



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

22nd July 2020

**CONSIDERATION OF THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19 (DETAIL OF THE
CABINET REPORTS CONSIDERED ON THE 21ST May & 25th JUNE 2020)**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES &
COMMUNICATIONS**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members of the Children and Young People's Committee with the opportunity to scrutinise, review and challenge the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the information received from the Director of Education & Inclusion.
- 1.2 To consider the statement made by the Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams MS, on the re-opening of schools in September, made on the 9th July 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:-

- 2.1 Consider the verbal update from the Director of Education & Inclusion in relation to the Council's response to COVID-19, from an education perspective.
- 2.2 Acknowledge the contents of the information included and latest verbal information received and determine whether there are any areas in which Members would like to receive further information.
- 2.3 Subject to 2.1 and 2.2 above, request the Service Director Democratic Services and Communications to report any relevant and further information to the next Committee.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Cabinet reports cited within this report, identify the critical actions taken by the Council since the COVID-19 restrictions were imposed by the UK and Welsh Governments and set out the future steps the Council will take in respect of service planning in the next recovery phase.
- 3.2 To support the committee's considerations of the Council's response, from an education perspective, and the current plans being undertaken to prepare schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf for September.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 On the 23rd March 2020, and in response to measures implemented by the UK and Welsh Governments as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council's committee meetings were temporarily suspended.
- 4.2 Council decisions have continued to be made during this period in accordance with the Council's constitution. However, the Council's Scrutiny Committees have been unable to undertake their role as part of the Council's decision making processes during this time, until the necessary regulations were presented by the Welsh Government.
- 4.3 With the introduction of [the Local Authorities \(Coronavirus\) \(Meetings\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2020 in May](#) all local authorities in Wales have been provided with the opportunity to resume their committee processes.
- 4.4 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee met for the first time under these arrangements on 26th June 2020.
- 4.5 Taking an over-arching response to scrutiny in the immediate period, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, determined areas for scrutiny over the extended municipal year up to the Council's Annual General Meeting on 16th September 2020.
- 4.6 Thematic Scrutiny Committee are not being requested to consider or develop specific work programmes for this period. The Children's Services' element of this committees remit will be considered at its September meeting.

5. SCRUTINISING THE OF THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

- 5.1 The Cabinet has been utilising video conferencing to engage with senior officers around the Council's response to the Coronavirus and the first formal virtual meeting of the Cabinet was held on [Thursday 21st May](#). At that meeting, the attached report was presented by the Chief Executive, outlining the Council's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic to date, and the future intentions to establish the recovery and resumption of services. Reports emanating from the recommendations agreed at this meeting, were considered by Cabinet on [Thursday 25th June](#). The Chief Executive also provided a

detailed summary to members at the first virtual meeting of Council, held on [1st July 2020](#).

- 5.2 The Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committee has to-date taken a Council-wide approach to scrutiny, as the Council's over-arching scrutiny committee. The Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee is the first thematic scrutiny committee to take place under the new regulations virtually.
- 5.3 This Committee is being held to provide the opportunity for the Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee, to consider the service response of the Council to date. Importantly it provides the first opportunity for members to receive information in respect of these issues relating to the remit of the Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee. **Members are asked to consider the reports attached and determine whether there are any issues on which they would like to receive further information or review in greater detail at a future meeting. It is not proposed, at this initial meeting, to facilitate detailed discussions around specific areas.**
- 5.4 Given the fast moving nature of these matters, it is important to acknowledge that information may need to be provided to Scrutiny in different formats, with a focus on a smaller range of issues relating predominantly to the Council's activity around COVID-19.
- 5.5 There will be further reports to Cabinet in the coming weeks which will outline how the Council continues to respond and prepare for the future. The Cabinet will consider the Service Recovery Plans of the Council, at its meeting on the 28th July 2020. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee, determined at its first meeting, to scrutinise the details of these proposals at its next meeting, scheduled to take place on 30th July 2020.
- 5.6 **It is important to acknowledge, in the current circumstances, that facilitating the opportunity for Senior Officers to provide up-to-date information directly at the committee meeting provides the most effective way for Scrutiny to be engaged in these matters.** In doing so, the opportunity will continue to be afforded for Scrutiny to be updated with the latest developments as they unfold, providing greater scope to engage in these matters and request information and additional reporting as deemed appropriate by Committee Members.
- 5.7 This Scrutiny committee will receive the latest information and evidence from Director of Education & Inclusion at this meeting at its first meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.8 As part of the review of these matters, it is proposed to receive information and evidence from the Cabinet Members where appropriate.
- 5.9 To support the smooth conduct of this first virtual scrutiny meeting, members are encouraged to seek clarification on specific matters, particularly of a ward nature, outside of the meeting, if these questions do not relate to recommendations set out for Member's considerations.

6. SUPPORTING PAPERS & INFORMATION

6.1 As general information for the committee, the following the reports have been considered by the Cabinet:

- Cabinet report titled: [“Update on COVID 19 Position in Rhondda Cynon Taf”](#) considered on the 21st May 2020.
- Cabinet Reports considered on 25th June:
[‘Council Infrastructure Projects – Supporting the Local economy during CORONAVIRUS’](#)

[‘Safer Places – Social Distancing in town centres and public spaces during Coronavirus’](#)

[‘Safer buildings social distancing and other safety measure in Council Offices, schools and other public buildings as lockdown is lifted.’](#)
[‘The Financial Implications of COVID-19.’](#)
- Urgent Cabinet Member Decision – Child Care & Summer Activities (<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/DelegatedDecisions/RelatedDocuments/Decisions/2019to2020/ChildcareandSummerActivityProgramme2020.pdf>)

6.2 Members are asked to consider any questions they may wish to progress, in the context of the above information

6.3 To facilitate the scrutiny process and questioning by members, the following appendices are attached for consideration, which will support the verbal update, on the latest situation relating to the return of schools in September, to be made by the Director of Education & Inclusion.

6.4 The guidance included at **APPENDIX A**, titled: Guidance 2- for the Safe Re-opening of Schools, was issued to schools by the Council to support the phased approach to all schools opening on the 29th of June, as outlined by the Education Minister Kirsty Williams, on the 3rd of June 2020. The summer term ceased on the 20th of July.

6.5 This guidance supported the phased re-introduction of all learners back into schools from the 29th of June, with cohorts split to ensure that all have an opportunity to safely check in, catch up, and prepare for summer and September 2020. Provision included emergency childcare for essential workers and vulnerable learners in their home school.

6.6 On the 9th July the Minister for Education Kirsty Williams MS, confirmed Arrangements for schools in Wales from September forward. A Copy of the Minister's Statement can be found at:
(<https://gov.wales/written-statement-arrangements-schools-september>),
Which includes the advice note of the Technical Advisory Group Advise from The Children & Education Sub Group can be found at:
(https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-07/technical-advisory-group-advice-from-children-and-education-subgroup_0.pdf)

6.6.1 In response to this confirmation by the Welsh Government, the Council's Director of Education & Lifelong Learning wrote to all Head Teachers in Rhondda Cynon Taf. A copy of this letter is attached at **APPENDIX B**.

6.6.2 The Welsh Government issued Operational guidance for the Autumn Term on the 13th July. This information can be found at:

En – <https://gov.wales/operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-autumn-term-covid-19>

Cy – <https://llyw.cymru/canllawiau-gweithredol-ar-gyfer-ysgolion-lleoliadau-o-dymor-yr-hydref-covid-19>

En – <https://gov.wales/guidance-learning-schools-and-settings-autumn-term-covid-19>

Cy – <https://llyw.cymru/canllawiau-ar-ddysgu-mewn-ysgolion-lleoliadau-o-dymor-yr-hydref-covid-19>

6.7 To support planning and preparation for these arrangements in the Autumn Term, the Council issues the following guidance for the Autumn Term, on the 14th July 2020. A Copy of this guidance 3 can be found at **APPENDIX C**

6.8 The Director of Education and Inclusion Service wrote to all parents and carers to inform them of the latest updated position regarding the "back to school plans" for September 2020 for pupils in Rhondda Cynon Taf. A copy of this letter can be is attached at **APPENDIX D**

6.9 Director of Education & Inclusion will provide the most update information and a synopsis of the Council's response, from an education perspective, to date.

7. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

7.1 Engagement has been undertaken with Director for Education & Inclusion in respect of the contents of this report.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not currently required - the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

10.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

11. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES.

11.1 This is an information report presenting the Cabinet report which outlines how the Council is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

12. CONCLUSION

12.1 Whilst it is proposed that Scrutiny is presented with a regular package of information identifying the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic (pressure points on Council services relating to COVID-19, along with the business of reinstating some services and the recovery and service planning process), Members are asked to acknowledge the fast-moving nature of this situation, which has necessitated the need to provide up-to-date information as part of the meeting, to effectively allow Scrutiny to consider these matters.

12.2 Committee will consider an update in respect of Children's Services at its next meeting.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE

22nd July 2020

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES &

COMMUNICATION



Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Guidance for the safe re-opening of schools

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg
This document is available in Welsh

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1. Introduction

This guidance outlines the proposed phased approach to all schools opening on the 29th of June, as outlined by the Education Minister Kirsty Williams, on the 3rd of June 2020. The summer term will cease on the 20th of July.

This guidance is intended to support the phased re-introduction of all learners back into schools on the 29th of June, with cohorts split to ensure that all have an opportunity to safely check in, catch up, and prepare for summer and September 2020. Provision will continue to include emergency childcare for essential workers and vulnerable learners in their home school.

This guidance is informed by the following documents:

Operational guidance:

<https://gov.wales/operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-keep-education-safe-covid-19>

FAQ Link:

<https://gov.wales/schools-increasing-operations-29-june-coronavirus>

Guidance for hubs and schools (17.4.2):

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-04/guidance-hubs-schools-coronavirus-provision.pdf>

This guidance aims to ensure that schools and childcare settings are safe for staff and children, maintaining social distancing wherever possible while supporting well-being. Under regulation 6A of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020 (the “Coronavirus Regulations”), a person responsible for a workplace is required to take all reasonable measures to ensure that a distance of 2 metres is maintained between persons on particular premises. This requirement includes schools and childcare settings. Further information can be found at:

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-04/the-health-protection-coronavirus-restrictions-wales-regulations-2020-as-amended.pdf>

This information aims to support schools to develop and maintain ‘reasonable measures’ in an educational context, as is issued under regulation 7A of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020. All school premises have different challenges in terms of its layout and size, but this information is provided as a framework to help school leaders to plan for the return of children to their local schools.

Underpinning this guidance is the expectation that schools work in partnership with the local authority and parents and carers to ensure that effective and safe approaches to re-opening schools will be adopted. Risks will need to be effectively identified and managed. There is an expectation that schools operate within the parameters of the



guidance documents provided by the local authority, although there is recognition that headteachers, in partnership with their governing bodies, need to make strategic and operational judgements based on their individual contexts and the presenting challenges faced on a daily basis.

The safety of children and staff is of utmost importance and this advice seeks to support staff working in schools to deliver education and childcare in the safest way possible, focusing on measures that can be put in place to help limit risk of the virus spreading in schools.

Further information and guidance which has been issued by the local authority to assist with the safe re-opening of schools is referenced throughout this document – located under the sections to which the specific guidance documents relate.

A list of Frequently Asked Questions has also been published by the local authority at www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolfags.

2. Opening Hours

Schools should be open for core hours for education delivery, with well-planned staggered start and finishing times that do not deviate too significantly from normal school hours.

Once schools open for education from 29th of June, childcare will be delivered in schools Monday to Friday between the hours of 8:00 and 17:00 for essential workers and core hours for vulnerable learners. Childcare should be staffed using school staff and care taken to ensure that staff do not exceed contractual hours when covering the childcare care provision. Staffing in the childcare provision will need to be managed on a shift basis and should be negotiated with staff given the after school hours element of the provision.

The Minister has indicated that any summer childcare provision will not involve school staff.

3. Pupil Groupings for Returning to School

In each school, there will be a phased approach to integrating learners back into school. Year groups should be split into cohorts with staggered starts, lessons and breaks. A maximum of a third of pupils should be present at any one time, although it is recognised that schools may need time to reach this level of operation. Schools should strive to ensure that all children access at least 3 days in school over the four week period, with additional sessions provided for priority year groups where deemed appropriate. However, it is acknowledged that each setting will have different pressures in relation to the number of vulnerable learners and essential worker placements. In view of this, a consistent approach across all schools will be difficult to achieve in practice. Where



there is concern, please advise your link local authority and support will be provided to address any challenges you are facing.

Childcare for 0-4 year olds will continue to be provided in settings other than schools. However, provision for nursery learners will not take place over the last 3 weeks of the summer term 2020. Should Welsh Government issue further advice on this issue, this position will be reviewed.

In order to avoid infection transmission, post 16 consortia arrangements and secondary transition visits to secondary school sites should not take place. Innovative ways of preparing learners for transition should be explored, including virtual experiences.

For primary school aged children, schools and settings may wish to consider allowing small, consistent groups of no more than 8 in a classrooms. These groups should remain the same as changing the membership could potentially increase the risk of transmissions.

Class sizes should ensure that there is sufficient space to adhere to 2 metres social distancing at secondary level, and should be sufficiently small to provide secure dedicated time with teaching staff and classmates.

When planning schools should consider:

- avoiding multiple groups of learners sharing the same space without cleaning;
- avoiding multiple groups of learners from interacting or having the opportunity to mix to avoid increasing the risk of transmission between groups;
- it may be preferable to bring a group of learners in for longer blocks of time with at least a week's interval in between rather than multiple, shorter slots over the course of the four weeks.

The number of children and staff reintroduced in schools will need to allow for social distancing in line with the requirements. If the numbers within a provision means you have concerns with compliance, please raise this with your allocated local authority lead who will be able to support and advise you.

Key actions:

- Where possible children should access at least 3 days in school.
- The same cohort of learners remain in the school setting per day with visits lasting nearly a full day to accommodate the staggered starts and finish times.
- Consideration should be given to prioritising key years where appropriate.
- The children of essential workers and vulnerable children should be accommodated alongside returning year groups where appropriate.
- Vulnerable learner attendance should be actively encouraged to secure engagement.
- Schools must liaise with ITU to confirm and agree transport arrangements before communicating proposed arrangements with parents/carers.

- Plan content and timing of communications to parents and pupils (including discussing attendance expectations and other specific things that parents should do to help prepare returning pupils, for example, arrangements for drop-off/collection).
- Ensure that children have contact with their class teacher where possible.
- Alert the local authority of any staffing capacity challenges.
- Place staff as consistently as possible with the same children to minimise the risk of infection. (However, it is recognised that this may not be possible if there is staff absence and in secondary settings).
- In special schools, agree which additional pupils will return irrespective of year groups to achieve a phased return.
- Agree what returning support is available for vulnerable and/or disadvantaged children (including any dual-registered students).
- Put in place provision for the return of pupils with SEN in conjunction with families and other agencies and engage with LA/agencies to provide support.

4. Emergency Childcare

The children of essential workers and vulnerable learners will continue to access emergency childcare, but this will be in their home schools from the 29th of June 2020. Children accessing childcare should also access educational opportunities alongside their peers. Care should be taken to ensure that this is carefully planned to minimise transmission risks. Only Rhondda Cynon Taf residents can access childcare in the County Borough, and children requiring access to childcare will receive this in their home school only. There will be no expectation for headteachers to make childcare provision for school staff in their own school, unless the child is on roll at the school.

This additional childcare provision could be provided in a discrete setting for both essential workers and vulnerable learners. Support should also be provided to engage vulnerable and disadvantaged learners, including engaging in distance learning activities. For vulnerable learners, additional learning support should be considered to enable the most vulnerable to catch up. In some contexts, if integrating the children of essential worker and vulnerable learners into their usual classes is easier to achieve organisationally due to small numbers, then this could be explored. Details relating to the definition of vulnerable learners and essential workers are provided in Appendix 1.

Applications for emergency childcare have now all been processed and the local authority is not processing any late applications. Any late applications are being redirected to the home school for consideration in terms of space and staffing and to evaluate whether they deem the circumstances exceptional.

Schools must adhere to the opening hours specified by the local authority of 8:00 to 17:00 hours Monday to Friday for emergency childcare provision for the children of essential workers and core school hours for vulnerable learners, unless there are no attendees.



Emergency childcare will continue to be provided for the 0-4 year old children of essential workers and those that are vulnerable in childcare settings until at least the end of August. This is delivered by CIW registered childcare providers. This childcare offer is in addition to the school based offer.

Applications should be made via the Council website. Welsh Government have confirmed that the Coronavirus Childcare Assistance Scheme (C-CAS) will close to new applications on the 12th July (with the exception of school based staff who can apply up until the end of term).

Key actions:

- Provide childcare for essential workers and vulnerable learners who have applied via the local authority.
- Ensure that vulnerable learners in childcare provision, where possible, access catch up sessions.
- Ensure that both essential workers and vulnerable learners have opportunities for engaging in distance learning opportunities when accessing childcare.
- Ensure that vulnerable learners and the children of essential workers have the same opportunities as their peer group to spend time with their peers and class teacher

5. Transport

Close partnership working with the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) will be essential, as capacity on school transport will be reduced by 80% due to social distancing requirements. When deciding on which cohorts of learners will be targeted for school attendance, consideration must be given to their transport arrangements. Schools have been working closely with ITU and seats on school transport have been duly allocated. Any further requests for transport **must** be agreed by the ITU.

Active travel should be encouraged where possible and parents/carers advised to access transport only if they have no other alternative.

Transport will run on existing routes every school day to avoid major re-scheduling, with similar arrival and departure times. Schools should aim to stagger times to allow walkers, parental transport and those on school transport to arrive/depart separately.

Transport providers, as far as possible, will follow hygiene rules and will try to keep social distance from their passengers. Measures such as cordoning off seats will be necessary to help passengers spread out. The number of learners that will be able to travel at any one time is limited to only 20% due to social distancing. Appropriate actions to reduce risk should be taken if hygiene rules and social distancing is not possible. For example, when transporting children and young people with complex needs who need support to access the vehicle or assistance to fasten seat belts. Social distancing measures should be utilised on all forms of transport, including buses and trains.



Due to Covid-19 and the impact of social distancing and shielding, the crossing patrol service is suspended and schools should remind parents and carers of their responsibilities to get their children to school safely.

Key actions:

- Seek ITU confirmation that any additional learners can be transported on key dates prior to confirming schedules with parents/carers.
- Drop off and pick up times to be agreed with between schools and ITU to ensure staggered starts and collections. Where schools stagger their times, they should aim to allow walkers and those on school transport to arrive/depart separately.
- Advise parents/carers that active travel should be encouraged where possible and transport only accessed if they have no other alternative.
- Due to COVID and the impact on crossing patrols, schools should remind parents and carers of their responsibilities to get their children to school safely.

6. Symptomatic Learners and Staff

Under no circumstances should learners or staff attend schools/setting if they:

- feel unwell, have any of the three identified COVID-19 symptoms (a new continuous cough, a high temperature or loss of taste or smell) or they have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days;
- live in a household with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19; or
- has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

Schools and settings should have clear procedures if learners or staff begin to show symptoms on site. These need to be fully understood by both staff and parents/carers. Those showing symptoms should be kept separate until they can be collected and taken home. Ideally, this should be in a separate room, supervised at a distance of two metres. If they need clinical advice, they (or a member of staff or their parent/carer) should go online to [111 Wales](#) (or call 111 if they don't have internet access).

Surfaces that learners or staff with symptoms have come into contact with should be carefully cleaned.

Anyone displaying symptoms should stay at home for 7 days and should arrange to be tested. Anyone who lives with someone displaying symptoms but remains well should stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person became ill.

All schools have been provided with temperature checking devices. Care should be taken to ensure that PPE is worn if devices require close contact (the use of visors is preferable to masks as visors can be cleaned).

7. Clinically vulnerable children and young people

‘Extremely vulnerable’ or shielding staff or learners

“Shielding” means protecting those people who are extremely vulnerable to the serious complications of coronavirus because they have a particular existing health condition. This includes children, who are extremely vulnerable and at high risk of developing serious illness if they are exposed to COVID-19 because they have a particular serious underlying health condition. These individuals will have received a shielding letter from the Chief Medical Officer. Staff and learners in this category **must not** be asked to attend schools or settings but should be supported to work or learn from home.

Further information can be found at:

<https://gov.wales/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-people-defined-on-medical-grounds-as-extremely-vulnerable-from-coronavirus-covid-19-html#section-38728>

‘Clinically vulnerable’ staff or learners

In the context of COVID-19, clinically vulnerable individuals are at greater than average risk from COVID-19. This category includes people aged over 70, those who are pregnant and those who have a range of chronic health conditions. Pregnant women are specifically advised to work from home after 28 weeks’ gestation.

People in this category can go out to work but they should work from home if possible. If staff or learners do attend, extra care must be taken to ensure vulnerable individuals, and those around them adhere to strict social distancing guidelines. In the case of learners, we would only expect these to attend where parents/carers consent to this.

If in doubt about whether their health condition means they should be shielding, staff, parents and carers should take advice from their GP or hospital doctor. Schools should work with local authorities in clarifying queries relating to staff attendance.

Living with a shielding or vulnerable person

If a staff member lives in a household with someone who is vulnerable or extremely vulnerable (in receipt of a shielding letter), they should return to work and adhere to social distancing principles. If they are unable to socially distance in the work context, a health & safety risk assessment should be undertaken by the headteacher to ensure a safe return to work and the effective use of preventative and social distancing approaches. Similarly, very young children and older children living with a shielding or vulnerable person who are unable to comply with social distancing requirements are not expected to attend school and they should be supported to learn at home where possible.

Learners and staff staying at home

Where children are not attending, provision should be made to ensure that they can continue to learn remotely. This is supported through Stay Safe, Stay Learning at <https://hwb.gov.wales/distance-learning/>



As extremely vulnerable staff (in receipt of a shielding letter) are unable to attend work, it is expected that they would support planning and remote learning. Where that staff member is able to work from home, there should be a discussion between the employer and the employee about what the shielding adult can reasonably do and what support the employee requires.

8. Staffing Considerations

The Council has been supportive of staff with underlying health conditions; who are pregnant; living with a person who is pregnant or with an underlying health condition; or had childcare issues and enabled them to remain off from work whilst still delivering services where appropriate. Moving forward, as key services start to re-open, advice and guidance should be sought from HR and the following principles applied:

- **Extremely vulnerable staff who are shielding (high risk)**
Staff must remain off until a further review is undertaken by Welsh Government in mid-August 2020. Staff that fall into this category should provide a copy of their shielding letter if they have not already done so.
- **Staff who are pregnant**
Pregnant women over 28 weeks should be regarded as at increased risk and are recommended to stay at home. For pregnant women with underlying health conditions, a precautionary approach is prudent and ethnicity should be taken into consideration. According to public health guidelines women who are pregnant with 'significant heart disease, congenital or acquired' are in the shielding group. If a shielding letter has been received, staff should remain off work for now. However, if no letter has been received and homeworking is not a practical option, the risk assessment provided in Appendix 2 should be completed by the line manager and advice sought from occupational health before any return to work can be considered. Health & safety risk assessments will also need to be undertaken by headteachers to ensure a safe return to work and the effective use of preventative and social distancing approaches.
- **Clinically vulnerable staff with other COVID risk indicators (moderate risk)**
Current research suggests that there are several other indicators that, when combined, may mean that an individual is at a higher risk level. A list of these indicators can be found in section 3 of the medical risk assessment in Appendix 2. Where appropriate, the risk assessment in Appendix 2 will be undertaken by the member of staff so as to inform decision making in relation to whether it is safe for them to return to work. If the individual concerned does not complete the medical risk assessment form it would be reasonable to assume that the member of staff considers themselves to be fit for a return to work. Where the risk is deemed to be low, or can be mitigated, then the member of staff will be required to return to the workplace. A health & safety risk assessment should also be undertaken by headteachers to ensure a safe return to work and the effective use of preventative and social distancing approaches.



- **Staff who live with someone at high risk, pregnancy and moderate conditions from coronavirus**

Employees in this category have been able to refrain from attendance in work to protect them. Moving forward, if home working is not feasible, then this category of staff must now return to duty and adhere to social distancing principles. A health & safety risk assessment should also be undertaken by headteachers to ensure a safe return to work and the effective use of preventative and social distancing approaches.

- **Staff with childcare issues, including responsibilities for children with ALN**

If homeworking is not a practical option, staff with these responsibilities must now return to work using the social distancing principles. In respect of childcare matters, if staff feel that they have extenuating circumstances then these should be shared with the line manager in the first instance, who can then seek advice from the Occupational Health, Equalities and Employee Relations teams. As essential workers, emergency childcare should be accessible to them.

Please note, that further detailed and precise guidance should be sought from HR prior to implementing the above actions.

