**Contingency Planning – September 2020**

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|  | Benefits/Risks with regard to  C-19 | Practical implications and potential resolutions | | Thoughts, concerns, queries and notes |
| The overarching principle to apply **is reducing the number of contacts between children and staff.** This can be achieved through keeping groups separate (in ‘bubbles’) and through maintaining distance between individuals. These are not alternative options and both measures will help, but the balance between them will change depending on:   * children’s ability to distance * the lay out of the school * the feasibility of keeping distinct groups separate while offering a broad curriculum (especially at secondary)   It is likely that for younger children the emphasis will be on separating groups, and for older children it will be on distancing. For children old enough, they should also be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff where possible.  For children old enough, they should also be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff and their peers where possible. This will not be possible for the youngest children and some children with complex needs and it is not feasible in some schools where space does not allow. Schools doing this where they can, and even doing this some of the time, will help.  When staff or children cannot maintain distancing, particularly with younger children in primary schools, the risk can also be reduced by keeping pupils in the smaller, class-sized groups described above. | * Reducing risks by use of ‘bubbles’ , separating groups and maintaining social distance * Risk to children of severe illness is low * Easier for secondary pupils to remain apart – as long as the classrooms have sufficient space * Recognises that maintaining distance for younger children and some pupils with complex needs is not feasible | * Classes need to be kept apart on the playground/lunch/breaks/cloakrooms/   moving between classes   * Staff can move between groups, but to maintain social distance wherever possible * Timetable management will be key * Use of outdoor space if possible * Use of halls and performance areas for class groups * Separate timetables (start and finish times, lunch and breaks) for each year group to ensure that there is no mixing on site * Secondary – teachers to move to classes, rather than student moving around the school | | * Not set distance outlined for pupils – just ‘maintaining distance’ for those who can * Transport implications of staggered start times * It is still important to reduce contact between people as much as possible, by ensure children and young people only mix in a small, consistent groups and that small group stay an adequate distance from other people and other groups within the school environment * Where possible all spaces should also be well ventilated using natural ventilation (opening windows) or ventilation units. |
| It is strong public health advice that staff in secondary schools maintain distance from their pupils, staying at the front of the class, and away from their colleagues where possible.  **Ideally, adults should maintain 2 metre distance from each other, and from children.** We know that this is not always possible, particularly when working with younger children, but if adults can do this when circumstances allow that will help. In particular, they should avoid close face to face contact and **minimise time spent within 1 metre of anyone.**  Similarly, it will not be possible when working with many pupils who have complex needs or who need close contact care. These pupils’ educational and care support should be provided as normal. | * In addition to good hand hygiene and other primary measures. * Adults are at more risk from COVID-19 that young age groups, hence the need for them to maintain the 2m social distance and good hand hygiene * Limits time spent within 1m, but this is still possible for short periods * Guidance recognises that this will not be possible within early years and special schools/PRUs * Difficult to maintain within KS1 * 2m distance will mean teachers will have to talk loudly throughout the lesson, whereas guidance on social distancing states: *Avoid loud talking or singing with others* | * Careful consideration needs to be made to times when pupils are moving around the school & in and out of classrooms – to ensure that this 2m distance from staff can be maintained * Limits interaction with the pupils/student – to detriment of established teaching methods * Limits practical/hands on activities where support from teacher/TA may be required * First aid/nappy changing/behaviour management will require close contact – this is recognised * Increase in peer to peer support/self-evaluation (EEF guidance) * BC advice for special schools/early years | |  |
| Public Health England is clear that **routinely taking the temperature of pupils is not recommended** as this is an unreliable method for identifying coronavirus (COVID-19). | * Temperature is one of three possible symptoms, only one of which needs to be present for a pupil to be sent home, so although the presence of a fever is useful information the absence one is not. | * Schools may wish to continue doing this. * There are resource implications (both time and money), but Public Health don’t see any reason to advise against it – precautions like this (even if not very effective) can help to reduce anxiety. | |  |
