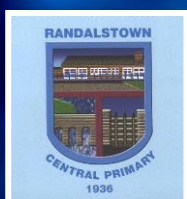


Randalstown Central Primary School

Coronavirus Procedures



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Randalstown Central Primary School - Coronavirus Procedures

INTRODUCTION & GENERAL NOTES

General Principles

These procedures have been drawn up from a range of sources (see References)...and include the Guidance set out in ***Northern Ireland Re-Opening Schools Guidance – New School Day*** (DENI June 2020) & Version 2 (DENI August 2020) and ***Primary Risk Assessment*** (EA July 2020)

Social Distancing

- Pupils are to be encouraged to maintain a 1 metre social distance within their protective class 'bubble'
- Adults/Staff are expected to maintain a 2 metre social distance from all other adults.

The Guidance does NOT require this social distance within the class setting...indeed it states ***"Where social distancing cannot reasonably be applied a 'protective bubble' strategy can be adopted."***

Current Start Dates

Currently the Guidance states that Primary 7 will restart on ***Monday 24th August 2020***

For all other classes, it is hoped that they will start on ***Tuesday 1st September 2020***

Ongoing Management of the School – During the Pandemic

The School has a very experienced senior management team of...

Principal	Mr Charlwood
Vice-Principal	Miss McCurdy
Senior Teacher	Mrs McKane

- If/When any member of staff/pupil is ill or self-isolating, the Chairman of Governors and EA will be informed.
- It is envisioned that if individual members of staff (not named above) are ill or have to self-isolate, the school will continue to operate with substitute members of staff.
- If/When one or more of the senior management team becomes ill or needs to self-isolate, consultation will begin with the Chairman of Governors to determine the viability of keeping the school open. However, it is envisioned that the school can/will continue to operate when at least one of the senior management team remains in place.
- If all 3 of the senior management team are ill or self-isolating...the school will close until at least one is able to return to work

HYGIENE

Hand Hygiene

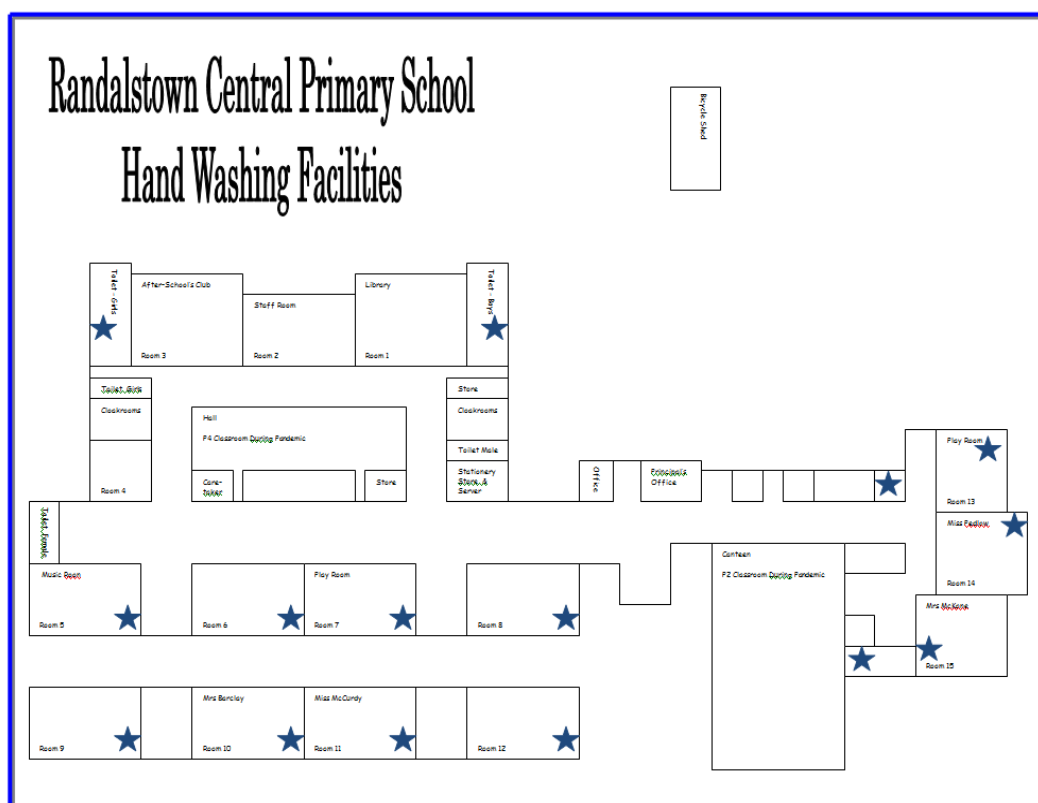
The Guidance states that ***'Regular and thorough attention to hygiene is essential to deter spread of the virus. Children should wash their hands thoroughly on arrival at the education setting – this must be a repeatable discipline throughout the school day'***

The importance of good hand hygiene will be explained regularly to pupils.

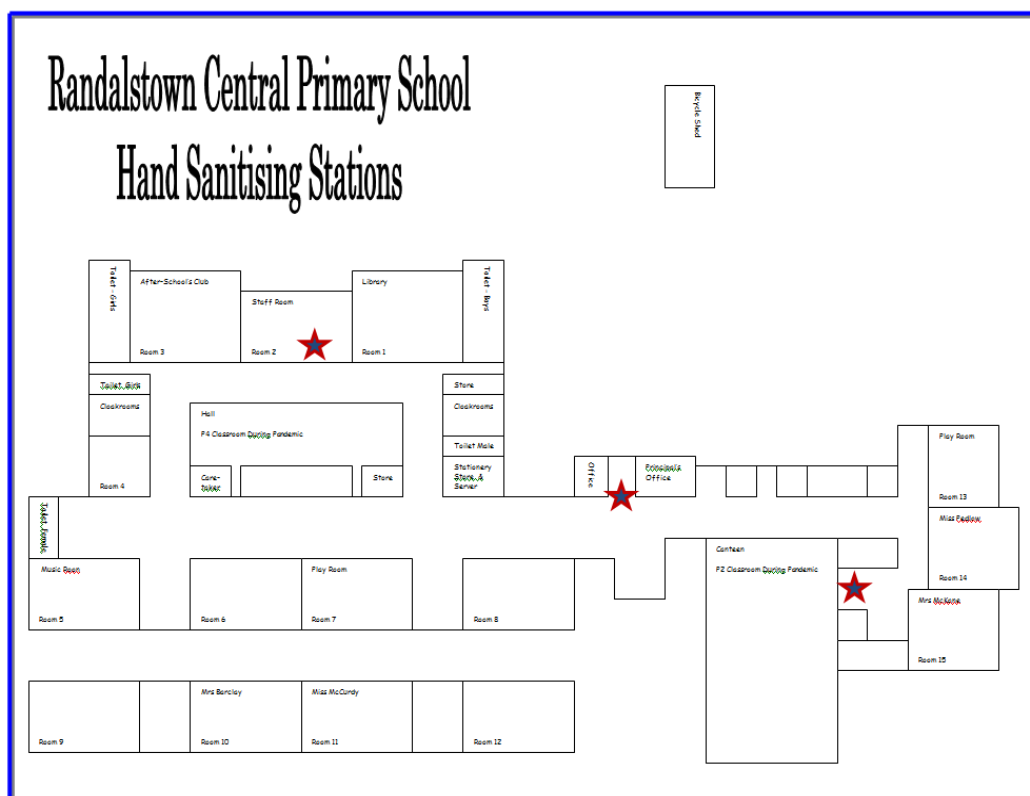
Pupils WILL...

- Have their hands sprayed IMMEDIATELY before they enter the school building in the morning.
- Wash their hands regularly throughout the day.
- Wash their hands EVERY TIME they leave and re-enter the classroom.

The following Soap, hand washing facilities are available within the school



The following alcohol gel hand sanitising stations are available within the school



Respiratory Hygiene

The importance of good respiratory hygiene will be explained and regularly reinforced to pupils.

Pupils WILL follow the 'Catch It, Bin it, Kill it' approach.

Pupils will be...

- Encouraged not to touch their face
- Shown how to cough into their elbow
- Shown how to cough into a paper towel and bin it.

Paper towels/tissues will be readily available in all classrooms.

Cleaning Procedures

The Guidance states '*It should be noted that normal cleaning activity should be sufficient and that hand hygiene is the most effective method of combatting the spread of the virus.*'

'Regular cleaning of door handles, desk tops etc. will take place throughout the day.'

And '*Routine general cleaning should take place at least daily.*'

There will be a particular emphasis on 'surface cleaning' 'such as desk surfaces, chairs, doors, light switches, banisters, sinks and toilets being cleaned more regularly. There should be routine cleaning

and disinfection of frequently touched objects and surfaces (e.g. telephones, keyboards, door handles, desks and tables).'

'Building Supervisors may wish to consider continuous cleaning of toilets and wash facilities.'

'Where existing facilities do not have hand basins at entry/exit points, settings should provide hand sanitisers to facilitate initial entry to the building and then immediately direct users to the nearest hand basin facilities to enable washing of hands. Help should be given to those pupils who struggle to wash their hands independently.

Bins with bags should be provided in classrooms and in other key locations around the site for the disposal of tissues and any other waste. Consideration should be given to their disposal including double bagging and emptying.

A good supply of disposable tissues should be available to implement the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach in each classroom.'

If pupils use a computer in the classroom, the teacher must...'***Make sure that each workstation is wiped down and disinfected before the next person uses it.***

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The Guidance states '***PPE should not be worn by children***'

It also states '**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will only be required in a very small number of cases e.g. dealing with intimate needs/ giving medication.**

In this school, PPE will also be worn by staff asked to supervise a pupil who is suspected to be infected, until their parent comes to remove the child.

If and when PPE is worn it should include Gloves & a Mask

If in 'contact' with an infected or suspected infected person/child...the PPE should ALSO include an Apron

Lunchtime Supervisors will be required to wear PPE as they will be moving between Class bubbles. (Gloves, mask and apron) **(SEE ALSO RISK ASSESSMENTS)**

Updated guidance in August 2020 suggests the following...

- ***Face coverings must be worn in staff rooms and during adult to adult meetings lasting more than 15 minutes and by adults visiting the school site.***
- ***Face coverings are strongly encouraged for activities that entail large numbers of staff or pupils within an enclosed space where social distancing is not possible.***
- ***Given the risk mitigations in place in schools to limit and contain the spread of COVID-19, face coverings are not generally recommended for routine use in schools. Staff and pupils may wish to use them during the routine school day and this is acceptable. Schools should also be aware that some persons (including children) are exempt from wearing face coverings.***

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Location of Classes

The Guidance states ***‘we expect education settings to use all available space within the school to best facilitate a normal return to school;’*** and ***‘dining space, [...] and indoor sports spaces may be utilised as learning and teaching areas [...] to relocate whole class groups to larger spaces;’***

The Guidance also suggests...***‘consideration may also be given to gaining access to additional spaces on a short term basis. This could include use of conveniently located public, private or third sector estate’.*** As a result, the neighbouring Church Of Ireland (Drummaul Parish) was approached to determine if the school could use their Church Hall as a classroom. We are very grateful that the Vestry of Drummaul Parish has agreed to help the school at this time.

As a result, the location of the classes will be as follows, based on class size

Class	Location
Reception – Busy Bees	Usual Classroom
Primary 1	Usual Classroom
Primary 2	Canteen
Primary 3	Usual Classroom
Primary 4	Assembly Hall
Primary 5	Usual Classroom
Primary 6	Usual Classroom
Primary 7	Church Of Ireland – Church Hall

Schools are also encouraged to consider Outdoor learning environments. These will be used, when appropriate, however, it must be noted that with the children missing over 3 months of formal education...the priority **MUST** be on ‘catching up’ in terms of Literacy and Numeracy. Teachers wishing to use outdoor learning, will be asked to demonstrate how the outdoor learning activity will help the children to ‘catch up’ in either Literacy or Numeracy...or both.

It is also important to take into consideration...that outdoor learning where children can touch surfaces, makes it unsafe and unusable for other children in other protective class bubbles, As the Guidance outlines ***‘Use of outdoor equipment with multiple touch points should be discouraged’***

Signage

The school will have signage in place to reinforce the changes to the ‘new normal’ in the building, such as the One-Way System and the need for improved Hand and Respiratory Hygiene. The Guidance states ***‘appropriate signage or verbal communication about the system adopted may need to be implemented if it differs from previous arrangements at the setting.’***

(See Appendix 2)

General Routines

Morning Routine

Transport

It is envisioned that the school bus will operate from 1st September as normal. Updated Guidance in August states...

'It is strongly recommended that all pupils wear a face covering on all dedicated school transport including buses and taxis where it is appropriate for them to do so. Parents should ensure their child has access to and understands the importance of wearing a face covering where it is appropriate for them to do so and disposing of it appropriately.'

Pupils should sit with siblings on the bus.

Due to the uncertainty of the exact time of arrival of the bus at the school, the pupils should report to the school office and they will be taken to their classes from there.

Arrival to School for other pupils

The Guidance states that schools should implement ***'Staggered arrival and pick up times to limit interactions.'***

Due to the staggered times throughout the day, for arrival, break, lunch and going home, the school will operate a ***"no bell" strategy***, as suggested in the revised guidance of August 2020.

It also states ***'Use of staggered arrival times and marked drop-off areas and asking parents to remain on or outside the school grounds, where possible, can also help with limiting interactions'***

Staff are encouraged to go directly to their classrooms on arrival at school and not to congregate in the Staffroom

Pupils are to arrive at the following times...and to the following places...

Parents to bring ...

