Part of
Education and childcare during coronavirus

Department for Education

Guidance

Planning guide for primary schools

Updated 15 June 2020

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This guidance has been updated to provide information on how primary schools can use flexibility to welcome back additional pupils this term, where they have capacity.

Purpose of this document

On 10 May the Prime Minister announced a roadmap towards recovery, including plans for the phased return of some children to school from the week commencing 1 June.

We have created a planning framework to help school leaders to prepare and decide arrangements for more children returning to school. It's a starting point from which schools may choose to develop their own plans. This planning guide builds on that – it gives school leaders the 'next-level down' of detail from the planning framework.

This guide has been designed by school leaders for school leaders. It is intended to provide a step by step guide for headteachers and senior colleagues to prepare for extending their opening to include all pupils in reception, year 1 and year 6 from the week commencing 1 June, alongside priority groups (vulnerable children and the children of critical workers). Eligible children should be offered a full-time place. Schools are not required to use this guide, and may choose to follow alternative approaches to preparing for wider opening, or to use some sections of this guidance alongside other approaches. We hope that some of these suggestions will be helpful to headteachers who are leading this important work, to support their own decision-making.

Timeframe this document covers

This guide covers the first phase of wider opening from the week commencing 1 June.

Options for delivery

Schools should not plan on the basis of a rota system, either daily or weekly, as they do not provide the consistency of education and care required for the youngest children, who also require more support with remote education. This guide sets out other options for schools if they are unable to cater for all of the vulnerable children, children of critical workers, nursery children (where applicable – any pre-existing, standard rotas may remain unchanged), reception pupils, year 1s and year 6s with their available staff or in their available space.

In most cases the preparation for wider opening will be undertaken by the headteacher and senior colleagues. However, relevant bodies (such as local authorities, academy trusts or governing bodies, depending on the school type) should support and work with the headteacher, and should particularly assure themselves that risk assessments of the school opening more widely, before pupils and staff return, are carried out appropriately and measures put in place to address identified risks.

We expect schools and trusts to work closely with:

- parents, staff and unions as they normally would, when agreeing the best approaches for their circumstances
- their local authorities to determine what services they require and agree on any specific arrangements during this period

A similar guide for early years settings has been published. Schools with nursery classes, 2-year-old provision and maintained nursery schools, should consult this guidance.

Much of this will be relevant and useful for special schools and alternative provision (AP) providers, though it has not been developed for those settings.

While aiming to be comprehensive, the guide may not be exhaustive and there may again be particular circumstances which necessitate the consideration of factors not covered here.

This guide does not supersede any legal obligations relating to health and safety, employment or equalities and it is important that as an employer you continue to comply with your existing obligations, including those relating to individuals with protected characteristics. It contains non-statutory guidance to take into account when complying with these existing obligations. When considering how to apply this guidance, take into account agency workers, contractors and other people, as well as your employees.

Background

As a result of the huge efforts everyone has made to adhere to strict social distancing measures, the government's 5 tests have been met, meaning we can move forward with modifying measures which have been in place. Based on all the evidence, we are therefore able, from the week commencing 1 June 2020, to welcome back more children to early years settings and primary schools. Primary schools are being asked to welcome back all children currently in nursery, reception, year 1 and year 6. This guide is designed to support schools' planning for this phase of return.

We are able to welcome back more children to secondary school and further education settings from 15 June 2020. We have published guidance for secondary school provision.

1. Preparing the site

Health and safety check of the building

If your whole school site or buildings have been closed for many weeks, or if parts of the building have been out of use for a long period, then you should consider undertaking a health and safety check of the buildings concerned. You should speak to your trust or local authority about this if you are unsure whether you need it or how to commission it.

Read more about managing school premises during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

You might also need to make adjustments to your fire drill and practise it in the first week when more pupils return. Refer to advice on fire safety in new and existing school buildings.

Cleaning and hygiene

You will want to decide and make clear to the school staff and parents what your expectations are about cleaning and hygiene.

