

Appendix to Risk Assessment COV-RAA19a

VENTILATION GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS DURING COVID-19

Many of our schools are naturally ventilated (e.g. using windows/doors) and the effectiveness and comfort of natural ventilation depends significantly on the temperature difference between the indoor air, the ambient air and the current wind situation. Now that Winter is upon us we need to demonstrate that we have given full consideration to how we can ensure each space is ventilated as much as possible, whilst minimising the spread from coronavirus (COVID-19), whilst also considering the balance with the temperature of the working environment.

Where schools do not have mechanical systems to aid them; the emphasis on increasing the flow of fresh air into a building or room at times when possible is paramount.

Practical solutions you may want to consider for your school–

- Schools that have mechanical ventilation systems can ensure a continuous air exchange throughout the building. For schools that have these types of systems they should check that they are functioning well i.e. circulating fresh air. If they are in any doubt about the type and performance of their system, they should contact their heating and ventilation contractor for advice.
- Ventilate spaces with outdoor air whenever possible for example by opening windows and doors before and after the school day and during break periods between lessons. You could
 - **Ventilate classrooms approx. every 60 minutes**
 - **That means leaving windows and doors fully open for at least five minutes**
 - **Inform parents to provide suitable warm clothing for pupils**
- Check whether windows and air-vents can be opened. For example, higher windows may cause less disruption from wind and rain than lower windows, whereas grids above windows help air circulate without significant heat loss
- Clean ventilation grids so that the air supply is not obstructed.
- Using desk or fans on stands, where there are pockets of stagnant air. If placed adjacent to open windows this can assist.
- Where schools believe that ventilation could be improved by leaving fire doors, either internal or external, open, this must only be done once the fire risk assessment has been reviewed and amended. Schools must ensure that systems are in place to close doors in the event of a fire alarm, during breaks if they cannot be monitored or at the end of the day (making this a Fire Warden responsibility for example). There is also the security risk of leaving external doors open and therefore there must be procedures in place to mitigate this such as ensuring that they are closed at times when they cannot be sufficiently monitored.

Whilst improving ventilation is one control, schools should continue to ensure that the wider controls of social distancing, personal hygiene and enhanced cleaning are implemented and maintained.

Please see link below for further information from the Federation of European Heating & Ventilation during Covid-19

https://www.rehva.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/REHVA_COVID-19_Guidance_School_Buildings.pdf