Key actions:

- Decide content and timing of staff communication(s) including if bringing staff in to their place of work in advance of pupils returning to school.
- Ensure that all staff absences are swiftly updated on vision to inform accurate reporting.
- Undertake a staff audit of teaching and non-teaching staff (including availability and location) to identify any gaps or pressures in essential posts, including leaders, teachers, support staff, first aiders, designated child protection staff, caretakers, crossing patrols, etc.
- Take corrective steps if necessary staffing levels are inadequate.
- Inform your allocated local authority lead if you are experiencing significant staffing challenges that are likely to restrict learner numbers.
- Identify staff who cannot return to school at this point (for example, those who are extremely clinically vulnerable or those who are clinically vulnerable) and identify how they can work from home (e.g. supporting remote education).
- Put in place measures to check on staff wellbeing (including for leaders) and ensure appropriate sign posting as detailed in HR communication.
- Ensure access to testing where appropriate, and engagement in the test, track and protect interventions.

9. Workload Issues

Staff should be supported to ensure the direct balance of direct teaching, remote learning and childcare provision. Due to the childcare provision in place in schools,



more flexible working arrangements may be necessary to support changes to usual work patterns. These should be discussed with colleagues but cannot be enforced due to contractual obligations. However, staff may well be receptive to arrangements that are more flexible.

Key actions:

- Agree any flexible working arrangements needed to support any changes to usual patterns of work (for example, staggered start/end times).
- Agree staff workload expectations, and the balance of activities e.g. direct teaching, remote learning and childcare staffing.
- Decide what staff training (either delivered remotely or in school) is needed to implement any changes the school plans to make (for example, risk management, curriculum, behaviour, safeguarding).

10. Attendance

Schools and childcare settings should keep a record of school and childcare attendance. Data has to be reported to Welsh Government and currently involves daily returns for childcare. Schools will be required to maintain these records. Appropriate referrals should be made to AWS if there are concerns in relation to attendance or the engagement of learners and families not accessing education or childcare. This will help to identify any barriers to returning to school and further support needed. Further detail relating to vulnerable groups is provided in the Vulnerable Learner guidance.

Parents/carers will not be issued with fixed penalty notices for poor school attendance. Extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable learners might not be able to attend. Further detail can be found at <https://gov.wales/coronavirus-social-distancing-guidance>

Welsh Government has issued guidance on Attendance Codes to be used from 29th June. The full link is available here:

<https://gov.wales/recording-attendance-schools-and-settings-29-june-coronavirus>

In summary:

Present - All children in the expected intake for that day or in a priority group (children of essential workers and vulnerable children) should be recorded as present upon arrival

Code Y - Any learner who is not in the expected intake for that day (including children of essential workers and vulnerable children)

Code C - can be used until further notice where a learner is in the expected intake for the day but where:

- a learner is prevented from attending school due to following government guidance on coronavirus (shielding/self-isolating);



- a learner does not attend school when they are expected to attend but they are not shielding or self-isolating and no other authorised absence code is appropriate e.g. a learner whose family is not reassured about the health risks associated with attending.

Code I - Where a learner cannot attend a session, where they were on the expected intake, due to illness

Other Authorised codes - Where other specific authorised absence and attendance codes are more appropriate schools may want to use these as usual, such as Code M (medical appointment).

Schools should not use unauthorised codes at this time.

11. Effective Hygiene

There are important actions that children and young people, their parents and those who work with them can take during the coronavirus outbreak, to help prevent the spread of the virus. In all education settings, preventing the spread of coronavirus involves dealing with direct transmission (for instance, when in close contact with those sneezing and coughing) and indirect transmission (via touching contaminated surfaces). A range of approaches and actions should be employed to do this. These can be seen as a hierarchy of controls that, when implemented, create an inherently safer system, where the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced. For further information, please refer to:

<https://phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/harp/infection-prevention-and-control/guidance/>

Staff must ensure that all staff and children regularly wash their hands. They should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Staff should also ensure that staff and children understand effective handwashing techniques. Regular handwashing should include on arrival and when leaving the school or childcare setting; before and after handling food; before and after handling objects and equipment that may have been used by others; where there has been any physical contact and after people blow their nose, sneeze or cough.

Ensuring that help is available for children and young people who have trouble cleaning their hands independently should be encouraged. Handwashing is preferable to the use of hand sanitisers but hand sanitisers must also be provided in all childcare/school settings. These should be available at entrances to the childcare/school settings and strategically positioned in places that takes into consideration the health and safety of children and staff. Please raise any issues relating with the supply of hygiene products with your local authority lead. Sufficient supplies of sanitiser and PPE will be delivered to your schools prior to schools opening. If further sanitiser and PPE is required please contact the Council's Procurement Team at ProcOrders@rctcbc.gov.uk



Children and staff should cough into their elbow. Staff and children, insofar as it is possible, should be encouraged not to touch their face, especially when using a tissue or elbow to cough. Bins for tissues should be emptied throughout the day and any used tissues deposited in pedal bins.

Consideration should be given to encouraging young children to learn and practice these good habits through games and different activities.

There is no need for anything other than normal personal hygiene and washing of clothes following a day in an educational or childcare setting.

It is still important to reduce contact between people as much as possible, and transmission risk can be minimised by ensuring children, young people and staff where possible, only mix in a small, consistent groups and that small groups stay away from other people and groups wherever possible. The handling of objects between individuals, including staff, parents/carers and learners, should be minimised.

All spaces should be well-ventilated using natural ventilation (opening windows) or ventilation units. Doors should be propped open, where safe to do so (bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding), to limit use of door handles and aid ventilation.

Key Actions:

- Decide the approach to be adopted to enhance hygiene (for example, toilet use, hand washing) and ensure this is consistently implemented.
- Decide on policy related to usually shared items (for example, books, toys, practical equipment) and implement.
- Ensure that there is sufficient sanitiser disseminated throughout the building.
- Install pedal bins.
- Teach good hygiene habits through different games and activities.
- Ensure good ventilation and keep doors open.

12. Effective Cleaning

School building(s) will need to be cleaned regularly and at least once a day. Hard surfaces should be cleaned with warm soapy water and then disinfected with the cleaning products normally used. Particular attention should be given to clean 'high-touch' areas and surfaces, which should be cleaned at least once a day and more frequently in high use areas based on local assessment, including bathrooms, railings, tables, toys, equipment and door handles. The handling of objects between individuals, including staff, parents/carers and children, should be minimised. Handling of objects by multiple individuals without cleaning should be avoided.

An additional clean will be required when pupil cohort is changed within any area or classroom. This will include canteen facilities and staggered lunch breaks. Cleaning



staff should maintain social distancing from each other and from teaching staff and pupils at all times.

Tissues should be placed in a separate pedal operated waste bin and disposed of safely. All rubbish should be removed daily. Used antibacterial surface wipes should also be placed in a separate pedal operated waste bin and disposed of safely.

If assistance is required in relation to the supply of antibacterial wipes, the Council's Procurement Department have advised that schools can directly contact SMI Group UK to order supplies of suitable antibacterial wipes - giles.prisgrove@smigroupuk.com

Additional cleaning hours will be commissioned on the schools behalf with all cleaning providers. Primary schools will receive an additional 6 hours per day, special schools 9 hours, secondary schools will receive 12 hours and all through schools 18 hours daily. These are minimum requirements, some sites will receive additional hours based on building size and the number of pupils. The frequency and effectiveness of daily cleaning will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary. The additional cleaning hours will be invoiced and paid for centrally.

Managing Symptomatic Cases of COVID-19

Once someone with symptoms has been identified all areas where this person has been, must be identified and kept clear. Management of the area should be physical where possible, i.e. barriers with suitable signage or behind locked doors. An immediate clean down should take place before reoccupation following the following guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-10-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Particular attention should be given to any specific area where the person has been in contact with, i.e. allocated desk as well as all other 'high-touch' areas. Any soft toys should be removed and stored securely for 72 hours before reintroducing to the area if not already removed as a preventative control. If any waste is suspected of being in contact with someone showing symptoms of COVID-19, it should be placed in a waste bag, held in a secure place for 72 hours then disposed of with other waste.

Cleaning staff should fully understand the cleaning requirements, and schools should work with LAs to ensure that cleaning staff have appropriate training, products and equipment available to them in a timely manner.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Actions Following Confirmed Case of COVID-19

Following a confirmed case, all areas known to have been accessed should be quarantined until it can be confirmed that a deep clean has been completed (this will be dependent on when the setting was last accessed by the confirmed case). Management of the area should be physical where possible, i.e. barriers with suitable signage or behind locked doors. A deep clean can consist of an intense general clean followed by



a clean down with disinfectant or an approved vapour or ozone decontamination system. If a decontamination system is not used any soft furnishings should be steam cleaned.

Key actions:

- Review the enhanced cleaning schedule and liaise with the local authority to request assistance to adapt any necessary changes to the current service provision.
- Ensure that frequent cleaning is undertaken throughout the day for high touch areas.
- Organise deep clean in the event of a confirmed case (depending on when the confirmed case last attended the setting).
- Ensure consistent responses are adopted to a suspected or confirmed cases.
- Review uniform expectations.
- Sensitively communicate to parents the need to wash uniforms daily.

13. Risk Assessments

All schools are required to undertake COVID specific risk assessments. The governing body has a duty to consult their workforce regarding on health and safety matters and should involve them in the assessment and development of relevant control measures. Employers must consult with the health and safety representative selected by a recognised trade union or, if not available, a representative chosen by staff. The employer must ensure that the risks are controlled so far as is reasonably practicable. This will include ensuring that a relevant risk assessment is undertaken, and control measures are implemented and monitored to ensure that they are effective.

Schools and settings should take a risk-benefit approach when making decisions about learners' social interaction and play in schools. The Health and Safety Executive advises a risk-benefit approach, which aims not to eliminate all risk but to strike a balance: maximising benefit while ensuring that learners are not exposed to unnecessary risk. Schools should work with the Health and Safety team in the local authority to develop risk assessments around increasing operations and to seek support and guidance where required.

Schools must carry out an appropriate COVID-19 risk assessment, as they would for other health and safety related hazards. This is a risk led approach and is not about creating unnecessary documentation, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks. Records of the assessment should be simple and focused on controls. Outcomes should explain to others what they are required to do and help staff with planning and monitoring.

Compliance in any school will depend upon the suitability and sufficiency of the risk assessment and the arrangements to implement and maintain sensible, proportionate and effective controls. The risk assessment should translate into the specific actions



that will need to be taken and will be influenced by site specific factors. The risk assessment should be undertaken in collaboration with a relevant person with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to give sensible guidance about managing the health and safety risks at the school. Controls should be considered following the hierarchy of control approach the assessment should consider what measures need to be implemented to protect the health and safety of all staff, learners, visitors and contractors.

To support schools and appropriate template has been devised and appropriate strategic risk assessments **MUST** be undertaken using the **COVID 19 School Re-opening and Risk Assessment Template Document in Appendix 3**. Where required, further information can be obtained from the Council's Corporate Health & Safety team to assist you. Once your schools risk assessment has been completed, please ensure that this is shared with staff so that risks can be mitigated. Your schools' completed COVID-19 risk assessment should be approved and signed off by headteacher, the relevant subgroup of your governing body and your chair of governors and should have been sent to schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk **by the 20th of June** at the very latest. This assessment will then be reviewed with the Corporate Health & Safety Team for evaluation and approval. If there are concerns about your risk assessment you will be notified and support provided.

Schools must ensure that they comply fully with this requirement and seek further advice from the Council's Health and Safety team and/or the 21st Century Team where this is needed.

Further guidance is routinely disseminated to schools from Education, Human Resources and Public Health and Protection Directors to ensure that our headteachers have the most up to date information available.

Risk assessments should already exist for learners with more complex needs, including those with emotional and behavioural needs. These risk assessments will require updating as a matter of priority in light of changes to provision such as environment and staffing, while also remaining mindful of the additional distress learners may be experiencing due to COVID-19. If risk assessments are not in place, then they must be undertaken in accordance with this guidance and local risk assessment guidance.

Key actions:

- Ensure that appropriate signage and demarcation lines are in place **by the 20.6.20**.
- Engage with the Council Health and Safety teams to complete a COVID risk assessment and ensure that Headteacher/governing body approved risk assessments are submitted to the local authority for approval **by the 20.6.20** at the very latest.
- Seek support from the Council's Health and Safety team if unclear about health and safety requirements.

- Ensure that all statutory compliance checks are undertaken prior to opening e.g. legionella and fire alarm testing (please refer to the checklist in Appendix 3 for further information and ensure that this is completed and returned urgently to schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk).
- Review fire safety arrangements and put in place additional controls if different layout and movement restrictions affect evacuation.
- Update all traffic management plans to ensure that they are safe and promote social distancing.

14. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

It is important to note Welsh Government currently recommends more extensive use of personal protective equipment (PPE) for health and social care workers. Current guidance states that educational staff do not require PPE but apron and gloves should be used for intimate care. The advice for settings is to follow steps on social distancing, handwashing, hygiene measures, and cleaning of surfaces. Please refer to the guidance issued by the Council and Welsh Government for further detail:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-and-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

Schools and childcare settings should not require staff, children and learners to generally wear face coverings (please see exceptions below). Evidence suggests that changing habits, social distancing, cleaning and hygiene are effective measures in controlling the spread of the virus.

Face coverings (or any form of medical mask where instructed to be used for specific clinical reasons) should not be worn in any circumstance by those who may not be able to handle them as directed (for example, young children, or those with special educational needs or disabilities) as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.

The majority of staff in education settings 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. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases including:

- Children and young people whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs should continue to receive their care in the same way;
- If a child or young person or other learner becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home, the supervising adult should wear a fluid-resistant surgical face mask if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the child or young



person is necessary, then disposable gloves, a disposable apron and a fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn.

When undertaking intimate care the following should be undertaken:

- Gloves and aprons should be used when providing intimate care to a child or young person. This can include personal, hands-on care such as washing, toileting, or first aid and certain clinical procedures such as assisted feeding.
- Fluid-resistant surgical mask and eye protection should also be worn if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes such as from coughing, spitting, or vomiting.
- Gloves, fluid repellent gown, FFP3 mask and eye protection are indicated when undertaking aerosol generating procedures such as suction.
- Gloves and aprons should be used when cleaning equipment or surfaces that might be contaminated with body fluids such as saliva or respiratory secretions

The local authority have supplied all schools with PPE. Additional PPE can be requested from the Council's Procurement team - ProcOrders@rctcbc.gov.uk

It is important to remember that physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene (catching a cough or sneeze in a tissue or covering the mouth and nose with an elbow or sleeve) are scientifically proven to be the most effective ways to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Hand hygiene is critical before and after all direct contact with a child or young person, and after cleaning equipment and the environment. There is therefore no need to use personal protective equipment (PPE) when undertaking routine educational activities in classroom/school settings.

Please refer to Appendix 4 - General Guidance to School Staff Working - PPE & social distancing for further information.

Key actions:

- Ensure that there is adequate PPE, including emergency PPE. This must be collected from the central store in Ty Elai Council offices on the day of your allocated pick-up slot.
- Ensure that sanitiser is distributed at key strategic points through the setting
- Make arrangements to ensure that there are adequate supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies for dealing with the small numbers of children and young people.
- If your staff provide intimate care for any children or young people and for cases where a child becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus PPE must be used (please see Appendix 4 for further detail).



15. Face Coverings

The Chief Medical Officer has been clear that there is no evidence to support the widespread wearing of non-medical face coverings in the community. Non-medical face coverings are recommended where social distancing cannot be maintained.

They are not a replacement for far more effective measures such as social distancing and hand hygiene. Schools should ensure that they organise the environment and they operate to ensure that social distancing can be maintained throughout a routine day.

Considering the well-being of learners is critical to any considerations around whether staff or older children wear face coverings. No one who may not be able to handle face coverings as directed (e.g. young children, or those with special educational needs or disabilities) should wear them as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.

16. Social Distancing

Social distancing practices need to be embedded across all schools and childcare settings. Staff must pay due regard to the guidance on social distancing as specified under the Coronavirus Regulations. Adhering to this will ensure that staff and children are safe and well, and will help ensure that the chain of infection is broken. Schools will need to ensure that policies reinforce the importance of social distancing and that practice mitigates risks for learners and staff. This would include school wellbeing/behaviour policies, intimate care and healthcare needs policies. These should be widely shared with stakeholders and expectations made clear in relation to requirement for all members of the school community, where possible, to adhere to social distancing requirements. A school's response to a deliberate refusal to comply with social distancing should be reflected in the school's wellbeing/behaviour policy and the position communicated to all stakeholders prior to learners returning to school.

Where transport is required, this should ensure children are appropriately socially distanced. Staff must consider how social distancing is ensured on arrival and collection. Parents should not gather closely outside and arrival and release of children should be staggered to avoid this. Parents will require appropriate communication outlining expectations prior to children's return to school.

Due consideration should be given to room size to ensure appropriate social distancing and adherence to the 2 metre rule. Seating arrangements, games and activities should be remodelled to ensure this and to minimise physical contact. School floor surfaces including external areas should be marked out and appropriate signage used to reinforce social distancing requirements. Appropriate signage has been provided for all settings prior to schools opening and examples of the signage can be seen Appendix 5.

A guidance document has also been distributed to all schools – 'Signage and Layout – Guidance for Schools – Re-occupation of school buildings during coronavirus (COVID-



19). This document contains the following helpful video links to assist schools with putting appropriate social distancing measures in place:-

around the school

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0EYp7Y3tk&feature=youtu.be>

drop off and pickup

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-P8MhrqHhAs&feature=youtu.be>

in the classroom Primary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q70NOMbp0Rc&feature=youtu.be>

in the classroom Secondary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qabqG7w85WE&feature=youtu.be>

Lunch time

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uBv1GKp-3U&feature=youtu.be>

staff rooms

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEuKTZXrpDY&feature=youtu.be>

toilets

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93fe44KTFeQ&feature=youtu.be>

To help social distancing, staff should consider as many activities outside as practicable. This will require children to have appropriate clothing for the weather.

Wherever possible, shared rooms for different groups should be avoided. Staff and children should use the same room for activities and, where appropriate, meals provided in the same setting or nearby. This will avoid risk of transmission from room to room and will ensure that the number of people each person comes in contact with is kept to a minimum. If there is no option but to eat meals in a different shared space, mealtimes should be staggered to avoid overcrowding and furniture appropriately cleaned between uses.

To reduce the risk of transmissions, where possible the same staff should interact with the same group of learners over time. This is clearly easier to achieve in a primary setting, but every effort should also be made to maintain social distancing of 2 metres at secondary and to ensure that groups of learners interact with the same staff where possible.

Where possible, schools should consider:

- avoiding multiple groups of learners sharing the same space without cleaning;
- avoiding multiple groups of learners from interacting or having the opportunity to mix;
- to avoid increasing the risk of transmission between groups, it may be preferable to bring a group of learners in for longer blocks of time with at least a week's interval in between rather than multiple, shorter slots over the course of the four weeks.

It is acknowledged that ensuring social distancing with younger children and those with additional learning needs/special educational needs can be challenging. It is also recognised that in some circumstances, there will be instances where it may not be reasonable or appropriate to maintain this degree of social distancing. Individual risk assessments should be carried out for children if there are significant health and safety concerns in relation to individual children or young people.

Social distancing must also take place during formal and informal interactions between staff and in staff rooms. This is essential to mitigate risks and to minimise infection transmission. Further guidance on social distancing can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

Key actions:

- Plan for how social distancing will be achieved and ensure this is robustly adhered to.
- Decide the physical and organisational structures needed to limit risks and limit movement around the building(s) (for example, classroom layouts, entry and exit points, staggered starts and break times, class sizes, lunch queues, toilet timetabling, use of communal staff areas). Refer to the Council's 'Signage and Layout' guidance document and YouTube clips for examples of how to set out your school (**see the links above**).
- Access rooms from the outside where possible.
- Use one-way circulation, or place a divider down the middle of the corridor to keep groups apart as they move through the setting where spaces are accessed by corridors.
- Agree how safety measures and messages will be implemented and displayed around school.
- Maintain continuity in grouping and staffing, and minimise transmission risks across groups and individuals.
- Undertake individual risk assessments for high risk learners and ensure that they are well supported to mitigate risks.
- Update behaviour policies to reflect the new rules and routines necessary to reduce risk in your setting and agree how to communicate this to school staff, students and parents.

- Plan parents' drop-off and pick-up protocols that minimise social contact.
- Ensure that all are aware that anyone displaying symptoms does not attend school and immediately self-isolates.
- Retain class groupings and do not mix groups unless necessary.
- Organise specialist-teaching areas to maintain spaces between seats, desks and workstations, i.e. science labs workshops, art rooms, etc.
- Avoid sharing of resources or equipment.
- Utilise outdoors for lessons and classroom activities.
- Encourage outside play but not contact or other risky sports and games.
- Remove unnecessary equipment and furniture if possible, to maximise social distancing opportunities.
- Stagger the use of staff rooms and offices to limit occupancy.
- Plan arrangements with your suppliers and check they are following appropriate social distancing and hygiene measures (for example, food suppliers, grounds maintenance, transport providers), including when in school.
- Minimise the numbers of external visitors.

17. Suspected Cases

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in an education or childcare setting, they must be sent home and advised to follow the stay at home guidance.

<https://gov.wales/self-isolation-stay-home-guidance-households-possible-coronavirus>

If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age of the child and with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area, which is at least 2 metres away from other people.

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

Gloves, aprons and a fluid-resistant surgical mask should be worn if a child or young person becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 and needs direct personal care. Eye protection should also be worn if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes such as from coughing, spitting, or vomiting. Gloves and aprons should be used when cleaning the areas where a person suspected of having COVID-19 has been

In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If a member of staff has helped someone who was unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves or if the child subsequently tests positive. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. Cleaning the affected area with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. Please see the cleaning section for further information.

Key action:

- Plan the school level response should someone fall ill on site (in line with relevant government guidance) and ensure compliance.
- Ensure appropriate PPE is used if there is a suspected case.

18. Confirmed Cases

When a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days.

When settings open to the wider cohort of children and young people, all those children and young people eligible to attend, and members of their households, will have access to testing if they display symptoms of coronavirus, and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario.

Where the child, young person or staff member tests negative, they can return to their setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation.

Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class or group within their childcare or education setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

<https://gov.wales/self-isolation-stay-home-guidance-households-possible-coronavirus>

19. What happens if there is an outbreak in a school?

If there are multiple cases of COVID-19 in a school then experts from across the NHS and local government will work together to prevent ongoing transmission within the school. This will involve identifying those exposed, and any child or staff member who is at increased risk and provide tailored infection control advice. Advice based on the assessment of each individual situation will be provided to support the school in preventing further spread.



The process should be handled sensitively and in confidence, for instance identities should not be revealed by senior leaders.

20. Test, Trace and Protect

Test, Trace, Protect initiative involves those who have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, enabling them to be tested while isolating from wider family, friends and their community. This entails tracing those individuals who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive on any occasion during a period beginning up to two days before they started experiencing symptoms, and requiring them to take precautions and self-isolate (for 14 days).

The initiative ensures that timely advice and guidance, particularly where the individual who has tested positive or their contacts are vulnerable or at greater risk.

In the event of a positive test, a contact tracer will contact the person tested to help identify potential contacts. A second contact tracer will then get in touch with those contacts and advise them to self-isolate for 14 days from their last contact with the person who tested positive. These people will only be required to take a test if they develop symptoms.

People are considered as potential contacts if they were in contact with the person who has tested positive during a period beginning up to two days before symptom onset and ending when the case entered home isolation. This is based on current understanding of the main period of infectivity.

A contact is defined as someone who has had close contact during this period, specifically:

- within one metre of the person who has tested positive and has been coughed on, had a face-to-face conversation, had skin-to-skin physical contact, or been in other forms of contact within one metre for one minute or longer;
- within two metres of the person testing positive for more than 15 minutes have travelled in a vehicle with the person who has tested positive.

Where staff have maintained social distancing rules and adhered to hygiene measures during work and where required have used personal protective equipment (PPE) or worked behind an appropriate screen or partition, they would not be regarded as part of a contact for these purposes.

A positive test on site therefore does not require closure of that site. The process of testing and contact tracing is part of the 'new normal' and where schools and settings follow these guidelines carefully, there is no cause for alarm.

Individuals who are symptomatic are required to report their symptoms straight away, self-isolate and advise their friends and family that they may have COVID-19.



Information, questions, and answers about Test, Trace, and Protect can be found at <https://gov.wales/test-trace-protect-your-questions>

21. Testing

Before requesting a test you must have at least one of the following symptoms:

- a new continuous cough;
- a high temperature;
- loss of or change to sense of smell or taste.

If these symptoms are acquired then individuals must self-isolate. The test is only effective for those who are experiencing coronavirus symptoms and needs to be taken in the first 5 days of having symptoms. It only checks if you have coronavirus right now and not if you have already had the virus.

Further information can be found at:

<https://gov.wales/welsh-national-covid-19-test-approach-may-2020>

A programme of antibody testing has started in a number of Rhondda Cynon Taf schools and will be extended in due course.