Once children are back in school, all frequently touched surfaces, equipment, door handles and toilets used during the day will need to be cleaned thoroughly each day. Talk to your cleaning provider about what will be needed.

Refer to guidance on cleaning non-healthcare settings for more information.

The guidance on implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings provides detailed advice on measures schools need to consider.

You may also wish to consider your plans for:

- the availability of soap and hot water in every toilet (and if possible in classrooms)
- the location of hand sanitiser stations, for example at the school entrance for pupils and any other person passing into the school to use, and their replenishment
- the location of lidded bins in classrooms and in other key locations around the site for the disposal of tissues and any other waste, their double bagging and emptying
- ensuring you have a good supply of disposable tissues to implement the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach in each classroom and enough to top up regularly

See Annex D: list of things to consider acquiring for other things you may need to get.

Movement around the school

Try to reduce possible contact between different groups of children, and between adults, it may be helpful for corridors to be used on a one way basis at any given time.

The guidance on implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings provides more suggestions on planning things like corridor access, lunch breaks and pick-up and drop-off times.

Site examination

Start with an examination of the classrooms available, and any other rooms to be used as temporary classrooms.

You may need to spread out into different classrooms or spaces than is usually the case. If you are having to split, for example, a reception class and use a non-reception classroom for half the class, you may need to move some essential resources into the non-reception room, if there is space to do so.

You should be mindful to minimise the number of resources in order to make sure they can be wiped clean. Wherever possible, resources which are not easily washable or wipeable should be removed.

Display the posters in Annex C (or others you think are suitable) in every classroom to be used, at the main entrance or front office, in places visible to those at the school gate if possible, in the staffroom and in all toilets.

2. Reviewing your staff for availability in school

Audit your whole staff to ascertain who will be available to be in school from the week commencing 1 June

Remember staff may need to work with different groups of children than usual.

You may also be working with some staff who are anxious and may value the opportunity for discussion and reassurance.

The guidance on implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings contains information about clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable adults.

Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals are currently advised not to work outside the home. We are strongly advising people, including education staff, who are clinically extremely vulnerable (those with serious underlying health conditions which put them at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) and have been advised by their clinician or through a letter) to rigorously follow shielding measures in order to keep themselves safe. Staff in this position are advised not to attend work.

Read guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable for more advice.

Clinically vulnerable individuals who are at higher risk of severe illness (for example, people with some pre-existing conditions as set out in the staying at home and away from others (social distancing) guidance) have been advised to take extra care in observing social distancing and should work from home where possible. This includes pregnant women. Education and childcare settings should endeavour to support this, for example by asking staff to support remote education, carry out lesson planning or other roles which can be done from home.

If clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the safest available on-site roles, staying 2 metres away from others wherever possible, although the individual may choose to take on a role that does not allow for this distance if they prefer to do so. If they have to spend time within 2 metres of other people, settings must carefully assess and discuss with them whether this involves an acceptable level of risk.

If a **member of staff lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable** (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), which includes those who are pregnant, they can attend work.

If a **staff member lives in a household with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable**, as set out in the guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as clinically extremely vulnerable, it is advised they only attend work if stringent social distancing can be adhered to. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those individuals to attend. They should be supported to work at home.

Your staffing picture may change so you should update your audit frequently, including if you have capacity and you are considering inviting additional children back. Ask staff to update you immediately if their situation changes as you will need to base decisions on your most recent staff availability audit.

What to consider when working out staff ratios

1. How many staff do you have available to work in school?
2. How many teachers do you have available to work in school?
3. How many support staff including teaching assistants do you have available for work in school?
4. Do you have a head or deputy available for work in school?
5. Do you have at least one person with paediatric first aid training available for work in school?
6. Do you have at least one person with up to date Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) training available to work in school?
7. Do you have your special educational needs coordinator available for work, or an alternative staff member who could take on this role?
8. Do you have a caretaker and/or cleaning staff, and if necessary at least one office staff member available during the school day?

If the answer to questions 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 is no, then you should try to find a solution to this before going further. You should speak to your local authority and/or trust who may be able to provide a suitable person temporarily to cover 5, 6, 7 or 8. In some cases, staff members may be prepared to undertake a different role to their normal role temporarily.

