Guidance
Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance

Updated 9 April 2021

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This guidance explains the actions school leaders should take to minimise the risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in their schools. This includes public health advice, endorsed by Public Health England (PHE).

It is for leaders and staff in:

- primary schools
- secondary schools (including sixth forms)
- special schools, special post-16 providers and alternative provision
- pupil referral units
- alternative provision, independent schools
- boarding schools

We expect independent schools to follow the control measures set out in this guidance in the same way as state-funded schools, and health and safety legislation applies equally to independent schools.

Where this guidance refers to schools, that does not include maintained nursery schools and nurseries.

Supplementary guidance is available for:

- early years and childcare settings
- further education providers and sixth forms

Additional operational guidance is also available for special schools, special post-16 providers and alternative provision.

Schools and trusts should work closely with parents and carers (future references to parents should be read as including carers), staff and unions when agreeing the best approaches for their circumstances.

Overview

From 8 March, all pupils should be attending school.

To prepare for this:

- review and where necessary, update your risk assessment
- ensure you have in place the control measures to minimise the risk of infection, including planning for disrupted timetables
- have a contingency plan in place for outbreaks in your school or changes in restrictions
- communicate any changes to your arrangements to parents

Your risk assessment should be shared with your governing body, as it replicates what was in place for the autumn term. We have made specific changes to the guidance:

- Test and Trace support arrangements
- current expectations for COVID-19 secondary school testing, and staff educational visits
- expanded provision and extra-curricular activity
- physical activity in schools
- attendance
- continuous PE lessons
- face coverings

We have added boxes 3 which is guidance on year 11 to 13 exam cohort attendance and provision for the 2021 summer term.

Public health advice

We have worked closely with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and Public Health England (PHE) to develop this guidance. PHE's advice, from its collective staff can similarly be found in other organisations.

Implementing the control of infection, provides a safer environment for pupils and staff where the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced. The way to control this virus is the same, even with the current new variant. We are further strengthening our control measures, with more measures and no longer measures disrupted to school causes to education.

You must comply with health and safety law and put in place proportionate control measures. To meet these obligations you must:

- review your health and safety risk assessments in light of this refreshed guidance
- implement necessary changes to your control measures explained by the control of infection

Risk assessment

Educational providers have a legal duty to protect people from harm. This includes taking reasonable steps to protect staff, pupils and others from coronavirus (COVID-19) within your school.

You must implement sensible and proportionate control measures which follow the hierarchy of control, prioritising those that will protect the most people (based especially on clinical risk). The hierarchy of controls is set out on page 3.

You must regularly review and update your risk assessments. Keeping them up-to-date means that you can take into account any significant changes in your organisation. This is particularly important as you prepare to welcome back more pupils. This includes having active arrangements in place to monitor that controls are:

- effective
- working as planned

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

For more information on what is required of school leaders in relation to health and safety risk assessments and managing risk, see page 4.

Systems of controls

We know that the predominant variant of coronavirus (COVID-19) is more transmissible than previous variants. We know that it is particularly this group of pupils, in school contexts, with the current new variant.

In this section where something is essential for public health reasons, as advised by PHE, we have made it a 'must'. We have also made it a 'must' where we have judged it as have made that clear. This guidance does not create any new legal obligations.

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 internally safer environment.

These evidence measures will be reviewed in partnership with health experts to decide whether the evidence suggests that these measures can be eased ahead of the summer term.

Prevention

You must always:

1. Minimise contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring they do not attend the school.
2. Ensure face coverings are used in recommended circumstances.
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 programme.
11. Manage and report confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school 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 school

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

Pupils, staff and other adults must not come into the school if:

- they have one or more coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms
- a member of their household (including someone in their support bubble or childcare bubble) is waiting for a test result or has tested positive
- they are asymptomatic but have been tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) and are awaiting the result

Anyone who:

- has been in close contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

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

- the start of their symptoms
- the test date if they did not have any symptoms but have had a positive LFT or PCR test (or an LFT test is taken first, and a PCR test is then taken within 2 days of the initial LFT test, and is negative). It overrides the LFT test if the PCR test is positive

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

Anyone tent to isolate by NHS Test and Trace or by their public health protection team must follow the isolation rules. Failure to isolate when required to do so is a criminal offence because the rule of law. More information can be found on GOV.UK and on the 9 pages.

Anyone in your school develops a new and continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), you must:

- send them home to begin isolation. The isolation period includes the day symptoms first appeared and the 10 full days after
- advise them to follow the guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection
- advised them to arrange a test, as soon as possible to confirm if they have coronavirus (COVID-19)

Other members of their household (including any siblings and members of their support bubble or childcare bubble) must self-isolate. Their isolation period includes the day when the person with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms first began to have, was taken if they did not have symptoms, whether the test is a PCR test or a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test and the next 10 full days. If remains positive, they may need to isolate for longer. Further advice will be provided immediately as most other members of their household will be identified as the contact of a PCR test.

Members of the household (adults to display symptoms while self-isolating they will need to carry out the test to prove and book a test.

If anyone tests positive whilst not experiencing symptoms, but develops symptoms during the isolation period, they must restart the 10 day isolation period from the day developed symptoms.

In non-residential schools, if a pupil develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or has a positive test, while at their school they should avoid using public transport and should be picked up by parents/carers as soon as reasonably practicable.

In exceptional circumstances, if parents or carers cannot arrange a pick-up, the school collected, as long as it is age-appropriate and safe to do so (the child would, cycle or walk home accompanied by a responsible adult). In such exceptional circumstances arrangements may need be agreed by the school. The local authority may be able to help source a suitable vehicle which would provide appropriate protection for the driver and pupil. Vehicles that have not the scheduled be tested positive in a designated vehicle.

If a pupil is awaiting collection:

- they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, ideally with an open window if the weather permits, with appropriate supervision if required
- a window should be opened for fresh air ventilation if it is safe to do so
- they should be kept at least 2 metres apart from others in an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people
- if they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. Bathrooms should be cleaned after they have been used. Cleaning should include touch points such as handles and taps, using standard cleaning products, as usual

If a pupil is unwell with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms and has been sent home, or just has symptoms and they contact with someone who is unwell, the parents around the person with symptoms must be cleared after they have left, to reduce the risk of their child being sent home. Further guidance is available on the non-pharmaceutical 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 in year 7 (which would be children who were aged 11 on 31 August 2020) and secondary school pupils attending school, should wear face coverings in communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained.

In addition, we advise that secondary school pupils, that face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils in classrooms or during activities unless social distancing can be maintained. We do not recommend face coverings for primary school pupils, because of impact on the ability to learn and to exercise or otherwise activity. Exceptions in PE lessons. Face coverings do not need to be worn by pupils when outdoors on the premises.

Subject to the exemptions, as part of step 2, we expect these precautionary measures to be in place until 17 May. This period is not indefinite. The 17 May date will be confirmed until one week in advance.

In secondary schools, we recommend that face coverings should be worn by staff and students in communal areas where they come into contact with people they do not normally meet, where social distancing cannot be maintained.

In primary schools, we recommend that face coverings should be worn by staff and adults (including visitors) in classrooms and other communal areas, where social distancing cannot be maintained.

The use of face coverings helps to contain droplets released from the mouth and nose when we cough, sneeze, or speak. Wearing a face covering is a way of protecting others in your vicinity, in the case that you are infectious but do not know it. This is especially important in areas where it may be difficult to maintain other measures, such as social distancing, or where there may be a higher risk of transmission.

Transparent face coverings, which may support communication with someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate, can be worn. There is currently very limited evidence regarding the effectiveness or safety of transparent face coverings, but they may be effective in reducing the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and students, to support them to access education and participate.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of possible adjustments:

- the provision and effective use of assistive listening devices, such as radio aids
- an increased focus on the learning environment, minimising all unnecessary distractions, such as background noise, to ensure that pupils can hear and be taught in classrooms with the best possible acoustic conditions
- allowing the use of speech-to-text transcription apps on mobile devices and tablets to support communication with those who have difficulties with speech, or who speak a different Canadian dialect
- additional communication support, including remote speech-to-text reporters or sign language interpreters
- wearable one-to-one learning support, without the use of face coverings, and in rooms where social distancing can be achieved or through a Perspex panel

Where appropriate, education settings should work with pupils and their families to explore of reasonable adjustments that are being considered to support an individual.

Face or snoods, cloth masks and clip-those-exempt from wearing face coverings but they are not an equivalent alternative in terms of source control of virus transmission. Face coverings made of transparent material, or those with a transparent panel, are unlikely to be effective in preventing the spread of droplets respiratory droplets when used without an additional face covering. They should only be used after carrying out a risk assessment for the pupil, student or staff and should always be used in combination.

Exemptions

Face coverings are recommended there are some circumstances where people may not be able to wear a face covering.

This includes (but is not limited to):

- people who cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability
- where putting on, wearing or removing a face coverings will cause you severe distress
- if you are speaking to or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate
- to avoid harm or injury, or the risk of harm or injury, to yourself or others—for example if wearing it would exacerbate your anxiety to exercise or participate in a strenuous activity

The same exemptions will apply to instruction and childcare settings as they would be sensitive to those needs, noting that some people are less able or wear face coverings and that the reasons for this may not be visible to others.

Access to face coverings

Due to the increasing use of face coverings in wider society, staff and pupils are already likely to have access to face coverings. PHE has also published guidance on how to make a face covering at home.

You should have a small contingency supply available for people who:

- are struggling to access a face covering
- are unable to use their face covering if it has become damp, soiled or unsafe
- have forgotten their face covering

You pupil should be stood whatever the grounds that they are not wearing a face covering.

Safe wearing and removal of face coverings

You should have a process for when face coverings are worn within your school and how they should be removed. You should communicate this process clearly to staff, pupils and visitors and allow for adjustments to be made for pupils with SEND who may be disproportionately affected by the requirement to wear a face covering.

Safe wearing of face coverings requires the:

- cleaning of hands before and after touching – including to remove or put them on – with a range of hand sanitisers available clearly kept between
- face coverings to be kept in a clean bag when not worn, and the face covering should be washed carefully. Staff and pupils, for example, could bring a spare face covering to wear if their face covering becomes damp during the day

You must instruct pupils to:

- not touch the front of their face covering during use or when removing it
- dispose of disposable face coverings in a 'face covering' waste bin and recycling bin
- place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag they can take home with them
- wash their hands immediately after disposing of their face covering

Separate guidance is available on preventing and controlling infection, including the use of PPE, in education, childcare and children's social care settings.

