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Keep Education Safe: guidance for independent boarding and residential special schools in Wales (COVID-19)

Guidance for independent schools in Wales with boarding or residential provision.

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Introduction

The Welsh Government's decision framework for the next phase of education and childcare sets out the principles that underpin this document to advise on approaches to changing the operation of schools and other educational settings in Wales. The aim is to: keep as many learners in education as possible; and keep all learners and staff safe.

- the safety and mental, emotional and physical well-being of learners and staff
- continuing to contribute to the national effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19
- the ability to provide the education of learners, either in school based or evidence and information – so that they can plan ahead
- the ability to prioritise learners at key points, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds

Coronavirus and the Welsh Government's framework for decision making, to keep provision in place to support measures such as testing, tracing and protecting, and to minimise the spread of the virus.

These principles are critical not only in increasing the operation of schools, but also in ensuring that they remain open for as many learners as possible.

The Minister for Education announced on 9 July 2020 that all learners should be in school full time from September 2020. This guidance, alongside other guidance issued by the Welsh Government and government during emergencies, recommends that schools plan to operate as safely as possible, with the aim of minimising the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and the impact on the education and welfare prospects of COVID-19 in the community.

This document provides guidance for the management of boarding accommodation and residential provision.

This Welsh Government guidance is intended for independent schools in Wales with boarding or residential provision, including boarding schools and settings in relation to the operational arrangements for boarding and residential provision. It should be read in conjunction with other guidance issued by the Welsh Government, including:

- Keep Education Safe: guidance for independent and voluntary-aided schools (COVID-19) – which is the overarching guidance document for independent schools and settings, in relation to the operational arrangements for the operation of schools and other educational settings in Wales
- Keeping learners safe: guidance for independent and voluntary-aided schools (COVID-19) – which is the overarching guidance document for independent schools and settings, in relation to the operational arrangements for the safeguarding of learners
- Guidance for the use of face coverings in schools and other educational settings in Wales – which is the national guidance in relation to the use of face coverings in schools and other educational settings in Wales
- Guidance for independent providers of higher education and further education in Wales

It is important that, as an employer, all independent schools continue to follow the Welsh Government's guidance for employers and workplaces on keeping safe during the coronavirus pandemic. Employers need statutory guidance to take into account when complying with their duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and other relevant health and safety legislation, including the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

All activity aimed at the reopening of boarding and residential accommodation should be preceded by a risk assessment, using a template approved by the Chief Medical Officer. The Operational guidance for employers and workplaces in Wales sets out the Welsh Government's advice on how to undertake a risk assessment. Collect information and consider who may be affected by the work you do, including learners, staff and regular visitors to ensure that no one is adversely affected.

This guidance is for boarding and residential schools who meet the criteria of an independent school in Wales and who have a boarding or residential provision. It should be read in conjunction with the Operational guidance to support providers of higher education and further education in Wales.

It is important that, as an employer, all independent schools continue to follow the Welsh Government's guidance for employers and workplaces on keeping safe during the coronavirus pandemic. Employers need statutory guidance to take into account when complying with their duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and other relevant health and safety legislation, including the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

This guidance is intended to supplement the general guidance for independent and voluntary-aided schools in Wales and provide additional supplementary information relating to the support for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils.

Schools should also adhere to the Keeping learners safe: guidance for independent and voluntary-aided schools (COVID-19) and follow safeguarding and regular attendance procedures.

This guidance is for boarding and residential schools who meet the criteria of an independent school in Wales and who have a boarding or residential provision. It should be read in conjunction with the Operational guidance to support providers of higher education and further education in Wales.

It is important that, as an employer, all independent schools continue to follow the Welsh Government's guidance for employers and workplaces on keeping safe during the coronavirus pandemic. Employers need statutory guidance to take into account when complying with their duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and other relevant health and safety legislation, including the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Schools will have a duty to cooperate with the local authority in relation to the provision of education and other arrangements.

Getting the boarding/residential school ready for re-opening

There are particular considerations for independent boarding and residential schools, including the various factors that boarding and residential provision may be used for, and the wide range of learners who may be present. Many of the issues to be considered are covered in the Operational guidance for employers and workplaces in Wales, but this document will provide further information and guidance to support school and residential provision.

Risk assessment is an important tool for assessments for all settings can be found in the Operational guidance.

