



ALNOOR MADRASSAH

COVID-19 POLICY & RISK ASSESSMENT

Creating a safe environment for staff and children and keep everyone safe from Covid-19

Safe Reopening of Madrassah after the Coronavirus Lockdown (September 2020)

COVID-SECURE

All planning should be performed on the understanding that Madrassa will never be fully Covid secure and free from all risk; the way the organisation is utilised and open to the public makes this very difficult. We need to ensure all effort is made to make the Madrassa as safe as possible for those who attend and work there.

CONTINUED RISK OF COVID-19

There continues to be a contagion risk of the Covid-19 disease in the community and this should drive all considerations when planning for the safe reopening of our Madrassah.

FOMITE TRANSMISSION

This is when an infected person coughs or sneezes and some of the droplets splash onto a nearby surface, or the person spreads the germs by touching a tap, handle, or surface before washing their hands.

Studies show that coronavirus can last up to three days on plastic and steel, but once it lands on a surface, the amount of viable virus begins to disintegrate in a matter of hours. That means a droplet on a surface is far more infectious right after the sneeze (same day) and reduces as time passes.

UNDERLYING HEALTH CONDITIONS

Among deaths with Covid-19 mentioned on the death certificate, a higher percentage mentioned diabetes, hypertensive diseases, chronic kidney disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and dementia than all cause death certificates. Diabetes was mentioned on 21% of death certificates where Covid-19 was also mentioned. This finding is consistent with other studies that have noticed a higher risk of death from Covid-19 among patients with diabetes.

COVID SAFETY OFFICER

To ensure the smooth and safe reopening of the Madrassa, we need to allocate one COVID Safety Officer to coordinate all activities relating to the Madrassa. This person must engage with teachers, parents, and children and be a focal point for your re-opening preparations.

The COVID Safety Officer(s) will represent Madrassa in the event of any 'Test and Trace' cases linked back to Madrassah and so it is imperative that he/she is fully versed on all legal requirements, risk assessment procedures and are authorised by the trustees to represent the interests of the madrassa.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COVID SAFETY OFFICER(S):

- Ensure a full risk assessment has been conducted prior to any reopening of the Madrassa
- Coordinate the planning of the phased reopening, including the purchasing of any equipment
- Consult widely so procedures and services can be tailored to meet the capacity and capabilities of your Madrassa
- Work with the Lama and Imams to balance the legal and safety requirements with the religious needs of the children attending
- Ensure all volunteers and staff are trained in the Covid safety procedures • Engage and set expectations with the parents so they know what to expect when the Madrassa reopens
- Establish and maintain links with the local council, police, and Public Health England representatives

RISK ASSESSMENT

Social distancing and reduced capacity will significantly change the way our buildings and surrounding areas are used. The Madrassah risk assessment is crucial in any investigations which may result from 'Test and Trace' cases involving the Madrassa. In summary the risk assessment will cover:

- Entrance / Exit Procedures
- Responsibilities
- Class Sizes
- Educational Bubbles
- Access to Wudu Facilities
- Cleaning Procedures
- Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
- Notices / Information Posters
- Safety and escalation procedures (suspected Covid case)

MADRASSA HOURS

In the initial phases of Madrassa reopening, it is unrealistic to adopt the traditional operating hours (typically two hours each weekday evening for four days and four hours for each day on weekend) for the following reasons:

- Limited or Wudu and toilet facilities
- Extended period in one location with huge number of attendees increase risk of fomite transmission. It is recommended that we reduced or staggered Madrassa hours are implemented for the following reasons:
- Reduced children in any one class
- Reduce time at the Madrassa
- Ease bottleneck issues at the entry and exits points

Based on the above recommendation we therefore decided to reschedule and divide the numbers of students attending in two group session in weekdays and weekend. Please see the chart below for further explanation.

WEEKDAYS MADRASSAH	
GROUP A	GROUP B
MONDAY 5:00PM – 7:00PM	WEDNESDAY 5:00PM – 7:00PM
TUESDAY 5:00PM – 7:00PM	THURSDAY 5:00PM – 7:00PM

WEEKEND MADRASSAH	
GROUP A (MORNING)	GROUP B (AFTERNOON)
SATURDAY 10:00AM – 01:00PM	SATURDAY 2:00PM – 4:00PM
SUNDAY 10:00AM – 01:00PM	SUNDAY 2:00PM – 4:00PM

Regardless of the method chose, sufficient time should be given between sessions to ensure there is no bottlenecks at the entrance / exit.

The guidelines recommended that children are kept in small groups of no more than 15 children with the same children each time wherever possible (do not mix groups unless absolutely necessary) and at least one staff member, depending on the type of provision or size of the group. Multiple groups of 15 plus staff can use the same shared space, if that is necessary, with distancing between the groups but this will constitute a large bubble.

The integrity of the bubble should be maintained at all times by restricting visitors (such as parents), strict hygiene is maintained and ensuring the class location is not used for other purposes.