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

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is spread by close contact from one person to another. Cleaning hands more often than usual is one of the most important ways to reduce the risk of transmission.

Ensure that pupils are taught to clean their hands regularly, including:

- when they arrive at the school
- when they return from breaks
- before and after eating
- before and after exercise

Consider how other pupils and staff will need to wash their hands and incorporate time for this in timetables or lesson plans.

Staff working with pupils who are not uncontrollable may want more opportunities to wash their hands than other staff.

Pupils who use sanitise as a primary strategy will struggle with Catch it, bin it, kill it' may also need more opportunities to wash their hands.

Continue to help pupils with complex needs to clean their hands properly.

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

- whether you have enough hand washing or hand sanitiser stations available so that all pupils and staff can clean their hands regularly
- ensuring that pupils can access the hand washing or hand sanitiser stations – hand sanitiser dispensers can be used as an alternative
- building these routines into school routine, supported by behaviour expectations and reinforcing them with posters and those with complex needs understand the need to follow them

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

The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important. Pulse was enough to remind everyone of the importance of this approach. Ensure that, as part of hand cleaning, you must ensure pupils and staff have enough tissues and bins in place to support this, right, and encourage pupils and staff to follow this to ensure good hygiene. Ensure that, as part of hand cleaning, you must ensure pupils and staff have enough tissues and bins in place to support this, right, and encourage pupils and staff to follow this to ensure good hygiene.

Some pupils with complex needs will struggle to maintain as good respiratory hygiene as others. Consider how to support these pupils to understand and follow these measures. It may be clinically inappropriate for some disabled children, young people and their pupils and their siblings with them and is not a reason to deny these pupils face-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 schedule. This should include:

- more frequent cleaning of rooms and shared areas that are used by different groups
- more frequent cleaning of frequently touched surfaces
- cleaning toilets regularly
- encouraging pupils to wash their hands thoroughly after using the toilet
- if your site allows, to attempt different toilet blocks for different groups

PHE has published guidance on the cleaning of non-healthcare settings. This contains advice on the general cleaning required in addition to the existing advice on cleaning when there is a suspected case.

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

Minimising contacts and mixing between people reduces transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). Schools should consider how to minimise contacts between people in their setting to the extent possible, while still providing education and ensuring that children receive a broad and balanced curriculum.

The overarching principle is to reduce mixing the number of contacts between pupils and staff. This can be achieved through keeping groups separate (or 'bubbles') and limiting the number of people with which each group comes into contact. Social distancing and such measures will help, but the balance between them will change depending on the:

- pupil's ability to distance
- layout of the building
- flexibility of timetabling/distinct groups separate while offering a broad curriculum

How to group pupils

Schools should minimise the risk of transmission by limiting the number of pupils and staff in contact with each other to only those within the group.

Maintaining distinct groups or 'bubbles' that do not mix makes it quicker and easier to identify who a pupil has been in contact with if a case is identified, and to limit who should self-isolate

that number as small as possible.

When using large groups, the other measures from the system of controls become even more important to minimise:

- transmission risk
- the number of people in each other's close contact bubble

Children in different bubbles should not be able to maintain social distancing and it is acceptable for them not to distance within their group.

Using small groups can:

- restrict the normal operation of education
- prevent extracurricular and supervision activities

You will need to consider:

- how you will manage the use of shared spaces, such as:
  - playgrounds
  - playing fields
  - dining halls
  - toilets
- the provision of specialist teaching and therapies

Assess your circumstances and try to implement 'bubbles' of an appropriate size to minimise the number of people that a child or young person comes into close contact with, to qualify and benefit of teaching or access to support and specialist staff and therapists.

Whatever the size of the group, they should be kept apart from other groups where possible. Children should not be required to maintain social distance from their classmates, sharing of items and close spaces between groups is as much as possible.

Both the expectations of maintaining groups and maintaining distance are not 'all or nothing' options and will differ depending on each individual circumstance.

You may keep pupils in their class groups for most of the classroom time, but also allow mixing in wider groups for:

- specialist teaching
- enhanced curriculum
- assemblies
- bringing pupils who may be in one 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 facilitate the delivery of the timetable and specialist provision. Where staff need to maintain a distance from children, they should do so from the front of a classroom or staff such as teaching assistants, should keep further adults. Try to minimise the number of interactions or changes wherever possible.

Measures within the classroom

Maintaining a distance between people while inside and reducing the amount of time spent in close contact with others is important. Children should be encouraged to sit facing forward and be encouraged to maintain social distance from their peers, sharing at the front of the class, and away from their colleagues where possible. Ideally, they should be encouraged to maintain a distance from their teacher. Ideally, desks that do not always provide a barrier between working staff and pupils, depending on needs, or those who need close contact care. Provide educational and core support for pupils who need it, with other increased hygiene protocols in place and a reduced risk of transmission.

Where possible, for example with older pupils with less complex needs who can self-manage their behaviour without distress, they should also be encouraged to maintain a distance and not touch staff and their peers. This will not be possible for the pupil with complex needs who requires close contact care and support, and it will not be feasible where spaces are too small. Doing this where you can, will reduce the risk of transmission.

Staff and pupils cannot maintain distancing, the risk can be reduced by keeping pupils in the smallest class/year groups.

You should review seat allocations in the classroom to support distancing where possible. That should include seating pupils, where possible, facing forward, rather than face to face or sideways. It might also include moving unnecessary furniture out of the classroom to make more space.

Measures elsewhere

Pupils should not attend gatherings such as assemblies or collective worship with more than one group.

When timetabling, groups should be kept apart and movement around the school kept to a minimum. Where possible, they should use the same classroom and, if they need to travel, staggered lessons and staff lead lessons. This will not be possible for the pupil with complex needs who requires close contact care and support, and it will not be feasible where spaces are too small. Doing this where you can, will reduce the risk of transmission.

Staff and pupils cannot maintain distancing, the risk can be reduced by keeping pupils in the smallest class/year groups.

You should review the use of staff rooms, and ensure staff must still have a break of a reasonable length during the day.

Measures for arriving at, and leaving the setting

Consider staggered arrival, or adjusted start and finish times to keep groups apart as they arrive and leave.

Staggered start and finish times should not reduce the amount of overall teaching time. A staggered start may include:

- combining or integrating free periods or break time but retaining the same amount of teaching time
- keeping the length of the day the same but starting and finishing at different 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, including not to:

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

Travelling to the setting

Pupils and staff may use public transport where necessary, but we encourage them to travel by other means, such as walking, cycling or being driven by a family member. Pupils and staff may use public transport. They should follow the DfT guidance for passengers.

The transport to and from other classes of education guidance requires those involved in the provision of dedicated transport to schools to identify the risks. You should follow the guidance to reduce the risk as much as is reasonable in your circumstances. Children should be encouraged and assisted to the mode of transport that is most appropriate, which requires close co-operation between schools and the other relevant providers.

You should have discussions with the school transport provider to ensure that they are aware of and supply a warrant. They should ensure the guidance on physical distancing and hygiene is in place for their drivers and staff, and that they are encouraging pupils to travel outside of school hours, if they can. Provide a record of who travel on each vehicle with sufficient detail to support rapid contact tracing if requested by NHS Test and Trace.

As normal, you should engage with your local transport providers to provide routine immunisation programme visits, ensuring these will be delivered in keeping with the guidance for transport providers. Ensure that it is essential for children to attend in person wherever possible.

Where a pupil routinely attends more than one setting on a part time basis, for example, attending a mainstream school and a specialist provision, the receiving school or settings should work through the system of controls, and agree which one is responsible for address any risks identified and allowing them to jointly deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. This will be kept under review to ensure it is still the most appropriate. While some adjustment to arrangements may be required, pupils in the cohort should not be isolated as a solution to the risk of greater contact except when required by specific public health advice.

Equipment

Pupils should not share any frequently used equipment, such as pencils and pens, staff and pupils should wash their hands before and after use.

Classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the bubble. These should be cleaned regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces.

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, ensure:

- clean if it has to be shared 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 used in the delivery of therapies, for example, physiotherapy equipment or sensory equipment. Determine whether this equipment is essential to the delivery of the education provision. If it is, and it is not back into general use. Where cleaning or disinfecting is not possible in practice, resources will have to be either:

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

Outdoor playground equipment should be more frequently cleaned than normal. This should be regularly wiped down handles and surfaces frequently touched and not sharing settings provides.

Pupils should limit the amount of equipment they bring into school each day, including essentials such as:

- lunch boxes
- PE kit and sports kit
- books
- stationery
- mobile phones.

Bags are allowed.

Pupils and teachers can take books and other shared resources home, although unnecessary sharing should be avoided. Similar rules on hand cleaning, cleaning of the resources and rotation should apply to these resources.

Parent pick-up and drop-offs

Pick up and drop off arrangements differ greatly. If those patterns allow, schools should consider staggered times for adjusting start and finish times to keep groups apart as they arrive and leave school.

Staggered start and finish times should not reduce the amount of overall time children spend in school. A staggered start may, for example, include keeping the length of the day the same but combining free periods or break time.

Schools should consider how to communicate this to parents and remind them about the process that has been agreed for drop off and collection, including not to congregate at the school entrance and otherwise coming into the site without an appointment is not allowed.

7. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated

Good ventilation increases the concentration of fresh air in the air, which reduces the number of airborne droplets that remain. It is important when people are within a small particle (aerosol) in the air where someone with the virus has occupied and breathed out.

When your school is in operation, it is important to ensure it is well ventilated and a comfortable teaching environment is maintained.

These can be achieved by a variety of measures.

Mechanical ventilation systems

These should be adjusted to increase the ventilation rate wherever possible and practicable, however, current operation meets current guidance and should be fresh outside air is included.

If possible, systems should be adjusted to full fresh air, if not, then systems should be operated as normal, as long as they are within a single room and recirculate within that room, or are operating in a way that is consistent with the guidance.

If necessary external contractors may also be used (as long as they are working in line with and where able to do so):

- ensure that there is sufficient increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature, consider:
  - opening high level windows in colder weather in preference to low level windows or draughts
  - increasing the ventilation while spaces are unoccupied (for example, between lessons, during lunchtime and after school activities)
  - providing flexibility to allow additional, suitable indoor clothing - for more information see the school uniform section
  - reprogramming ventilation systems to avoid direct draughts

Heating should be used as necessary to ensure comfort levels are maintained alongside good ventilation.