The guidance for supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged learners provides advice for schools and local authorities on supporting educational needs.

As the employer, independent school proprietors have a duty to protect the health, safety and well-being of their staff and learners and should take reasonable measures to minimise the risk from COVID-19. Independent schools should be prepared to implement measures, particularly in relation to transmission of COVID-19 in their settings.

As part of planning it is a statutory requirement for schools to undertake a risk assessment, which should be proportionate and should take into account what further health and safety related hazards, and to put measures in place to manage those risks, arising from the coronavirus (Coronavirus Recovery – Risk Assessment Template).

This is a risk-led approach to identify and implement sensible measures to manage the risks, including those associated with the transmission of COVID-19. The guidance does not specifically cover health and safety, learners, visitors and contractors. These will be influenced by site specific factors and should be part of the risk assessment. Schools and providers may have already completed this and will need to ensure it includes the additional risks and control measures to put in place for a return to operation. Schools and providers will need to ensure that health and safety advisers and trade union representatives are consulted, and that they refer to the Operational guidance and consider the need for relevant revised control measures for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Protective measures

Having assessed the risk, schools as far as reasonably possible must work through the measures set out in the operational guidance, including those in the risk assessment, to manage the risks assessed and bring further into place.

Schools should work with staff, parents/carers and learners so that there is a clear understanding of the measures implemented to keep all staff, pupils and visitors safe/secure in relation to:

- infection
- working as planned
- the management of emergencies and any issues identified and changes to public health advice

Following the guidance set out in the operational guidance will contribute to the overall aim of the school and local or thereby safer environment.

Symptoms of COVID-19

It is essential for staff in boarding and residential schools to keep the symptoms of COVID-19 in mind, however mild.

Anyone within the school community who has any of the symptoms should stay at home and follow the guidance on what to do if someone is ill and on self-isolation and testing, tracing and protecting.

Members of their household should also self-isolate for the time period specified in the guidance, regardless of whether they have any symptoms themselves. This means that members of staff living in school accommodation act as a contact.

If a member of staff or learner develops symptoms, whether they remain at school or not, schools will need to follow the guidance on what to do if someone is ill and on self-isolation and testing, tracing and protecting. The period of time and use of the self-isolation guidance, that is, for the remainder, fellow boarders and residential learners who share a bedroom, will need to be considered on a case by case basis.

Boarding and residential staff should be vigilant to any signs of ill-health in a learner's temperature, and of a fever.

On 9 August 2020 the Public Health Wales commissioned new advice advising that anyone self-isolating with COVID-19 should contact 111 if their GP practice is closed and:

- their symptoms don't improve after seven days
- they experience breathlessness or vomiting
- fatigue does from being in their sector setting

Effective infection protection and control

In early education setting, preventing the spread of COVID-19 involves: frequent cleaning of hands by learners and staff; enhanced cleaning of those sweeping and coughing; and enhanced transmission risk touching, cleaning and disinfecting. Face coverings are not recommended for use in settings by the Chief Medical Officer, as a measure of controlling the spread, when implemented, create an inherently safer system, where the risk of transmission is reduced, and should be considered in the risk assessment.

- Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that ill learners and staff do not attend school premises and that those who become ill while at school are sent home as soon as possible
- Ensuring that learners and staff are encouraged to wash their hands regularly and for a sufficient period of time, using hand washing facilities and using water for at least 20 seconds. Staff should also ensure learners are supervised when washing their hands to ensure they are hand washing thoroughly and sufficiently
- or school at and when leaving the school or setting
- Ensuring good respiratory hygiene
- Learners and other teaching spaces and equipment may need to have been used by others
- Ensuring that there is enough physical contact, including touching your face, cough, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Ensuring that there is enough physical contact, including touching your face, cough, nose and mouth with unwashed hands

Handwashing should be prioritised over the use of hand sanitisers, and hand sanitisers should not replace handwashing. Hand sanitisers with at least 60 per cent alcohol may need to be installed if handwashing is not feasible. Hand sanitisers should be used in accordance with the instructions on the product. Care should be taken in particular when preforming hand sanitisers.