| Schools must ensure **they understand the NHS Test and Trace** process and how to contact their local [Public Health England health protection team](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/contacts-phe-health-protection-teams). Schools must ensure that staff members and parents/carers understand that they will need to be ready and willing to:   * [book a test](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested) if they are displaying symptoms. Staff and pupils must not come into the school if they have symptoms, and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in school. All children can be tested, including children under 5, but children aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit * provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test & Trace * [self-isolate](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection) if they have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19 | * With a bubble system in place it should rarely be necessary to close a whole school, because the possible in-school contacts of any potential case are limited. * However, the planned removal of small bubbles/groups in September increases the likelihood that any school outbreaks will cause severe disruption to the education of large numbers of children because of the larger number of potential contacts. | It is important that schools consider record keeping and how this is managed in the case of a positive test and associated requests from public health | |  |
| Public Health England **does not (based on current evidence) recommend the use of face coverings in schools.** This evidence will be kept under review.  They are not required in schools as pupils and staff are mixing in consistent groups, and because misuse may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission. There may also be negative effects on communication and thus education.  Face coverings are required at all times on public transport (for children, over the age of 11) or when attending a hospital as a visitor or outpatient. | * This is consistent with current guidance and practical – face coverings protect others, not the wearer. * The teacher is the person most at risk and also the only person who can be relied upon to wear a face covering properly in most school settings. | * Not needed as pupils and staff are mixing in consistent groups, and misuse may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission | | * Social distancing is known to be an effective way to interrupt potential transmission, although it also potentially interferes with teaching and learning. * However, masks can also be scary for young children, so maintaining social distancing (between the teacher and the students) is probably more practical. |
| Schools should make s**mall adaptations to the classroom** to support distancing where possible, they should include **seating pupils side by side and facing forwar**d, move unnecessary furniture out. | * Meets the requirements from government review of the social distancing guidance which state: If it is not possible to keep 2m distance, reduce the risk to yourself and others at 1m by taking suitable precautions: * *Sit / stand side by side or behind other people, rather than facing them* * *Keep interactions brief* * *Increase ventilation* | * Current furniture may not be suitable for forward facing desks (esp. early years/KS1) – ‘where possible’ in guidance recognises that this may not always be possible’ * Not sustainable in special schools * Number and availability of sinks for handwashing – strict usage and cleaning rota needed * The size/shape of the available classrooms may limit the usage of all forward facing tables * Limits peer to peer discussion * Alternative methods of group engagement/discussion will need to be developed * Specific guidance for early years and special schools * Additional resource may be needed to reduce sharing * Detailed timetabling of use of cloakrooms | | * Where possible all spaces should also be well ventilated using natural ventilation (opening windows) or ventilation units. * Guidance states schools might move unnecessary furniture out of classrooms to make more space |
| Based on the advice from the health protection team, **schools must send home those people who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive**, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person when they were infectious. Close contact means:   * direct close contacts - face to face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin) * proximity contacts - extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual * travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person   The health protection team will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home. To support them in doing so, we recommend schools **keep a record of pupils and staff in each group, and any close contact that takes places between children and staff in different groups** (see [section 5 of system of control](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools#five) for more on grouping pupils). This should be a **proportionate recording process.** Schools do not need to ask pupils to record everyone they have spent time with each day or ask staff to keep definitive records in a way that is overly burdensome. | * will enable efficient test and tracing should there be a positive test result within the school * Families with a history of poor attendance are often risk adverse and might use C-19 to reinforce their position. | * schools must decide what is **proportionate** recording based on their own risk assessments * schools must set up an efficient and effective process for staff to record proximity contacts * schools should identify circumstances when proximity contact is more likely and make staff aware (e.g. first aid, changing children in early years, physical behaviour management) | |  |