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

Face coverings are not specified in PPE (personal protective equipment). PPE is used in a limited number of settings to protect workers against hazards and risks, such as chemicals, dangerous equipment, and infectious diseases. Face coverings fall into a covering of your face and mouth or your nose and mouth.

Most staff in schools will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work. It is good practice for most routine tasks needs that staff and pupils in PPE, the same PPE should continue to be used.

Staff who are working with children who are only required in a very limited number of systems, for example, when:

- a pupil becomes ill with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, and only then if a 2 metres distance cannot be maintained
- performing personal care or providing emergency CPR

When working with children and young people who cough, spit or vomit but do not have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, any PPE that would be routinely worn, should be used.

The guidance on infection control in education, childcare and social care settings 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 use it

9. Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing, where available

Regular testing helps to identify asymptomatic people to suppress the virus. Schools should promote and encourage testing for:

- primary schools, special schools, alternative provision and maintained nursery schools
- secondary schools and colleges
- specialist settings

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

Staff members, parents and carers will need to:

- be a contact if they test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)
- isolate if:
  - a close contact
  - a close or changes to your scheme of work or tasks
- self isolate immediately and not come to school if:
  - they have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)
  - they live in a household or support a child or bubble developing symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
  - they are required to quarantine having recently visited countries outside the Common Travel Area
  - they have been advised to isolate by NHS Test and trace or the Public Health protection team
  - they have been advised by their employer or close contact with, if they test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test and Trace

Booking a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test contingency supply

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) and should get a test. Staff members, parents and carers will need to be able to book a PCR test. Apply for coronavirus (COVID-19) testing, or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet.

Ensure that staff, parents and carers are involved in education or childcare, have priority access to testing.

All children and young people can be tested if they have symptoms. This includes children under 5, but children under 2 will need to be tested by their parents or carers if using a home testing kit.

Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) tests contingency supply

Separate to the asymptomatic testing regime, all schools were sent an initial supply of PCR tests to use if they have a pupil or member of staff who is a close contact with a confirmed case, or with a pupil or member of staff who develop the coronavirus. You should call the Test and Trace helpline on 119 if this is the case, if they have ordered have not arrived.

Having kept a stockpile you can deliver the tested results for contacts as required. These PCR tests kits are provided to be used in the exceptional circumstances that a school cannot access testing through the local testing sites, or for those requiring testing as part of their risk assessment.

You will need to decide how to prioritise the distribution of your test kits.

These kits can be given directly to:

- staff
- parents collecting a pupil who has developed symptoms at school

These PCR tests kits will also help ensure that symptomatic staff can get a test, if they test negative, they can return to work as soon as they are well and they do not have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Further information on tests for schools and further education providers is available.

The app is available to anyone aged 18 and over to download if they choose. For some young people, participating in some trials (secondary school and twenty-first to form a bubble) one of the app is appropriate.

Parents can order a home test kit for a year 7, and most pupils in year 12 and above will be eligible to use the app as required to test themselves.

Staff members are also able to use the app.

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

11. Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community

Staff or pupils must be taken when someone tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), if someone who uses dedicated transport tests positive, local authorities should work with the transport provider to implement the guidance.

Schools may receive support via the local public health protection team, or, if required by PHE, which can be reached through the 0300 303 8162 or 0300 303 8537 or their out of hours service. Public health teams will be able to advise on the steps to be taken to close contact with the person who has tested positive must be carried out and advised to self-isolate immediately and for at least the next 10 full days coming from the date of the test. Household members of those who are self-isolating should stay at home as individuals in self-isolate if they need to leave their home for exceptional circumstances.

A risk assessment may be undertaken to determine this, but a close contact can be given advice.

- Close in the same household as someone with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)
- You had any of the following types of contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) during the period 48 hours before the person's test was first ill, negative, provided you have been with the case of the positive (C) in the same for a total time and close contacts (or step self isolating):
  - face to face contact for a total of 15 minutes (cumulative in a day) or more
  - conversation within 1 metre
  - sexual contact
  - been within 2 metres for 1 minute or longer without face-to-face contact
  - travelled in a vehicle or public transport within 2 metres of the case or a direct contact or sitting at together over 1 days
  - travelled in the same vehicle or a plane

Without awaiting the confirmatory PCR test, pupils, students and staff and close contacts should continue to self-isolate.

If a case has used public 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
- whether a Perspex screen is in place

The advice service (or PHE local health protection team if escalated) will provide advice on the steps to be taken to close contact with the person who has tested positive. It will depend on a number of pupils and staff in each group, and any other measures that takes place between pupils and staff in different groups (see section 6 of the guidance on 'Ensure that the school is ready for the return of children and young people'). You will need to ensure that pupils in receiving services have their time with each day or day self to keep definitive records in a way that is easily accessible.

Where individuals are self-isolating and are within our definition of vulnerable, it is important that we maintain our support for them and ensure they are kept in social support and check they are able to access education support.

A fantastic letter has been provided for you to send to parents of children asked to self-isolate. It explains why their child has been asked to self-isolate, what they can do while self-isolating with all providers of children that have been asked to self-isolate and advice allows parents who are a low income and unable to work from home to apply to their local authority for a hardship payment of £500 to cover the loss of earnings during self-isolation. They will be able to access an application without providing the reason for self-isolation. You must start the scheme as details of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) others essential to protect others.

Staff members who are essential workers who are sent home do not need to self-isolate unless they are asked to do so by their employer or a local authority. Key worker employers who have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace should follow the public health protection team. In which case they must self-isolate. Only a single member of staff should be in school to ensure the school can remain open and provide support to children who are self-isolating. Staff members who are essential workers who are sent home do not need to self-isolate unless they are asked to do so by their employer or a local authority. Key worker employers who have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace should follow the public health protection team. In which case they must self-isolate. Only a single member of staff should be in school to ensure the school can remain open and provide support to children who are self-isolating.

If the test delivery is delayed, PHE may be eligible for a payment from the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme to be able to claim, you must follow these steps.

- Ensure that you collect all essential close contacts for the person who has tested positive within your establishment and inform these close contacts that they now need to self-isolate.
- Call the service hub on 0300 3743 0713 as soon as you have the English NHS Test and Trace Accounts Coordinators referred by a LTBS and inform them of those who has tested positive.
- 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 the LTBS, you will need to provide the details of the person who has tested positive and will assist in tracing the contacts to ensure the regular NHS Test and Trace system (LTBS).
- 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.
- Following this, individuals who are employed or self-employed can use this number, unable to work from home and losing income as a result may qualify for the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme through their employer.

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

Eligible parents or guardians of children who are required to self-isolate, and who are in education setting cannot where they have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, or who are self-isolating in line with government guidance after a close contact with a positive, unlikely to work from home and need to take time off work to care for children who is self-isolating. Parents and carers do not require an NHS Test and Trace Account ID to apply for the Test and Trace Support Payment. Parents and carers who are self-employed or employed by an employer who is not eligible for the Test and Trace Support Payment or discretionary payment.

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

- Ensure that you collect all essential close contacts for the person who has tested positive within your establishment and inform these close contacts that they now need to self-isolate.
- Call the service hub on 0300 3743 0713 as soon as you have the English NHS Test and Trace Accounts Coordinators referred by a LTBS and inform them of those who has tested positive.
- 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 the LTBS, you will need to provide the details of the person who has tested positive and will assist in tracing the contacts to ensure the regular NHS Test and Trace system (LTBS).
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The scheme is open to eligible parents and carers of children aged 15 and under, and parents of young people aged 16-25 with special educational needs and disabilities. For information on how parents and guardians can claim financial support under the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme.

Test and Trace Support Payments

Some school staff parents and carers 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:

- live on a low income
- be unable to work from home
- be at risk of losing income as a result of self-isolating
- be a parent or carer
- meet the eligibility criteria

Staff identified as close contacts of a positive case will receive an NHS Test and Trace Account ID number (TTC) to be able to apply for a Test and Trace Support Payment or discretionary payment. Parents and carers of self-isolating children should contact their local authority to see if they are eligible for a payment. They will need an NHS Test and Trace Account ID number (TTC) number.

The Department for Health and Social Care has launched the self-isolation service hub (0300 3743 0713). The phone line is open 7 days a week. Staff who are identified as close contacts will be given a TTC number to be able to apply for a Test and Trace Support Payment or be able to be eligible for the Test and Trace Support Payment or discretionary payment.

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

- Ensure that you collect all essential close contacts for the person who has tested positive within your establishment and inform these close contacts that they now need to self-isolate.
- Call the service hub on 0300 3743 0713 as soon as you have the English NHS Test and Trace Accounts Coordinators referred by a LTBS and inform them of those who has tested positive.
- 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 the LTBS, you will need to provide the details of the person who has tested positive and will assist in tracing the contacts to ensure the regular NHS Test and Trace system (LTBS).
- 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.
- Following this, individuals who are employed or self-employed can use this number, unable to work from home and losing income as a result may qualify for the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme through their employer.

Staffing

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 need to contact your local health protection team.

You should call the dedicated advice service who will escalate the issue to your local health protection team if necessary. You may be contacted by your local health protection team. 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 self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure. This could be the class or year bubble, for example.

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 required or be considered in light of all the circumstances and current public health advice.

Admitting children and staff back to the school

The pupil or staff member who tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) can return to school/work after recovering from coronavirus (COVID-19). Those who have been tested 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 cleared. If a child is still coughing or has a runny nose or other symptoms 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 or asking them to undertake a test to prove they are fit to return.

In the vast majority of cases, parents and carers will be in agreement that a pupil with symptoms should not attend school. In the rare cases where a parent or carer insists that a pupil or carer should come to a school/attending your school, you can take the decision to refuse the pupil in your reasonable judgement. It is necessary to protect your staff and other children and students attending the school. In this case, you would need to be carefully considered in light of all the circumstances and current public health advice.

Asymptomatic testing

Coronavirus (COVID-19) asymptomatic testing in schools

Rapid testing using Lateral Flow Devices (LFDs) will support the return to face-to-face education by helping to identify people who are infectious but do not have any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms. For secondary school staff and pupils, we are providing 2 tests per week, spaced 3 days apart, to be taken at home. Only lateral flow devices and home test kits approved by approved by the MHRA for use in home test kits will be available for all staff.

Testing remains voluntary but strongly encouraged.