22. Learning

Guidance relating to learning based on Welsh Government guidance will be provided in due course. Agree an ongoing approach for the learning offer for vulnerable children and children of critical workers who are in school but not in the returning year groups.

Agreeing to what learning is appropriate, including the relationship between face-to-face and remote education, will be important e.g. identifying curriculum priorities, agree revised expectations and required adjustments in practical lessons, and any approaches to 'catch up' support.

Joint work with the local authority will be important to identify what provision can be reasonably provided for in line with statements.

Agree ongoing learning offer for eligible pupils who can't attend school will also be important.

23. Learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

Specialist schools, PRUs and learning support classes should follow the same principles and guidance as mainstream schools. As much as possible, protective measures should be adhered to and class or group sizes should be small. Staff should use differentiated language to explain safety measures, and reiterate and reinforce key messages. Safe routines for access to toilets, hand cleaning, break, and lunch times should be put in place. Teaching resources should be used to aid understanding.



Settings may need to carry out a risk assessment, if it is deemed that a child or young person may not be able to follow instructions, to determine what mitigations need to be put in place and whether, in rare circumstances, they should stay at home.

For those high priority children and young people with a social worker, the expectation is that they should attend their educational setting unless a risk assessment concludes they will be safer at home.

Risk assessments should already exist for learners with more complex needs, including those with emotional and behavioural needs. These risk assessments will need to be updated as a matter of priority in light of changes to provision such as environment and staffing, while also remaining mindful of the additional distress learners may be experiencing due to COVID-19. If risk assessments are not in place, then they must be undertaken in accordance with this guidance and other key guidance documents e.g. LA guidance on complex health needs, positive restrictive intervention, etc.

Further information relating to learners with ALN can found at on the service website.

24. Supporting the Wellbeing of Learners and Staff

These challenging and uncertain times have undoubtedly placed children, parents/carers and school staff under significant pressure. Planning, timetabling and the physical surroundings should take this into account so that children and staff's physical, emotional and mental wellbeing is taken into consideration.

Supporting children and staff to adapt to a new and unfamiliar environment will be important and children should be encouraged to express any worries and concerns they have so that they can be supported in a developmental appropriate manner. If further advice and support is required, please contact the relevant support services in Access and Inclusion. A range of resources is available on the Access and Inclusion Service website.

<https://www-staging.rctcbc.gov.uk/Preview/1/EN/Resident/SchoolsandLearning/AccessandInclusiontoEducation/COVID19AccessandInclusionServiceAdvice.aspx>

Please ensure that regular contact is made with the parents/carers of the most vulnerable learners who are not in school. For learners who are on the child protection register and highly vulnerable this contact will need to be very frequent. Other vulnerable groups include looked after children, children in need of care and support, young carers, children on the edge of care and children with additional learning needs will require frequent contact dependant on their needs. Please refer to the Vulnerable Learner guidance provided by the Access and Inclusion Service.

Additional resources have been made available to support young people, teachers and leaders, and others. This includes focus on learners' mental and emotional health and



well-being and providing well-being support in the new environment. A Young Person's Mental Health Toolkit can be found on Hwb. This comprises a variety of online resources, which can help them through lockdown and beyond. It contains information on websites, apps, helplines, and more, which support mental health and well-being.

- Anxiety <https://hwb.gov.wales/go/agg9pn>
- Coronavirus and your well-being <https://hwb.gov.wales/go/ffkbs1>
- Crisis <https://hwb.gov.wales/go/4ypw1s>
- Keeping health <https://hwb.gov.wales/go/nz95en>
- Loss <https://hwb.gov.wales/go/lvy6hx>
- Low mood <https://hwb.gov.wales/go/bi4vbc>

<https://hwb.gov.wales/repository/resource/e53adf44-76cb-4635-b6c2-62116bb63a9a/en>

Schools and settings will need to consider the potential impacts on the health and well-being of staff and leaders, including work–life balance. There should be clear routes by which concerns can be raised with management and leadership. Please consult with your HR for further advice and guidance on support for staff wellbeing.

Timetabling and rotas should support staff's well-being and they should be given regular welfare breaks. It is also important to recognise that staff are not all necessarily required on site, not only for those who are unable to attend for health reasons, but also those staff working on remote learning on any given day. Minimising the number of staff on site can help lower transmission risks.

As a local authority, we are committed to supporting the well-being of all staff, including senior leaders. It is natural that some staff may require more support than others during this period. Senior leaders will need to consider that some might find it difficult to re-adjust following a period at home and may have developed anxious behaviours relating to the pandemic or their own health and wellbeing. Those with pre-existing issues that may have increased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and others may well have experienced loss and bereavement.

COVID-19 makes it more important than ever that we acknowledge the need to provide a reflective space for staff to deal with and process the often stressful, uncomfortable and sometimes painful experiences of working with children, young people, their families and the systems around them. Should you require support to deal with these issues, please do not hesitate to contact the Educational Psychology Service or HR would will be able to support and advice if required.

Key action:

- Plan likely mental health, pastoral or wider wellbeing support for children (for example, bereavement support) and discuss with central services what wider support services are available.

- Secure services for additional support and early help where possible (for example, around anxiety, mental health, behaviour, social care, or changes to mobility), and consider how these might apply to pupils who were not previously affected.

25. Emergencies, Accidents and First Aid

A qualified first aider should always be present at school and risk assessments, should consider appropriate contingencies in case of emergencies, and what PPE is required.

26. Safeguarding

Learners will have encountered different experiences and home environments during lockdown and all staff should be reminded of their safeguarding duties within the statutory safeguarding guidance for education settings Keeping Learners Safe and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

The role of the designated safeguarding person (DSP) will be vital and all staff and learners should be informed of who the DSP is and how to contact them. Accessing a trusted adult, or the DSP, may be more difficult with social distancing so schools and settings should consider how learners can talk privately.

Safeguarding children is a critical area of business and Emergency and Duty Teams will remain in operation to receive calls about children at risk of harm, abuse or neglect. Please report concerns to MASH in accordance with agreed local procedures.

If you have any concerns relating to an allegation of professional abuse, then the Wales Safeguarding Procedures must be adhered to. A C1 referral should be made to IAA Team in the usual way. If advice is required prior to completing a referral then please email the childprotectionreviewingteam@rctcbc.gov.uk with your contact details and a safeguarding officer will contact you to discuss the concern to determine whether a C1 is required.

27. Catering

Breakfast club provision will not be provided in schools and childcare settings. BACS payments will continue to be made for e-FSM learners and a grab and go lunch will also be provided at lunchtime for e-FSM learners attending school and childcare. Hot meals will be provided in special schools. Non-eFSM learners should bring packed lunches to school and childcare.

All learners should bring filled water bottles to school/childcare that can be refilled during the day. Water fountains must only be used for replenishing water bottles and this should be managed and supervised at a school level. This will ensure that refilling water



bottles is managed safely and made available to pupils who need/or request it. The current catering offer for our hubs will cease on the 29th of June 2020.

The eating area should be cleaned according to guidelines. Staff should ensure that social distancing is maintained at mealtimes and children should be sat 2 metres away from each other. Food should not be shared and lunch and break times could be staggered to support social distancing.

Young people should not be allowed to go off site unsupervised during lunch breaks.

28. Effective Communication

Ensure early and effective communication with parents:

- tell children, young people, parents, carers or any visitors, such as suppliers, not to enter the education or childcare setting if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus;
- tell parents/carers that if their child needs to be accompanied to the education or childcare setting, only one parent should attend;
- tell parents and young people their allocated drop off and collection times and the process for doing so, including protocols for minimising adult to adult contact (for example, which entrance to use);
- make clear to parents that they cannot gather at entrance gates or doors, or enter the site (unless they have a pre-arranged appointment, which should be conducted safely);
- ensure parents and young people are aware of recommendations on transport to and from education or childcare setting;
- ensure parents and carers recognise their responsibility to get their children to school safely;
- communicate to staff about the plans (for example, safety measures, timetable changes and staggered arrival and departure times), including discussing whether training would be helpful;
- communicate early with the local authority and suppliers that will need to prepare to support your plans for opening for example, cleaning, catering, food supplies, PPE;
- discuss with cleaning contractors or staff the additional cleaning requirements and agree additional hours to allow for this;
- keep your governing body abreast of developments and ensure that all risk assessments have appropriate sign off.

29. Support

Regular updates will be provided but if you require further advice please do not hesitate to contact:

- Gaynor Davies for strategic queries;



- Bernard Whittingham or Sarah Corcoran for secondary or all through school queries;
- Andrea Richards or Tim Britton for primary queries;
- Ceri Jones for ALN/special school and PRU queries;
- Richard Evans for staff, trade union and procurement issues;
- Catrin Edwards for data queries;
- Non Morgan for issues relating to governance;
- Lisa Gorringe for school catering and cleaning queries;
- Lisa Howell/Nicola Goodman for childcare eligibility queries;
- Denise Humphries for 0-4 childcare queries (excluding Flying Start);
- Jess Allen for Flying Start/YEPS queries;
- Mike Murphy for health and safety issues.

Staff mobile numbers are provided in the Education Directory. It is recognised that these are unprecedented times so please do not hesitate to contact at any time if you have any significant concerns and we will endeavour to deal with your query as swiftly as possible. Senior officers have been allocated clusters of schools to ensure that you have swift responses to your queries.

Cluster	Lead LA Officer
Aberdare Community School	Bernard Whittingham 07793404423
Bryn Celynnog	Catrin Edwards 07717 432327
Cardinal Newman	Tim Britton 07786 523861
Cwm Rhondda	Sarah Corcoran 07966 232041
Ferndale Community School	Sarah Corcoran 07966 232041
Hawthorn High School	Andrea Richards 07799 132044
Mountain Ash School	Tim Britton 07786 523861
Pontypridd High School	Sarah Corcoran 07736 488673
Porth Community School	Sarah Corcoran 07736 488673
St. Johns	Bernard Whittingham 07793404423
Tonyrefail Community School	Catrin Edwards 07717 432327
Treorchy School	Dan Williams 07736 488673



Y Pant	Catrin Edwards 07717 432327
Ysgol Garth Olwg	Tim Britton 07786 523861
Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun	Bernard Whittingham 07793404423
Ysgol Llanhari	Catrin Edwards 07717 432327
Ysgol Nant Gwyn	Dan Williams 07736 488673
Ysgol Ty Coch	Ceri Jones 07385 086099
Ysgol Hen Felin	Kate Hill 07471 140741
Maesgwyn School	Hayley Jeans 07471 140703
Park Lane School	Ceri Jones 07385 086099
Tai Education Centre	Ceri Jones 07385 086099
Ty Gwyn Education Centre	Ceri Jones 07385 086099



Appendix 1

Definitions - Vulnerable learners and essential workers

Vulnerable learners include:

- Children on the child protection register;
 - Children in need of care and support with an allocated social worker
 - Looked after children;
 - Young carers;
 - Children on the edge of care;
-
- Children with additional learning needs/disabilities.

Essential workers are defined as individuals in:

- Health and social care;
- Education and childcare;
- Key public services;
- Local and national government;
- Food and other necessary goods;
- Public safety and national security;
- Transport; and
- Utilities, communication and financial services.



Appendix 2

COVID RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

COVID-19 STAFF SELF-REPORTING RISK ASSESSMENT

This risk assessment tool has been developed for you and your line manager to understand whether you may be at a greater risk of COVID-19. It will also help you and your manager to choose the right actions based on your level of risk.

We recognise that some questions on the toolkit are extremely personal. Therefore, you will only be required to advise your manager if you are in a shielded group, meet one of the categories of pregnancy OR provide your overall score to your manager.

If you require support to complete this form your manager can refer you to Occupational Health.

Section 1: STAFF WITHIN THE SHIELDING CATEGORY	
<p>Shielding groups (Very High Risk): Any employee in shielding groups should be working from home until further announcement on shielding.</p> <p>Are you currently 'shielded'?</p> <p>If YES, this means you fall into the 'extremely vulnerable group' and you will have received a 'Shielding' letter from the Chief Medical Officer.</p> <p>This will need to be reviewed on a regular basis as further evidence and Welsh Government guidance emerges.</p> <p>If Yes - Please complete Section 1 on the COVID – 19 Risk Assessment Return – Employee Declaration</p> <p>If NO, continue to section 2.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Shielding guidance can be found here for further information:</p> <p>Guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable from coronavirus (COVID-19)</p>	

Section 2: PREGNANCY	
Are you 28 weeks pregnant or over?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<p>If YES, to the above you fall into the 'very high risk' category and your manager will discuss the 'Shielding' guidance and discuss suitable working from home arrangements where possible</p> <p>NB For pregnant women, with underlying health conditions at any stage of pregnancy a more precautionary approach is prudent and Women who are BAME should be included in the consideration and discussed between the employee and manager.</p> <p>Please complete Section 2 on the COVID – 19 Risk Assessment Return – Employee Declaration If NO, continue to section 3.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Section 3 – OTHER RISK FACTORS	
Please tick the score for any of the criteria that applies to you:	
Age 50-59	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
60-69	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
70+	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
Are you Black, Asian, Minority or Ethnic (BAME)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Sex at Birth - Male	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Cardiovascular disease (on treatment for Hypertension, Irregular Heartbeat, Heart Failure, Previous Heart Attack, Stroke, TIA etc.)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Diabetes Mellitus Type 1 or 2	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Chronic pulmonary disease (including asthma, COPD, interstitial lung disease)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Chronic kidney disease (any stage 1-5)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Sickle cell/Thalassaemia trait or other haemoglobinopathies	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Obesity (BMI >30 or waist circumference >33 (BAME female) > 34.5 (White female), >35 (BAME male), 40 (White male)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Has any member of your immediate family died from COVID-19 or been admitted to ITU for COVID-19	1 <input type="checkbox"/>



Please add up the numbers that you have circled and enter the Total Score here:	
--	--

Assessing your risk

Your total score will be used to assess your level of return to work risk in line with the following:

0-3 Low risk - Continue current duties with adherence to best social distancing and public health guidance

4-6 Moderate to High risk - Consider enhanced PPE & reasonable adjustments to job role, wherever practical

>7 Very High- Risk Work from home/non frontline roles

Please now complete the **COVID – 19 Risk Assessment Return – Employee Declaration** which you should return to your manager.



COVID – 19 Risk Assessment Return – Employee Declaration

Please complete this section and return to your line manager. Your line manager can then discuss this with you when planning your return to the workplace

Employee Name		Payroll No:	
Department		Employee Tel No.	
Manager's Name		Manager's Tel No.	
Section 1 – Are you within a shielded category and in receipt of a shielding letter	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Section 2 – Are you 28 weeks pregnant?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Section 3 – Please enter the score for your Risk Assessment here:			

Assessing risk

The **total score** section should be used to assess the level of return to work risk in line with the following:

0-3 Low risk - Continue current duties with adherence to best social distancing and public health guidance
4-6 Moderate to High risk - Consider enhanced PPE & reasonable adjustments to job role, wherever practical
>7 Very High- Risk Work from home/non frontline roles

If the employee or line manager has any questions or concerns regarding the individuals score, and what this means in relation to a return to the workplace, then contact should be made with the following colleagues for advice:

1. If you wish to discuss the score in connection with the work environment or work tasks you can contact a member of the **Health and Safety team**.



2. For queries regarding a medical condition or health concerns please contact the **Occupational Health Unit**. The manager may refer the individual employee to Occupational Health for a more in depth assessment to validate their score and to seek advice on workplace adjustments.
3. If you have queries relating to a protected characteristic for example disability or BAME, or would like information about reasonable adjustments please contact the **Equality and Diversity Team**.
4. Any other employment matters can be discussed with your **Employment Relations Team**.



RETURN TO WORK AGREEMENT

PLEASE NOTE - This form ONLY needs to be completed if the individual is unable to return to the workplace, or needs workplace adjustments to return.

To be completed by the Line Manager in consultation with the Individual Employee

If the individual's risk assessment indicates that they are not able to return to the workplace or that adjustments (for example PPE) need to be provided then this should be recorded in this document.

N.B. Due to the changing nature of advice surrounding the COVID-19 virus the individual's ability to return to the workplace should be reviewed monthly OR when changes to guidance changes.

Section 2: AGREED ACTIONS - THIS WILL NEED TO BE REVIEWED MONTHLY			
Please record the agreed work plan and ensure you review these each month.			
Please outline what workplace adjustments have been made to minimise risk (this could include redeployment):			
Please state when new working arrangements will begin from:			
These arrangements should be reviewed monthly in line with Public Health Wales guidance.			
Employee Signature		Date	
Manager Signature		Date	

APPENDIX 3

COVID 19 SCHOOL RE-OPENING AND RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE DOCUMENT

RCT Corporate Health and Safety Team	Version 1 – 09.06.20
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1. Introduction

Since the announcement by the Welsh Government to re-open Schools work has been underway to prepare buildings and settings to reopen. A risk assessment is key to this process and allows School Management to identify hazards and implement controls to reduce the spread of COVID 19.

2. Guide to the document

This document has been produced to assist School Management with the development of a risk assessment and the introduction of controls to prevent the spread of COVID 19 in Educational settings. It is important that Headteachers/Managers go through and adapt the risk assessment for their own school or setting.

The existing/new controls listed are not mandatory but are provided as guidance on reducing the risk of transmission. Each school/setting must consider their own situation and adapt the assessment by editing the measures where appropriate and adding any school specific controls. The hazard and controls listed are not an exhaustive list and can be amended to suit the individual circumstances within the setting.

The risk assessment template is intended for the control of the spread of COVID 19 only, there may be other site issues to consider prior to re-opening the setting. With this in mind we have also included a brief 'Site Management Checklist' to assist you (see page 3).

3. Further Support

Further advice and support in the preparation of the risk assessment can be obtained from the Councils Corporate Health and Safety Team:

Healthandsafetyteam@rctcbc.gov.uk



Subject specific COVID 19 risk assessment guidance e.g. D&T, Science and PE can also be accessed using the links provided below, Department Heads will be familiar with the various resources:

- <https://gov.wales/keep-education-safe-operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-covid-19> - **WG Keep Education Safe – Operational Guidance for Schools and Settings (COVID 19)**
- <http://www.cleapss.org.uk/> - CLEAPSS Site (Username: **solar** password: **system20**)
- <http://science.cleapss.org.uk/> - CLEAPSS Science Site – for specific guidance on science
- <http://dt.cleapss.org.uk/> - CLEAPSS Design and Technology Site for specific guidance on D&T
- <https://www.afpe.org.uk/physical-education/afpe-launch-new-support-document-covid-19-interpreting-the-government-guidance-in-a-pesspa-context/> - Association for Physical Education for specific guidance on PE



Some statutory inspections may have lapsed since the school was shut. The checklist below provides a list of those items that may require attention prior to the site opening:

Site Management Checklist:

Site issue		Yes/No	Further Action
1	Gas Boiler/Heating systems - Serviced/Inspected by a competent person?		
2	Fire Protection Systems – Alarms & Emergency Lighting maintained quarterly by Contractor? Fire protection systems are also checked by management.		
3	Sprinkler Systems inspected/maintained by a Contractor? (as per frequency set out by the system)		
4	Fire Extinguishers (FFE) – Have they been serviced annually by a competent person? Inspect FFE for any damage/discharged or removed units.		
5	Fire Evacuation Procedures/Drills – Have any fire evacuation arrangements been revised to take account of revised site layouts/personnel?		
6	Legionella – Low use systems flushed/temperatures monitored by management and maintained by Contractors?		
7	LEV Units (in D&T) – have they been inspected by a competent person? (required annually).		
8	Traffic Management – Review arrangements to account for social distancing and supervision/increase in private vehicles?		
9	First Aid – Do you have adequate no's of first aiders in view of possible staff shortages or alternative layout of the site?		
10	Lifting Equipment (e.g. lift hoists) have they been inspected by a competent person?		
11	Arrangements are in place for dealing with contractors when they arrive on site?		

For further information on statutory inspections in relation to the building contact the **Councils Corporate Maintenance Section**.

Please complete this form and return to schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk

COVID 19 Risk Assessment

Subject: COVID 19 School Premises Risk Assessment

Date of Assessment: Date

Assessor: Headteacher

School Name: SCHOOL NAME HERE

Hazard	People at Risk	Existing Control / New Controls	Additional Comments/Control Measures – School Specific
School drop off/Pick up – Infection control	All Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/carer pick up and pick up protocols have been developed to minimise adult to adult contact and avoid gatherings (signs and floor markings made available from RCT) • Arrangements in place to supervise pupils arriving/leaving on contracted transport to ensure social distancing. • Early Years classes will arrange for children to be dropped off and collected at the door/threshold of the setting where possible - Parents queue outside the entrance to drop off/pick up • One parent encouraged to drop off/pick up. • Floor markings provided to assist with social distancing. • Stagger drop off/collection times for year groups. • Additional entrances used to reduce gatherings at peak times • Parents / carers instructed not to attend school if symptomatic • Temperature checks taken at arrival • Handwashing/hand sanitiser available at all entrances. 	

<p>Circulation Routes – Infection control</p>	<p>All Persons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where large numbers of pupils still need to move around the setting, alternative external routes have been provided where available and consideration is given to implementing a one-way system where this is possible. • Floor markings and signage is provided to assist with social distancing. • Doors kept open (where safe to do so) to reduce physical contact. • Times for using stairs and corridors have been planned to ensure that use of common areas does not encourage gatherings. • Class times have been staggered to prevent large numbers moving around the premises at the same time. • Cloakrooms are managed to ensure social distancing – coats/bags can be placed on backs of chairs/under tables. 	
<p>Classroom/Teaching Environment – Infection control</p>	<p>All Persons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil groups/class sizes are kept as small as possible to minimise interaction (see WG guidance on class numbers). https://gov.wales/keep-education-safe-operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-covid-19 • Pupils will stay in their class/group wherever it is possible throughout the day, or on subsequent days. • Where possible pupils use the same desk and resources each day where they attend on consecutive days. Resources are placed in individual trays/bags. • The use of outdoor space is utilised wherever possible. • Rooms have been organised to encourage social distancing, tables and chairs are moved apart in order for pupils to spread out and arranged to enable sitting side to side and not face to face. Where it 	

		<p>is not possible to move furniture seats are taped off/marked as not to be used to support social distancing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early years settings that host more than one cohorted group in a single room should consider the physical means that can be used to separate each group e.g. utilise furniture or screens • Arrangements put in place to avoid mixing with other groups. • Unnecessary items have been removed from learning environments where there is space to store elsewhere. • Resources which are not easily washable, wipeable or otherwise cleaned have been removed e.g. soft toys, sand, water play etc.. • Arrangements in place for the use of the playground, including equipment. <p>NB: outdoor equipment should not be used unless it is appropriately cleaned between groups of children and young people using it, and that multiple groups do not use it simultaneously.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements are also in place for social distancing in staff rooms and prep rooms. 	
<p>Pupil and Staff Toileting – Infection control</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Times are staggered where possible and consider the increased handwashing times that have been introduced. • The setting has introduced a one in/one out policy. • Distancing for queuing has been introduced e.g. through floor markings • Signage is in place in each toilet to encourage adequate hand washing takes place. • Similar arrangements are also in place for staff toilets. 	

<p>Spread of COVID - 19/Social Distancing Infection Control (General)</p>	<p>All Persons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windows and doors are open to increase ventilation (where safe to do so) • Movement of whole classes is avoided where pupils can stay in the same room and staff can move to different classes instead. Rooms used have been selected to enable this. • Appropriate signage is in place throughout the setting. https://gov.wales/safety-and-physical-distancing-signs-employers-coronaviru • Arrangements are in place to manage break times including staggered times, alternative entrances, demarcation. 	
<p>Staffing</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff who are clinically vulnerable have been assessed and suitable measures have been put in place to manage the risk e.g. ensure extra care is taken in observing social distancing. Refer to the Council guidance ‘Update for Chairs of Governors, Headteachers, Managers & Staff – Shielding and Childcare Responsibilities’ & Staff COVID19 Risk Assessment Tool. • Daily review of staffing levels takes place, including those in key safety roles to ensure the safe supervision and operation of the setting including premises management. Daily review of staffing levels takes place, including those in key safety roles to ensure the safe supervision and operation of the setting including premises management. • Teaching staff have breaks from their group during the day where possible, for example, by alternating between the teacher and 	

		<p>teaching assistant, avoiding new staff covering from a different grouping.</p>	
<p>Catering/Lunchtime Arrangements – Infection control</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups of children can eat packed lunch or school meals within their own classroom setting. • Packed lunches are stored in the individual group classrooms rather than a central location to avoid group mixing. • Different groups mixing together is avoided through staggered times with several sittings and/or use of additional areas and to help reduce queues. • Hand gel is provided for pupils and staff to use immediately before collecting their lunch. • Social distancing is employed at meal collection points (the use of floor tape to demarcate areas may be useful) where this is not possible screens are installed where required between pupils and serving staff. • Additional meal collection points have been put in place to reduce queuing where necessary. • Alternative payment methods are being used to eliminate cash handling. • Tables and seating are moved apart and reflect the maximum capacity to allow social distancing within the group. Where furniture is fixed and cannot be moved space is created by taping off/taking out of use alternate seating. • A different entry and exit route are being used at dinner times where more than one door is available. 	