Keep your staffing arrangements as consistent as possible. Wherever possible keep them with the same pupil group and in the same settings. In instances where you do need to use staff from other schools, ensure cover is agreed on a weekly basis, not daily, to limit contacts.

3. Familiarise yourself with the maximum safe group size

We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. In deciding to bring more children back to early years and schools, we are taking this into account.

You should, therefore, work through the hierarchy of measures set out in implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings:

- avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
- frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices
- regular cleaning of settings
- minimising contact and mixing

It is still important to reduce contact between people as much as possible, so children, young people and staff where possible, should only mix in a small, consistent group and that small group should stay away from other people and groups. If you can keep older children within those small groups 2 metres away from each other, you should do so. While in general groups should be kept apart, brief, transitory contact, such as passing in a corridor, is low risk.

For primary schools, classes should normally be split in half, with no more than 15 pupils per small group and one teacher (and, if needed, a teaching assistant).

Vulnerable children and children of critical workers in other year groups should also be split into small groups of no more than 15. Where desks are used, they should be spaced as far apart as possible.

4. Inviting back additional pupils, where there is capacity

We know that in some schools, there will be capacity to welcome more children back, in group sizes of no more than 15, before the summer holidays. This may be because take-up amongst eligible children is lower than expected, or because there is additional space still available within the school and available staff to teach and supervise. There is no expectation on primary schools to welcome back additional children where they do not have capacity to do so.

Primary schools should only welcome back additional children where:

- they have already made provision available for children of critical workers, vulnerable children, and children in nursery, reception, year 1 and year 6 and have ensured as many as possible are able to attend (especially for those who would particularly benefit from being in school because of other disadvantage)
- they can accommodate more children while still following the approaches set out in the protective measures guidance and their own risk assessment
- they do not require additional funding, staff or classrooms to do so. If schools have access to space on other school sites (for example, local secondary schools, if that is feasible alongside the secondary offer) they may use this, taking care to ensure children stay in allocated groups. However, other community buildings (such as village halls) should not be used to expand capacity this term, while they remain closed in line with the government's roadmap

Where schools have capacity, they may choose to welcome back additional pupils. It is up to schools to decide which pupils to prioritise, based on their knowledge of their children and communities. They may choose to welcome back pupils in another year group. Where middle schools choose to invite year 8 pupils back, they should be confident they can manage this within the strict measures we have asked primary schools to adopt (including no more than 15 in a class, and consistency of these groups).

We would encourage middle schools to ensure that the use of public transport to travel to and from school is minimised as far as possible, and where it is totally necessary, this should not be during peak times. They should also consider the potential risks inherent in broader social mixing outside school and communicate with pupils about not socialising with each other in groups outside school. They may also want to consider staggered starts and finishes.

When deciding how to welcome additional pupils back before the summer, schools should consider how they will communicate to parents, including those with children in reception, year 1 or 6 who have not yet taken up their offer of a place. Schools should ascertain if those parents want to take up the offer, making it clear that if they indicate that they do not, or do not respond, schools may offer this capacity to another pupil in which case they won't subsequently be able to take up a place this term. They should ensure they are still able to accommodate vulnerable children and children of critical workers.

We know that many primary schools are keen to invite in pupils who are not returning to school at this time for face-to-face meetings, before the end of term. This time can be used to check-in on pupils, and ensure they are supported before a planned return to school from September. Where this happens, this contact needs to be in line with the current guidance on protective measures.

5. Creating and staffing your temporary teaching groups

If you have answered yes to questions 4, 5, 6 and 7 in section 2, and know how many teachers, teaching assistants and other support staff you have who are available for work, you should begin the process of working out how you can support eligible pupils.

