



EA Guidance for Schools

8th March – Easter Break 2021

Issued 03/03/2021

On the 24th February the Minister for Education issued a letter to all schools outlining the approach to the phased reopening of schools agreed by the NI executive. Schools should note the following points arising from the communication.

The Minister for Education has announced a phased return to full time face-to-face teaching for certain pupils. In the meantime, all schools should continue to provide supervised learning for vulnerable pupils and children of key workers.

Special schools and EOTAS Centres will continue to provide face to face teaching as per January arrangements.

The Department of Education has advised that:

- from 8 March until 19 March, pre-school, nursery and primary school pupils in P1 to P3, will return to full-time face-to-face teaching. This does not include any children in other primary school years who may be in composite classes with these pupils; and,
- pupils in years 12 to 14, who will be awarded qualifications in summer 2021, will return to full time face-to-face teaching with effect from 22 March 2021.
Pre-school, nursery, and primary school pupils in P1 to P3 will then return to full-time face-to-face teaching after the Easter holidays along with years 12-14.

Other key points include:

- Schools who have pupils who are either (i) taking CCEA GCSE maths in 2021 as a prerequisite for entry in Further maths in 2022 or (ii) early entries for CCEA GCSE Irish in Irish medium schools or units or where the learner intends extending their learning through GCSE Gaeilge, will, if they choose to do so, be permitted to offer these pupils face to face classes in these subjects.
- Remote learning will resume for pre-school/nursery and pupils in P1-3 for the week beginning 22 March until the planned start of the Easter holidays for individual schools.
- Breakfast clubs, education visits, inter school sports and after school activities should remain paused until at least 12 April or until advised otherwise.
- Additional signage will be provided to all schools to encourage everyone to comply with public health messaging.
- There will be a publicity campaign to promote the use of face coverings within school settings and on school transport, and spot checks will be carried out at key points along bus routes.
- School meal services should be offered for those classes and year groups attending schools.
- For now Youth Service provision will remain unchanged, however, it is intended that a paper will be presented to the Executive in the coming weeks to provide clarity to the service as restrictions more generally ease.

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This document will be kept under review
and updates will be issued if required.

- The Minister for Education’s objective is to have a full return of all pupils to face to face teaching in school as soon as practicably possible after the Easter break but it is recognised that this has to be balanced against the public health position.

The Executive will keep this position under review and it may be revised and updated during March.

Schools should now make arrangements to support pupils based on the information in the Minister’s statement. To support you in this we have prepared phase specific information on the following pages. **You only need to review the pages specific to your phase or setting.**

- **Nursery Schools and Nursery Units** **Pages 3 – 10**
- **Special Schools and EOTAS Settings** **Pages 11-18**
- **Primary Schools** **Pages 19-28**
- **Post-Primary Schools** **Pages 29- 38**
- **Appendices** **Pages 39- 48**

The Cross-Organisational Link Officer (COLO) support system is operational, and you can contact your COLO for further advice.

Overview of Updates from January 2021

For each phase/school type:

- Details and dates of the phased restart as known at this time have been included where appropriate.
- A section has been added to outline how to access additional staffing if needed to support a mixture of face-to-face teaching, remote learning, and supervised learning.
- A new section has been added to provide guidance on the use of face coverings in schools.
- There is a small update to clarify guidance on bubble management

1. Nursery Schools and Nursery Units

1.1 Key Points

From Monday 8th March until Friday 19th March:

- Nursery Schools, Nursery Units and DE funded Preschool settings are open for normal teaching and learning

From Monday 22nd March to the planned Easter Break:


- Nursery Schools, Nursery Units and DE funded Preschool settings are NOT open for normal teaching and learning.
- Nursery Schools, Nursery Units and DE funded Preschool settings should accommodate registered pupils who are vulnerable or who are the children of key workers for supervised learning, and support remote learning for all other pupils.

After Easter

- Nursery Schools, Nursery Units and DE funded Preschool settings should plan to open for normal teaching and learning.

This situation remains under review by the NI Executive and is subject to change throughout March.

