



RETURN TO SCHOOL PROTOCOLS

AUGUST 2020

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1. In order to promote a safe and healthy school environment it is crucial that we all continue to:

- Practice social distancing as much as we can
- Wash our hands thoroughly during the school day
- 'Catch it. Kill it, Bin it' or use our elbow, when we cough or sneeze

2. Social distancing in line with Government guidance will be observed as much as possible:

- Adult to adult – 2m
- Adult to student - 2m
- Student to student - 1m where possible
- Students in Years 8-10 will remain in a class 'bubble'. Students in other year groups will be in year 'bubbles'.
- We will restrict the number of adults in specific rooms – office, staffroom
- A one-way system will operate in the building
- There will be staggered starts and ends to the school day
- Break and lunchtimes will be split
- Students will be encouraged to go outside at break and lunchtimes unless it is wet
- There will be no indoor clubs before, during or after school until further notice

3. Face Coverings

[Public Health guidance](#) recommends that face coverings are used in particular circumstances - short periods in enclosed spaces where social distancing is not possible.

- It is mandatory for all students aged 13 and over to wear a face covering on public transport. It is also strongly recommended that all students, regardless of age, should wear a face covering on all buses, trains or taxis for the journey to school where it is appropriate for them to do so and they are able to handle them as directed
- Where practicable coverings must be worn in staff rooms and during adult to adult meetings lasting more than 15 minutes and by adults visiting the school site
- Face coverings are strongly encouraged for activities that entail large numbers of staff or students within an enclosed area where social distancing is not possible
- Staff and students may wish to use them during the routine school day and this is acceptable.
- Please be aware that some persons (including children) are exempt from wearing face coverings
- Further information on face coverings can be found [here](#)
- VIsors can be available for staff should they wish

4. Classrooms

- Unnecessary items should be removed from classrooms
- Floor markings are in place to indicate a 2m distance from the teacher's desk
- Student desks will face forwards as far as is practicable
- All classrooms will have a supply of hygiene products

- The opening of doors and windows is encouraged to increase natural ventilation and also reduce contact with door handles
- Students should provide their own learning materials – details have been previously circulated to parents / guardians
- Staff and students will 'clean and go' at the end of a lesson as appropriate
- Staff and students should avoid the sharing of books / resources in line with teaching and learning guidance

5. Good Hand Hygiene

- Staff and students are expected to use the hand sanitiser stations at each entrance to the school building
- Students will be reminded orally and visually about the need to wash hands thoroughly and regularly
- Hand sanitisers are available in all classrooms for use at the start and end of lessons
- As far as is practicable students should wash their hands on arrival to school and frequently during the school day
- Students should bring their own hand sanitiser to school
- Staff and students should avoid touching their faces including their mouth, nose and eyes. A tissue or elbow must be used to cough or sneeze and use the bin

6. School Office

- In order to maintain social distancing of 2m between adults no more than **FOUR** members of staff, including Office Staff, can be in the office at once
- Please observe the markings on the floor
- Only ONE staff member can be in the Photocopy Room at a time

7. Staffrooms and Work Areas

- Staff must adhere to the designated staff rooms and work areas
- All staff are expected to bring their own cutlery and crockery and take responsibility for washing and storing it

8. Visitors to School

- As far as possible deliveries will be restricted to outside school hours
- Visitor access will be strictly limited and by appointment only
- All visitors must report to reception, sanitise their hands, sign in and give contact details for 'test and trace' purposes
- All visitors will be expected to maintain social distancing and use a face covering

9. Student Attendance

Any student who has symptoms of Coronavirus or a positive test result will need to remain at home for at least 10 days.

Where an individual has had a negative result, it is important to still apply caution. If everyone with symptoms who was tested in their household receives a negative result, the student can return to

work providing they are well enough and have not had a fever for 48 hours. The school will follow the latest guidance on attendance for children and young people who have health conditions or who live with individuals who have health conditions or are pregnant. Current guidance on these categories is published on NI Direct and by PHA [here](#).

Where medical guidance would be to refrain from school, evidence should be provided to the school that the student is shielding due to underlying medical conditions. If this is not possible then an unauthorised absence should be recorded.

