**FAQs for Primary Schools**

**Please note that updates since the 8.6.20 issue have been highlighted in blue**

1. **Where classrooms in schools are small can groups be smaller than 15?**

The maximum group size is 15. DfE guidance asks that schools calculate how many children can be accommodated in temporary teaching groups and this is dependent upon the size of the classrooms and the layout of the school.

1. **Will teachers get PPA**?

PPA is a contractual entitlement so teachers should be given PPA time

1. **Can schools close for example on a Friday afternoon to cover everyone’s PPA?**

Schools are being asked to welcome back eligible pupils full-time. Heads and governing boards will make local decisions in consultation with staff and parents about the organisation of teaching during the recovery period.

1. **Caterlink FAQS**

**Do Caterlink require Sneeze screens?**

No these are not required – please see details of how food will be served below

**How will the pupils receive their packed lunches?**

The packed lunches will be prepared off site and transported by Caterlink into school.  If appropriate these will be dropped off at the service point or school reception. Pleasediscuss with Caterlink if there is a preferred location for future deliveries when you see them on Monday

**How will food be served to the pupils?**

This will vary depending on where the children are eating**:**

* **Classrooms –** *The packed lunches will be placed on a trolley and left in the classroom for the children to help themselves to or be given out by members of school staff as appropriate*
* **Dining Rooms –** *Packed lunches will be placed on a table/trolley for collection*
* **Dining Room –** *Hot meals  will be plated and left ready on a trolley/table for pupils to help themselves to*

**How will I know who to order my packed lunches from?:**

Caterlink will be contacting you directly with contact details before the end of half term

**Should I put my meals onto Parent Pay?**

Yes please put all meals on parent pay, (FSM, UISFM, and Paid) as you would normally. Hampers are still being recorded centrally

**Can we still order hampers for our Free school meal children who remain at home?**

Yes

**What if my FSM child is only coming in a few times a week, can they have a hamper and a free packed lunch at school?**

No. If your FSM is only coming in part time it would be best to offer the hamper choice and ask their parents to make their packed lunch themselves using it’s contents

1. **Can schools refuse to reopen in the way the Government wants? What are our rights on this?**

The government has confirmed that it is asking providers to open on 1 June (assuming scientific advice confirms it is safe to do so), but it is not a requirement.

Schools are being asked to prepare for wider opening on the assumption that eligible year groups can return to schools from 1 June at the earliest. Whilst there is an ongoing national debate around the safety of children and staff with a wider return to school, schools should continue to plan for reopening at the earliest opportunity from 1 June.

1. **When do I need Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), what PPE do I need and how do I use it safely?**

Most staff in education, childcare and children’s services will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain distance of 2 metres from others.

PPE is only needed in a small number of cases:

* children, young people and learners 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, young person or other learner becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus (new continuous cough OR fever OR loss/change to sense of smell or taste) while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home. A fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult 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.

In non-residential settings, any child, young person or other learner who starts displaying coronavirus symptoms while at their setting should, wherever possible, be collected by a member of their family or household. In exceptional circumstances, where this is not possible, and the setting needs to take responsibility for transporting them home, or where a symptomatic child or young person needs to be transported between residential settings, you should do one of the following:

* use a vehicle with a bulkhead
* the driver and passenger should maintain a distance of 2 metres from each other
* the driver should use PPE, and the passenger should wear a face mask if they are old enough and able to do so

The Infection Control and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for COVID-19, Guidance for non-Health Care settings v2 booklet provides a clear table which outlines the PPE required in each setting.  Row l to p relate to education settings (pages 12 and 13) and rows r-t on page 14 cover cleaning of infected areas and transporting children.

To minimise the risk of infection it is important that PPE is put on (donning) and taken off (doffing) correctly and that it is disposed of carefully.  Guidance on donning and doffing is on page 19 and is supported by a video which can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-use-for-non-aerosol-generating-procedures>.

Information on disposal can be found on page 2.  The guidance also provides helpful background information as well as best practice handwashing and PPE specifications.  We encourage you to familiarise yourself with this information and will continue to update it as necessary.