In so doing you should:

- assume all eligible children will attend for the purposes of the first stage of planning, even if you think that is unlikely - that includes ensuring you follow the attendance expectations for vulnerable children
- determine your half class groups (maximum size of 15), taking into account any limitations of your school buildings and outdoor space (see implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings for more details)
- include children of critical workers and vulnerable children who are in reception, year 1 or 6 in groups of 15 within their year group
- determine your small groups (maximum size of 15) of children of critical workers and vulnerable children not in reception or years 1 and 6
- assume that the staffing model will be one teacher per group (or 2 teachers sharing the week if you have existing job shares) - qualified teachers are qualified to teach any primary year group, including early years foundation stage (EYFS)
- if there are any shortages of teachers then teaching assistants can be allocated to lead a group, working under the direction of a teacher

As a result of this exercise, and in the light of your staffing audit and the school premises, you will know if you can cater for all eligible children, including children of critical workers and vulnerable children of all ages.

If you do not have the staff available to be able to cover all the new teaching groups you have created, and this may be more likely for infant schools, you will need to consider possible solutions with your local authority and/or trust.

Possible approaches to managing a shortfall in staffing include:

- bringing additional teachers in to help, who may be supply teachers, teachers on temporary agreed loan from other schools, or teachers provided by your trust or local authority (considering the guidance in section 2 about consistent staffing across the week)
- asking suitably experienced teaching assistants who are willing to do so to work with groups under the supervision of a teacher
- using some senior leadership time to cover groups, although you should as headteacher consider your own workload and that of your senior colleagues to make sure this is manageable and you have sufficient leadership time remaining

We trust headteachers to make the best decisions they can. If you still cannot get enough cover in place and an arrangement which enables eligible children to attend consistently at another local school is not manageable, schools should focus first on continuing to provide places for priority groups of all year groups (children of critical workers and vulnerable children). Then, to support children's early learning, you should prioritise groups of children as follows:

- early years settings - 3 and 4 year olds followed by younger age groups
- infant schools - nursery (where applicable) and reception
- primary schools - nursery (where applicable), reception and year 1

Schools should not plan on the basis of a rota system, either daily or weekly, as they do not provide the consistency of education and care required for the youngest children, who also require more support with remote education.

Attendance reporting

Prepare to resume taking the attendance register and continue completing the daily data returns using the DfE portal (further guidance on what attendance and absence codes to use at this time has been published).

You should also prepare to continue with any arrangements that have been made with the local authority with the aim of safeguarding vulnerable children.

Parents and carers of eligible year groups, and critical workers/parents and carers of vulnerable children, are strongly encouraged to bring in their children, but they will not face fines or other sanctions if they don't.

Your school will not be held to account for your attendance figures during this time.

You should encourage parents whose children have been invited in to call you each day if they are not coming in as normal, so you understand why and can discuss it with them if needed.

6. Practical steps to reduce risk

You should plan for putting in place protective measures to reduce risks, for example by adjusting timings of the school day and agreeing this with the relevant body (such as your governing board). The overriding aim here is to reduce contact between different groups.

You should consider steps including:

- how you might stagger start and end times between year groups by a short period to reduce volume at the entrance
- ensuring parents and carers are aware of recommendations on transport to and from school, which means reducing any unnecessary travel on coaches, buses or public transport where possible (for example, by walking or cycling to school) and avoiding peak times
- using signage to guide parents and carers about where and when they should drop off and pick up their children - you will want to communicate this to parents in advance
- working out arrangements for breaks or play times so that ideally only one group of maximum 15 children is in the same play area at any one time
- ensuring that staff remain at a safe distance from each other at lunchtime or during breaks (including how to manage if your school has a small staff room or other staff areas)
- arranging for assemblies to take place with individual groups in their allocated classroom spaces rather than bringing children from different classes together into one hall or large space

You should also consider working with your catering supplier and kitchen staff on arrangements for lunchtime. Children in reception and year 1 should have the option of a free meal under the universal infant free school meals policy. Meals should be available for all pupils in school, and these should also be free of charge for pupils that qualify for benefits-related free school meals. With your kitchen staff, you will need to consider how meals will be prepared and served safely. Plans will need to be in place to ensure food supplies are in place for when children return.