1.2 Common Questions for Nursery Schools and Nursery Units

Area	Question	Answer
<p>Staff</p> 	<p>Are staff expected to be in school?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From Monday 8th March until Friday 19th March Nursery Schools, Nursery Units and DE funded Preschool settings are open for normal teaching and learning. From Monday 22nd March to the planned Easter Break staff should work remotely where they can do so effectively and fully, but if required by their Principal / line manager / Preschool Leader to attend preschool for an essential reason they are expected to do so. Required attendance at the preschool setting would of course be subject to any personal medical or exceptional circumstances. From Monday 22nd March to the planned Easter break it is expected that teaching and/or non-teaching staff and staff in preschool settings will supervise and support vulnerable and key worker children in engaging with the remote learning tasks and activities provided to all pupils. This will include providing support, explanations and direction From Monday 22nd March to the planned Easter break Classroom Assistants who provide support to children with statements should continue to support these children in their supervised


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		<p>learning- directly for those who attend the preschool setting and remotely where they are at home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All preschool setting staff are defined as Key Workers and so can access supervised learning in their child's own school for school aged children. Childcare provision remains unchanged. It is understood that there may be some staff who still find difficulties due to caring responsibilities. In these circumstances, staff should liaise with their Principal/Line Manager/ Preschool Leader regarding potential alternative working options, in line with normal arrangements.
	<p>Can schools access additional staff to support a mixture of face to face teaching, remote learning and supervision?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Minister has agreed flexibility to maximise the use of COVID funding in 2020-21. NISTR teachers may be engaged where required. If a school requires additional Classroom Assistants, please contact the EA Emergency Resourcing Team by emailing Emergency.Resourcing@eani.org.uk. All Covid related expenditure should be recorded.
	<p>Are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) staff expected to be in their preschool setting?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) people who are working and are unable to do so from home are advised not to attend the workplace. (Currently being reviewed by PHA) The Department would emphasise that this is advice only. People are free to make their own judgements about whether or not they should attend work, depending on the Covid-security of their working environment. However, the general restrictions which apply to everyone must be followed https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you. Anyone who cannot attend work due to this advice will be eligible for their normal pay, as was the case when shielding was introduced at the start of the pandemic. CEV people will receive a letter for their employer, and they do not need to get a fit note from their GP. This advice applies to clinically extremely vulnerable individuals only. Others living in a household with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable are not advised to follow it, but should continue to stringently follow the guidance on social distancing, face coverings and hand hygiene.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DE funded preschool setting staff should consult with their management committee about employment matters.
	<p>Will I still be paid if I am unable to attend work as a result of the change in restrictions and I am not Clinically Extremely Vulnerable?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff impacted by the changes who are unable to attend the workplace or unable to be given alternative working options will be paid as normal, including substitute teachers who were booked to work from 4 January 2021 and staff scheduled to work hours for Extended Schools programmes. • DE funded preschool setting staff should consult with their management committee about employment matters.
<p>Pupils</p> 	<p>What is expected for our pupils during these restrictions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Monday 8th March until Friday 19th March Nursery Schools, Nursery Units and DE funded Preschool settings are open for normal teaching and learning. Pupil absences should be recorded in the normal way. There is no expectation that remote learning is provided for children of parents who choose to keep their children at home with no medical reason for doing so. • From Monday 22nd March to the planned Easter break Nursery schools, nursery units and pre-school settings are required to provide remote learning at home to their pupils rather than face to face teaching in the preschool setting. • Preschool provision is mandatory for children of key workers and vulnerable children and this provision should operate over normal school hours. It is not, however, mandatory for these children to attend the preschool setting during the period of remote learning. • The Board of Governors and Principals are reminded that the Department’s policy is that only one parent needs to be a key worker for a pupil to be allowed to attend preschool. (See Appendix 2 - This will be kept under review)
	<p>How should absences be recorded?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Monday 8th March until Friday 19th March attendance is recorded as normal. • From Monday 22nd March until the planned Easter Break the vast majority of pupils should be undertaking remote learning (and attendance should be recorded as Code] “Covid-19 Learning from home – Social Distancing”). • If pupils are not engaging in learning then preschools need to ascertain why. Attendance Code options include (per DE Circular 2020/08 and associated addendum):