| We are asking schools to prepare for **all pupils to return full time from the start of the autumn term**, including those in school-based nurseries. Schools should not put in place rotas.  We know that travel to school patterns differ greatly between schools. If those patterns allow, schools should consider staggered starts or adjusting start and finish times to keep groups apart as they arrive and leave school. Staggered start and finish times should not reduce the amount of overall teaching time. A staggered start may, for example, include condensing / staggering free periods or break time but retaining the same amount of teaching time, or keeping the length of the day the same but starting and finishing later to avoid rush hour. | * The requirement for social distancing in Primary will cease * The biggest problem with this requirement is that it is probably impacted upon and contradicted by other requirements in the same and other Government documentation. | * The ‘bottom line’ seems to be that school won’t be able to claim they have to limit the number of pupils in school from 1/9/2020 because of the way they organise staffing, classrooms, the curriculum, break times, etc. * However this is almost bound to be contradicted because of the changing landscape of C-19 by September 2020 and because of particular local circumstances | | * However the intention seems to be to make it clear that the priority is the return of all/as many pupils to full time schooling in Sept local  operational plans regarding staffing or other operational plans intentionally (deliberately or coincidently) to limit when all pupils return or for how long pupils return because they would require extra (often non available) space to implement |
| We are asking schools and local authorities to:   * **communicate clear and consistent expectations around school attendance to families** (and any other professionals who work with the family where appropriate) throughout the summer ahead of the new school year * **identify pupils who are reluctant or anxious about returning** or who are at risk of disengagement and develop plans for re-engaging them. This should include disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people, especially those who were persistently absent prior to the pandemic or who have not engaged with school regularly during the pandemic * use the additional catch-up funding schools will receive, as well as existing pastoral and support services, attendance staff and resources and schools’ pupil premium **funding to put measures in place for those families who will need additional support to secure pupils’ regular attendance** * **work closely with other professionals** as appropriate to support the return to school, including continuing to notify the child’s social worker, if they have one, of non-attendance | * Schools should inform families via their normal communication methods. | * Schools to start their irregular attendance procedures immediately schools return in September with amended template letters to reflect C-19 supplied by BC. * Use data to identify those at risk and undertake enhanced engagement activities * We will produce guidance for schools to ensure only appropriate referrals for PNs are issued | | * VT has asked our legal team for their views to ensure we are compliant. * The Government have said they be issuing new guidance on attendance codes shortly |
| This means from that point, **the usual rules on school attendance will apply**, including:   * parents’ duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age; * schools’ responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence * the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities’ codes of conduct | * We have a well embedded system for schools to refer to the LA for the issuing of PNs (Fines). | * We will produce guidance for schools to ensure only appropriate referrals for PNs are issued | * VT has asked our legal team for their views to ensure we are compliant. * The Government have said they be issuing new guidance on attendance codes shortly | | |

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| The key principles that underpin our advice on curriculum planning INCLUDE:  **Remote education, where needed, is high quality and aligns as closely as possible with in-school provision:** schools and other settings continue to build their capability to educate pupils remotely, where this is needed.  Remote education may need to be an essential component in the delivery of the school curriculum for some pupils, alongside classroom teaching, or in the case of a local lockdown. DfE has also published a range of resources, including [case studies to support remote education](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/case-studies-remote-education-practice-for-schools-during-coronavirus-covid-19) and help address staff workload, this includes case studies on managing wellbeing.  **All schools are therefore expected to plan to ensure any pupils educated at home for some of the time are given the support they need to master the curriculum and so make good progress**. Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, we expect schools to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education. Schools should monitor engagement with this activity  Relationships and health education (RHE) for primary aged pupil schools and relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) for secondary aged pupils becomes compulsory from September 2020, and schools are **expected to start teaching by at least the start of the summer term 2021**.  