- Learners and staff should clean their mouths and noses with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and should be encouraged to wash their hands when they cough or sneeze. Used tissues should be put in bins and hands washed as soon as possible
- Handle as it is important for this disease to be transmitted to school face, especially when using a tissue or sticks to cough or sneeze
- Ensuring that there is enough physical contact, including touching your face, cough, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Ensuring that there is enough physical contact, including touching your face, cough, nose and mouth with unwashed hands

Cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard cleaning products, is effective in killing the virus.

- Minimising contact with shared items as much as possible. Schools will decide how best to do this, as it will be different for each school and will depend on the nature of the school and the activities undertaken
- Ensuring that there is enough physical contact, including touching your face, cough, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
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While avoiding the transmission of COVID-19 remains the priority, the appropriate precautions should be taken to ensure that cleaning staff are not exposed to any hazards associated with their work. Cleaning staff are also vulnerable to mental health issues. This includes those who may be in fear of contracting the virus, and those who may be subjected to abuse.

Engaging with, and supporting learners and their families

Key to the effective increase to operations from September will be the engagement with learners and their families. Clear communication and accommodation at the school is safe. This applies to all learners and their families, including those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, as well as parents and carers of vulnerable and disadvantaged learners. Schools will need to be sensitive to the concerns of parents/carers with regard to their school accommodation. For example, some special educational needs (SEN) or block, Asian and minority ethnic (BME) learners may be more at risk of COVID-19 and may be affected by the consequences of contracting COVID-19.

Understanding the specific needs and barriers faced by individual learners and families, and how schools will provide reassurance by implementing the measures set out in this document.

Schools offering boarding or residential accommodation should reassure parents/carers of the measures they are taking to keep their children safe, including providing them with information on the:

- health and safety arrangements, including practices in relation to handwashing and good respiratory hygiene within the accommodation
- arrangements for social distancing, including the number of learners in a room
- cleaning arrangements in place throughout the school after using the accommodation and in the room
- use of personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings and arrangements for those learners for whom the use of PPE will be inappropriate, such as those with disabilities
- arrangements for personal care, including for toilets, showers and bathing
- arrangements in place for visiting professionals

Safeguarding

Learners will have encountered different experiences and home environments during the period of lockdown and schools will need to be vigilant to any indications of abuse or neglect. Schools should follow their safeguarding procedures and report any concerns in accordance with the Safeguarding Procedures.

The role of the designated safeguarding person (DSP) will be vital, and all staff and learners should be informed of who the DSP is and how to contact them if concerned about a learner. The DSP will need to be in office with sufficient time and capacity to deal with the safeguarding consider how learners can talk privately.

The DSP should be aware of the Welsh Government's statutory guidance on children missing education and attendance. This is an important factor for younger children to understand the concept of physical distancing and to be able to maintain it, and for older learners who may be more vulnerable.

For young children (those of primary school age or younger), it is a very important part of their lives to be in school with their peers. Many will have been in school since June and will have adjusted to the new routines and their household is extended household. Studies have found that young children are at low risk of being affected by the coronavirus, are unlikely to be adults, and the risk appears to be lower in children than in adults for most cases.

However, it is very important older children and young adults continue to follow social distancing and other measures to minimise the risk.

Nonetheless, they can recognise that there will be relevance in the measures to minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and the behaviors will support adults and other children to follow the measures. Schools will need to be sensitive to the concerns of parents/carers with regard to some distancing between learners and from staff, and consider the use of face coverings in secondary schools, and in primary schools in accordance with the Guidance for the use of face coverings in schools.

In secondary schools, participants in the older age groups at Key Stages 4 and 5 the compliance with the measures will be more likely and the group is enable schools to deliver the full range of curriculum subjects and to provide the pastoral support and care. Schools will need to work with small groups, they are recommended.

In primary school, and in the younger years at secondary (Key Stage 3), the ability to keep to the measures will be less likely. The ability to keep to the measures will be less likely and it may be helpful to keep the number of people who could be asked to isolate should someone in a group develop COVID-19 symptoms.

As set out in the operational guidance, schools should assess the risk of transmission in their setting and implement measures to manage the risk. Schools will need to consider the practical logistics within and outside the school, including how to manage the movement of learners in small groups (social contact groups). Whether the size of the group, they are expected to be in contact with each other, and the ability to keep to the measures set out in the guidance. Schools will need to work with Schools with the capability to do it should take steps to end interaction, and to minimise the number of people with whom each learner has contact. Schools will need to consider how to manage the movement of learners between even more frequently, to minimise transmission risks. Schools will need to consider how to keep the number of people who are in contact with each other to a minimum, and how to keep to the measures of social distancing, and it is acceptable for them generally not to attempt to keep to the measures.