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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Code D “No reason provided” ○ Code H “Other Absence” ○ Code N “No reason yet provided” ○ Code } “Covid-19 Self-Isolating – No evidence of learning from home” <p>Code XP should be used by the non-statutory pre-school settings on their roll book during the period of remote learning.</p>
	<p>Can my preschool setting cluster with other preschool settings to provide supervised learning for Key Worker and Vulnerable Children?</p>	<p>For the period of Monday 22nd March until the planned Easter Break:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preschool settings should first assess the level of demand for and uptake of provision in their own setting first. If demand is very low then they can make local arrangements with preschool settings in their immediate area. ● All preschool settings must ensure that they remain open and contactable by their own parents and/or pupils. ● Preschool settings are required to respond to requests for and support their pupils in supervised learning.
	<p>How will targeted services be delivered by Children and Young People’s Services?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact can be made directly with all SEN Services. Service contact details for each service can be found on the EA website. ● Advice, guidance and support to preschool setting staff, and families, where appropriate, will be done on a remote basis, but can be arranged for preschool setting sites as is necessary. ● A suite of SEN resources relevant to each service can be found on EAs website https://www.eani.org.uk/services/pupil-support-services/. ● Services supporting pupils directly will plan with the preschool setting and/or parents of pupils known to services to determine, plan and facilitate an appropriate pathway for the period of restrictions or access, as appropriate. Where possible, Services directly supporting young people will be delivered in preschool settings in accordance with presenting need and risk assessment. Child Protection Support Service continues to operate within the context of COVID to support preschool settings and young people. Schools should continue to follow Child Protection Guidance and procedures. ● The Educational Psychology Service will use a blend of remote assessment and face-to-face assessment, test administration, as well as indirect and direct consultations with parents and

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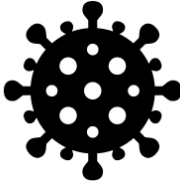

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		<p>preschool setting staff and other professionals depending on the individual circumstances of each case.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SEN Assessment and Review Service (Statutory Operations) continue to deliver through; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Referral and progression of statutory assessments ○ Annual Reviews and maintenance of statements of Special Educational Needs, ○ Management of the statutory processes linked to the Transfer and placement of pupils to Nursery, P1 and Post Primary Schools. • The online Training Calendar can also be accessed at https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-11/Supporting%20Children%20and%20Young%20People%27s%20Training%20Booklet%20V3.7%20131120.pdf • See Appendix 4 for further details on delivery of CYPs services during restrictions.
<p>Face Coverings</p> 	<p>Rationale for Face Coverings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The latest scientific advice from the World Health Organisation, and from the Chief Medical Officer and Chief Scientific Officer, is that face coverings should be worn within education settings, unless a reasonable excuse applies under public health guidance.
	<p>In Nursery and Pre-School Settings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Nursery and Pre-School Settings children are recommended not to use face coverings because of the range of mitigation measures schools have in place, the reduced rate of transmission to and from children of this age.
	<p>Face Coverings for Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside of classrooms, face coverings must be worn by adults and pupils where they cannot keep 2m distance and are interacting face-to-face with other adults and/or children and young people; and, by all adults visiting the school site. • Face coverings must be worn for activities that entail large numbers of staff or pupils within an enclosed space where social distancing is not possible. • As Post-Primary pupils must use face coverings during the routine school day and on transport, it is considered best practice for teachers and support staff to wear them. Schools should also be aware that some persons (including children)

