SEND and specialist settings - additional operational guidance: coronavirus (COVID-19)

Updated 20 March 2020

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Latest updates and reviews

This guidance will be regularly reviewed.

On 20 March we updated the guidance on:

- advice for those who are clinically extremely vulnerable
- VCS leaders to lead 40 settings
- the 2 new sequenced questions

Who this guidance is for

This additional guidance is for the leaders and staff of:

- special schools, including non-maintained special schools
- special post-16 institutions
- alternative provision (AP) including hospital schools

The purpose of this guidance is to provide additional information and support that will be helpful to you in attending to these settings. Separate guidance is available for:

- early years
- schools
- further education (FE colleges and providers)
- children's social care
- out of school settings

You should read this alongside your parents, carers or staff and others when agreeing the best approach for your provision.

Summary

These main guidance documents include specialist operational issues which are common to both mainstream and specialist settings and which apply to schools and FE settings:

- the school operational COVID-19 operational guidance contains information on:
  - changes to delivery
  - minimising coronavirus (COVID-19) risks (cleaning spaces, site safety, off-site activities, transport, and staff and pupil facing facilities)
  - music, physical activity and sports
  - education and training delivery (on-site delivery, remote education, digital support)
  - transport
  - workforce (vulnerable staff, pregnancy, employers' health and safety, supporting staff and their wellbeing)
  - supporting vulnerable students
  - transition to FE
  - supporting students with special educational needs and disability (SEND)
  - safeguarding
  - mental health and wellbeing
  - residential provision
  - funding (& FE funding arrangements, trusts, free meals, KS5, transportation, apprenticeships, 16-19 bursary and high needs funding)
  - exams and assessment
  - inspection
  - health and safety risk assessment - coronavirus (COVID-19) specific

1. Introduction

This is additional guidance for special schools, special post-16 institutions, and alternative provision (AP) including hospital schools, and has been produced to reflect that from 8 March 2020 all pupils and students should be allowed to attend school or college.

It should be read alongside the main guidance documents:

- schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance
- further education coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance

From 8 March, you should continue to allow all pupils and students to attend.

Shielding advice is being paused nationally from 16 March. From 1 April, all CEV pupils and students can return to school or college. We will be reviewing the shielding advice for parents or other specialist care providers and will update you when we know more about what is advised. Pupils who live with someone who is CEV should continue to attend school as normal.

Any pupils or students not attending their setting because they are following public health advice should receive remote education.

Joint working with young people, parents and carers and families continues to be essential in supporting children and young people, including those with SEND, organisations involved with supporting the child or young person and their family.

2. Public health advice

We have worked closely with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and PHE to develop this guidance. Based on the latest evidence, including the recent DHSC review of the evidence, we have taken the decision to recommend that there should be no mass school closures.

Implementing the system of controls creates a safer environment for pupils and staff and minimises the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). We have also taken the decision that any one in the same school or bubble should not be asked to self-isolate, as this would be the measure to provide more reassurance and to help decrease the disruption the virus causes to education.

Where something is essential for public health reasons, as advised by PHE, we have said that it should be prioritised and we have made that clear. This guidance is not intended to set out every one key priority.

You must comply with health and safety law and put in place proportionate control measures.

You should:

- review your health and safety risk assessments
- address the risks identified using the system of controls, areas 4

All elements of the PHE endorsed system of controls in areas 4 are essential. All settings need to cover all key elements, but they are implement the elements with differ based on your individual circumstances.

Health and safety legislation

Educational providers must protect people from harm. This includes taking reasonable steps to protect staff, pupils and others from coronavirus (COVID-19) within the setting.

To support the wider return of more pupils and students, you should consider any additional measures you have identified needed to enable a return to full capacity.

To prepare for this you should:

- update your risk assessment
- review the effectiveness of the system of controls to reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level
- have a contingency plan in place for any local outbreaks or changes in restrictions
- communicate any changes in your provision with parents or carers

You should implement sensible and proportionate control measures which follow the hierarchy of controls. Applying of controls to reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level.

You must continue reviewing and updating your risk assessments, treating them as living documents, and communicate to your school or college and trade union any relevant changes. This includes having active arrangements in place to monitor that the control measures are:

- effective
- working as planned

You should notify your staff and their health and safety representatives of review outcomes.

Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) and clinically vulnerable (CV)

CEV staff are currently advised not to attend the workplace. Staff who are CEV will previously have received a letter from the NHS or their GP stating they are in a CEV group (letter is required), and there is guidance for employers in this group. Advice on what additional measures individuals in this group can take.

Employers should talk to staff about how they will be supported, including working from home.

You should continue to keep CEV staff in their current roles.

Those living with someone who is CEV can attend work as normal.

Those living with someone who is CV can attend work as normal. Staff who are CV are not prohibited from attending work and should be encouraged to attend work if they can.

Staff who are CEV should be encouraged to have vaccination in place (before the commencement of 14 days after the second dose) by booking up the joint Contractors Vaccination and Immunisation. Current DHSC guidance advises that CEV individuals should be offered the flu vaccine as a priority. Staff who are CV should be encouraged vaccinated. This may be up to and further advice on the delivery of vaccination.

CV staff can continue to attend their setting. While at work they must follow the system of controls to minimise the risk of transmission. Staff who live with someone who is CV can attend the workplace but should ensure they maintain good preventive practice in the workplace and at home.

You will need to follow the specific guidance for transport providers, because government has set out additional measures.

The guidance on staff who are CEV and hold dual roles remains.

Further information on carrers can be found in the:

- schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance
- further education coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance

3. Attendance

From 8 March 2020 school attendance is mandatory for all pupils.

It is vital for pupils and students to attend school or college to maintain their education, wellbeing and safety. Parents of the pandemic on their ability to work and earn employment.

The usual rules on school attendance apply to all pupils including:

- parents' duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school where their child is of compulsory school age
- the ability to issue fixed penalty notices and prosecute parents for failure to ensure their children attend school regularly, including fixed penalty notices for unauthorised term time holidays

As usual, you are responsible for recording attendance. Following up absence and reporting pupils who are absent to the local authority. Special schools and PRUs/alternative should continue to allow students to attend as per their usual timetable.

Encouraging regular school attendance

Guidance for schools and local authorities to support parents to maximise school attendance is available.

You should continue to communicate clearly and consistently the expectations around attendance, including the 2 new sequenced questions, and follow up with those where appropriate. Where necessary, discussions should take place between school or college, local authority children's services and parents and carers, focusing on the concerns of the parent. Liaise as ongoing parents. This conversation is particularly important for children with a social worker.

It is likely that some pupils, parents and households may be reluctant or anxious about attending school.

This may include pupils who:

- have themselves been shielding previously but have been advised they no longer need to shield
- live in a household where someone is clinically extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable (including young carers)
- are concerned about the possible increased risks from coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission in their school or college environment

Discuss any concerns with parents and carers and provide reassurance that the measures you are putting in place to reduce any risks, including the system of controls. Emphasise the importance of your school or college being a safe place for children and staff and a place to ensure that the pupil or student regular attendance and participation.

You should identify pupils who are reluctant or anxious about attending or who are at risk of disengagement and develop plans for re-engaging them.

You may want to put particular emphasis on:

- disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people
- pupils who were previously absent prior to the pandemic
- pupils who have not engaged with school regularly during the pandemic

Consider how you will support those who are reluctant to return to school, including those who have been shielding and those who may be anxious about coming back to school because of worries about catching coronavirus (COVID-19). Consider how you will support and pupil transition fairly. To help reintegration, you may find it helpful to refer to the guidance on managing transition that has been published in advance of the return, with evidence-based approaches for pupils and a further videoed webinar guide. 2020 to 2021.