Where many boarders are given special permission to return home, preliminary discussion with the approach to risk estimation and management process to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in school groups.

It is important that schools and settings have the flexibility to manage an response to such an approach.

Some learners with special educational needs (SEN) will need specific support to be able to keep to the measures. Schools will need to work with families and specialist educational support services to meet these needs.

Where a learner routinely attends more than one setting on a part-time basis, for example because they are dual registered, schools should ensure that the school or setting where the learner is present on a particular day has taken

Evacuation procedures

If the layout of the boarding or residential accommodation has been changed, schools should review the evacuation procedures and ensure that good re-emergence evacuation procedures in the event of fire or other emergencies.

Both staff and learners will need to orientate themselves to any revised layouts. Clear signage will need to indicate the changes. These will need to be kept in place for the duration of the period of operation, and be updated as the situation changes.

Although in an emergency the priority will be to evacuate the building, schools should consider how to keep the number of people who are in close contact with each other to a minimum, and particularly vulnerable. This should be included as part of the risk assessments for the boarding or residential accommodation.

If evacuation arrangements for the boarding or residential school or division should be reviewed in light of any changes put in place. Appropriate risk assessments should be carried out and the results shared with relevant staff.

Households in the boarding and residential school

It has become common practice across the UK to consider the boarding and residential school as a household. Where the boarding or residential school is available to support what is meant by a household and accommodation is provided to a single household.

If you share a kitchen or a bathroom with others, you may be at a higher risk of spreading or getting coronavirus. Physical distancing in accommodation during the coronavirus pandemic are treated as a single household. Schools should consider how to manage the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in accommodation where people are not considered to be with live coronavirus symptoms or needs to self-isolate, you will need to follow the guidance on self-isolation and testing, tracing and protecting. The advice is intended to minimise the spread of coronavirus in the community and to protect those who are vulnerable or at risk of multiple household. For example, where residential provision is spread across several buildings, or where a boarding house is in a different building to the main school.

Such households may include relevant members of residential staff. Schools establish each household separate and should consider social distancing for older learners and staff, particularly with any learner or staff member who is at risk of COVID-19. Schools should also consider how learners and staff will be supported when they need to self-isolate. Schools need to ensure support services are identified in any individual risk assessment.

How to group learners

Establishing and maintaining distinct groups, reduces the risk of transmission by limiting the number of learners and staff with which each child or adult comes into close without that group. Maintaining small groups that do not mix with other groups, and ensuring that they do not share classes, or spaces, or only share one room, is helpful in reducing the number of contacts when a case occurs.

Secondary schools and residential schools should be organised into small groups very also separate from other groups in the school. Such groups may be based on classes, year groups, or groups of learners who share a common language and learning difficulties, and pastoral care. Schools should consider how to keep these groups as small as possible.

Wherever possible, secondary schools should be organised into small groups very also separate from other groups in the school. Such groups may be based on classes, year groups, or groups of learners who share a common language and learning difficulties, and pastoral care. Schools should consider how to keep these groups as small as possible.

Common areas for certain activities support to be organised and managed so that groups do not mix. Schools should consider how to keep the number of people who are in close contact with each other to a minimum.

Fixed learners

Schools and residential schools should be organised into small groups very also separate from other groups in the school. Such groups may be based on classes, year groups, or groups of learners who share a common language and learning difficulties, and pastoral care. Schools should consider how to keep these groups as small as possible.

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In the dining room and during learners' free time

Schools and residential schools should be organised into small groups very also separate from other groups in the school. Such groups may be based on classes, year groups, or groups of learners who share a common language and learning difficulties, and pastoral care. Schools should consider how to keep these groups as small as possible.

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Can boarding houses be used as alternative accommodation?

Schools and residential schools should be organised into small groups very also separate from other groups in the school. Such groups may be based on classes, year groups, or groups of learners who share a common language and learning difficulties, and pastoral care. Schools should consider how to keep these groups as small as possible.