DfE has also published the first of the relationship, sex and health education training modules for teachers to support them in preparation to deliver content on mental health and wellbeing. The training module on [teaching about mental wellbeing](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-mental-wellbeing), which has been developed with clinical experts and schools, will improve teacher confidence in talking and teaching about mental health and wellbeing in the classroom. It was published early given the importance of supporting pupils’ mental health and wellbeing at this time. | GM | * Would reduce numbers and could, by inviting fewer children into the school, mitigate risk * Would offer those students unable to return to school for health or other reasons the chance to access the curriculum * Would continue to deny certain students access to face-to-face live teaching/social opportunities of normal school day * Would continue the disruption of delivery of the curriculum and impact on examination years * Pupils denied access to the wider curriculum * Pupils progress in foundation subjects is hindered * This is contrary to the focus of the new Ofsted framework * Pupils’ enjoyment and engagement with learning just core subjects could disengage some pupils | * Decision making criteria to identify which parts of the school would be put into lockdown e.g. which year groups? Who decides? * Temporary return: timeframe? * Remote teaching – some schools have been using this technique already e.g. Amersham; however, some other schools have not been live-streaming any classes on platforms such as Google Classroom as they do not have the IT infrastructure to undertake this * Quality control mechanism for monitoring to ensure ‘high quality’ remote teaching is variable across the schools * What are the criteria for ‘high quality’ remote teaching – what guidelines can we share with schools/best practice models? Independent school model? * Are these dependent upon the IT infrastructure of the individual schools? * What are the school’s own/LA mechanism/s for assessing the quality of remote delivery in the schools? * Most effective practice subject/Key Stage/topic etc. remote lessons could be shared across twinned or cluster secondary schools? KS3 more straightforward; KS4 and 5 potentially dependent on examination board selected | * How are hot-spots identified and how will LAs and then schools be made aware? * Notice period of the mandate for all or some of the school to be placed into lockdown and timeframe needed to action this * Alert to area-leads (e.g. Bucks/specific locations in Bucks) of the decision e.g. Leicester critical incident management of current second-wave | |
| **The vast majority of pupils in year 10 and 11 are expected to continue to study their examination subjects**. This will support them towards their preferred route to further study.  In **exceptional circumstances**, it may be in the best interests of a year 11 pupil to discontinue an examined subject because the school judges that, for example, they would achieve significantly better in their remaining subjects as a result, especially in GCSE English and mathematics.  School leaders are expected to make such decisions in discussion with pupils and parents and informed by ongoing assessment of a pupil’s progress and wellbeing, using the existing discretion that schools already apply on these matters. | GM | * Reduction of student experience for individual and narrowing of the curriculum – contrary to Ofsted’s latest benchmark for good provision * How will these students be identified? * A number of students denied the benefit of the wider curriculum * Life choices for those students would be drastically reduced e.g. MFL deficit; reduction in A level or BTech choice ahead; limits access to Tertiary Education options * Those students may receive timetable diet that is too dense, not creative/reducing opportunities for lowering cortisol levels; detrimental to wellbeing, social and emotional health of the child * Not appealing to individual students; removal of their autonomous selection of subjects could reduce motivation | * Not in line with Ofsted and DfE commitment to the broad curriculum (not narrowed post-Covid 19) for all students * Need to be clear which students to be selected and have clear rationale that is shared with student and parents plus staff * Ensure that there is capacity in teaching staff/on timetable to manage more teaching in narrower set of subjects | * How will grades be contextualised for future educational settings/workplaces? | |
| Up to and including key stage 3**, prioritisation within subjects of the most important components for progression is likely to be more effective than removing subjects, which pupils may struggle to pick up again later.**  In particular, schools may consider how all subjects can contribute to the filling of gaps in core knowledge, for example through an emphasis on reading  For pupils in key stage 3, **the curriculum should also remain broad** from year 7 to year 9 so that the majority of pupils are taught a full range of subjects over the year, including sciences, languages, humanities, the arts, PE/sport, RE and RSHE. For pupils in year 7, it may be necessary to address gaps in English and maths by teaching essential knowledge and skills from the key stage 2 curriculum. | GM | * A good plan to use the KS2 Year 6 syllabus as a launch-pad anyway for future learning; not a terrible suggestion! Many good Year 7 English and Maths schemes of work address the breadth of experiences and abilities of a wide range of students incoming from often circa 80 different primary feeders… * Risk – movement of primary teachers between primary and secondary settings to support (see first point below); mixing physical educational settings and increasing transmission risk * Long-term impact on students playing catch-up throughout KS3 and then 4 for the subjects of Maths and English   . | * Secondary school English/Maths subject specialists not familiar or experienced in Year 6 (end of KS2) expectations * Research best practice in 7-up Launchpad curricular in secondary schools….potential to share most effective practice, upskill secondary subject specialists over the summer (?? ) to deliver this * Ideologically, similar concern to above, where the curriculum is being narrowed, if additional timetabled lessons are devoted to core-subject catch-up work * Benchmark testing would be needed at the start of the academic year to identify gaps and deficit areas to inform the curricular planning to shore-up missed learning the previous academic year (March-July 2020) |  | |
