary tracking systems.
- Develop remote education so that it is integrated into school curriculum planning: Remote education may need to be an essential component in the delivery of the school curriculum for

some pupils, alongside classroom teaching, or in the case of a local lockdown. All schools are therefore expected to plan to ensure any pupils educated at home for some of the time are given the support they need to master the curriculum and so make good progress.

Over lockdown at National Drama we have supported our members with a rich array of CPD, which we will continue into the next academic year and beyond.



Part 2: Preparing yourselves and your classrooms for students

Quick guide to risk assessments

Teachers have always been asked to wear a number of different 'hats' on a daily basis. These 'hats' often require us to very quickly become 'experts', in previously unknown professions. However, when it comes to risk assessments, we must take a few moments to consider some key points.

What is a risk assessment?

The [Health and Safety Executive](#) defines a risk assessment as

"...a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm..."

It is a vital part of Health and safety management, that ensures a workplace complies with its statutory duty under the [Health and safety at Work Act 1974](#), and all associated regulations, by reducing the levels of incidents.

Why do a risk assessment?

As well as complying with the law, a risk assessment is designed to protect you and your students. A person from your school needs to attend risk assessment training, before completing a risk assessment. This will ensure that the person is competent within your organization and will gain the necessary abilities in hazard identification and the ability to categorise and evaluate risks.

How to do a risk assessment?

Though there are no fixed rules on how a risk assessment should be carried out, there are a few general principles that should be followed. These can be summed up as 5 steps to ensure your risk assessment is carried out correctly. These 5 steps are:

1. [Identify the hazards](#)
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. [Evaluate the risks and decide on control measures](#)
4. Record your findings and implement them
5. Review your assessment and update if necessary

What do I need to consider in the drama classroom?

This section is intended to support anyone who has the responsibility for Delivering drama activities in educational settings. It provides suggested control measures and prompts to think about specific local circumstances, that can be used as the basis of discussions with those in your organization who have ultimate authority. It is not intended to cover all risks associated with any activity. Instead it looks only at additional measures to minimise transmission of Covid-19, with any and all existing risk assessments still applying.

By its very nature this not a complete assessment but merely a guide. Users will need to adapt the content to fit local circumstances and to comply with individual organisations' safety management systems. Legal responsibility for any activity rests with the person or organisation in charge. Remember that assessing risk is about understanding hazards and can never expect to eliminate all possibility of harm.

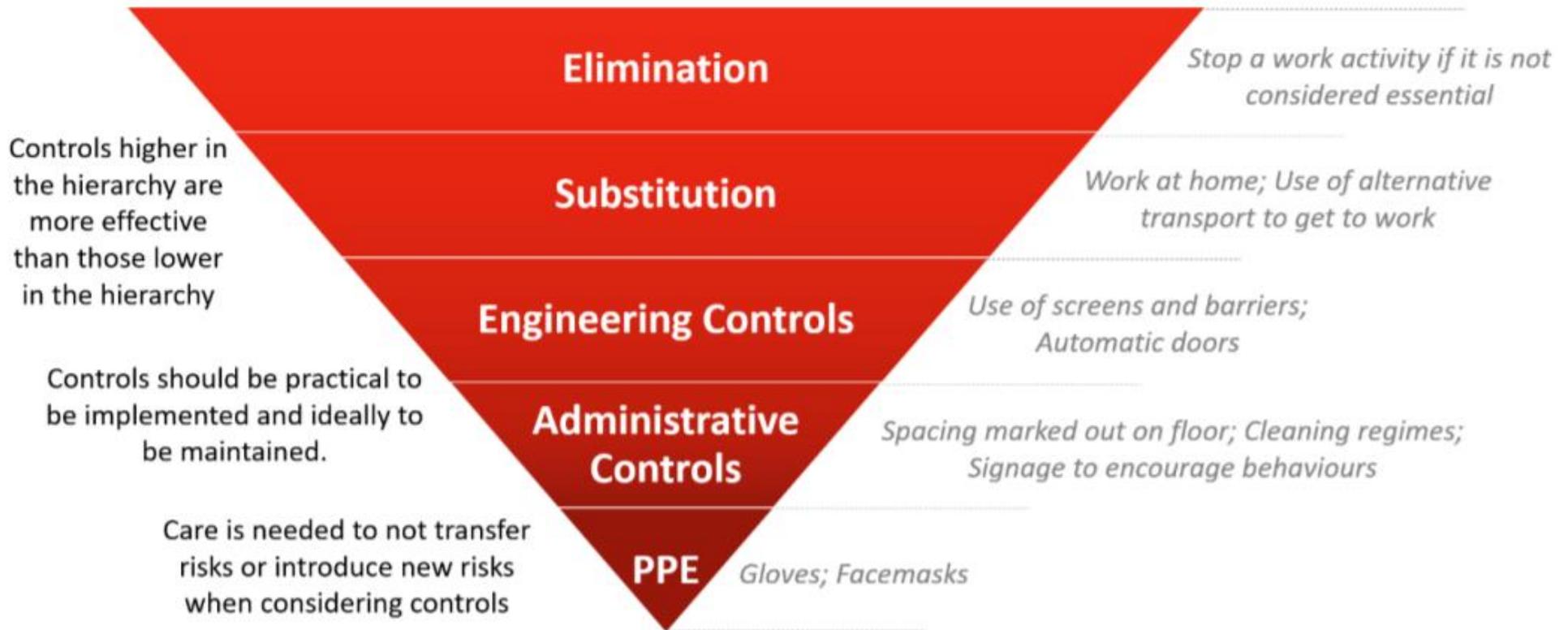
The standard is to identify **reasonably foreseeable** risks. We know that the extreme outcome of this infection is death or long-term health detriment but both are unusual outcomes in children and younger adults. The reasonably foreseeable risk here is the spread of Covid-19 virus. If the activity happens in a health setting or participants are known to have underlying health (particularly respiratory) issues, you will need to account for this at an activity or individual level.

