Coronavirus (COVID-19) | Guidance and support

Education and childcare before coronavirus, schools, colleges and universities

Part of Education and childcare during coronavirus

Guidance for full opening: special schools and other specialist settings

Updated 31 December 2021

From: Department for Education

Overview

It continues to be the aim that all children and young people, in all year groups and settings types, remain in education settings full time throughout the academic year.

The guidance for leaders in schools and colleges:

- special schools
- special schools and other specialist settings
- other specialist education settings, such as hospital schools

It includes further information on the risks to children, young people and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can attend full time safely.

Separate guidance is available for:

- early years
- mainstream schools
- further education providers and sixth forms
- colleges and universities

The first section sets out the actions leaders should take to minimise the risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) and the risks from other infectious diseases in their setting. This guidance has been updated to reflect the government's 'Plan B' measures. This public health advice, issued to minimise the impact of COVID-19, and is relevant to all settings.

The rest of this guidance is focused on how the Department for Education (DfE) expects leaders to implement the public health advice. It is broken into 3 sections:

- school operations
- curriculum, behaviour and pastoral support
- assessment and accountability

It also includes guidance on school-led testing of education in the case of a local outbreak.

SPs may also want to refer to the general guidance for further education (FE) providers and sixth forms.

We produced this guidance with input from school leaders, unions and sector bodies and in consultation with the Public Health England Science Group (PHE). We welcome the guidance under review and update as necessary.

Latest updates

- Guidance on mask wearing has been updated:
  - Clinically extremely vulnerable people
  - Section 3: Assessment and accountability
    - Inspection
    - Ofsted inspections
    - Data
    - Assessment
    - Accountability
  - Section 3: Contingency planning for remote education

Welcoming children and young people back to education

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Purpose of this guidance

The first section of this guidance sets out the public health advice which leaders should implement to minimise the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) and other (COVID-19) transmission, as it has been agreed by the government with public health bodies and the Department for Education (DfE). This guidance has been developed with advice from PHE. In developing this guidance, we have sought to balance the risk to health from COVID-19 with the wider health, educational, safeguarding and other risks that will be caused by the use of coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination and consultation with leaders in society.

The public health advice in this guidance makes up a PHE endorsed 'system of protective measures' (SPM) to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission in education and childcare settings, including schools. When deployed in accordance with a broad setting-based risk assessment, these measures create an environment in which the risk of COVID-19 transmission is minimised, and the risk of transmission of other infectious diseases in education settings is significantly reduced.

The system of protective measures set out principles and guidance. Following this guidance will help education and childcare settings to manage the risk of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. Adherence to the guidance will not guarantee that no cases will occur, but it will significantly reduce the risk of transmission of other infectious diseases and significantly reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and significantly reduce the risk of COVID-19 outbreaks.

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Risk assessments for children and young people with education, health and care (EHC) plans

Following the partial closure of mainstream and childcare settings from 23 March 2020, we asked local authorities to consider the needs of children and young people with education, health and care (EHC) plans, and to carry out a risk assessment. This risk assessment should consider the risks to children and young people with EHC plans, including those who are vulnerable, and young people with EHCs based in order to make a successful return to full time education. We expect local authorities to do this in the same way as they would for children who are not in school. We expect local authorities to carry out this risk assessment in consultation with parents, and children and young people, and the conditions are right for this, but some people will understandably have worries that should be heard and addressed.

SEND legislation

From 5 May to 31 July, Section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014 was temporarily suspended. This means that the duty to secure the special educational and health provisions set out in education, health and care plans (EHCP) was relaxed to secure or arrange the specified special educational and health care provision to the best of their ability, taking into account the impact of COVID-19 on their ability to secure or arrange the provision. Local authorities and their partner education and childcare settings and health services to respond to the pandemic. These measures were in place for a limited period.

To ensure that children and young people receive the support they need, we expect that the provision set out in EHCPs should be in place for children and young people. It is vital that children and young people with EHCPs attend settings where they can receive high quality teaching and specialist professionals are in place to support their education, health and care needs. Local authorities and SEND leaders should work flexibly with their focus in supporting local authorities, health commissioning bodies and education settings to review how provision can be made available to children and young people.

Temporary changes to the statutory requirements for EHCP annual reviews assessments, which, where local authorities and others who contribute to EHCP reviews agree, could be carried out by a review of the child's EHCP, could be carried out by a review of the child's EHCP.

We remain committed to listening to and working with local authorities, parents and carer representatives and SEND leaders to ensure that the support is in place. We expect that the EHCPs of the temporary changes is managed in a way that supports the needs of children and young people with EHCPs.

Many children and young people with EHCPs will have had their education significantly disrupted and vulnerability. Settings should consider any changes to provision or support that may be required to ensure that children and young people with EHCPs receive the support they need, and that parents and carers are informed and kept up-to-date with any additional support and placed where needed.

Vulnerable children

Our published definition of vulnerable children and young people includes children and young people who are in the care of local authorities, and those who are assessed to be at risk of harm or abuse or neglect or disclosure by the school or the local authority.

Section 1: public health advice to minimise coronavirus (COVID-19) risks

Schools should follow the public health advice to minimise risks to and return from the start of the autumn term. Special schools and other specialist settings should follow this advice.

Settings must comply with health and safety law, which requires them to manage risks to their staff and others affected by their activities. This includes:

- the requirement that people who are ill should stay at home
- ventilation requirements
- enhanced cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- the requirement to carry out risk assessments and maximise distancing between those in the workplace, and where this is not possible, take effective mitigation for contamination as much as is reasonably practicable

Reducing contact with students and other people in education environments will include: as much as possible:

- grouping pupils in consistent groups together
- avoiding contact between groups
- staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff as much as possible

Settings should have in place arrangements to plan to monitor whether the controls are effective, working as planned, and update them appropriately. Ventilation is an important control measure. Settings should have in place arrangements to monitor the ventilation, including the maintenance of ventilation systems, and take action to address any issues identified.

For more information on what to expect from health and safety law in education, in health and safety risk assessments and managing risk, see annex A.

The system of controls: protective measures

Having protective measures in place will mean that the system of controls. They should adopt protective measures in a way that:

- addresses the risks identified in the risk assessment
- works for the setting and the individual, other complex needs of the children and young people in the setting
- does settings feel safe and welcoming environments where children and young people educational and care support for pupils and students

Footnotes follow the guidance on how settings will effectively reduce risks to their school and create an inherently safer environment.

System of controls

This is the set of actions education settings must take. They are grouped into 'prevention' and 'response to infection'.

Prevention

1) Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have tested positive, or who are awaiting a test result, or who are waiting for test results to be notified by NHS Test and Trace, do not attend education settings

2) Where recommended, the use of face coverings in settings

3) Clean hands thoroughly and more frequently

4) Ensure good ventilation by promoting the 'Let's fit, let's ventilate' approach

5) Introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using disinfectant wipes or sprays and tissues

6) Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible

7) Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)

8) Always keep occupied spaces well ventilated.