Members of staff that have been supervising a child or young person with symptoms of COVID in a school or early years setting can return to work once the child/young person has been collected. They should not need to change their clothes if the guidance described here has been followed, unless the clothes have been obviously soiled for example with vomit.

1. **NEU - Our strong advice is that, on this basis, you should currently not engage with any planning based on a wider reopening of schools. If your head asks you if you will be available for wider working after 1 June, we urge you to reply that you are waiting further advice from your union. What is the LA’s response to this?**

The local authority is in the process of formulating a response to this as the national picture develops.

1. **In the same way as we are considering Y6 children spending some time in their new secondary school as part of the phased re-opening, could we contemplate doing the same for our Y2 children in Infant schools (i.e. spend some time in Y3 of the Junior school?).**

The DfE will be issuing more guidance for infant schools. This is likely to be a local decision between infant and junior school. Infant and primary schools are asked to plan for YR, Y1 and Y6 and not for other year groups.

1. **If secondary schools do have Y6s on site for a period of time, please can we ensure that there is a co-ordinated County wide approach to this? It would potentially allow primary schools to phase more year groups back in.**

Secondary heads are proposing to work together on an approach to Y6 transition. It has been suggested that new intake pupils are hosted for induction during the week beginning 6 July.

1. **We have an open plan nursery and reception class unit with one set of toilets at the end of the setting. We could partition the room in half (quite easily) but this would leave no access to toilets for the nursery children. Do we as a primary school with a nursery, prioritise YR over our nursery children?**

The guidance states that Nursery and Reception should be prioritised over other year groups but it does not state whether Nursery should be prioritised over Reception or vice versa.

On this basis, Reception should be relocated to another area of your setting, with access to toilets exclusively for their use, with the Nursery children remaining in their existing unit.

1. **If schools are to re-open, albeit in a phased manner, can they start having lettings again after school to companies providing classes to a variety of children?**

This depends on whether the lettings can reopen based on the current guidelines and then with social distancing measures in place.

If the lettings are for wrap around care of which the school is the employer then a risk assessment would need to be completed as per national government guidance and social distancing measures put in place.

Schools are only open for pupils at present and cannot be used for other purposes. If at any point they are able to open to the public, indoor sports remain on the list of businesses/premises that still cannot open, and until that changes schools should not open their premises for any form of indoor sport.

1. **What is the plan for C and I Centres and reopening? Are they classed as a specialist provision? Would they just open for YR, Y1 and Y6?**

We are expecting additional SEND guidance to come out in the next few days which may clarify this. However, in the absence of any clear national steer on this, we suggest that C & I centres are treated in line with special schools – in that schools may wish to promote attendance of children in Reception, Year 1 & Year 6 but equally can prioritise the attendance of other children outside of these year groups. The current guidance is clear that any child of any age with an EHCP can already attend school. The school’s COVID-19 risk assessment and the school’s ability to use its best endeavours to meet the provisions stated in the child’s EHCP should be the basis for determining which children are prioritised for places.

1. **What about after school provision if schools are doing teams, to keep children apart?**

Schools are not required to run after school provision. You should only run such provision if you are able to keep children within the groups they are in during the day or safely distanced.

1. **Is the expectation that all staff are in school all of the time from 1 June?**

Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals (those who have been advised by their doctor or through a letter) are advised not to attend work. If a staff member lives in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable, it is advised they only attend work if stringent social distancing can be adhered to. If this is not possible, they should be supported to work at home.

Clinically vulnerable individuals who are at higher risk of severe illness should work from home where possible. If they cannot work from home, they should be offered the safest available on-site roles, staying 2 metres away from others wherever possible.

More detailed guidance on the categorisation of vulnerable categories will be made available by the local authority. Please refer to DfE guidance in the interim.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools#reviewing-your-staff-for-availability-in-school>

1. **How do we carry out a comprehensive risk assessment? Will guidance be given from the LA?**

The SHE team has developed a risk assessment that schools can adopt as their own.

The risk assessment will require some adaption by each school to record the measures that will be taken to prepare the building and staff for more pupils to return; and how they will be controlling access, implementing social distancing and infection control.