Control measures should be **reasonable** and **proportionate**. Remember that the person most at risk may be the adult leading the activity: this is not just about the children. As death rates increase with age, it may be reasonable and proportionate to have more or fewer controls depending on their age and definitely depending on their general health.

Hierarchy of risk controls

Start at the top of the *Hierarchy of controls* and identify possible control measures within a category before moving down to the next category in the hierarchy

Some simple examples



The use of multiple different independent controls give defence in depth through different layers of protection

Figure 1 Hierarchy of control model located at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/891990/S0329_Risk_Estimation_to_inform_risk_assessment.pdf

Many control measures need cost little, if anything, to put in place, so consider behavioural or procedural measures (a Safe System of Work) before specifying equipment. Do bear in mind the cost of staff time however. Risk assessment is a positive process which enables activity to occur. We all want young people to be involved in as much practical drama as possible. Therefore, the safest classroom would be a non-practical space but this is unacceptable and still would not eliminate the risk of transmission of the virus. It is our hope therefore that this section will help drama practitioners to make the strong case for practical drama in education, whatever the setting's risk appetite and local circumstances.



Step 1. Describe the activity. If specific to a group, school or situation, provide details such as where it takes place (site, space, room) numbers involved, equipment and who leads the activity.

Step 2. References to related risk assessments. If there are any pre-existing risk assessments for this activity remember to refer to them.

Step 3. Control measures. Here you should include things you already do, or are inherent in the activity, that will reduce the risk. For example, The Hazard is airborne transmissions, with everyone being identified at risk. The control measure would be to ensure maximum space is used, allowing pupils to be spaces 2 Meters from teachers. Finally identifying who will be responsible for ensuring this will take place (i.e. the classroom teacher through department policy and/or signs).

Item	Hazard	Who is at risk?	Control measure(s)	Who is responsible?
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Risk ratings are a useful way of thinking about how likely an activity will result in actual harm and how severe the consequences will be. The rating can take into account Initial risk and residual risk.

RISK MATRIX

RISK RATING KEY		LOW 0 – ACCEPTABLE <hr/> OK TO PROCEED	MEDIUM 1 – ALARP as low as reasonably practicable <hr/> TAKE MITIGATION EFFORTS	HIGH 2 – GENERALLY UNACCEPTABLE <hr/> SEEK SUPPORT	EXTREME 3 – INTOLERABLE <hr/> PLACE EVENT ON HOLD
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		SEVERITY →			
		ACCEPTABLE LITTLE TO NO EFFECT ON EVENT	TOLERABLE EFFECTS ARE FELT, BUT NOT CRITICAL TO OUTCOME	UNDESIRABLE SERIOUS IMPACT TO THE COURSE OF ACTION AND OUTCOME	INTOLERABLE COULD RESULT IN DISASTER
LIKELIHOOD ↓	IMPROBABLE RISK IS UNLIKELY TO OCCUR	LOW – 1 –	MEDIUM – 4 –	MEDIUM – 6 –	HIGH – 10 –
	POSSIBLE RISK WILL LIKELY OCCUR	LOW – 2 –	MEDIUM – 5 –	HIGH – 8 –	EXTREME – 11 –
	PROBABLE RISK WILL OCCUR	MEDIUM – 3 –	HIGH – 7 –	HIGH – 9 –	EXTREME – 12 –

Figure 2 An example of a risk matrix. It is important to use the Matrix employed by your organisation to ensure consistency.