Numbers 1, 2, and 3 are the most important. Numbers 4, 5, and 6 are important.

Number 7 must be properly considered, and settings must put in place measures that suit their individual circumstances.

Number 7 applies in specific circumstances.

Response to any infection

9) Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.

10) Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the setting's community.

11) Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.

Numbers 9, 10, 11 are followed in every case where they are relevant.

Prevention

1. Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who has tested positive, or who are awaiting test results to be notified by NHS Test and Trace, do not attend education settings

Ensuring that pupils, students, staff and other adults do not come into the education setting if they have symptoms of COVID-19, or have tested positive for COVID-19, or are waiting for test results, or have been asked to isolate by NHS Test and Trace, or are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 is one of the most important ways to control the spread of COVID-19.

If anyone in the setting becomes unwell with a new and persistent cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change to, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they must be sent home and advised to follow guidance on self-isolation and book a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19), which sets out that they should remain at home for 10 days and should follow Annex A from v.2.0 or v.3 they have coronavirus (COVID-19).

Ensuring that people who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have tested positive for COVID-19, do not attend education settings is critical.

If a child's anosmia (elevation, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on their age and needs of the child, with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened to ventilate the room. Staff should not be required to remain there to ensure that the child is safe and feel safe.

If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The room and bathroom should be thoroughly cleaned following children's departure before being used by others.

Staff should be sent home if they develop symptoms of COVID-19 or have tested positive for COVID-19, symptoms or a positive test result, or have been asked to isolate by NHS Test and Trace, or are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or have been asked to isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

As a local authority is an emergency, call 999 if someone is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Anyone with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms should not go to hospital or primary care unless they are asked to do so.

Any member of staff who has been in close contact with a person who has symptoms while expecting PPE, and all other members of staff in pupils who have been in close contact with a person who has symptoms, or who are shielding, do not need to go home if they are:

- the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive
- they develop symptoms themselves (in this case, they should self-isolate and arrange to have a test)
- they are notified by NHS Test and Trace or the PHE advice service that they are a close contact of a COVID case

Everyone must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water as soon after the event as possible, and should not touch their face unless they have washed their hands.

Staff who are pregnant, or who have a medical condition that means they are clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19, should follow the government's guidance on shielding and protection.

Public Health England has good evidence that routinely taking the temperature of pupils and students in education settings is unnecessary and unreliable as a method of screening for COVID-19.

If a child or young person in a boarding school shows symptoms, they should remain in their bedroom and be provided with meals in their bedroom. Staff should not isolating in their boarding house or their their usual support can continue, with appropriate precautions. Staff should follow the PHE guidance on how to care for a suspected case in a boarding school, and the guidance on dealing with cases and contacts. Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on isolation for residential educational settings.

They should not use public transport if they are symptomatic. If arranging the transport of a pupil or student who is symptomatic, consider the risks.

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They should not use public transport if they are symptomatic. If arranging the transport of a pupil or student who is symptomatic, consider the risks.

2. Where recommended, use of face coverings in schools

The government is no longer recommending the use of face coverings in all settings. Settings that teach children in years 7 and above, and which are in areas where the local authority has recommended the use of face coverings for secondary pupils, staff and visitors should continue to follow those guidelines where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. This could include small meetings with people from other households in communal areas, for example, their particular circumstances. Face coverings are not recommended and need to wear a face covering and, older children and young people in specialist settings, should continue to wear face coverings.

In particular, settings that teach years 7 and above should continue to follow the wearing of face coverings for pupils, staff or visitors in communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. This could include small meetings with people from other households in communal areas, for example, their particular circumstances.

Based on current evidence and the measures that schools are already putting in place, such as the control measures outlined in this guidance, the risk of transmission will not be necessary in the classroom even where full social distancing is not in place. Face coverings should not be worn in lessons or teaching and they can be a barrier to clear communication and learning.

Exemptions

Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings. This applies to those who:

- cannot put on, wear, or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability
- speak to a person who is exempt from wearing a face covering or who is a lip reader or facial lip-reader communicate

The same exemptions apply in education settings, and we would expect teachers and other staff to be sensitive to those needs, noting that some people may not be able to wear face coverings and the reasons for this may not be visible to others.

Local restriction tiers: high alert or very high alert

When an area moves to local restriction tiers high alert or very high alert, in addition to the measures set out in the 'Prevention' section, face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils when moving around in communal areas such as in classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. This could include small meetings with people from other households.

In the event of an area moving into local restriction tier high alert or very high alert, settings and local authorities should work closely to staff, parents and pupils that the new arrangements require the use of face coverings in communal areas.

Access to face coverings

It is reasonable to assume that staff and young people will now have access to face coverings. Schools should be able to provide face coverings to staff and students if they have forgotten theirs.

However, where someone is struggling to access a face covering, or where they are unable to use the face covering for a prolonged period, or they are being become called in unsafe, education settings should take steps to have a small number of spare disposable face masks to hand.

Secondary schools should follow guidance on the grounds that they can no longer be worn safely.

Safe wearing and removal of face coverings

Settings should have a process for removing face coverings when they are no longer safe to wear, for example, if they become damp or if the wearer is asked to remove it.

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adjustments to be made for those children and young people with SEND who may be more disrupted by changes to routine or unexpected events.

Safety warning of face coverings requires clearing of hands before and after touching face covering. Children and young people with SEND who have difficulties in learning how to manage face coverings safely, or who find wearing a face covering or mask because they cannot take it off without assistance, may be more disrupted by wearing a face covering.

Children and young people must be instructed not to touch the front of their face covering or mask and to dispose of it if it becomes damaged or if it becomes wet (coming to the end of its useful life). Children and young people who find it difficult to manage their face coverings or mask in a way that they can take home with them, and dispose of safely, may need additional support.

Further guidance on face coverings:

Separate guidance is available on:

- face coverings in education settings
- preventing and controlling infection, including the use of PPE, in education, childcare and residential settings

2. Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is spread by droplets to the face or eyes. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser. Special settings must ensure that children and young people with SEND who need to touch their face or eyes when they return to school, have their hands cleaned more often than usual.

Special education settings will want to consider what frequency of hand washing is best for their pupils. Students and staff will need to be taught how to do this (timetables or lesson plans). Staffing with children and young people who have complex needs will need to be aware of the need to clean their own hands after contact with children and young people who are unable to clean hands or who struggle with 'catch, bin it, kill it'. Hand washing facilities or hand sanitisers should be available in classrooms, and in other areas where children and young people with SEND will be taught. Special education settings may need to ensure they are able to allow time to handle hand washing.

Regular and thorough hand hygiene is an important measure for the foreseeable future.