Work out arrangements for lunch (and any 'snack' times for early years) so that children do not mix with children from other groups – this could mean having several lunch sittings or serving lunch in more than one location, including if appropriate in a classroom, or asking your caterers to look at other flexible ways of giving pupils access to lunch such that it can be eaten in the small group setting (for example taking cold or 'packed' lunches to children in the areas they are in for the day).

7. External support for SEND and behaviour

Schools may normally work with external agencies to support pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND) or with behaviour or other issues. Headteachers should check with local authorities or other providers of such support services to ascertain whether or when such services will be available. For pupils with education health and care (EHC) plans, it may not be possible to provide the full range of provision set out in the plan, and it may be necessary to make different arrangements if some of the support services are not available in their usual form from the start of June. If this is the case you should work with the local authority and parents, and confirm what special provision can reasonably be provided.

We have published guidance on conducting a SEND risk assessment during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Headteachers should also be aware that there may be additional pupils, including those with SEND, who display symptoms of stress or anxiety and additional support may be needed for them. Schools should check with local authorities on their capacity to support with this.

8. Changes to routines for staff and pupils

Ahead of opening for more pupils, schools will need to update their behaviour policy to reflect the new rules and routines, and communicate these changes to staff, pupils and parents.

Think about if and how your school rules need to change. There are some example new school rules given in Annex A which you could adopt or adapt. Any revised rules will need to be referenced in the revised behaviour policy with sanctions.

Consider how the new rules and routines will be communicated to pupils and parents/carers. Best practice suggests this includes:

- proactively teaching new rules to staff, pupils and parents
- regularly and rigorously reinforcing behaviour throughout every day
- consistently imposing sanctions when rules are broken, in line with the policy, as well as positively reinforcing well-executed rules through encouragement and rewards

Display the posters in Annex C, which are suitable for reception, years 1 and 6.

Prepare guidance for staff (see a model in Annex B) and ensure all staff are trained in the new rules and routines, including the use of sanctions and rewards, so that they can support pupils to understand them and enforce them consistently.

Staff will need to explicitly teach and supervise health and hygiene arrangements such as handwashing, tissue disposal and toilet flushing.

Taking books home

Limit the number of shared resources that are taken home by staff and pupils and limit the exchange of such resources.

Teachers should make sure they wash their hands and surfaces, before and after handling pupils' books.

Uniform

There is no need for anything other than normal personal hygiene and washing of clothes following a day in a school. Uniform that cannot be machine washed should be avoided.

You will want to think about leeway for any child who has grown out of any parts of their uniform since March but whose parents cannot currently replace it.

Drop off and pick up routines

Changes to drop off and pick up routines will be required. You should tell parents when they can drop off their children and that this should happen at the school gate.

You should determine a queuing system and a process for staff to greet each child, ensure they wash their hands immediately on arrival, and then go straight to their classroom.

Schools should inform parents that this is to reduce the number of people on the school site in the interest of infection control. If it is customary for parents to gather in the playground or to enter the buildings to drop off or collect children this should no longer be allowed, and neither should any gathering at the school gates to talk to other parents.

Visitors

Limit the external visitors to the school during school hours.

Parents should come into school buildings only when strictly necessary, by appointment, and ideally only one (unless for example, an interpreter or other support is required). Any such meetings should take place at a safe distance (and so the use of small offices may not be suitable).

9. Communicating with staff

Undertake an online staff meeting before wider opening from the week commencing 1 June, to take staff through arrangements if possible.

Ensure you or senior colleagues are free to be present around the school especially during the early part of wider opening. Staff and pupils may require additional support and reassurance, and you will be more easily available to pick up on any issues or problems.

Arrange regular opportunities to get feedback from staff on the new arrangements.

10. Communicating with parents

You should communicate with parents to make sure they know:

- whether their child will be able to attend from the week commencing 1 June
- what protective steps you're taking to make the school a low-risk place for their child
- what you need them to do (such as on drop off and collection)

You may also want to consider senior leaders calling parents in eligible groups to discuss with them directly, where this is feasible.

You may also need to communicate with parents if you have capacity and wish to invite additional children back (as covered in section 4).

