

September guidance for schools

Quick overview

Updated 12 August 2020



September expectations

- All schools and education settings to open for all pupils
- All schools to follow DfE guidance and PHE system of controls to reduce risk of transmission
- Some flexibility on implementation - “informed judgements” but **no part-time provision or rotas**
- Schools asked to keep pupils in class or year “bubbles” wherever possible but not at expense of accessing full curriculum
- Protective measures to be put in place - emphasis on regular cleaning and hygiene
- Schools to have clear systems for responding to confirmed cases of infection as advised by PHE and local authority
- Schools must be actively engaged with NHS Test and Trace
- Extra-curricular provision to resume

Controls – “sensible, proportionate controls”

- Reduce risks of transmission – “reasonably practical”
- Groups of children - class or year “bubbles” – avoiding mixing where possible but not at expense of curriculum
- Avoid large groupings – assemblies/concerts
- Seating plans – forward-facing desks
- Staff distance from pupils and each other “as much as possible”
- Update risk assessments and monitor arrangements
- No touching where possible
- Staggered starts, breaks, lunch and finish if possible
- Regular and thorough cleaning – avoid shared resources where feasible

Prevention, Response and Containing Outbreaks of Covid-19

- **Prevention**

- All schools to follow DFE/PHE '**hierarchy**' of **controls** to reduce risk of spread:
 - System in place for preventing symptomatic children and staff coming to school (must)
 - Ensure that all parents are aware of symptoms and how to get tested (see letter on EGFL <https://www.egfl.org.uk/sites/default/files/Julian-Bell-letter-parents-and-carers-8-July-2020.pdf> <https://www.egfl.org.uk/coronavirus#testing>)
 - Hand and respiratory hygiene (must)
 - Enhanced cleaning (must)
 - Reduce contacts and maximise distancing (properly considered)
 - PPE in (specific circumstances)
- Robust risk assessments
- System in place for monitoring effectiveness of above controls

Prevention, Response and Containing Outbreaks of Covid-19

- **Response**

- Identification and management of possible and confirmed cases
 - Use flowchart on EGFL
 - <https://www.egfl.org.uk/coronavirus#testing>
- Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process, including isolation of close contacts

- **Containing outbreaks**

- Work with PHE health protection team (London Coronavirus Response Cell) and Local authority to determine actions.
 - Including need for isolation of larger groups of children
 - If schools are effectively implementing the prevention controls, whole school closure will not generally be necessary, and should not be considered except on advice from health protection team

Groupings

- Secondary – bubbles the size of year groups (or smaller where possible)
- Keep apart from other groups where possible
- Small adaptations to classrooms and desks
- Teachers can operate across different groups
- Adults in secondary schools to try and keep 2m from others or limit closer contact
- No expectation of 2m with younger children or those with complex needs
- Avoid congestion where possible - pupils and adults

Curriculum and assessment

- Broad and balanced curriculum for all – modifications when necessary but full entitlement by Summer latest
- Use existing flexibilities to cover missed content
- Reinforce basics – reading through all subjects
- Assess starting points and plan from there to address gaps in knowledge and skills
- Regular, formative assessment
- Full provision and support for SEND
- Support staff and additional services as usual
- Schools can suspend some subjects – exceptional circumstances
- RHE and RSHE compulsory and expected by summer 2021 latest
- Can discontinue subjects for Y11 if necessary to support focus on core
- Review any plans for early entry Y10
- Music – singing, wind and brass precautions
- PE – outdoors when and wherever possible – cleaning indoors
- Emphasis on pastoral - pupil wellbeing and support

Curriculum and assessment

- Primary statutory assessment will take place summer 2021
- EYFS, KS1, KS2 usual timetable – phonics screening; KS1 TA; Y4 multiplication; KS2 tests and TA; statutory trialling
- Reception baseline assessment postponed until Sept 21
- Reviewing requirements re phonics screening check in Y2
- GCSEs and A Levels scheduled Summer 21 with adaptations
- Opportunity for Autumn exams series – **funding announced**
- No performance tables for 2019 to 2020 academic year

GCSE and A Levels 2021

- Exams and assessments to go ahead for 2021
- Changes announced to 15 A level subjects and 25 GCSE subjects
 - how content is assessed in geography and history GCSE
 - GCSE English literature choice of topics
 - Fieldwork days reviewed GCSE and A level
 - Teacher assessments of spoken language skills MFL GCSE
 - Modifications alongside PHE requirements – food; music; PE
 - No significant changes to length or format of exam papers
 - Delay to exams – no decision to date
 - Contingency plans in event of further disruption in progress
 - Flexibilities for vocational subject assessment – consultation closes 14 August
 - [Read about the proposed changes to the assessment of GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2021](#)