Children who are able to undertake hand washing or hand sanitiser routines unaided or that require minimal prompting, should be encouraged.

Children who are unable to undertake hand washing or hand sanitiser routines independently, may need to be supported to do so. Special education settings may need to support these pupils and the staff working with them and to ensure they have pupils' face hygiene needs met.

3. Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach

The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach remains important. In addition, we must ensure that they have enough tissues and bins available to support your pupils. Special education settings will want to consider how they will support young children and those with complex needs who are unable to 'catch, bin and kill' and pupils unaccustomed that this is now part of their hygiene routines. Special education settings will want to consider how they will support pupils who are unable to dispose of tissues independently (for example, those in wheelchairs).

Some pupils with complex needs will struggle to maintain as good respiratory hygiene as others. Special education settings will want to consider how they will as a precaution. This may mean providing more tissues and bins than usual to support these pupils and the staff working with them and to not a reason to keep these pupils from their education.

4. Introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often and more than usual, including toilets and classrooms

Special education settings will want to consider:

- putting in place a cleaning schedule that ensures cleaning is generally enhanced and includes additional cleaning of those surfaces and areas that are used by different groups and frequently touched surfaces being cleaned more often than usual
- toilets, and areas such as classrooms, should be kept to a high standard of clean that feels thoroughly after using the toilet. Different groups being in different areas of the school should not be a reason for a lower standard of cleanliness to take place

Public Health England has published revised guidance for cleaning non-healthcare settings outside of the home, which includes information for the existing advice on cleaning these settings when there is suspected sars-cov-2 (coronavirus) contamination.

Special education settings should also consider social distancing wherever possible

Social distancing and mixing between people who have tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) and those who have not should be avoided. Special education settings must consider how to implement this. Special settings must do everything reasonable to ensure that children and young people who have tested positive are isolated.

The overarching principle to apply is reducing the number of contacts between children, young people and adults. Special education settings should organise spaces (or 'bubbles') and through maintaining distance between individuals. Special education settings will want to consider how they will ensure that children and young people's movement and activity is reduced to the lowest level of the setting, and the flexibility of keeping distinct groups separate should be kept to the lowest level.

We recognise that maintaining social distancing between children and young people is particularly difficult in special settings, particularly given the need for staff to provide personal care and support to pupils. Special education settings will want to consider how they will support pupils who have difficulty or are unable to maintain a special distance with 3 pupils closer than the average number is. Special education settings will want to consider how they will support pupils who are for any individual.

The points to consider and implement are set out in the following sections.

1. Keep to groups (bubbles) as much as possible

Consistent groups reduce the risk of transmission by limiting the number of children, young people and staff that need to be in close contact with each other. Special education settings will want to consider how they will ensure that children and young people are kept in their groups as much as possible. It is important that children, and especially the youngest children and those with complex needs, understand and can follow the rules that are put in place to keep them safe. Special education settings will want to consider how they will support children and young people who are unable to follow these rules.

Both the approaches of separating groups and maintaining distances are not, or nothing' options and will strike a big benefit even if implemented partially. Special education settings will want to consider how they will support children and young people who are unable to follow these rules (for example, those with complex special needs, wheelchairs and transport, or the breathing pipes in a different groups. Endeavoring to keep groups (or 'bubbles') separate and maintaining distance between children and young people who are able to do so will offer public health benefits as it reduces the network of possible direct transmissions.

All teachers and other staff can operate across different classes and year groups. Special education settings will want to consider how they will ensure that they minimise the number of interactions or changes whenever possible.

2. Minimise within the classroom

Maintaining a distance between people while inside and reducing the amount of time they are in close contact with people who are not in their bubble is a hierarchy that is a more effective, sustainable approach. Special education settings with young people with complex needs, or those who need close contact with staff, will need to consider how they will support children and young people who are unable to maintain a distance of 2 metres. Special education settings will want to consider how they will support children and young people who are able to maintain a distance of 1 metre.

Where possible, for example with older children in secondary school, pupils are able to self-isolate when they are in their classroom. Special education settings and young people should also be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff or other pupils. Special education settings will want to consider how they will support children and young people who are able to maintain a distance of 1 metre in settings where space does not allow. Settings doing this where they can, will need doing this safely and effectively.

When staff, children or young people cannot maintain distancing, the risk of transmission is increased. Special education settings will want to consider how they will minimise this.

Settings should make small adaptations to the classroom to support maintaining distance. Special education settings will want to consider how they will facilitate, rather than hinder, the ability of children and young people who are unnecessary furniture out of classrooms to make more space.

3. Prioritise 1 metre apart

Groups should be kept apart, meaning that settings should avoid large gatherings such as assemblies and should not mix in playgrounds or dinner halls.

When timetabling, groups should be kept apart and movement around the school should be minimised. Special education settings will want to consider how they will, settings should avoid large gatherings such as assemblies. Settings should also consider staggered break times and lunch times (and staggered start and finish times if this is practicable).

Settings should also consider how they will ensure that children and young people staff to distance from each other.

Face and staff rooms should be maintained, although staff must still have a break of a reasonable length during the day.

4. Prepare for outdoor learning and the setting

We know that lessons within the setting between settings. If these partners are able to, they will need to be able to be able to be able

Pupils and students who have been identified as clinically extremely vulnerable should continue to follow shielding advice. Clinically extremely vulnerable children and young people are those who are at highest risk from coronavirus (COVID-19). The advice is not for everyone who is clinically vulnerable.

Pupils and students who are clinically extremely vulnerable or self-isolating

A small number of pupils and students will be unable to attend in the education setting because they are:

- they have test symptoms or a positive test result themselves
- they live with someone who has symptoms or a test result themselves and any household contact
- they are a clinically extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable person

For individuals who are self-isolating and are within our definition of vulnerable, we will provide access to a place in school if they wish to attend and it is safe for the pupil or student, and if they are able to travel to school without using public transport. Pupils and students who are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) or those who are vulnerable (CV) are at more risk than others from coronavirus (COVID-19) and may be advised by their clinical or public health teams to self-isolate if they are at risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) in their local authority.

There is evidence to emerge that shows there is a very low risk of children becoming very unwell from coronavirus (COVID-19), even for children with underlying health conditions. We will be guided by medical and public health advice on which pupils and students are clinically extremely vulnerable or vulnerable.

The advice for children and young people who remain in the clinically extremely group (CEV) has been updated. The advice is highly cautious in nature and it is the government will write to families separately to inform them if clinically extremely vulnerable children and young people should shield.

Children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are not themselves clinically extremely vulnerable, should continue to attend school.

Where a pupil or student is shielded because they are complying with government advice or is self-isolating because they are a household member of someone who has symptoms or has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), we will not record their absence in the register if they do not want to be formally recorded in the attendance register.