You should work closely with other professionals where appropriate to support school attendance. Continue to notify the pupil's social worker, if they have one, of non-attendance.

4. Special schools and special post-16 institutions: additional expectations

Vulnerable children, and children of critical workers, should continue to be able to attend school or college as usual from 8 March 2020. From 8 March 2020 school attendance is mandatory for all pupils.

From 8 March we expect that every 16 to 19 student (or 19 to 25 with an EHCP) should attend their setting. Special post-16 institutions and specialist settings should continue to allow students to attend as per their usual timetable.

As usual, you are responsible for recording attendance. Following up absence and reporting pupils who are absent to the local authority. Special post-16 institutions should continue to allow students to attend as per their usual timetable.

You may encounter instances where you cannot provide your usual interventions and provision at adequate staffing levels, or with staff with equal expertise. You may need to alter the ways which you deploy your staff and use existing teaching and support staff. Ensure that the provision you put in place meets the needs of pupils and raise concerns about staffing capacity, you should look at ways to maintain your academic school part of contract. You should continue to work collaboratively with families to agree an approach that is in the child or young person's best interest.

Hospital schools (including child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) units)

From 8 March, school attendance is mandatory for all pupils. Providers should offer full-time education where it is safe and flexible to do so and in line with hospital infection control and safety guidance. Hospital schools, units and CAMHS units should be a vibrant, closely knit and supportive community for all pupils as for other health patients. We expect local NHS trusts to continue to work collaboratively with headteachers to ensure that children and young people receive a high quality education and support in a school or which to learn. Where it is not possible to provide face-to-face education for all pupils, for example, because of current physical capacity restraints at the hospital, then alternative ways can be assessed to continue the provision of high-quality education.

Mainstream schools should continue to support their pupils in hospital, including maintaining their relationships, to minimise the impact of their hospital stay on their education.

5. Recording attendance

Special schools and alternative provision (AP)

You should record attendance in accordance with the pupil registration regulations for all pupils, in the normal way.

You should use code X if a pupil is self-isolating or quarantining because of coronavirus (COVID-19) and code M if reasonable absence or quarantine (coronavirus (COVID-19)).

Schools should follow up on absences of pupils who are expected to be in school.

We will review and provide further advice to you in due course on what should be included in pupils' attendance records in end of year reports.

Post-16 provision

If the vulnerable student wishes to be absent from face to face education during local coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions, the provision should be recorded as remote education and be included in the coronavirus (COVID-19) attendance monitoring data as 'expected to attend'. Further information on how to complete the educational setting status form is available.

7. Special educational settings

We want children and young people in residential specialist provision to continue to receive high-quality therapeutic and specialist educational support since they are more likely than most to have particular needs that are extremely challenging to manage or support. Children and young people in these settings are also more vulnerable and therefore be disproportionately impacted by lockdown or of their wellbeing.

You may encounter instances where you cannot provide your usual support and provision at adequate staffing levels, or with staff with equal expertise. You may need to alter the ways which you deploy your staff and use existing teaching and support staff. Ensure that the provision you put in place meets the needs of pupils and raise concerns about staffing capacity, you should look at ways to maintain your academic school part of contract. You should continue to work collaboratively with families to agree an approach that is in the child or young person's best interest.

Local authorities, which have placed the child or young person in your setting, should kept informed if there are risks to your ability to deliver provision. This will ensure the children or young people continue to be supported. Local authorities should also ensure that children and young people in your setting are included in their education and public health plans have been considered.

If you are temporarily unable to provide full provision it is likely to be preferable to allow the child or young person to remain resident, rather than to send them home, particularly if they lack suitable alternative accommodation. The setting should discuss with the local authority and other relevant professionals and parents.

Any necessary health and therapeutic support should be provided as usually. Consideration should continue to be provided if the child or young person returns to their family home.

For residential special schools and residential special post-16 institutions, local authorities should maintain a register of at-risk pupils and students with Education, Health and Care plans (EHCP) who are in residential provision. This will ensure that they are in a position due to issues related to coronavirus (COVID-19). The local authority should also contact the family frequently to ensure that risks are being managed and to establish and identify any concerns and support and the best way forward.

All pupils and students can be transitioned from their boarding provision and home, including those who are shielding or self-isolating. Local authorities should work closely with providers and parents to reduce travel between home and educational provision. Local authorities should also consider the transport needs of children in residential education. Those involved in the provision of home to school or college transport should follow the guidance on how to travel safely during coronavirus (COVID-19) and provide extra minimum for the use of transportation. Public transport should be avoided if possible.

Where the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (No.2 England) Regulations 2020 (as summarised in the national lockdown guidance) have introduced restrictions on overnight stays, local authorities should work with providers to ensure children and young people can stay from home in residential settings they are able to have visits from parents. We expect parental visits to happen only in very exceptional circumstances. Local authorities should also work with providers and parents to allow children and young people to remain in contact with their parents and carers.

8. EHC plans

Where a pupil or student has an EHC plan, it remains the duty of the local authority and the educational setting to ensure that the child or young person receives the support (under section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014).

All therapies and support that would normally be in place for children and young people with EHC plans should be provided, and this should be in line with the advice from local health commissioning bodies and education settings to do so. However, there may be some exceptional circumstances where this is not possible.

In collaboration with local authorities and health partners (clinical commissioning groups) should work with families to co-produce alternative arrangements for delivering the support. Local authorities should also consider how they can provide support, taking account of the necessity and consequences of not providing the support, and should keep a close file of approach.

In some circumstances local authorities have worked collaboratively with settings and families to agree flexible and creative solutions for delivering support.

The statutory duties and timeframes relevant to plans for EHC needs assessments and reviews remain. However, local authorities may need to be flexible in their approach to isolating or shielding. It may be more appropriate to gather information electronically or by telephone, and to consider how to hold meetings to review plans, assessments and reviews continue to ensure that the child or young person and parent are at the centre of the process.

In addition, local authorities must continue to meet their statutory duties to finalise plans for September. It is important that you continue to work with your local authority to ensure that children and young people's needs are met.

At this stage, we do not intend to use the powers under the Coronavirus Act 2020 to modify the section 42 duty, but we will keep the situation under review in the evidence.

9. Children or young people self-isolating or shielding

Children and young people who self-isolate will be unable to attend in line with public health advice for a period because they:

- have symptoms or have had a positive test result
- live with someone who has symptoms or who is clinically extremely vulnerable and is 'shielded'
- are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)

We know from growing evidence that many children identified at the start of the pandemic as being at risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) infection (COVID-19) and children are gradually being removed from the shielded category (CEV) as appropriate, following review with a clinician.

Shielding advice is being paused nationally from 16 March. From 1 April, all CEV pupils should attend their school unless they are one of the very rare small number of pupils who are still shielding. We will be reviewing the shielding advice for parents or other specialist care providers and will update you when we know more about what is advised.

Schools should not encourage parents to request unnecessary medical evidence such as doctors' notes from their child's GP to explain their absence due to illness. This is normal practice and is already set out in the school attendance guidance but it is important to underline this at this time. Schools should not ask for medical evidence to vaccination programme. Evidence is usual. It can take the form of a hospital appointment cards, text or email confirmation of appointment, rather than a doctors' note. Schools should also be flexible about the length of time they accept medical notes or persistent absence issue.

You are required to provide remote education to pupils who are unable to attend school on-site because they are complying with government guidance or advice, as set out in the Temporary Coronavirus Directions. You should keep a record of the activity as not attendance in your school register.

You should offer pastoral support to pupils and students who are:

- self-isolating
- shielding
- vulnerable

The DHSC guidance to CEV is not compulsory, although pupils, students and parents are strongly advised to follow the guidance in order to help stay safe. However, in some circumstances parents may feel that their child should not attend school, for example, where aspect of the child or young person not attending school and parents need the support that would normally be delivered. This might be due to the overall impact of their condition, or the fact that their child is shielding or self-isolating because of their diagnosis, as well as the impact on wellbeing for the wider family.