Reception – P2 pupils to their entry point BUT MUST NOT ENTER THE SCHOOL BUILDING

Primary 3 – P6 pupils to the fence separating the carpark and the front playground...THEY MUST NOT ENTER THE PLAYGROUND

Primary 7 pupils to Drummahaire Parish Church gate. Parents MUST NOT ENTER THE CHURCH GROUNDS

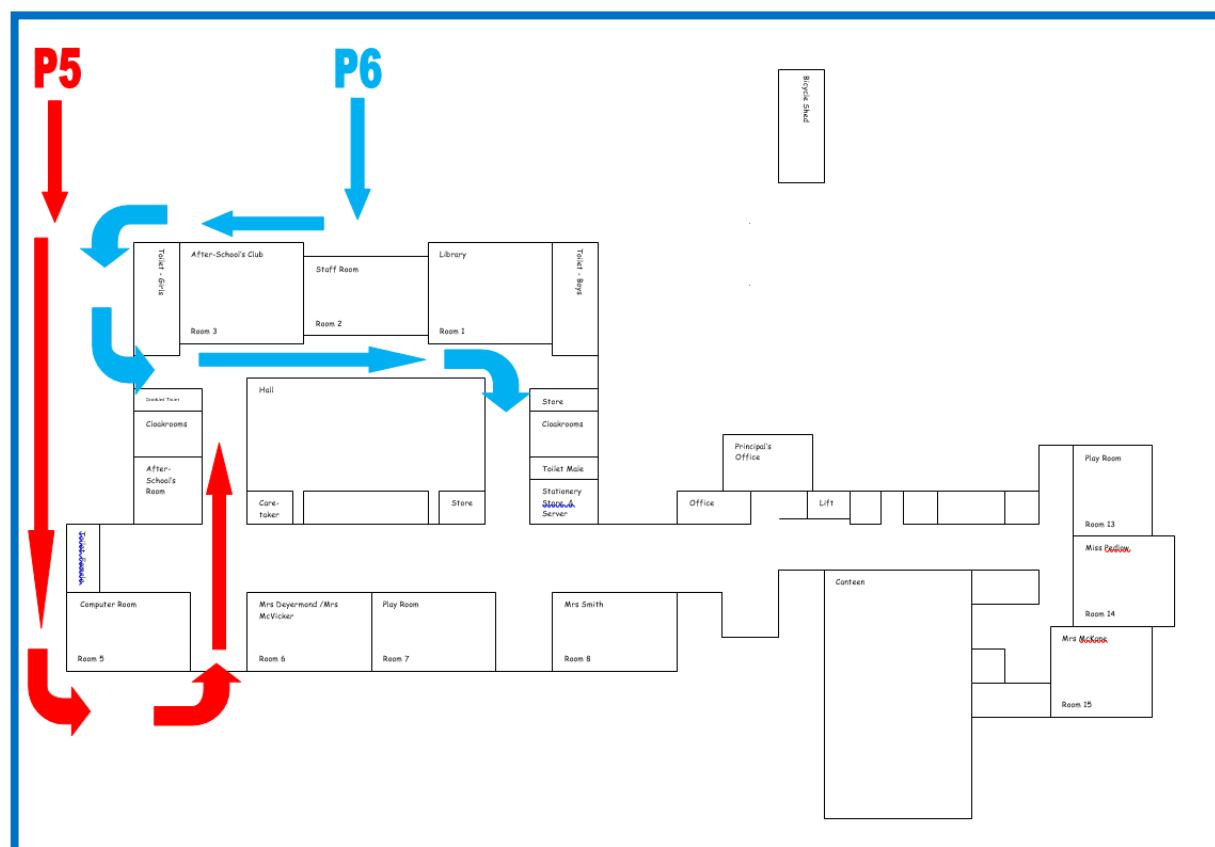
Staff will be provided with spray bottles of hand sanitiser to spray pupils' hand prior to entry into the school buildings, to ensure the pupils have clean hands before they touch any surface within the school.

The school will be relying on parents with children in different classes to maximise their distance from others and minimise their interactions with others as they move between the range of drop off and pick up points that they will be using each day.

Parents are also strongly encouraged to arrive at and leave from the school promptly. They are asked not to wait or have prolonged chats with other parents...again, to maximise their distance from others and minimise their interactions with others.

Class	Time	Location
Reception – Busy Bees	8:45 – 8:55	Class Fire Door From Gate at the ramp in the playground
Primary 1	8:45 – 8:55	Class Fire Door From the Steps into the Soft Play Area
Primary 2	8:45 – 8:55	Infant Door
Primary 3	8:45 – 8:55	Main Door in Foyer
Primary 4	8:45 – 8:55	Girls' Entrance
Primary 5	8:55 – 9:05	Girls' Entrance
Primary 6	8:55 – 9:05	Girls' Entrance
Primary 7	8:45 – 8:55	Church Gate

Pupils will have to bring their coats etc into the classroom. The communal Cloak Rooms do not allow the separation of the pupils' belongings from other classes...and breaches their 'protective class bubble'...so CAN'T be allowed.



Use of Staffroom

Staff are reminded that 2m social distancing must be observed at all times in the staffroom. Surfaces such as photocopiers, taps, cups, cutlery, benches, tables, chairs etc will be touched by multiple people throughout the day...so it would be prudent for staff members to consider the staffroom as a potentially unsafe area, and ensure their hand hygiene accordingly.

In light of multiple people (from different 'bubbles') using the Staffroom throughout the day increased, regular cleaning will take place during the day, focusing on the items mentioned above to minimise the risk of virus transmission.

To further minimise the risk of virus transmission, alcohol based hand sanitiser will be placed at the door of the staffroom. Anyone entering the staffroom will be expected to use the sanitiser so that their hands will be virus free on entry.

Pupils are NOT to enter the staffroom for any reason !

Visitors To The School

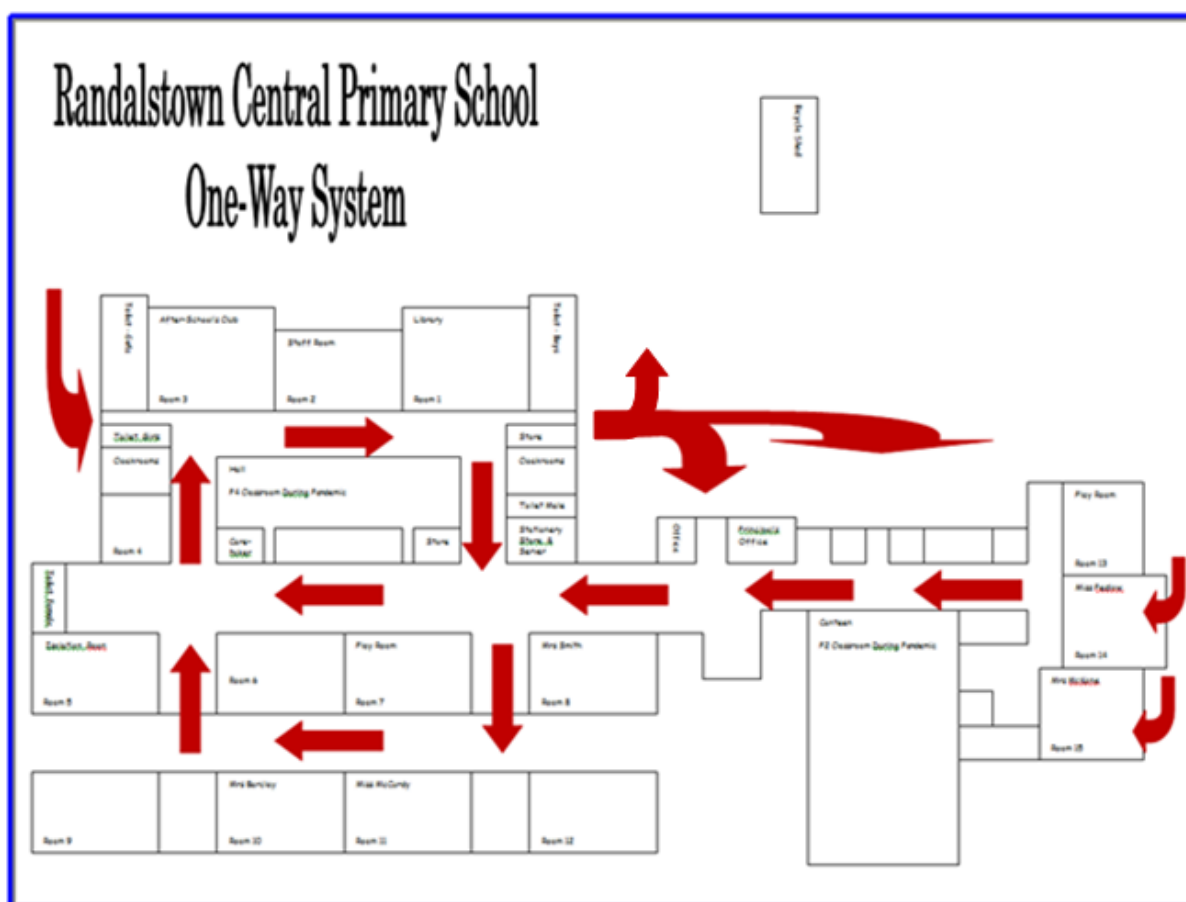
Outside agencies visiting the school will be kept to a minimum during the pandemic. On entry to the school, permitted visitors will be directed to use the alcohol gel hand sanitiser immediately.

If like RISE they are to meet with an individual pupil, this will take place in the Library, ensuring Social Distancing. Trevor will be informed that a 'visitor' used the room and cleaning will take place.

Pupil Flow Within School

Even though the Guidance states...'**Passing in corridors and short periods of contact does not therefore present a significant risk to staff or pupils.**' We will put in place a One-Way system to minimise the possibility or duration of contact.

Please note...if moving from the Main Building towards the Reception and Primary One classes...you **MUST** walk through the playground, as using the corridors goes against the One-Way System. The Guidance supports this, by saying '**External Circulation – as part of an amended circulation strategy, it may be beneficial to encourage the use of external areas to move between parts of the building. This would reduce the density of use of the internal areas and also provide some movement and fresh air.**'



Afternoon Routine

Pupils are to leave at the following times...and from the following places... This is supported by the Guidance, which states...***‘Consideration may be given to a “no bell” strategy which allows a degree of flexibility on class start/finish times and avoids the intensity of flow which many schools experience.’***

During the pandemic, classes CAN’T go to other teachers between 2:00 and 3:00. In addition, all teachers will need planning time and ‘online’ time to set and mark online homeworks and communicate with shielding pupils. Time needs to be set aside to allow this to occur.

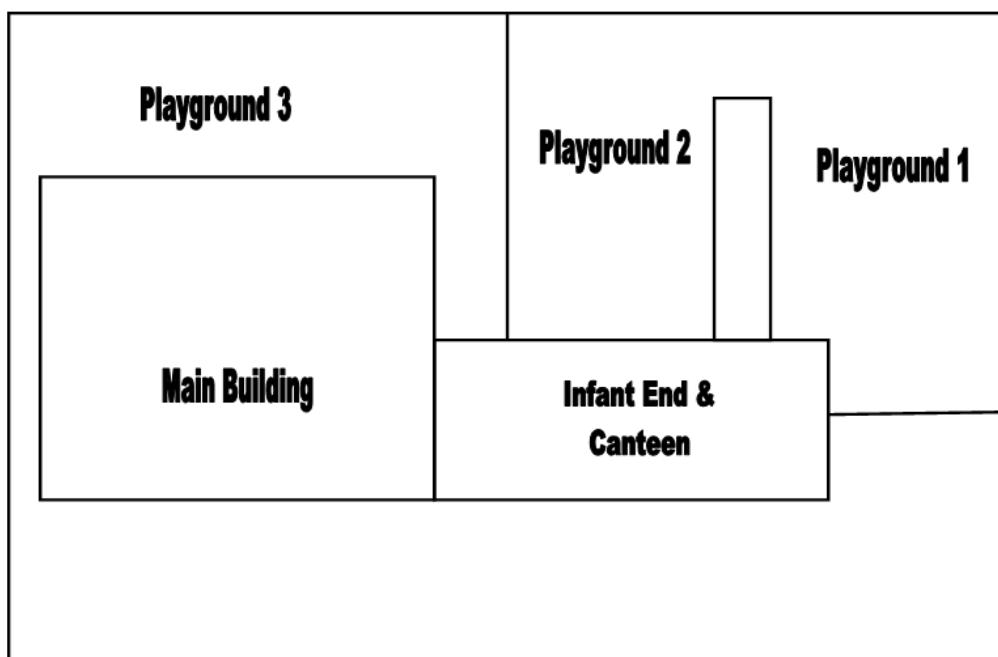
As a result all the school day will end for classes at the following times.

Class	Time	Location
Reception – Busy Bees	1:30	Class Fire Door From Gate at the ramp in the playground
Primary 1	2:00	Class Fire Door From the Steps into the Soft Play Area
Primary 2	2:00	Infant Door
Primary 3	2:00	Main Door in Foyer
Primary 4	1:50	Boys’ Entrance
Primary 5	2:00	Boys’ Entrance
Primary 6	2:10	Boys’ Entrance
Primary 7	2:00	Church Gate

Breaktime Routine

The Guidance states '*All education settings should consider appropriate approaches to minimising physical interactions between individuals/small groups in schools, including at social [...] times.*'

Plan Of The School's Playgrounds



BREAK / PE		
Class	Time	Location
Reception – Busy Bees	10:15 – 10:30	Playground 1
Primary 1	10:15 – 10:30	Playground 2
Primary 2	10:15 – 10:30	Playground 3
Primary 3	10:30 – 10:45	Playground 1
Primary 4	10:30 – 10:45	Playground 2
Primary 5	10:30 – 10:45	Playground 3
Primary 6	10:45 – 11:00	Playground 2
Primary 7	10:45 – 11:00	Playground 3

Teachers and their Classroom Assistants will have to supervise their own classes during breaktimes.

Classroom assistants are to have their 15 minute break when they are not on break duty or supervising their own, or another class.

For Teacher Comfort Breaks...Classroom Assistants will supervise the classes. They can stay inside their own room if supervising there...or from the class doorway but will need to stay out of the room...to preserve the class 'bubble'... if supervising a different class.

Classroom Assistants to provide cover for breaks/comfort breaks for classes without a Classroom Assistant		
Class	Time	Location
Reception – Busy Bees	10:45 – 11:00	Donna
Primary 1	10:30 – 10:45	Donna
Primary 2	10:30 – 10:45	Elizabeth/Claire & Stacy
Primary 3	10:45 – 11:00	Tanya
Primary 4	10:45 – 11:00	Elizabeth/Claire
Primary 5	10:45 – 11:00	Barbara
Primary 6	11:00 – 11:15	Barbara
Primary 7	11:00 – 11:15	Sharon

Lunchtime Routine

Lunch will not be provided by the kitchen during the week 24th – 28th August. So Primary 7 pupils should bring packed lunches that week.

Lunches will be available from Tuesday 1st September.

The Guidance suggests ***'meals delivered to classrooms with disposable containers and cutlery'*** it also suggests ***'Staggered lunch breaks should also be considered;'***

ALL pupils will eat their lunch in their own classroom.

