



## Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

### Education and Inclusion Service Directorate

# Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance for the safe re-opening of schools VERSION 1b (11.6.20)

## 1. Introduction

This guidance outlines the proposed phased approach to all schools opening on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June, as outlined by the Education Minister Kirsty Williams, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 2020. The summer term will be extended by one week, and will cease on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July. It is also intended that the autumn half-term break will be extended to two weeks.

This guidance is intended to support the phased re-introduction of all learners back into schools on the 29<sup>th</sup> 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.

## **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.

Childcare will continue to be provided at the emergency childcare hubs until the 14.6.20. From the 15.6.20, emergency childcare weekend provision will cease and hub provision will be provided between 8:00 to 17:00 on a daily basis. Once schools have opened for education, childcare will be delivered in schools 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 4 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 29.6.20. 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.

Essential workers will continue to apply on-line for emergency childcare to assist with planning. One application only will be required for vulnerable learners and an assumption made that this will continue until the school is informed otherwise. On the 19.6.20, on-line applications will commence for emergency childcare for a two week period for the week commencing 29.6.20 and the 6.7.20. This application will cease on midnight on the 22.6.20. **Please note this is a change to allow schools to plan.** Any late applications will be redirected to the home school for consideration and to evaluate whether they deem the circumstances exceptional.



In light of the change from weekly to a two weekly application process, increased late applications are anticipated as in some sectors rotas are not provided in a timely manner. Schools must adhere to the specified opening hours for childcare outlined by the local authority, 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. The Coronavirus Childcare Assistance Scheme (C-CAS) may close to new applications at some point in July but this is yet to be confirmed by Welsh Government and the guidance will be updated to reflect WG future directives.

**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

Active travel should be encouraged where possible and parents/carers advised to access transport only if they have no other alternative. Feedback from parents/carers detailing whether they intend to send their child to school and require transport is needed to inform planning from a school and transport perspective. This should be undertaken at a school level and shared with the local authority to determine the demand for school transport, thus ensuring a more streamlined planning process. Timely information sharing will be critical.

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:**

- Schools to seek feedback from parents as to whether they are likely to require transport prior to splitting learners into cohorts for timetabling purposes.
- Ensure that strategic planning is well informed by the transport lists provided by ITU, so that any reduced capacity identified determines which year groups and learners are prioritised and timetabled for attendance.
- Send the high level outline proposal for year groups returning to your school over the next 4 weeks to ITU **by the 17.6.20** at the very latest.
- Seek ITU confirmation that proposed 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.

The present advice is that it is not necessary to screen temperatures. However, a sample of devices have been provided in hub settings to pilot usage, whilst maintaining social distance. Care should be taken to ensure that PPE is worn if devices require close contact.

## **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>

## 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.

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.

Additional cleaning hours will be commissioned on the schools behalf with all cleaning providers. Primary schools will receive an additional 6 hours per day, secondary schools will receive 12 hours and all through schools 18 hours daily. 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 sent to [schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk) by the **20<sup>th</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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).
- 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 will supply all schools with PPE.

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 will be provided for all settings prior to schools opening and examples of the signage can be seen Appendix 5.

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.

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 YouTube clip for examples of how to set out your school (**link to be provided shortly**).
- 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 Learner 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](mailto: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 provided at lunchtime for children attending school and childcare. Non-eFSM learners should bring packed lunches to school and childcare, and 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 29<sup>th</sup> 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 Gorrington 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.

<b>Cluster</b>	<b>Lead LA Officer</b>
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

### **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.

<b>Section 1: STAFF WITHIN THE SHIELDING CATEGORY</b>	
<p><b>Shielding groups (Very High Risk):</b> Any employee in shielding groups should be working from home until further announcement on shielding.</p> <p>Are you currently 'shielded'?</p> <p><b>If YES</b>, 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><b>If Yes - Please complete Section 1 on the COVID – 19 Risk Assessment Return – Employee Declaration</b></p> <p><b>If NO, continue to section 2.</b></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><a href="#">Guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable from coronavirus (COVID-19)</a></p>	

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

<p>If <b>YES</b>, 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><b>NB</b> 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><b>Please complete Section 2 on the COVID – 19 Risk Assessment Return – Employee Declaration</b>  <b>If NO, continue to section 3.</b></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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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"/>





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

### **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

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

### Assessing risk

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

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

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.**

<b>Section 2: AGREED ACTIONS - THIS WILL NEED TO BE REVIEWED MONTHLY</b>			
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](mailto: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**.