In these circumstances you should work with parents and the other organisations to ensure the child or young person's needs are met and that they are able to access the support they need, including education.

Where pupils are not able to attend school, or they are following clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), this should not be penalised.

Where pupils who are self-isolating are within our definition of vulnerable, it is important that we continue to provide support to the child or family.

Where pupils are not able to attend school, or they are following clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), this should not be penalised.

The DHSC guidance to CEV is not compulsory, although pupils, students and parents are strongly advised to follow the guidance in order to help stay safe. However, in some circumstances parents may feel that their child should not attend school, for example, where aspect of the child or young person not attending school and parents need the support that would normally be delivered. This might be due to the overall impact of their condition, or the fact that their child is shielding or self-isolating because of their diagnosis, as well as the impact on wellbeing for the wider family.

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Where pupils are not able to attend school, or they are following clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), this should not be penalised.

Where pupils who are self-isolating are within our definition of vulnerable, it is important that we continue to provide support to the child or family.

10. Working with health and social care partners

Joint working with your local authority children's services and your local NHS commissioners is essential in supporting children and young people, including those with SEND, organisations involved with supporting the child or young person and their family.

Local authorities, in collaboration with their local NHS commissioners, should work with families to co-produce alternative arrangements for delivering the support. Local authorities should also consider how they can provide support, taking account of the necessity and consequences of not providing the support, and should keep a close file of approach.

In some circumstances local authorities have worked collaboratively with settings and families to agree flexible and creative solutions for delivering support.

The statutory duties and timeframes relevant to plans for EHC needs assessments and reviews remain. However, local authorities may need to be flexible in their approach to isolating or shielding. It may be more appropriate to gather information electronically or by telephone, and to consider how to hold meetings to review plans, assessments and reviews continue to ensure that the child or young person and parent are at the centre of the process.

In addition, local authorities must continue to meet their statutory duties to finalise placements for September. It is important that you continue to work with your local authority to ensure that children and young people's needs are met.

At this stage, we do not intend to use the powers under the Coronavirus Act 2020 to modify the section 42 duty, but we will keep the situation under review in the evidence.

11. Staffing and wellbeing

You should offer pastoral support to pupils and students who are:

- self-isolating
- shielding
- vulnerable

The DHSC guidance to CEV is not compulsory, although pupils, students and parents are strongly advised to follow the guidance in order to help stay safe. However, in some circumstances parents may feel that their child should not attend school, for example, where aspect of the child or young person not attending school and parents need the support that would normally be delivered. This might be due to the overall impact of their condition, or the fact that their child is shielding or self-isolating because of their diagnosis, as well as the impact on wellbeing for the wider family.

In these circumstances you should work with parents and the other organisations to ensure the child or young person's needs are met and that they are able to access the support they need, including education.

Where pupils are not able to attend school, or they are following clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), this should not be penalised.

Where pupils who are self-isolating are within our definition of vulnerable, it is important that we continue to provide support to the child or family.

12. Training specialists, therapists and other provision providers

13. Supporting pupils and students with SEND and their families

14. Safeguarding learning

15. Funding

Review of guidance: dates and changes

When a vulnerable pupil is requested to self-isolate, you should:

- notify their social worker (if they have one)
- agree with the social worker the best way to maintain contact and offer support

You should encourage pupils to:

- check if a vulnerable pupil is able to access remote education support
- support them to access this as soon as possible
- regularly check if they are accessing remote education

10. Working with health bodies, local authorities and other agencies

You should continue to work with your local authority and other agencies as usual. Your local authority will be your main point of contact for support and advice. Your local authority will also be your main point of contact for public health advice and support. Teachers and other professionals may continue to visit education settings to provide therapies and support, where this is considered safe.

Where children and young people (CYP) are not able attending their school or setting, multi-agency professionals should collaborate to agree how the provision set out in the CYP's plan will be delivered. This may include flexibility to the timing or mode of school support by means of video or telephone calls, or on-scroll.

11. Visiting specialists, support staff and wider provision

There is an expectation within the coronavirus (COVID-19) regulations to allow for the continued provision of health care services. This means that children and young people can continue to receive appropriate support from health and social care services. Specialists, therapists, clinicians and other support staff may visit schools and settings. Specialists, therapists, clinicians and other support staff to pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND) can provide interventions as usual where this is reasonably feasible, including where this requires them to move between settings.

Settings have continued to offer wraparound provision, such as breakfast and after school clubs, where it is safe and practicable to do so, and subject to local circumstances. Pre-arranged visits to or which children are eligible to attend wraparound childcare and out-of-hours settings for face-to-face provision please see the guidance for childcare providers for holiday and after school clubs, and other out of school settings.

12. Respite care

Special care services for disabled children which provide respite care are able to continue to operate. This includes provision for residential and non-residential respite services, including those for children who are looked after or care leavers. Read the coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance for children's social care services.

13. Remote education expectations and delivery

Those not receiving on-site education should have suitable remote education, taking into account the expectations set out in the:

- schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance
- further education coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance

The temporary continuity direction makes it clear that the schools, effective has a duty to provide education to children of compulsory school age who are not in attendance. Pupils should be continuing to government guidance or law around coronavirus (COVID-19).

Schools should refer to the detailed guidance on remote education expectations set out in the further education coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance.

Teachers and students with SEND, and those in alternative provision settings, their teachers are best placed to know how their needs can be met effectively and how they continue to make progress if they are not in face-to-face education.

We recognise that some parents and students with SEND may not be able to access remote education without adult support and so expect you to work with families to deliver a differentiated curriculum appropriate to their needs. Guidance to support delivering remote education for children and young people with SEND is set out in the remote education good practice.

You should have systems for checking, daily, whether pupils and students are engaging with their work, and work with families to rapidly identify effective solutions where engagement is a concern.

14. School transport

Transport services to education settings should continue to be provided and local authorities remain under a duty to provide free home to school transport for all eligible children and young people. This transport is not school and others of compulsory school age.

If you are needed to return to school or college transport, you should follow the recreational actions to maximise social distancing where possible and to minimise the risk of transmission. What is practicable will vary according to your local circumstances.

The approach to school transport should follow the system of controls, areas if where possible. You should:

- maximise social distancing
- ensure that children and young people either sit with their 'bubble', or with the same people as their school bubble members before entering and exiting
- put in place additional cleaning
- put in place organised queuing and boarding where possible
- ensure pupils/students, staff and other users are able to wash or sanitise their hands upon boarding and alighting where

The transport guidance acknowledges that implementing bubbles cannot perfectly will utilizing benefits, and that every step need to allow minimal, for contact with certain circumstances, including on transport. However, we know that vehicle capacity will be significantly reduced, and that local authorities and operators will not be in a position to offer as bubble to the extent to which sharing can be minimised.

Where it is not possible, the other measures in the system of controls become even more important.

In accordance with advice from PHE, children and young people aged 5 and over should be asked to wear face coverings when travelling on school transport or college school. The rule of supply to people who are exempt from wearing face coverings in public transport. Their information on this can be found in the other travel exemptions for people with disabilities. Children and young people aged 11 and over travelling on school transport or college their to receive any issues regarding face coverings where appropriate.

Transport operators should conduct a risk assessment for all their operations including dedicated school transport services. This will determine the most appropriate safety measures to be put in place. Local authorities and operators should refer to the guidance for operators provided by the sector.

Drivers and passenger assistants, who should wear a face covering, will not normally be required to keep a distance from others. Operators should take other mitigating protocols from the pilots and pinging apps on the transport. However, where risk assessments and risk mitigations that a child or young person ordinarily receives on home to school transport requires the use of PPE, that should continue as per the risk assessment and plan.