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		<p>are exempt from wearing face coverings and this should be treated sensitively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No one should be excluded from school for failure to have or wear a face covering. • Face covering for teachers is a permitted expense under Covid expenditure.
	Using Face Coverings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face coverings should not be shared with others. • Before putting on or removing the face covering, hands should be cleaned by washing with soap and water or hand sanitiser. • Make sure the face covering is the right size to cover the nose, mouth and chin. Children should be taught how to wear the face covering properly, including not touching the front and not pulling it under the chin or into their mouth. • When temporarily storing a face covering (e.g. during classes), it should be placed in a washable, sealed bag or container. Avoid placing it on surfaces, due to the possibility of contamination. • Re-usable face coverings should be washed after each day of use in school at 60 degrees centigrade or in boiling water. • Disposable face coverings must be disposed of safely and hygienically in the general waste bin. They are not considered to be clinical waste in the same way that used PPE may be.
	Exemptions for Face Coverings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should also be aware that some persons (including children) are exempt from wearing face coverings and this should be treated sensitively. • <u>No one should be excluded from school or transport for failure to have or wear a face covering.</u> • Examples of reasonable excuses can be found at Appendix Six of this document and include physical or mental impairment or disability, and causing severe distress. •
	Visors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visors only protect the eyes and are only required where there is a risk of splashing. They are therefore only recommended for basic PPE when worn with a mask, plastic apron and gloves, as they do not offer the same protection as a mask or face covering which cover the nose and the mouth. • They offer little protection worn on their own and are not recommended for routine use in schools. Staff remain free to procure and wear them at their own expense.

Covid19 Response 	Covid19 Risk Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preschool settings must review and update their risk assessments regularly to ensure compliance and reflect any adaptations introduced to their operations. The EA have reviewed and revised risk assessment templates. These can be accessed through C2K exchange Go to Exchange > Resources > Covid19 • If you do not have access to C2K Exchange call the EA helpline on 028 3836 8186 - Operating Monday – Friday, 9am – 5 pm and select the option for the Health and Safety Team.
	Bubble Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible schools should operate single consistent groups (bubbles). These have two main purposes. • To reduce the total number of contacts every individual has. • To make the identification of contacts easier should a case of COVID be confirmed within a school staff members can be included in the bubble. • At times it may be necessary to change membership of bubbles. For example, to provide safe staff cover. There is no requirement to have a period of “isolation” or break before an individual joins a new bubble. However, bubbles should be kept as consistent as possible and where possible staff should not move across multiple bubbles as a matter of routine. • With smaller numbers of pupils, it is acceptable to use a single room, with 2m social distancing. • If a new bubble needs to be formed this should be retained/ • A new seating plan will need to be created to assist with contact tracing if needed. • For supervised learning family/household bubbles should be considered and facilitated if possible.
	Confirmed Cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The confirmed cases helpline and PHA support to preschool settings remains active during this time.
School Transport 	Is school transport operating?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Transport will operate as normal for pre-school pupils who are entitled to transport assistance from Monday 8th March to Friday 19th March (with the exception of 17th March).
School Meals	Are School Meals available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Monday 8th March until Friday 19th March the school meals service will operate as normal for year groups that are in school if lunch is normally supplied.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a child cannot attend school during this period, due to the revised reasons set out by DE, and are entitled to a FSM and wish to order a FSM Box they should order these boxes through the Principal and the Unit Catering Manager as they did previously in 2020. • From Monday 22nd March any pupil attending school will be required to bring a packed lunch. • Schools that remain open to key workers' children and vulnerable children should provide food if necessary, for any child in need.
	<p>How will Free School Meals be paid/provided?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Monday 22nd March provision in lieu of free school meals will be made to those children entitled to free school meals while normally in school.
<p>Online and Remote Learning</p> 	<p>Where can I get guidance on supporting remote / home learning?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nursery and Pre-School Supporting Learning Portal for staff is available at: https://www.easds.org.uk/sds/portal2/createaccount/ One-Time Invite Code: a4815p **Please note that this is a one-time use code and is not your password. You will be sent an email with a password on creation of your account.
	<p>How can I evaluate our readiness for Home Learning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In early December EA provided a checklist on readiness for home learning for all schools via the C2K noticeboard. It is attached as Appendix Three of this document for your information.