Secondary school testing on the ground: an Asymptomatic Testing Site (ATS)

Secondary schools are asked to offer pupils testing on site at an on-site ATS for their school.

Schools should retain a small on-site ATS on-site so they can offer testing to pupils who are unable or unwilling to test themselves at home.

Home testing

Both pupils and staff in secondary schools will be supplied with LFD test kits to self-swab and test themselves twice a week at home. Staff and pupils must report their results to NHS Test and Trace. Those who test positive must immediately self-isolate in line with the guidance in the home test kit. Staff and pupils should also share their result, whether positive or negative, with their school to help with control measures.

Pupils aged 18 and over should self-test and report their result, and self-isolate if positive. Adolescents aged 13 to 17 should self-test and report with adult supervision. The adult should also self-isolate if the result is positive. Children aged 12 attending a secondary school should be tested by an adult.

Confirmatory PCR tests

Staff or pupils with a positive LFD test result must self-isolate in line with the stay-at-home guidance. They should also book a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction test (PCR) test to confirm the result. If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the earlier LFD test and the pupil can return to school if they are well. We will review this approach in light of emerging school and wider evidence.

Primary schools

Staff in primary schools will continue to test with LFDs twice a week at home, as per the guidance for secondary schools and staff in mainstream schools.

Primary age pupils will not be tested with LFDs. Public Health England have advised there are currently limited public health benefits attached to testing primary pupils with lateral flow devices. Primary age pupils may find the LFD testing process unpleasant and difficult to self-swab. We will review this approach in light of emerging evidence.

All primary school pupils were expected to return to school on 8 March.

Specialist settings

We recognise specialist settings will have additional considerations to take into account when determining asymptomatic testing and additional guidance will be published and circulated. We recognise that self-swabbing may cause significant distress to some children and young people. For SEND pupils, the decision to testing children should be taken with their parents, who know their children and can make an informed decision, and should be supported by the appropriate person.

Symptomatic testing

The asymptomatic testing programmes will not replace the current testing policy for those with symptoms. Anyone with symptoms (even if they recently had a negative LFD test result) should still book a coronavirus (COVID-19) test and self-isolate immediately.

Those with symptoms are also expected to order a test online or a visit test site to take a PCR test (polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test) to find out if they have COVID-19.

It remains imperative that the system of controls continues to be rigorously applied to minimise the risk of transmission. Testing is an additional measure, in addition to supporting students to maintain the continuity of education through the pandemic.

Attendance

School attendance became mandatory again for all pupils from 8 March.

The usual rules on school attendance apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure their child's regular attendance at school (where the child is a registered pupil at school) and the sanctions they are liable to if they do not
- the ability to issue penalties, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' local enforcement plans

As usual, you are responsible for monitoring attendance, following up absence and reporting children missing education to the local authority.

You should not plan for the future as there is no requirement to reduce occupancy in schools. Instead, everyone must follow the system of controls.

Guidance on year 11 to 13 exam cancellation and provision for the 2021 summer term can be found on page 9.

Self-isolation and shielding

A small number of pupils will still be able to attend in line with public health advice to self-isolate because they:

- have symptoms or have had a positive test result
- live with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive and are a household contact
- are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)

Shielding advice has been paused nationally from 31 March. All EXCO leaders should attend their school premises in one of the very small number of pupils under shielding arrangements, or other specialist sites and have been advised by their GP or clinician not to attend. Pupils who are shielding will be contacted by their school or college and supported to remain at home.

As normal, you should encourage parents to request unnecessary medical evidence such as doctors' letters that GP when their child is absent from school or college. Where this is already set out in the clinical directions guidance, but it unfortunately remains the case that some families are being asked for this unnecessary paperwork. Evidence is required in cases of the form of prescribed medication, hospital appointments or other medical interventions. Where a pupil is absent for a medical reason, input from GPs should only be sought where there are complex health needs or persistent absence issues.

You are required to provide remote education to pupils who are unable to attend school because of COVID-19 in line with the guidance. Ofsted will be monitoring this provision in its inspections. DfE is also prioritising provided free of charge, access to temporary continuity direction. You should keep a record of this activity but do not need to record it in the attendance register.

You should offer pastoral support to pupils who are:

- self-isolating
- shielding

Schools are also not able to attend school, as they are following clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), the absence will not be penalised.

Recording attendance

You should record attendance in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) for all pupils.

You should use codes E (if a child is self-isolating or quarantining because of coronavirus (COVID-19) in accordance with relevant legislation or guidance published by PHE or the DfE) or PN (parent-nominated).

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

Pupils and families who are anxious about attending school

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 (CEV) or clinically vulnerable
- live in a household where the possible increased risks from coronavirus (COVID-19) such as those who have certain conditions such as obesity and diabetes

Discuss any concerns with parents and provide reassurance about the measures you are putting in place to reduce risks including the system of controls and testing. Discuss with individual parents other specific accommodations that can be put in place to support the pupil on a regular basis and encourage their return to school attendance.

Remind parents that pupils of compulsory school age must be in school unless a statutory reason applies.

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

Encouraging regular school attendance

You should continue to communicate clearly and consistently the expectations around school attendance for families and any other professionals who work with the family where appropriate.

You should also 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 pay particular attention to:

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

To support families who are ill and additional help to secure pupils' regular attendance, you should consider how you can use your pastoral support staff, including your family liaison officers and support services, effectively to support school attendance.

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

Vulnerable children

Where pupils who are self-isolating are within our definition of vulnerable, it is important that you will systems in place to keep in contact with them.

When a vulnerable pupil is required 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 have procedures in place for:

- check if a vulnerable pupil is able to access remote education support
- ensure the pupil is able to access the curriculum
- regularly check if they are accessing remote education

Alternative provision

All pupils in alternative provision (AP) settings should attend school full-time, including:

- pupils attend arts
- GP academies
- AP free schools
- independent AP schools

Where they are affected by the remote education temporary continuity direction, AP providers should provide a full-time offer of education, including a broad and balanced curriculum and continue to be governed by guidance on best practice for safeguarding (COVID-19).

AP settings must comply with health and safety law which requires employers to assess risks and put in place proportionate control measures.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school, AP settings should take steps to minimise social contact and mixing as far as is practicable.

All AP settings, especially larger AP schools, should consider whether pupils can be placed into smaller groups and if they can ensure a broad and balanced curriculum.

Due to the smaller size of many AP settings, and because AP settings are not typically organised by year groups, AP settings may wish to adopt whole school bubbles as part of their system of controls.

School workforce

School leaders are best placed to determine the workforce that is required in schools. Staff should follow the updated advice set out in this section of the guidance. Staff who are CEV

Some roles, such as some administrative roles, may be conducive to home working, and you should consider what is feasible and appropriate.

All staff must follow the system of controls to minimise the risks of transmission. Following the system of controls will reduce the risks to all staff members.

You must expect to staff the measures you are putting in place to reduce risks and should discuss any concerns individually with staff.

Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable

Shielding advice has been paused nationally from 31 March. CEV individuals are no longer advised to shield but should continue to follow the rules in place for everyone under the current national restrictions. Staff who is Schools who are CEV will be advised to attend their place of work as usual. However, Staff who cannot work from home should attend their workplace.

CEV individuals (over 18) have been prioritised for vaccination in phase 1 before the general population and in line with the priority ordering set by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation.

Staff who are clinically vulnerable (CV)

CV staff can continue to attend work. While in school they must follow the system of controls to minimise the risks of transmission.

Staff who are with those who are CV should attend the workplace but should ensure they maintain good prevention practice in the workplace and at home.

Pregnancy

You will need to follow the specific guidance for pregnant employees. Because pregnant women are CEV for other reasons, pregnancy by itself does not place them in additional conditions that mean they are considered CEV, where the advice for clinically extremely vulnerable staff will apply.

COVID-19 vaccination: a guide for women of childbearing age, pregnant or breastfeeding, including their families and carers

Your workplace risk assessment should already consider any risks to female employees of childbearing age and, in particular, risks to new and expectant mothers. You should review this assessment and, if necessary, breastfeeding, to two given within the last 6 months, or who are breastfeeding, and take any further action as required to comply with the regulations. Your focus should be on the additional action to follow, relevant to control the risks.

As part of your risk assessment, you should consider whether adjusting duties and/or facilitating home working may be appropriate to mitigate risks.

You should be aware that pregnant women from 28 weeks' gestation, or with underlying health conditions, are at a higher risk from coronavirus (COVID-19) and women who have if they catch coronavirus (COVID-19). This is also the case for pregnant women with underlying health conditions that place them at greater risk of severe illness if they contract coronavirus (COVID-19).

We recommend that schools follow the advice provided for pregnant pupils, in line with their wider health and safety obligations.

Read more guidance on and advice on coronavirus (COVID-19) and pregnancy from the Royal College of Gynaecologists.

Staff who may otherwise be at increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19)

Current evidence shows that a range of factors mean that some people may be at comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19).

Shielding advice has been paused nationally from 31 March. CEV individuals are no longer advised to shield but should continue to follow the rules in place for everyone under the current national restrictions. Staff in schools who are CEV will be advised to attend their place of work as usual. However, Staff who cannot work from home should attend their workplace.

For others who feel they may be at increased risk, where it is not possible to work from home, you should discuss your concerns with your line manager in the first instance, in confidence in future. You should follow your staff risk assessment and discuss management for your workplace, recognising that staff may have a variety of baseline risks. Your focus should be on the additional action to follow, relevant to control the increased risks they face.

There is further information available on who is at higher risk from coronavirus.

Staff who are Both those who may have comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19) can attend the workplace where it is not possible to work from home.

Employers' health and safety obligations

Employers have a legal obligation to protect their employees, and others, including children, from harm. Employers should continue to assess and update health and safety risks in the usual way, especially in the light of any changing circumstances.

Following the system of controls will help you:

- mitigate the risks of coronavirus (COVID-19) to pupils and staff
- meet your legal duties to protect employees and others from harm

The Health and Safety Executive published guidance on first aid during coronavirus (COVID-19) which:

- supports day-to-day assessments
- provides guidance for first aiders

Equalities duties

You must continue to meet your equalities duties. See the Equality Act 2010 advice for schools for more information.

Supporting staff

All employers have a duty of care to their employees, and this extends to their mental health.

Make sure you have explained to all staff the measures you are putting in place. Discuss with all staff any changes to your system of these measures.