Children bringing packed lunch, are asked to bring it in a disposable bag. This will reduce pupils bringing a lunchbox backwards and forwards to school and will minimise the risk of virus transfer into the class bubble.

The school has 3 lunchtime supervisors. During the period of the pandemic, Supervisors will be asked to wear PPE. They will be moving between class bubbles, so it would be prudent for them to wear Gloves, Mask & Apron. When they move to a different class, they will remove and bin their PPE equipment, thoroughly wash their hands and put on a new set of PPE. The Supervisors will remain with the same classes during the period of the pandemic.

Class	Lunch Time	Supervisor	Play Location
Reception – Busy Bees	11:30 – 12:00	Mrs Hayes	Playground 1
Primary 1	11:30 – 12:00	Ms Selfridge	Playground 2
Primary 2	11:30 – 12:00	Mrs Nesbitt	Playground 3
Primary 3	12:05 – 12:35	Mrs Hayes	Playground 1
Primary 4	12:05 – 12:35	Ms Selfridge	Playground 2
Primary 5	12:05 – 12:35	Mrs Nesbitt	Playground 3
Primary 6	12:40 – 1:10	Mrs Hayes	Playground 2
Primary 7	12:40 – 1:10	Ms Selfridge & Mrs Nesbitt	Playground 3

When pupils have finished eating their lunch, the supervisor will ask the children to line up. The Supervisor will sanitise the table tops, before taking the pupils outside for play, to their nominated playground.

Toileting Procedures

The Guidance states ***‘the safe and practical use of toilets and hand-wash facilities should be considered by each school;’***

This is probably the most difficult procedure to TRY to organise. We all KNOW we can’t stop children going to the toilet when they need to go!

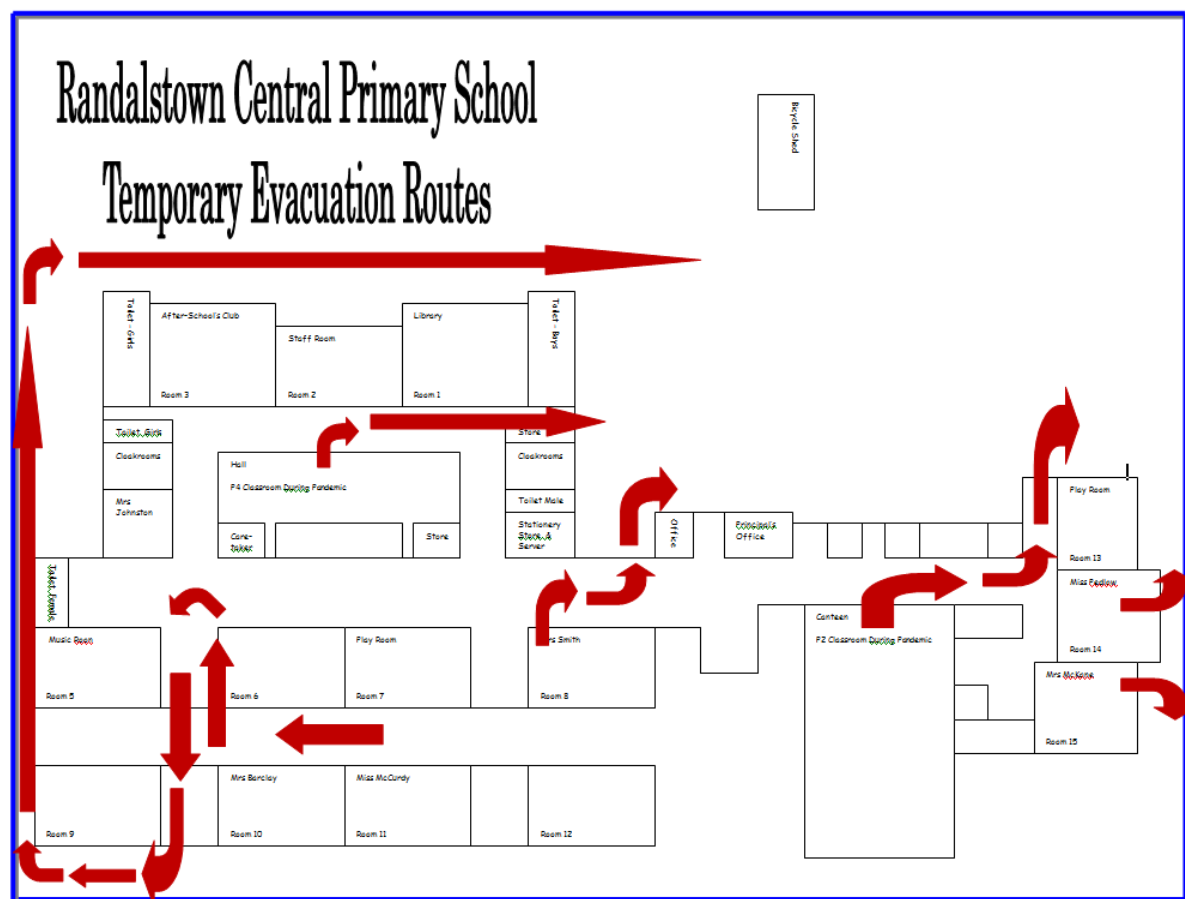
SO I will put in place a timetable for classes to use...with the full knowledge that some pupils will need to use the bathrooms outside these time...but with the expectation that using the timetable (where possible) we can minimise children from different bubbles interacting in the toilets.

The timetable, and the regular cleaning of the toilets during the day, will minimise the chance of virus spread.

Class	Toilets To Be Used	‘Main’ Times of Use
Reception – Busy Bees	Infant Toilets	9:00 – 9:30 10:30 – 11:00 12:00 – 12:30
Primary 1	Infant Toilets	9:30 – 10:00 11:00 – 11:30 12:30 – 1:00
Primary 2	Infant Toilets	10:00 – 10:30 11:30 – 12:00 1:00 – 1:30
Primary 3	Senior Toilets	9:15 – 9:30 11:15 – 11:30 1:00 – 1:15
Primary 4	Senior Toilets	9:30 – 9:45 11:30 – 11:45 1:15 – 1:30
Primary 5	Senior Toilets	9:45 – 10:00 11:45 – 12:00 1:30 – 1:45
Primary 6	Senior Toilets	10:00 – 10:15 12:00 – 12:15 1:45 – 2:00
Primary 7	Church Toilets	Any Time

Temporary Change to the Evacuation Procedure

Due to the new One-Way system and the change of class settings for particular classes, it will be necessary to temporarily change the Evacuation Procedure for the pupils and staff of the school, if required. During the period of the pandemic, the school is to evacuate as follows...



The Primary 7 class will not need to evacuate the church hall if the school evacuates. If however, that church hall needs to be evacuated, they will exit the hall and evacuate back into the school grounds, to their normal evacuation muster point.

Communication - Material From Home...Homework

The Guidance states that schools should be ***'prohibiting children from bringing anything from home and, at the end of each school day, limiting/preventing shared resources from being taken home'***

There can be NO exceptions to this. Homework will be set and done electronically...

Seesaw for classes Reception to P2

Google Classroom for classes P3 to P7

The use of Seesaw and Google Classroom will also be used for pupils who do not attend school due to them, or their parents shielding. (also see Pupil Attendance) It will be the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that pupils who do not attend (and their parents) are supported effectively using these digital platforms.

There is also an expectation that staff will continue to develop ongoing communication and interaction with parents and pupils using these online platforms.

The updated guidance of August 2020 expands this by stating...

'Two-way communication is vital. The gathering of questions, issues or concerns from parents and carers will be just as important as clear communication to parents and carers about how things will work.'

Play Equipment/Materials & Rooms

Play equipment, or materials must not be shared between classes, as that would break/burst the protective 'bubble' of each class

As such...

- the playroom beside the Reception Class (Busy Bees) is ONLY for the use of the Primary One Class during the pandemic
- the playroom on the Main Corridor, between the usual Primary 2 & 3 Classroom is ONLY for the use of the Primary Two Class

The guidance further suggests that particular play equipment/material should be kept for groups within the class, rather than for the use of the whole class. It states ***'consideration should be given to the allocation of resources to the same small group, rather than sharing across groups;'***

Teachers will need to plan for this. The Guidance discourages the splitting the class into two groups to use a playroom at different times, with both groups able to access the same toys or activities.

Special Needs Provision

During the pandemic, it is essential that the protective Class Bubble is maintained. This would be breached if pupils undertook withdrawal classes, as is normal practice for this school.

It will be the responsibility of the class teacher, in consultation with the Special Needs Co-Ordinator to ensure that as much support as possible is provided to the pupil (and their parents) with additional materials etc using the digital platforms of Seesaw and Google Classroom.

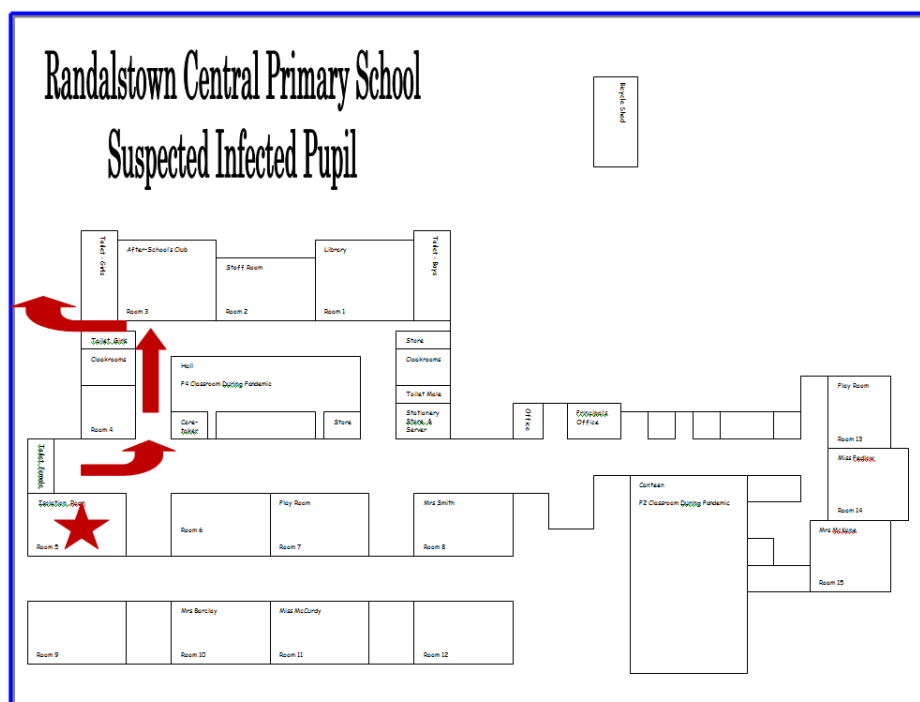
Temporary Addition To The School's Positive Behaviour Policy

The Guidance states that *'The school's pupil behaviour policy should be reviewed to ensure that it covers COVID-19 related incidents and should make provision for the school to be able to sanction, up to and including exclusion, pupils who wilfully refuse to adhere to arrangements of social distancing and deliberately cough or spit at pupils or staff, putting them at risk.'*

The actions of pupils 'wilfully' breaking Social Distancing Rules, will be taken very seriously by the school, as the safety of other pupils and staff members is our paramount concern.

Each case will be considered on how seriously the rules have been broken. However, pupils who have endangered others by their actions are likely to be suspended from the school until assurances are given that such behaviours will not happen again.

Procedure for suspected infected pupil

ISOLATION ROOM 

If you suspect a child may be showing symptoms of Coronavirus...

Suspected Coronavirus Infected Pupil	
STEP	
1	Check the child's temperature with the handheld thermometer in the class
2	<p>If the child's temperature is raised...or they are showing other symptoms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous Cough • Reporting a loss of taste or smell • Any other concerning symptom <p>Message or phone the office immediately</p>
3	The pupil will be taken to and supervised in the isolation room...with the windows open...by Perry OR Philomena (Wearing PPE...mask and gloves & Apron if necessary)
4	<p>The parent will be immediately informed and asked to come and take the child home.</p> <p>If the pupil needs to use the toilet, while waiting, they will be taken to the Disabled Toilet.</p> <p>When the parent arrives, they will be advised to get a Coronavirus Test and informed that the school will be informing EA Health & Safety AND EA Cleaning Service.</p>
5	The pupil will leave the school by the shortest route (indicated above)
6	The parent will be sent a ParentMail form and asked to confirm that they received the advice to follow the Test, Trace & Protect programme
7	Trevor will be informed that a suspected infected pupil used the isolation room and the room and Toilet (if used) will be cleaned

The school's use of class, protective bubbles, along with swift removal of potentially infected pupils and immediate notification to EA supports what the guidance requires...

'The Department of Health's Test, Trace and Protect strategy requires early identification and isolation of such cases, rapid testing, tracing of close contacts and early, effective and supported isolation to break transmission chains.'

Updated guidance of August 2020 advises...

'Should a COVID-19 confirmed case occur, the EA cleaning service should be notified. Following notification the normal process is undertaken of isolating the prevalent location within the school where any incidence of COVID-19 is likely to have happened. After three days of isolation an enhanced clean of the isolated location will be conducted. The normal cleaning regime then resumes thereafter.'

It also states that the siblings of an ill child are also sent home from school, immediately...

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature/fever or anosmia (a loss or a change in your normal sense of smell, which can also affect your sense of taste) in an educational setting, they and any members of their household within that school setting must be sent home and advised to follow the PHA guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection. Settings should keep a full record of such actions and request a parent / carer / guardian record their acknowledgement of this action.

Staff Attendance The Guidance states...

Clinically vulnerable individuals have been advised to take extra care in observing social distancing and should work from home where possible. If they cannot work from home they should take extra care in observing 2m social distancing. Line Managers should undertake a risk assessment and staff should be offered safest available on-site roles.

For staff who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable, current PHA advice does not require them to self-isolate. Staff can attend their education or childcare setting.

Staff living with someone who is considered clinically extremely vulnerable, and in receipt of a shielding pause letter, can continue to work with suitable controls in place. Such staff should have an individual risk assessment conducted.

Staff who were previously shielding (clinically extremely vulnerable people). These restrictions eased and with effect from 1 August 2020 'shielding' has been paused. The latest advice recommends that staff unable to work from home can now return to the workplace subject to risk assessment.

Pupil Attendance The Guidance states...