## 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"> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• Arrangements in place to supervise pupils arriving/leaving on contracted transport to ensure social distancing.</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• One parent encouraged to drop off/pick up.</li> <li>• Floor markings provided to assist with social distancing.</li> <li>• Stagger drop off/collection times for year groups.</li> <li>• Additional entrances used to reduce gatherings at peak times</li> <li>• Parents / carers instructed not to attend school if symptomatic</li> <li>• Temperature checks taken at arrival</li> <li>• Handwashing/hand sanitiser available at all entrances.</li> </ul>	



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

		<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"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Arrangements put in place to avoid mixing with other groups.</li> <li>• Unnecessary items have been removed from learning environments where there is space to store elsewhere.</li> <li>• Resources which are not easily washable, wipeable or otherwise cleaned have been removed e.g. soft toys, sand, water play etc..</li> <li>• Arrangements in place for the use of the playground, including equipment.</li> </ul> <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"> <li>• Arrangements are also in place for social distancing in staff rooms and prep rooms.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Pupil and Staff Toileting</b> – Infection control</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Times are staggered where possible and consider the increased handwashing times that have been introduced.</li> <li>• The setting has introduced a one in/one out policy.</li> <li>• Distancing for queuing has been introduced e.g. through floor markings</li> <li>• Signage is in place in each toilet to encourage adequate hand washing takes place.</li> <li>• Similar arrangements are also in place for staff toilets.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Spread of COVID - 19/Social Distancing</b> Infection Control (General)</p>	<p>All Persons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Windows and doors are open to increase ventilation (where safe to do so)</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Appropriate signage is in place throughout the setting. <a href="https://gov.wales/safety-and-physical-distancing-signs-employers-coronaviru">https://gov.wales/safety-and-physical-distancing-signs-employers-coronaviru</a></li> <li>• Arrangements are in place to manage break times including staggered times, alternative entrances, demarcation.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Staffing</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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 <b>‘Update for Chairs of Governors, Headteachers, Managers &amp; Staff – Shielding and Childcare Responsibilities’ &amp; Staff COVID19 Risk Assessment Tool.</b></li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Teaching staff have breaks from their group during the day where possible, for example, by alternating between the teacher and</li> </ul>	

		teaching assistant, avoiding new staff covering from a different grouping.	
<b>Catering/Lunchtime Arrangements – Infection control</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups of children can eat packed lunch or school meals within their own classroom setting.</li> <li>• Packed lunches are stored in the individual group classrooms rather than a central location to avoid group mixing.</li> <li>• Different groups mixing together is avoided through staggered times with several sittings and/or use of additional areas and to help reduce queues.</li> <li>• Hand gel is provided for pupils and staff to use immediately before collecting their lunch.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Additional meal collection points have been put in place to reduce queuing where necessary.</li> <li>• Alternative payment methods are being used to eliminate cash handling.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• A different entry and exit route are being used at dinner times where more than one door is available.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Pupils/Staff displaying symptoms whilst at school</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrangements in place to deal with pupil/staff who develop symptoms whilst at the setting – Follow the WG guidance</li> <li>• <a href="https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19-educational-settings-guidance">https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19-educational-settings-guidance</a></li> <li>• An isolation room is available for pupils/staff.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Cleaning/Waste Disposal</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Enhanced cleaning regime in place across the setting.</li> <li>• Adequate cleaning supplies and facilities around the school are in place.</li> <li>• A Clear desk policy in place for all pupils and staff.</li> <li>• Tissues should be placed in a separate waste bin and disposed of safely. All rubbish should be removed daily.</li> </ul> <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><b>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PPE is not required for routine class activities</li> <li>• 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 <b>RCT Schools COVID 19 PPE Guidance Matrix</b>.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Visitors</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>	



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



## 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	<b>No PPE</b> 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	<b>X – Risk Assess</b>
	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>