Children who normally sold or receive physical contact (for the children with complex medical needs, sectors) or guidance on the specific steps that should be taken to care for children with complex medical needs, sector-specific resources - this includes personal protective equipment.

In order to maximise home to school transport capacity, some local authorities have asked or required schools to stagger their opening times so that it is possible for more than child to travel without other education setting. This is permissible with the parent's consent but is not something which operators or local authorities can insist on. Operators should be aware that this may have an impact on their ability to provide school or college education to a specified period of time and accordance with agreement in place with local authorities. Operators should be aware of the impact on their business of the future. Reasonable notice will be needed to put home to school arrangements back in place for the child or young person when this is required again.

Children, young passenger staff can continue to use public transport where necessary to travel to school or college. Children and young people should be encouraged to walk, Boarisa page and cycle, cycle or scooter wherever possible and practicable.

Although the provision of transport for post-16 students is not a statutory duty for local authorities, it is often critical to those learners being able to access college or education. We ask local authorities to continue to provide transport if they had been doing so previously.

15. Asymptomatic testing

Asymptomatic covers comprises up to a third of all coronavirus (COVID-19) cases, and rapidly identifying and isolating them will help stop infections and so slow the further unknowingly spreading it. Rapid testing using LFD support the identification of people who have the virus and are asymptomatic, so that they can isolate to stop the spread of test positive and their contacts. Helping to reduce transmission of the virus.

Rapid testing using LFDs will support the wider return to face-to-face education by helping to identify people who are infectious but do not have or recognise they have symptoms.

Staff in primary aged settings will continue to test with LFDs twice a week or more, or only if advised by an all-through school, college or 16-19 setting to do so.

For secondary school staff and pupils (where appropriate) we are moving to a home testing model (for the majority of pupils, they will move to home testing following the Easter holidays). Home tests will be available for all staff. Once pupils have been tested 3 times at school, they will be provided with home tests for regular testing at home twice a week, if their parents/carers consent.

In colleges and specialist FE institutions, both students and staff will continue to test with LFD test kits to self-swab and test themselves twice a week at home.

Independent training providers (ITPs) and adult community learning providers (ACLPs) will have access to home testing kits through the COVID-19 education testing programme. Staff and learners will be invited to self-swab and test twice a week at home.

We recognise that specialist settings need greater flexibility when delivering testing. There will be a range of children and young people in these settings, with different needs and different levels of support. Local authorities and providers of SEND settings will need to work with pupils, students and their families to agree the most appropriate way of conducting testing, ensuring safety and dignity. There is further guidance on testing for children with special needs.

Where you do not have enough staff to carry out assisted swabbing on pupils who cannot self-swab, additional assistance could be provided by suitable further testing.

Home tests will be available for all secondary and FE staff. Primary staff should already have access to home testing kits.

Testing remains voluntary and no child or young person will be tested unless informed consent has been obtained. Children and young people who do not consent to be tested will be treated as if they had tested and have to self-isolate in accordance with the current guidance.

Staff or students with a positive LFD test result must self-isolate in line with the stay at home guidance, immediately. They should book a PCR test to confirm the result and inform school/college/ITP/ACL that they have tested and share the result of the test. Positive results from a PCR test must can continue to attend school or college and use protective measures.

Pupils or students who test asymptomatically testing should inform their school/college/ITP/ACL that they have tested and share the result of the test.

Additionally, the households, childcare and support bubbles of pupils, students and staff of schools, nurseries and colleges can test twice a week using LFD tests at home. These tests. Further guidance is available on rapid lateral flow testing for households and bubbles.

16. Funding

Local authorities will continue to receive their high needs funding and should continue to pay top-up and other high needs funding to schools and colleges. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) will also continue to pay high needs funding direct to providers. Local authorities will also continue to receive funding for their services to provide advice and support for supporting pupils and students with SEND and for alternative provision.

Funding should be maintained and services should not be reduced because some or all children and young people are not in attendance, whether this is because of sickness or because they are being kept at home in line with government or local authority advice.

Settings, where settings are having to pay to either bring in supply teachers or provide alternative provision or are paying for other SEND or alternative provision services, we expect local authorities to reimburse them for these costs, where they are acting in accordance with these temporary arrangement contracts.

For residential school provisions, where the educational costs are funded from the dedicated schools grant, the residential costs are met from social care budgets. Similarly, residential college places may be funded through a combination of ESFA funding and local authority social care budgets. We expect local authorities and providers to continue to receive funding for social care provision and continue to pay residential costs so that the employment and payment of staff supporting children and young people in these residential provision can continue.

System of controls: annex A

We know that the predominant new variant of coronavirus (COVID-19) is more transmissible. However PHE advice remains that the way to control the virus is the same, even with the current new variants.

In this section, where something is this guidance is essential for pupils, health reasons, as advised by Public Health England (PHE), we have said 'must'. Where there is scope for discretion we have made PHE. Some guidance does not vary in new stage adaptations.

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

If you follow the system of controls, you will effectively reduce risks in your setting and create an hierarchy safer environment.

These additional measures will be reviewed in partnership with health experts to decide when and evidence suggests that these measures can be eased ahead of the system review.

Prevention

You must always:

1) Minimise contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring they do not attend the setting

2) Ensure face coverings are used in accommodation and in communal areas

3) Ensure everyone is advised to clean their hands thoroughly and more often than usual

4) Ensure good respiratory hygiene for everyone by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach

5) Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents.

6) Consider how to minimise contact across the site and maintain social distancing wherever possible.

7) Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.

In specific circumstances:

8) Ensure individuals wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary.

9) Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing, where available.

Response to any infection

You must always:

10) Promote and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.

11) Manage and support confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the setting community.

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

1. Minimise contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring they do not attend the setting

When an individual develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or has a positive test

Pupils, students, staff and other adults must not attend the setting if:

- they measure a temperature (COVID-19 coronavirus)
- a member of their household (including someone in their support bubble or childcare bubble) if they have said they have coronavirus (COVID-19)
- they are legally required to quarantine having co-habited from certain other countries (travel quarantine)
- they have had a positive test
- have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

They must immediately cease to attend and not attend for at least 10 days from the day on which:

- the start of their symptoms,
- the test date if they didn't have any symptoms but have had a positive test (whether this was a Global Rapid Antigen or coronavirus (COVID-19) test)

You must follow the process and ensure everyone onsite or visiting is aware of it.

Anyone told to isolate NHS Test and Trace or by their public health team, should follow this a legal obligation to self-isolate, but you may leave home to avoid injury or illness or to seek medical aid. Further information on self-isolation is available on the NHS Test and Trace website.

If anyone in your setting develops a new and continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of or a change in their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they should:

- send their home to begin isolation. The isolation period includes the day the symptoms first appeared and the next 10 days
- advise them to follow the guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection
- encourage them to book a test as soon as possible to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19).

Other members of their household (including any siblings and members of their support or childcare bubble) do have small children should isolate. Their isolation period begins from the day symptoms started for the first person in their household, or the day their test was taken if they did not have any symptoms. They should follow the stay at home rules for 10 days. If a member of the household (which is changing or not changing) is isolating, they will need to restart the 10-day isolation period and book a test.

Children and young people will not normally need to self-isolate if someone they live with is a household member but not the 10 day isolation period from the day they developed symptoms.

In non-exceptional settings, if a child or young person or student develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or has a positive test, either at their setting they should avoid close contact with others and should not attend school or college. Their parents should be advised to book a coronavirus (COVID-19) test.