When pupils are not able to attend school for reasons related to coronavirus (COVID-19), public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), the absence will not be recorded.

Pupils and families who are anxious about attending their educational setting

Anxiety about school attendance is not new. Support should be put in place to address the potential concerns of pupils. Students and families may be reluctant or anxious about attending. This may include:

- pupils who were previously attending but have been informed that this is not mandatory
- those living with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable
- those who have been advised provider to receive meals from coronavirus (COVID-19), including those who are from BAME backgrounds or those with certain health conditions and disabilities

If parents of pupils with provider risk factors are concerned, we recommend they discuss their child's circumstances with their provider and their local authority as soon as they can to discuss the provision. Schools should be clear with parents that government has issued guidance that it is safe for children to attend school and that the government expects that children will attend school unless they have a disease, in which case they should follow the guidance on self-isolating and shielding and follow the advice of their doctor.

Some children and young people with EHC plans who have spent time away from their setting during the pandemic may be anxious about returning to their setting, to their school, college, or other provision, and any other approaches that may be in place to meet their needs. Local authorities, schools and other providers SENCo who have spent time with their children and young people will be able to reassure them about their attendance.

A reasonable adjustment for a child or young person with SEND who has found a period of restrictions exceptionally difficult socially and emotionally may be to provide a place in school for a period of time, initially for a few hours, alongside a phased return to a full school timetable. Such a phased return should be part of a wider package of support to meet the child's or young person's needs and wellbeing. Any phased return to perform learning arrangements should always be agreed between the provider and the child or young person's parents/carers, and review and monitor arrangements jointly with the child or young person and young people with SEND benefit as quickly as provision from attending school and accessing their usual curriculum offer.

Actions for all settings and local authorities

There is separate guidance on recording attendance at attendance: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) for schools and other locations open. We are asking settings to work with families to secure regular attendance and to follow the attendance code, including, in the first instance, education, making every effort to establish their wellbeing and wellbeing development.

We are asking settings and local authorities to:

1. Continue to communicate clear and consistent expectations about attendance, including with those who are anxious about school or who have special circumstances.
2. Identify pupils and students who are vulnerable or anxious about attending or who are at risk of attendance issues, and put in place a plan to address this. This should include disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people, those who are anxious about attending school, those who are shielding and those who are engaged with the wellbeing for education recovery scheme.
3. Use the additional catch-up funding, existing pastoral and support services effectively to ensure that provision is in place to meet the needs of the families who need additional support to secure pupils' and students' regular attendance.
4. Work closely with their local authority, and other services, as necessary, as appropriate to support their actions to settings including, continuing to notify the child's social worker if they are a child with a social worker.

Advice for schools and local authorities to support them to improve school attendance is available.

Workforce of settings

We have worked closely with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and PHE to provide clear guidance for schools and colleges. PHE and DHSC endorsed system of controls outlined in this document sets out the measures that schools should take to manage risks to their staff.

Where settings implement the system of controls outlined in this document, in conjunction with other measures set out in this guidance, they will be reasonable and sufficient to minimise risks to their staff and other users. Staff, parents and carers may find it reassuring to know that the measures put in place to minimise the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in their setting are based on the advice from medical and public health experts and are not currently expected to change significantly in the coming months.

Most school based roles are not ideally suited to home working and settings may expect most staff to attend their place of work. However, there are some roles, may be conducive to home working, and senior leaders should consider what is feasible and practicable.

All staff should follow the measures set out in the system of controls section of this document. Settings should also ensure that they have carried out risk assessments where good hygiene and social distancing cannot be followed consistently in line with the provisions as set out in part 2 of the 'Prevention' section.

Settings should ensure that they have carried out risk assessments for any staff who are at risk of being more seriously affected by coronavirus (COVID-19). The risk should be discussed and adjustments made where appropriate. Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable or who are living with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable are advised to follow the shielding advice.

Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable

Advice for those who are shielding or rather than the NHS or a specialist doctor as in the group deemed clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) or shielding but recently discharged from hospital, or who are pregnant, should be discussed with their specialist or treating clinician.

Staff who are continue to attend work in 2 local restriction tier.

Under local restriction tier 3, staff and employees may wish to discuss their individual circumstances with their employer, who will then carry out a risk assessment and take a decision based on their circumstances.

In the future, the government will only reintroduce formal restrictions shielding advice in some areas if the virus is spreading in a way that cannot otherwise be controlled effective and for a limited period of time. The government will aim to notify those who are clinically extremely vulnerable at least 48 hours in advance.

Staff who are clinically vulnerable

Clinically vulnerable staff can continue to attend school. While within the setting they should follow the same hygiene rules, measures and advice to prevent transmission as everyone else.

This includes taking particular care to observe good hand and respiratory hygiene, practicing social distancing and ventilation and adhering to the wide ranging protocols set out in section 4 of the 'Prevention' section of this guidance. This is particularly important in the case of those who are living with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, who may be at more risk of being very ill if they catch the virus. Staff who are at higher risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) in their workplace, for example because of their ethnicity, should discuss their risk assessment with their employer.

People who live with those who are clinically extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable can attend the workplace unless otherwise shielding or individuals letter from the NHS or a specialist doctor.

Staff who are pregnant

Pregnant women are not in the clinically extremely vulnerable category, and are generally advised to follow the above advice, which applies to all staff in schools. Their employer should discuss their individual circumstances with them, including any particular risks to their pregnancy, through hand washing and cleaning of frequently touched surfaces and the wearing of face coverings.

An employer's workplace risk assessment should strongly remind any non-immune pregnant employee of the importance of avoiding close contact with anyone who is suspected or confirmed to have coronavirus (COVID-19) at their physical, chemical or biological agency. Any risks identified must be included in the employer's risk assessment and be properly managed.

If a school is notified that a pregnant employee has been exposed to the virus both within the last six months, the employer should check the workplace risk assessment and ensure that it is up to date and that it takes into account the advice on preventing infection and on the management of cases of coronavirus in pregnancy. The employer should then discuss with the employee the measures that have been put in place to manage the risk.

Where this is not possible, the employee should be offered alternative work or suspended on full pay for a period of time, until the risk of transmission between young people in the workplace has reduced, or until the pupils' or students' attendance ceased, or until the employee's own baby is born, if this is earlier than the end of the period of suspension. Pregnant employees are entitled to suspension on full pay if a risk arising from their work cannot be prevented by other means, including by ensuring that other staff adhere to the hygiene, social distancing and other measures in place to minimise the risk of transmission to them.

Pregnant women who are non-immune and who have been exposed to a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in their workplace should be offered a test to see if they have developed the virus and, if they have not, be kept off work on full pay for the period of the 14 days from the date of the last exposure, in case they develop the virus and become ill. If they do develop the virus, they should be treated as any other person who has coronavirus and be kept off work while they are ill. If they are well enough to work, and if a risk assessment has been put in place, they can return to work. If a pregnant woman who has been exposed to the virus does not want to be tested, she should be treated as if she is ill and be kept off work on full pay for 14 days from the date of the last exposure, in case she develops the virus and becomes ill.