<p>Pupils/Staff displaying symptoms whilst at school</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements in place to deal with pupil/staff who develop symptoms whilst at the setting – Follow the WG guidance • https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19-educational-settings-guidance • An isolation room is available for pupils/staff. 	
<p>Cleaning/Waste Disposal</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All contact surfaces which are fixed to the premises have been identified and are disinfected on a daily basis e.g. door handles, toilets, taps, handrails, external gates and dining room equipment. • Enhanced cleaning regime in place across the setting. • Adequate cleaning supplies and facilities around the school are in place. • A Clear desk policy in place for all pupils and staff. • Tissues should be placed in a separate waste bin and disposed of safely. All rubbish should be removed daily. <p>If any waste is suspected of being in contact with someone showing symptoms of COVID-19, it should be placed in a waste bag, held in a secure place for 72 hours then disposed of as other waste is.</p>	
<p>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPE is not required for routine class activities • PPE may be required when carrying out intimate care, dealing with body fluids or a suspected case of COVID 19. For further guidance on PPE requirements refer to the RCT Schools COVID 19 PPE Guidance Matrix. 	
<p>Visitors</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about visitor arrangements are displayed in a suitable place where necessary, including information about social distancing, hygiene and not attending if the person has symptoms. 	



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception areas have been reviewed to take account of infection control and allow social distancing including floor markings/barriers/reception screens. • Where possible, reception staff sign in visitors. Visitors do not use the same pen and touch screens are sanitised after each visitor. 	
<p>Training</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff have been instructed on the nature of COVID-19 and its transmission. • The risk assessment together with any COVID 19 control measures have been brought to the attention of all teaching staff. • Any staff briefings are also conducted with social distancing considerations 	



Appendix 4

GENERAL GUIDANCE TO SCHOOL STAFF WORKING - PPE & SOCIAL DISTANCING

1. PPE - Rhondda Cynon Taf Council - Schools COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment Guidance Matrix – V2 – 11-06-20

Introduction

It is important to remember that physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory **hygiene** (catching a cough or sneeze in a tissue or covering the mouth and nose with an elbow or sleeve) remain strongly evidenced to be the most effective ways to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Hand hygiene is critical before and after all direct contact with a child or young person, and after cleaning equipment and the environment. There is therefore no need to use personal protective equipment (PPE) when undertaking routine educational activities in classroom/school settings. The list below covers when PPE may be required. Further guidance is available at <https://gov.wales/keep-education-safe-operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-covid-19>

Activity / Task / Circumstance	Context	Disposable Gloves	Disposable Plastic Apron	Fluid Resistant Surgical Mask	Eye Protection
Routine Activities	No PPE is required when undertaking routine educational activities in classroom or school settings.				
Suspected coronavirus (COVID-19)	If a child or young person becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 and needs direct personal care.	√ Single use	√ Single use	√ Single use	X – Risk Assess
	When cleaning the areas where a person suspected of having COVID-19 has been.	√ Single use	√ Single use		

Activity / Task / Circumstance	Context	Disposable Gloves	Disposable Plastic Apron	Fluid-resistant Surgical Mask	Fluid Repellent Gown	FFP3 Mask	Eye Protection
Intimate Care	When providing intimate care to a child or young person. This can include personal, hands-on care such as washing, toileting, or first aid and certain clinical procedures such as assisted feeding.	√ Single use	√ Single use	X – Risk Assess			X – Risk Assess
	When undertaking aerosol generating procedures such as suction.	√ Single use			√ Single use	√ Single use	√ Single use (clean & re-use)
	When cleaning equipment or surfaces that might be contaminated with body fluids such as saliva or respiratory secretions.	√ Single use	√ Single use				

X Risk Assess = If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes such as from coughing, spitting, or vomiting.

Guidance

The use of PPE by staff within education settings should be based on a clear assessment of risk, taking into account each individual setting and the needs of the individual learner. Schools, settings and local authorities already have risk assessments processes in place which should be used to identify the need for the use of PPE. Following any risk assessment, where the need for PPE has been identified, it should be readily available and provided. Further information has been provided by the [Health and Safety Executive](#):



Using PPE at work during the coronavirus outbreak

All staff should understand how to put on or remove PPE in the right order, safely dispose of the waste and use correct hand hygiene steps to reduce the risk of onward transmission of infection. Further guidance is available in Appendix 6 of the [Infection Prevention and Control for Childcare Settings Guidance](#).

In any case, hand washing should always be practiced before putting on and after removing PPE. Schools and settings should contact their local authority to obtain PPE to cover the above.

NB – For pregnant staff or those staff who have been off with Moderate Health Risks the above PPE guidance may be adjusted to take account of any medical risk assessment process that has been undertaken prior to a staff member returning to work.

Please refer to the link below for the full version of the Welsh Government Guidance – Keep Education Safe: Operational Guidance for Schools and Settings (COVID-19)

<https://gov.wales/keep-education-safe-operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-covid-19>

2. Social Distancing

Under Regulation 7a of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restriction) (Wales) Regulations 2020, Welsh Government have chosen to impose a legal requirement on workplaces to ensure that everything reasonably practicable is done to minimise transmission of coronavirus. The key purpose of the Regulations is to minimise the risk of transmission of Coronavirus. Where contact or closer working is required, it is important that other measures are considered, for example:

- Washing hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap or use of hand sanitiser after close contact;
- Minimising the level of interaction;
- Physical barriers (including wearing Personal Protective Equipment that has been provided when required);
- Improved personal hygiene and reminders about the importance of good hygiene;
- Ensuring those with symptoms are isolated from other person's onsite until they can be collected.

Although the duty falls on the person responsible for management control, everybody in a workplace has a personal responsibility to comply with the 2 metre distance requirement wherever possible, to ensure that the risk of transmission of Coronavirus across Wales



is reduced. WG have made it clear that while there is a requirement to take all reasonable measures to maintain a physical distance, it is about taking proportionate action where it is practicable to do so.

What constitutes a reasonable measure?

It will be for the duty holder of the school/childcare setting to justify the reasonable measures that they have adopted, and to demonstrate how they have considered that these are proportionate and minimise the risks faced by all persons who have to continue to attend work in their setting.

If physical distancing can be achieved, this would be considered a reasonable measure and this will play a part, along with other actions, to minimise community transmission. Where possible a 2 metre distance should be maintained for everyone (pupils, staff, visitors, etc.) at the school or childcare setting. This can include class sizes being reduced, therefore limiting the number of pupils staff have to assist with physical distancing, or carrying out activities on a rotation.

However, it is recognised that due to the age and personal requirements of some pupils this will undoubtedly be difficult to achieve and therefore physical distancing is not in these cases considered a reasonable measure. If for any reason a member of staff cannot maintain suitable distance, PPE would need to be worn as per the above table, to provide a level of protection.

Appendix 5

SIGNAGE – description of signage to be received by schools

		<p>White Tac</p>
		<p>Double sided tape</p>

		<p>Screens</p>
		<p>Fence 2mtr banner</p>
		<p>Gate no access sign</p>
		<p>Cable ties</p>



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

Appendix B

I: Pob Pennaeth

Gofynnwch Am:
Please Ask For:
Rhif Est:
Telephone N°:
Ffacs:
Fax:
E-Bost:
E-Mail:
Cylchlythyr:
Circular:

Gaynor Davies
01443 744001

Fy Nghyf: GD/TM
My Ref:

Eich Cyf: Your Ref:

Dyddiad: 9/7/2020
Date:

Annwyl Gydweithiwr,

Mae Cyngor Rhondda Cynon Taf yn croesawu cyhoeddiad y Gweinidog Addysg heddiw, sef bod modd i bob disgybl ddychwelyd yn ddiogel i'n hysgolion o ddechrau mis Medi. Cadarnhaodd Llywodraeth Cymru fod modd i ysgolion groesawu pob disgybl yn ystod wythnos gyntaf y tymor pe bydden nhw'n dymuno gwneud hynny. Serch hynny, rydyn ni'n cydnabod efallai bydd rhai ysgolion yn dewis gweithredu dull dychwelyd i'r ysgol fesul cam yn ystod y bythefnos gyntaf gan ganolbwyntio ar y grwpiau sy'n cael eu blaenoriaethu yn yr achos gyntaf. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru wedi nodi bod **rhaid** i bob disgybl fod yn ôl yn yr ysgol erbyn 14 Medi.

Mae effaith y pandemig ar bob disgybl, aelod o staff a chymuned wedi bod yn bellgyrhaeddol ac mae ymrwymiad cryf ar draws y proffesiwn i groesawu pob plentyn ac aelod o staff yn ôl i'r ysgol ac i addysg llawn amser cyn gynted â'i bod hi'n ddiogel gwneud hynny. Mae'n galonogol ein bod ni bellach wedi cyrraedd y cam yma ac mae modd i ni ddychwelyd i ddarparu cyfleoedd addysgu, dysgu a lles o ansawdd uchel i bob disgybl mewn lleoliad ysgol. Mae'r wynebau hapus a welwyd ar draws ein holl ysgolion yn ystod yr wythnosau diwethaf yn awgrymu bod ein plant a'n pobl ifainc hefyd ar bigau'r drain i ddychwelyd i'r ysgol yn llawn amser.

Yn ystod y cyfnod ailgydio, dal i fyny a pharatoi, mae arweinwyr ysgolion wedi sefydlu mesurau iechyd a diogelwch cadarn ac maen nhw mewn sefyllfa dda i groesawu pob disgybl yn ôl i'r ysgol. Byddwn ni yn y Cyngor yn gweithio gyda'n harweinwyr ysgolion ac undebau llafur i sefydlu dull cyson er mwyn i ddisgyblion dychwelyd i'w hysgolion cyn gynted ag y bo modd.

Bydd Lywodraeth Cymru yn cyhoeddi rhagor o ganllawiau ddydd Llun nesaf a bydd canllawiau lleol yn cael eu dosbarthu cyn gynted ag sy'n bosibl ar ôl eu cyhoeddi. Wrth i'r sefyllfa ddatblygu, rydyn ni'n disgwyl i'r canllawiau gael eu diweddarau'n barhaus.

Tŷ Trevithick
Abercynon, Aberpennar, CF45 4UQ
Abercynon, Mountain Ash, CF45 4UQ

Ffôn/Tel: 01443 744000
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Gaynor Davies
Cyfarwyddwr Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cynhwysiant | Director of Education and Inclusion Services

Dewiswch iaith a diwyg eich dogfen | Available in alternative formats and languages

Croesawn ohebu yn Gymraeg a fydd gohebu yn y Gymraeg ddim yn arwain at oedi. Rhowch wybod inni beth yw'ch dewis iaith e.e Cymraeg neu'n ddwyieithog. We welcome correspondence in Welsh and corresponding with us in Welsh will not lead to a delay. Let us know your language choice if Welsh or bilingual.



MAE EICH DATA O BWYS www.rctcbc.gov.uk/diogeludata
YOUR DATA MATTERS www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection



Yn y cyfamser, rydyn ni'n awgrymu'n gryf bod pob ysgol yn paratoi ar gyfer croesawu'r disgyblion sy'n cael eu blaenoriaethu ac o leiaf traean o'r holl ddisgyblion ar unrhyw un diwrnod yn ystod yr wythnos gyntaf. Mae'n bosibl y bydd grwpiau sy'n cael eu blaenoriaethu yn cynnwys dysgwyr sy'n mynychu dosbarthiadau cymorth dysgu mewn ysgolion cynradd ac uwchradd, dosbarthiadau'r blynyddoedd cynnar a dosbarthiadau blwyddyn 6 yn y sector cynradd, a blynyddoedd 7, 11 a 13 yn y sector uwchradd.

Dylech chi gyflwyno asesiadau risg diwygiedig i'r awdurdod lleol erbyn dydd Mercher 3 Medi fan bellaf. Dylai'r rhain adlewyrchu ein nod uchelgeisiol o gael yr holl ddisgyblion yn ôl i'r ysgol cyn gynted ag sy'n bosibl yn ystod yr ail wythnos, a'n nod o sicrhau bod pob disgybl yn yr ysgol erbyn 14 Medi, pen fydd mynychu'r ysgol yn orfodol.

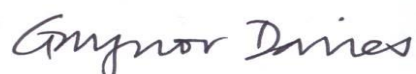
Mae pob ysgol wedi dangos eu dulliau hynod effeithiol o asesu risg a mesurau lliniaru hyd yma. Rydw i'n hyderus y byddwn ni'n symud ymlaen yn ddi-dor i'r cam nesaf hwn o addysg yn Rhondda Cynon Taf trwy arddangos arweinyddiaeth effeithiol barhaus a thrwy weithio mewn partneriaeth.

Caiff rhagor o wybodaeth i rieni a chynhalwyr ei hanfon maes o law a'n dealltwriaeth ni yw bydd ailagor ysgolion i bawb bob dydd yn golygu y bydd y ddarpariaeth gofal plant ar gyfer gweithwyr allweddol yn dod i ben.

Mae Llywodraeth Cymru wedi cyhoeddi y bydd £29miliwn o gyllid ychwanegol ar gael i helpu gyda'r cam ailagor a bydd rhagor o fanylion am y gronfa yma'n cael eu cyhoeddi dros y diwrnodau nesaf.

Rwy o'r farn bod ein harweinwyr ysgol a staff yn Rhondda Cynon Taf wedi bod yn rhagorol ac wedi gwneud gwahaniaeth go iawn i fywydau llawer yn ystod y cyfnod heriol yma. Rwy'n gwerthfawrogi'n fawr eich cyd-ymdrechion a'ch agwedd broffesiynol.

Yn ddiffuant,



Cyfarwyddwr Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cynhwysiant



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

To: All Headteachers

Gofynnwch Am:
Please Ask For:
Rhif Est:
Telephone N°:
Ffacs:
Fax:
E-Bost:
E-Mail:
Cylchlythyr:
Circular:

Gaynor Davies
01443 744001

Appendix B(1)

Fy nghyf: GD/TM
My Ref:

Eich Cyf:
Your Ref:

Dyddiad: 9/7/2020
Date:

Dear colleague,

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council welcomes the Education Minister's announcement today, that from the start of September all pupils can safely return to our schools. It has been confirmed by Welsh Government that schools can accommodate all pupils within the first week of term should they wish to do so, whilst also recognising that some schools may prefer to manage the return of priority groups of pupils, on a phased basis, over the first two weeks. At the very latest, Welsh Government has stipulated that all pupils **must** be back in school by the 14th of September.

The impact of the pandemic on all pupils, staff and communities has been far reaching and there is a strong commitment across the profession to welcoming all children and staff back into school and full time education as soon as it is safe to do so. It is heartening that we have now reached this phase and that we can return to delivering high quality teaching, learning and wellbeing opportunities for all pupils in a school setting. The happy faces witnessed across all our school sites in recent weeks suggests that our children and young people are also keen to return to full time education.

During the check in, catch and prepare phase, school leaders have established robust health and safety measures and are in a strong position to welcome all pupils back into school. As a Council we will work with our school leaders and trade unions to establish a consistent approach across the County Borough to returning all pupils to school at the earliest opportunity.

Further guidance will be issued by Welsh Government next Monday and local guidance will be issued as soon as possible following publication. It is expected that as the situation evolves, the guidance will be continuously updated.

Tŷ Trevithick
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Gaynor Davies
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Croesawn ohebu yn Gymraeg a fydd gohebu yn y Gymraeg ddim yn arwain at oedi. Rhowch wybod inni beth yw'ch dewis iaith e.e Cymraeg neu'n ddwyieithog. We welcome correspondence in Welsh and corresponding with us in Welsh will not lead to a delay. Let us know your language choice if Welsh or bilingual.



MAE EICH DATA O BWYS www.rctcbc.gov.uk/diogeludata
YOUR DATA MATTERS www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection



It is strongly advised that all schools prepare for the return of priority pupils and at least a third of all pupils on any given day during week 1. Priority groups could potentially include learners attending learning support classes across primary and secondary schools, the early years and year 6 in the primary sector, and years 7, 11, 13 in the secondary sector.

Revised risk assessments should be submitted to the local authority no later than Wednesday the 3rd of September and these should reflect our aspirational aim of getting all pupils back into school at the earliest opportunity during week 2, leading to a full return on the 14th of September when school attendance will be compulsory.

All schools have clearly demonstrated highly effective approaches to risk assessment and mitigation to date and I have every confidence that through continued effective leadership and strong partnership working we will transition seamlessly into this next phase of education in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Further information for parents and carers will follow in due course and it is our understanding that the resumption of schooling will mean that the childcare provision for key workers will cease.

The Welsh Government has announced that £29m of additional funding will be provided to assist with the recovery phase and further details regarding this fund will be issued over the next few days.

I think our school leaders and staff in Rhondda Cynon Taf have been outstanding and have made a real difference to the lives of many during this challenging period and I am hugely appreciative of your collective efforts and professionalism.

Yours sincerely,



Director of Education and Inclusion Services



Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Guidance for the safe re-opening of schools - September 2020

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg
This document is available in Welsh

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1. Introduction

This guidance outlines the proposed phased approach to all schools opening on the 1st of September 2020, as outlined by the Education Minister Kirsty Williams, on the 9th of July 2020.

Since the 29th of June, schools in Wales have been offering their learners the opportunity to attend sessions to check in, catch up and prepare. This has been on a reduced basis taking into account the scientific advice available at the time and the legislative requirements. In recent weeks, things have progressed and the scientific evidence suggests that all learners can now be returned to schools in the autumn term. The Welsh Technical Advisory Group (TAG), which provides scientific and technical advice to Government during emergencies, recommends that schools “plan to open in September with 100% of pupils physically present on school sites, subject to a continuing, steady decline in the presence of COVID-19 in the community.”

Further information can be provided at

<https://gov.wales/technical-advisory-group-advice-return-school>

This technical and scientific evidence suggests ‘that the risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID–19) is very low’ and that the ‘balance of risk is now overwhelmingly in favour of children returning to school. Being out of school is detrimental for children’s cognitive and academic development and their health and wellbeing, particularly for disadvantaged children; and, can have an impact both in the short and longer term’.

Further information can be provided at

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-07/operational-guidance-for-schools-and-settings-from-the-autumn-term.pdf>

This information aims to support schools to develop and maintain ‘reasonable measures’ to keep learners safe, and this information is provided as a framework to help school leaders to plan for the safe return of children to their local schools in September 2020.

Underpinning this guidance is the expectation that schools work in partnership with the local authority and parents and carers to ensure that approaches are adopted to ensure the safe return of all learners to school. This will build on the robust risk assessment planning and control measures put in place during the check in, catch up and prepare phase. These risk assessments will need to be reviewed in light of this new guidance, and revised risk assessments shared with staff ideally prior to the end of the summer term and submitted to the local authority by the **31st of August 2020** at the very latest. Risk assessments should also include containment measures to be adopted in the event of a local lockdown and how continuity of education would be maintained in these circumstances.



Schools who are in a position to submit these risk assessments prior to this date are encouraged to do so.

There is an expectation that schools operate within the parameters of the guidance documents provided by the local authority, although there is recognition that headteachers, in partnership with their governing bodies, need to make strategic and operational judgements based on their individual contexts and the presenting challenges faced on a daily basis.

The safety of children and staff is of utmost importance and this advice seeks to support staff working in schools to deliver education in the safest way possible, focusing on measures that can be put in place to help limit the risk of the virus spreading in schools. These measures should aim to enable all learners to receive a broad and balanced curriculum, which will enable all learners to learn and progress, both academically and from a wellbeing perspective.

2. Phased Return of Learners to School

All schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf have a designated INSET day on the 1st of September 2020. It is now recommended that the 1st and 2nd of September are used as planning and preparation days to review risk assessments and to put in place processes and procedures to ensure the effective implementation of risk assessment plans. All schools will still have an additional 6 INSET training days at their disposal.

Our priority in Rhondda Cynon Taf is to ensure that we get all of our learners back into school as quickly and as safely as possible so that the positive benefits of being back in school can be achieved. This guidance is intended to support the phased re-introduction of all learners back into schools to enable all learners to start as early as possible prior to the **14th of September** deadline when all learners are expected back in school.

A consistent approach to the reintroduction of learners back in to schools across Rhondda Cynon Taf is essential to ensure that there is equity in the system. The following parameters have been set and all schools are required to:

- Prepare for the return of priority pupils and **at least 33%** of all pupils from the 3rd of September 2020. Priority groups for inclusion on the 3rd and 4th September could include learners attending learning support classes across primary and secondary schools, the early years and year 6 in the primary sector, and years 7 and key examination groups in the secondary sector. Schools are expected to prioritise based on their context and local challenges, but in all cases at least 33% of all learners must be provided with the opportunity to return to school from the first day of the school being open to pupils (3rd of September 2020). For schools who consider that they do not require 2 planning days, consideration should be given to opening sooner.



- By Monday the **7th of September**, all schools must plan for the return of **at least 50%** of learners to school.
- By Thursday the **10th of September at the latest**, all schools and pupil referral units in Rhondda Cynon Taf must plan to have **all learners back in school**.

Revised risk assessments should reflect the local authority's aspirational aim of getting all pupils back into school by Thursday the 10th of September in preparation for compulsory attendance for all learners by the 14th of September. From September, provision in schools will not include emergency childcare for essential workers and vulnerable learners. Nursery age pupils should also return in September with no modifications to access. Post 16 consortia arrangements should continue but should be explicitly referenced in all risk assessments and plans in partnership with other schools involved.

All plans for the phased return of year groups and vulnerable groups **MUST** be submitted to the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) by **Friday 17th of July at the latest**.

Risks should be mitigated through the appropriate use of preventative and reactive strategies

Prevention

- Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have COVID-19 symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school (Section 3: Symptomatic Learners and Staff).
- Minimise contact between individuals wherever possible. For younger learners the emphasis will be on separating groups, and for older learners it will be on distancing (Section 4: Social Distancing).
- Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual, ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach and promote effective ventilation (Section 5: Effective Hygiene).
- Continue enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach (Section 6: Effective Cleaning).
- Where necessary, in specific circumstances (set out later in the guidance), wear appropriate PPE (Section 14: PPE).

Reactive Approaches

- Engage with the Test, Trace, Protect (TTP) strategy (Section 19: TTP).
- Manage confirmed cases of COVID-19 among the school community and contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice (Section (20: Potential Outbreaks).



A list of Frequently Asked Questions will be updated shortly by the local authority at www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolfaq to support parental/carer queries to the autumn term return. The revised document will be available from the 16th of July.

Key actions:

- Schools must liaise and advise ITU, and confirm which year groups have been prioritised for a return to schools by **Friday the 17th of July 2020** at the latest.
- Update risk assessments and aim to share with staff **before the 20th of July**, if possible.
- Submit revised updated risk assessments, including information relating to any localised lockdown, and submit to the local authority by the **31st of August 2020**.
- Where possible all children in Rhondda Cynon Taf should be back in school by **Thursday the 10th of September**, in preparation for compulsory return by **Monday the 14th of September**.
- Once a child has returned to school, plans should ensure that these learners remain in school for the duration of the phased return.
- Consideration should be given to prioritising learners attending learning support classes and those in the early years, year 6, year 7, and examination year groups during week 1 (school to plan for **at least 33% attendance on the 3rd and 4th of September; 50% by the 7th and 100% by the 10th**).
- Ensure that new nursery admissions are included in the phased re-introduction of children to school.
- Plan the content and timing of communications to parents and pupils (including discussing attendance expectations and other specific things that parents should do to help prepare returning pupils, for example, arrangements for drop-off/collection).
- Aim to ensure an effective range of preventative and reactive measures and that these are included in the risk assessment.
- Ensure that learners with statements of SEN have support in place as specified in their statement of SEN and alert the local authority of any staffing capacity challenges.
- Put in place provision for the return of pupils with SEN in conjunction with families and other agencies and engage with the LA/agencies to provide support.
- Agree what arrangements should be put in place for dual-registered or collaborative post 16 arrangements with the other educational settings.

3. Symptomatic Learners and Staff

Under no circumstances should learners or staff attend schools/setting if they:

- feel unwell, have any of the four identified COVID-19 symptoms (a new continuous cough, a high temperature or loss of taste or smell) or they have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 7 days;



- live in a household with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or has tested positive to COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

Schools and settings should have clear procedures if learners or staff begin to show symptoms on site. These need to be fully understood by both staff and parents/carers. Those showing symptoms during the school day should be kept separate until they can be collected and taken home. Ideally, this should be in a separate room, supervised at a distance of two metres (**if 2 metres cannot be maintained then PPE should be used – please refer to Section 14**). If they need clinical advice, they (or a member of staff or their parent/carer) should go online to **111 Wales** (or call 111 if they don't have internet access).