Student should be allocated a fixed position on space and this space should not be shared or changed during the Madrassa session.

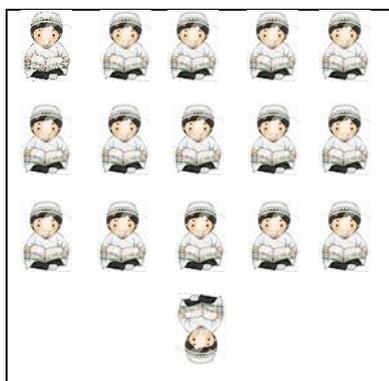
Where the Madrassa operates in the Mosque space all effort should be made to keep students separated from any adults attending the Mosque.

The Madrassah should keep a written or electronic attendance list of the children in each group for at least 21 days for ‘Test and Trace’ purposes.

CLASS CONFIGURATION

Social distancing should always be maintained in the Madrassa environment outside the defined bubbles. Regulations state this is one metre where additional mitigating steps have been taken to reduce risk or two metres where social distancing is not possible.

In setting up the Madrassa the classrooms should be at least two metres apart. In a given class, a ‘side-by-side’ or ‘Back-to-Back’ configuration is much safer than a ‘face-to-face’ and so the traditional U-shaped layout should be avoided unless there is more than two metres between the rows facing each other.



It is normal practice for the student to come to the teacher’s close place but this would result in a high-risk commonly touched surface. If the Madrassa wants to continue with this teaching approach, the student should not sit too close to a teacher’s area and would need to maintain a distance to reduce the risk of fomite transmission.



The other option for teaching method would be that the teacher physically goes to each student's place. To further reduce close contact, a Perspex screen or a face covering should be used by teachers at all time.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

VENTILATION

Wherever possible, all doors should be propped open to reduce the need for individuals to touch handles and to circulate air. Please Note: This does not apply to fire doors.

Windows should be kept open during Madrassa hours to increase the circulation of air. The use of air conditioning or fans are not recommended as it may recirculate infected droplets.

READING QURAN OR ISLAMIC BOOKS (SHARED RESOURCES)

There remains a small risk of picking up Covid-19 from paper and cardboard. It is highly recommended that students only use their own Mus'haf, educational books and stationery.

Classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the bubble or small, consistent group; these should be cleaned regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces.

OVERLAP WITH JAMA'AT TIMES

To maintain the integrity of the classroom bubble, teachers and students should never mix with general people attending the main Jamaat if a Salah occurs during Madrassa hours. The social distancing rule should be adhered at all time.

PRAYER MATS

It is accepted that there remains a small risk of picking up Covid-19 from soft fabrics and furnishings including carpets. It is highly recommended that all carpets are deep cleaned regularly before any reopening of the Madrassa to students.

If the student is to be seated on the carpet for extended periods during Madrassa hours, it is recommended that they bring a prayer mat or sheet pray on.

RAISED VOICES / COLLECTIVE RECITATION

Teachers should note that there may be an additional risk of infection in environments where you or others are chanting, shouting or conversing loudly. This applies even if others are at a distance to you. Steps should be taken to reduce the risk by maintaining social distancing and using a face covering, face shield or a Perspex screen where possible.

HYGIENE

WUDU FACILITIES

Water droplets, spitting and use of taps all present a risk of spreading Covid-19. Therefore restrictions on Wudu and toilet access will also apply to the Madrassa.

The reopening of these facilities should only be considered after the implementation of strict more often cleaning procedures.

HAND WASHING / SANITISER STATIONS

It is highly recommended that students to bring in their pocket hand sanitiser. The Madrassah will install hand washing facilities (sanitiser stations) at all entrances to the Madrassa and individuals are instructed to use them upon entering and exiting the Madrassah.

CLEANING PROCEDURES

A clear and regular cleaning regime should be established at the Madrassa and be conducted ideally before each Madrassah session. At a minimum all door handles, and commonly touched surfaces should be wiped with disinfectant, including chairs. All desk and chairs should be wiped down with disinfectant before and after each class.

FOOD AND WATER

No open food should be distributed or served during Madrassa. Any water coolers or dispensers should never be used at all time. Students should bring their own water bottle.

PERSONNEL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

The Madrassah will ensure all staff (Teachers, Admin staff, caretakers etc.) are provided with PPE. PPE packs should be prepared for each member of staff containing the following.

- Face Shield
- Hand sanitiser
- Gloves
- Disinfectant wipes

It is our moral responsibility to keep those who volunteer for your madrassa safe and they should be provided with face masks and gloves as a minimum.

Regulations state that students and teachers are not required to wear face coverings in educational settings. It is highly recommended that strict social distancing is maintained and if the teachers requests it, face shields should be made available.

All student contact details should be updated, and an accurate register of attendance be maintained in case of an incident.