Employer health and safety and equalities duties

Employers have a legal duty to ensure their employees are safe and protected from harm. They should continue to ensure health and safety risks in the usual way, including those related to stress and mental health, and should consider the health and safety of their workers when planning for the return of pupils/students and protect employees and others from harm — see COVID-secure from the Health and Safety Executive.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published guidance on COVID-secure workplaces (CSW) which will support sound risk assessments and prevent harm to workers. The HSE will be prioritising its enforcement activity to ensure that employers take the steps necessary to protect their workers from serious harm in close proximity. Those administering schools should be familiar with the guidance and be able to demonstrate that they have taken its provisions into account.

Settings should continue to meet their equalities duties. Guidance is available on Equality Act 2010 and the sector.

Supporting staff

Employers should have regard to staff (including the headteacher) workload levels and wellbeing. They should consult their staff on proposals and discuss the measures that they are proposing putting in place and ensure all staff understand them.

Workplaces have a duty of care for their employees, which includes their mental health. Settings will already have mechanisms to support staff wellbeing and should ensure that these are in place for the return of pupils/students. Employers should consider how their existing mental health and wellbeing support for staff could and reflecting during the pandemic. Information and resources to support staff mental health and wellbeing are available on Mental health and wellbeing.

The Education Support Partnership provides a free helpline for school staff and bereaved support for mental health and wellbeing.

Staff deployment

Settings may need to adapt the ways in which they deploy their staff, and use existing staff more flexibly. Managers should discuss and agree any changes to working practices with their staff.

We recognise that staff will need to be deployed across groups but that this should be kept to a minimum and kept under the same bubble.

Attendance

Attendance expectations

It is vital for all children and young people to attend their education settings, as the lost time is a disadvantage to their education, development, social education, wellbeing and development.

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils or students falling behind further. Pupils/students with disadvantaged backgrounds have been the biggest losers in the pandemic. The impact of school attendance on future life outcomes is stronger than any other factor.

Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable or vulnerable should be encouraged to attend school unless they are advised to not attend by their clinician or their local authority.

There is evidence to emerge that shows there is a very low risk of children becoming very unwell from coronavirus (COVID-19), even for children with underlying health conditions. We will be guided by medical and public health advice on which pupils and students are clinically extremely vulnerable or vulnerable.

The advice for children and young people who remain in the clinically extremely group (CEV) has been updated. The advice is highly cautious in nature and it is the government will write to families separately to inform them if clinically extremely vulnerable children and young people should shield.

Children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are not themselves clinically extremely vulnerable, should continue to attend school.

Where a pupil or student is shielded because they are complying with government advice or is self-isolating because they are a household member of someone who has symptoms or has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), we will not record their absence in the register if they do not want to be formally recorded in the attendance register.

When pupils are not able to attend school for reasons related to coronavirus (COVID-19), public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), the absence will not be recorded.

Pupils and families who are anxious about attending educational setting

Anxiety about school attendance is not new. Support should be put in place to address the potential concerns of pupils. Students and families may be reluctant or anxious about attending. This may include:

- pupils who were previously attending but have been informed that this is not mandatory
- those living with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable
- those who have been advised provider to receive meals from coronavirus (COVID-19), including those who are from BAME backgrounds or those with certain health conditions and disabilities

If parents of pupils with provider risk factors are concerned, we recommend they discuss their child's circumstances with their provider and their local authority as soon as they can to discuss the provision. Schools should be clear with parents that government has issued guidance that it is safe for children to attend school and that the government expects that children will attend school unless they have a disease, in which case they should follow the guidance on self-isolating and shielding and follow the advice of their doctor.

Some children and young people with EHC plans who have spent time away from their setting during the pandemic may be anxious about returning to their setting, to their school, college, or other provision, and any other approaches that may be in place to meet their needs. Local authorities, schools and other providers SENCo who have spent time with their children and young people will be able to reassure them about their attendance.

A reasonable adjustment for a child or young person with SEND who has found a period of restrictions exceptionally difficult socially and emotionally may be to provide a place in school for a period of time, initially for a few hours, alongside a phased return to a full school timetable. Such a phased return should be part of a wider package of support to meet the child's or young person's needs and wellbeing. Any phased return to perform learning arrangements should always be agreed between the provider and the child or young person's parents/carers, and review and monitor arrangements jointly with the child or young person and young people with SEND benefit as quickly as provision from attending school and accessing their usual curriculum offer.

Actions for all settings and local authorities

There is separate guidance on recording attendance at attendance: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) for schools and other locations open. We are asking settings to work with families to secure regular attendance and to follow the attendance code, including, in the first instance, education, making every effort to establish their wellbeing and wellbeing development.

We are asking settings and local authorities to:

1. Continue to communicate clear and consistent expectations about attendance, including with those who are anxious about school or who have special circumstances.
2. Identify pupils and students who are vulnerable or anxious about attending or who are at risk of attendance issues, and put in place a plan to address this. This should include disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people, those who are anxious about attending school, those who are shielding and those who are engaged with the wellbeing for education recovery scheme.
3. Use the additional catch-up funding, existing pastoral and support services effectively to ensure that provision is in place to meet the needs of the families who need additional support to secure pupils' and students' regular attendance.
4. Work closely with their local authority, and other services, as necessary, as appropriate to support their actions to settings including, continuing to notify the child's social worker if they are a child with a social worker.

Advice for schools and local authorities to support them to improve school attendance is available.

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interest specific rates and specific training, for staff. Many staff in special schools and alternative provision are paid at the same rate as those in other young people and they are not paid for the additional responsibilities and accountability a setting. Furthermore, some staff work across settings. Many specialist staff are employed by local authorities and are deployed to schools and alternative provision settings to provide specialist support and benefit from education.

Staff who deliver these interventions will need to be particularly rigorous about hard working and expensive hygiene (which, lest it. 60.5). but additional PPE, additional cleaning, and the use of specialist equipment may be recommended, and staff may need to be provided with training to ensure they are able to deliver these interventions safely.

The specialisation and the peripatetic nature of much staffing in special schools and alternative provision means that staff may need to be paid more than those in other settings. Staff who are deployed to provide intervention and their maintenance of staff needs to self-isolate due to coronavirus (COVID-19) exposure, or to be unavailable for other reasons, will need to be paid for their services.

Settings and local authorities may wish to have discussions about these pressures and how additional staff resources and additional staff resources are available to them, whether an additional staff member could be trained, or whether a specialist could be deployed to provide the support. Local authorities may also wish to provide support to settings to ensure that they are able to provide unnecessary and unmanageable workload burdens. This could include a review of staffing and staff deployment, and the provision of support. See the DfE's workload reduction toolkit for more information.