SHE has provided this supplement to the GCC risk assessment to take into account primary schools inviting additional year groups.



1. **The Government expects children to be able to return to early years settings, and for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 to be back in school in smaller sizes, from this point. This aims to ensure that the youngest children, and those preparing for the transition to secondary school, have maximum time with their teachers. As an infant school, this would mean we could have 180 children in school and 57 early years children in kindergarten which is pretty much the whole school – is this really acceptable?**

If you are not able to achieve the small groups recommended then you should discuss options with the local authority or your trust. If necessary, settings have the flexibility to focus first on continuing to provide places for priority groups and then, to support children’s early learning, should prioritise Nursery and Reception.

In addition the guidance says

‘Where the physical layout of a setting does not allow small groups of children to be kept at a safe distance apart, we expect practitioners to exercise judgement in ensuring the highest standards of safety are maintained. In some cases, it may be necessary for providers to introduce a temporary cap on numbers to ensure that safety is prioritised.’

1. **Pupils with SEMH needs where there is challenging behaviour (of a sort that could compromise social distancing and general safety) – will these need to be risk assessed? What if schools feel that the risk is too great – could/should they be asked to stay at home?**

The return to school will be a challenging experience for all children, but particularly for children with additional needs. Their class environment, teacher and class mates may well have changed and the re-introduction of school structures will be a challenge for some. The inclusion service has produced a short guidance document which also outlines the support available through GCC teams and appropriate contact details.



1. **The Government are hoping that all primary children will be back in school for a month. Will there be a move towards a reduction in the summer holiday period or expectation that schools remain open throughout the summer holidays?**

There has been no indication that schools are expected to open for the summer break. Schools are asked to plan for the first cohorts YR, Y1 and Y6 initially.

1. **Can the LA acknowledge that it is ok for children to come to school for part of the week if we haven’t got space for them all to come everyday from 1st June. The guidance says this is for schools to negotiate with LA.**

Schools are encouraged to make arrangements that are consistent for pupils and their families. Where schools have arrangements in place that are less than full-time, these should be agreed by the governing board. The rationale and details of the organisation for the week should be clearly communicated to parents and children. Timetable arrangements should be kept under regular review.

1. **In the guidance 'Implementing protective measures...' the second paragraph seems to suggest that children of keyworkers no longer need to 'stay at home where they can', and should be 'encouraged to attend school (now, and when/if we reopen?). Please can you check that this is the intended interpretation?**

Parents are encouraged to send their children to school if they can.

1. **Some schools are considering marking out the floors in their schools to ensure that children are never less than 2m apart, is this something that all schools should be doing?**

This is definitely one of the measures that schools should consider but this will depend on each school’s situation.  It is not mandatory.  Floor marking is one the measures included in the risk assessment.  For example, in areas where queues may develop, floor marking can indicate safe distance rules.  Floor marking may also be used along shared corridors to keep pupils apart on one side.

1. **The guidance states that the same adults should only mix with the same groups of children. There is no reference or clarification on how to safely undertake the roles of non-class based staff e.g. HT/Office staff/SENCO etc. How do the LA as our employer consider that these members of staff will be protected?**

Limiting adults to the same groups of children will reduce contacts and reduce the risk of transmission.  All staff, including non-class based staff should consider the hierarchy of measures:

* avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
* frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices
* regular cleaning of settings
* minimising contact and mixing.

The risk assessment and preventative measures will need to be adopted by these staff too.  If they do this the risk of transmission will be lower.  If SENCO and other staff need to provide close hands-on contact because of a child’s EHCP, staff need to increase their level of self-protection, such as minimising close contact and having more frequent hand-washing and other hygiene measures, and regular cleaning of surfaces.