2. Special Schools and EOTAS Centres

2.1 Key Points

- Special schools and EOTAS Centres remain open for face to face teaching providing , learning and targeted support for all enrolled pupils subject to public health advice.


This situation remains under review by the NI Executive and is subject to change throughout March.

2.2 Common Questions for Special Schools and EOTAS

Area	Question	Answer
Staff 	Are staff expected to be in school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As these settings are open to all children it is expected that teaching and non-teaching staff will be in school, as required by the Principal or Senior Teacher. • Required attendance by staff in school would of course be subject to any personal medical or exceptional circumstances, and the number of staff required onsite may vary by the number of pupils attending. • School staff are defined as Key Workers and so can access supervised learning in their child's own school. • Appropriate risk assessments should be in place and followed by all teaching and support staff.
	Can schools access additional staff to support a mixture of face to face teaching, remote learning and supervision?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Minister has agreed flexibility to maximise the use of COVID funding in 2020-21. NISTR teachers may be engaged where required. If a school requires additional Classroom Assistants, please contact the EA Emergency Resourcing Team by emailing Emergency.Resourcing@eani.org.uk. All Covid related expenditure should be recorded.
	Are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) staff expected to be in school? This section is copied directly from DE guidance and should not be changed. Amendments have	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) people who are working and are unable to do so from home are advised not to attend the workplace. (Currently being reviewed by PHA) • The Department would emphasise that this is advice only. People are free to make their own judgements about whether or not they should attend work, depending on the Covid-security of their working environment. However, the general restrictions which apply to everyone must be followed https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus

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	<p>already been agreed with DE.</p>	<p>-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone who cannot attend work, due to this advice will be eligible for their normal pay, as was the case when shielding was introduced at the start of the pandemic. CEV people will receive a letter for their employer, and they do not need to get a fit note from their GP. • This advice applies to clinically extremely vulnerable individuals only. Others living in a household with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable are not advised to follow it, but should continue to stringently follow the guidance on social distancing, face coverings and hand hygiene.
<p>Pupils</p> 	<p>Will I still be paid if I am unable to attend work as a result of the change in restrictions and I am <u>not</u> Clinically Extremely Vulnerable?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff impacted by the changes who are unable to attend the workplace or unable to be given alternative working options will be paid as normal, including substitute teachers who were booked to work from 4 January 2021 and staff scheduled to work hours for Extended Schools programmes.
	<p>What is expected for our pupils during these restrictions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special schools and EOTAS Centres are to be open providing teaching and learning for all enrolled pupils. Where this is not possible onsite for individual young people, remote provision should be made for all pupils following the Good Practice Guidelines on Remote Learning. • Attendance during enhanced restrictions is at parental discretion. If parents decide to keep their child at home for remote learning, where agreement has been reached between the school and parent, this should be recorded as Code] “Covid-19 Learning from home – Social Distancing”.
	<p>How will absences be recorded?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance and absences should be recorded on SIMS, as is usual practice. • Pupils attending school or EOTAS will be recorded in the normal manner. • If parents decide to keep their child at home for remote learning, where agreement has been reached between school and parent, this should be recorded as Code [“Covid-19 Self-Isolating & learning from home”. • If pupils are not engaging in learning then schools or EOTAS settings need to ascertain why. Attendance Code options include (per DE Circular

		<p>2020/08 and associated addendum(effective from 04/01/21):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Code D “No reason provided ○ Code H “Other Absence” ○ Code N “No reason yet provided” ○ Code } “Covid-19 Self-Isolating – No evidence of learning from home” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Principal discretion is important. Some pupils may not be capable of engaging in remote learning due to health challenges. In these cases Principals and Senior Teachers should use a Code that reflects the individual's circumstances.
	<p>How will targeted services be delivered by Children and Young People’s Services?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact can be made directly with all CYP Services. Service contact details can be found on the EA website. ● The online Training Calendar can also be accessed at https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-11/Supporting%20Children%20and%20Young%20People%27s%20Training%20Booklet%20V3.7%20131120.pdf ● Advice, guidance and support to school staff, and families where appropriate, will be done on a remote basis, but can be arranged for school sites as is necessary. ● Child Protection Support Service continues to operate within the context of COVID to support all schools and young people. Schools should continue to follow Child Protection Guidance and procedures. ● The Educational Psychology Service will use a blend of remote assessment and face-to-face assessment, test administration, as well as indirect and direct consultations with parents and teachers and other professionals depending on the individual circumstances of each case during the period of restrictions. ● The SEN Assessment and Review Service (Statutory Operations) continue to deliver through; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Referral and progression of statutory assessments ○ Annual Reviews and maintenance of statements of Special Educational Needs, ○ Management of the statutory processes linked to the Transfer and placement of