Surfaces that learners or staff with symptoms have come into with should be carefully and thoroughly cleaned.

Anyone displaying symptoms of COVID-19 should stay at home and begin to self-isolate for 7 days while making arrangements to be tested. If the test result is negative the individual with symptoms will not be required to complete the full 7 days self-isolation period. Anyone who lives with someone displaying COVID-19 symptoms, or is in an extended household arrangement with someone displaying symptoms must stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person became ill or until the outcome of the COVID-19 test is known.

All schools have been provided with temperature checking devices although it is not a mandatory requirement to screen for a temperature. Care should be taken to ensure that PPE in the form of a visor is worn if devices require close contact.

4. Social Distancing

Minimising contacts and mixing between people reduces transmission of COVID-19. These practices need to be embedded across all schools to ensure that staff and children are safe and well, and every effort is made to break the chain of infection. Schools will need to ensure that policies reinforce the importance of a range of preventative measures as outlined in section 2, including social distancing. This should be reflected in school wellbeing/behaviour policies, intimate care and healthcare needs policies. These should be widely shared with stakeholders and expectations made clear in relation to requirement for all members of the school community to adhere to social distancing requirements, where possible. A school's response to a deliberate refusal to comply with social distancing should be reflected in the school's wellbeing/behaviour policy and the position communicated to all stakeholders prior to learners returning to school.

Schools should aim to minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible. The latest scientific guidance (<https://gov.wales/technical-advisory-group-advice-return-school>) suggests that



transmissibility in learners under the age of 12 is particularly low. Children under the age of 18 make up 22-25% of the population, but consistently only make up <2% of the total COVID-19 caseload in every country.

Minimising contacts and social distancing

In order to reduce transmission of COVID-19, schools must consider how to best minimise contacts and promote social distancing whilst delivering a broad and balanced curriculum. It is acknowledged that schools will have constraints relating to buildings, rooms and staffing resources and an element of flexibility may be needed in order that children can be accommodated to return to school.

The overarching principle to apply is reducing the number of contacts between learners and staff by keeping groups separate and maintaining distance between individuals. Potential barriers to achieving this in practice include learners' ability to keep distance; layout of schools; and the feasibility of keeping distinct groups separate while offering a broad curriculum, especially at secondary school. For younger learners, the emphasis will be on separating groups, and for older learners it will be on maintaining some social distancing and discouraging physical contact with others.

Consistent grouping should be maintained where possible to limit the number of learners and staff in contact with each other to only those within the contact group. Young learners often struggle to socially distance and consistent grouping provides an additional protective measure. Maintaining distinct contact groups that do not interact will ensure that the identification and isolation of contacts will be swifter in the event of a confirmed case.

Maintaining small contact groups will be challenging, particularly at secondary level, when full national curriculum delivery is resumed. Risk assessments and control measures should be revised to reflect the growth in contact groups in September. In secondary schools, key stage 4 and key stage 5 contact groups are likely to be the size of a full year group to ensure access to specialist teaching and resources. Where smaller class size contact groups can be accommodated in secondary schools then this is recommended, particularly in key stage 3. At primary level, implementing class size contact groups is recommended where possible.

If class-sized groups are not compatible with offering a full range of subjects or managing the practical logistics within and around school, then consideration should be given to establishing year or half-year group sized contact groups. Whatever the size of the contact group, they should be kept apart from other contact groups where possible and older learners should be encouraged to keep their distance within groups. Schools with the capacity to do so should also limit interaction, sharing of rooms and social spaces between groups as much as possible. When using larger groups, other preventative measures become even more important, to minimise transmission risks and the need to self-isolate. Welsh Government recognise that younger learners will not be able to maintain social distancing, and advise that it is acceptable for them not to distance within their group.



Even when it is challenging to fully separate groups and to maintain distance, partial implementation can still provide benefits. For example, schools may robustly adhere to limiting contact groups for the majority of the day, but might allow mixing for specialist teaching, wraparound care and transport. Siblings may also be in different groups. Making efforts to keep these groups at least partially separate and minimising contacts between learners will still offer public health benefits as it reduces the network of possible direct transmission opportunities.

All teachers and staff can operate across different classes and year groups in order to facilitate the delivery of the school timetable. This will be particularly important for secondary schools. Where staff need to move between classes and year groups, they should try to keep their distance from learners and other staff as much as they can, and ideally 2 metres from other adults. Again, Welsh Government recognises this is not always possible with younger learners and teachers in primary schools can still work across groups if that is needed to enable a full educational offer.

Where mixing between groups cannot be avoided, schools and practitioners should run the *approach to risk estimation and management* process to reduce the risk of transmission between contact groups. Further consideration of the process outlined in Annexe A of the attached document should be given.

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-07/operational-guidance-for-schools-and-settings-from-the-autumn-term.pdf>

Classroom measures

Maintaining a distance between people and reducing face to face to contact lowers the risk of transmission. Public Health Wales strongly advise that secondary staff should maintain distance from their learners, staying at the front of the class, and away from their colleagues where possible. Ideally, adults should maintain 2 metre distance from each other, and from learners where possible.

When working with young pupils, it can be more challenging to maintain social distance, adults should avoid close face-to-face contact and minimise time spent within 1 metre of both children and adults. Similarly, when working with many learners who have complex needs or who need close contact care measures should be taken to minimise risks and to keep learners in smaller, class sized contact groups. Where there are capacity constraints steps should be taken to exploring different spaces to eat lunch, including classroom settings. The portability of school meal provision will be an important consideration in this regard.

Classroom layouts should support social distancing and should include seating learners side by side and facing forwards, rather than face to face or side on, and might include moving unnecessary furniture out of classrooms to make more space.

Use of other school spaces

Contact groups should be kept apart where possible, and large gatherings such as assemblies or collective worship with more than one group should be avoided. When timetabling, groups should be kept apart and movement around the school site kept to



a minimum. While passing briefly in the corridor or playground is low risk, schools should avoid creating busy corridors, entrances and exits. Schools should also consider staggered break times and lunch times (and time for cleaning surfaces in the dining hall between groups).

Schools and settings should also plan how shared staff spaces are set up and used to help staff to distance from each other. Use of staff rooms should be minimised, although staff must still have a break of a reasonable length during the day.

To help social distancing, staff should consider as many activities outside as practicable. This will require children to have appropriate clothing for the weather.

Staggered start and finish times

Where possible, schools should consider staggered starts or adjusting start and finish times to keep groups apart as they arrive and leave school. These should not reduce the overall teaching time and this could be achieved by condensing/staggering free periods or break time, or starting or finishing later. Changes should be clearly outlined to parents and expectations in relation to drop off and collection made explicit, including not gathering at the school gate or attending without an appointment.

For dual placed learners, including post 16 consortia arrangements, schools should work through the system of controls collaboratively, enabling them to address any risks identified and allowing them to jointly deliver a broad and balanced curriculum for the learner.

On-Site Visitors

Supply teachers, peripatetic staff and/or other temporary staff can move between schools. They should ensure they minimise contact and maintain as much distance as possible from other staff. Specialists, therapists, clinicians and other support staff for learners with SEN should provide interventions as usual. Schools should consider how to manage other visitors to the site, such as contractors and ensure site guidance on social/physical distancing and hygiene is explained to visitors on or before arrival. Where visits can happen outside of school hours and/or meetings can take place remotely, they should. A record should be kept of all visitors. Whilst visitors will be required to follow hygiene standards, including use of sanitiser, they will not be mandated to wear any PPE.

Signage and layouts

Appropriate signage has been provided for all settings prior to schools opening and examples of the signage can be seen Appendix 4. A guidance document has also been distributed to all schools – ‘Signage and Layout – Guidance for Schools – Re-occupation of school buildings during coronavirus (COVID-19)’. This document contains the following helpful video links to assist schools with putting appropriate social distancing measures in place:-

Around the school:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0EYp7Y3tk&feature=youtu.be>



Drop off and pickup:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-P8MhrqHhAs&feature=youtu.be>

In the classroom Primary:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q70NOMbp0Rc&feature=youtu.be>

In the classroom Secondary:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qabqG7w85WE&feature=youtu.be>

Lunch time:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uBv1GKp-3U&feature=youtu.be>

Staff rooms:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEuKTZXrpDY&feature=youtu.be>

Toilets:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93fe44KTFeQ&feature=youtu.be>

Key actions:

- Plan for how social distancing will be achieved and ensure this is robustly adhered to.
- Decide the physical and organisational structures needed to limit risks and limit movement around the building(s) (for example, classroom layouts, entry and exit points, staggered starts and break times, class sizes, lunch queues, toilet timetabling, use of communal staff areas). Refer to the Council's 'Signage and Layout' guidance document and YouTube clips for examples of how to set out your school (**see the links above**).
- Access rooms from the outside where possible.
- Use one-way circulation, or place a divider down the middle of the corridor to keep groups apart as they move through the setting where spaces are accessed by corridors.
- Agree how safety measures and messages will be implemented and displayed around school.
- Maintain continuity in grouping and staffing where possible, and minimise interaction and transmission risks across contact groups and individuals.
- Whatever the size of the contact group, they should be kept apart from other contact groups where possible and older learners should be encouraged to keep their distance within groups.
- Secondary staff should maintain distance from their learners, staying at the front of the class, and away from their colleagues where possible. Ideally, adults should maintain 2 metre distance from each other and from learners where possible.
- When working with young pupils, adults should avoid close face-to-face contact and minimise time spent within 1 metre of both children and adults.
- When working with learners with complex needs where PPE is routinely used, consideration should be given to keeping learners in smaller, class sized contact groups.
- At key stage 4/5 contact groups are likely to be a year group or smaller so contacts are minimised where possible and physical distancing reinforced.

- In key stage, 3 contact groups should be class size where possible. Where it is not possible, consideration should be given to half-year group sized contact groups.
- Contact groups in primary schools should be class sized.
- Schools should aim to adhere to limiting contact between groups for the majority of the day, but might need to allow for wider mixing for specialist teaching, wraparound care and transport.
- Schools with the capacity to do so should also limit interaction, sharing of rooms and social spaces between groups as much as possible.
- Undertake individual risk assessments for high-risk learners and ensure that they are well supported to mitigate risks.
- Update behaviour policies to reflect new procedures and protocols aimed at reducing risks in settings and agree how to communicate this to school staff, students and parents.
- Stagger drop off and collections to promote social distancing.
- Plan parents' drop-off and pick-up protocols that minimise social contact.
- Ensure that all are aware that anyone displaying symptoms does not attend school and immediately self-isolates.
- Where appropriate, organise seating for that learners are facing the front and are not face to face or side on, where this is age appropriate (for younger age groups a combination of control measures should be implemented to mitigate risks)
- Avoid sharing of resources or equipment.
- Utilise outdoors for lessons and classroom activities.
- Encourage outside play but not contact or other risky sports and games.
- Remove unnecessary equipment and furniture if possible, to maximise social distancing opportunities.
- Stagger the use of staff rooms and offices to limit occupancy.
- Plan arrangements with your suppliers and check they are following appropriate social distancing and that hygiene measures (for example, food suppliers, grounds maintenance, transport providers) are in place.
- Allow access of professionals who work across other schools and ensure compliance with preventative measures.
- Parents/carers should attend on a pre-appointment basis only.

5. Effective Hygiene

It is recommended that learners limit the amount of equipment they bring into school each day, to essentials such as lunch boxes, bags, hats, coats, books, stationery and mobile phones. Learners and staff can take books and other shared resources home, although unnecessary sharing should be avoided, especially where this does not contribute to learners' education and development. Similar rules on hand washing, cleaning of the resources and rotation should apply to these resources.



For individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pencils and pens, it is recommended that staff and learners have their own items that are not shared. Classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the contact group; these should be cleaned regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces. Resources that are shared between contact groups, such as sports, art and science equipment should be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between contact groups, or rotated to allow them to be left unused and out of reach for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different contact groups.

Schools and settings should ensure outdoor playground equipment is more frequently cleaned. This would also apply to resources used inside and outside by wraparound care providers.

There are important actions that children and young people, their parents and those who work with them can take during the coronavirus outbreak, to help prevent the spread of the virus. In all education settings, preventing the spread of coronavirus involves dealing with direct transmission (for instance, when in close contact with those sneezing and coughing) and indirect transmission (via touching contaminated surfaces). A range of approaches and actions should be employed to do this. These can be seen as a hierarchy of controls that, when implemented, create an inherently safer system, where the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced. For further information, please refer to:

<https://phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/harp/infection-prevention-and-control/guidance/>

Staff must ensure that all staff and children regularly wash their hands. They should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Staff should also ensure that children understand effective handwashing techniques. Regular handwashing should include on arrival and when leaving the school or childcare setting; before and after handling food; before and after handling objects and equipment that may have been used by others; where there has been any physical contact and after people blow their nose, sneeze or cough, and before and after visiting toilets to avoid contamination of toilet cubicles.

Ensuring that help is available for children and young people who have trouble cleaning their hands independently should be encouraged. Handwashing is preferable to the use of hand sanitisers but hand sanitisers must also be provided in all school settings. These should be available at entrances to the childcare/school settings and strategically positioned in places that takes into consideration the health and safety of children and staff.

Please raise any issues relating with the supply of hygiene products with your local authority lead. Sufficient supplies of sanitiser and PPE will be delivered to your schools prior to schools opening. If further supplies are needed, then please order as follows:

- Sanitiser - ProcOrders@rctcbc.gov.uk
- PPE – paula.griffiths@rctcbc.gov.uk

Learners must wash their hands (or use sanitiser) immediately on arrival and then wash their hands again before heading to their classroom. If learners and staff on arrival at school wish to remove a face covering they should be advised to take care and avoid touching their face when they do so, although some may choose to continue to wear them throughout the school day. Any disposable face coverings should be placed in a pedal operated waste bin.

Children and staff should cough into their elbow. Staff and children, insofar as it is possible, should be encouraged not to touch their face, especially when using a tissue or elbow to cough. Bins for tissues should be emptied throughout the day and any used tissues deposited in bins, including pedal bins. Consideration should be given to encouraging young children to learn and practice these good habits through games and different activities.

There is no need for anything other than normal personal hygiene and washing of clothes following a day in an educational or childcare setting.

All spaces should be well-ventilated using natural ventilation (opening windows) or ventilation units. Doors should be propped open, where safe to do so (bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding), to limit use of door handles and aid ventilation.

Key Actions:

- Decide the approach to be adopted to enhance hygiene (for example, toilet use, hand washing) and ensure this is consistently implemented.
- Decide on policy related to usually shared items (for example, books, toys, practical equipment) and implement.
- Limit the amount of items that children bring into schools.
- Resources that are shared between contact groups should be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between contact groups, or rotated to allow them to be left unused and out of reach for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different contacts.
- Ensure that there is sufficient sanitiser disseminated throughout the building.
- Install pedal bins.
- Teach good hygiene habits through different games and activities.
- Ensure good ventilation and keep doors open where it is appropriate to do so, and does not present as a fire or safeguarding risk.

6. Effective Cleaning

Current information relating to cleaning in non-clinical settings is provided at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>



Points to consider and implement includes putting in place a cleaning schedule that ensures cleaning is generally enhanced and more frequent cleaning of rooms/shared areas after they have been used by different groups. Frequently touched surfaces being cleaned more often than normal and separate toilets should be provided for different contact groups, where possible. Where this is not possible, using hand sanitiser before entering the toilet and ensuring toilets are cleaned regularly will help. Learners must be encouraged to clean their hands thoroughly after using the toilet

School building(s) will need to be cleaned regularly and at least once a day. Hard surfaces should be cleaned with warm soapy water and then disinfected with the cleaning products normally used. Particular attention should be given to 'high-touch' areas and surfaces, which should be cleaned at least once a day and more frequently in high use areas based on local assessment, including washrooms, railings, tables, toys, equipment and door handles.

The handling of objects between individuals, including staff, parents/carers and children, should be minimised. Handling of objects by multiple individuals without cleaning should be avoided.

An additional clean will be required when a contact group is changed within any area or classroom. This will include canteen facilities and staggered lunch breaks. Cleaning staff should aim to maintain social distancing with adults and children, and mitigate risks by deploying a range of preventative measures.

Tissues should be placed in a separate bin/pedal operated waste bin and disposed of safely. Used antibacterial surface wipes should also be placed in a separate bin/pedal operated waste bin and disposed of safely on a daily basis. If schools are not able to obtain antibacterial wipes from their normal suppliers, then they are advised to contact the Procurement Service.

Additional cleaning hours will be commissioned on the schools' behalf with all cleaning providers. Primary schools will receive an additional 6 hours per day, special schools 9 hours, secondary schools 12 hours, and all through schools 18 hours daily. These are minimum requirements, some sites will receive additional hours based on building size and the number of pupils. The frequency and effectiveness of daily cleaning will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary. The additional cleaning hours will be invoiced and paid for centrally. Concerns relating to the standard of cleaning should be escalated to the service manager.

Managing Symptomatic Cases of COVID-19

Once someone with symptoms has been identified all areas where this person has been, must be identified and kept clear. Management of the area should be physical where possible, i.e. barriers with suitable signage or behind locked doors. An immediate clean down should take place before reoccupation following the following guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-10-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>



Particular attention should be given to any specific area where the person has been in contact with, i.e. allocated desk as well as all other 'high-touch' areas. Any soft toys should be removed and stored securely for 72 hours before reintroducing to the area if not already removed as a preventative control. If any waste is suspected of being in contact with someone showing symptoms of COVID-19, it should be placed in a waste bag, held in a secure place for 72 hours then disposed of with other waste.

Cleaning staff should fully understand the cleaning requirements, and schools should work with LAs to ensure that cleaning staff have appropriate training, products and equipment available to them in a timely manner.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Actions Following Confirmed Case of COVID-19

Following a confirmed case, all areas known to have been accessed should be quarantined until it can be confirmed that a deep clean has been completed (this will be dependent on when the setting was last accessed by the confirmed case). Management of the area should be physical where possible, i.e. barriers with suitable signage or behind locked doors. A deep clean can consist of an intense general clean followed by a clean down with disinfectant or an approved vapour or ozone decontamination system. If a decontamination system is not used any soft furnishings should be steam cleaned.

Key actions:

- Review the enhanced cleaning schedule and liaise with the local authority to request assistance to adapt any necessary changes to the current service provision.
- Ensure that frequent cleaning is undertaken throughout the day for high touch areas.
- Organise deep clean in the event of a confirmed case (depending on when the confirmed case last attended the setting).
- Ensure consistent responses are adopted to a suspected or confirmed cases.
- Review uniform expectations.
- Sensitively communicate to parents the need to wash uniforms daily.

7. Transport

At the daily Welsh Government coronavirus briefing on the 13th of July 2020, the First Minister announced that in order to help reduce the risk of transmission whilst using buses, trains and taxis, where it is not always possible to maintain a two metre physical distance while travelling, it will become mandatory for people to wear a three-layer face covering from the 27th of July 2020.

New guidance in relation to public transport is being issued shortly and this is expected to impact on the school transport requirements.



Close partnership working with the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) will be essential, and information relating to schools plan for the first two weeks of the autumn term will be essential. Information relating to which year groups and groups of learners (e.g. learning support class learners) will be targeted for school attendance in the days leading up to the 14th of September should be submitted to the ITU by the 20th of July 2020 at the very latest.

The ITU will assess the travel needs of learners who are aged under 19. This includes those who the local authority are legally required to provide transport for and those for whom they may wish to provide discretionary transport when assessing travel needs.

Due regard will be given to:

- the needs of disabled learners and learners with learning difficulties;
- any particular needs of learners who are 'looked after' or formerly looked after by a local authority;
- the age of a learner;
- the nature of the route that the learner is expected to take between home and the places where they receive education or training. In assessing the travel needs of learners, the local authority will take into account the fact these arrangements must not cause unreasonable stress, take an unreasonable amount of time or be unsafe.

Where seating capacity is limited because of social distancing, priority will be given to those who are entitled to free school transport in accordance with the Council's policy but who live the furthest away or would otherwise be unable to attend without it.

More detailed school transport guidance from Welsh Government will provide clarity but it is envisaged that school transport will operate within the parameters outlined in the Minister for Education's announcement on the 9th of July 2020:

- the overall risk to children and young people from coronavirus (COVID-19) is low;
- home to school transport often carries the same group of children and young people on a regular basis, and those children and young people may also be together in school or college;
- contact will be minimised with individuals who are unwell;
- learners, drivers and passenger assistants should wash their hands or use hand sanitiser before boarding transport and when arriving at school or home;
- if there is a suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19, then it will be easy to identify who was travelling on which vehicle so we can comply with contact tracing, isolation and testing.

Transport will run on existing routes every school day to avoid major re-scheduling, with similar arrival and departure times. Schools should aim to stagger times to allow walkers, parental transport and those on school transport to arrive/depart separately.

Transport providers will:

- keep the windows open, where possible;



- maintain good hand and respiratory hygiene;
- use a rigorous cleaning and sanitising regime between/before/after each journey;
- take action to reduce risk if hygiene rules and social distancing is not possible. For example, when transporting children and young people with complex needs who need support to access the vehicle or assistance to fasten seat belts.

Every effort will be made to reinstate the crossing patrol service in September, in line with the most up to date Guidance on social distancing but parents and carers should be reminded of their responsibilities to get their children to school safely. Active travel should be encouraged where possible and parents/carers advised to access transport only if they have no other alternative.

Key actions:

- Schools to inform ITU of which year groups and groups of learners will be transported on specific dates by **Friday the 17th of July**.
- Drop off and pick up times to be agreed with between schools and ITU to ensure staggered starts and collections. Where schools stagger their times, they should aim to allow walkers and those on school transport to arrive/depart separately.

8. Clinically Vulnerable Children and Young People

‘Extremely vulnerable’ or shielding learners

The advice on shielding is likely to be updated imminently and further guidance will be issued if appropriate. Shielding is required when an individual is extremely vulnerable and at high risk of developing serious illness if they are exposed to COVID-19 because they have an underlying health conditions. These individuals will have received a shielding letter from the Chief Medical Officer. Learners in this category must not be asked to attend schools or settings but should be supported to learn from home.

The advice for shielding is constantly being reviewed in the light of evolving evidence and the levels of infection in the community. It is anticipated that updated guidance on shielding will be published shortly. There are circumstances where children would be unable to attend school for health reasons irrespective of COVID-19 and they should be supported to learn from home if they are.

Clinically vulnerable learners at ‘increased risk’

In the context of COVID-19, individuals at ‘increased risk’ are at a greater risk of severe illness from COVID-19. This category includes children and young people who have a range of chronic health conditions. Young people who are pregnant should stay away from school after 28 weeks’ gestation.

If clinically, vulnerable learners do attend school, extra care must be taken to ensure these individuals, and those around them adhere to strict social distancing guidelines. In the case of learners, attendance must be with the full consent of parents/carers and their full agreement of any individual risk assessment and control measures. The details



of the risk assessment may require a meeting to ensure that full informed consent is given.

If there is any doubt about whether their health condition means they should not be attending their school, further advice from a medical practitioner should be sought.

Living with a person who is either shielding or at increased risk

If a learner lives in a household with someone who is at increased risk or is "shielding", they should only attend a school or setting where they are strictly able to adhere to the social/physical distancing measures and the learner is able to understand and follow those instructions. This may not be possible for very young learners, and older learners without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social and physical distancing. In those instances, it is not expected that learners attend school and they should be supported to learn at home.

This position should however be considered in the light of the most current advice around shielding.

Parents/carers and learners who are anxious about return to school and settings

All other learners must attend school. Schools should bear in mind the potential concerns of pupils, parents/carers who may be reluctant or anxious about returning and put the right support in place to address this. This may include learners who have themselves been shielding previously but have been advised that this is no longer necessary, those living in households where someone is clinically vulnerable, or those concerned about the comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19), including those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds or who have certain conditions such as obesity and diabetes.

If parents/carers of learners with significant risk factors are concerned, we recommend schools/settings discuss their concerns and provide reassurance of the measures they are putting in place to reduce the risk in school/setting. Schools and settings should be clear with parents/carers that pupils of compulsory school age must be in school unless a statutory reason applies (for example, the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is absent for a necessary religious observance, etc.).

9. Staffing Considerations

The Council has been supportive of staff with underlying health conditions; who are pregnant; living with a person who is pregnant or with an underlying health condition; or had childcare issues and enabled them to remain off from work whilst still delivering services where appropriate. Moving forward, as key services start to re-open, advice and guidance should be sought from HR and the following principles applied:

Extremely vulnerable staff who are shielding (high risk)

Staff must remain off (undertaking home working wherever possible) until a further review is undertaken by Welsh Government in mid-August 2020. Staff that fall into this



category should provide a copy of their shielding letter if they have not already done so. However based on the current trajectory of the virus, and the lifting of such restrictions in other parts of the UK, the indications are that at the next review, these restrictions in Wales are to be lifted. It would be pertinent therefore to review arrangements now to incorporate a return of all staff in this category for September, even if you factor in their return towards the end of week 2, when pupil numbers attendance will be near full capacity. To that end, the Medical Risk Assessment provided in Appendix 1 should be completed by the line manager and advice sought from occupational health before any return to work can be considered. Health & safety risk assessments will also need to be undertaken by headteachers to ensure a safe return to work and the effective use of preventative and social distancing approaches.