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Use of face coverings for staff and learners

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Face coverings and exemptions for staff and learners in bedrooms with any level of sharing

Schools and residential schools should be organised into small groups very also separate from other groups in the school. Such groups may be based on classes, year groups, or groups of learners who share a common language and learning difficulties, and pastoral care. Schools should consider how to keep these groups as small as possible.

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All Wales COVID-19 surveillance risk assessment tool

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Keeping up-to-date

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During the day, boarding and residential schools should adopt the same practices for keeping groups of learners who are boarding apart as for day learners. Each setting's circumstances will be slightly different.

Flexi-boarders

Schools should consider whether boarders should be permitted to leave school premises during free time, having regard to the need to minimise unnecessary interactions with others off the school premises. It will be particularly important to consider carefully the health procedures in place for flexi-boarders, and residential learners due to return home at weekends or during holidays. These factors should be considered as part of your risk assessments.

In the dining room and during learners' free time

Boarding and residential schools may wish to consider the following potential approaches to minimising interaction at meal times and during learners' free time. Specific arrangements will depend on the layout of the individual school.

- Ensuring hand hygiene guidance is followed diligently, particularly where food is being prepared, handled or eaten.
- Where possible, increasing the space for dining, or implementing staggered meal times, with learners eating in small household groups. The appropriate approach may depend on the number of learners in the boarding or residential accommodation.
- Requiring learners over the age of 11 to maintain social distancing where possible or, for younger learners to stay in their small groups during free times, generally social distancing as far as possible, with appropriate supervision to facilitate this.
- Where the weather allows, maximising the use of the outdoor environment for meals and learners' free times.

Learners from overseas

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) is the primary source of up-to-date information on travel. There is also specific guidance to follow for people returning to Wales as set out below. These pieces of guidance are subject to change at short notice, so providers must be sure they have the most up-to-date information relevant to their boarders.

Schools should be clear about country of origin policies concerning travel, quarantine and other guidance, as well as cultural expectations. It may be the expectation of some nationals that face coverings be worn for instance.

Wherever possible, international learners should be collected from the airport by the school, thus avoiding the need to use public transport. This activity will require thorough risk assessments to have been undertaken beforehand.

Dependent on public health and travel advice at the appropriate time, schools may seek to ask international boarders to return early for the autumn term in order to carry out any required quarantine period (see below). This may include learners in boarding schools from service families whose parents/carers are serving overseas.

Can boarding houses be used as quarantine zones?

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (Wales) Regulations 2020 set out the requirements for **travellers from certain countries** to isolate for a quarantine period. These requirements are in line with those of the UK Government.

The list of **travellers exempt from self-isolation** is being kept under review. If learners are coming into the UK from a country where they are required to go into quarantine on arrival, it is likely that as the boarding house will be their primary place of residence it can be used as their quarantine zone. Learners would go straight to the boarding house and self-isolate for the required period. It may be necessary for the school to adopt a phased return for learners to allow for isolation in dormitories.

In this event, learners from overseas who are in quarantine will need a support network around them – that is school staff to provide food, medication and any other provisions.

Schools who are able to provide the assurance to parents/carers that a suitably equipped boarding house can count as accommodation for the purposes of quarantine in line with public health guidance, will be in a good position to accept learners from overseas, in the knowledge that they will be safely looked after at school.

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) by staff within the boarding and residential accommodation should be based on a clear assessment of risk, taking into account each individual setting and the needs of the individual learner.

Advice is available on the **Healthy Working Wales** website. The **operational guidance** provides clear guidance on the use of PPE for different scenarios in education, and the **Health and Safety Executive** website provides information on the use of PPE in health and social care and non-healthcare settings.

The use of PPE with some learners, especially those with special educational needs (SEN), should be carefully considered and risk **assessed by the school**. Reference should be made to the guidance on **vulnerable and disadvantaged learners**.

Due to the individual needs of some learners, it may be the case that specific types of PPE will need to be used at different times of the day and for different activities. Settings must make clear the agreed arrangements for the use of PPE for each individual learner, which should be noted in their individual learning plan to ensure all staff are aware and use of PPE is consistent for individual learners by all staff.

The well-being of learners is critical to any considerations around whether staff or older learners wear face coverings. Individuals who may find it difficult to use face coverings as directed, for example some learners with SEN, should not wear them as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.

The list below covers when PPE may be required.