Schools should follow latest guidance on attendance for children and young people who have health conditions, who live with people with health conditions or who are pregnant.

Pupils who are clinically vulnerable are those with pre-existing conditions who have been advised to stringently follow the social distancing guidelines and should learn from home where possible. A small minority of pupils will fall into this category.

Pupils who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, can attend their education or childcare setting.

Pupils who were previously shielding (clinically extremely vulnerable people). These restrictions eased over time and as of 1 August 2020 'shielding' has been paused. Pupils should follow the guidance of their hospital consultant or General Practitioner (GP) if in doubt and should have an individual risk assessment conducted before return.

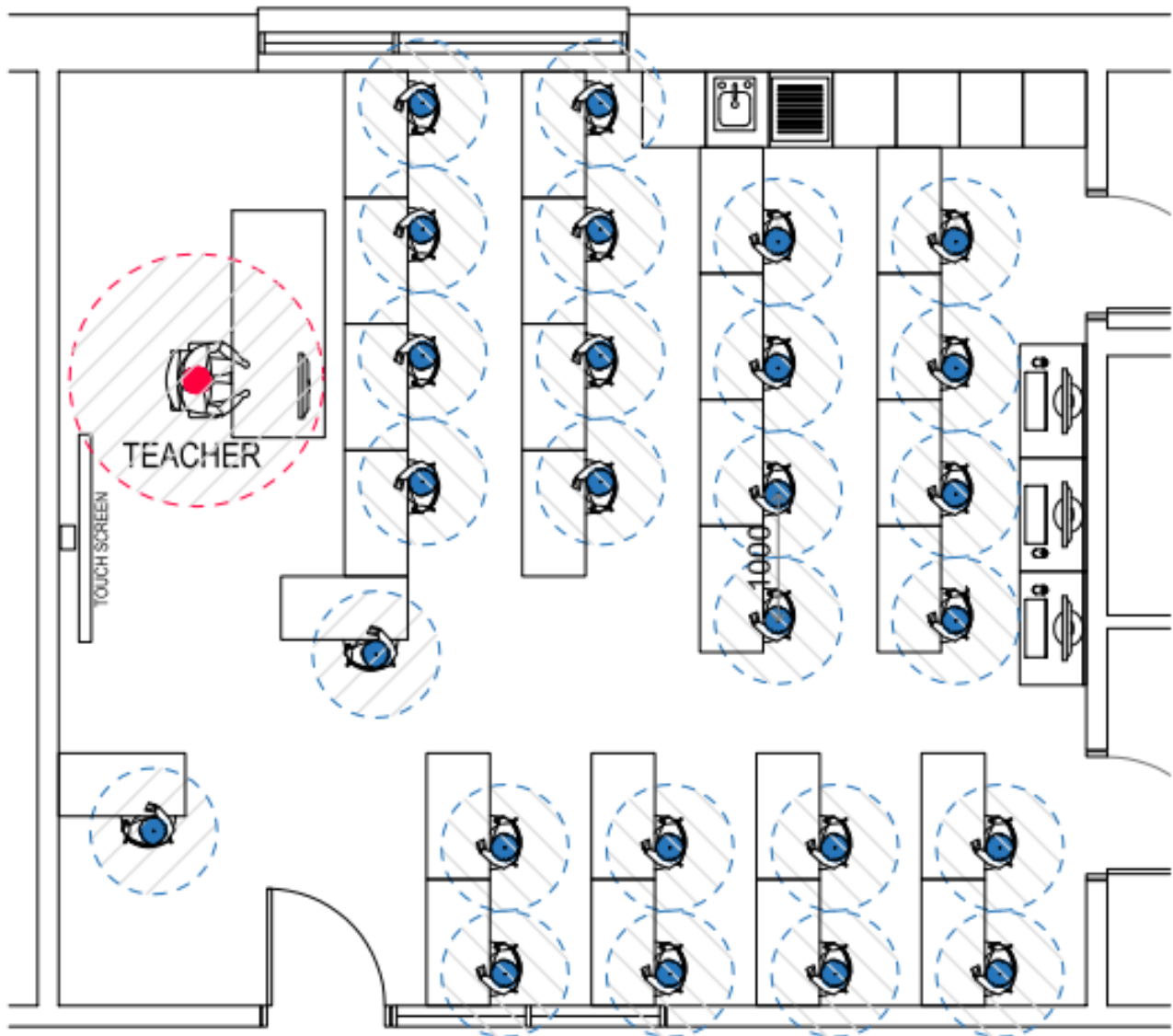
Pupils living with someone who was previously shielding. These restrictions eased over time and as of 1 August 2020 'shielding' has been paused. Such pupils should have an individual risk assessment conducted before return.

CLASS PROCEDURES

Proposed Layout of Classroom at 1 Metre Social Distancing

The guidance suggests and encourages '*designated fixed places (desks) for individual children*'

Pupils will NOT be allowed to move to different desks, as often occurs in a Primary School.



Classroom Layout 2
Static Layout - 1.0m pupil spacing
2.0m teacher spacing

SCALE 1:50

Classroom Procedures

Minimalistic Classrooms

The Guidance calls for removal of unnecessary objects in the classroom. Including, as the Guidance states... *'items/toys/learning materials that are hard to clean'* and *'removing non-essential furniture from teaching spaces'*

Ventilation

'The opening of doors and windows should be encouraged to increase natural ventilation and also to reduce contact with door handles. However, propping open of doors into corridors, external doors, security access systems and any other fire safety doors is prohibited. It should be sufficient for windows to be open dependent on climates and for existing mechanical ventilation where desired to achieve thermal comfort.'

Schoolbags/Personal Materials In Class

Schoolbags will not be needed and will therefore be banned from school. Teachers will provide folders/wallets for each pupil containing all the materials that they require to use in class (pencils, paper etc). These materials will remain exclusively for the use of individual pupils and will not be transferred between home and school. Homework will be done exclusively online.

Children's coats will have to be stored over the backs of their chairs. This will be difficult in wet weather...but it is important not to have a communal place for all coats, even within a classroom

Water

Children need to remain hydrated throughout the day. Communal water fountains must not be used as they could easily spread virus between the protective 'bubbles'. Personal water bottles from home are banned. Water jugs and disposable cups will be provided in each class.

Tissues

Good respiratory hygiene will be practised in each class. Tissues to 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' are an essential part of respiratory hygiene and a plentiful supply of tissues will be made available for each class.

Uniform/Clothing

It is essential that everyone wears clean clothes to school...every day, if possible. It is recognised that if a child only has one uniform that it may not be possible to wash and dry it in time for the next day. For that reason pupils will be allowed (if needed) to wear non-uniform on days when their uniform is being washed. This is not a suspension of the wearing of school uniform, but rather a compromise to ensure the children's clothes are clean each day, reducing the risk of bringing the virus into their protective class bubble.

Marking of Work

Staff will continue to regularly mark all work done in class. However, staff are reminded that where possible they should delay the marking of paper based work by 24 hours as the virus can live on paper for that period of time.

Handling Cash

Where possible, payments should be made to the school through ParentMail.

Cash can be sent in...but staff MUST NOT touch paper money for 24 hours and coins for 72 hours

Messages between Classes

It is common in a Primary School for pupils to be sent on 'messages' to another class. This would break the class bubbles of both classes, and must not happen. If teachers need to get a message to another teacher or the office, they are permitted to use their mobile phones for this purpose.

This also applies to sending pupils on messages around the school, especially to pick up printed material from the photocopier. Pupils should be in class unless they are going out for break, for lunch, going home or using the bathrooms. The Staffroom is used by teachers from all the bubbles...as such it is potentially one of the most risky rooms on site. Pupils must not enter the staffroom.

First Aid

Teachers should have a First Aid Kit in their classroom. Minor cuts and injuries should be handled there if at all possible. If there is a more serious injury, the office should be informed so that the Principal can supervise the First Aid teacher's class (from the doorway) whilst the First Aid Teacher deals with the injury (in the corridor outside the classroom if possible).

A pupil's immediate health and safety, takes priority over possible virus spread. However, IF POSSIBLE first aid will be delivered in the corridor, outside the class bubble, to maintain both the child's health and safety AND their class bubble.

Chronic (ongoing) Medical Conditions

Most ongoing medical conditions can and should be managed within the class bubble. For example unless extreme, asthma will be managed in the class setting, where the inhaler will be stored.

If a pupil has to be administered with a controlled prescription drug, that can't be stored in the classroom, the pupil can continue to go to the Office for their medicine. They should remain outside the glass partition to maintain their social distance from office staff...to protect them and to maintain the office as a safe, uncontaminated space.

Currently, the school only has one pupil requiring physical contact to administer their medication by injection. Plans have been put in place, after consultation with parents, to ensure that this is carried out as safely as possible.

Ordering Break & Lunch

Colleen and the Kitchen staff will continue to offer break and lunch. These are to be ordered via a message to the office each morning.

The Kitchen staff will deliver break and lunch to the classroom door...knock the door...and leave without entering the room

Basic Cleaning Material

Basic cleaning materials will be available in each class so that the teacher can wipe down surfaces, keyboards etc during the day.

Sand & Water

Sand and Water trays will NOT be in use during this period, due to the increased risk of virus transfer.

Well-Being

It will be crucial for teachers to implement a programme of 'Well-being' within their classes. Teachers are responsible for developing a programme suitable for their age of pupils, to run alongside the catch up programmes needed for Literacy and Numeracy.

A basic 'well-being' programme has been developed by the NSPCC and Childline and has been placed on the School's Public Site in a folder entitled 'Well-Being NSPCC'

This will need to be adapted and added to by teachers, to form part of their Well-Being programme for their class.

P.E.

Updated guidance of August 2020 recommends the following...

'Therefore, the Department would envisage that from September all children will continue to have regular access to PE within the curriculum. It is recommended that pupils are taught at least two hours of PE a week and where at all possible schools should endeavour to deliver this recommendation.'

TEST, TRACE & PROTECT

Staff or pupils who exhibit ANY symptoms associated with Coronavirus MUST NOT attend school and are expected to follow the requirements of the Test, Trace & Protect programme.

In line with this programme, if a member of staff or pupil displays symptoms...they MUST get a TEST.

If the test is NEGATIVE...they can ***'return to work [or school] providing they [and others in their household also test negative (page32)] are well enough and have not had a temperature for 48 hours.'***

If the test is POSITIVE...

'Where the result is positive, they should follow PHA isolation guidance which currently requires that everyone in your house must stay at home:-

- ***if you develop symptoms of coronavirus you should arrange to have a test as soon as possible, you will need to stay at home for at least 10 days from the onset of your symptoms;***
- ***if you live with someone who has symptoms or has a positive test, you are a close contact and you will need to stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person in the home started having symptoms, it is important that the full 14 days are completed;***
- ***if you develop symptoms during this 14-day period, you will need to arrange to have a test and if your test is positive you must stay at home for 10 days from the onset of your symptoms (regardless of what day you are on in the original 14-day period);***
- ***7 days after your symptoms started, if your condition has improved and you have not had a temperature during the previous 48 hours you can complete your period of self-isolation. If you still have a high temperature, keep self-isolating until your temperature returns to normal. You do not need to self-isolate if you just have a cough after 10 days, as a cough can last for several weeks after the infection has gone;***
- ***if you have symptoms and live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else they can stay for the 14 day isolation period;***
- ***it is likely that people living within a household will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days if you are a close contact or 10 days if you have the infection will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.***

Staff or pupils who have been part of the same 'protective bubble' as someone who has/develops symptoms and/or who tests positive for COVID-19, must follow PHA isolation guidance under the Test Trace and Protect programme. All other contacts in the same 'protective bubble' as a person with symptoms or who tests positive will have to self-isolate for the required 14 day isolation period. They can return to school when they have completed the necessary period of isolation as advised by the Test, Trace and Protect service.'

Storage & Use of Test Results

Over the period of the Pandemic, members of the school community will be tested for Coronavirus.

It is essential that the school records and stores the results of these tests, as they form the evidence upon which we will make decisions about isolation and/or eligibility to return to school.

For example...

A parent of the school who is tested for coronavirus will have to isolate along with their child(ren) until their result is known. If the test is positive, the isolation will continue until the completion of the 14 day period. The pupil(s) will not be permitted to return to school until the 14 day isolation has been completed.

If the test is negative, the pupil will be permitted to return to school on production of the parent's negative test result.

The same rule applies to pupils of the school who get a test. They isolate until the test result is known...and if it is negative (along with any other family member who has been tested) they will be permitted to return to school, on production of the negative test result.

If results are not provided...it will be assumed that the test was not undertaken, or that the result was positive, and the child will not be permitted to return to school until the 14 day isolation has been completed.

This process obviously raises GDPR concerns.

To address this, parents will be made aware of the procedure and the consequences of not providing the test results.

Tests will be sent to the Principal only...and these will be stored centrally and confidentially on his computer, in a file protected by password.

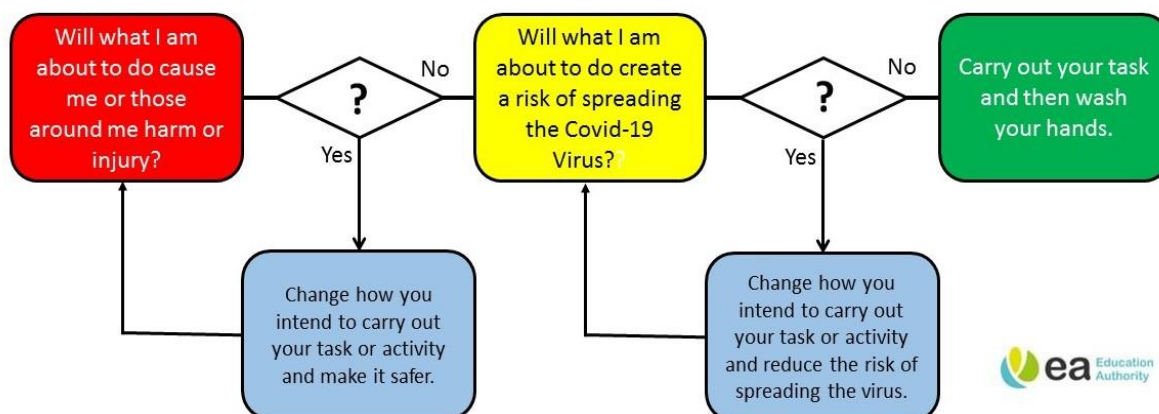
Risk Assessments

The Health and Safety Executive (www.hse.gov.uk) outlines Risk Assessment as a five step process.