Staff who are pregnant

Pregnant women over 28 weeks should be regarded as at increased risk and are recommended to stay at home. For pregnant women with underlying health conditions and those who are BAME, a precautionary approach is prudent. According to public health guidelines, women who are pregnant with 'significant heart disease, congenital or acquired' are in the shielding group. If a shielding letter has been received, staff should remain off work for now. However, if no letter has been received and homeworking is not a practical option, the Medical Risk Assessment provided in Appendix 1 should be completed by the line manager and advice sought from occupational health before any return to work can be considered. Health & safety risk assessments will also need to be undertaken by headteachers to ensure a safe return to work and the effective use of preventative and social distancing approaches.

Clinically vulnerable staff with other COVID risk indicators (moderate risk)

Current research suggests that there are several other indicators that, when combined, may mean that an individual is at a higher risk level. A list of these indicators can be found in section 3 of the Medical Risk Assessment in Appendix 2. Where appropriate, the Medical Risk Assessment in Appendix 2 will be undertaken by the member of staff so as to inform decision making in relation to whether it is safe for them to return to work. If the individual concerned does not complete the medical risk assessment form it would be reasonable to assume that the member of staff considers themselves to be fit for a return to work. Where the risk is deemed to be low, or can be mitigated, then the member of staff will be required to return to the workplace. A health & safety risk assessment should also be undertaken by headteachers to ensure a safe return to work and the effective use of preventative and social distancing approaches.

Staff who live with someone at high risk, pregnancy and moderate conditions from coronavirus

Employees in this category have been able to refrain from attendance in work to protect them. Moving forward, if home working is not feasible, then this category of staff must now return to duty and adhere to social distancing principles. A health & safety risk assessment should also be undertaken by headteachers to ensure a safe return to work and the effective use of preventative and social distancing approaches.

Staff with childcare issues, including responsibilities for children with ALN

If homeworking is not a practical option, staff with these responsibilities must now return to work using the social distancing principles, wherever practical to do so. In respect of childcare matters, if staff feel that they have extenuating circumstances then these should be shared with the line manager in the first instance, who can then seek advice from the Occupational Health, Equalities and Employee Relations teams.

Please note, that further detailed and precise guidance should be sought from HR prior to implementing the above actions.

Key actions:

- Decide content and timing of staff communication(s) including if bringing staff in to their place of work in advance of pupils returning to school.
- Ensure that all staff absences are swiftly updated on vision to inform accurate reporting.
- Undertake a staff audit of teaching and non-teaching staff (including availability and location) to identify any gaps or pressures in essential posts, including leaders, teachers, support staff, first aiders, designated child protection staff, caretakers, crossing patrols, etc.
- Take corrective steps if necessary staffing levels are inadequate.
- Inform your allocated local authority lead if you are experiencing significant staffing challenges that are likely to restrict learner numbers.
- Identify staff who cannot return to school at this point (for example, those who are extremely clinically vulnerable or those who are clinically vulnerable) and identify how they can work from home (e.g. supporting distance learning).
- Put in place measures to check on staff wellbeing (including for leaders) and ensure appropriate sign posting as detailed in HR communication.
- Ensure access to testing where appropriate, and engagement in the test, track and protect interventions.

10. Staff Deployment/Recruitment

Schools and pupil referral units may need to alter the way in which they deploy their staff, and use existing staff more flexibly to welcome back all learners during the autumn term. Managers should discuss and agree any changes to staff roles with individuals, and where appropriate with Human Resources. It is important that planning builds in the need to avoid increases in unnecessary and unmanageable workload for staff. School leaders should raise any concerns about staffing capacity with Human Resources.

Recruitment should continue as usual. Further information on interviewing teachers remotely can be found at:

<https://teaching.blog.gov.uk/2020/05/29/recruiting-during-lockdown-how-we-did-it/>
<https://teaching.blog.gov.uk/2020/06/12/attending-your-first-remote-interview/>



When recruiting, schools must continue to adhere to the legal requirements regarding pre-appointment checks. Should headteachers experience any issues around these checks they should contact Human Resources.

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) partnerships have worked flexibly to ensure this year's NQTs are ready and prepared to enter the classroom. They will be supported by the ITE partnerships and regional consortia as they embark on their induction programmes. Changes have been made to the Regulations governing induction to ensure that NQTs will not be disadvantaged during the Coronavirus pandemic. The amended Regulations will come into force on the 15th of July and will remain in place until the 31st of August 2021.

Supply Teachers

Schools can continue to engage local supply teachers and other supply staff during this period. To minimise the numbers of temporary staff entering the school premises, and secure best value, schools may wish to use longer assignments with supply teachers/agency staff and agree a minimum number of hours across the academic year. This advice for supply teachers also applies to other temporary staff working in schools.

11. Attendance

All learners should return to their school or setting in the autumn term unless they have a medical/health reason not to. This includes learners who are still shielding, if the medical advice at the time is that they should attend school. Those learners who have been advised that they no longer have the need to shield, or whose parents have chosen to send their child to school should be supported to attend without restriction, but encouraged to social distance and engage in regular hand washing.

In the current climate, the Welsh Government advise against issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) or commencing proceedings for non-school attendance. This is under review by Welsh Government.

If a learner is unable to attend the school setting, the school must regularly engage with the learner remotely to ensure continuity in learning.

Under no circumstances should learners attend schools if they:

- feel unwell, have any of the three identified COVID-19 symptoms (a new continuous cough, or a high temperature or loss of or change to their sense of taste or smell) or they have tested positive to COVID-19 in the past 7 days;
- live in a household or are part of an extended household with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

Please see Section 8 on Clinical Vulnerable Children and Young People for further information on which groups should potentially not attend school at the current time. It should however be noted that this section will require updating once shielding advice is revised.

Schools and settings should keep a record of attendance and families should notify their school if their child is unable to attend and explain the reason for the absence so that this can be coded correctly. This will assist settings to identify barriers to engagement, the support required and any welfare concerns that warrant further swift referrals. Guidance on recording attendance is expected from Welsh Government in the autumn.

Key actions:

- Schools to communicate clear and consistent expectations around school attendance to parents/carers prior to the summer and ahead of the new school year.
- Schools should identify learners who are reluctant or anxious about returning or who are at risk of disengagement and develop plans for re-engaging them. This may include meeting to discuss the barriers to returning. This should include disadvantaged and vulnerable learners and young people, especially those who were persistently absent prior to the pandemic or who have not engaged with school regularly during the pandemic.
- Schools should work closely with other professionals such as the Attendance and Wellbeing Service, Youth Engagement and Participation Service and/or the Educational and Psychology Service to support the return of learners to school, including continuing to maintain regular contact with Children's Services if they have involvement.
- Schools to work closely with learners and parents/carers to secure regular school attendance from the start of term.

12. Estates

Based on current scientific and medical advice Welsh Government does not consider it necessary for schools and settings to make significant adaptations to school sites and to acquire additional sites to enable them to welcome all learners back. In classrooms, it will be important that schools improve ventilation (for example, by opening windows where it is safe to do so). Good ventilation is essential at all times in classrooms and particularly during this period. Schools should ensure all systems are working in their normal operating mode. Natural ventilation via windows or vents, where it is safe to do so, should be used as far as possible. Where centralised or mechanical ventilation is present, circulatory systems should be adjusted to full fresh air, if this is not possible systems should be operated as normal. Where ventilation units have filters present ensure enhanced precautions are taken when changing filters and advice must be sought from the Council's Corporate Estates Maintenance Team.

It is important that, prior to reopening for the autumn term, all the usual pre-term building checks are undertaken to make the school safe. If buildings have been closed or had reduced occupancy during the COVID-19 outbreak, water system stagnation can occur due to lack of use, increasing the risks of Legionnaires' disease. Further information relating to necessary statutory check are included in Section 13 and the associated Health and Safety Risk Assessments.



13. Health & Safety Risk Assessments

All schools are required to undertake COVID-19 specific Health & Safety Risk Assessments. The governing body has a duty to consult their workforce regarding health and safety matters and should involve them in the assessment and development of relevant control measures. Employers must consult with the health and safety representative selected by a recognised trade union or, if not available, a representative chosen by staff. The employer must ensure that the risks are controlled so far as is reasonably practicable. This will include ensuring that a relevant risk assessment is undertaken, and control measures are implemented and monitored to ensure that they are effective. Schools and settings should share the results of their risk assessment with their workforce. Once this is reviewed by the Health and Safety team, consideration should be given to publishing it on their website to provide transparency of approach to parents, carers and pupils (HSE would expect all employers with over 50 staff to do so). The Health and Safety Team can provide support and guidance to school leaders when required.

Schools and settings should take a risk-benefit approach when making decisions about learners' social interaction and play in schools. The Health and Safety Executive advises a risk-benefit approach, which aims not to eliminate all risk but to strike a balance, maximising benefit while ensuring that learners are not exposed to unnecessary risk. Schools should work with the Health and Safety team in the local authority to develop risk assessments around increasing operations and to seek support and guidance where required.

Schools must carry out an appropriate COVID-19 risk assessment, as they would for other health and safety related hazards. This is a risk led approach and is not about creating unnecessary documentation, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks. Records of the assessment should be simple and focused on controls. Outcomes should explain to others what they are required to do and help staff with planning and monitoring.

Compliance in any school will depend upon the suitability and sufficiency of the risk assessment and the arrangements to implement and maintain sensible, proportionate and effective controls. The risk assessment should translate into the specific actions that will need to be taken and will be influenced by site-specific factors. The risk assessment should be undertaken in collaboration with a relevant person with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to give sensible guidance about managing the health and safety risks at the school. Controls should be considered following the hierarchy of control approach and the assessment should consider what measures need to be implemented to protect the health and safety of all staff, learners, visitors and contractors.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) provides more information on the role of local authorities and schools as employers in the following guidance:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/sensible-leadership/school-leaders.htm>



To support schools a template has been devised and appropriate strategic risk assessments **MUST** be undertaken using the **COVID 19 School Re-opening and Risk Assessment Template Document in Appendix 3**. Where required, further information can be obtained from the Council's Corporate Health & Safety team to assist you. Once your schools risk assessment has been completed, please ensure that this is shared with staff so that risks can be mitigated, ideally before the end of the summer term. Headteachers are encouraged to ensure that consultation on any changes to risk assessments that will be in place for the start of the autumn term commence with staff before the summer break, to ensure that those that are on term-time only contracts have adequate time to contribute.

Your school's completed COVID-19 risk assessment should be approved and signed off by the headteacher, the relevant subgroup of your governing body and your chair of governors and should be sent to HealthandSafetyTeam@rctcbc.gov.uk by the **31st of August** at the very latest. Schools that are in a position to submit this information prior to this date are strongly encouraged to do so. These risk assessments will be reviewed by the Health and Safety Team, who will provide any necessary feedback, recommendations or comments directly to the headteacher. To support swift feedback, please ensure that you provide suitable contact details and direct queries to the email address provided.

The designated planning days on the 1st and 2nd of September should enable all schools to plan for the term ahead and ensure that all staff are familiar with the risk assessments, and any revised processes and procedures, and control measures.

Schools must ensure that they comply fully with this requirement and seek further advice from the Council's Health and Safety team where this is needed. Further guidance is routinely disseminated to schools from Education, Human Resources and Public Health and Protection Directors to ensure that our headteachers have the most up to date information available.

Risk assessments should already exist for learners with more complex needs, including those with emotional and behavioural needs. These risk assessments should be updated as a matter of priority in light of changes to provision such as environment and staffing, while also remaining mindful of the additional distress learners may be experiencing due to COVID-19. If risk assessments are not in place, then they must be undertaken in accordance with this guidance and local risk assessment guidance.

Key actions:

- Ensure that any amendments to the appropriate signage and demarcation lines installed for the June restart are checked against the new guidance.
- Engage with the Council Health and Safety teams to complete a revised COVID risk assessment. This should be shared with school staff **prior to the 20.7.20** where possible.

- Ensure that Headteacher/governing body approved risk assessments are submitted to the local authority for approval **by the 31.8.20** at the very latest (earlier submissions will be reviewed prior to this date).
- Seek support from the Council's Health and Safety team if unclear about health and safety requirements.
- Ensure that all statutory compliance checks are undertaken prior to opening, e.g. legionella and fire alarm testing (please refer to the checklist in Appendix 3 for further information and ensure that this is completed and returned urgently to schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk) **by the 31.8.20**.
- Review fire safety arrangements and put in place additional controls if different layout and movement restrictions affect evacuation **by the 31.8.20**.
- Update all traffic management plans to ensure that they are safe and promote social distancing **by the 31.8.20**.

14. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

It is important to note Welsh Government currently recommends more extensive use of personal protective equipment (PPE) for health and social care workers. Current guidance states that educational staff do not require PPE but apron and gloves should be used for intimate care. The advice for settings is to follow steps on social distancing (wherever practical to do so), handwashing, hygiene measures, and cleaning of surfaces. Please refer to the guidance issued by the Council and Welsh Government for further detail:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-and-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

Schools and childcare settings should not require staff, children and learners to generally wear face coverings (please see exceptions below). Evidence suggests that changing habits, social distancing, cleaning and hygiene are effective measures in controlling the spread of the virus.

Face coverings (or any form of medical mask where instructed to be used for specific clinical reasons) should not be worn in any circumstance by those who may not be able to handle them as directed (for example, young children, or those with special educational needs or disabilities) as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.

The majority of staff in education settings 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. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases including:



- Children and young people whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs should continue to receive their care in the same way;
- If a child or young person or other learner becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home, the supervising adult should wear a fluid-resistant surgical facemask if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the child or young person is necessary, then disposable gloves, a disposable apron and a fluid-resistant surgical facemask should be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn.

When undertaking intimate care the following should be undertaken:

- Gloves and aprons should be used when providing intimate care to a child or young person. This can include personal, hands-on care such as washing, toileting, or first aid and certain clinical procedures such as assisted feeding.
- Fluid-resistant surgical mask and eye protection should also be worn if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes such as from coughing, spitting, or vomiting.
- Gloves, fluid repellent gown, FFP3 mask and eye protection are indicated when undertaking aerosol-generating procedures such as suction.
- Gloves and aprons should be used when cleaning equipment or surfaces that might be contaminated with body fluids such as saliva or respiratory secretions

The local authority have supplied all schools with PPE for use when somebody displays symptoms. Additional PPE can be requested from the Council's Procurement team:

- PPE – Paula.griffiths@rctcbc.gov.uk

It is important to remember that physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene (catching a cough or sneeze in a tissue or covering the mouth and nose with an elbow or sleeve) are scientifically proven to be the most effective ways to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Hand hygiene is critical before and after all direct contact with a child or young person, and after cleaning equipment and the environment. There is therefore no need to use personal protective equipment (PPE) when undertaking routine educational activities in classroom/school settings.

If a member of staff wishes to wear their own PPE then they are at liberty to do so.

Please refer to Appendix 3 - General Guidance to School Staff Working - PPE & social distancing for further information.

Key actions:

- Ensure that there is adequate PPE, including emergency PPE. This must be collected from the central store in Ty Elai Council offices, once confirmation of your order is e-mailed to you.
- Ensure that sanitiser is distributed at key strategic points through the setting
- Make arrangements to ensure that there are adequate supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies for dealing with the small numbers of children and young people.
- If your staff provide intimate care for any children or young people and for cases where a child becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus PPE must be used (please see Appendix 3 for further detail).

15. Face Coverings

The Chief Medical Officer has been clear that there is no evidence to support the widespread wearing of non-medical face coverings in the community. However, on the 13.7.20 the First Minister announced that this would be required on public transport in the near future. Non-medical face coverings are recommended where social distancing cannot be maintained. Face coverings are not a replacement for far more effective measures such as social distancing and hand hygiene. Schools should ensure that they organise the environment and they operate to ensure that social distancing can be maintained throughout a routine day.

Considering the well-being of learners is critical to any considerations around whether staff or older children wear face coverings. No one who may not be able to handle face coverings as directed (e.g. young children or those with special educational needs or disabilities) should wear them as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission. Care should also be taken when using face coverings in the presence of children and young people with a significant hearing impairment.

16. School Uniform

All schools should encourage learners to wear a school uniform, although this is a matter for the governing body to determine. Eligible families should be reminded of their eligibility for the PDG Access grant.

17. Suspected Cases

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature or a loss of taste and smell in an education or childcare setting, they must be sent home and advised to follow the stay at home guidance:

<https://gov.wales/self-isolation-stay-home-guidance-households-possible-coronavirus>

If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age of the child and with



appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area, which is at least 2 metres away from other people.

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

Gloves, aprons and a fluid-resistant surgical mask should be worn if a child or young person becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 and needs direct personal care. Eye protection should also be worn if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes such as from coughing, spitting, or vomiting. Gloves and aprons should be used when cleaning the areas where a person suspected of having COVID-19 has been.

In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If a member of staff has helped someone who was unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves or if the child subsequently tests positive. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. Cleaning the affected area with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. Please see the cleaning section for further information.

Key actions:

- Plan the school level response should someone fall ill on site (in line with relevant government guidance) and ensure compliance.
- Ensure appropriate PPE is used if there is a suspected case.

18. Confirmed Cases

When a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. Please refer to Annex C in the following guidance for further information

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-07/operational-guidance-for-schools-and-settings-from-the-autumn-term.pdf>

All children and young people eligible to attend, and members of their households, will have access to testing if they display symptoms of coronavirus, and are encouraged to be tested in this scenario. Where the child, young person or staff member tests negative, they can return to their setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation.



Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class or group within their childcare or education setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms:

<https://gov.wales/self-isolation-stay-home-guidance-households-possible-coronavirus>

19. Test, Trace and Protect

Test, Trace, Protect initiative involves those who have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, enabling them to be tested while isolating from wider family, friends and their community. This entails tracing those individuals who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive on any occasion during a period beginning up to two days before they started experiencing symptoms, and requiring them to take precautions and self-isolate (for 14 days).

The initiative ensures that timely advice and guidance, particularly where the individual who has tested positive or their contacts are vulnerable or at greater risk.

In the event of a positive test, a contact tracer will contact the person tested to help identify potential contacts. A second contact tracer will then get in touch with those contacts and advise them to self-isolate for 14 days from their last contact with the person who tested positive. These people will only be required to take a test if they develop symptoms.

People are considered as potential contacts if they were in contact with the person who has tested positive during a period beginning up to two days before symptom onset and ending when the case entered home isolation. This is based on current understanding of the main period of infectivity. A contact is defined as someone who has had close contact during this period, specifically:

- within one metre of the person who has tested positive and has been coughed on, had a face-to-face conversation, had skin-to-skin physical contact, or been in other forms of contact within one metre for one minute or longer;
- within two metres of the person testing positive for more than 15 minutes or have travelled in a vehicle with the person who has tested positive.

Schools should maintain records of seating plans and records relating to break/lunchtime activities to assist with contact tracing.

Where staff have maintained social distancing rules and adhered to hygiene measures during work and where required have used personal protective equipment (PPE) or worked behind an appropriate screen or partition, they would not be regarded as a contact for these purposes.



A positive test on site therefore does not require closure of that site. The process of testing and contact tracing is part of the 'new normal' and where schools and settings follow these guidelines carefully, there is no cause for alarm.

Individuals who are symptomatic are required to report their symptoms straight away, self-isolate and advise their friends and family that they may have COVID-19. Information, questions, and answers about Test, Trace, and Protect can be found at <https://gov.wales/test-trace-protect-your-questions>

20. Potential Outbreaks

If there are multiple cases of COVID-19 in a school then experts from across the NHS and local government will work together to prevent ongoing transmission within the school. This will involve identifying those exposed, and any child or staff member who is at increased risk and provide tailored infection control advice. Advice based on the assessment of each individual situation will be provided to support the school in preventing further spread.

The process should be handled sensitively and in confidence, for instance identities should not be revealed by senior leaders.

Building upon the Disease Outbreak Plan for Wales (2020) Public Health Wales has provided specific advice regarding the investigation and management of clusters and outbreaks of COVID-19 in educational settings so as to reduce the spread to other communities. Further information is provided in Annex C of the attached guidance: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-07/operational-guidance-for-schools-and-settings-from-the-autumn-term.pdf>

A potential **cluster** is defined as two or more cases of COVID-19 among learners or staff in an educational setting within 14 days or; an increased rate of absence due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.

A potential **outbreak** is defined as two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 among learners or staff who are direct close contacts, proximity contacts or in the same 'bubble'* in the school/setting, within 14 days". * This may be a class, year group or other defined group.

It is important to highlight that if only one person has been identified with a case of COVID-19 in a school or setting the regular contact tracing process should be followed. Confirmed cases of COVID-19 in school or setting should be flagged by local contact tracing teams and followed up with educational settings to establish the potential of clusters or outbreaks. However, if a potential cluster or outbreak has been identified the contact must be made with the regional multi-agency Track, Trace and Protect Team.



21. PCR Antigen Testing

The rapid deployment of testing is available to support outbreaks in schools/settings. The NHS Wales TTP Programme and Local Health Boards will facilitate PCR antigen testing for everybody in the school/setting contact group that are affected by the outbreak and everyone in the school/setting if it has been established that the setting has not followed Welsh Government guidelines for schools and/or Infection Prevention and Control measures.

The method for delivery and sampling of rapid antigen tests can be executed in a range of ways such as the deployment of Mobile Testing Units (MTUs), temporary testing satellites and drop off and collection routes. The most appropriate testing channel will be discussed and agreed between all stakeholders.

Further information can be found at

<https://gov.wales/welsh-national-covid-19-test-approach-may-2020>

22. Antibody Testing

A programme of antibody testing has started in a number of Rhondda Cynon Taf schools and will be extended in due course. The focus to date has been on education staff (teachers, and support staff) that have worked in hub schools during the pandemic. The national target for serology testing is 10% of the population.

Latest evidence suggests there would be very limited benefit in adopting blanket PCR antigen testing of teachers and support staff in schools in Wales.

It is Welsh Government's intention to provide each school and setting in Wales with a supply of home testing kits to ensure there is flexibility in the testing available. Welsh Government Officials have developed an information leaflet specifically for education settings which provides detail regarding the wider TTP programme:

<https://gov.wales/guidance-testing-and-contact-tracing-education-settings>

23. Learning

Welsh Government guidance on learning in the autumn term can be found at

<https://gov.wales/guidance-learning-schools-and-settings-autumn-term-covid-19>

Further local authority guidance will follow in due course.

It will be important that distance learning provision will continue to be made for learners who cannot attend school due their vulnerability and that schools have well established contingency plans in the event of a further peak in COVID-19 or a more local lock down.

During this time the Consortium will continue to support schools in curriculum delivery and recovery planning to help meet the needs of all learners. This work will be carried out in partnership with the challenge advisors and strategic improvement teams and will



be centred around enabling schools to effectively deliver a 'broad and balanced curriculum.' The blended learning approach will be a model retained for implementing should there be a further national or local lockdown due to any further outbreak of Covid-19.

24. Learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

Specialist schools, PRUs and learning support classes should follow the same principles and guidance as mainstream schools. As much as possible, protective measures should be adhered to and class or contact group sizes should be small. Staff should use differentiated language to explain safety measures, and reiterate and reinforce key messages. Safe routines for access to toilets, hand cleaning, break, and lunch times should be put in place. Teaching resources should be used to aid understanding.

Risk assessments should already exist for learners with more complex needs, including those with emotional and behavioural needs. These risk assessments will need to be updated as a matter of priority in light of changes to provision such as environment and staffing, while also remaining mindful of the additional distress learners may be experiencing due to COVID-19. If risk assessments are not in place, then they must be undertaken in accordance with this guidance and other key guidance documents e.g. LA guidance on complex health needs, positive restrictive intervention, etc.

For dual placed learners, schools should work through the system of controls collaboratively, enabling them to address any risks identified and allowing them to jointly deliver a broad and balanced curriculum for the learner.

Further information relating to learners with ALN can be found at on the service website. All learners with statements of SEN should access their statutory entitlement as specified in their statement of SEN.

