**Summary of the guidance for full opening of schools**

**Updated 2.7.20**

It is the government’s plan that all pupils, in all year groups, will return to school full-time from the beginning of the autumn term. This includes primary and secondary schools and school-based nurseries. There is no extra funding to reimburse any additional costs of reopening to all pupils. Schools are asked to MINIMISE THE NUMBER OF CONTACTS that a pupil has during the school day.

**1. Public health advice to minimise coronavirus risks**

Schools must review their risk assessments, incorporating the protective measures (system of controls) summarised below

1. Individuals with covid-19 or those in their household do not attend the setting
2. Wash hands more often
3. Promote catch it, bin it, kill it approach to respiratory hygiene
4. Enhanced cleaning
5. Minimise contact between groups where possible (schools must consider this and put in place measures to suit their circumstances)
6. Where necessary wear PPE – where looking after an individual displaying symptoms or in the course of usual personal care

In response to any infection:

1. Engage with NHS track and trace system
2. Manage a confirmed case amongst the setting community
3. Contain an outbreak by following local health protection team advice

The guidance contains more detailed advice on the above measures. This system of controls is the same as that in the Early Years guidance.

Schools must also give formal consideration of how to minimise contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible – which may include

* + grouping children together
  + avoiding contacts between groups
  + arranging classrooms with forward facing desks
  + staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff as much as possible

In Primary schools these groups (bubbles) are likely to be one full class in size. They should be kept apart from other groups where possible, avoid sharing of rooms and social spaces as much as possible. Older children should be encouraged to maintain distancing, however IT IS RECOGNISED THAT YOUNGER CHILDREN WILL NOT BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING, AND IT IS ACCEPTABLE FOR THEM NOT TO DISTANCE WITHIN THEIR GROUP.

The approach is not an all-or-nothing approach and it is recognised that some children may have to mix into wider groups at some times, such as for wraparound care or on school transport, but keeping children in groups even partially will still bring benefits and reduce transmission.

Staff should still try to maintain a 2 metre distance from each other and from the children, though it is recognised this is not always possible with younger children or those with SEND and smaller, class sized groups should reduce this risk. Staff should try to avoid face to face contact and minimise time spent within 1 metre of someone.

No assemblies/large gatherings

Minimise movement around the school, consider staggered breaks/lunchtimes (including time for cleaning between groups in dining hall). Minimise use of staff rooms.

Consider staggered arrival/departure times, but without decreasing teaching time.

Pupils with SEND

Support pupils to understand the changes to routines (eg with social stories).

**Supply teachers/temporary staff can move between schools. They should ensure they minimise contact and maintain as much distance as possible form other staff. Specialists, therapists, clinicians and other support staff for pupils with SEND should provide interventions as usual.**

Use of resources

For very frequently used resources, such as pencils and pens, pupils and staff should have their own items that are not shared. Classroom resources such as books and games can be shared within the bubble but should be cleaned regularly, along with frequently touched surfaces. Resources shared between classes (eg sports equipment) must be cleaned between bubble use or rotated and left for 48 hours (72 hours for plastics). Clean outdoor playground equipment frequently, and any equipment used by wraparound care providers.

Limit the resources pupils bring to school from home to that which is essential. Books can be taken home by pupils and staff but rules on hand washing, cleaning and rotation should apply to these.

**2. School Operations**

Transport

If dedicated school transport, this acts as one bubble as the children using it are consistent. No need for face coverings for children under 11 years. Pupils should use hand sanitiser on boarding and disembarking, be grouped if possible in their class groups, extras cleaning of vehicles, distancing when queuing and within vehicles if possible.

There is different guidance for the use of public transport.

Attendance

All pupils are expected to attend unless they have symptoms of Covid-19, have had a positive test or have had contact with someone who has. These pupils should be immediately offered remote education and schools should monitor engagement with this. Previous shielding advice is paused from 1st August(subject to a continued decline in cases) and all pupils and staff who have been shielding, or live with someone who was, can return to school. If there is a local rise in cases families from that area only may be advised to shield and may be temporarily absent.

It is recommended that schools discuss parental concerns over returning to schools and provide reassurance over protective measures being put in place, but be clear that children of statutory school age must be in school unless there is a statutory reason not to (sickness etc). Schools and LAs and other professionals are asked to promote this expectation and plan to re-engage reluctant returners, including vulnerable children and those that didn’t engage during lockdown.