Because some staff may be particularly anxious about returning, you may need extra systems in place to support staff wellbeing. Read about the:

- extra mental health support for pupils and teachers
- Wellbeing for Education return programme

Education Support provides a free helpline for school staff and targeted support for mental health and wellbeing.

Staff deployment

Schools have full control over the way in which you deploy your staff and use existing teaching and support staff from Monday.

You should ensure that you continue to have appropriate support in place for pupils with SEND. Any redeployment of staff should not be made at the expense of supporting pupils with SEND.

You should discuss and agree any proposed changes in role or responsibility with members of staff, ensuring staff members have the appropriate skills, expertise and training to fulfill the new role. Staff should be given sufficient notice of the change, engaging in negotiation and support as appropriate. Employers should seek advice for further information.

Schools should bear in mind that for any interventions or care for pupils with complex needs:

- safe ratios are met
- specific training is undertaken

You should be satisfied that staff have the appropriate skills, expertise and experience to carry out the work, and discuss and agree any proposed changes in role or responsibility with the staff.

Staff who are not teachers may be deployed to lead groups or cover lessons, under the direction and supervision of a qualified or experienced teacher. This is consistent with the existing school workforce.

- Education (Specified Work) (England) Regulations 2012 for mainstream schools and non-maintained special schools
- the Teachers provided under the funding agreement for academies

If having pursued all the immediate options available, you still have concerns about staffing capacity, you must report this to your local authority or trust partner.

Further support on staff deployment is available including:

- a workload reduction toolkit to help review and minimise unnecessary burdens
- the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) guidance on making the best use of teaching assistants

Supply staff and other temporary or agency staff

You can continue to use supply teachers and staff. We recommend using the Teaching Staff Supply Framework to source supply teachers and other staff. Use of other lists of preferred suppliers, who must provide transparent charging rates. You can get support by emailing supplyteachers@governmentsupplyservice.com and your school's requirements and current plans.

Supply staff and other temporary or peripatetic staff can move between schools. Such staff should follow the school's system of controls, including any requirements for hand control the system of controls. They should also have access to information on the safety arrangements and be provided with this as soon as possible after the deployment.

This may apply to other temporary staff and volunteers working in schools such as:

- support staff working on a supply basis
- sandpatch staff such as music tutors and sports coaches
- those working in before and after school clubs

Other support

Volunteers may be used to support the work of the school, as would usually be the case. It is important that they are prepared to support and given appropriate roles.

Where you are using volunteers, continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process you would usually follow before deploying volunteers. In most cases, circumstances should underlie that volunteers will be DBS checked and unsupervised allowed to work in regulated activity.

Placing of volunteers across groups should be kept to a minimum, and they should adhere to the system of controls in place.

Recruitment

You can continue recruiting members of staff. The Teaching Regulation service can help with recruitment of teachers and provide advice on recruitment processes.

Schools should consider a flexible approach to interviews, with alternative options to face-to-face interviews offered where possible. The DfE learning blog provides:

- information on the use of videoconferencing and other resources
- advice that can be sent to candidates on how to prepare for remote interviews

Where face-to-face meetings are necessary, you should ensure the system of control measures in advance and make it clear to candidates that they must follow the system of control measures. Ensure that the interview process is conducted in a way that supports the hiring process and ensures safety is managed safely.

When recruiting, continue to adhere to the legal requirements as pre-appointment checks as set out in part 3 of Keeping children safe in education.

Initial teacher training (ITT) providers have worked flexibly to ensure this year's newly qualified teachers (NQTs) can complete their training and have their QTS recommended. We supported the initial teacher training (ITT) providers to place trainees. Schools in the early mid-region (Bradford, Doncaster, Greater Manchester and the North East) and the Teaching Schools Council (TSC) provided:

- support to schools and providers
- a dedicated mailbox
- a dedicated telephone line
- a dedicated Twitter account
- a dedicated blog

Where trainees have been placed in a school, they should follow the system of control measures in advance and make it clear to candidates that they must follow the system of control measures. Ensure that the interview process is conducted in a way that supports the hiring process and ensures safety is managed safely.

When recruiting, continue to adhere to the legal requirements as pre-appointment checks as set out in part 3 of Keeping children safe in education.

Deployment of IT trainers and school engagement

IT trainers can continue to go into their host school or placement.

Trainers who go to their placement should be offered coronavirus (COVID-19) testing in line with the DfE's guidance on testing. They are expected to follow all control measures put in place by host schools.

Performance management and appraisal

Personnel schools must continue to follow the school teachers' pay and conditions document. We pay progression for teachers must be linked to performance management.

You should consider adapting performance management and appraisal arrangements to take account of the current circumstances, particularly where these have had or impact on the ability of teachers to meet fully their objectives.

Teachers must not be penalised during the appraisal process or any subsequent pay decisions for not achieving their objectives if the circumstances prevent them from doing so.

You should also not suspend or postpone performance management for staff who are in accordance with the employer's contract of employment. We do not specify or terms and conditions of employment staff.

Staff taking leave

Staff who want to or are required to work in school during term time. Discuss leave arrangements with staff before workforce planning taking into account their individual contractual arrangements.

There is a risk that some staff may be granted or is legally permitted mission, their return and they may need to quarantine on their return.

Guidance on how to self-isolate when you travel is available.

Transport

Dedicated school transport, including statutory provision

Pupils on dedicated school services do not mix with the general public on those services. They tend to mix with the number of people with which they share this contact.

Local authorities are not required to uniformly apply the social distancing guidelines which are in place for public transport on dedicated school transport. However, social distancing should be applied wherever practicable.

Dedicated school services can take different forms and may include:

- coaches, minibuses or taxis operating on the same routes each day
- minibuses
- services which are used by different pupils on different days
- services for pupils with SEND

The precise arrangement taken will need to reflect the range of measures that are reasonable in the different circumstances.

Do speak to the local authority or transport provider so that you understand the measures they are taking to ensure that the service is safe and that adequate risk assessment. It is important, wherever it is possible, that:

- social distancing is maintained within vehicles
- pupils either sit with their 'bubble' on a school transport, or with the same consistent group of children each day
- pupils are kept separate from boarding transport and again on disembarking
- additional cleaning takes place
- improved opening and boarding is put in place
- pupils are kept in their bubble when they are at destination, is maintained, particularly through lunchtime and on visiting sites

Pupils should not be asked to use school transport if they, or a member of their household, has had a positive test for coronavirus (COVID-19) and are isolating.

As described in the system of controls and in accordance with advice from PHE, children and young people aged 11 and over must wear a face covering when travelling on dedicated transport to secondary schools. A face covering is a covering of any type that covers the nose and mouth. It is not a medical mask or respirator. Pupils should wear a face covering when travelling on school transport.

Do support local authorities in promoting the use of face coverings on school transport and help them to resolve any issues of non-compliance where appropriate.

Further guidance on face coverings and transport to school and other places of education is available.

In some circumstances, local authorities are providing additional dedicated school services to supplement the capacity of the school transport. Additional funding for school transport is available for this purpose.

Wider public transport

In many areas, pupils are highly reliance on use of the wider public transport system, including buses, trains, trams and ferries, to travel to school or college. For some of them, in by public, particularly in urban areas, should be kept to an absolute minimum.

If possible, consider staggered start times to enable more pupils to travel to school outside of peak hours.

Families using public transport should refer to the safer travel guidance for passengers.

Encourage parents, staff and pupils to walk or cycle to school where possible.

Pupils travelling from abroad

Where pupils have their abroad to travel a regular basis, the DfE has published a guidance on travel to England from other countries.

Where pupils have travelled to England from a country from which travel is permitted, they are required to quarantine in their own accommodation for 10 days. The school should be aware of the requirement for these pupils to self-isolate for 10 days and put in place suitable arrangements for their self-isolation which will be kept under review by local authorities. You may also want to consider whether the test to release scheme is appropriate for these pupils.

School meals

We expect kitchens to be fully open and normal legal requirements will apply to the provision of food for pupils. Independently run kitchens should follow the standards for school food in England. This includes those eligible for:

- benefits-related free school meals
- universal infant free school meals

Schools kitchens should follow the guidance for food businesses on coronavirus (COVID-19).

You should also continue to provide free school meal support to pupils who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals and to make arrangements for the provision of school meals for those who are entitled to them.

Provide information on providing school meals during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak is available.

Remote education

From 8 March, attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age. Schools offered the remote education temporary continuity direction are still required to provide remote education to pupils who are not in school, but are not permitted to operate the US government guidance or legislation around coronavirus (COVID-19). This includes, for example, where such guidance means that a pupil who is not in school because they are self-isolating but not ill, or because vulnerable children are to shield. All such pupils not physically attending school have access to remote education as soon as reasonably practicable, which may be the next school day.

Independent Schools (not including academies) are not all covered by the remote education temporary continuity direction. However, they are still expected to meet the requirement to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, including high quality education, all of the education requirements set out in part 1 of the Independent School Standards.

The remote education provided should be equivalent in length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school and should include recorded or live direct teaching time, as well as time for pupils to complete tasks and assignments independently. As a minimum, we expect:

- Key Stage 1: 3 hours a day on average across the cohort, with zero for younger children
- Key Stage 2: 4 hours a day
- Key Stages 3 and 4: 5 hours a day

Online video lessons do not necessarily need to be recorded by teaching staff at the school where the pupil currently lessons. For example, can be provided in line of school last video content.

In developing remote education, we expect you to:

- teach a planned and well-sequenced curriculum so that knowledge and skills are built incrementally, with good level of clarity about what is intended to be taught and practised in each subject so that pupils can progress through the school's curriculum
- select a digital platform for remote education provision that will work consistently across the school in order to deliver interaction, assessment and feedback and make sure staff are trained and confident in its use. We have published a guide to help platform in place. Many services have support at hand with technical issues
- welcome learners to digital access for pupils by:
  - providing devices, including laptops, subsidised by a user agreement or contract
  - providing printed resources, such as textbooks and workbooks, for pupils to work learning, supplemented with other forms of communication to keep pupils on learning, including feedback on work
  - have systems for checking, daily, whether pupils are engaged in their work, and work with families to rapidly identify effective solutions where engagement is a challenge
  - ensure that vulnerable children and young people receive a daily offer of education, including those that provision meets expectations for remote education

When teaching pupils remotely we expect schools to:

- will meaningful and ambitious work each day in an appropriate range of subjects
- consider how to embed time remote education within what we already know about effective teaching in the classroom, for example, by:
  - providing frequent, clear explanations of new content, delivered by a teacher or through high-quality curriculum resources
  - assessing understanding and progress, including questioning, eliciting and reflective discussion
  - providing scaffolded practice and opportunities to apply new knowledge
  - enabling pupils to receive timely and constructive feedback on their learning, using digitally facilitated or online assessment where appropriate
  - using assessment to ensure teaching is responsive to pupils' needs and addresses any misconceptions that may emerge
  - providing an overview on how they will assess progress on internal schools and nationally

We expect you to consider these expectations in relation to the pupils' age, stage of development or special educational needs, for example where this will require significant demands on parents' help or support.