11. Managing pupil and staff wellbeing and mental health

The coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak may have caused significant mental health or wellbeing difficulties for some children. It is important to recognise that while 'getting back to normal' is important and will be reassuring for many, school staff will need to consider how to support:

- individual children who have found the long period at home hard to manage
- those who have developed anxieties related to the virus
- those about whom there are safeguarding concerns
- those who may make safeguarding disclosures once they are back in schools

Some children may also have experienced bereavements in their immediate family or wider circle of friends or family or had increased/new caring responsibilities.

All children will have missed the routine of school, seeing their friends, and being supported by their teachers and other adults in the school.

Staff may wish to provide:

- opportunities for children to talk about their experiences of the past few weeks
- opportunities for one-to-one conversations with trusted adults where this may be supportive
- some refocussed lessons on relevant topics, for example, mental wellbeing or staying safe
- pastoral activity, such as positive opportunities to renew and develop friendships and peer groups
- other enriching developmental activities

As part of the introduction of health education during 2020 to 2021, we are producing some training materials for teachers on teaching about mental wellbeing and these may be a useful source of information for teachers and headteachers. Public Health England has also published advice for parents and carers on looking after the mental health and wellbeing of children or young people during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, which may be a useful resource.

The different experiences all pupils will have had at home will naturally play a large part in how easily they re-adapt to attending school and its routines. Staff will need to strike an appropriate balance between reintegrating pupils into a reassuring and familiar work ethic to support their mental wellbeing on the one hand, and identifying and taking time to address explicitly individual concerns or problems on the other.

If safeguarding issues come to light, they should be addressed using the school's safeguarding policy, which may need to be updated in light of wider opening. Headteachers should consider how they might manage any increase in referrals as pupils return to school.

Alongside this, governing boards and school leaders should consider the mental health and wellbeing of staff (including school leaders themselves), and the need to implement flexible working practices in a way that promotes good work-life balance for teachers and leaders.

11. Planning what to teach, and how

The priorities for young children at this time are resocialisation into new style school routines, speaking and listening, and regaining momentum in particular with early reading.

Each school context will vary and needs are likely to be greatest where children have not been able to access remote education consistently. Children who have had limited opportunities for exercise should be encouraged to exert themselves physically, making use of supervised non-touch running games within their group. The Association for PE and the Youth Sport Trust are also offering some support to schools.

For younger children, the resources made available for child-initiated learning should be carefully considered. For example, malleable resources, such as play dough, should not be shared and consideration should be given to their safe use, depending on circumstances.

Resources for activities such as painting, sticking, cutting, small world play, indoor and outdoor construction activities should be washed before and after use (more detailed guidance on this will be included in the guide for early years providers) and where possible, children should be discouraged from sharing these.

Children should be taught to wash their hands frequently, but particularly after using wheeled bikes, trikes and other large, movable toys. Children should be encouraged where possible not to touch their faces or to put objects in their mouths. Sharing stories, singing and playing outdoor games will help all children to socialise and resettle into familiar everyday classroom routines.

We have amended legislation to allow for the temporary disapplying and modifying of a number of requirements within the early years foundation stage (EYFS), which covers children in reception, giving settings flexibility to respond to changes in workforce availability and potential fluctuations in demand. These temporary changes came into force on 24 April 2020. During the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, schools should use reasonable endeavours to meet the existing EYFS learning and development requirements. As far as possible, children should benefit from a broad range of educational opportunities, but this also provides schools with the flexibility to give additional focus to fundamental areas where support is required following time spent out of school, such as reading.

For year 1, where possible schools should ascertain where children have fallen behind or have progressed further against the school's existing reading curriculum. If they have forgotten aspects already covered, then reteach and practise this material, where necessary reteaching phonics and using appropriately matched reading books to practise reading. Where there are small numbers significantly behind others then ensure they receive support as intensively as can be managed to catch up, and liaise where possible with parents and carers to ensure they can support too.