25. Supporting the Wellbeing of Learners

These challenging and uncertain times have undoubtedly placed children and parents/carers under significant pressure. The support and guidance provided and the approaches adopted should take this into account so that children's physical, emotional and mental wellbeing is taken into consideration. Helping learners feel safe will be critical and this can be achieved through the provision of appropriate support, ensuring that learners are clear about operational arrangements and by ensuring that their voice is heard. Supporting children to adapt to a new and unfamiliar environment will be important and they should be encouraged to express any worries and concerns they have so that they can be supported in a developmentally appropriate manner. For children and young people who have experienced significant trauma and loss, appropriate pastoral support and guidance should be provided, including external



agency support or school based counselling where appropriate. A range of resources is available on the Access and Inclusion Service website:

<https://www-staging.rctcbc.gov.uk/Preview/1/EN/Resident/SchoolsandLearning/AccessandInclusionEducation/COVID19AccessandInclusionServiceAdvice.aspx>

The Vulnerable Learner Guidance produced by the Access and Inclusion Service and the Attendance and Wellbeing Service provides a clear process for supporting learners who are disengaged with learning.

Resources are available to support children and young people's wellbeing. A Young Person's Mental Health Toolkit can be found on Hwb. This comprises a variety of online resources, which can help them through lockdown and beyond. It contains information on websites, apps, helplines, and more, which support mental health and well-being.

- Anxiety: <https://hwb.gov.wales/go/agg9pn>
- Coronavirus and your well-being: <https://hwb.gov.wales/go/ffkbs1>
- Crisis: <https://hwb.gov.wales/go/4ypw1s>
- Keeping health: <https://hwb.gov.wales/go/nz95en>
- Loss: <https://hwb.gov.wales/go/lvy6hx>
- Low mood: <https://hwb.gov.wales/go/bi4vbc>

<https://hwb.gov.wales/repository/resource/e53adf44-76cb-4635-b6c2-62116bb63a9a/en>

26. Staff Wellbeing

As a local authority, Rhondda Cynon Taf is committed to supporting the well-being of all staff and senior leaders. It is natural that some staff may require more support than others during this period. Senior leaders will need to consider that some staff members might find it difficult to re-adjust following a period at home and may have developed anxious behaviours relating to the pandemic or their own health and wellbeing, or family members. Those with pre-existing issues that may have increased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and others may well have experienced loss and bereavement.

COVID-19 makes it more important than ever that we acknowledge the need to provide a reflective space for staff to deal with and process the more challenging experiences of working with children, young people, their families and the systems around them. Leaders in schools need to provide opportunities for staff to discuss issues with them or their colleagues. Sharing experiences and discussing their feelings and emotions can identify areas where additional support is needed, and may well provide an opportunity for individuals to support their own well-being. Staff involvement in risk assessments and control measures will be important in reducing anxiety and ensuring a consistent approach. Effective communication, avoiding duplication of work and unnecessary demands on staff will be important to supporting staff wellbeing.



To support staff, the Council has already put in place the wellbeing helpline, which can give you support and guidance for both your mental and physiological wellbeing. The wellbeing helpline can provide access to coaching, counselling, exercise programmes and physiotherapy to help you to stay as well as possible during these difficult times.

The helpline is available Monday-Friday (Excluding Bank Holidays) 8:30 to 18:00 hours. You can access the Wellbeing Helpline service by either

- Emailing WellbeingHelpline@rctcbc.gov.uk
- Calling any of the following numbers:

Craig	07384 910 525	David	07384 910 527
Sian	07384 910 524	Carys	07384 910 491
Kylie	07799 116 571	Luke	07824 496 496
Emma	07769 164 673	Nikki	07384 910 488
Gareth	07385 086 789	Corinne	07385 086 111
Kayleigh	07385 086 830		

There is also a whole host of wellbeing information and learning and development programmes on the RCTSource that can help you to plan your work, gain new knowledge and develop new skills (<https://rctlearningpool.com>). This is in addition to all the usual support you can access through all the HR teams.

The Education Workforce Council's Code of Professional Conduct and Practice also provides good practice guides which may be of further assistance to staff: <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/>

Additional information on wellbeing support can also be accessed via the <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/coronavirus-support>

Key actions:

- Ensure a good work-life balance for school staff and ensure that rotas and timetables are appropriate.
- Ensure that there are clear processes and opportunities for raising concerns should they arise.
- Provide support for staff who have experienced particular trauma or who are experiencing enhanced anxiety as a result of the pandemic.
- Provide a reflective space for staff when this is required and provide opportunities to discuss feelings and emotions when appropriate.
- Ensure that communication is effective and involve staff in risk assessments so that risks can be effectively mitigated.
- Signpost staff to support mechanisms and guidance.
- Seek HR or occupational health involvement where required.



27. Safeguarding

Learners will have encountered different experiences and home environments during lockdown and all staff should be reminded of their safeguarding duties within the statutory safeguarding guidance for education settings Keeping Learners Safe and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

The role of the designated safeguarding person (DSP) will be vital and all staff and learners should be informed of who the DSP is and how to contact them. Accessing a trusted adult, or the DSP, may be more difficult with social distancing so schools and settings should consider how learners could talk privately. Safeguarding children is a critical area of business and Emergency and Duty Teams will remain in operation to receive calls about children at risk of harm, abuse or neglect. Please report concerns to MASH and escalate in accordance with agreed local procedures.

28. Catering

It is expected that school kitchens will be fully open from the start of the autumn term and normal legal requirements will apply about provision of food to all pupils who want it, including for those eligible for free school meals. Further Welsh Government guidance is expected in due course, to address any potential issues with the provision of free school meals either on a national or local basis. Schools will be required to deliver meals in accordance with the Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards and Requirements) (Wales) [Regulations 2013](#).

BACS payments for eFSM learners will continue throughout the summer period.

The eating area should be regularly cleaned in-between sittings and eating areas zoned. Staff should ensure that social distancing is maintained at mealtimes and that children should remain in their contact groups where possible. Where school numbers are such that staggered lunchtimes are likely to be very difficult to achieve in practice, more context specific catering solutions should be explored with catering teams. Possible solutions could include some portable lunchtime options and opportunities to eat within classroom and outside settings where appropriate.

Food should not be shared and lunch and break times could be staggered to support social distancing.

Young people should not be allowed to go off site unsupervised during lunch breaks.

To minimise the risk of transferring infection via cash handling, schools are encouraged to become “cash and cheque free” once reopened with the aim of becoming cash free during the autumn term. This will apply to all items purchased for cash or cheque within a school and includes (but not limited to) purchases such as schools meals, uniform, kit and equipment. Online payments are well established within Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC



with all schools being enabled for dinner money payments. Please contact bankrec@rctcbc.gov.uk to set up appropriate options.

29. School Milk (n/a for secondary schools)

Schools should ensure that they contact Woosnam Dairies to advise them of order volumes, commencing Wednesday the 2nd of September 2020, by **Friday the 17th of July 2020**. The schools order requirements should reflect planned attendance in the first two weeks of term for eligible pupils, the supplier will require 2 days' notice to amend order quantities for all eligible pupils returning Monday 14th September 2020.

Please email order volumes required for Wednesday 2nd September 2020 to: sian@woosnamdairies.co.uk

30. Breakfast Clubs/After School Clubs

In line with Welsh Government guidance consideration will be given to the recommencement of breakfast clubs and after school provision following the phased return of all learners to school over a two week period in September. A staged approach to the re-introduction will be adopted following a review of the capacity of schools to meet demand whilst maintaining discrete contact groups and safe social distancing, where possible.

There will be no breakfast clubs or afterschool club provision for the first two weeks of term whilst this review is undertaken and portable breakfast provision will be made available for eFSM learners only during this period. Thereafter, application processes for accessing provision will be agreed in partnership with schools to manage and a cap placed on numbers to ensure that health and safety, and appropriate social distancing requirements are met. Eligibility criteria will be devised and shared with schools. Where demand exceeds supply, clear eligibility criteria will be applied by schools and numbers accessing provision reduced in the short term to ensure safe management.

Key Actions:

- A phased approach to re-introducing breakfast club and wrap around care to be adopted from week 3 of the autumn term onwards.
- Schools to inform parents of this.
- Numbers will be capped and where demand exceeds supply, priority will be given to eFSM, vulnerable learners and single parent working families
- Local authority to develop eligibility criteria and to jointly agree application processes with schools, who will retain responsibility for provisions
- Eligible children will access portable breakfast provision for the first two weeks of term.

- Potential challenges in delivery should be raised with the local authority so that these can be resolved to support families and carers to access wrap around care at either end of the school day at the earliest opportunity.

31. Educational visits

National guidance for the management of outdoor learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom is provided by the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel. This guidance is endorsed by Welsh Government and is produced by a partnership of experts to help ensure that educational visits and activities are safe. Further information can be found at <https://oeapng.info/>

32. Effective Communication

Ensure early and effective communication with parents/carers.

Key actions:

- Tell children, young people, parents, carers or any visitors, such as suppliers, not to enter the education setting if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus.
- Tell parents/carers that if their child needs to be accompanied to the education setting, only one parent should attend.
- Advise parents/carers, children and young people of the drop off and collection arrangements, including protocols for minimising adult to adult contact (for example, which entrance to use).
- Make clear to parents/carers that they cannot gather at entrance gates or doors, or enter the site (unless they have a pre-arranged appointment, which should be conducted safely).
- Ensure parents/carers are aware of recommendations in relation to transport and the active travel recommendation.
- Ensure parents/carers are reminded of their responsibility to get their children to school safely.
- Communicate to staff about the plans (for example, safety measures, timetable changes and arrangements relating to arrival and departure times).
- Communicate early with the local authority and suppliers your support needs to facilitate your plans for opening for example, cleaning, catering, food supplies, PPE.
- Discuss with cleaning contractors or staff the additional cleaning requirements and agree additional hours to allow for this.
- Keep your governing body abreast of developments and ensure that all risk assessments have appropriate sign off.

33. Support

Regular updates will be provided but if you require further advice please do not hesitate to contact:

Nature of Concern	LA Officer
Strategic queries or significant concerns	Gaynor Davies
School organisation issues	Andrea Richards
Secondary school/all through school queries	Sarah Corcoran
Primary school or all through school queries	Tim Britton
ALN/special school and PRU queries	Ceri Jones
Attendance and Wellbeing Service	Daniel Williams
Staff, trade union and procurement issues	Richard Evans
Data, secondary finance or digitally excluded learners	Catrin Edwards
School finance queries, efsm payments	Stephanie Davies
Governing Body queries	Non Morgan
School catering and cleaning queries	Lisa Gorringe
0-4 childcare queries (excluding Flying Start)	Denise Humphries
Flying Start/YEPS queries	Jess Allen
Health and safety issues	Mike Murphy



Appendix 1

COVID RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

COVID-19 STAFF SELF-REPORTING RISK ASSESSMENT

This risk assessment tool has been developed for you and your line manager to understand whether you may be at a greater risk of COVID-19. It will also help you and your manager to choose the right actions based on your level of risk.

We recognise that some questions on the toolkit are extremely personal. Therefore, you will only be required to advise your manager if you are in a shielded group, meet one of the categories of pregnancy OR provide your overall score to your manager.

If you require support to complete this form, your manager can refer you to Occupational Health.

Section 1: STAFF WITHIN THE SHIELDING CATEGORY	
<p>Shielding groups (Very High Risk): Any employee in shielding groups should be working from home until further announcement on shielding.</p> <p>Are you currently 'shielded'?</p> <p>If YES, this means you fall into the 'extremely vulnerable group' and you will have received a 'Shielding' letter from the Chief Medical Officer.</p> <p>This will need to be reviewed on a regular basis as further evidence and Welsh Government guidance emerges.</p> <p>If Yes - Please complete Section 1 on the COVID – 19 Risk Assessment Return – Employee Declaration</p> <p>If NO, continue to section 2.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Shielding guidance can be found here for further information:</p> <p><u>Guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable from coronavirus (COVID-19)</u></p>	

Section 2: PREGNANCY	
Are you 28 weeks pregnant or over?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If YES , to the above you fall into the 'very high risk' category and your manager will discuss the 'Shielding' guidance and discuss suitable working from home arrangements where possible	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>NB For pregnant women, with underlying health conditions at any stage of pregnancy a more precautionary approach is prudent and Women who are BAME should be included in the consideration and discussed between the employee and manager.</p> <p>Please complete Section 2 on the COVID – 19 Risk Assessment Return – Employee Declaration If NO, continue to section 3.</p>	

Section 3 – OTHER RISK FACTORS	
Please tick the score for any of the criteria that applies to you:	
Age 50-59	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
60-69	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
70+	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
Are you Black, Asian, Minority or Ethnic (BAME)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Sex at Birth - Male	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Cardiovascular disease (on treatment for Hypertension, Irregular Heartbeat, Heart Failure, Previous Heart Attack, Stroke, TIA etc.)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Diabetes Mellitus Type 1 or 2	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Chronic pulmonary disease (including asthma, COPD, interstitial lung disease)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Chronic kidney disease (any stage 1-5)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Sickle cell/Thalassaemia trait or other haemoglobinopathies	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Obesity (BMI >30 or waist circumference >33 (BAME female) > 34.5 (White female), >35 (BAME male), 40 (White male)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>



Has any member of your immediate family died from COVID-19 or been admitted to ITU for COVID-19	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Please add up the numbers that you have circled and enter the Total Score here:	

Assessing your risk

Your total score will be used to assess your level of return to work risk in line with the following:

0-3 Low risk - Continue current duties with adherence to best social distancing and public health guidance

4-6 Moderate to High risk - Consider enhanced PPE & reasonable adjustments to job role, wherever practical

>7 Very High- Risk Work from home/non frontline roles

Please now complete the **COVID – 19 Risk Assessment Return – Employee Declaration** which you should return to your manager.



COVID – 19 Risk Assessment Return – Employee Declaration

Please complete this section and return to your line manager. Your line manager can then discuss this with you when planning your return to the workplace

Employee Name		Payroll No:	
Department		Employee Tel No.	
Manager's Name		Manager's Tel No.	
Section 1 – Are you within a shielded category and in receipt of a shielding letter	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Section 2 – Are you 28 weeks pregnant?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Section 3 – Please enter the score for your Risk Assessment here:			

Assessing risk

The **total score** section should be used to assess the level of return to work risk in line with the following:

0-3 Low risk - Continue current duties with adherence to best social distancing and public health guidance
4-6 Moderate to High risk - Consider enhanced PPE & reasonable adjustments to job role, wherever practical
>7 Very High- Risk Work from home/non frontline roles

If the employee or line manager has any questions or concerns regarding the individuals score, and what this means in relation to a return to the workplace, then contact should be made with the following colleagues for advice:

1. If you wish to discuss the score in connection with the work environment or work tasks you can contact a member of the **Health and Safety team**.



2. For queries regarding a medical condition or health concerns please contact the **Occupational Health Unit**. The manager may refer the individual employee to Occupational Health for a more in depth assessment to validate their score and to seek advice on workplace adjustments.
3. If you have queries relating to a protected characteristic for example disability or BAME, or would like information about reasonable adjustments please contact the **Equality and Diversity Team**.
4. Any other employment matters can be discussed with your **Employment Relations Team**.



RETURN TO WORK AGREEMENT

PLEASE NOTE - This form ONLY needs to be completed if the individual is unable to return to the workplace, or needs workplace adjustments to return.

To be completed by the Line Manager in consultation with the Individual Employee

If the individual's risk assessment indicates that they are not able to return to the workplace or that adjustments (for example PPE) need to be provided then this should be recorded in this document.

N.B. Due to the changing nature of advice surrounding the COVID-19 virus the individual's ability to return to the workplace should be reviewed monthly OR when changes to guidance changes.

Section 2: AGREED ACTIONS - THIS WILL NEED TO BE REVIEWED MONTHLY			
Please record the agreed work plan and ensure you review these each month.			
Please outline what workplace adjustments have been made to minimise risk (this could include redeployment):			
Please state when new working arrangements will begin from:			
These arrangements should be reviewed monthly in line with Public Health Wales guidance.			
Employee Signature		Date	
Manager Signature		Date	

APPENDIX 2

COVID 19 SCHOOL RE-OPENING AND RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE DOCUMENT

RCT Corporate Health and Safety Team	Version 1 – 09.06.20
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1. Introduction

Since the announcement by the Welsh Government to re-open Schools work has been underway to prepare buildings and settings to reopen. A risk assessment is key to this process and allows School Management to identify hazards and implement controls to reduce the spread of COVID 19.

2. Guide to the document

This document has been produced to assist School Management with the development of a risk assessment and the introduction of controls to prevent the spread of COVID 19 in Educational settings. It is important that Headteachers/Managers go through and adapt the risk assessment for their own school or setting.

The existing/new controls listed are not mandatory but are provided as guidance on reducing the risk of transmission. Each school/setting must consider their own situation and adapt the assessment by editing the measures where appropriate and adding any school specific controls. The hazard and controls listed are not an exhaustive list and can be amended to suit the individual circumstances within the setting.

The risk assessment template is intended for the control of the spread of COVID 19 only, there may be other site issues to consider prior to re-opening the setting. With this in mind, we have also included a brief 'Site Management Checklist' to assist you (see page 3).

3. Further Support

Further advice and support in the preparation of the risk assessment can be obtained from the Councils Corporate Health and Safety Team:

Healthandsafetyteam@rctcbc.gov.uk

Subject specific COVID 19 risk assessment guidance e.g. D&T, Science and PE can also be accessed using the links provided below, Department Heads will be familiar with the various resources:



- <https://gov.wales/keep-education-safe-operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-covid-19> - **WG Keep Education Safe – Operational Guidance for Schools and Settings (COVID 19)**
- <http://www.cleapss.org.uk/> - CLEAPSS Site (Username: **solar** password: **system20**)
- <http://science.cleapss.org.uk/> - CLEAPSS Science Site – for specific guidance on science
- <http://dt.cleapss.org.uk/> - CLEAPSS Design and Technology Site for specific guidance on D&T
- <https://www.afpe.org.uk/physical-education/afpe-launch-new-support-document-covid-19-interpreting-the-government-guidance-in-a-pesspa-context/> - Association for Physical Education for specific guidance on PE



Some statutory inspections may have lapsed since the school was shut. The checklist below provides a list of those items that may require attention prior to the site opening:

Site Management Checklist:

Site issue		Yes/No	Further Action
1	Gas Boiler/Heating systems - Serviced/Inspected by a competent person?		
2	Fire Protection Systems – Alarms & Emergency Lighting maintained quarterly by Contractor? Fire protection systems are also checked by management.		
3	Sprinkler Systems inspected/maintained by a Contractor? (as per frequency set out by the system)		
4	Fire Extinguishers (FFE) – Have they been serviced annually by a competent person? Inspect FFE for any damage/discharged or removed units.		
5	Fire Evacuation Procedures/Drills – Have any fire evacuation arrangements been revised to take account of revised site layouts/personnel?		
6	Legionella – Low use systems flushed/temperatures monitored by management and maintained by Contractors?		
7	LEV Units (in D&T) – have they been inspected by a competent person? (required annually).		
8	Traffic Management – Review arrangements to account for social distancing and supervision/increase in private vehicles?		
9	First Aid – Do you have adequate no's of first aiders in view of possible staff shortages or alternative layout of the site?		
10	Lifting Equipment (e.g. lift hoists) have they been inspected by a competent person?		
11	Arrangements are in place for dealing with contractors when they arrive on site?		

For further information on statutory inspections in relation to the building, contact the **Councils Corporate Maintenance Section**.

Please complete this form and return to schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk

COVID 19 Risk Assessment

Subject: COVID 19 School Premises Risk Assessment

Date of Assessment: Date

Assessor: Headteacher

School Name: SCHOOL NAME HERE

Hazard	People at Risk	Existing Control / New Controls	Additional Comments/Control Measures – School Specific
School drop off/Pick up – Infection control	All Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/carer pick up and pick up protocols have been developed to minimise adult to adult contact and avoid gatherings (signs and floor markings made available from RCT) • Arrangements in place to supervise pupils arriving/leaving on contracted transport to ensure social distancing. • Early Years classes will arrange for children to be dropped off and collected at the door/threshold of the setting where possible - Parents queue outside the entrance to drop off/pick up • One parent encouraged to drop off/pick up. • Floor markings provided to assist with social distancing. • Stagger drop off/collection times for year groups. • Additional entrances used to reduce gatherings at peak times • Parents/carers instructed not to attend school if symptomatic • Temperature checks taken at arrival • Handwashing/hand sanitiser available at all entrances. 	

<p>Circulation Routes – Infection control</p>	<p>All Persons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where large numbers of pupils still need to move around the setting, alternative external routes have been provided where available and consideration is given to implementing a one-way system where this is possible. • Floor markings and signage is provided to assist with social distancing. • Doors kept open (where safe to do so) to reduce physical contact. • Times for using stairs and corridors have been planned to ensure that use of common areas does not encourage gatherings. • Class times have been staggered to prevent large numbers moving around the premises at the same time. • Cloakrooms are managed to ensure social distancing – coats/bags can be placed on backs of chairs/under tables. 	
<p>Classroom/Teaching Environment – Infection control</p>	<p>All Persons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil groups/class sizes are kept as small as possible to minimise interaction (see WG guidance on class numbers). https://gov.wales/keep-education-safe-operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-covid-19 • Pupils will stay in their class/group wherever it is possible throughout the day, or on subsequent days. • Where possible pupils use the same desk and resources each day where they attend on consecutive days. Resources are placed in individual trays/bags. • The use of outdoor space is utilised wherever possible. • Rooms have been organised to encourage social distancing, tables and chairs are moved apart in order for pupils to spread out and arranged to enable sitting side to side and not face to face. Where it is not possible to move 	

		<p>furniture seats are taped off/marked as not to be used to support social distancing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early years settings that host more than one cohort group in a single room should consider the physical means that can be used to separate each group e.g. utilise furniture or screens • Arrangements put in place to avoid mixing with other groups. • Unnecessary items have been removed from learning environments where there is space to store elsewhere. • Resources, which are not easily washable, wipe able or otherwise cleaned have been removed e.g. soft toys, sand, water play etc. • Arrangements in place for the use of the playground, including equipment. NB: outdoor equipment should not be used unless it is appropriately cleaned between groups of children and young people using it, and that multiple groups do not use it simultaneously. • Arrangements are also in place for social distancing in staff rooms and prep rooms. 	
<p>Pupil and Staff Toileting – Infection control</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Times are staggered where possible and consider the increased handwashing times that have been introduced. • The setting has introduced a one in/one out policy. • Distancing for queuing has been introduced e.g. through floor markings • Signage is in place in each toilet to encourage adequate hand washing takes place. • Similar arrangements are also in place for staff toilets. 	

<p>Spread of COVID - 19/Social Distancing Infection Control (General)</p>	<p>All Persons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windows and doors are open to increase ventilation (where safe to do so) • Movement of whole classes is avoided where pupils can stay in the same room and staff can move to different classes instead. Rooms used have been selected to enable this. • Appropriate signage is in place throughout the setting. https://gov.wales/safety-and-physical-distancing-signs-employers-coronaviru • Arrangements are in place to manage break times including staggered times, alternative entrances, demarcation. 	
<p>Staffing</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff who are clinically vulnerable have been assessed and suitable measures have been put in place to manage the risk e.g. ensure extra care is taken in observing social distancing. Refer to the Council guidance 'Update for Chairs of Governors, Headteachers, Managers & Staff – Shielding and Childcare Responsibilities' & Staff COVID-19 Medical Risk Assessment Tool. • Daily review of staffing levels takes place, including those in key safety roles to ensure the safe supervision and operation of the setting including premises management. • Teaching staff have breaks from their group during the day where possible, for example, by alternating between the teacher and teaching assistant, avoiding new staff covering from a different grouping. 	

<p>Catering/Lunchtime Arrangements – Infection control</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups of children can eat packed lunch or school meals within their own classroom setting. • Packed lunches are stored in the individual group classrooms rather than a central location to avoid group mixing. • Different groups mixing together is avoided through staggered times with several sittings and/or use of additional areas and to help reduce queues. • Hand gel is provided for pupils and staff to use immediately before collecting their lunch. • Social distancing is employed at meal collection points (the use of floor tape to demarcate areas may be useful) where this is not possible, screens are installed where required between pupils and serving staff. • Additional meal collection points have been put in place to reduce queuing where necessary. • Alternative payment methods are being used to eliminate cash handling. • Tables and seating are moved apart and reflect the maximum capacity to allow social distancing within the group. Where furniture is fixed and cannot be moved space is created by taping off/taking out of use alternate seating. • A different entry and exit route are being used at dinner times where more than one door is available. 	
<p>Pupils/Staff displaying symptoms whilst at school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements in place to deal with pupil/staff who develop symptoms whilst at the setting – Follow the WG guidance • https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19-educational-settings-guidance 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An isolation room is available for pupils/staff. 	
Cleaning/Waste Disposal		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All contact surfaces which are fixed to the premises have been identified and are disinfected on a daily basis e.g. door handles, toilets, taps, handrails, external gates and dining room equipment. • Enhanced cleaning regime in place across the setting. • Adequate cleaning supplies and facilities around the school are in place. • A Clear desk policy in place for all pupils and staff. • Tissues should be placed in a separate waste bin and disposed of safely. All rubbish should be removed daily. If any waste is suspected of being in contact with someone showing symptoms of COVID-19, it should be placed in a waste bag, held in a secure place for 72 hours then disposed of as other waste is. 	
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPE is not required for routine class activities • PPE may be required when carrying out intimate care, dealing with body fluids or a suspected case of COVID 19. For further guidance on PPE requirements refer to the RCT Schools COVID 19 PPE Guidance Matrix. 	
Visitors		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about visitor arrangements are displayed in a suitable place where necessary, including information about social distancing, hygiene and not attending if the person has symptoms. • Reception areas have been reviewed to take account of infection control and allow social distancing including floor markings/barriers/reception screens. 	