Younger children in Key Stage 1 or reception children require high levels of parental support and guidance. Pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND) will also prioritise a particular challenge for this age group. We, therefore, do not expect that widely digital means will be used to teach these pupils remotely.

We also recognise that some pupils with SEND may not be able to access remote education without adjustments or additional support. We expect schools to be ambitious for all children, including those with SEND.

Our set-help with remote education provides information for teachers and school leaders on how to teach pupils remotely, including how to deliver high-quality remote education provision. We support school leaders in implementing self assessing their current remote education offer.

Plan-tech advice and training is available through the EdTech Demonstrator programme.

Find guidance on how schools can order devices and access support to get set up with a digital platform at set-up help with technology.

Delivering remote education safely

Keeping children safe online is essential. The statutory guidance keeping children safe in education sets out the requirements for online safety in schools and colleges and public online. The guidance includes a collection of resources which includes support for:

- safe remote education
- virtual lessons
- live streaming
- information to share with parents and carers to support them in keeping their children safe online

Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19) provides guidance to help schools and leaders support remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19).

For schools delivering their remote education through live and recorded lessons, the following support is available through third-party resources:

- information portals to help schools, parents and staff deliver safe remote education
- Safe Remote Learning Foundation based in SWGfL
- Safe Online Learning Consortium, a collaboration by SWGfL
- the remote lessons - SGAHS, article answering questions about use of the Professional Online Safety Helpline addressing key concerns from teachers
- Google Hangouts for Education, Google's free online video conference service is right for you and using video conferencing services securely.

Special educational needs

Pupils with SEND are not able to be a school their teachers are best placed to know how the pupil's needs can be most effectively met to ensure they continue to make progress.

The requirement for schools within the SEN Code of Practice and Parts 3 to 5 of the Children and Families Act 2014 to use their best endeavours to secure the special educational provision called for by the pupils' special educational needs remains in place.

You should work collaboratively with families and put in place reasonable adjustments to the way in which the SEN Code of Practice is applied to ensure that the best educational decisions are have provision can be delivered should the information they have in exceptional circumstances including the types of services that can be provided.

You can access further information on supporting pupils and students with SEND to access remote education.

Estates

There is no need for class sizes to be adjusted from the usual size.

Ventilation systems

Where mechanical ventilation systems exist, you should ensure they are maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and that they are operated at the normal air circumstances and particularly during this period.

Refer to the system of controls for guidance on keeping occupied spaces well-ventilated.

Fire safety

Fire safety management plans should be reviewed and checked in line with operational changes to ensure they remain:

- all fire doors are operational at all times
- ensure that ignition sources and emergency lights have been tested and are fully operational
- Carry out emergency drills as normal (following social distancing as appropriate). You should make adjustments to your fire drill to allow for social distancing as appropriate. Refer to reopening the safety management of buildings.

Opening after reduced occupancy

It is important that you undertake all the usual building checks to make the school safe. Plumbing must been cooled or had received occupancy, water system stagnation or occur due to lack of use. This can increase the risk of pneumonic disease.

Advice on safety and plumbing buildings can be found in the Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers' guidance on reopening hot buildings.

Educational visits

DfE recognises the significant benefits of educational visits for children in educational establishments and the wider benefits to communities and society. We know that children to enjoy visits in line with the government's roadmap. The roadmap is dated, not dates. The government will only move from one step to the next when it is safe to do so and not before.

For that reason, all dates mentioned are subject to change. The roadmap has been updated to reflect the Prime Minister's announcement regarding step 2. Advice will continue to be updated in line with the roadmap.

Educational day visits

In line with the roadmap, schools can resume educational day visits from 12 April.

Any educational day visits must be conducted in line with relevant coronavirus (COVID-19) secure guidance and risk assessments. Pupils should be kept in small groups, such as keeping children within their consistent groups and the COVID-secure measures in place at the destination.

Schools should undertake full and meaningful risk assessments in relation to all educational visits, including those in the United Kingdom. As part of these risk assessment, schools will need to consider what control measures need to be used and follow wider advice on children and outdoor venues. Schools should consult the health and safety guidance on educational visits when considering visits.

Domestic residential educational visits

In line with the roadmap, we also expect domestic residential educational visits until at least step 3, no earlier than 17 May.

The roadmap is driven by data not dates. The approach to domestic residential visits is dependant on the roadmap and is subject to change.

Existing bookings

Should step 3 commence as planned, you may undertake domestic residential education visits, that are already booked, no earlier than 17 May.

Any domestic residential educational visits must be conducted in line with relevant coronavirus (COVID-19) secure guidance and requirements in place at the time.

New bookings

Schools may begin planning for new domestic residential educational visits to take place from step 3 onwards as planned. Any new visits will be subject to change or cancellation if they.

Schools are advised not to enter into any new financial or contractual commitments at this stage. This advice will remain under review and updated at the earliest opportunity.

Any new domestic residential educational visits must be conducted in line with relevant coronavirus (COVID-19) secure guidance and requirements in place at that time.

We are working with Public Health England and the sector on what coronavirus (COVID-19) secure residential visits will look like at step 3, and further advice will be provided.

International visits

The Global Travel Taskforce has been commissioned to set out how to facilitate a return to international travel as soon as possible while managing the risk from imported coronavirus (COVID-19) cases. From 17 April 2021. This advice will be updated following the publication of the report.

Credit notes

Any school holding EU- or ABTA-refund credit notes may use these credit notes to reboot educational or international visits.

Indemnity

We recognise the gap created by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in the commercial insurance market leading to the coronavirus (COVID-19) based cancellation insurance.

We are working with the Department's Treasury to explore the possibility of addressing that gap and putting in place a coronavirus (COVID-19) restricted indemnity that will:

- give schools cover against coronavirus (COVID-19) based cancellations in the future
- allow schools to reuse credit notes with confidence

Those details will be provided as soon as they are available.

School uniform

We would encourage all schools to maintain their usual uniform policies. Uniform can play a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of a school and setting an appropriate tone.

Uniforms do not need to be cleaned:

- more often than usual
- using different methods

Think about how you will manage pupil non-compliance. Taking a mindful and compassionate approach to enforcing uniform and have difficulty obtaining uniform or are experiencing financial pressures.

Increased washing may make school bookings cooler than usual over the winter months. Consider allowing pupils to wear additional items of clothing in addition to the school's current uniform. Where this occurs, no extra financial pressure should be placed on parents.

Wraparound provision and extra-curricular activity

You should be working to resume all pre-school and after-school educational activities and services, including those that are provided by external providers, to provide support to parents to work, attend education and access medical care, and as part of pupil's wider education and training. We will amend the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 to remove the restriction of this. Wraparound provision will be subject to coronavirus (COVID-19) secure arrangements.

You should advise parents that where they are accessing this provision for their children, they must only do so if they are one of the following reasons:

- where the provision is taking place outdoors - all children may access outdoor provision in line with current restrictions
- their children are eligible for free school meals or are attending vulnerable part of the holiday activities and food programme
- their children are offered a place at the school's educational activities (including catch-up provision)
- the provision is for a vulnerable child or young person
- the provision is for a child of a key worker or a child who is supported qualification or meet the only requirements of an education provision
- the use of the provision is necessary necessary to support them to:
  - work
  - seek work
  - receive education or training
  - attend a medical appointment
  - address a medical need
  - attend a support group

In line with the government roadmap, from 12 April parents may access wraparound provision for any reason provided, without any restrictions on the reasons for which they may attend.

You should continue to work closely with any external wraparound providers which your pupils may use to minimise disruption to their education. This can be achieved by such ways such as trying to keep children in the same school bus bubble or school transport, where possible.

Encourage providers to make sure that they are following the guidance in the same bubble as they are in during the school day, providers should try to keep them in consistent groups of no more than 15 children and at least one staff member.

Activities taking place outdoors can happen in groups of any number. This is because the transmission risk is lower outdoors.

The guidance for providers who are providing activities, holiday clubs, after school clubs, breakfast clubs and childcare provision for children. Note that this includes extra-curricular provision.

Where parents are using external childcare providers or out of school extra-curricular activities for their children, you should also:

- advise them to limit their use of multiple out-of-school setting providers, and to only use one provider at a time where possible, to limit their contacts
- encourage them to discuss with providers how put in place their own arrangements
- send them the link to the guidance for parents and carers

If you hold your premises for any commercial wraparound childcare providers, such as after-school or holiday clubs, make sure these organisations have:

- considered the relevant government guidance for their sector
- put in place protective measures

Curriculum

You should ensure that all pupils - particularly disadvantaged, SEND and vulnerable pupils - are given the support they need to make good progress.

The key principles that underpin our advice on curriculum planning are as follows:

- education is not optional - all pupils receive a high-quality education that prepares them for the next stage in their education and training and is broad and balanced so they need to succeed in life
- the curriculum remains broad and ambitious - all pupils continue to study a wide range of subjects, maintaining their choices for further study and employment

Key curriculum expectations

Returning to face-to-face provision, you should meet the following key curriculum expectations:

Teach an ambitious and broad curriculum to all subjects

Pupils should be taught a broad and balanced curriculum, underpinning the most significant areas of subject knowledge.

The key principles that underpin our advice on curriculum planning are as follows:

- education is not optional - all pupils receive a high-quality education that prepares them for the next stage in their education and training and is broad and balanced so they need to succeed in life
- the curriculum remains broad and ambitious - all pupils continue to study a wide range of subjects, maintaining their choices for further study and employment

You should ensure that curriculum planning is informed both by an assessment of pupils' starting points and by the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils need to progress in the subject concerned. In addition, you should consider the need for modifications to your curriculum and should make effective use of regular formative assessment while avoiding the introduction of unnecessary bureaucratic burdens.

You can use existing flexibilities to create time to cover the most important content in which pupils are not present.

You may consider it appropriate to suspend some subjects for some pupils in order to focus on others.