Workforce

Most staff are expected to return to the workplace, including those clinically vulnerable or pregnant, providing schools are applying this guidance and staff take particular care. Schools should try to accommodate additional measures where appropriate. Further guidance is available. Extra mental health support is also available.

Recruitment can continue, as can the use of supply staff (with certain recommendations) and trainee teachers.

Safeguarding

Designated safeguarding leads should be provided with extra time in the first few weeks to support staff and children regarding any new safeguarding concerns.

Other

School kitchens should be fully open and food provided. All classrooms should have ventilation (opening windows). Residential school trips and overseas trips still not allowed but non-residential trips are allowed, providing wider advice on indoor and outdoor venues is followed. Uniform should be worn and need not be washed more than usual.

After-school activities

Schools can resume breakfast and after-school provision, including where multiple providers or childminders are used. Schools should carefully consider how they can make such provision work, alongside their wider protective measures, including keeping children in their year group bubbles where possible, or keeping small consistent bubbles. There is additional guidance on protective measures for out-of-school settings.

**3. Curriculum, behaviour and pastoral support**

Key expectations **–**

* Teach an ambitious and broad curriculum but be flexible to create time to cover the most important missed content
* Aim to return to normal curriculum by summer term 2021
* Plan based on the needs of the children
* Develop remote education so that it is integrated into the curriculum planning
* **For EYFS – in nursery settings teachers should focus on the prime areas, in Reception classes teachers should also address gaps in language, early reading and mathematics, particularly ensuring children’s acquisition of phonic knowledge and extending their vocabulary. Consider how all groups of children can be given equal opportunities for outdoor learning.**

Settings should follow updates to the EYFS disapplication guidance.

* Singing – increases risk. Pupils should be spaced out and sit side by side or back to back, with good ventilation, or outdoors.
* PE is expected to be taught but outdoors is recommended where possible because of the way people breathe when exercising, although large indoor spaces can be used if necessary whilst maximising distancing. No contact sports.

There is a one-off catch up grant for all schools, which head teachers can decide how to spend, to support pupils make up for lost learning. The Education Endowment Foundation has published guidance of effective interventions. It is strongly encouraged that some of this is spent on supporting pupils with complex needs.

There will also be a National Tutoring programme rolled out for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.

Pupil and staff wellbeing and support

The DfE will be offering a variety of resources and training for school staff to support pupils with emotional wellbeing, including webinars, training resources and a community of practice. Some are specific to supporting children with SEND. The guidance contains links to these. There are also resources to support staff wellbeing, including a staff resilience hub.

Schools should consider their provision of pastoral care to support children to rebuild friendships and social engagement, equip pupils to respond to issues linked to covid-19 and support them with approaches to improve their physical and mental wellbeing. School nurses can also support with this, via the Healthy Child Programme.

Behaviour

Schools should work with parents and pupils to ensure they understand any new behaviour expectations/rules. They should also recognise the experiences of the children during lockdown and that these may affect behaviour upon return, and work with a range of professionals to support these children.

**4 Assessment and accountability**

Inspections

These will remain suspended during the autumn term, however inspectors will visit a sample of schools to discuss how they are managing the return. These discussions will not result in a judgement but a brief letter will be published after the visit. Results from these visits will be collated nationally to share learning with the sector and the public. Inspections in response to significant concerns will continue. Routine inspections are expected to restart from January 2021, but this will be kept under review.

Primary assessment

The EYFS profile will return in the 2020/21 academic year, as will all statutory KS1 & 2 assessments.

The statutory rollout of the Reception baseline assessment has been postponed until September 2021, but schools can sign up to be an early adopter for the 2020/21 year.

Performance tables for schools are suspended for the 2019/20 academic year.

**5. Contingency plans for outbreaks**

Schools should develop a contingency plan in case they are required to close due to a local outbreak. This may involve a return to reopening only to children of critical workers and vulnerable children. Schools should be able to offer immediate access to a programme of remote education. This may also be needed if an individual or class needs to self-isolate. This should include quality online and offline resources. Online resources should allow feedback and there should be printed materials for children who do not have online access. For younger pupils who will need adult support schools should work with families to deliver a broad and ambitious curriculum. There is further guidance within the document about the expectations for this remote learning and a selection of recommended packages plus information on access to I.T. equipment for disadvantaged children. More guidance on remote learning will be published in the autumn.

**Appendix – this contains further guidance about health and safety risk assessments.**