In exceptional circumstances, if parents or carers cannot arrange to have their child collected, if possible and to do so the child should wait, outside in a well-ventilated following a positive test result. If this is not possible, alternative arrangements may need to be made to ensure the child can be collected. If a child is too ill to be collected, to help ensure a suitable which should wait outside in a well-ventilated area, ensure, ensure, who must be made aware that the individual has tested positive or is displaying coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms.

If a pupil or student is awaiting collection, observe the following:

- they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age and needs of the pupil or student, if appropriate adult supervision if required
- if they need to use the toilet, wait for ventilation if it is safe to do so
- if it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area where it is at least metre away from other people
- if they need to use a bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom must be cleaned and ventilated before standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else
- if they are able to, they should be encouraged to wash their hands: they should collected (it is already if medical reasons be maintained) and to use a tissue and bin (or child or those with complex needs) more information and PPE can be found in the safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, section 2

In an emergency, call 999 if someone is seriously ill or injured or think she is at risk. Inform the parent/carer of the child that the child is ill. Do not leave the child unsupervised or put parents or carers at risk, unless advised to.

If a pupil or student is a residential setting shows symptoms, they should initially self-isolate in their residential setting. Residential Social Care Providers will need to follow the step symptoms started for the first person in their household, or the day their test was taken if they did not have any symptoms. They should follow the stay at home rules for next 10 days. If a member of the household (which is changing or not changing) is isolating, they will need to restart the 10-day isolation period and book a test.

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Children and young people will not normally need to self-isolate if someone they live with is a household member but not the 10 day isolation period from the day they developed symptoms.

When an individual has test result confirmed with someone with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms

Member of staff who has provided close contact care to someone with symptoms, regardless of whether they are wearing PPE, and all other members of staff and other students who have been in close contact with that person, do not need to go home to self-isolate.

- the symptomatic person tests positive
- they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should self-isolate immediately and arrange to have a test)
- they are requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace or Public Health England because they are identified as a close contact (in which case they should follow a legal obligation)
- they have tested positive from an LFD test as part of a community or seaside testing

Everyone must avoid their friends, household and relatives and should not go visiting outdoor or have contact either any contact with someone who is unwell. The only exceptions to this are essential visits, such as to receive medical care, or for the purpose of caring for the children or other people. Disregarding of the NHS Test and Healthcare settings.

If you are contacted by NHS Test and Trace or your local health protection team and told to self-isolate because you have been a close contact of a positive case, you have a legal obligation to do so.

2. Ensure face coverings are used in recommended circumstances

Where pupils and students aged 11 and over should be pupils and students who were aged 11 or over on 31 August 2020) and above are educated, we recommend that face coverings are worn in communal areas where social distancing is not practicable, such as premises outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas (and outside classroom) cannot easily be maintained. Face coverings do not need to be worn in classrooms or when sitting at a table.

In addition, we also recommend in those settings that the wearing of face coverings in classrooms and during activities where social distancing can be maintained, such as when sitting at a desk, should be kept under review. Face coverings do not need to be worn by pupils in lessons or otherwise settings. Its exceptions PE lessons. This information can be found in the face covering guidance. We are taking this additional precaution in secondary schools and colleges in the spring term because of increased COV prevalence in the community.

These measures will be in place until Easter. As with all measures, we will keep it under review and update guidance at that point.

In primary schools, face coverings should be worn by staff and adult visitors in situations where social distance adults is not practicable. Staff should wear when moving around in corridors and communal areas). Children in primary schools should not wear face coverings.

Transparent face coverings which impact communication and learning for those who are lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate can be worn. There is no requirement for children in primary schools to wear face coverings or transparent face coverings, but they are welcome to adopting the approach of wearing face coverings (COV 19).

Those who rely on visual signs for communication, or speak to or provide support to such individuals, are currently also exempt from any requirement to wear face coverings or transparent face coverings.

Settings have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people and pupils to support them to access education and accessibility.

Face visor or shields should not be used as an alternative to face coverings. They may protect against dropped speech or specific circumstances but are unlikely to be effective

preventing aerosol transmission. In an education setting environment they are unlikely to be practical for pupils and students to wear for long periods of time and they can lead to a risk assessment for the specific circumstances. They should always be cleaned appropriately.

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 impairment or disability. Illness or mental health difficulties
- speak to or provide help to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate

The same exemptions will apply in education and childcare settings and you should not ask people who are exempt to provide evidence of their exemption. Face wear face coverings and that the reasons for this may not be visible to others.

Access to face coverings

Face coverings should be worn in shops and other places in accordance with the current guidance. Face coverings can be worn anywhere within your school or college by pupils, students, staff and visitors and allow for adjustments to be made for children and young people with physical or educational needs and disability (SEND) who may find it difficult to wear a face covering for a prolonged period of time.

Safe wearing of face coverings requires:

- cleaning of hands before and after touching – including to remove or put them on
- safe storage of material, separate, ventilated bag or container

Where a face covering becomes damp, it should not be worn, and the face covering should be replaced immediately. Staff, pupils and students may need to bring a spare face covering to wear if their face covering becomes damp during the day.

You must instruct pupils and students to:

- not touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing it
- dispose of temporary coverings in a bin liner in a way that minimises risk to others
- wash reusable face coverings in a bag they can take home with them
- not share face coverings with other people or households

Additional guidance is available to remind students and colleagues of the importance of the PPE, of safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings.

If your setting operates commercial training environments such as hairdressing, beauty, barbering and beauty salons, sports and fitness facilities or restaurants, they must follow the additional guidance on working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19) and the stay at home guidance.

3. Ensure everyone is advised to clean their hands thoroughly and more often than usual

Safe wearing and removal of face coverings

You should have a process for when face coverings are worn within your school or college. This should be communicated to students, parents and carers. It should be taught to pupils, students, staff and visitors and allow for adjustments to be made for children and young people with physical or educational needs and disability (SEND) who may find it difficult to wear a face covering for a prolonged period of time.

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Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an easy virus to kill when it is on the skin. You can be done with it in your home by washing your hands. You must ensure that pupils and students clean their hands regularly, including:

- when they arrive at school or college
- when they return from breaks
- when they changrooms
- before and after eating

Consider how offe-pupils, students and staff will need to wash their hands and how this will be managed in your school or college.

Staff providing pupil and student care will also need to carefully plan when their opportunities to wash their hands other child.

Pupils and students who are able to wash themselves should be encouraged to wash their hands. Staff may need to assist their pupils or students to wash their hands.

Continue to help pupils and students who are able to wash their hands properly.

You will typically have hardened hands in or adjacent to classrooms, so you may be able to use these to encourage hand washing.

Frequent and thorough hand cleaning should now be regular practice. You should consider:

- whether you have enough hand washing or hand sanitiser stations available so that all pupils and students can practice hand hygiene
- if you need to support hand sanitiser use (place the virus-impacted signs – pro friendly skin cleaning wipes can be used as an alternative)
- how you will encourage pupils and students to use the stations, supported by behaviour reminders and hygiene messaging from posters and those with complex needs understand the need to follow them

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

The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important. Make sure enough tissues and bins are available to support pupils, students and staff to follow this routine. As with hand cleaning, you must ensure younger pupils and all those with complex needs understand the need to follow them. Ensure pupils and students know this is part of their hygiene routine. The Blue coronavirus (COVID-19) posters contain helpful reminders for schools, including materials to encourage good hand and respiratory hygiene.

Some pupils and students with complex needs will struggle to maintain as good personal hygiene as others. Staff will need to provide extra support to pupils and students as a sensory disruption. This should be considered in risk assessments and support these pupils and students and the staff working with them and is not reason to delay these pupils and students back to face education.

5. Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products, such as detergents

In line with the risk assessment and timetabling of the day, put in place and maintain an enhanced cleaning regime including:

- more frequent cleaning of rooms and areas that are used by different groups
- frequently touched surfaces being cleaned more often than normal
- cleaning toilets regularly
- encouraging pupils and students to wash their hands thoroughly after using the toilet
- if your site allows it, disinfecting different groups their own toilets

PHE has published guidance for cleaning non-health care settings. This contains advice on cleaning after a suspected case and in addition to the existing advice on cleaning when there is a suspected case.

6. Consider how to minimise contact and maintain social distancing wherever possible

Minimising contacts and mixing between people reduces transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). Schools, colleges and other educational providers will be important places for this. You must do everything possible to minimise contacts and mixing while maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum.

Consider how you can do this, for example by reducing the number of contacts between pupils, students and staff. This can be achieved through keeping groups separate (or in 'bubbles') and through maintaining distance between individuals. There are not alternative arrangements that ensure well-being, but the balance between them will change depending on the:

- pupil and student's ability to distance
- layout of the building
- flexibility of keeping distinct groups separate while offering a broad curriculum or programme of learning

Maintaining distance or forming bubbles could be difficult in special settings. Nevertheless, special schools and other specialist settings should consider what adjustments for the children and young people attending. However, the average number of pupils and students attending a special school is 59% much lower than the average number in a mainstream school. This will help to limit the number of contacts for any individual.

How to group pupils (schools)

Pupils and students can be kept in of transmissions by limiting the number of pupils, students and staff in contact with each other to stop those within the group.

Maintaining distinct groups or 'bubbles' that do not mix makes it quicker and easier in the event of a positive case to identify those who may need to self-isolate and to keep that number as small as possible.

When solving groups or bubbles, the reasons from the system of controls become important. Consider:

- transport routes
- the numbers of pupils and staff who need to self-isolate

Younger pupils and those with complex needs will not be able to maintain social distancing and it is impossible for these not to distance within their group.

Living small groups can:

- restrict the normal operation of education
- prevent educational and logistical challenges

You will need to consider:

- the cleaning and use of shared spaces, such as:
  - playgrounds
  - boarding houses
  - dining halls
  - toilets
- the provision of specialist teaching and therapies

Areas you or pupils and students go to implement 'bubbles' of an appropriate size to achieve the greatest reduction in contact and mixing. Make sure this won't affect the quality and breadth of learning or access to support and specialist teaching and therapies.

Whatever the size of the group, they should be kept apart from other groups where possible. Pupils and students should not be required to mix with other groups. Limit interaction, sharing of rooms and outside spaces between groups as far as possible.

Both the approaches of separating groups and maintaining distance are 'aid' or 'nothing' options and will only bring benefit, even if partially implemented.

Consider how to maintain distance in the class groups for most of the curriculum time, but also allow mixing in other groups for:

- specialist teaching
- enrichment
- transport
- boarding pupils who may to a new group residentially and another during the school day

Siblings may also be in different groups.

All teachers and other staff can operate across different classes and year groups to teach specialist subjects or provide pastoral support across the school. Staff can move between groups, they should try and keep their distance from pupils and other staff as much as they can. Keep moving to a minimum when adults. Try to minimise the number of interactions and changes wherever possible.

How to group students (post-16 institutions)

Post-16 institutions should also consider distancing between individuals and groups, and how to maintain distance when possible. All post-16 providers are offered the same measures as for those appropriate for certain age groups, or more easily manageable in certain buildings.

Where class sized groups are not possible in order to advise the full programme of study, post-16 providers should consider how to minimise the number of students in the first instance, sharing of rooms and outside spaces between groups as far as possible.

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Measures within the classroom or learning environment

Maintaining a distance between people while inside and reducing the amount of time people are in close contact with each other helps to limit the opportunities the virus has to spread. Consider whether you can place more emphasis on small groups or bubbles rather than pupils and students, staying at the front of the class and away from colleagues when teaching and using one way systems for corridors and stairways to limit the number of times that children and young people. If possible, additional social distancing measures may be put in place.

We know that this is not always possible, particularly when working with children and young people who require support, or those who need to be supervised in order to ensure educational and co-curricular for these pupils and students to normal, with the increased hygiene protocols in place to minimise the risk of transmission.

Where possible, for example with older pupils and students with less complex needs, you should consider whether you can place more emphasis on small groups or bubbles to maintain distance and reduce the amount of time people are in close contact with each other. Keep movement to a minimum, for example, by having teachers move between classes and bubbles rather than pupils and students, staying at the front of the class and away from colleagues when teaching and using one way systems for corridors and stairways to limit the number of times that children and young people. If possible, additional social distance measures may be put in place.

We recognise that some staff will need to move between groups, for example, teachers delivering maths and English to students creating a broad range of curriculum and academic subjects. You should take steps to minimise the movement of staff between groups and maintain a distance from other staff as much as they can. Consider whether broader protection measures such as maintaining distance from students where possible.

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Measures in groups and in assembly

Pupils and students should be encouraged to maintain their distance when in groups and in assembly. Consider:

- seating pupils and students in one direction
- staggering the length of the day the same but starting and finishing later to avoid busy periods

You should consider how to communicate any changes to parents. Remind them about the process that has been agreed for drop off and collection. According not to:

- gather at the gates
- come onto the site without an appointment

Travelling to the setting

Pupils and students should travel to school using transport where necessary, but we encourage them to walk, cycle or travel to and from your education setting by private transport, car and safe to do so. Wherequals, students will need to use public transport, they should follow the guidance

The transport to schools and other places of education guidance requires those responsible for transport to ensure that children and young people, aged 11 to 16, should adopt measures to address these risks in a way that is not to be used in any circumstances. Distancing should be maintained and mixing of groups should be minimised where possible and practical.

People aged 11 and over must wear a face covering when travelling on public transport, school transport and in other situations where social distancing is difficult to maintain. Travelling on dedicated school transport after education setting. People who are exempt do not need to wear a face covering.

Other coronavirus (COVID-19) measures

Some pupils and students with EHCP(Together with EHCP) (Carers or SEN support) will need to receive their therapies and other support. Ensure that this can be provided in a safe manner. Staff should prepare to meet these needs, for example using social distancing.

To make sure pupils and students with medical conditions are fully supported, work with:

- local authorities
- health professionals
- regional schools commissioners
- GP practices

Use individual healthcare plans to help pupils and students receive an education in line with their peers. In some cases, the pupil and student's medical needs will mean this education is not possible in a school setting for a period of time. Provide education available in the school or suitable alternative provision, or a school with medical provision.

Specialists, therapists, clinicians and other support staff for pupils and students with EHCP(Together with EHCP) (Carers or SEN support) may be able to visit schools to provide participate teachers or other therapeutic staff can move between settings. They should follow the guidance for social care services providing care to children and young people. Staff. Specialists and other support staff EHCP(Together with EHCP) (Carers or SEN support) should consider how to manage other visitors to the site, such as contractors, catering staff and others. Ensure that they follow the guidance for social care services providing care to children and young people. This will require close co-operation between schools, settings and the other relevant employers.

Ensure that you have clear and consistent communication about the setting's control measures and ways of working. Have high-quality risk guidance and clearly-defined roles and responsibilities for hygiene is explained to visitors or on before arrival. Where visits can happen outside of school hours, ensure that the site is ready for the start of the school day. Consider whether school staff should be present outside school hours if required by the DfE's guidance.

As normal, you should engage with your local immunisation providers to provide immunisation programmes on site, ensuring these will be delivered in keeping with your settings control measures. These programmes are essential for pupil and student health and should be prioritised as far as possible.

Where a pupil or student cannot attend school because of a local lockdown, or for other reasons because they are dual registered at a mainstream school and a special setting, the setting should work with the other school to ensure the pupil receives education. Ensure that the pupil or student receives the appropriate teaching and learning, including broad and balanced curriculum for the pupil or student. Pupils and students should be encouraged to maintain their distance when in groups and in assembly. Consider whether, for example, pupils and students in the situation should not be included in a solution to the mix-greater contact when required by specific pupils. Health advice.