Up to and including Year 6, prioritisation within subjects of the most important components for progression is likely to be more effective than removing subjects, which may deprive pupils of the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed later.

If you choose to suspend some subjects for some pupils (where the subject is not one required by statutory requirements), you should ensure that pupils do not lose elements of these pupils and this should be subject to discussion with parents.

Early years foundation stage (EYFS) to Key Stage 3

Pupils in Reception should continue with a blend of EYFS and Reception curriculum, where coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions prevent settings delivering the EYFS in full.

You may consider focusing more on the prime areas of learning (EYFS), including communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, and physical development, and on the specific areas of literacy and mathematics, as set out due to coronavirus (COVID-19). For pupils in Reception, teachers should also assess children's learning and development against the early learning goals, to ensure children's acquisition of phonic knowledge and extending their vocabulary.

For Reception, consider how all groups of children can be given equal opportunities for outdoor education.

Key Stages 1 and 2

Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2, you are expected to prioritise identifying pupils and to ensure that they are taught the essential knowledge and skills in English and mathematics, setting and mathematics, identifying opportunities across the curriculum on they read widely, and developing their knowledge and vocabulary.

You should ensure your curriculum offer remains broad, so that the majority of pupils are taught a full range of subjects over the year, including:

- science
- languages
- humanities
- music and the arts
- physical education and sport
- religious education
- RE (Key Stage 2 in Wales)
- citizenship

Key Stage 3

Pupils in Key Stage 3, you are expected to consider whether any modification to your curriculum offer is needed to address the most significant gaps in English and mathematics.

You should ensure the curriculum remains broad from year 7 to year 9 so that the majority of pupils are taught a full range of subjects over the year, including:

- science
- languages
- humanities
- music and the arts
- physical education and sport
- religious education
- citizenship

Key Stages 4 and 5

The majority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 are expected to continue to study mandatory non-examination subjects (the RE, alongside their examination (teacher assessment) subjects. This will support them to meet their preferred route to further study.

Pupils in years 12 and 13 are more likely to undertake with-school study, but may be expected to undertake independent study, supported by their teachers, to make up for lost teaching time. Independent study, including independent research and reading, is an

Guidance on year 11 to 13 exam contingent attendance and provision for the 2021 summer term can be found in annex B.

Relationships, sex and health education (RSHE)

Schools are required to provide new relationships, sex and health education to all secondary pupils in the academic year 2020 to 2021, and to provide new relationships and health education to all primary age pupils.

You are also required to be able to undertake relationships and sex education (RSE) online and to consult parents on this. You must engage with parents on the school's RSE policy. You can do this online and do not necessarily need to do it in person.

You may choose to focus this year's RSHE teaching on the immediate needs of your pupils, such as, for instance, introducing a more comprehensive RSE programme in September 2021.

You should prioritise RSHE content based on the needs of your pupils, with particular attention to the importance of positive relationships, as well as mental and physical health.

Music, dance and drama in school

You should continue teaching music, dance and drama as part of your school curriculum, especially as this builds pupils' confidence and supports their wellbeing. Pupils should be able to participate in performances and exhibitions, and to develop their knowledge and skills in music, dance and drama during the year.

Singing, wind and brass instrument playing can be undertaken in line with this and other guidance, including guidance from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) on working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19) in the performing arts.

Schools should also be able to provide pupils with opportunities to participate in Arts Council England's Arts Council England's Creative Learning Time programme. Taking part in contact details for local hubs, is available at music education hubs published by the Arts Council England.

Schools that offer specialist, elite provision in music, dance and drama should also continue to provide this in line with DCMS guidance for the performing arts. Specialist provision delivered by further education (FE) providers in higher education (HE) providers should consider the bespoke FE guidance for these sectors.

Minimising contact between individuals

The overarching objective should be to reduce the number of contacts amongst pupils, teachers and other staff, and to minimise the number of people they mix with, in line with wider guidance. This can be achieved through meaning groups separate from one another and through maintaining social distance between individuals. These are not alternative options, but should be considered together, in the context of the age and maturity of the age of pupils, the nature of the building, and the flexibility to operate in ways that separate from each other while offering a broad curriculum.

If staff need to move between classes and year groups, they should try and keep their distance from pupils and other staff as much as they can, ideally 2 metres from other people.

You should take particular care when music, dance and drama lessons to observe social distancing where possible. This may limit group activity in these subjects in terms of numbers of people, the use of musical instruments and equipment, and the use of shared teachers pupils in dance and dance.

Additionally, you should keep any background or accompanying music to levels which do not encourage loud singing or conversation to ease their exposure. Use of microphones to reduce the need for shouting or prolonged periods of loud speaking should be kept to a minimum. Performances, if they are needed, should be in accordance with current government guidance.

Performances

You should not host any performances with an audience. You may wish to consider alternatives such as live streaming and recording performances, subject to the usual safeguarding considerations and parental permission.

Singing, and playing wind and brass instruments in groups

Singing, wind and brass playing should not take place in larger groups such as choirs and ensembles, or assemblies unless significant space, natural airflow and strict social distancing can be maintained.

When planning these activities, you should consider additional safety and hygiene measures. There is some evidence that additional risk can both from aerosol transmission and droplet spread, and from contact transmission, from shared surfaces and contact spaces. This is particularly evident for singing and playing brass. Take appropriate safety mitigation and consideration, singing, wind and brass teaching can take place. The government has published guidance on safer singing.

Playing instruments

Playing instruments and singing in groups should take place outdoors whenever possible. If indoors, consider limiting the numbers in relation to the space.

Playing instruments

If indoors, use a room with as much space as possible, for example, large rooms, rooms with high ceilings are needed to enable dilution of aerosol transmission.

If playing indoors, limit the numbers to account for ventilation of the space and the ability to maintain 2 metres. Ventilation is a key consideration. Further advice can be found in Health and Safety Executive guidance on ventilation and working in spaces the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Social distancing

In the smaller groups where these activities can take place, schools should observe social distancing between participants, and between participants and others present, in line with the rest of the school, in combination, other measures, as appropriate. Current guidance is that the activity is less further forward and without mitigations, 2 metres is appropriate. Pupils should use safety eyewear particularly if unable to keep distancing.

Seating positions

Pupils should be seated back to back, or side to side when playing or singing (rather than face to face) whenever possible. Front-facing and brass players so that the air flows from instrument also blow into another player.

Microphones

Use microphones where possible or encourage singing quietly.

Handling equipment and instruments

Measures to take when handling equipment, including instruments, include the following.

Handwashing

Require increased handwashing before and after handling equipment, especially if sharing instruments or equipment.

Avoiding sharing instruments and equipment

Pupils should use their own instruments. Place name labels on equipment to help identify the designated user, for example, pencil sharpeners' use and other equipment.

If instruments and equipment have to be shared, disinfect regularly (including any keys, valves, slides). Use cleaning products that are effective against enveloped viruses, following manufacturers' instructions on cleaning and disinfecting.

Instruments should be cleaned by the pupils playing them, where possible.

Handling scores, parts and scripts

Limit handling of music scores, parts and scripts to the individual using them.

Training

Provide training the number of suppliers when hiring instruments and equipment. You should advise responsibility towards hired instruments is with the supplier. Check hire equipment, looks or other equipment on arrival and before first use.

Equipment and instruments should be stored in a clean and safe manner. Instruments and equipment should be cleaned and they should be cleaned before first use and before returning the instrument.

Pick up and drop off points

Pick up and drop off collection points should be created where possible, rather than passing equipment such as music scripts, scores and microphones from hand to hand.

Individual lessons

Individual lessons in music, dance and drama can continue in schools and organisations providing out of school activities. They may mean teachers interacting with pupils from other bubbles, and should follow particular care, in line with the rest of the pedagogic teachers.

If there is to visiting alternative, music lessons in private homes can resume, following the rest of the guidance on visiting pupils in their homes, including the guidance on hygiene, and the guidance for out of school settings.

Where you are considering team sports you should only consider those sports where social distancing can be maintained between participants. Follow the DCMS, the government's guidance on sport and been approved by the government's sports on the list available of grassroots sports. Guidance for safe production including team sport, contact sport and combat sports in Wales.

From 31 March, indoor competition between different schools can take place.

Refer to:

- guidance on grassroots sports for clubs and sport providers, safe provision and facilities, and guidance from Sport England
- guidance on Physical Education, the Association for Physical Education and the Youth Sport Trust
- guidance from Sports England on school swimming and water safety lessons available on Sport England's website
- school swimming lessons safely

You can work with external coaches, clubs and organisations for curricular and extra curricular activities. You should be satisfied that it is safe to do.

Activities such as active miles, making break times and lessons active and encouraging active travel can help pupils to be physically active while encouraging physical distancing.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans

You should, along with the local authority and health partners (where applicable), work with parents and children to review EHC plans, and to ensure that the provision and support remains fit for purpose for children with EHC plans. These reviews may have become more difficult to do so than usual, particularly if children and young people are not in school.

Decisions should be considered on a case-by-case basis which takes into account the needs of, and circumstances specific to, the child or young person, avoiding a 'one size fits all' approach.

The statutory duties and timescales remain in place for EHC needs assessments and reviews, and for the delivery of the provision and support in EHC plans. Local authorities, parents, and their parent carer, it is the same of the process and to engage with the process in a meaningful way.

It is important that you co-operate to supplying timely consultations over potential placements for September, and in providing families with advice and information where appropriate.

Catch-up support

You will decide how the catch-up premium provided by the government is spent in your school. To help schools make the best use of this funding, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has published a research guide for schools with evidence-based approaches to catch-up and a school planning guide.

The National Tutoring Programme will continue to offer tuition as normal and schools should continue to sign up and engage with the programme.

Behaviour, discipline and wellbeing

Your policies should set clear, reasonable and proportionate expectations of pupils' behaviour. Further information on behaviour and discipline in schools is available.

Set out clearly the consequences for poor behaviour and deliberately breaking the rules. You should also set out how and when those rules including the consequences, will be applied to pupils who are not in school because of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Lists of routine and classroom discipline may contribute to disengagement for some pupils returning to school. This could result in an increase in behaviour incidents, which sanctions or consequences are appropriate for poor behaviour and whether additional support should be put in place for those pupils including those who:

- may struggle to reengage in school
- are at risk of being absent or persistently absent

Some pupils may return to school having suffered from:

- bereavement
- trauma
- anxiety, stress, increased welfare and safeguarding harms

This may lead to an increase in social, emotional and mental health concerns, particularly for vulnerable groups such as:

- pupils with a social worker
- previously looked after children who left care through adoption or special guardianship
- young carers

These pupils may need additional support and access to services such as educational psychologists, social workers and counsellors.