1	Identify Hazards
2	Assess the Risks
3	Control the Risks
4	Record your Findings
5	Review the Controls

Much of what is outlined in this document and in the Risk Assessments to follow has been planned well in advance. Unfortunately I can't hope to cover every eventuality and expect to meet unique situations every day, when the school reopens. In those cases, I intend to use what EA term 'Dynamic Risk Assessment'.

Dynamic Risk Assessment



The Education Authority (EA) have produced the following 'matrix' method for determining 'Risk'

The measure of 'Risk' is the product of 'Likelihood' x 'Severity'

Probability Rating - Likelihood		
Very Likely	Likely to occur immediately or in the short term	4
Likely	Could occur in time, or if repeated enough	3
Unlikely	Though unlikely, may occur over time	2
Very Unlikely	Unlikely to occur	1

Severity Rating - Impact		
Very Serious	Single or multiple fatalities, widespread illness, large scale property/equipment damage	4
Serious	Serious injury or illness, serious property/equipment damage	3
Significant	Significant injury or illness, significant property/equipment damage	2
Minor	Minor injuries and/or illness, minor property/equipment damage	1

Resulting in a Risk Assessment MATRIX

Likelihood					
Impact	X	1	2	3	4
	1	1 Insignificant/Trivial	2 Low / Tolerable	3 Low / Tolerable	4 Low / Tolerable
	2	2 Low / Tolerable	4 Low / Tolerable	6 Medium/Substantial	8 Medium/Substantial
	3	3 Low / Tolerable	6 Medium/Substantial	9 Medium/Substantial	12 High/Intolerable
	4	4 Low / Tolerable	8 Medium/Substantial	12 High/Intolerable	16 High/Intolerable

Risk Level Description	Numerical Value
High – Intolerable. Immediate action required. Activity should be stopped until control measures can be implemented to reduce risk	12 – 16
Medium – Substantial. Activity can proceed, but with caution, ensuring control measures are maintained. Efforts should be made to control/reduce the risk.	6 – 9
Low – Tolerable. Activity can proceed. Control measures must be monitored and reviewed as required to ensure they remain suitable and sufficient.	2 – 4
Insignificant – Trivial. Monitor activity/task for future changes that would increase the risk	1

The Education Authority (EA) have suggested that schools should look at 3 main areas and minimise the risks involved

- Start of Day Procedures
- During the Day Procedures
- End of Day Procedures

Start of Day Procedures				
Morning Arrival of Staff & Pupils				
Identified Hazards	To Whom	Likelihood	Severity	Risk
<i>As staff, pupils and delivery drivers arrive to the school building they will spread/contract the virus through the school and into the wider community due to a lack of social distancing measures.</i>	Pupils	3	2	6
	Staff	3	3	9
	Parents / Community	2	3	9
	Delivery Drivers / Visitors	2	3	6
Mitigation to Minimise Risk				
Is mitigation in place ?			Yes	No
Staggered arrival and departure times for pupils and staff to minimise gatherings in any location.			✓	
Communication sent to all parents/carers that should their child appear unwell or display any of the symptoms of Covid-19 they should not be sent to school. Symptoms of Covid-19 include:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature), or; a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual), or; anosmia - the loss or a change in your normal sense of smell (it can also affect your sense of taste) Source: https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-overview-and-advice 			✓	
Hand-over of children in the morning is structured to maintain social distancing of at least 2 metres. Children are received into school/centre by a member of staff, maintaining social distancing protocols.			✓	
All staff/children to wash their hands before coming to school, before going home, during day and when they get home.			✓	
Hand sanitiser provided at all entrance and exit points, anyone assessing the building must use hand sanitiser.			✓	
Introduce a one-way system for arrival/departure or designate areas or entrances for the arrival of particular year groups. If possible access classrooms directly from the external classroom doors.			✓	
Information sent to parents on new arrangements and informing them that they cannot gather at entrance gates or doors, or enter the school building			✓	
Inform parents that if their child needs to be accompanied on the journey to school, that only one parent should attend.			✓	
Upon staff arrival to school they should proceed to their designated classroom.			✓	
Upon arrival to school at their designated time, pupils should proceed to their designated classroom with their class teacher.			✓	
Arrange delivery times with companies, when this is not possible all deliveries to be directed to a central point			✓	

During the Day Procedures				
Circulating in the School Building				
Identified Hazards	To Whom	Likelihood	Severity	Risk
The Covid-19 virus will spread through the school and into the wider community due to a lack of social distancing measures.	Pupils	3	2	6
	Staff	3	3	9
	Parents / Community	2	3	9
	Delivery Drivers / Visitors	2	3	6
Mitigation to Minimise Risk				
Is mitigation in place ?			Yes	No
Reorganise classrooms and other learning environments maintaining social distancing space. Remove any unnecessary equipment at this time and seek appropriate storage of this equipment. Displays, unnecessary cupboards and soft furnishings, and those with intricate parts should be removed. This is designed to enable successful and effective cleaning of all surfaces.			✓	
In circumstances in which it may not be possible or appropriate for social distancing to be applied to some very young children who require additional support needs, e.g. where close contact with staff is necessary to their wellbeing. In such circumstances, bespoke approaches should be determined by individual or group risk assessments, with full regard to the best interests of children, young people and staff.			✓	
Students and staff to wash hands on entry to the classroom;			✓	
<p>The majority of staff in education will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from others.</p> <p>PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where an individual child, young person or other learner becomes ill with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms and only then if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained • where a child, young person or learner already has routine intimate care needs that involves the use of PPE, in which case the same PPE should continue to be used <p>Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings-including-the-use-of-personal-protective-equipment-ppe</p>			✓	
Teachers to be issued with their own hand sanitiser,			✓	
All classrooms provided with basic cleaning kit and stored in appropriate safe location.			✓	
Students are organised into small groups of consistent membership known as bubbles. The class group will not interact with other groups within the school.			✓	
The number of teachers (and other staff) that mix with a class is restricted to as few people as possible.			✓	
Pupils will have their own allocated desk which they will use throughout the school day; desks to be cleaned down at the end of the school day, using designated cleaning substances which are proven to be effective against the spread of Covid-19.			✓	

Pupils have allocated resources such as pens that are assigned to them.	✓	
Resources for the day are placed on each desk prior to the arrival of pupils into class.	✓	
Once in the classroom, pupils should remain there as much as possible to reduce movement around the school or building.	✓	
Frequently used Medication e.g. inhalers should be brought into class on the first day back, these should be kept in class from that point in a sealed bag.	✓	
Controlled Medication should be brought to the Office on the first day back, these should be kept in the Office from that point in a sealed bag.	✓	
Where possible, all spaces should be well ventilated using natural ventilation (opening windows).	✓	
Remove the use of sand trays and water trays at this time.	✓	
If teachers collect individual students work for marking, this should be delayed for 24 hours and marked within the classroom. Teachers should apply good hand washing procedures or use hand sanitiser at regular intervals and should be discouraged from touching their face after handling pupils books. The use of gloves is not recommended as the misuse or removal of gloves incorrectly, could inadvertently cause contamination. Consider the use of other forms of feedback techniques such as verbal feedback, whole class feedback, self-assessment or comments written onto post-it notes etc.	✓	

During the Day Procedures				
Suspected or Confirmed Case of Covid-19 in School				
Identified Hazards	To Whom	Likelihood	Severity	Risk
Suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19 in staff member or pupil or family member of a particular class bubble.	Pupils	3	2	6
	Staff	3	3	9
	Parents / Community	2	3	9
	Delivery Drivers / Visitors	2	3	6
Mitigation to Minimise Risk				
Is mitigation in place ?			Yes	No
If 'Suspected' Case. Class Bubble (Staff and Pupils) to Self-isolate for 48 hours or until a test has been taken and results returned. If Negative, all can return to school.			✓	
If 'Confirmed' Case...the confirmed case, their whole family & ALL members of the class bubble to self-isolate for a period of 14 days in line with Government guidance			✓	
Consult PHA website for most up to date guidance.			✓	
Normal system of work in relation to cleaning should be maintained with particular attention to high contact areas, toilets, door handles, telephones, grab rails.			✓	
Everyone over five years of age in Northern Ireland with symptoms of coronavirus is now eligible for testing.			✓	
PHA contact tracers will telephone those who test positive for COVID-19 to help prevent the further spread of infection			✓	
Class and visitors registers will establish who will be in that child or staff members' bubbles.			✓	

During the Day Procedures				
Teaching Staff Shortages due to Covid-19				
Identified Hazards	To Whom	Likelihood	Severity	Risk
A shortage of teaching staff and/or a reduction in leadership capacity due to Covid-19. Concurrent issues further reducing leadership capacity.	Pupils	3	2	6
	Staff	3	3	9
	Parents / Community	3	1	3
Mitigation to Minimise Risk				
Is mitigation in place ?			Yes	No
Use NISTR register to employ substitute teachers.			✓	
Consider combining classes whilst maintaining social distancing.			✓	
Where pupil/teacher ratios exceed DE recommendations– partial closure for certain classes or part time / AM / PM classes.			✓	
ParentMail to parents to notify them of any exceptional closures due to insufficient staff cover.			✓	
Notify DE and EA in the event that an exceptional closure may be necessary.			✓	

<i>During the Day Procedures</i>				
<i>Support Staff Shortages due to Covid-19</i>				
Identified Hazards	To Whom	Likelihood	Severity	Risk
Shortage of support service staff such as • Building Supervisor/Cleaning • Admin Staff • Learning Support Resulting in non-delivery of essential services	Pupils	3	2	6
	Staff	3	3	9
	Parents / Community	3	1	3
<i>Mitigation to Minimise Risk</i>				
<i>Is mitigation in place ?</i>			Yes	No
Contact EA (NEEDS) for cover arrangements			✓	
Classroom Assistants to provide temporary cover for admin			✓	
Reassign support staff to core health & safety functions within the school			✓	
ParentMail to parents to notify them of any exceptional closures due to insufficient staff cover.			✓	

<i>During the Day Procedures</i>				
<i>Pupil Contact Activities</i>				
Identified Hazards	To Whom	Likelihood	Severity	Risk
That contact activities (including contact with resources/tools) will act as an infection route.	Pupils	1	2	2
	Staff	1	3	3
	Parents / Community	1	1	1
<i>Mitigation to Minimise Risk</i>				
<i>Is mitigation in place ?</i>			Yes	No
Daily disinfecting equipment which pupils are in regular contact with.			✓	
Each child to be assigned their own desk and equipment which they use. Workstations should be allocated consistently to the same staff and children rather than having spaces that are shared. Make sure that each workstation is wiped down and disinfected before the next person uses it.			✓	
There should be routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched objects and surfaces. Desk surfaces, chairs, doors, light switches, banisters, sinks and toilets will be cleaned more regularly.			✓	
Cleaning of the staff areas should be considered as part of the overall cleaning strategy. Staff should use their own cup/cutlery and ensure these are cleaned straight after use.			✓	

During the Day Procedures				
Provision of First Aid, Intimate Care & Diabetic Support				
Identified Hazards	To Whom	Likelihood	Severity	Risk
Infection could be spread between adults and children during the provision of play, first aid & intimate care (including medication) as social distancing is not possible.	Pupils	3	3	9
	Staff	3	3	9
Mitigation to Minimise Risk				
Is mitigation in place ?			Yes	No
Designated members of staff are trained in First Aid at Work or Emergency First Aid.			✓	
Where it is not possible to maintain a 1 metre or more distance away from an individual, whilst administering first aid, disposable gloves, face mask and a disposable plastic apron are recommended. Disposable gloves should be worn if physical contact is likely to be made with potentially contaminated areas or items.			✓	
The use of a fluid repellent surgical face mask is recommended and additional use of disposable eye protection (such as face visor or goggles) should be risk assessed when there is an anticipated risk of contamination with splashes, droplets of blood or body fluids.			✓	
When using a fluid repellent surgical face mask, you should mould the metal strap of the mask over the bridge of the nose and make sure the mask fits snugly under the chin, around or across any facial hair if present.			✓	
Clean your hands thoroughly with soap and water or hand sanitiser before putting on and after taking off PPE. In all circumstances where some form of PPE is used, the safe removal of the PPE is a critical consideration to avoid self-contamination			✓	
Outdoor fixed playground equipment should not be used by multiple class bubbles during this period.			✓	
Staggering of break and lunch times so limited number of children are in the playground at any one time to reduce the need for first aid.			✓	
Follow all normal protocols for first aid and intimate care and consider enhancements to provide extra protection for staff and pupils.			✓	
PPE appropriate to the need should be worn by adults providing first aid and intimate care to children or to other adults. Information on donning and doffing PPE can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-GncQ_ed-9w&feature=youtu.be https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878677/PHE_11606_Putting_on_PPE_062_revised_8_April.pdf https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878678/PHE_11606_Taking_off_PPE_064_revised_8_April.pdf			✓	
Consider the PPE needs and provide packs for adults assisting children with medication and intimate care. (This may include aprons, visors and masks in addition to the gloves normally worn)			✓	
Follow all normal protocols for first aid and intimate care and consider enhancements to provide extra protection for staff and pupils.			✓	
PPE appropriate to the need should be worn by adults providing first aid and intimate care to children or to other adults.			✓	
Diabetic Support will be provided in the office, in an area prohibited to all other pupils, so as to minimise the likelihood of virus spread due to contaminated surfaces			✓	

During the Day Procedures				
Risk of Fire and Building Evacuation Procedures				
Identified Hazards	To Whom	Likelihood	Severity	Risk
The risk of fire remains, however, there is a need to ensure that evacuation and assembly procedures comply with current PHA guidance as far as possible.	Pupils	1	2	2
	Staff	1	3	3
	Parents / Community	1	1	1
Mitigation to Minimise Risk				
Is mitigation in place ?			Yes	No
Advice on what to do if you discover a fire has not changed. Staff and pupils should always exit the building by the nearest available exit. These may have been changed due to the amended layout of the building during this crisis.			✓	
Routine weekly testing of the fire alarm system within the school building should continue as normal. Any faults to be logged to EA Maintenance.			✓	
Fire escape routes need to be reviewed and kept clear at all times.			✓	
Daily cleaning of bins, to avoid build-up of combustibles.			✓	
Staff who are not familiar with the building should be made aware, on their first day of attendance, of actions to be taken in the event of a fire, emergency escapes routes and the position of the assembly point.			✓	
Register kept of all persons present in the building.			✓	
Fire Extinguishers must not be used to prop open doors, they must remain in their normal place.			✓	
Evacuation arrangements for children with complex needs or disabilities should be reviewed in light of any changes.			✓	
Carry out a fire drill. Remembering to maintain social distancing whilst vacating the building and at assembly points, you may need to spread out the assembly points to maintain social distancing.			✓	