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, reception staff sign in visitors. Visitors do not use the same pen and touch screens are sanitised after each visitor. 	
Training		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff have been instructed on the nature of COVID-19 and its transmission. • The risk assessment together with any COVID 19 control measures have been brought to the attention of all teaching staff. • Any staff briefings are also conducted with social distancing considerations. 	



Appendix 3

GENERAL GUIDANCE TO SCHOOL STAFF WORKING - PPE & SOCIAL DISTANCING

1. PPE - Rhondda Cynon Taf Council - Schools COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment Guidance Matrix – V2 – 11-06-20

Introduction

It is important to remember that physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory **hygiene** (catching a cough or sneeze in a tissue or covering the mouth and nose with an elbow or sleeve) remain strongly evidenced to be the most effective ways to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Hand hygiene is critical before and after all direct contact with a child or young person, and after cleaning equipment and the environment.

There is therefore no need to use personal protective equipment (PPE) when undertaking routine educational activities in classroom/school settings. The list below covers when PPE may be required. Further guidance is available at:

<https://gov.wales/keep-education-safe-operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-covid-19>

Activity/Task/ Circumstance	Context	Disposable Gloves	Disposable Plastic Apron	Fluid Resistant Surgical Mask	Eye Protection
Routine Activities	No PPE is required when undertaking routine educational activities in classroom or school settings.				
Suspected coronavirus (COVID-19)	If a child or young person becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 and needs direct personal care.	√ Single use	√ Single use	√ Single use	X – Risk Assess
	When cleaning the areas where a person suspected of having COVID-19 has been.	√ Single use	√ Single use		

Activity/Task/ Circumstance	Context	Disposable Gloves	Disposable Plastic Apron	Fluid- resistant Surgical Mask	Fluid Repellent Gown	FFP3 Mask	Eye Protection
Intimate Care	When providing intimate care to a child or young person. This can include personal, hands-on care such as washing, toileting, or first aid and certain clinical procedures such as assisted feeding.	√ Single use	√ Single use	X – Risk Assess			X – Risk Assess
	When undertaking aerosol generating procedures such as suction.	√ Single use			√ Single use	√ Single use	√ Single use (clean & re-use)
	When cleaning equipment or surfaces that might be contaminated with body fluids such as saliva or respiratory secretions.	√ Single use	√ Single use				

X Risk Assess = If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes such as from coughing, spitting, or vomiting.



Guidance

The use of PPE by staff within education settings should be based on a clear assessment of risk, taking into account each individual setting and the needs of the individual learner. Schools, settings and local authorities already have risk assessments processes in place which should be used to identify the need for the use of PPE. Following any risk assessment, where the need for PPE has been identified, it should be readily available and provided. Further information has been provided by the [Health and Safety Executive](#).

Using PPE at work during the coronavirus outbreak

All staff should understand how to put on or remove PPE in the right order, safely dispose of the waste and use correct hand hygiene steps to reduce the risk of onward transmission of infection. Further guidance is available in Appendix 6 of the [Infection Prevention and Control for Childcare Settings Guidance](#).

In any case, hand washing should always be practiced before putting on and after removing PPE. Schools and settings should contact their local authority to obtain PPE to cover the above.

NB – For pregnant staff or those staff who have been off with Moderate Health Risks the above PPE guidance may be adjusted to take account of any medical risk assessment process that has been undertaken prior to a staff member returning to work.

Please refer to the link below for the full version of the Welsh Government Guidance – Keep Education Safe: Operational Guidance for Schools and Settings (COVID-19):

<https://gov.wales/keep-education-safe-operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-covid-19>

2. Social Distancing

Under Regulation 7a of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restriction) (Wales) Regulations 2020, Welsh Government have chosen to impose a legal requirement on workplaces to ensure that everything reasonably practicable is done to minimise transmission of



coronavirus. The key purpose of the Regulations is to minimise the risk of transmission of Coronavirus. Where contact or closer working is required, it is important that other measures are considered, for example:

- Washing hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap or use of hand sanitiser after close contact;
- Minimising the level of interaction;
- Physical barriers (including wearing Personal Protective Equipment that has been provided when required);
- Improved personal hygiene and reminders about the importance of good hygiene;
- Ensuring those with symptoms are isolated from other person's onsite until they can be collected.

Although the duty falls on the person responsible for management control, everybody in a workplace has a personal responsibility to comply with the 2 metre distance requirement wherever possible and practical to do so, to ensure that the risk of transmission of Coronavirus across Wales is reduced. WG have made it clear that while there is a requirement to take all reasonable measures to maintain a physical distance, it is about taking proportionate action where it is practicable to do so.

What constitutes a reasonable measure?

It will be for the duty holder of the school/childcare setting to justify the reasonable measures that they have adopted, and to demonstrate how they have considered that these are proportionate and minimise the risks faced by all persons who have to continue to attend work in their setting.

If physical distancing can be achieved, this would be considered a reasonable measure and this will play a part, along with other actions, to minimise community transmission. Where possible a 2 metre distance should be maintained between staff and any visitors. If practical to do so, staff should also maintain a 2 metre distance from pupils at the school or childcare setting.

However, it is recognised that due to the age and personal requirements of some pupils this will undoubtedly be difficult to achieve and therefore physical distancing is not in these cases considered a reasonable measure. If for any reason a member of staff cannot maintain suitable distance, PPE would need to be worn as per the above table, to provide a level of protection.

Appendix 4

SIGNAGE – description of signage to be received by schools July 2020 – 2M signage to be reviewed

		<p>White Tac</p>
		<p>Double sided tape</p>

		<p>Screens</p>
		<p>Fence 2mtr banner</p>
		<p>Gate no access sign</p>
		<p>Cable ties</p>

At Rhieni/Cynhalwyr
sylw:

Gofynnwch am:
Please Ask For:
Rhif Est:
Telephone N°:
Ffacs:
Fax:
E-bost:
E-Mail:
Cylchlythyr:
Circular:

Gaynor Davies
01443 744001

Appendix D 1

Fy Nghyf: GD/TM
My Ref:

Eich Cyf:
Your Ref:

Dyddiad: 15 Gorffennaf 2020
Date:

Annwyl Rieni/Cynhalwyr (Gofalwyr),

Dyma roi gwybod i chi am sefyllfa ddiweddaraf trefniadau 'Yn ôl i'r Ysgol' ym mis Medi ar gyfer ysgolion Rhondda Cynon Taf. Ar 9 Gorffennaf 2020, cadarnhaodd Kirsty Williams, y Gweinidog Addysg yng Nghymru, y bydd pob disgybl yn gallu dychwelyd i'r ysgol ym mis Medi. Yr wythnos ddiwethaf, rhoddodd Grŵp Cynghori Technegol Cymru, sy'n darparu cyngor gwyddonol a thechnegol i'r Llywodraeth yn ystod argyfyngau, argymhelliad i'r Gweinidog y dylai ysgolion "drefnu i agor ym mis Medi gyda 100% o ddisgyblion yn mynychu ar y safle, a hynny'n amodol ar lefel COVID-19 yn y gymuned yn lleihau'n barhaus ac yn gyson."

Cyhoeddodd y Gweinidog hefyd:

- Bydd ysgolion yn dychwelyd i'w capasiti llawn, gyda dim ond ychydig o fesurau cadw pellter cymdeithasol mewn grwpiau cyswllt.
- Pan fydd ysgol yn gweithredu ar gapasiti llawn, dylai grŵp cyswllt gynnwys tua 30 o blant. Bydd rhywfaint o gymysgu uniongyrchol neu anuniongyrchol rhwng plant mewn grwpiau cyswllt gwahanol hefyd yn anochel, e.e. ar gludiant i'r ysgol, wrth dderbyn addysg arbenigol neu oherwydd cyfyngiadau staffio.
- Dylai mesurau cadw pellter cymdeithasol i oedolion barhau, yn unol â'r rheoliadau a'r canllawiau.
- Bydd yn ofynnol i ysgolion leihau'r risg o drosglwyddo'r feirws drwy gymryd mesurau lliniaru eraill gan ddefnyddio'r hierarchaeth o fesurau rheoli risg.
- Dylai pob ysgol barhau i "ddiogelu'i hun rhag COVID-19", a hynny ar ôl cynnal asesiadau risg. Dylai ysgolion liniaru'r risgiau yma drwy gyfuniad o fesurau rheoli fel sicrhau hylendid dwylo ac arwynebau, systemau unffordd ac ati.
- Os bydd systemau rhybuddion cynnar yn nodi gwybodaeth am ddigwyddiad neu achos lleol, yna dylai ysgolion cyfagos roi mesurau cyfyngu priodol ar waith.
- Bydd pob ysgol yn derbyn cyflenwad o becynnau profi gartref.

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Dewiswch iaith a diwyg eich dogfen | Available in alternative formats and languages

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Cadarnhaodd y Gweinidog y bydd tymor yr hydref yn dechrau ar 1 Medi 2020. Bydd ein disgyblion yn dychwelyd i'r ysgol ar 3 Medi. Erbyn hyn bydd ysgolion wedi cael cyfnod o baratoi a chynllunio ar gyfer asesu risgiau a rhoi mesurau rheoli ar waith. Byddan nhw hefyd wedi addasu prosesau a gweithdrefnau ar gyfer cadw disgyblion a staff yn ddiogel wrth i bawb ddychwelyd i'r ysgol. O 3 Medi 2020, bydd disgyblion yn mynd yn ôl i'r ysgol yn raddol dros gyfnod o wythnos. Bydd holl ddisgyblion Rhondda Cynon Taf yn ôl yn yr ysgol erbyn 10 Medi 2020.

Bydd modd bod yn hyblyg ac rydyn ni'n cydnabod efallai y bydd ysgolion am ganolbwyntio ar grwpiau blwyddyn â blaenoriaeth, e.e. y rheiny sy'n mynychu dosbarthiadau cynnal dysgu sy'n gysylltiedig ag ysgolion prif ffrwd. O ran ysgolion cynradd, gall grwpiau â blaenoriaeth hefyd gynnwys disgyblion yn y blynyddoedd cynnar neu flwyddyn 6. O ran ysgolion uwchradd, gall hyn olygu disgyblion sy'n newydd i'r ysgol uwchradd neu sydd i fod i sefyll arholiadau yr haf nesaf. I gael canllawiau pellach, ewch i: <https://llyw.cymru/canllawiau-gweithredol-ar-gyfer-ysgolion-leoliadau-o-dymor-yr-hydref-covid-19>

Yn ffodus, mae nifer yr achosion o COVID-19 ledled y wlad wedi gostwng, ac mae'r camau rydych chi wedi'u cymryd wedi cyfrannu'n sylweddol at hyn. Rydyn ni hefyd yn gwybod bod rhai teuluoedd a phlant wedi'i chael hi'n anodd ymdopi â'r cyfyngiadau. Bydd colled a galar wedi effeithio'n bersonol ar rai, bydd eraill wedi wynebu heriau ariannol ac mae pawb wedi profi newid ac ansicrwydd. Yn ystod y cam nesaf yma, gall ysgolion agor gyda'r ddarpariaeth ddysgu fwyaf posibl, gan darfu cyn lleied â phosibl ar ein pobl ifainc. Bydd rhai heriau wrth ail-agor pob ysgol i holl ddisgyblion y Sir, gan fod pob ysgol yn wahanol i'w gilydd. Serch hynny, mae carfanau rheoli ysgolion a'r Awdurdod Lleol yn gweithio ar y cyd i sefydlu'r dull gorau i bob ysgol ac rydyn ni'n falch iawn o groesawu'r holl ddisgyblion yn ôl i'n hysgolion ledled y Fwrdeistref Sirol. Mae'r ffaith bod cymaint o hapusrwydd i'w weld ar wynebau ein disgyblion yn ein hysgolion yn ystod yr wythnosau diwethaf yn profi cymaint maen nhw wedi mwynhau bod yn ôl yng nghwmni'u ffrindiau a staff yr ysgol, a dysgu yn eu hysgolion yn y gymuned.

Rydyn ni'n gwybod y byddwch chi'n teimlo'n ansicr a bod gyda chi lawer o gwestiynau am amgylchiadau unigol eich plentyn. Bydd dolen i Gwestiynau Cyffredin ar gael ar wefan y Cyngor maes o law. Ein gobaith yw y bydd yn ateb pob ymholiad posibl. Bydd modd dod o hyd i'r Cwestiynau Cyffredin o ddydd lau 16 Gorffennaf yma:

www.rctcbc.gov.uk/CwestiynauCyffredinDychwelydirYsgol

Ddylai disgyblion sydd wedi derbyn llythyr gwarchod oherwydd eu bod yn agored i niwed o safbwynt meddygol, neu sy'n byw yn yr un tŷ â rhywun sydd wedi derbyn llythyr gwarchod, ddim dychwelyd i'r ysgol (yn seiliedig ar gyngor meddygol cyfredol). Serch hynny, caiff y 'categori gwarchod' ei adolygu yng nghanol mis Awst 2020 felly mae'n bosibl bydd y sefyllfa'n newid. Os bydd y sefyllfa'n newid, bydd cyfarwyddyd pellach yn cael ei rannu â holl rieni a chynhalwyr. Ar hyn o bryd, y disgwyl yw bydd y plant yma'n parhau i fanteisio ar gyfleoedd dysgu digidol a chymorth gan yr ysgol o bell.

Bydd carfanau rheoli ysgolion yn cynnal asesiadau risg i'w helpu i nodi'r dull sydd orau ar gyfer ysgol eich plentyn. Bydd pob ysgol yn gweithredu cynlluniau a all fod yn wahanol i'w gilydd ledled yr Awdurdod Lleol, gyda gwahanol grwpiau blwyddyn yn cael eu blaenoriaethu o ran dychwelyd i'r ysgol. Bydd pob ysgol yn cysylltu â rhieni a chynhalwyr i rannu'r wybodaeth yma cyn gwyliau'r haf.

Bydd ysgolion yn gweithio'n wahanol iawn, o leiaf am ran gynta'r hanner tymor. Bydd dosbarthiadau a grwpiau blwyddyn yn cael eu rhoi mewn grwpiau cyswllt a bydd cyswllt cymdeithasol rhwng grwpiau'n cael ei leihau cymaint â phosibl. Bydd ysgolion yn gweithredu arferion golchi dwylo/defnydd o hylif glanhau dwylo a chadw pellter cymdeithasol rheolaidd, a bydd grwpiau'n cael gwahanol amseroedd egwyl/cinio a dechrau/gorffen yr ysgol. Byddwn ni'n gweithio'n agos gydag ysgolion a llywodraethwyr i geisio sicrhau cysondeb o ran egwyddorion a dull gweithredu ledled y Fwrdeistref Sirol.

Rydyn ni'n aros am ragor o fanylion am cludiant rhwng y catref a'r ysgol ac mae disgwyl i Lywodraeth Cymru gyhoeddi canllawiau hefyd. Dyma ofyn i rieni a chynhalwyr helpu i esbonio i ddisgyblion bwysigrwydd mesurau cadw pellter cymdeithasol ac arferion effeithiol o ran golchi dwylo a'r hyn i'w wneud wrth disian neu beswch er mwyn helpu'r feirws rhag lledaenu, gan bydd y rhain yn chwarae rhan allweddol wrth gadw pawb yn ddiogel.

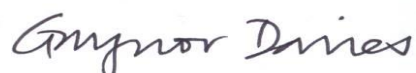
Mae Cyngor Rhondda Cynon Taf yn parhau i weithio'n agos gyda'n holl ysgolion sydd wedi gwneud gwaith gwych yn darparu gofal plant drwy gydol y tymor, gan gynnwys yn ystod gwyliau ysgol a phenwythnosau o dan amodau anodd iawn. Maen nhw hefyd wedi darparu gwersi digidol a chymorth lles i'ch plentyn/plant, yn ogystal â phroses dychwelyd i'r ysgol yn raddol yn ystod y 3 wythnos diwethaf, ac rydyn ni'n gobeithio bod hyn wedi gwneud gwahaniaeth yn ystod y pandemig. Hoffwn i hefyd ddiolch i chi am y cyfleoedd dysgu gartref gwerthfawr rydych wedi'u darparu i'ch plentyn/plant dros y misoedd diwethaf ac am wneud gwahaniaeth cadarnhaol. Rydyn ni'n gwerthfawrogi'r gwaith yma'n fawr.

Os yw eich plentyn yn disgwyl canlyniadau arholiadau'r haf yma, bydd modd eu casglu o'r ysgol ar y dyddiad dynodedig. Yn naturiol, bydd rhai newidiadau sylweddol i'r gweithdrefnau arferol. Bydd y profiad yma'n wahanol iawn eleni a bydd yn ofynnol i ysgolion ganiatáu i grwpiau bach o ddisgyblion yn unig fynd i mewn i adeilad yr ysgol i gasglu eu canlyniadau ar adegau penodol, a hynny er mwyn rheoli llif unigolion a chynnal mesurau cadw pellter cymdeithasol. Fydd disgyblion hefyd ddim yn cael ymgynnull mewn grwpiau mawr y tu allan i'r ysgol oherwydd y risgiau posibl y mae hyn yn debygol o'u peri. Dyma gydnabod y bydd hyn yn anodd gan fod y diwrnod yn un emosiynol, ond mae'n ofyniad hanfodol er mwyn cadw pawb yn ddiogel. Bydd ysgolion yn darparu cyfleoedd wedi hyn i ddisgyblion a'u teuluoedd os oes angen cymorth ac arweiniad arnyn nhw. I helpu teuluoedd gydag unrhyw ymholiadau am newidiadau i'r arholiadau, mae dogfen Cwestiynau Cyffredin ar gael er gwybodaeth. Mae modd dod o hyd i'r Cwestiynau Cyffredin yma: www.rctcbc.gov.uk a chlicio ar adran 'Newyddion Ysgolion' ar y dudalen hafan.

Bydd Pennaeth ysgol eich plentyn yn rhoi gwybod i chi am drefniadau tymor yr hydref yn y man, a/neu drefniadau diwrnod canlyniadau arholiadau os yw'n berthnasol. Os bydd y Gyfarwyddiaeth Addysg yn diweddarar unrhyw wybodaeth pan fydd yr ysgol ar gau, bydd y Cyngor yn cyhoeddi'r newyddion yma ar ei wefan. Yn y cyfamser, dyma obeithio y cewch chi haf hyfryd.

Diolch ymlaen llaw am barhau i roi'ch cefnogaeth.

Yn gywir,



Cyfarwyddwr Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cynhwysiant



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

To: Parents/Carers

Gofynnwch Am:
Please Ask For:
Rhif Est:
Telephone N°:
Ffacs:
Fax:
E-Bost:
E-Mail:
Cylchlythyr:
Circular:

Gaynor Davies
01443 744001

Appendix D

Fy nghyf: GD/TM
My Ref:

Eich Cyf: Your Ref:

Dyddiad: 15th July 2020
Date:

Dear Parents/Carers,

I'm writing to inform you of the latest updated position about the 'back to school' plans for September for Rhondda Cynon Taf schools. The Minister for Education in Wales (Kirsty Williams) confirmed on the 9th of July 2020 that all pupils will be able to return to school in September. The Welsh Technical Advisory Group, which provides scientific and technical advice to Government during emergencies, last week recommended to the Minister that schools "plan to open in September with 100% of pupils physically present on school sites, subject to a continuing, steady decline in the presence of COVID-19 in the community."

The Minister also announced that:

- Schools will return to full capacity, with only limited social distancing within contact groups.
- At full operation, a contact group should consist of around 30 children. Some direct or indirect mixing between children in different contact groups will also be unavoidable, such as on transport, receiving specialist teaching or due to staffing constraints.
- Social distancing for adults should remain in line with regulations and guidance.
- Schools will be required to minimise the risk of transmission by taking other mitigating measures using the hierarchy of risk controls.
- Every school should continue to be "COVID Protected" - having carried out risk assessments and mitigated them with a combination of controls such as hand and surface hygiene, one-way systems and so forth.
- If early warning information shows a local incident or outbreak then nearby schools should implement appropriate restriction measures.
- Each school will be provided with a supply of home testing kits.

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We welcome correspondence in Welsh and corresponding with us in Welsh will not lead to a delay. Let us know your language choice if Welsh or bilingual.



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The Minister confirmed that the autumn term will start on the 1st of September 2020. Our learners will return to school from the 3rd of September following a period of school preparation and planning for assessing risk and putting in place control measures, and processes and procedures for keeping learners and staff safe once everyone returns to school. From the 3rd of September 2020, learners will undergo a phased return to school over a period of a week with all learners in Rhondda Cynon Taf accessing school by the 10th of September 2020.

There will be a period of flexibility in recognition that schools may want to focus on priority year groups, such as those attending learning support classes attached to mainstream schools. At primary level, priority groups may also include learners in the early years or year 6; and at secondary level, learners who are new to secondary school or are due to sit examinations next summer. For further guidance please refer to: <https://gov.wales/operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-autumn-term-covid-19>

Thankfully, we have seen a significant fall in COVID-19 cases locally and nationally and your actions have made a big contribution to this. We know that some families and children have found lockdown very difficult to cope with. Some will have been personally affected by loss and grief, others will have encountered financial challenges and we have all experienced change and uncertainty. In this next phase, schools can open to deliver maximum learning with minimal disruption for our young people. There will be some challenges to re-opening all schools for all learners across the County, particularly as each school has its own context. However, school leaders and the local authority are working together to establish the best approach that is right for each context and we are delighted to be welcoming all learners back to our schools across the County Borough. The many happy and smiling faces that have been so evident in our schools in recent weeks is testimony to the enjoyment that so many have felt being back amongst friends and school staff, and learning in their community schools.

We know you will feel uncertain and will have many questions about your child's individual circumstances. A frequently asked questions link will shortly be posted on the Council website and will hopefully answer all potential queries that you may have. This will be available at www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolreturnfaqs on Thursday, 16th of July.

Pupils who are in receipt of a shielding letter due to their medical vulnerability or who live in a household with someone who is in receipt of a shielding letter should not, based on the current medical advice return to school. However, this 'shielding category' is due for a review in mid-August 2020 so could change. If that is the case then further guidance will be shared with all parents and carers. Until that position is clarified, these children are likely to continue to access digital learning opportunities and remote school support.

School leadership teams will be carrying out risk assessments to help them identify the approach that is right in your child's school. Each school will implement plans which may vary across the local authority, with different year groups being prioritised for a return to school. Each school will be in touch with parents and carers to share this information prior to the summer break.

Schools will work very differently, at least for the first half term. Classes and year groups will be placed into contact groups and social contact across groups minimised. Schools will implement regular hand washing/use of sanitiser and social distancing routines, with staggered break/lunch times and start/finish times. We will be working closely with schools and governors to try to ensure consistency in terms of principles and approaches across the County Borough.

Further details are awaited in relation to school transport and Welsh Government guidance is due to be issued. We ask that parents and carers help communicate to pupils the importance of following social distancing, effective hygiene and respiratory controls as this will play a key role in keeping everyone safe.

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council continues to work closely with all our schools who have done a fantastic job in delivering childcare throughout the term, including holiday periods and weekends, under very difficult conditions. They have also provided digital learning, wellbeing support and a phased return to school during the last 3 weeks which we hope has made a difference during the pandemic. I would like to extend my thanks to you too for the invaluable home learning opportunities that you have provided during these challenging few months and for making a positive difference. This is hugely appreciated.

If your child is expecting summer examination results there will be an opportunity for these to be picked up from the school on the designated date, with some significant changes to procedures. This experience will be very different this academic year and schools will be required to allow small groups of learners only into the school building to collect their results at set times, so as to manage the flow of learners and maintain social distancing. Learners will also not be allowed to congregate in large groups outside the school due to the potential risks this is likely to pose. It is recognised that this will be difficult due to the obvious emotions associated with the day but this is an essential requirement to keep everyone safe. Schools will provide follow up opportunities for learners and their families if they require support and guidance. To assist families with any queries that they may have about the examination changes, a frequently asked questions document been prepared for information. This can be accessed by visiting www.rctcbc.gov.uk and clicking on the 'Latest Schools Information' section on the home page.

Your child's headteacher will inform you shortly of the imminent plans for the autumn term and/or examination results day arrangements if applicable. During the school closure period, if there are updates from the Education Directorate these will be provided via the Council website. In the meantime, I hope you have a lovely summer.

Thank you in anticipation of your continued support.

Yours sincerely,



Director of Education and Inclusion Services