1. **Class groups of 15. I know that communication has been very clear that we want a united approach for Glos LA schools. Is this going to be half class in the morning half the class in the afternoon and UIFSM/FSM children collect a sandwich as they leave/arrive? This will alleviate the huge pressures and logistical nightmare of keeping class groups of children apart from other class groups of children. This would mean dinner supervisors could be used to clean the classrooms, toilets, shared spaces, door handles and equipment. It would also mean that teachers can teach all their children the same maths and English every day and set the home learning half of the day with topic based learning. How soon will we know the recommended approach and can schools deviate from this?**

Schools are being asked to welcome back eligible pupils full-time, and the DfE do not expect schools to implement flexible approaches, such as rota systems. Where it is necessary to make different arrangements, the rationale and alternative arrangements should be clear and agreed by the governing board. These arrangements should be kept under regular review.

1. **Someone in my school/setting has symptoms of Covid-19, how do I arrange a test?**

Anyone can now register for a test through <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19> or call 119 if you do not have access to the internet.  You can either request a home testing kit or arrange to visit a testing centre.  You will be able to choose a testing centre from a selection of those closest to you.  For children under 5 the parent or guardian will be required to perform the test.

**Babies and children** – call 111 if you’re worried about a baby or child under 5.  If the child seems very unwell, is getting worse or you think there is something seriously wrong, call 999.  Do not delay getting help if you’re worried.  Trust your instincts.

1. **Should we make any particular considerations in relation to BAME colleagues given the reported higher incidence of the virus amongst these groups?**

The evidence is continually being reviewed regarding factors which may differentially impact the health outcomes of certain population sub-groups.  The national guidance will be updated based on any emerging evidence which indicates a change in risk.  Currently we recommend that schools and early years settings use the “GCC COVID-19 RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR SCHOOLS & EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS” developed by GCC Safety, Health and Environment Team, which has been informed by the national guidance and will help to identify risks and possible adaptations.  You can call Occupational Health if you would like to discuss a specific scenario.  Alternatively you can discuss with your own Health and Safety, Occupational Health or Human Resources providers if you have them.  There are also a number of additional HR Recovery Plan FAQs which may help in specific scenarios such as an employee refusing to work, an employee who is clinically vulnerable or an employee living with someone who is shielding.

1. **Will a child be able to attend school and also go to a childminder?  Are they able to attend 2 provisions in this way?**

We anticipate that settings will accept children who are attending both school and a childminding setting. Schools should make their own arrangements, in discussion with parents, around the drop off and collection of their child from school if this will be done by the childminder.

1. **Can I use outdoor play structures when my school/setting reopens?**

The government guidance states that outdoor equipment should not be used **unless** the setting is able to ensure that it is appropriately cleaned between groups of children and young people using it, and that multiple groups do not use it simultaneously.

However, if cleaning between groups using outdoor equipment is problematic, settings may want to put in place a rota for a different cohort to use play structures each day.  The COVID-19 virus is unlikely to survive outdoors on the wooden surfaces of play structures longer than 1 day so the risk of transmission would be low if this can be planned adequately.  The most important thing is to keep up the other protective measures, such as hand washing (before and after use) and avoid different groups using it simultaneously.

Also, please note that the annual inspection of play equipment arranged by GCC may have lapsed due to the COVID-19 lockdown.  This is planned to be carried out soon.  Schools should check the date of the last inspection and that any remedial work identified has been actioned.  Before using equipment it should be visually examined for any signs of damage, wear or tear and if there is any doubt do not use it.

School’s latest reports can be found on the XELES website.

1. **I am carrying out a weekly deep clean in my school. Do I need to be doing this?**

Deep cleaning is only required where there has been a suspected/confirmed case of Covid within the school.  Normal cleaning routines are sufficient at all other times although you may want to think about cleaning surfaces that are touched frequently, such as door handles, more often than normal.  This should be coupled with good personal hygiene such as hand washing.

If you do need to carry out a deep clean , the following guidance outlines what you need to know.



1. **What will happen if there is one or more laboratory confirmed case of Covid-19 in our school/EY setting?**

If one or more children or members of staff test positive for Covid-19 inform Public Health England Health Protection Team (HPT) as soon as possible - 0300 303 8162 or [swhpt@phe.gov.uk](mailto:swhpt@phe.gov.uk).  Staff and children who have been in close contact with the confirmed case within the infectious period (48 hours before symptoms to 7 days after) will be asked to self-isolate at home.  Household contacts of contacts do not need to self-isolate.  The HPT will help you to identify all close contacts within the setting.