End of Day Procedures				
Afternoon Departure of Staff and Pupils				
Identified Hazards	To Whom	Likelihood	Severity	Risk
As staff and pupils leave from the school building they will spread/contract the virus through the school and into the wider community due to a lack of social distancing measures.	Pupils	3	2	6
	Staff	3	3	9
	Parents / Community	2	3	6
Mitigation to Minimise Risk				
Is mitigation in place ?			Yes	No
Staggered arrival and departure times for pupils and staff to minimise gatherings in any location.			✓	
Hand-over of children in the afternoon is structured to maintain social distancing of at least 2 metres. Children are received by parent/carer from a member of staff, maintaining social distancing protocols.			✓	
Staggered departure times for staff to minimise gatherings in any location. Eg Staffroom, office areas, foyer.			✓	

Risk	Reason	Mitigation
Contaminated Surfaces		
Handling children's books/each other's books	COVID 19 lives on cardboard/paper for up to 24 hours. ¹	Increased use of self-marking/calling of answers No peer marking. Delay marking beyond 24 hours. Minimising contact and mixing by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (including staggered break times) ⁸
Handling of permission slips	COVID 19 lives on cardboard/paper for up to 24 hours. ¹	Use of ParentMail Forms to replace paper slips. Children to hand in forms to box/similar, left in safe space for +24 hours before being handled.
Sending letters/newsletter to parents	COVID 19 lives on cardboard/paper for up to 24 hours. ¹	Use of email or school website/facebook page/ ParentMail. Preferable all 3 where possible.
Handling of money	COVID 19 lives up to 3 days on metal money and up to 24 hours on paper money. ¹	Use of ParentMail Payments
Handling of textbooks and guided reading books	COVID 19 remains viable on plastic surfaces up to 3- 9 days. ¹	Textbooks to be provided 1-1 basis, with name/number labels to prevent multiple users. Guided reading books to be returned by a member of staff, only after sitting in a safe place for 4 days since last use.
Use of stationery – pencils/pens/ calculators, etc.	COVID 19 remains viable on plastic surfaces up to 3- 9 days. ¹	Children to use their own school stationery and not to be shared by other pupils
Contaminated frequently touched surfaces – bannisters, door handles, desks, chairs etc	COVID 19 lives on cardboard/paper for up to 24 hours ¹	Use of effective surface disinfection procedures - 62– 71% ethanol, 0.5% hydrogen peroxide or 0.1% sodium hypochlorite ^{10,11} If cleaning an area in which a symptomatic person has been - wear disposable or washing-up gloves and aprons for cleaning. These should be double-bagged, then stored securely for 72 hours then thrown away in the regular rubbish after cleaning is finished. ⁹
Contaminated hands	Droplet transmission of COVID 19 on hands & contamination of touched surfaces. Eg...Toys/resources contaminated.	Cleaning hands more often than usual - wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered. ⁸ Ensure that all adults and children: Frequently wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly. Pupils and Staff to clean their hands on arrival at the setting, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing and are encouraged not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose Use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste ('catch it, bin it, kill it'). ⁸ Remove unnecessary items from classrooms and other learning environments where there is space to store it elsewhere. ⁸ Remove soft furnishings, soft toys and toys that are hard to clean (such as those with intricate parts). ⁸

Contaminated Air Risk

Breathing/ coughing spread of aerosolised virus Infected child/adult likely to be asymptomatic, but highly contagious	<p>Virus remains viable in air for up to 3 hours.¹</p> <p>Most COVID19 cases either totally asymptomatic (especially in children) or very mild.^{3,4}</p> <p>Masks significantly reduce transmission of COVID19. 5</p>	<p>Children and staff must maintain a safe distance at all times; At least 1m, but more if possible.^{2,8}</p> <p>Designated seating in staff rooms, with 2m distance.</p> <p>If possible teach relevant lessons or classroom activities outdoors.⁸</p> <p>Stagger drop-off and collection times.⁸</p> <p>Ensure all rooms are well-ventilated.</p> <p>Accessing rooms directly from outside where possible</p> <p>one-way circulation, staggering breaks to ensure that any corridors or circulation routes used have a limited number of pupils using them at any time⁸</p>
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Contamination of Hygiene Areas

Contaminated bathroom areas	COVID 19 is found in stools and wastewater. ¹²	<p>Ensuring that toilets do not become crowded by limiting the number of children or young people who use the toilet facilities at one time⁸</p> <p>Where possible separate bathroom times to “student clusters”.</p> <p>Strict, regular cleaning regime using effective disinfectants.</p>
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At Risk Pupils/Staff/Family Memembers

Risk to vulnerable people.	<p>People over 70 and with underlying conditions are at much greater risk from COVID 19.^{6,7}</p>	<p>No person in the Vulnerable or Highly Vulnerable⁶ categories for COVID 19 should be in any school building, unless they work alone in the building at all times.</p> <p>Staff in this group should provide distance learning/ perform other duties from home.⁸</p>
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Guidance on Supporting Staff to Return to Schools – DENI August 2020

1. Introduction

As COVID-19 restrictions are eased, schools will be reopening for pupils and staff will be returning to schools.

This guidance is to be read alongside the latest PHA/Government guidance, to support Principals/line managers and staff when planning their return to the work place. In particular, we draw your attention to the recently published, Northern Ireland Reopening School Guidance - New School Day.

This guidance includes key considerations and responsibilities and sets expectations on how to support staff returning to the work place. It should be used to supplement any specific guidance and social distancing protocols linked to schools and it recognises that for the majority of school based staff it may not be feasible to work from home.

This guidance will be kept under review and updated in line with PHA or N.I Executive changes. Please note due to the speed or timing of changes there may be a short lag in updates but we will endeavour to respond swiftly.

For the most up to date version of this guidance please go to the Department of Education and Education Authority website.

2. Underpinning Principles

The Employing Authorities recognise there will be staff who are worried about the implications of returning to the work place, and who will require support to re-adjust, therefore this guidance is underpinned by the following principles:

- Guidance will adhere to all PHA/N.I. Executive directives and updates will continue to be shared with staff through email, FAQs, website and social media platforms as appropriate.
- Staff will be required to follow any relevant guidance and raise any concerns with their Principal/line manager in the first instance.
- Employing Authorities will work in close collaboration with others such as Health and Safety and Occupational Health Services to support staff as appropriate. Staff will also continue to have access to the Employee Assistance Programme (Inspire Wellbeing), independent Occupational Health Services and Health and Wellbeing services.
- All of the key protection and hygiene measures will continue to apply to minimise the spread of infection.

3. Guidance for Principals/Line Managers

The following outlines the current guidance for Principals/line managers in relation to key groups of staff; namely:

A. Staff with caring responsibilities

B. Staff, or a member of their household, who are displaying symptoms of COVID- 19 and have been advised to self-isolate

C. Staff who are considered clinically vulnerable due to an underlying health condition, age (over 70) or pregnant

D. Staff who are considered clinically extremely vulnerable

E. Staff who live with someone who is considered • clinically vulnerable due to an underlying health condition, age (over 70) or pregnant or • clinically extremely vulnerable (shielding)

F. Staff in none of the above categories, who may not want to return to the work place despite being able (without justifiable medical grounds)

The Principal/line manager and Employing Authority are entitled to request and be provided with evidence to confirm medical conditions and inform, where necessary, risk assessments. See Appendix A, Risk Assessment template.

3.1 Category A - Staff With Caring Responsibilities

This includes:

(a) The care of children in the household

(b) The care of vulnerable adults or children in the household

(c) The need to support vulnerable members of the family outside of the household with essentials for example, food and medicine deliveries

The Executive announced the publication of the Childcare Recovery Plan on 18 June. The Childcare Recovery Plan aims to restore the childcare sector to pre-Covid-19 capacity levels as quickly and safely as possible. The aim of the plan is to ensure more parents can access childcare. School re-opening plans and the availability of childcare 3 is inextricably linked, and work is ongoing to build the capacity of the childcare sector as quickly as possible.

To support this, on 27 July 2020 a new £10.5m childcare recovery support fund opened for applications. Led by the Early Years Organisation (on behalf of the Department of Education) the fund is designed to facilitate and support the reopening of day care providers and nurseries throughout July and August.

Staff should seek to investigate and source all childcare options available to them in order that they can attend school when it restarts. In an emergency situation staff can apply for emergency carer leave should childcare arrangements breakdown.

It is understood that there may be some staff who still find it difficult to return to school in their usual capacity due to caring responsibilities. In such circumstances they are expected to communicate effectively and regularly with their Principal/line manager about any concerns. If a member of staff is wishing to consider flexible working and/or a corresponding reduction in hours staff should make a formal request in accordance with the relevant policy, (see Section 11 below).

3.2 Category B – Staff, Or A Member Of Their Household, Who Are Displaying Symptoms Of COVID-19 And Have Been Advised To Self-isolate

Staff in these circumstances must not attend school and should stay at home as advised and follow the latest PHA stay at home guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance.

Staff in this category and their families should have a test undertaken to establish if they have COVID-19. Principals/line managers will inform staff on the arrangements for testing (see link below). Staff who are displaying symptoms have a duty of care to themselves and others so therefore must self-check to be tested.

It is important that Principals/line managers are fully aware of staff within their school who are self-isolating at any time. Testing is available for them or a member of their household (whoever is displaying the symptoms). <https://self-referral.test-forcoronavirus.service.gov.uk/test-type>

Test and Trace and Protect

Staff who exhibit any symptoms associated with COVID-19 should not attend school. The N.I. Executive has rolled out a Test and Trace and Protect strategy designed to control the spread of COVID-19 and symptomatic staff are expected to follow the advice and obtain a test for COVID-19.

Where an individual has had a negative result, it is important to still apply caution. If everyone with symptoms who was tested in their household receive a negative result, the member of staff can return to work providing they are well enough and have not had a fever for 48 hours.

Anyone who tests positive will be contacted by the Contact Tracing Service in the Public Health Agency, and will need to share information about their recent interactions. This could include household members, people with whom you have been in direct contact, or been within 2 metres for more than 15 minutes. Passing in corridors and short periods of contact does not therefore present a significant risk to staff or pupils. All household members should follow PHA isolation guidance which currently requires everyone in the house to stay at home.

The guidance is as follows:

- if you have symptoms of coronavirus or a positive test, you will need to stay at home for at least 10 days;
- if you live with someone who has symptoms or a positive test, you will need to stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person in the home started having symptoms;
- however, if you develop symptoms during this 14-day period, you will need to self-check in accordance with Test and Trace guidance and stay at home for 10 days from the day your symptoms started (regardless of what day you are on in the original 14-day period);
- 10 days after your symptoms started, if you do not have a high temperature, you do not need to continue to self-isolate. If you still have a high temperature, keep self-isolating until your temperature returns to normal. You do not need to self-isolate if you just have a cough after 10 days, as a cough can last for several weeks after the infection has gone;

- if you have symptoms and live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else they can stay for the 14-day isolation period;
- it is likely that people living within a household will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

Staff or pupils who have been part of the same 'bubble' as anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19, must likewise follow PHA guidance and self-isolate and undertake a test under the Test and Trace and Protect system. They can return to school when they have a negative test result or have undertaken the necessary period of isolation after a positive test result. This will contain any potential transmission to those limited number of staff/pupils in the 'bubble' and protect the wider community. Where staff or pupils have tested positive in a cohort that is not operating as a 'bubble' (for example, in some senior school classes or where smaller numbers permit social 5 distancing within existing classrooms) all staff and pupils who have been in direct contact with the individual must follow the PHA guidance and self-isolate, seek a COVID-19 test and only return to school when they have received a negative test or completed the required period of isolation after a positive test.

It is essential that all staff follow this guidance, as by doing so staff will not only protect themselves but limit the spread of the virus to educational settings and the wider population.

New StopCovid NI Proximity App

The StopCOVID NI Proximity App was released in July 2020 to assist in stopping the spread of COVID-19 in Northern Ireland, by anonymously contacting people who have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. All staff are encouraged to download this free application to help reduce the spread of COVID- 19.

Staff Experiencing Symptoms In School

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature/fever or anosmia (a loss or a change in your normal sense of smell, which can also affect your sense of taste) in an educational setting they must be sent home and advised to follow the guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection.

Staff Supervising Children Experiencing Symptoms Of COVID-19

A child awaiting collection should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate the child, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people. A risk assessment should be undertaken by the school to address this. Depending on the age of the child, appropriate adult supervision should be provided as required.

If the child needs to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected before being used by anyone else.

PPE should be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if direct personal care is needed and a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).

If the child is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk, call 999. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If a member of staff (who was wearing the appropriate PPE and adhering to the social distancing guidelines) has helped someone who was unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature or loss of taste/smell, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. Cleaning the affected area with available cleaning products, followed by disinfection after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

3.3 Category C – Those Considered “Clinically Vulnerable” Due To An Underlying Health Condition, Age (Over 70) Or Pregnancy (This May Be Subject To Review By The PHA)

Clinically vulnerable individuals who are at higher risk of severe illness (for example, people with some pre-existing conditions as set out in the NI Government website ([Click here for more information www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-vulnerable-people](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-vulnerable-people)) have been advised to take extra care in observing social distancing and should work from home where possible. This includes pregnant women. Principals/line managers should endeavour to support this, where possible, for example by asking staff to support remote education, carry out lesson planning or other roles which can be done from home.

If clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) individuals cannot work from home they should take extra care in the work place observing social distancing, staying 2 metres away from others wherever possible¹, although the individual may choose to take on a role that does not allow for this distance if they prefer to do so. If they have to spend time within 2 metres of other people, Principals/line managers should undertake a risk assessment with the individual to assess and control measures to reduce risk. They should, if necessary, be offered the safest available onsite roles.

Pregnancy And Risk

There is no evidence that pregnant women are more likely to get seriously ill from COVID-19 but pregnant women have been included in the list of people at moderate risk (clinically vulnerable) as a precaution.