Additional control measures are new measures identified to reduce the risk rating. It is usually easier (and it is perfectly acceptable) to reduce the likelihood of harm rather than the severity. It is not necessary to implement additional control measures for every hazard identified. Prioritise the hazards you have identified and ensure that control measures are reasonable and proportionate.

Look at what you're already doing and the control measures you already have in place. Ask yourself:

- Can I get rid of the hazard altogether?
- If not, how can I control the risks so that harm is unlikely?

Some practical steps you could take include:

- trying a less risky option;
- preventing access to the hazards;
- organising your work to reduce exposure to the hazard;
- issuing protective equipment;
- providing welfare facilities such as first aid and washing facilities;
- involving and consulting with workers.

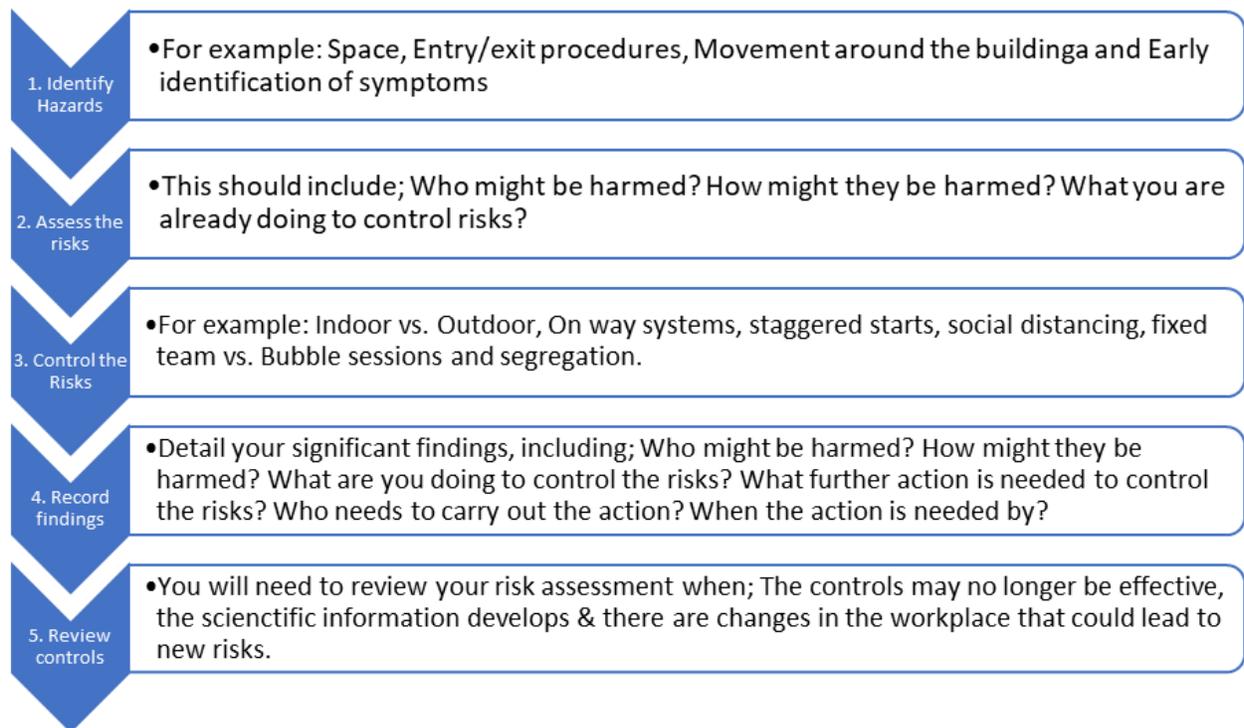


Figure 3 Five step model to writing a risk assessment

Again, it is important to remember, that as your Subject Association National Drama is here to support you. Please remember to get in touch with us, if you feel Drama is under attack in your school.