In year 6 it is unlikely that many of the end of term traditions will be able to take place, for example, whole year or class assemblies with parents, school journeys and trips. Schools should provide opportunities for children to discuss this as it may be a source of anxiety or sadness. Though visits to secondary schools for induction will not take place this year, some secondary schools may have capacity to undertake remote induction briefings or other types of sessions for pupils, for example, to meet form tutors, heads of year, or other key staff, or have a tour of the school virtually. You should discuss the options with your secondary schools.

Primary schools should, if not already in hand, ensure that information is transferred to destination secondary schools as soon as possible, and if practical in the absence of SATs results ensure that secondary schools are briefed in as much detail as possible about the attainment profile of transferring pupils, along with other information normally transferred.

Year 6 teaching during this time should focus on readiness for secondary school, including academic readiness, which could involve additional teaching in any subject, but in particular mathematics and English to make up for any losses to learning incurred while at home.

Physical education lessons may continue to take place providing they are strictly non-contact and do not involve more than any one temporary group.

13. Remote education during wider opening

Many schools will have been able to offer high-quality remote education opportunities or programmes over recent weeks. Now that primary schools will be opening more widely, larger numbers of staff will be needed to provide face-to-face teaching at school. This means that it may be more difficult to maintain the same level of remote education provision for pupils in the year groups who are not eligible to attend, or for those pupils in year groups who are eligible to attend but who themselves cannot.

In these circumstances consider how Oak National Academy or other remote education platforms can provide additional support for learning, as well as how learning delivered in school, if manageable, could be made available to pupils learning remotely.

Equal consideration should also be given to pupils who do not have suitable online access and where possible would benefit from printed resources.

We have produced guidance on remote education during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, including an initial list of educational resources and case studies.

Frequently asked questions

What if for example, my year 1 teacher(s) cannot come into school, but my year 2 teacher(s) can? Is it OK to invite year 2 children to school instead of year 1 children?

No. Only pupils in the eligible years (reception, years 1 and 6) plus vulnerable children and children of critical workers should come in to school from the week commencing 1 June. You should support your year 2 teacher(s) to teach the year 1 class(es), or ask the year 1 teacher(s) to set the work, or teach via video link, while another adult, for example, your year 2 teacher(s), supervises the class. Any qualified teacher is qualified to teach any year group in a primary school, including reception.

If you have capacity, only after you have made provision available for children of critical workers, vulnerable children, and children in nursery, reception, year 1 and 6, you can consider inviting additional children back, providing you can do so in line with the existing protective measures guidance.

We normally run breakfast and after school clubs as part of our 'wrap-around' provision. Are we required to re-start them?

No, you are not required to do so. You should only run such provision if you are able to keep children within the groups they are in during the day or safely distanced.

We have worked through this document and are ready to extend our opening from week commencing 1 June. Do I need to convene a meeting of my governing body to secure their agreement? Do I need to tell the local authority or the diocese?

Throughout each stage of this process, it is important to consult members of staff and governors to gain their involvement and support. You should keep your appropriate authority (who may be your governing body, trust board or local authority) informed of arrangements being made and key strategic decisions should be taken by them. This process can provide very helpful support for headteachers.

Some parents have children in, for example, reception and year 1 so staggered start times are not practical for them. What should I do?

You are encouraged to contact parents where this is the case and agree a start time for both or all children concerned.

What if parents do not observe social distancing at the school gate? Is it my job to enforce social distancing outside the school gates?

It is likely to be helpful to parents for you to explain clearly what the arrangements are for the start and end of the school day, and decisions you make about this should allow for the need for social distancing outside the school. Clear communication, including if possible or appropriate, through signage, can be helpful. Reminders may be useful as well from time to time.

Some of my staff have asked to have masks, gloves and aprons. Am I required to provide them?

We have published guidance on implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings. The guidance states that personal protective equipment (PPE) is only needed in a very small number of cases and it is not necessary for staff to wear masks, gloves and aprons unless they are carrying out activities that would usually require the use of PPE or if a child, young person or other learner becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) while in their setting and needs supervision until they can return home.

Education settings should use their local supply chains to obtain PPE.