Students who are Clinically Vulnerable

Students who are clinically vulnerable are those with pre-existing conditions who have been advised to stringently follow the social distancing guidelines and should learn from home where possible. A small minority of pupils will fall into this category and parents should seek guidance from a Hospital Consultant or GP.

Students Who Were Shielding (clinically extremely vulnerable people)

Parents should follow the guidance of the relevant hospital consultant or GP if in doubt about school attendance.

It may be necessary to consider the distance learning and support the needs of any students who are unable to return to school either all or some of the time.

The most up-to-date guidance and list of underlying health conditions that necessitate shielding should be checked on the NI Direct website under the [shielding section](#).

Students Who Live with Someone Who is Clinically Vulnerable

If a student lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable as above), including those who are pregnant, they can attend school. If in doubt, advice should be sought from the Hospital Consultant or GP of the clinically vulnerable person.

Students Who Are Living with Someone Who Was Shielding

Students who have household members who were considered clinically extremely vulnerable (at high risk of severe illness and requiring 'shielding'). These restrictions eased over time and from 1 August 2020 'shielding' has been paused. Such students should have an individual risk assessment conducted before returning to school.

10. People who Develops Symptoms on Site

If anyone develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at school with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature/fever or anosmia (a loss or a change in your normal sense of smell, which can also affect your sense of taste) the procedures set out below should be followed:

- They and any members of their household within that school setting must be sent home and advised to follow the PHA guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection. School

will keep a full record of such actions and in the case of a student request a Parent / Carer / Guardian record their acknowledgement of this action

- Where necessary the class teacher will phone the office to contact home for a student to be collected. The student will then be escorted to the Parent Room
- A student awaiting collection should be moved, if possible, to the Parent Room where they can be isolated behind a closed door. Appropriate adult supervision must be provided. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to fully isolate the child, they should be moved to an area which is at least 2m away from other people. A risk assessment should be undertaken by the school to address this. Schools should fully document this process to ensure a record is held of who made the decision, who was contacted, who provided supervision and who picked up the student.
- If the student needs to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected before being used by anyone else.
- PPE should be worn by staff caring for the student while they await collection if direct personal care is needed and a distance of 2m cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).
- If the student is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk, call 999. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.
- Enhanced cleaning should be carried out within any classroom in which an individual who has developed COVID-19 has been to minimise risk of the spread of the virus.
- If a member of staff (who was wearing the appropriate PPE and adhering to the social distancing guidelines) has helped someone with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature or loss of taste/smell, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who has developed symptoms. Cleaning the affected area with available cleaning products, followed by disinfection after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

11. Test, Trace and Protect

Students and staff who exhibit any symptoms associated with COVID-19 should not attend school. The N.I. Executive has rolled out a Test and Trace and Protect strategy designed to control the spread of COVID-19 and symptomatic staff are expected to follow the advice and obtain a test for COVID-19. Where an individual has had a negative result, it is important to still apply caution. If everyone with symptoms who was tested in their household receives a negative result, the pupil or member of staff can return to work providing they are well enough and have not had a fever for 48 hours.

Anyone who tests positive will be contacted by the Contact Tracing Service in the Public Health Agency, and will need to share information about their recent interactions. This could include household members, people with whom you have been in direct contact, or been within 2 metres for more than 15 minutes. Passing in corridors and short periods of contact does not therefore present a significant risk to staff or students. All household members should follow PHA isolation guidance which currently requires everyone in the house to stay at home. Isolation guidance will then be provided that is context specific and may result in friendship groups, regular contacts and potentially an entire class or 'bubble' being instructed to self-isolate at home.

The guidance is as follows:

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

Enhanced cleaning should be carried out within any classroom in which an individual who has developed COVID-19 has been to minimise risk of the spread of the virus. This should be clearly communicated to staff, parents and students to provide assurance that the environment is safe.

Students or members of staff can return to school when they have completed the necessary period of isolation as advised by the Test, Trace and Protect service. This will help contain any potential transmission to those staff/students and will also assist in protecting the wider community.[COVID-19: Information for the public.](#)

12. End of the School Day

All students will be instructed on the procedures for dismissal and leaving the school building at the end of the day. Relevant procedures will be in place to optimise social distancing and manage those using the designated school buses.

All staff are advised that they should not congregate in any area at the end of the day and should exit the building in a 'staggered' way.