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GUIDANCE ON CATERING SERVICES

CHECKS AND BALANCES: RESPONDING TO COVID-19

A toolkit to support leaders
as they reopen schools



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Context

This guidance has been written to help structure a discussion on the changes that will be required to provide a catering service safely in schools when they reopen following closure due to COVID-19. It is supplementary to the Toolkit and should be used alongside it.

It is based on the principle that the nature of the measures that can be implemented at each stage of the catering operation will determine the food offer that can be safely provided. School Business Managers should work closely with the Catering Manager to ensure adherence to the following. Schools may also wish to add their own site-specific key actions.

Safety and hygiene routines and checklists

Remobilisation Checklist for Catering Staff	
Pupil numbers and building occupancy: key actions	Yes/No
A clear timetable has been produced for increasing/maintaining building occupancy numbers.	
Changes to the core operating hours of the building are known.	
A plan is in place to communicate changes to the catering offer/service.	
Service times: key actions	
Working patterns and break times have been adapted/staggered to reduce peak catering demand.	
Requirements for additional service times have been identified (e.g. breakfast, lunch, after school provision).	
Kitchen facilities: key actions	
The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Reopening Checklist has been completed and signed off prior to reopening. This checklist is provided at the end of this document.	
Access to confined space areas such as fridges, freezers and stores is limited to one person at a time to ensure compliance with social distancing measures.	
Food production workflow has been planned to ensure social distancing wherever possible.	
An assessment of the kitchen has been made to allow for staff to have separate workbenches.	
Safe working zones, complying with social distancing measures, have been marked out in the kitchen.	
Additional PPE has been provided where social distancing cannot be fully maintained.	
Servery facilities: key actions	
Floor markings have been installed at the serving counter to facilitate social distancing.	
Self-serve facilities have been removed if they cannot be operated in a way to maintain social distancing and hygiene requirements. Alternative arrangements have been put in place.	
A sufficient supply of disposable gloves is available.	
High-frequency touch points have been identified, and cleaning and sanitisation frequencies have been increased accordingly.	
Social distancing and hygiene signage are prominently displayed.	
In order to facilitate social distancing, a queuing system is in place and clearly marked.	

Remobilisation Checklist for Catering Staff	
Specific requirements for PPE have been assessed and additional PPE has been provided.	
Sanitisation stations have been placed around the catering facilities.	
Fixed/portable sneeze screens have been installed to enhance protection.	
An assessment has been made to decide whether the unit moves to cashless payments only.	
Pre-wrapped reusable or disposable cutlery has been provided.	
Reusable cutlery has been placed behind sneeze guards/screens.	
Physical barriers have been installed to direct pupil flows.	
All condiments are wrapped or portioned.	
Dining facilities: key actions	
The number of pupils entering the dining area is managed to maintain social distancing.	
Social distancing and hygiene signage are prominently displayed.	
The dining area has been reconfigured to provide separation.	
Small tables are limited to single occupancy.	
Fixed seating has been marked and cordoned off as not for use if it cannot be relocated.	
Catering/cleaning staff only enter the dining area once it is empty or where separation/ social distancing can be assured.	
Cleaning and sanitisation frequencies have increased.	
Pupils are required to self-clear tables.	
Other spaces have been identified for use for dining (e.g. classrooms).	
Vending machines: key actions	
Vending machines are out of use and clearly marked as such.	
Service offer: key actions	
The implications of social distancing and workflow management in the kitchen is a central factor in determining the food offer that can be provided.	
An assessment has been made of the implications of removing chef stations, self-service counters or any other changes on the catering offer.	
An assessment has been made of the impact of supply restrictions on the catering offer.	
Consideration has been given to whether the use of ready-chopped products could ease food production constraints.	
Consideration has been given to whether pre-prepared meals should be used to ease food production constraints.	
If social distancing cannot be implemented in the kitchen, servery or dining areas, consideration has been given to whether the offer should be reduced to 'grab and go' or take-away.	