If education settings cannot obtain the PPE they need they should approach their local authority. Local authorities should support them to access local PPE markets and available stock locally, including through coordinating the redistribution of available supplies between settings according to priority needs.

If the local authority is not able to meet the PPE needs of education providers, the local authority should approach their nearest Local Resilience Forum (LRF) which will allocate stock if it is available once the needs of other vital services locally have been met. If neither the local authority or LRF is able to respond to an education setting's unmet urgent need for PPE, they will need to make their own judgement in line with their risk assessment as to whether it is safe to continue to operate.

Can I direct staff to come into school?

It is natural that some staff will be worried about coming into school even if the risks for them are very low. You will know your staff best and so will be in the best position to work out how to proceed in individual cases. We are working in an unprecedented context, and more reassurance and discussion than usual may be required. It is always best, if at all possible, to work out a sensible way forward in individual cases that acknowledges any specific anxieties but which also enables the school's responsibilities to be effectively discharged. If you need support in finding a solution, speak to your local authority or trust.

Annex A: Behaviour principles

In light of the need for children to behave differently when they return to school, and any new systems you have put in place to support that, you'll need to make changes to your behaviour policy. Behaviour policy changes will also need to be communicated to pupils, parents and staff.

Areas schools may wish to add to their behaviour policy are:

- following any altered routines for arrival or departure
- following school instructions on hygiene, such as handwashing and sanitising
- following instructions on who pupils can socialise with at school
- moving around the school as per specific instructions (for example, one-way systems, out of bounds areas, queuing)
- expectations about sneezing, coughing, tissues and disposal ('catch it, bin it, kill it') and avoiding touching your mouth, nose and eyes with hands
- tell an adult if you are experiencing symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- rules about sharing any equipment or other items including drinking bottles
- amended expectations about breaks or play times, including where children may or may not play
- use of toilets
- clear rules about coughing or spitting at or towards any other person
- clear rules for pupils at home about conduct in relation to remote education
- rewards and sanction system where appropriate

Identify any reasonable adjustments that need to be made for students with more challenging behaviour.

Annex B: Principles for staff

1. Do not come to work if you have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or go home as soon as these develop (informing your manager), and access a test as soon as possible. You can do this by visiting the NHS website to ask for a test or calling the NHS on 119 if you do not have internet access.
2. Clean your hands more often than usual - with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.
3. Use the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.
4. Avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes.
5. Clean frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents and bleach.
6. Think about ways to modify your teaching approach to keep a distance from children in your class as much as possible, particularly close face to face support (noting that it's understood that this is not possible at all times, which is why hygiene and hand cleaning is so important).
7. Consider avoiding calling pupils to the front of the class or going to their desk to check on their work if not necessary.
8. Help your class to follow the rules on hand cleaning, not touching their faces, 'catch it, bin it, kill it' etc. including by updating your classrooms displays with posters.
9. Prevent your class from sharing equipment and resources (like stationery).
10. Keep your classroom door and windows open if possible for air flow.
11. Limit the number of children from your class using the toilet at any one time.
12. Limit your contact with other staff members, and don't congregate in shared spaces, especially if they are small rooms.
13. Make sure you've read the school's updated behaviour policy and know what role in it you're being asked to take.

Annex C: Posters

e-Bug has produced a series of helpful coronavirus (COVID-19) posters:

- Horrid hands
- Super sneezes
- Hand hygiene
- Respiratory hygiene
- Microbe mania

Annex D: List of things to consider acquiring

This might include:

- posters (for example, to encourage consistency on hygiene and keeping to own group)
- soap for sinks, and where there is no sink nearby, hand sanitiser in rooms/learning environments
- disposable paper towels
- cleaning products
- sanitising wipes for wiping some equipment
- lidded bins
- tape for cordoning off areas and marking floors

Is this page useful? Yes No Is there anything wrong with this page?

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance and support

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Transition period: get ready for 2021

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Citizenship and living in the UK
Crime, justice and the law
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Education and learning
Employing people
Environment and countryside
Housing and local services
Money and tax
Passports, travel and living abroad
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