Examination results 2020

- “Triple lock” announced 12th August to provide further “security” to students – appeal for mock grades in event that algorithm grades are lower plus opportunity to resit in Autumn
- Ofqual promoting flexibility on entry to 6th form
- Schools can appeal if historic data does not reflect current cohort
- £30M Support package to help schools with costs of running re-sits in Autumn

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/triple-lock-for-students-ahead-of-a-level-and-gcse-results>

Accountability – Ofsted

- Routine Section 5 and Section 8 inspections suspended for Autumn term
- From 28 September, HMI face-to-face visits scheduled 5% of all schools
 - focus on management of pupils' return; planned approach for maximising access to learning including blended approach; vulnerable pupils; wellbeing and behaviour as a whole
 - collaborative discussions with leaders (no lesson observations)
 - No judgements. Letter written on site with leaders.
- Safeguarding inspections continue as usual

Behaviour

- Review and revise behaviour policy
- Usual powers but consider carefully....
- Plan for pupils who may be most anxious or reluctant to engage – consider context and experiences - reintegration programmes
- Focus on pupil and staff wellbeing

Attendance

- Mandatory
- Usual rules apply
- Early work with parents and families who have concerns about return
- Work with LA in anticipating persistent absence
- Parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at their education setting where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age
- Settings' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- Availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct
- Under usual circumstances *"schools must meet for at least 380 sessions or 190 days during any school year to educate their pupils. If a school is prevented from meeting for one or more sessions because of an unavoidable event, it should find a practical way of holding extra sessions. If it cannot find a practical way of doing this then it is not required to make up the lost sessions."*
- As attendance will be mandatory the LA advises school maintain usual term dates and not to plan increases in the number of inset days beyond the usual 5, or extended the summer closure period unless this is unavoidable or can be made up. Usual school processes apply in determining and changing dates with the LA published term dates.
- Relevant guidance:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818204/School_attendance_July_2019.pdf
- <https://www.egfl.org.uk/coronavirus>
- **Ealing school attendance policy**

SEND Pupils in mainstream

- All children are expected to start back in provision from September and EHCP are recognised as being particularly vulnerable when not attending school. The government intends to reinstate Section 42 so that 'reasonable endeavours' no longer apply and all provision should be made available by schools.
- Specific support needs to be put in place for children with an EHCP and in some cases a transition plan discussed and coproduced with parents/carers to ensure a successful transition back to school.
- The statutory duties on schools under the equalities legislation remain in place and children with an EHCP having a protected characteristic will have special rights which need to be considered.
- Behaviour policies should not discriminate unfairly against children with an EHCP who by the nature of their needs may find it difficult to socially distance, may spit or behave in other challenging ways and these types of behaviours should be anticipated within return to school planning.

Transport

- **Special school transport** – ‘Dedicated transport’. Social distancing not a requirement, other additional protective measures to continue, working with individual schools to plan for September.
- **Public transport** – limited capacity and social distancing remains 2m and 1m+. Passengers encouraged to walk and cycle. Face coverings to be worn by those over 11. Guidance on safe travel is found here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>
- **Free Travel** – Awaiting further guidance. Temporary suspension of free travel for 11-17 year olds to be implemented immediately after October Half Term. This is ambitious
- Remaining eligible for free travel: Children aged 10 and under, Children aged 11-17 who live more than two miles walking distance from their school/college
- Children aged 11-17 who live less than two miles walking distance from their school/college if they:
 - have a social worker
 - have an Education, Health and Care Plan
 - are in alternative provision (i.e. educated in a pupil referral unit, or an alternative provision academy/free school)
 - do not have a safe walking route under two miles walking distance
 - cannot walk due to a medical condition or lack of mobility

The eligibility criteria set out above will apply until the end of the academic year in which a child turns 11 or 18

Contingency Arrangements – Remote learning

- Government expects schools to have the capacity to offer immediate **high quality** remote education, where a class, group or small number of pupils need to self-isolate, or there is a local lockdown
- Expect schools to have strong contingency plan in place for remote education provision by the end of September
- Government will explore making a temporary continuity direction in the autumn term, to give additional clarity as to what remote education should be provided.
- Emerging advice and guidance on remote learning

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/remote-education-practice-for-schools-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Access to additional IT and resources

- Schools can apply for government-funded support through The Key for School Leaders and access one of two free-to-use digital education platforms: G Suite for Education or Office 365 Education
- More laptops and tablets have been made available for disadvantaged children in certain year groups who are affected by disruption to face to face education at their school, or have been advised to shield
- Pilot schemes to increase access to internet in progress