Social Distancing and Hygiene Checklist for Catering Staff		
Key actions	Yes / No N/A	
1. Personal hygiene and handwashing procedures have been reinforced with all team members.		
2. Handwashing facilities are available including soap and disposable hand towels.		
3. Disposable gloves are available and worn for till work and for cleaning/clearing away.		
4. Disposable aprons are available and worn for cleaning/clearing away.		
5. Workflow has been planned to allow social distancing between colleagues where possible.		
6. Separate workbenches are used for food preparation e.g. meals, packed lunch/hamper assembly.		
7. Team members remain behind the counter at all times during food service.		
8. Social distancing signage is in place.		
9. Floor markings are used to ensure social distancing during queuing.		
10. Payment transactions are limited to one person at a time.		
11. A cashless payment system is in place.		
12. Touch points are frequently cleaned and sanitised (e.g. keypads, door plates, fridge/ freezer handles, card machines, biometric sensors, trolleys, tools, delivery vehicle controls).		
13. Dining area layouts are configured to ensure social distancing. Tables/chairs are cordoned off where this is not possible.		
14. Pupils are instructed to self-clear tables.		
15. Dining area cleaning only takes place once food service has stopped and the dining area has been vacated.		
16. There is frequent cleaning of surfaces that are touched regularly, using standard cleaning products e.g. kettles, refrigerators, microwaves.		
17. Crockery, eating utensils, cups etc. are washed and dried between use.		
Site Specific Actions		
List any actions required in addition to the above safe system of work		
Key actions	Yes/No	
The above control measures are implemented within the catering unit. All relevant staff are aware of these control measures and this is recorded in the training record.		
Manager's Name	Signed	Date

Safety Training Record

I confirm that I fully understand the control measures associated with the task and that I will follow the Safe System of Work (Social Distancing) at all times. Catering staff to sign and complete.

Operative Name	Signature	Date

HSE Remobilisation Checklist – Catering to be completed by Catering Manager/SBM					
Date		School name			
Item No:	Check	Guidance	Who	Timeframe (countdown to opening)	Actions Required
1	Mechanical plant and systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heating, Ventilation and Airconditioning: Check valid test certificate for ventilation and Local Exhaust Ventilation systems. Any outstanding maintenance work required is undertaken. • Refrigeration Equipment: Check in good working order, no leaks or icing up. • Lifts: Check thorough examination certificate is in date and valid. Operate lift to all floors ensuring lift carriage aligns correctly to threshold. • Boilers: Ensure all boilers are re-filled and operating to the correct pressure and temperature. • Plant Equipment and Pipework: Check all refrigeration plant and equipment is working correctly and no evidence of leaking pipework or evaporators. 	School Business Manager (SBM)	Day -14 to -7	
2	Utilities check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check all water, gas, electricity, heating, ventilation and drainage to the catering unit are working correctly. • Turn on all water outlets to flush the water system and drain any stagnant water which may harbour legionella. 	Catering Manager with SBM	Day -7	
3	Fire doors and escape routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check valid inspection certificates and review Fire Risk Assessment. • Check all fire doors leading from the catering unit can be easily opened and that all escape routes are clear and unobstructed. • Check all fire extinguishers are available and within test date. 	Catering Manager with SBM	Day -7	
4	Catering equipment check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the condition of all catering equipment. • Check that PAT test dates are still valid. • Visually inspect the equipment and turn them on to check they are in good working order. 	Catering Team	Day -6	

HSE Remobilisation Checklist – Catering to be completed by Catering Manager/SBM					
5	Pest check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look along skirting boards, under counters and fixed equipment for droppings or smear marks. Check any traps for new evidence of pest activity. Check for evidence of damaged stock or gnaw marks to furniture. Consider deep clean if signs of infestation and report to SBM. 	Head Chef / Catering Team	Day -5	
6	Food stocktake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thoroughly check all remaining food items (dry/frozen) for their shelf life dates. Remove and waste any food past its Use by or Best Before date. Re-order any required stock. 	Head Chef / Catering Team	Day -5	
7	Consumables stocktake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thoroughly check all disposable consumables to ensure sufficient stock to operate a takeaway food service. 	Head Chef / Catering Team	Day -5	
8	Cleaning check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check the supplies of all cleaning products and chemicals in particular hand sanitiser, hand soap. Re-stock all dispensers. Clean the unit if required. 	Catering Manager	Day -4	
9	Social distancing / PPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the food offer and staffing levels to determine what social distancing measures need to be implemented within the kitchen and front of house. Liaise with the school in relation to dining room arrangements and/or the removal of any catering equipment or vending outlets. Review what PPE requirements may be required to operate within the site, considering any client specific requirements. 	Catering Manager / Head Chef	Day -4	
10	Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure social distancing training is delivered to all colleagues to ensure they know how to operate the new service. Issue out Social Distancing site safety rules to all colleagues. 	Catering Manager	Day -2	