| **School workforce**  Following the reduction in the prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) and relaxation of shielding measures from 1 August, we expect that most staff will attend school.  It remains the case that wider government policy advises those who can work from home to do so. We recognise this will not be applicable to most school staff, but where a role may be conducive to home working for example, some administrative roles, school leaders should consider what is feasible and appropriate. | GD |  | **Note requirements about quarantine:**  Many staff will want to take a holiday over the summer period, which may involve travelling abroad. The government has set a requirement for people returning from some countries to quarantine for 14 days on their return. The latest guidance on quarantine can be accessed at [coronavirus (COVID-19): how to self-isolate when you travel to the UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate-when-you-travel-to-the-uk/coronavirus-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate-when-you-travel-to-the-uk).  As would usually be the case, staff will need to be available to work in school from the start of the autumn term. We recommend that school leaders discuss leave arrangements with staff before the end of the summer term to inform planning for the autumn term. | * It should be recognised that many staff who are in either the high risk or extremely vulnerable categories (or who have family members who are) will have significant anxiety about returning to work. Workforce issues for schools are therefore likely to continue in September. Further detail on this will follow. |
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| **Safeguarding**  Schools should consider revising their child protection policy (led by their Designated Safeguarding Lead) to reflect the return of more pupils. Schools must have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, keeping children safe in education and should refer to the coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers guidance.  Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) should be provided with more time, especially in the first few weeks of term, to help them provide support to staff and children regarding any new safeguarding and welfare concerns and the handling of referrals to children’s social care and other agencies where these are appropriate, and agencies and services should prepare to work together to actively look for signs of harm. | GD |  | Communication with school nurses is important for safeguarding and supporting wellbeing, as they have continued virtual support to pupils who have not been in school. |  |
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* Children and young people must wash their hands immediately on arrival at school or college, dispose of any temporary face coverings they may have been wearing in a covered bin, or place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag they can take home with them, and then wash their hands again before heading to their classroom
* There may need to be changes to some subjects - such as PE and music - to ensure they can be delivered as safely as possible
* Schools should also plan how shared staff spaces are set up and used to help staff to distance from each other. Use of staff rooms should be minimised, although staff must still have a break of a reasonable length during the day.
* Re-do risk assessments
* Schools should consider how to manage other visitors to the site, such as contractors, and ensure site guidance on physical distancing and hygiene is explained to visitors on or before arrival.
* Where a child routinely attends more than one setting on a part time basis, for example because they are dual registered at a mainstream school and an alternative provision setting or special school, schools should work through the system of controls collaboratively, enabling them to address any risks identified and allowing them to jointly deliver a broad and balanced curriculum for the child.
* For individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pencils and pens, it is recommended that staff and pupils have their own items that are not shared. Classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the bubble; these should be cleaned regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces. Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, such as sports, art and science equipment should be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between bubbles, or rotated to allow them to be left unused and out of reach for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different bubbles.
* Outdoor playground equipment should be more frequently cleaned
* Schools should ensure that appropriate support is made available for pupils with SEND, for example by deploying teaching assistants and enabling specialist staff from both within and outside the school to work with pupils in different classes or year groups.