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-laptops-and-tablets-for-children-who-cannot-attend-school-due-to-coronavirus-covid-19>

Catch-up premium 2020 - 2021

- School allocations on per pupil basis £80 for each pupil Reception to Y11
- Special and AP schools provided with £240 per place with additional weighting for specialist settings
- Funding provided in three tranches
- Flexibility in how funds are used (see Education Endowment Fund support guide for schools on evidence based approaches)

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/covid-19-support-guide-for-schools/#nav-covid-19-support-guide-for-schools1>

National Tutoring Programme 2020 - 2021

- Programmes funded to to be delivered in Autumn 2 onwards
- High-quality tuition available to 5 to 16 year olds in state-funded primary and secondary schools - delivery led by EEF
- 16 to 19 fund for school sixth forms, colleges and all other 16 to 19 providers to provide small group tutoring activity for disadvantaged
- Teach First tasked with recruiting, training and placing Academic Mentors (salaries subsidised by government)
- <https://nationaltutoring.org.uk/contact-us> Tuition Partners
- <https://nationaltutoring.org.uk/ntp-academic-mentors> Academic Mentors
- Schools to express their interest in participating in or contributing directly to the programmes at websites above. **Funding round opens 31st August**

Risk Assessments

- Revised risk assessments required, LA will update both the generic and individual risk assessments <https://www.egfl.org.uk/coronavirus>
- Focus on sensible and proportionate control measures
- Consultation with representatives of staff required in good time
- Consider involving parents and pupils, may help to reassure them regarding steps you are taking
- HSE expect Assessment to be published for employers with more than 50 employees
- Monitor and review the preventive and protective measures regularly

Special Schools

- The expectations on special schools are very similar to mainstream settings including remote learning for those who must not attend school
- Co-production and involvement of families and young people expected
- Expect full return to start in Autumn Term, should not be rotas
- Attendance compulsory unless specific exceptions apply detailed in the document
- DfE does not intend to issue any further notices to modify EHC duties in respect of using reasonable endeavours to provide what is specified in plans. Current one expires 31st July

Special Schools and other specialist settings

- There will be no further national notices issued to modify the EHC duties, but consideration will be given to whether any such flexibilities may be required locally to respond to outbreaks.
- All children back to school full time from the start of the autumn term
- Provision of a 'full' educational experience for pupils
- Plan for the possibility of a local lockdown to ensure continuity of education
- Risk assessments may prove useful now and over the autumn term, in identifying what additional support children and young people with EHC plans need to make a successful return to full education
- Review health and safety risk assessments and draw up plans for the autumn term that address the risks identified
- Specialist therapists, clinicians and other support staff for pupils with SEND should provide interventions as usual and can move between settings

Special Schools and other specialist settings

- Classroom based resources can be shared between a bubble, they should be cleaned regularly along with all frequently touched surfaces
- Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, such as sports, art and science equipment should be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between bubbles, or rotated to allow them to be left unused for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different bubbles.
- Settings will need to make an assessment of the cleanability of equipment used in the delivery of therapies (for example. physiotherapy equipment, sensory equipment), to determine whether this equipment can withstand cleaning and disinfection between each use (and how easy or practical it would be to do so) before it is put back into general use.
- Where cleaning or disinfection is not possible or practical, resources will have to be restricted to one user, or be left unused for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different individuals.

Staffing – Workforce in Schools Sept 2020

- Guidance states that **most** staff expected to be back at school from Sept
- Staff in the most “at risk” categories may be able to return but...
 - flexibility in how these staff are deployed and
 - extra care taken to ensure safety e.g. individual risk assessment
 - **Cross reference of advice for clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable (Ealing category 6)**
 - Discussion with individuals is encouraged to identify concerns/anxieties and establish if these can be mitigated to the extent necessary to bring staff back
- **Self-isolation period for those displaying C19 symptoms has changed from 7 to 10 days (Ealing categories 1 & 3)**
- **Staff reluctant to attend school or those who may be at increased risk from C19 (Ealing category 12)**
- **New category for staff who are pregnant – two risk assessments required (Ealing new category 10)**
- Emphasis of legal obligations on health and safety
- Employers reminded of need to pay due regard to staff wellbeing and work-life balance
- Supply teachers and peripatetic staff can move between schools
- Specialist and therapists – business as usual

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

<https://www.egfl.org.uk/coronavirus>

Full guidance updated 7 August

Read the guidance for full opening: schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>