DfE has also published a range of resources, including case studies to support special schools and alternative provision, which include case studies on managing scheduling.

If having accounted all the immediate options available, settings still have concerns about their staffing capacity they should talk to their local authority or trust.

Deploying support staff and accommodating visiting specialists

Settings should minimise the number of visitors where possible, however, visiting specialists such as therapists, clinicians, peripatetic teachers and other specialist staff will need to visit to deliver specialist support services, including nursing assistants and other medical staff who provide medical support to pupils with complex medical needs.

Where support staff capacity is available, settings may consider using them to support visiting specialist services. Support staff in special schools may also be deployed to lead groups or close teams, under the direction and supervision of a teacher, to provide support to pupils who are Looked-After, Classes Mentor (Classes Mentor) and other specialist interventions are maintained special schools and in accordance with the freedoms provided under the funding agreement for academies.

Setting leaders should be satisfied that the person has the appropriate skills and knowledge to deliver the intervention, and that the intervention is based on sound evidence and is delivered in a way that is consistent with the school's approach to teaching and learning.

- specific training, or qualifications if needed for any intervention or care for pupils with complex needs where specific training or specific roles are required
- only those staff responsible for the care of pupils with complex medical activity – full guidance is provided in part 3 of keeping children safe in education
- The Education Environment Institute (EEI) has published guidance to help settings make the best use of their teaching assistants.

Recruitment

Recruitment should continue as usual. The government's teaching vacancies service can help schools and local authorities to find and recruit headed teaching staff postings. The free national service for searching and listing teaching vacancies in schools, colleges and other settings, is available to employers and jobseekers.

As DfE guidance advises limiting the number of visitors, it may be appropriate for schools to consider delivery of some training remotely. Some training providers have indicated that some training that would normally be delivered remotely may be a new experience for many schools. The DfE teaching days guidance provides information on how to deliver training remotely, including information on how to deliver training remotely and on how to plan for remote delivery.

Where face-to-face training are arranged, schools should make clear to candidates that they must adhere to the system of controls that schools have put in place to ensure that the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) is minimised. Schools where social distancing is not possible, should be cautious.

When recruiting, settings must continue to adhere to the legal requirements regarding pre-appointment checks, as set out in part 3 of the statutory guidance keeping children safe in education. Initial teacher training sets a high standard for the teaching profession, and teachers who are in their first year of teaching, in addition, should be supported in accordance with the statutory induction for teachers.

They will also be supported by mentors (DfE), a training available to all schools and colleges in England, which provides a high quality, flexible, and fully funded teaching course. Setting up a mentoring programme, Mentor Training Discussion, Greater Manchester, and the North East) will be delivered a new service of the structured support package.

Supply teachers and other temporary or peripatetic teachers

Settings can continue to use supply staff during this period. We recommend that they consider using the same supply teachers where possible (DfE) because this offers a bit of continuity of support that must be transparent about the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) exposure. Supply teachers and other temporary or peripatetic teachers can be provided with information from the teaching vacancies for coronavirus (COVID-19) and with the school's details and vacancies.

Supply staff and other temporary or peripatetic teachers who are deployed to school leavers will need to consider how to minimise the number of visitors to the school, and how they will be kept safe while they are in school. Supply staff and other temporary or peripatetic teachers who are deployed to schools will be expected to comply with the settings arrangements for managing risk and ensuring that they are able to work safely in accordance with the government guidance on social distancing and other safety measures. Schools should provide a short staff induction and orientation, and secure best values, schools may wish to use the same supply teachers and other temporary or peripatetic teachers on a regular basis, where this is possible.

This advice for supply teachers also applies to other temporary staff working in schools such as support staff employed through agencies, supply teachers such specific courses, and those engaged to deliver before and after school activities.

This is not intended to be adequate and IT partnerships will need to ensure that they identified and comply with all equipment and guidance relevant to their service.

Performance management and appraisals

Performance is based continue to adhere to the Education, Training and Skills and Conditions Document (ETSCD), which includes the requirement to ensure that staff are not subject to unfair or unreasonable workload burdens. The ETSCD also requires that teachers are given a fair and reasonable opportunity to deliver the duties and responsibilities set out in their job descriptions, taking into account current circumstances. Schools must ensure that teachers are not penalised for any inability to meet their targets or standards as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) decisions as a result of the disruption to teaching and learning and to ensure that where this has impacted on the ability of the teacher to meet fairly their objectives.

Appraisals and performance management for support staff should be carried out in accordance with the school's performance management policy, taking into account the specific pay or terms and conditions of employment for support staff.

Staff taking leave

The government has set out requirements for people returning from some countries to quarantine for 14 days on their return. The latest guidance on quarantine for people returning to England, including the list of countries where travel is currently prohibited.

As would usually be the case, staff will need to be available to work in their school during term time, and to be available to work in accordance with arrangements with staff to take holiday during the school holiday periods.

There is a lot there which I found about, their return travel arrangements would be disrupted and they are being required to self-isolate because of coronavirus (COVID-19), such as the potential for recruitment of local restrictions to those people who are visiting.

Where it is not possible to assist a member of staff having to quarantine during term time, schools should consider, in line with their normal practice, allowing several working arrangements to enable them to work from home.

Other support

Teachers may be asked to support the work of the setting, or would usually be expected to do so, such as supervising pupils during lunchtime or attending meetings. Where settings are using volunteers, they should continue to follow the safeguarding and other safeguards in place for their use. Volunteers should be part of Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Responsibilities of Staff and Volunteers, which sets out the roles and responsibilities clearly, situations where they can be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity with children, and the training they should receive, and the mentor, and they should receive 2 metres from pupils and staff where possible.

Safeguarding

Settings should consider revising their child protection policy, taking their current circumstances into account. The Department for Education (DfE) has set out the statutory safeguarding guidance, keeping children safe in education.

Designated safeguarding leads and deputies should have sufficient time, especially in the first few weeks of term to:

- provide additional pastoral support and care for children and their families
- handle referrals to children's social care and other agencies, if appropriate

Responsibility for the delivery of the child protection and safeguarding training and updates remains the strategic lead for coronavirus (COVID-19) and the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) has produced a guide to help schools and colleges to plan for staff training in education, children and children's social care settings in England and Wales. The guide includes information on how to deliver training remotely, and how to ensure it is effective.

Includes guidance on:

- how to work safely in education, including virtually where PPE may be required
- what care should be taken in remote safeguarding
- specific steps needed to cope for children and young people who have been bereaved or have family members who are ill with coronavirus
- caring for children and young people who regularly act or require physical contact
- Whether PPE and how coverings

Catering

We expect kitchens to be fully open during the autumn term and normal supply arrangements and plans for pupils who are entitled to free school meals, including for those eligible for benefit-related free school meals or universal infant free school meals.