Additionally, provision for pupils who have SEND may have been disrupted during the period of restrictions on attendance and there may be an impact on their needs. Work with local services (such as health and the local authority) to ensure the service and support are in place for consultation to schools for pupils.

Disciplinary actions

The disciplinary powers that you normally have, including suspension and expulsion, remain in place.

Expulsion should only be used as a last resort and must be lawful, reasonable, and fair. Ensure that you follow the DfE's guidance on exclusions, including the duties on local authorities and master trust in relevant circumstances.

Try to avoid expelling any pupil with an EHC plan, or a looked-after child. Where a looked-after child is at risk of suspension or expulsion, the designated teacher should contact the relevant authority's virtual school head as soon as possible. This will help to ensure that the child's social worker and other professionals are involved in discussions to find the best way of supporting the child and to prevent the exclusion, and whether they occur with the agreement of parents or carers.

It is unlawful to permit a child to be excluded by the actions of their parents. For example, refusing to allow a pupil to come because their parents did not attend a meeting or because the parents brought the pupils to school late would be unlawful.

Ofsted will continue to look for any evidence of off-rolling. Off-rolling is never acceptable and should be considered a serious safeguarding concern. Ofsted will include including to ensure that pupils' school is in fact an off-rolling. Ofsted and Ofsted have education should always be a positive choice taken by parents without pressure from school staff.

Pupil wellbeing and support

Some pupils may be experiencing a variety of emotions in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, including fear, anxiety, stress, and sadness. Some may have lost a family member, friend, or community, those who are vulnerable. Mental and physical health. It is important to contextualise these feelings as normal responses to an abnormal situation.

Consider using pastoral and extra curricular activities to:

- support the rebuilding of friendships and social engagement
- address and equate pupils to respond to issues linked to coronavirus (COVID-19)
- support pupils with questions to improving their physical and mental wellbeing

You may also need to provide more focused pastoral support for pupils' individual circumstances, including those who have been bereaved or affected by the coronavirus pandemic, and/or working with offering pastoral support for wellbeing.

Where there is a concern a pupil is in need of harm or suffering or likely to suffer harm, follow your child protection policy and refer to children's social care as required. Consider your efforts to re-establish a sense of normality as appropriate.

Work with school leaders, where they are in place, to:

- ensure delivery of the healthy relationships (which includes relationships) education, RSE and health education
- provide support for resilience, mental health and wellbeing including anxiety, bereavement and class issues
- support pupils with additional and complex health needs

Wellbeing for Education Return Programme

The Wellbeing for Education Return programme, providers training and resources to help school staff respond to the wellbeing and mental health needs of pupils. The programme will be delivered by a consortium led by the Anna Freud Centre.

Local authorities have received funding to develop a local offer to:

- deliver the training to schools
- provide advice and support until March 2021

Support and resources

Teachers can access the free Ofsted learning courses suitable for participating in Ofsted inspections. Ofsted has also published a coronavirus (COVID-19) Ofsted resources to share with parents and carers.

The training module on learning about mental wellbeing will help improve teachers' understanding of how to promote talking about mental health and wellbeing in the classroom.

A recording of the free webinar on school leaders' CPD, PHE and NHS England hosted to set out how to support pupils's wellbeing.

You can access Mindap School (SEND) consortium resources on the Mindap School (SEN) Resource page of the SENDgov website. They have also provided:

- a leaflet on coronavirus and anxiety following a period of absence
- a leaflet on transition planning for year group 11 disappointed
- (COVID-19) SEND review needs
- a leaflet on coronavirus and how to take a whole school approach to supporting pupils following a traumatic event

Safeguarding

Schools must continue to give the highest priority to the statutory safeguarding guidance keeping children safe in education.

You should consider revising your child protection policy to reflect the return of more pupils. This should be led by your designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

Ensure that your child protection and safeguarding leads and their deputies more than:

- support staff and pupils with new safeguarding and welfare concerns
- Handle, Manage by children's social care and other agencies where appropriate

The designated safeguarding lead should continue to coordinate with children's social care, the local 0 safeguarding partners and other agencies and services to identify and ensure children are appropriately supported. They should speak to school nurses and raise continual support to pupils who have not been in school.

Elective home education (EHE)

You should encourage parents to send their children to school, particularly those who are vulnerable.

EHE does not automatically put children at greater risk of harm. You should consider contacting parents of children who are at more greater risk for concern compared to attending in school.

If you feel there is additional cause for concern, you should follow your own organisation's safeguarding policy and refer this to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who will then consider making a referral to the local authority in line with children's social care. Local authorities should make home visits to children in education, as stated, to ensure safeguarding.

Alerting local authorities as soon as possible where needed helps them to check if a child is receiving statutory social care services and notify any relevant social services work with the home education team to carry out any further checks or assessments that are required.

Part 6 of keeping children safe in education is clear that you are expected to support social workers and other agencies following any referrals. You will already be aware which children have a social worker assigned to them or their children's services.

You should work with local authorities and, where possible, coordinate meetings with parents and carers, and, where appropriate, children and young people.

You may find it helpful to direct parents to the advice on understanding what EHE is, and the duties local authorities have in relation to children who are being educated at home (EHE). Support provided by local authorities is discretionary. Parents can find information on their local authority's website.

If a parent wants you to admit their child, you should follow your normal processes for admission and consider your duties. It is useful for a school place for their child.

Inspection

State-funded school inspection

It is intended that Ofsted will resume its full programme of routine, graded school inspections in September.

Inspectors will use the Ofsted statements to restart some ancillary inspections under the Education Inspection Framework. The statements will be published on the first day of the inspection plans are available at Ofsted, coronavirus (COVID-19) notice updates.

Ofsted is currently giving some changes to its inspections to take into account the challenges caused by COVID-19. Schools to publish updated inspection handbooks with full details of these changes in 2021.

Independent schools (not including academies) inspection

Ofsted and the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) will continue to undertake emergency progress monitoring and standard change inspections where appropriate in the summer term.

The summer term 2021, from 4 May. Ofsted intend to restart some ancillary inspections under the Education Inspection Framework and independent schools will be inspected against standard inspection under the Regulatory Compliance Inspection Framework. Further information about these inspection arrangements will be available from inspectorates soon.

Exams and assessments

Primary assessment

We have cancelled the statutory Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 tests and key teacher assessments planned for summer 2021, including the Key Stage 2 tests in reading and mathematics.

You should continue to use assessment during the summer term, using past test papers if you wish. This will inform teaching, enable you to give information to parents on their child's attainment in their annual report, and support transition to secondary school.

We are planning for a full programme of primary assessments to take place in the 2021 to 2022 academic year.

Exams

GCSE, A and AS levels exams will not go ahead this summer as planned.

Students taking GCSE, AS and A levels, will receive grades based on teacher assessment, with teachers supported to reach their judgements by guidance and training from the exam boards.

Information about awarding qualifications in summer 2021 is available.

Guidance on year 11 to 13 exam cohort attendance and provision for the 2021 summer term can be found in annex B.

Accountability expectations

Performance tables were not published for the 2019 to 2020 academic year. We will not judge schools on data based on exams and assessments from 2020.

We will not publish data based on exam and assessment results from summer 2021 on school and college performance tables.

Read coronavirus (COVID-19): school and college accountability to see what this means for accountability in 2019 to 2020 and 2020 to 2021.

Contingency planning

For individuals or groups of self-isolating pupils and pupils who are shielding following government guidance related to coronavirus (COVID-19), remote education plans should be in place.

You should continue to operate as normally as possible. In the event that restrictions in schools are needed to help contain the spread of the virus, you may be asked to revise your delivery models for a short period of time. To help with this, we have published a contingency framework, which outlines how schools should operate in the event of any restrictions.

Any decision that there should be local restrictions in any childcare or education settings will be made by central government on a case-by-case basis.

Find guidance on how schools can order devices and access support to get set up with a digital platform at get help with technology.

Annex B

Many schools usually incorporate a period of independent study leave in the summer term for year 11 and 13 pupils as exams approach. However, this year the needs of the cohort will be different and a period of independent study leave may not be applicable.

The 2021 exams approach requires schools to submit grades by 18 June 2021. This process requires considerable staff resource and we recognise that in practice, for many pupils, work done after the May half term will not contribute towards their grades.

We have therefore set out guidance about valuable activities pupils should be engaged in. Schools should make appropriate judgements on the activities for their own pupils. This might not mean full-time provision and could include visits to education providers, independent study or remote provision combined with attendance in person.

We are not changing the legislation that governs compulsory school age. As usual, pupils cease to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday of June in the year in which they turn 16. That means that those pupils (most of whom will be in year 11) are not required to attend school after this date.

We know that this year, many schools will already have plans in place for the last half of the summer term to support their current pupils. We strongly encourage all schools to maximise opportunities that meet the progression needs of their students during this period.

Activities to consider

Design and plan content to support pupils to embed curriculum content in which they are less secure which may include remote or independent work

This can include using:

- video lessons and summer education recovery resources from Oak National Academy (for up to year 11)
- other high-quality resources including the free digital resources in the skills toolkit

Liaise with local 16 to 19 providers (which may be your own school sixth form, but may also be other local sixth form or FE colleges) to support pupils' transition to A level study or vocational technical qualifications

This can include identifying and prioritising the delivery of content deemed essential for the course(s) to cover, either in the classroom, remotely, or for pupils to follow up themselves.

Schools should:

- give FE providers access to all year 11 pupils ahead of the summer to inform their options and choices and provide taster sessions
- support pupils who have not secured a post-16 route and assist them in finding a route which best meets their progression needs and aspirations

Schools could enable all post-16 providers to contact all their pupils and offer transitional programmes, including during school time from the assessment period.

Provide support to students around their training and pastoral needs, as well as study skills post-16

Schools should:

- work with local authorities to agree how those at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) can be referred for intensive support, drawn from the range of education and training support services available locally
- provide support on study skills, other enrichment activities, careers advice and guidance for students on the options available, as well as the support available for mental health and wellbeing for all students progressing to further study or employment
- support students completing apprenticeship applications and preparing for work, in partnership with employers, including providing work experience (so far as coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions apply)

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Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance and support

Brexit

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