Equipment

For individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pencils and erasers, staff, pupils and students should have their own items.

Classroom or learning environment resources, such as books and games, can be used by different groups. These should be cleaned regularly, for example, at the frequently touched times.

Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, such as sports, arts, and science equipment should be cleaned frequently. When sharing equipment between different bubbles, you should:

- clean it before it is moved between bubbles
- allow them to be left unused for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics)

You will need to assess the ability to clean equipment and the distance of the bubble. Ensure that you do not share equipment between bubbles if it is not possible to clean equipment can withstand cleaning and disinfecting between each use before it can be used by another bubble. Prioritise cleaning or disinfecting is not practical, such as sensitive electronic equipment.

- restricted to 1 user
- left unused for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different individuals

Outdoor and playground equipment should be more frequently cleaned than normal. This also applies to resources used inside and outside by wraparound care and out of school settings providers.

Pupils and students should limit the amount of personal belongings they bring to school. Personal belongings essentials such as:

- lunchboxes
- hats and coats
- books
- stationery
- mobile phones

Bags are allowed.

Ensure pupils and staff can take boxes and other shared resources home, although unnecessary sharing should be avoided. Similar rules as hand cleaning, cleaning of the resources and children should apply to these resources.

Parent and carers drop off and pick up

We know that travel to setting patterns differ greatly between settings. If those patterns allow, settings should consider staggered starts or adjusting the start times times to keep groups apart as they are and leave the setting.

Ensure that you have clear and consistent communication about the control of parents drop off and pick up. Engagement can help. For example, it can include letters the length of the day the same but starting and finishing later to avoid rush hour.

Settings should consider how to communicate this to parents and carers. Ensure that you have clear and consistent ways have agreed for drop off and collection, including that parents and other adults wait at the gate and otherwise coming onto the site without an appointment is not allowed.

7. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated

Good ventilation reduces the concentration of the virus in the air, which reduces the risks from airborne transmission. This happens when people breathe it small particles and droplets. Ventilation is a key control measure for airborne transmission.

When the setting is in operation, it is important to ensure it is well ventilated and a comfortable teaching and learning environment is maintained.

These can be achieved by making of measures including:

- **mechanical ventilation systems** – these should be adjusted to increase the ventilation rate wherever practice and intended to maintain the best ventilation means meets current guidance and that you find suitable and is compliant. If possible, ventilation should be at least 1.5 times the usual. Ensure that the system is operational as normally as they are within a single room and supplying fresh outside air supply
- **natural ventilation** – opening windows (in cooler weather windows should be opened just enough to provide comfort background ventilation and windows should be open during breaks to purge the air or the space) – **opening internal doors** can also assist with the flow of air and
- **natural ventilation** – if necessary external opening doors can be used (only if safe to do so) they are not fire doors and where safe to do so

The Health and Safety Executive provides guidance on ventilation and ventilation during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and CIBSE coronavirus (COVID-19) advice provides more information.

To balance the need for ventilation with maintaining a comfortable temperature, consider:

- opening high level windows in colder weather in preference to low level to reduce draughts
- opening the ventilation while spaces are unoccupied (for example, between classes, during break and lunch, when a room is unused)
- providing flexibility to allow additional, suitable indoor clothing – for more information, see guidance on school uniforms in the coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance
- rearranging furniture where possible to avoid blowing pupils

Heating should be used as necessary to ensure comfort levels are maintained particularly in occupied spaces.

8. Ensure individuals wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary

Face coverings are not classified as PPE Personal protective equipment. PPE is used in a controlled manner in settings to protect workers against hazards such as a chemical, surgical mask or respiratory used in medical and industrial settings. A face covering is a piece of cloth that covers the nose and mouth. Face coverings.

Most staff in schools and colleges will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work. It is a question of should they routine intimate care needs that involve the use of PPE. Some PPE should be used in the following cases:

Additional PPE for coronavirus (COVID-19) only required in a very limited number of scenarios. For example, when:

- a pupil or student becomes ill with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, and only they are in your school or college
- performing aerosol generating procedures (AGPs)

When working with pupils and students who could, sign or control but do not have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, staff PPE that would be suitable every. Health care.

The guidance should only apply to classroom, childcare and children's social care provides more information about preventing and controlling infection. This includes:

- when and how PPE should be used
- what type of PPE to use
- how to source it

9. Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing, where available

Asymptomatic testing remains a vital part of our plan to suppress this virus. Schools and colleges should follow the guidance set out for their settings.

- primary schools, school-based nurseries and maintained nursery schools
- secondary schools and colleges
- specialist settings

10. Promote and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process

Staff members, pupils, students, parents and carers will need to:

- book a test if they or their pupils/students: the main symptoms are
  - a new cough
  - a high temperature cough
  - a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste
- self-isolate immediately and carry on to the setting if:
  - they have tested positive
  - they have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)
  - anyone in their household or support or childcare bubble develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
  - they are required to quarantine (leave equally undisturbed) when outside the country (United States) and
  - they have been notified by NHS test and trace or the PHE local health protection team
  - provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with, if they test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test and Trace.

Booking a PCR test for asymptomatic testing

Ensure that anyone who develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. Anyone can book a test through the NHS Test and Trace service or through the coronavirus (COVID-19) website, or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet.

Essential workers, which includes anyone involved in education or childcare, including teachers, can book a test through the coronavirus (COVID-19) website. Testing is free for testing.

All pupils and students can be tested if they have symptoms. This includes children under 5, but children aged 5 and under will need to be tested by their parents or carers if using a home testing kit.

PCR coronavirus (COVID-19) testing

Separate to the asymptomatic testing regime, all settings were sent a initial supply of PCR coronavirus (COVID-19) tests in the week of 14 June. These tests are for those who are likely to be testing at home or away through the online portal. You should use the Test and Trace Helpline on 119 for this if you have ordered these test at home.

Having met or at least, aspired to deliver the tested results for symptomatic cases. These PCR tests are provided to be used in the exceptional circumstance that an outbreak is confirmed in your setting or you are asked by Test and Trace to undertake testing proactively.

You will need to decide how to prioritise the distribution of your tests. These tests can be given directly to:

- staff
- pupils or carers collecting a pupil or student who has developed symptoms at the setting

These PCR tests will also help ensure that symptomatic staff can get a test. If they test negative, they can return to work as soon as they no longer have a coronavirus (COVID-19).

Further information and tips for schools and other educational providers is available.

Ask parents, carers, students and staff to inform you as soon as they get test results.

NHS COVID-19 app

The app is available to anyone aged 16 and over to download if they choose. For some young people, particularly some vulnerable children, parents and carers will need to download the app on their behalf.

You can ask their children pupils and students in year 11, and most pupils and students in year 12 and above, will be able to sign up and benefit from its features.

Staff members are also able to use the app.

The guidance for schools and further education colleges in England provides information about how the app works and guidance for its use within schools in England.

11. Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19)

Swift action is taken when someone tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). This section sets out what schools and colleges need to do when a case is identified and how health officials and colleges to identify close contacts.

Schools and colleges may receive a phone call from a member of the local health team introduced by PHE, which can be reached through the 0300 test centre (0300 1663 667). Schools and colleges will be asked to provide a list of pupils, students and staff who have been in close contact with the person who tests positive, and the last date they were in school and advised to self-isolate immediately and for at least the next 14 days. Contacts will be given a date from which they can end self-isolation. This will be based on the requirement for an individual to self-isolate for coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms and Test and Trace.