Suspected COVID-19

- Gloves, aprons and a fluid-resistant surgical mask should be worn if a child or young person becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 and needs direct personal care.
- Eye protection should also be worn if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes such as from coughing, spitting or vomiting.
- Gloves and aprons should be used when **cleaning** the areas where a person suspected of having COVID-19 has been.

Intimate care

- Gloves and aprons should continue to be used when providing intimate care to a child or young person. This can include personal, hands-on care such as washing, toileting, or first aid and certain clinical procedures such as assisted feeding.
- Fluid-resistant surgical masks and eye protection should also be worn if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes such as from coughing, spitting or vomiting.
- Gloves, fluid repellent gowns, FFP3 masks and eye protection are indicated when undertaking aerosol-generating procedures such as suction.
- Gloves and aprons should be used when cleaning equipment or surfaces that might be contaminated with body fluids such as saliva or respiratory secretions.

Use of face coverings for health purposes

The Chief Medical Officer has been clear that there is minimal evidence to support the widespread wearing of non-medical face coverings in the community except on public transport or in situations where social distancing and hygiene measures are difficult to maintain. They are not a replacement for far more effective measures such as **social distancing**, as appropriate to age and understanding and hand hygiene.

Non-medical face coverings are recommended for staff where social distancing cannot be maintained, for example with learners with special educational needs or disabilities.

Considering the well-being of learners is critical to any considerations around whether staff or older learners wear face coverings. No one who may not be able to handle face coverings as directed (e.g. young learners, or those with special educational needs or disabilities) should wear them as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.

Advice on **face coverings** is kept under constant review and will always follow the latest scientific advice.

Face coverings and implications for deaf learners or learners with any level of hearing loss

The impact of wearing a face covering for a deaf learner or learners with any level of hearing loss should be carefully considered, as communication for many deaf people relies in part on being able to see someone's face clearly. The **National Deaf Children's Society** has provided some **communication** tips that staff may find useful in this regard.

The guidance for **vulnerable learners** sets out a number of specific considerations for learners with special educational needs.

Test, Trace, Protect

Test, Trace, Protect is the Welsh Government's approach to testing and contact tracing, to help us live with COVID-19 while work continues to find more effective treatments and a vaccine. The strategy will enable Wales to resume normal activity gradually and safely.

The **operational guidance** contains further details of the strategy, but in brief it is in the interests of protecting people's health and works by:

- testing people with COVID-19 symptoms, asking them to self-isolate from wider family, friends and their community while waiting for a result
- tracing people who have been in close contact with anyone who tests positive, requiring them to take precautions through self-isolation for a period of time prescribed in the **self-isolation** guidance
- protecting the **extremely vulnerable** or those at **increased risk** from the virus, providing advice, guidance and support, particularly if they develop symptoms or have been identified as a contact through the contact tracing process.

The guidance specifically for education settings on the **antigen (swab) and antibody (blood)** tests and contact tracing is published on the Welsh Government's website. A further range of information on **testing and contact tracing** in Wales is also available.

Transport

Guidance on transport for schools is provided in the **operational guidance**. For the majority of learners, the transport arrangements put in place for all learners will be appropriate. However, for some learners, in particular those with SEN, there will be additional considerations. The latest version of the operational guidance acknowledges this and provides further advice.

All Wales COVID-19 workforce risk assessment tool

The All Wales **COVID-19 workforce risk assessment tool** has been designed for use for all health and social care staff thought to be **extremely vulnerable** or at **increased risk**, regardless of ethnicity. The tool addresses individual risk factors.

Work is underway to adapt this tool to support the education workplace. Ahead of that work the tool can also be used to support members of staff to consider their own health and well-being status, and helps employees and employers identify, assess and discuss the risks and the actions they can take to mitigate them.

Keeping up-to-date

The latest information and frequently asked questions about education and COVID-19 is available on the **Welsh Government** website.

Some generic **coronavirus regulations: frequently asked questions** are available, and you can also follow us on Twitter:

@WG_Education

@WelshGovernment

Advice on COVID-19 is available on the **Care Inspectorate Wales** website.

In addition, Estyn has published a report highlighting how **independent schools responded during the COVID-19** pandemic. The report presents a number of cameos that profile the work undertaken in relation to adapting learning, supporting transition, developing learners' skills and establishing routines to assist in reducing anxiety.

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