This is because pregnant women can sometimes be more at risk from viruses like flu. At present it is not clear if this happens with COVID-19 but because it is a new virus, it is safer to include pregnant women in the moderate-risk group.

Principals/line managers should undertake a risk assessment with the individual to assess and control measures to reduce risk in addition to any existing risk assessments.

3.4 Category D - The Employee Is Considered “Clinically Extremely Vulnerable” As Per PHA Guidance.

Prior to 01 August 2020 individuals who received letters classifying them as clinically extremely vulnerable were asked to take extra measures to social distance “shield” thus minimising interaction with others.

These restrictions eased over time and with effect from 01 August 2020 “Shielding” has been paused. Full details can be found on the following link.

www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-vulnerable-people

The latest advice recommends that clinically extremely vulnerable individuals who are unable to work from home can now return to the work place subject to risk assessment (as explained below).

Restrictions remain in place with the aim of reducing social contact with those outside of the household. This is to protect those who are at very high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 from coming into contact with the virus. Staff who fall into this category will have received a “shielding pause” letter from the NHS/GP. The Government is regularly monitoring its position on clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.

Based on risk assessment the Principal/line manager and Employing Authority reserve the right to request that clinically extremely vulnerable staff do not attend the work place.

Principals/line managers should undertake a risk assessment with the individual to assess and control measures to reduce risk. In most cases the risk assessment and subsequent control measures will sufficiently reduce the risk and the staff member will be able to return to the work place if they are unable to work from home. See Appendix A3 Risk Assessment template.

The Principal/line manager and Employing Authority also may request evidence that a staff member has been advised to shield or self-isolate. For more information on shielding use the following link.

www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-pausing-shielding-extremely-vulnerable-people

3.5 Category E – Staff Members Who Have A Member Of Their Household That Is Considered Vulnerable Or Extremely Vulnerable.

If a member of your household is considered clinically vulnerable, current PHA advice does not require you to self-isolate. If a member of your household falls into this category, you are able to attend work.

With effect from 01 August 2020 “Shielding” has been paused and full details can be found on the following link.

www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-vulnerable-people

If a member of your household is considered clinically extremely vulnerable and in receipt of a shielding letter, employees should follow the guidance as set out by the Government and can continue to work with suitable controls in place. Government guidance published on the 11 May 2020 called for particular attention to be paid to 8 people who live with clinically extremely vulnerable individuals. Such staff should have an individual risk assessment conducted before the most appropriate course of action is determined.

With effect from 01 August 2020 “Shielding” will be paused and full details will be provided by PHA and this guidance will be further updated at that time. There may be staff in this situation who feel they cannot return to work in any capacity at present despite the aforementioned measures and assurances. In this situation, the staff member and Principal/line manager should consider options. These may include;

- flexible working (if possible)
- reduced hours/days
- annual leave (if the contract of employment allows for this) or
- unpaid leave as appropriate

See section 11 for a more information on flexible working policies and schemes.

If despite all of the above arrangements and assurances being put in place the member of staff still does not come to work or avail of the options available then HR advice should be sought from the Employing Authority.

3.6 Category F - Staff In None Of The Above Categories, Who May Refuse To Return To The School Despite Being Able To Do So (Without Medical Grounds).

There may be staff who are not defined as vulnerable, nor have caring responsibilities within their household, but feel they cannot return to work in any capacity at present despite the aforementioned measures, assurances and safety arrangements being implemented.

In this situation, the staff member in consultation with the Principal/line manager should consider the options of reducing hours/days, annual leave (if the contract of employment allows for this) or unpaid leave as appropriate.

If everything has reasonably been done to address an employee’s concerns, and action taken accordingly, but they still refuse to attend work, this may constitute unauthorised absence or partial performance (i.e. where they are only prepared to carry out certain tasks rather than their full range of duties). The Principal/line manager should explain the individual’s contractual obligations and the potential consequences of refusing to work, including, in extremis, the risk of withdrawal of pay. If there is still no change in the individual’s position, the manager should seek immediate advice from HR/ the Employing Authority who should ensure an appropriate and consistent approach is taken across the organisation. The employee should also be reminded of their right to seek advice from their trade union representative.

4. Employees Who Have A Disability

A person has a disability for the purposes of Disability Discrimination Act 1995 if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The Act imposes a duty on employers to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people to help them to remove barriers in gaining and remaining in employment.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), covers a very wide range of people and is not confined to those who come within the Government’s COVID-19 list of clinically extremely vulnerable people. Many people with a disability may have impairments that are not on the list, but their health is still

particularly vulnerable. The reasonable adjustment duty applies to all employees or job seekers who are disabled, regardless of whether they are on the Government's list or not.

Schools should ensure they make reasonable adjustments, as they are obliged to do, in addition to what they will have done to protect the health and safety of all of their employees. Where suitable health and safety risk assessments have been conducted and adequate precautions taken, all that some employees may need is reassurance that their health will be safe at work. If a disabled employee previously had tailored adjustments at work, these might still adequately meet their particular needs when they return to work. However, it is important that schools are not complacent and are prepared to do more, where reasonable, recognising that individual needs change and may have changed during the pandemic. When considering reasonable adjustments HR advice is available from the Employing Authority.

5. Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities (BAME)

As there is some evidence which suggests that COVID-19 may impact disproportionately on some groups with underlying health conditions, notably Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities (BAME), the Employing Authorities and schools should ensure that they support positive action measures such as the Occupational Health Service (OHS) providing practical support and advice to BAME staff, particularly if they are anxious about protecting themselves and their families.

All Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff with underlying health conditions and disabilities, who are over 70 or who are pregnant should be individually risk assessed and appropriate reasonable work place adjustments should be made following risk assessment.

HR advice on this matter can be sought from the Employing Authority.

6. Return To Work Support Meetings

A re-orientation or re-induction for returning staff is crucial to ensure all staff understand what is required in relation to the school successfully restarting. Every Principal/line manager should have a return meeting or conversation with staff prior to their return into the school. The key focus should be on health, safety and wellbeing.

Where possible the Principal/line manager may wish to provide generic information on important changes within the school to groups of staff and where necessary have a one to one sensitive and open discussion with individuals to discuss any adjustments and/or ongoing support they may need to facilitate an effective return to the work place. This should cover any changes to their work duties or tasks where it can be accommodated. It could be that some staff want to discuss a new working arrangement, especially if their domestic situation has changed because of the pandemic.

7. Social Distancing Responsibilities

Principals/line managers should consider the best ways to ensure key work progresses whilst adhering to the PHA and DE guidelines on social distancing at work.

Principals/line managers should remain abreast of, comply this and enforce the requisite social distancing guidelines for schools set out by the N.I. Executive.

Members of staff who are vulnerable or extremely vulnerable, or live with someone who is vulnerable or extremely vulnerable, should be supported as they follow the recommendations set out in guidance on social distancing and shielding respectively.

All of the key protection and hygiene measures will continue to apply to minimise the spread of infection, such as reminding staff about regular and effective handwashing facilities. Depending on the working environment, it may be necessary to consider providing PPE, including gloves, masks or anti-viral hand gel. For many settings guidance has already been developed and should be followed.

8. Supporting “Healthy Minds” At Work

It must be recognised that the risks to people’s health from this pandemic are psychological as well as physical.

These include:

- Anxiety about the on-going health crisis and fear of infection, as well as social isolation due to the lockdown. Many will have experienced challenging domestic situations, such as juggling childcare or caring for a vulnerable relative, as well as financial worries if a partner has lost their income.
- Some staff will have experienced illness, or bereavement.
- Some may take more time than others to reacclimatise and it is likely that most people will need a period of readjustment. Even if staff have carried on working and participating in video meetings, etc, they will still need to adjust to working in a shared environment with colleagues again.
- Some members of staff may have concerns about travelling to work on public transport – or it may not be as readily available. The current Government advice is to avoid public transport if possible and wear a protective mask if that is not possible.
- Many may find that they are still coming to terms with the significant change which society has seen, and the familiar work place routines could feel very different.
- Staff should be reminded about Employee Assistance Programme (Inspire Wellbeing), our independent Occupational Health Service and Health and Wellbeing Team.
- Every Principal/line manager should endeavour to ensure that the school remains inclusive, and that every employee feels they are returning to a supportive and caring environment. The pandemic has had an unequal impact across the workforce in many ways, as different groups of employees, and individuals, will have been affected in diverse ways according to their job role and individual circumstances. The uneven nature of people’s work and personal experiences and the challenging nature of the lockdown and on-going situation, means there could be potential for some negative feelings creeping into the employment relations climate. Therefore, it is important that Principals/line managers are sensitive to any underlying tensions and proactive about nipping potential conflict in the bud.

9. Staff Responsibilities

Staff are expected to communicate effectively with their Principal/line manager regularly. Staff should make their Principal/line manager aware of any work restrictions or concerns they have during this time.

Staff are expected to make themselves available for work and if they cannot they must clearly explain their situation and agree options with their Principal/line manager.

Staff in self-isolation because they or a member of their household are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (new continuous cough and/or fever and/or change or loss of taste/ smell) should ensure they follow the PHA advice and also inform their Principal/line manager. Testing is available as indicated above.

The Principal/line manager and Employing Authority are entitled to request and be provided with evidence to confirm medical conditions and inform, where necessary, risk assessments.

10. Further Concerns Or Guidance

Employing Authorities will continue to follow PHA and N.I. Executive guidance and medical advice at all times. This guidance has been produced so Principals/line managers and employees are aware of arrangements regarding staff returning to their school.

This guidance will be kept under review and will be updated as necessary. If an employee has any concerns regarding their attendance at work they should always discuss this with their Principal/line manager in the first instance.

11. Flexible Working Policies And Procedures

The following Flexible Working Policies and Procedures are available for staff If they wish to consider flexible working.

11.1 Teaching

- Flexible Working Scheme (Teaching)
- Job Share Scheme (Teaching)
- Temporary Variation of Contract (Teaching)
- Career Break Scheme (Teaching)

11.2 Non-Teaching

- Flexible Working Scheme – (school based Non Teaching)
- Job Share Scheme (Non Teaching)
- Career Break Scheme (Non Teaching)

12. Useful Contacts And Links

- Northern Ireland Re-Opening Schools Guidance - New School Day
- Coronavirus: Workplace safety guidelines and social distancing
- COVID-19 (coronavirus)
- Testing and tracing for COVID-19
- Guidance to support safe working in educational settings
- Covid-19 Working Through This Together
- Supporting EA Staff
- NHS - Every Mind Matters

- NHS - Pregnancy and coronavirus
- Health Well
- Inspire
- Contact Inspire counselling (free and confidential 24/7) – Tel: 0808 800 0002 24/7) – Tel: 0808 800 0002

Guidance on Absence Relating to Coronavirus (COVID-19):

Advice for Principals, Managers and Staff

(Published 28/09/2020)

1. The health, safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff is of paramount importance to all education employers in the sector. The following guidance has been produced so employers and employees are aware of arrangements regarding absences in relation to COVID-19.

2. This guidance should be read alongside the latest Public Health Agency (PHA)/Government guidance, to support Principals/Line Managers and staff when planning their return to the work place. In particular, we draw your attention to the Guidance on Supporting Staff to Return to Schools (updated 10 August 2020). For non-school based staff please [click here](#).

3. Decisions regarding an employee's attendance at the work place should be taken in line with the latest (PHA) guidance. Staff must keep their Principal/Line Manager informed on attendance issues.

4. The following guidance applies to employees subject to NJC/JNC and TNC terms and conditions including substitute teachers and non-teaching staff providing emergency cover for the period of time they have been engaged to work.

5. Procedures for other absences not related to COVID-19 remain extant.

Definition of COVID-19 Symptoms

6. The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

Please Note This guidance includes current advices from the PHA and may be subject to change. In the event of new information or guidance a further update will be issued. Please also refer to the **Guidance for Educational Settings** page at the following link:

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus>

Most people with COVID-19 have at least 1 of these symptoms.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms>

The following Scenarios 1-6 apply to all staff. This includes both substitute teachers and non-teaching staff providing emergency cover for the period of time they have been engaged to work.

SCENARIO 1: No symptoms of COVID-19

- This includes when no member of your household have symptoms.
- Those who fall into vulnerable categories should refer directly to Scenario 3 below.
- If an employee has no symptoms of COVID-19 as described above the current PHA advice is that staff can attend their work place if required and in line with Government advice including social distancing guidelines. Other arrangements, for example, working from home will require planning and regular contact with the Principal/Line Manager.

SCENARIO 2: You or a member of your household, test positive or display symptoms of COVID-19

- If an employee or a member of their household tests positive or is displaying symptoms of COVID-19 they must self-isolate immediately and follow PHA advice for their recovery.
- Staff self-isolating, without symptoms, will continue to receive **normal pay** and will be required to work from home, where feasible, during any isolation period.

2a) Employee or a member of their household display symptoms of COVID-19

- Staff who are displaying symptoms have a duty of care to themselves and others so therefore must self-refer to be tested immediately. To self-refer follow this link.
- Employees in this situation must refrain from attending work, and follow medical advice (available via telephone from your GP or NHS 111).
- Where the employee or individual/s within the household have received a **negative result**, it is important to still apply caution. If everyone with symptoms who was tested in their household receive a negative result, the member of staff can return to work providing they are well enough and have not had a fever for 48 hours. This COVID-19 absence will be excluded from any calculation of contractual sick pay. The employee will receive **normal pay**. There will therefore be no impact on absence trigger points or contractual sick pay.
- The employee must keep their Principal/Line Manager informed throughout this period.

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2b) Employee or a member of their household test positive for COVID-19

- If a member of the employee's household tests positive for COVID-19 the employee must be tested. Anyone who tests positive will be contacted by the Contact Tracing Service in the Public Health Agency, and will need to share information about their recent interactions.
- The employee must not return to work for 14 days¹ or until their symptoms have gone (whichever is later). If an employee's symptoms are continuing after 14 days¹ they should seek advice from their GP or NHS 111 before returning to work.
- Employees in this situation should refrain from attending work for a minimum of 14 days* and follow medical advice (available via telephone from your GP or NHS 111). Any such COVID-19 absences will be excluded from any calculation of contractual sick pay. The employee will receive **normal pay**. There will therefore be no impact on absence trigger points or contractual sick pay.
- The employee must keep their Principal/Line Manager informed throughout this period.

Staff living alone would only be required to refrain from work for 10 days or until their symptoms have gone (whichever is later).