Close contacts will be signposted to determine this, but a close contact includes:

- anyone in the same household as someone with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

- has had any of the following types of contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) with a PCR or LFD test:
  - face-to-face contact including being coughed on or having a face-to-face conversation within 1metre
  - been within 1 metre for 1 minute or longer without face-to-face contact
  - been within 2 metres of someone for more than 15 minutes (either as a one-off contact, or added up together over 1 day)
  - travelled in the same vehicle or an aircraft

If someone who uses transport tests positive, the assessment is likely to take account of factors such as vehicle size, degree of face-to-face contact, length of time in close proximity and whether a Perspex screen is in place.

The advice service (or PHE local health protection team if escalated) will provide advice on who must be sent home. To support them in doing so, we recommend you keep a record of pupils, students and staff in each group, and any close contact that takes places between pupils, students and staff in different groups (see section 6 of the system of control for more on grouping pupils). This should be a proportionate recording process. You do not need to ask pupils and students to record everyone they have spent time with each day or ask staff to keep definitive records in a way that is overly burdensome.

Where individuals are self-isolating and are within our definition of vulnerable, it is important that settings put systems in place to keep in contact with them, offer pastoral support, and check they are able to access education support.

A template letter has been provided to all settings to send to parents of children asked to self-isolate. This can also be used for staff, if needed. It is important that this letter is shared promptly with all parents of children that have been asked to self-isolate as this letter allows parents who are on a low income and unable to work from home to apply to their local authority for financial support under the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme. They will not be able to make an application without providing this letter as supporting evidence. You must not share the names or details of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) unless essential to protect others.

Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the pupil, student or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms, unless they have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, in which case they must self-isolate; this is a legal obligation. If someone in a class or group that has been asked to self-isolate develops symptoms themselves within the 10 days from the day after contact with the individual who tested positive, they should follow guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection. They should get a test, and:

- if the test delivers a negative result, they should remain in isolation for the remainder of the 10-day isolation period - this is because they could still develop coronavirus (COVID-19) within the remaining days
- if the test result is positive, they must inform their setting immediately, and must isolate from the day of onset of their symptoms and at least the following 10 full days - their household should self-isolate starting from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms and the next 10 full days, following guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection

You should not request evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or young people or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

The local public health team will also contact you directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) attended your setting, as identified by NHS Test and Trace or PHE local health protection.

Based on advice from Public Health England (PHE) and NHS Test and Trace, the testing programme initially included offering those who came into close contact with a positive case in schools and colleges the option of 7 days of daily contact testing (with self-isolation if a subsequent test was positive) as an alternative to self-isolation. PHE and NHS Test and Trace have now reviewed their initial advice in light of the higher prevalence and rates of transmission of the new variant. They have concluded that these changes in the virus warrant further evaluation work and that daily contact testing in place of self-isolation should be paused until this evaluation has taken place. We will update this guidance once this evaluation is complete.

Further guidance is available on testing and tracing for coronavirus (COVID-19).

Reporting actual or suspected cases through the education setting status form

From 11 January, we asked you to resume completing an educational setting status form. From 8 March the form was amended to reflect wider opening. The data you supply helps the government monitor the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on schools.

See guidance on how to complete the educational setting status form for more information.

Test and Trace support Payments

Some school, college, FE staff and some parents, carers and students may be eligible for a one-off Test and Trace support payment of £500. This is payable in one lump sum from your local authority.

To be eligible for a Test and Trace support Payment, you must:

- be on a low income
- be unable to work from home
- be at risk of losing income as a result of self-isolating
- be living in England
- meet the eligibility criteria

Staff identified as close contacts of a positive case will require an NHS Test and Trace Account ID number (CTAS number) to be able to claim a Test and Trace Support Payment or discretionary payment. Parents and carers of self-isolating children should be provided with a letter to support their application for payment, but will not require an NHS Test and Trace Account ID number (CTAS number).

The Department for Health and Social Care has launched the self-isolation service hub available by calling 020 3743 6715. The phone line is open 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm, allowing a setting to provide contact details of any staff who have been asked to self-isolate and are likely to be eligible for the Test and Trace support payment or discretionary payment.

In order for any of your staff or students who may be eligible for a payment from the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme to be able to claim, you must follow these steps:

1. Ensure that you collate a list of appropriate close contacts for the person who has tested positive within your establishment and inform these close contacts that they now need to self-isolate.
2. Call the new service hub on 020 3743 6715 as soon as you have the eight-digit NHS Test and Trace account ID (sometimes referred to as a CTAS number) of the person who has tested positive.
3. Provide the details of the person who has tested positive, along with the details of the relevant staff members you have identified as close contacts. If you do not have NHS Test and Trace account ID for the person who has tested positive - hub staff will assist in tracing the person in order to register their contacts on the Test and Trace system (CTAS).
4. NHS Test and Trace will then contact individuals to formally advise them of their need to self-isolate and provide them with an NHS Test and Trace account ID.
5. Following this, individuals who are employed or self-employed, on a low income, unable to work from home and losing income as a result may qualify for the Test and Trace support payment scheme through their local authority. Full information on the scheme and how to apply can be found at claiming financial support under the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme

Applications from parents and guardians who need to take time off work to care for a child who is self-isolating

Eligible parents or guardians of self-isolating children who are not required to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace can also apply for the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme if they are on a low income, unable to work from home and need to take time off work to care for a child who is self-isolating. Parents and carers do not require an NHS Test and Trace Account ID number in order to claim and schools are not required to register all children asked to self-isolate with NHS Test and Trace in the same way as staff.

The scheme is open to eligible parents and carers of children aged 15 and under, and parents of young people aged 16-25 with an EHC Plan. The full eligibility criteria for the scheme, and further information on how parents and guardians can apply, can be found at Claiming financial support under the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme.

Schools should provide parents and carers of children advised to self-isolate with the template letter, detailing the child's name and the dates of their isolation period. The parent or guardian will need to use this letter as supporting evidence for as part of their application to their local authority for a payment from the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme. Parents whose children are told to self-isolate by their school will not be able to apply for financial support without a letter.

When a parent or guardian applies to the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme because they need to care for a child who is self-isolating, their local authority will be required to contact their child's school via phone or email to verify information about the child. This includes the child's name, age and dates of self-isolation. This is a standard check against fraudulent claims, and may take place before or after a payment is made.

You will only be asked to share information on children whose parents have made an application to their local authority for the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme. You may wish to update your Data Privacy Notice to reflect this.

12. Contain any outbreak by following PHE local health protection team advice

If you have 2 or more confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where coronavirus (COVID-19) is suspected, you may have an outbreak.

You should call the dedicated advice service who will escalate the issue to your local health protection team where necessary and advise if any additional action is required. You can reach them by calling the DfE helpline on 0800 046 8687 and selecting option 1 for advice on the action to take in response to a positive case.

In some cases, health protection teams may recommend that a larger number of other pupils or students self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure. This could be the whole site, class, group or year group.

If you are implementing the system of controls, addressing any issues you have identified and therefore reducing transmission risks, whole site closure will not generally be necessary.

You should not close except on the advice of health protection teams.

13. Admitting pupils, students and staff back to the setting

The pupil, student or staff member who tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) can return to their normal routine and stop self-isolating after they have finished their isolation period and their symptoms have gone or if they continue to have only a residual cough or anosmia. This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. If they still have a high temperature after 10 days or are otherwise unwell, you should advise them to stay at home and seek medical advice.

You should not request evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting pupils, students or staff or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

In the vast majority of cases, the student, parents and carers will be in agreement that those with symptoms should not attend the setting, given the potential risk to others. In the event that a parent, carer the student themselves insists on attending your setting, you can take the decision to refuse the pupil or student if, in your reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect your pupils and staff from possible infection with coronavirus (COVID-19). Your decision would need to be carefully considered in the light of all the circumstances and current public health advice.

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Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance and support

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