Schools/kitchens can continue to operate but must comply with the guidance for food businesses on coronavirus (COVID-19).

Estates

Settings should look to maximise the use of their site and any associated premises, including playing fields, to provide education and other services, with a religious character. Therefore, the school may be able to use premises for settings to make significant adjustments to their site to enable them to continue to provide education. Schools may need to do this if, for example, they need to deliver a part of their education on other sites because class sizes can return to normal and spaces used by more than one class or group can be used by one class or group. Schools may need to make changes to their site, for example, to provide additional classrooms or to create a new entrance. Schools will be at the discretion of individual settings, based on their particular circumstances.

It is important that, for the autumn term, all the usual pre-letting checks and arrangements are in place, including that the hirer has appropriate insurance in place and that the premises are in a safe condition. Alternatively, some system designated can occur, increasing the risks of organisation. Review the guidance on the use of school premises for community and private lettings.

Additional advice on safety requirements buildings can be found in the guidance for schools, colleges and other educational settings in the Coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance. Also see the guidance on keeping settings well-ventilated in the system of controls section.

Educational visits

Overseas educational visits

We continue to advise against overseas trips (UK) overnight and overseas educational visits at this stage. This advice remains under review.

Domestic (UK) overnight educational visits

We continue to advise against domestic (UK) overnight educational visits.

The department recognises the important role that overnight and overseas educational visits can provide for children.

In February 2020, we set out the possibility of changing our advice for domestic (UK) overnight educational visits, and we will review our advice to provide the scientific evidence supports any such change.

This advice will therefore be reviewed and updated again in February 2021.

Non-overnight domestic educational visits

During the autumn term, settings have been able to take pupils on non-overnight domestic educational visits, including residential, if they can demonstrate connection with a school or the delivery of a curriculum. Schools will be able to take pupils on non-overnight domestic educational visits.

Settings should make use of outdoor spaces in the local area to support the delivery of the curriculum, for example, they should plan lessons and risk assessments in relation to all educational visits to ensure they are planned and risk assessed in a way that is consistent with the school's approach to teaching and learning. Settings should also consider how they can minimise the number of visitors, TB vaccine measures on transport and the destination.

Settings should consider and plan educational visits outdoor where considering visits and make sure that they are in line with the government's guidance.

The Association of British Insurers (ABI) has produced a guide to the insurance implications following the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. If settings are considering educational visits, they should contact their insurance provider for further reassurance. they should contact their travel insurance provider.

School uniform

It is for the governing body of a setting to set the academy trust, in the case of academies) to make decisions regarding uniform. Some settings may have decided to change their uniform, for example, to a less formal uniform, or allowing pupils to wear a particular uniform for a particular term. Uniform can play a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of a school.

Uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned in a different way because of coronavirus.

Settings should remind their pupils of the importance of personal hygiene, mindfully and considerate approach in relation to parents or carers may be experiencing financial pressure.

Increased ventilation may make buildings cooler than usual over the winter months, and pupils may need to be allowed to wear coats in class. Schools may also wish to consider allowing pupils to wear hats and gloves, and to be aware during the winter period in addition to their current uniform. Where pupils are in receipt of free school meals or are facing financial pressure in parents or carers.

Wraparound provision and extra-curricular activity

Settings should be mindful of the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on their school provision. Resuming this provision is important, to ensure parents and carers can return to work, and to provide a range of activities for children and young children that improve their well-being and development. They should work closely with any external wraparound providers which their children are accustomed to, to ensure that they are able to provide this service, and to work with them to ensure that they are able to provide this service safely.

Where it is not possible, or it is impractical, to group children in the same way as they were before the pandemic, for example, because of the number of children may need to group children in the same way as they were before the pandemic and / or from a different school. This may happen, for example, if only one or two children from a school need to attend a particular club, or if the number of children who need to attend a particular club is significantly reduced. Schools will need to ensure that parents and carers are carefully considering their own circumstances and the risk to their children and families before deciding to attend. DfE has also issued guidance on providing childcare and education during the school closures.

Schools may wish to consider how to open up a free out-of-hours provision for any extended looks or organisations, such as external coaches or after-school clubs, to provide a range of activities for children and young people. Schools may provide to consider how they can operate within their wider protection measures and should have regard to any other relevant government guidance. Schools may also wish to consider how they can open up their facilities to provide a range of activities for the government guidance on outdoor sports facility coronavirus (COVID-19) for providers of recreational sport and physical activity.

Settings should ensure that they are able to provide a range of activities that address additional restrictions that apply. Currently, supervised activities, training and sport can be provided to children in groups of 15 or less, including children and adults.

Parents or carers of disabled children may continue to access respite care in a manner that is in line with their disability. Further information on this is available at guidance for children's social care services.

Section 3: curriculum, behaviour and pastoral support

Curriculum expectations

This section sets out the principles and expectations for curriculum planning to ensure that children and young people can make good progress and that they have substantial opportunity by the end of the academic year for the curriculum that underpin our advice on curriculum planning are:

- education is delivered in a way that ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, including their responsibilities and experience of life
- teachers will need to teach and assess pupils' progress and to be taught to fill the gaps in pupils's learning that have developed during the coronavirus pandemic
- high-quality remote education where required, remote education is high-quality, and set out clear, consistent, and comprehensive guidance for parents and pupils, including on how to access and participate in remote education

Informed by these principles, DfE also that special schools and other specialised provision will need to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, including the national curriculum for the academic year 2020 to 2021.

Teach an ambitious and broad curriculum to all students from the start of the autumn term, so that students can continue to make progress towards the cover the most important missed content

Schools should teach a broad and balanced curriculum, including the most important subjects, to pupils' progress towards the national curriculum. Schools should teach subjects that pupils may struggle to pick up again later. In particular, settings should teach the most important content in English and mathematics.

Aim to return to the normal curriculum in all subjects by summer term 2021

Substantial modification of the curriculum may be needed at the start of the autumn term, but schools should return to teaching the full curriculum as quickly as practicable. The aim should be to return to the normal curriculum content by no later than the summer term 2021.

Plan on the basis of the assumption that all pupils

Curriculum planning should be informed by an assessment of pupils' starting points and progress. Schools will need to take into account the impact of coronavirus on pupils' learning and development. Schools will need to consider formative assessment, such as quizzes, observing pupils in class, talking to pupils to assess understanding and feedback on pupil work.

Integrate remote education into school curriculum planning

Schools should integrate remote education into the design of the school curriculum for contingency purposes, for example, in the event of local or national lockdowns.

All settings are therefore expected to plan to ensure any pupils educated at home for some of the time are given the support they need to master the content and make good progress.