The HPT will provide you with the Infection Control Checklist to help you manage and monitor the situation.

The HPT may call an Outbreak Control Team meeting.  This brings together member of the HPT with relevant Gloucestershire County Council officers, school or EY setting representatives and any other relevant partners.  They will support the risk assessment and provide resources such as letters for contacts and for wider school/setting parents/guardians if required.

The individual who tested positive will be contacted by the NHS Test and Trace service who will provide advice on self-isolation, signpost for any support required and identify any additional close contacts.

1. **Is it acceptable for teachers to work across different bubbles?**

This is acceptable but schools shoud be looking to minimise risk. Ideally this should be done at the end of a school day and, ideally, you would look to leave a gap e.g. teach one bubble on a Friday and another on the Monday.

There will be an impact in the event of a case, however, as it would mean all bubbles involving that teacher would have to close.

1. **If I can move teaching staff between bubbles, can I do the same with children?**

No, children should remain in their teaching bubbles throughout.

1. **Can schools use other premises to increase their capacity so that they are able to invite more children back into school?**

Schools can use other premises, such as village halls and libraries, if they have sole use of the premises. These premises should be incliued in any risk assessments and should not be used outside school hours for any other activity.

1. **When will formal childcare and holiday clubs re-open?**

The Government had announced that wrap-around care, including holiday clubs for school age children, and formal childcare will restart over the summer school holiday break.

1. **When will schools be returning to normal opening for all children?**

The Government has announced that primary and secondary education will re-start in September with full attendance and those children who can already go to school should do so – because it is safe.

1. **We are coming to the end of term and schools would usually hold events that involve parents such as sports day. Are schools able to hold events/large gatherings on the school field?**

Schools are only open to pupils so there should be no events where parents come on site. Schools can hold events for pupils, but they must ensure that whatever the number of pupils, they should be kept in their bubbles and the bubbles must be kept apart so they do not mix.

1. **What should I do if someone exhibits symptoms of Covid-19?**

The infectious period is from 48 hours prior to symptom onset to 7 days after.

As soon as anyone shows symptoms of the virus they should be isolated immediately and sent home to self isolate for 7 days and arrange to have a test to see if they have COVID-19.  That person would have been infectious for the 48 hours before they showed any symptoms so, if they test positive to COVID-19, all the people that they had contact with in the previous two days could have been infected, and all those people will need to self isolate for 14 days.  It follows that if you can limit the number of people that the person is in contact with, the impact of a confirmed COVID-19 case will be less.   The following examples might help explain:

Teacher 1 works only with Group A Mon-Fri.  They become unwell with COVID-19 symptoms during the week, are sent home and test positive.  This means Group A will need to self-isolate for 14 days to see if they become unwell in that time.

Teacher 2 works with a different group every day - Group B on Monday, Group C on Tuesday and Group D on Wednesday etc.  However, on Wednesday they become unwell with COVID-19 symptoms so are sent home.  If they then test positive, Group C and Group D and probably Group B will have to be told to self isolate for 14 days because the teacher would have been infectious for the previous 48 hours.

Teacher 3 works with Group E on Monday and Group F on Thursday.  If they become unwell on Friday and test positive, only Group D will need to self isolate.

Teacher 4 works with Group G for a whole week Mon-Fri.  If on the following Monday morning they get up feeling unwell and self isolate and get a positive test, Group G will not need to self isolate because they have not been in contact with Teacher 4 since Friday.

The most important thing is for anyone with symptoms to be isolated immediately and get tested.  HPA and the Outbreak Control Teams will investigate any confirmed cases in a school and they will determine who has been in contact with them and could have been infected and needs to be told to self-isolate.  They will ask the person who has COVID-19 when their symptoms started and will trace it back 48 hours from then.  The less people that they have been in contact with in 48 hours, the less impact it has on you, the children and their families.

**Please note that the FAQs are accurate at the date of publication and will be updated regularly as further guidance is received from the government and local authority.**