SCENARIO 3: Employee is advised to self-isolate due to falling into a vulnerable health group

- As defined in the supporting information below some employees will fall into categories specified as Clinically Vulnerable or Clinically Extremely Vulnerable with respect to the effects of COVID-19. There is an onus on employing authorities and managers to take extra measures to support our most vulnerable staff to self-isolate or engage in social distancing as appropriate.
- The Principal/Line Manager should undertake an individual risk assessment for each relevant member of staff prior to returning to the school/work place.
- Where possible these employees should work from home. It is recognised that for the majority of school based staff it may not be feasible to work from home. It is however the view of the Chief Medical Officer and PHA that schools adhering to the Departmental guidance as set out in Northern Ireland Re-Opening School Guidance (New School Day) are safe places of work and study.
- A relatively small number of employees in vulnerable categories may be advised to continue to self-isolate or work from home on medical advice related to their condition despite the pausing of shielding. In such circumstances they shall receive their **normal**

pay. Working from home will require planning. The employee must keep the Principal/Line Manager informed throughout this period.

- For more information on vulnerable categories please refer to categories 3.3 and 3.4 of the Guidance on Supporting Staff to Return to schools/ work place as highlighted above.

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SCENARIO 4: Employee is directed by their Principal/Line Manager not to attend their place of work due to a temporary closure relating to COVID-19

If an employee is directed by their Principal/Line Manager, not to attend their place of work due to a temporary closure e.g. a school (or a particular year group/department/bubble) on a short-term basis due to a COVID-19 outbreak, following agreement from the employing authority/ DE, they shall receive their **normal pay**. Where possible these employees should work from home or other agreed work place and return to work when directed to do so.

SCENARIO 5: Other PHA/ Government directives to self-isolate or quarantine relating to COVID-19

5a) Test and Trace and Protect requirement to self-isolate

- The N.I. Executive has rolled out a Test and Trace and Protect strategy designed to control the spread of COVID-19 and staff are expected to follow the advice and obtain a test for COVID-19. For more information refer to;
 - a) The Guidance on Supporting Staff to Return to Schools or
 - b) The Guidance on Supporting EA Staff to Return to the Work Place
- If a member of staff is advised through Test and Trace and Protect to self-isolate they should not attend the workplace, arrange to be tested and minimise contact with others where possible. The member of staff will continue to receive normal pay for this period and will be required to work from home, where feasible, during any isolation period. Where an individual has had a negative result, it is important to still apply caution. If everyone with symptoms who was tested in their household receive a negative result, the member of staff can return to work providing they are well enough and have not had a fever for 48 hours.

Please Note This guidance includes current advices from the PHA and may be subject to change. In the event of new information or guidance a further update will be issued. Please also refer to the **Guidance for Educational Settings** page at the following link: <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus>

New StopCOVID NI Proximity App

The StopCOVID NI Proximity App was released in July 2020 to assist in stopping the spread of COVID-19 in Northern Ireland, by anonymously contacting people who have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. All staff are encouraged to download this free application to help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

5b) Requirement to quarantine due to travel outside of the UK and Ireland

Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice

- It is appreciated that the situation concerning travelling outside the Common Travel Area is uncertain at this time and official advice may change. Staff must ensure they follow Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice regarding foreign travel. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office continues to advise against non-essential international travel, except to the countries and territories listed on their exemptions page. Quarantine arrangements are a legal requirement and staff cannot attend the work place during an imposed quarantine period.
- Any staff likely to be affected by quarantine arrangements as detailed below should ensure that they notify their Principal/Line Manager at the earliest opportunity so they can assess if working from home is feasible and be fully informed on pay implications. For ease of reference 2 scenarios have been identified linked to staff travel related quarantine implications;

1. Staff who are subject to new quarantine rules while abroad (unforeseen).

Staff who have travelled to a country which is added to the UK quarantine list during their stay will be required to quarantine upon their return. As this is unforeseen staff will continue to receive **normal pay** and will be required to work from home, where feasible, during any imposed quarantine period.

Where an employee cannot do their normal work at home during the quarantine period, the Principal/Line Manager should consider whether it would be reasonable to redeploy them to alternative duties that they could carry out at home.

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2. An employee who travels abroad in full knowledge of the requirement to self-isolate on their return will be required to bring this to their Principal/Line Manager's attention, prior to departure, to facilitate an open conversation about the potential impact of this including discussing the feasibility of working from home during the quarantine period.

Where working from home is not feasible, the following options (or combination of options) should be considered as appropriate:

- take additional paid annual leave (where the contract of employment allows for this)
- take paid special leave
- make up the days over a period of time (where the contract allows for this to prevent a loss of pay)
- take unpaid special leave
- take unpaid leave
- redeployment to alternative duties that they could carry out at home

It must be emphasised that there is no automatic entitlement in this category to normal pay for this period of quarantine upon their return to Northern Ireland.

Consideration will be given to granting paid special leave on an exceptional basis if travel is for compassionate reasons.

Examples of reasons for considering a compassionate approach might include:

- attending a close family funeral
 - receiving urgent and serious medical attention
 - accompanying a family member requiring urgent and serious medical attention
 - complying with urgent legal responsibilities overseas
 - supporting a relative overseas who needs urgent and immediate help
-
- In June 2020 TNC reached an agreement relating to pre-existing holiday arrangements or commitments and quarantine arrangements for the academic year 2020/21. Teachers, Principals and Vice-Principals who had pre-booked holidays arranged prior to the announcement of quarantine arrangements and who may be required to isolate after travelling abroad, will be required to work from home during any isolation period.

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SCENARIO 6: Staff who have a child who is required to self-isolate a result of COVID-19

- The exceptional circumstances presented by the COVID-19 pandemic have particularly impacted on staff with dependants. It is recognised that in an emergency situation a member of staff may be unable to attend school/work place in their usual capacity at very short notice due to their child being required to self-isolate for a period of time as a precaution against COVID-19 and there being no one else available to care for the child.
- In these specific circumstances the member of staff should be facilitated to work from home. If the nature of the individual's job prevents this the member of staff, in these circumstances and for the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, may request **exceptional dependant leave** from their Principal/Line Manager up to a maximum of ten working days (pro-rated for part time staff) on normal pay.
- In all other circumstances staff with dependants should continue to investigate and source all care options available to them in order that they can attend the school/work place. Principals/Line Managers and staff can also refer to the Responsive Working Toolkit for more information on the range of existing flexible working and special leave options available to support them.

Other Supporting Information

Concerns about coming to work

- If an employee has any concerns regarding their attendance at work they should discuss this with their Principal/Line Manager in the first instance who will contact the Employing Authority if necessary.

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and Clinically Vulnerable groups

- The Education Sector will have employees who are in various defined vulnerable groups. In some cases this may necessitate the need for working at home or remaining out of the work place. Guidance has been provided Guidance on Supporting Staff to Return to Schools (updated 10 August 2020).

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Employees with Disabilities

- The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), covers a very wide range of people and is not confined to those who come within the Government's COVID-19 list of clinically extremely vulnerable people. The reasonable adjustment duty applies to all employees or job seekers who are disabled, regardless of whether they are on the Government's list or not.
- Managers should make reasonable adjustments, as they are obliged to do, in addition to what they will have done to protect the health and safety of all of their employees. Where suitable risk assessments have been conducted and adequate precautions taken, all that some employees may need is reassurance. If a disabled employee previously had tailored adjustments at work, these might still adequately meet their particular needs when they return to work.
- For more information please refer to section 4 of the Guidance on Supporting Staff to return to schools/ work place as highlighted above.

Evidence in relation to COVID-19

- Staff may be required to provide evidence, including medical evidence where appropriate, confirming the necessity for them or their dependant to self-isolate. Staff will be afforded a reasonable period of time to provide evidence post recovery or requirement for self-isolation in relation to any of the scenarios above (e.g. medical correspondence). If diagnosed with an illness unrelated to COVID-19 then the absence will revert to normal sickness scheme procedures.
- If applicable staff can obtain a self-isolation notice via the following NHS website:

<https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note>

Please Note This guidance includes current advices from the PHA and may be subject to change. In the event of new information or guidance a further update will be issued. Please also refer to the **Guidance for Educational Settings** page at the following link: <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus>

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities (BAME)

- As there is some evidence which suggests that COVID-19 may impact disproportionately on some groups with underlying health conditions, notably Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities (BAME), EA and managers should ensure that they support positive action measures such as the Occupational Health Service (OHS) providing practical support and advice to BAME staff, particularly if they are anxious about protecting themselves and their families.
- All Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff with underlying health conditions and disabilities, who are over 70 or who are pregnant should be individually risk assessed and appropriate reasonable work place adjustments should be made following risk assessment.
- For more information please refer to section 5 of Guidance on Supporting Staff to return to schools/ work place as highlighted above.

Signage In Place In School (1)**STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS****CATCH IT**

Germs spread easily. Always carry tissues and use them to catch your cough or sneeze.

**BIN IT**

Germs can live for several hours on tissues. Dispose of your tissue as soon as possible.

**KILL IT**

Hands can transfer germs to every surface you touch. Clean your hands as soon as you can.

COVID-19 ALERT

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



NEW AND CONTINUOUS COUGH



HIGH TEMPERATURE

IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS, YOU NEED TO SELF-ISOLATE FOR 7 DAYS.

IF YOU LIVE WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS SYMPTOMS, YOU NEED TO SELF-ISOLATE FOR 14 DAYS FROM THE DAY THEIR SYMPTOMS STARTED.

ONLY USE NHS 111 IF YOUR SYMPTOMS GET WORSE OR ARE NO BETTER AFTER HOME ISOLATION

STOP THE SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS



USE SOAP AND WATER OR A HAND SANITISER WHEN YOU:
- GET HOME OR INTO WORK
- SLOW YOUR NOSE
- SNEEZE OR COUGH
- EAT OR HANDLE FOOD



WHEN YOU COUGH OR SNEEZE, THROW THE TISSUE AWAY STRAIGHT AWAY.

WASH YOUR HANDS MORE OFTEN AND FOR 20 SECONDS

COVER YOUR MOUTH AND NOSE WITH A TISSUE OR YOUR SLEEVE (NOT YOUR HANDS)



FREQUENTLY CLEAN AND DISINFECT OBJECTS AND SURFACES THAT ARE TOUCHED REGULARLY, USING YOUR STANDARD CLEANING PRODUCTS



GOV.UK/CORONAVIRUS

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COVID-19 ALERT

**THIS AREA IS
CLEANED
REGULARLY**



**Please use
hand sanitiser
before entering**

Signage In Place In School (2)



Flowcharts



Management of People Who Become Symptomatic Onsite

To be used in conjunction with New School Day Guidance – Section 8

If anyone becomes unwell with

- a new, continuous cough; or
- a high temperature/fever; or
- anosmia (a loss or a change in your normal sense of smell, which can also affect your sense of taste)

they **must be sent home and advised to follow the [PHA](#) guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection.**

Settings should **keep a full record of such actions and request a parent / carer / guardian record their acknowledgement of this action.**

A child awaiting collection should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door. **Appropriate adult supervision must be provided.** Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to fully isolate the child, they should be moved to an area which is at least 2m away from other people.

A **risk assessment** should be undertaken by the school to address this. **Schools should fully document this process** to ensure records of who made the decision, who was contacted, who provided supervision and who picked up the child are held.

If the child needs to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they **should use a separate bathroom if possible.** The bathroom should be **cleaned and disinfected before being used by anyone else.**

PPE should be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if direct personal care is needed and a distance of 2m cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).

If the child is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk, call 999. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If a member of staff (who was wearing the appropriate PPE and adhering to the social distancing guidelines) has helped someone with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature or loss of taste/smell, **they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves.**

They should **wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds** after any contact with someone who has developed symptoms. **Cleaning the affected area with available cleaning products, followed by disinfection after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.**

You do not need to tell other pupils and parents that a child has been sent home with COVID-19 symptoms.

Test , Trace, Protect

To be used in conjunction with New School Day Guidance – Section 8

Anyone who exhibits any symptoms associated with COVID-19 should not attend school. All symptomatic pupils and staff are expected to follow the advice and obtain a test for COVID-19.

Where an individual has had a **negative result** and **everyone with symptoms who was tested in their household receive a negative result**, the pupil or **member of staff can return to school providing they are well enough and have not had a fever for 48 hours.**

Anyone who tests positive will be contacted by the Contact Tracing Service in the Public Health Agency, and will need to share information about their recent interactions. This could include household members, people with whom you have been in direct contact, or been within 2 metres for more than 15 minutes.

All household members should follow PHA isolation guidance which currently requires everyone in the household to stay at home.

- If you have symptoms of coronavirus or a positive test, you will need to **stay at home for at least 10 days.**
- If you live with someone who has symptoms or a positive test, you will need to **stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person in the home started having symptoms.**
- However, if you develop symptoms during this 14-day period, you will need to self-check in accordance with Test and Trace guidance and **stay at home for 10 days from the day your symptoms started** (regardless of what day you are on in the original 14-day period).
- 10 days after your symptoms started, if you do not have a high temperature, you do not need to continue to self-isolate. If you still have a high temperature, keep self-isolating until your temperature returns to normal. You do not need to self-isolate if you just have a cough after 10 days, as a cough can last for several weeks after the infection has gone.
- If you have symptoms and live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else they can stay for the 14-day isolation period.
- It is likely that people living within a household will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

PHA guidance under the Test and Trace and Protect programme will be **applied for all staff or pupils in contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19.** Test and Trace staff will contact anyone with a positive test and trace their contacts over the previous 48 hours seeking information on where that individual has been in contact with someone for 15 minutes or more and less than 2 m social distance. **Isolation guidance will then be provided that is context specific and may result in friendship groups, regular contacts and potentially an entire class or 'bubble' being instructed to self-isolate at home.**

Should a COVID-19 confirmed case occur, **the EA cleaning service should be notified. Enhanced cleaning should be carried out within any classroom in which an individual who has developed COVID-19 has been to minimise risk of the spread of the virus.** This should be clearly communicated to staff, parents and pupils to provide assurance that the environment is safe.

Pupils and staff can return to school when they have completed the necessary period of isolation as advised by the Test, Trace and Protect service. This will help contain any potential transmission to those staff/pupils and will also assist in protecting the wider community.

COVID-19 Management Flowchart Possible / Confirmed COVID-19 Case in School

TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH NEW SCHOOL DAY GUIDANCE – SECTION 2 AND SECTION 8