They may consider it appropriate to suspend some subjects for some pupils, for example, those who are in Year 11 or Year 13 in the spring term, if it is in the interests of their pupils to focus on those subjects that are most critical to their future prospects. Schools should not suspend any subjects with the aim of returning to their normal curriculum for all pupils by the summer term 2021.

Schools should consider how they can provide pupils with high-quality and relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) for secondary pupils and pupils in primary schools. Schools will need to start teaching them by at least the start of the summer term 2021.

Specific points for early years foundation stage to key stage 3

For children in nursery and children settings and pupils in reception, the early years foundation stage (EYFS) provides a framework for learning, development and assessment. Schools should refer to the Early Years Foundation (EYFS). New regulations have been put in place to allow the EYFS disapplication to be used flexibly to support providers in delivering the EYFS in a way that is safe, good-quality, and meeting children's needs.

Teachers and early years practitioners may consider focusing more on the prime areas of learning and development, particularly communication, personal, social and emotional development, and physical development. If they think that children need to focus on the specific areas of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) for a period, they should also ensure that they are still supporting children's development in other areas. Teachers should also consider how they can support children's acquisition of phonics knowledge and extending their vocabulary. For children who are in their last year of the early years foundation stage (EYFS), teachers should also prepare for their transition to Year 1.

For pupils in key stages 1 and 2, staff should prioritise identifying gaps and establishing good progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics, reading, vocabulary, writing and mathematics, identifying opportunities across the curriculum to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding in other subjects. The curriculum should remain broad and balanced, and pupils should be taught a full range of subjects over the year, including sciences, humanities, the arts, languages, physical education, and relationships, sex and health education.

For pupils in Year 9, the curriculum should be broad and balanced, and pupils' to year 9 for their most pupils are taught a full range of subjects over the year, including sciences, languages, humanities, the arts, physical education, religious education and relationship, health and sex education.

Specific points for key stages 4 and 5

As with earlier key stages, it is likely that most students in key stage 4 and 5 will need extra support to catch up on any content they have missed, but the school curriculum is less flexible than it is in earlier key stages.

To ensure exams and assessments next summer are as fair as possible, and to ensure that students are not disadvantaged by the impact of coronavirus, Ofqual has published a framework of proposed adjustments. These decisions are available at proposed changes to the assessment of GCSEs, AS and A levels.

Students who are in their last year of GCSE, AS and A level courses, including students in sixth forms, should be taught the full curriculum for their course. Students who are in their first year of a two-year course, for example, in sixth form, should be taught the full curriculum for their course, but they may need to be taught some of the content that they missed, but the school curriculum is less flexible than it is in earlier key stages.

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Physical activity in schools

Settings have the flexibility to decide how to provide physical education, sport and physical activity. Schools should provide high quality physical education.

In considering what team sports can be offered, those whose national governing bodies have developed a return to sport plan should be the government's guidance on how and when these sports can be organised and played are permitted. Schools must only provide team sports on the list available at www.gov.uk/government/publications

Pupils and students should be kept to consistent groups, sports equipment should be cleaned regularly and contact should be minimised.

Settings can benefit from outdoor learning, including using the immediate outside area related to open spaces, for example practising specific techniques, rather than using indoor facilities. Where practical, and weather permitting, we encourage outdoor activity such as walking, outdoor games and sports in lieu. Maximising natural ventilation flows (through opening windows and doors or using mechanical ventilation) and ensuring good hygiene and environmental cleaning is also recommended. Outdoor learning and activity can be particularly important in a specific setting because of the way in which simple benefits such as being able to see the sky, breathe fresh air, feel the wind on your face, or physical interaction with nature such as active rides, making trees blow and leaves active and encouraging active travel.

Music, dance and drama

Music, dance and drama build confidence, help children and young people to express themselves and are important for their mental and emotional wellbeing. There may, however, be additional risks associated with performance, dance, singing, chanting, playing wind or brass instruments, dance and drama takes place indoors.

Singing, and other activities that generate droplets or aerosols, carries risk of infection. Guidance, including guidance provided by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Education (DfE) on how to mitigate risk in these areas should be followed. Performances in front of a concertina/accordion/concertina/accordion/concertina/accordion/

Section 4: Assessment and accountability

Inspection

For state-funded schools, the intention is that routine, graded Ofsted inspections will resume from September 2020 (subject to Parliament's approval). Ofsted will be conducting a proportionate approach to inspections of state-funded schools most in need of support – maintained schools and some schools that academies have taken on since their last inspection, and those that have been judged Requires Improvement at their last inspection. This will include a focus on safeguarding and teaching (including remote education), and attendance, particularly of vulnerable pupils.

Inspectors will be sensitive to the school's context and support schools to recover from the impact of COVID-19. Inspections will not be used to make the power to require a school to respond to any significant concerns, including those relating to safeguarding and quality of education (which could be delivered remotely).

Primary assessment

To recognise the challenges that primary schools are facing, primary assessments in summer 2021 will focus on core assessments in phonics, English reading and writing, and mathematics.

Pupils will sit the phonics screening and mathematics, and the English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests in the week beginning 15 March (subject to live year). There will also be no requirement to undertake and report on teacher assessment in writing and teacher assessment in science. The tests will be the equivalent to those sat in summer 2019 and will be marked in the same way, with ordinary scales to be set in an agreed way.

We are also enabling schools to use teacher assessments approach to the administration of the key stage 2 tests and phonics screening check to inform their judgements about pupils' attainment in relation to the new standards in 2021.

For the 2020 to 2021 academic year only, schools will be required to administer and report on the phonics screening check, as they have been during the summer of 2020 and in previous years. The check will be expected standard in the autumn check will not be required to complete any statutory assessments in relation to the check. Schools will be required to administer the check in the autumn term and report the results to the standards check in June 2021.

The statutory nature of the reception baseline assessment has been postponed until September 2021. Settings had the opportunity to sign up to the reception baseline assessment in the autumn term of 2020 to 2021.

In light of the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the 2020 to 2021 academic year, the Department for Education (DfE) will not administer the multiplication tables check (MTC) in schools. The MTC is a statutory check for year 4 pupils, which is usually administered in the summer term. The DfE will not collect data and report on it for the academic year 2019 to 2020 (Academic Year 19). The DfE will not collect data and report on it for the academic year 2020 to 2021 (Academic Year 20). The DfE will not collect data and report on it for the academic year 2021 to 2022 (Academic Year 21). The DfE will not collect data and report on it for the academic year

4. Administrative controls: identify and implement the procedures to improve safety (for example, markings on the floor, signage).

5. Having gone through this process, PPE should be used in circumstances where the guidance says it is required.

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1. Para 9.214 of the SEND Code of Practice states that, where parents want their child or young person to go to a school or college which is further from home than a school or college which could equally meet the child's or young person's needs, then the local authority can come to an agreement with the parents that the parents pay all or part of the costs of the transport if the local authority agrees to name the parents' preferred school or college. ↩

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