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		<p>pupils to Nursery, P1 and Post Primary Schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A suite of SEN resources relevant to each service can be found on EAs website https://www.eani.org.uk/services/pupil-support-services/. • Services supporting pupils directly will plan with the school or parents of pupils known to services to determine, plan and facilitate an appropriate pathway for the period of restrictions, as appropriate. Services will prioritise vulnerable young people accessing school sites, and will provide services as usual within the setting, as is possible and appropriate to do so. • Where possible, Services directly supporting young people will be delivered in school in accordance with presenting need and risk assessment. If young people are not accessing school settings, services will be delivered remotely as appropriate and possible during the period of school restrictions. • Independent Counselling for Schools continues to deliver on a flexible model of support including onsite provision, telephone and online sessions. • Principals and Senior Teachers should plan locally for vulnerable young people who attend Partnership Placements at EOTAS. • Generic youth provision will move online under the discretion of Management Committees and EA Youth Service will continue to lead on targeted provision for vulnerable and at risk young people, including limited face to face work (with mitigations in place to limit the spread of the virus) where this is deemed appropriate and to provide support under existing protocols to PSNI. • Appendix Four of this document contains details of how targeted services for pupils will be delivered.
<p>Face Coverings</p> 	<p>Rationale for Face Coverings</p> <hr/> <p>In Primary School Settings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The latest scientific advice from the World Health Organisation, and from the Chief Medical Officer and Chief Scientific Officer, is that face coverings should be worn within education settings, unless a reasonable excuse applies under public health guidance. • In Primary schools children are recommended not to use face coverings because of the range of mitigation measures schools have in place, the

		reduced rate of transmission to and from children of this age.
	In Post-Primary School Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In post primary education settings it is recommended best practice for teachers, classroom assistants to wear face coverings when a physical distance of 2 metres from other staff and students cannot be maintained. • It is compulsory for post primary pupils to wear face coverings in school and at drop off pick up areas unless an exemption applies. • Face coverings are strongly recommended to be worn by adults and compulsory for pupils/young people in post-primary schools (including special schools and independent and grant aided schools) when moving about the school in corridors and confined communal areas (including toilets) where physical distancing is particularly difficult to maintain. <p>Suspensions should not be issued where a young person refuses to wear a mask.</p>
	Face Coverings for Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside of classrooms, face coverings must be worn by adults and pupils where they cannot keep 2m distance and are interacting face-to-face with other adults and/or children and young people; and, by all adults visiting the school site. • Face coverings must be worn for activities that entail large numbers of staff or pupils within an enclosed space where social distancing is not possible. • As Post-Primary pupils must use face coverings during the routine school day, it is considered best practice for teachers and support staff to wear them. Schools should also be aware that some persons (including children) are exempt from wearing face coverings and this should be treated sensitively. • No one should be excluded from school for failure to have or wear a face covering. • Face covering for teachers is a permitted expense under Covid expenditure.
	Using Face Coverings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face coverings should not be shared with others. • Before putting on or removing the face covering, hands should be cleaned by washing with soap and water or hand sanitiser.

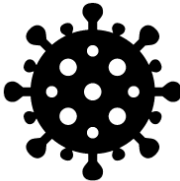

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure the face covering is the right size to cover the nose, mouth and chin. Children should be taught how to wear the face covering properly, including not touching the front and not pulling it under the chin or into their mouth. • When temporarily storing a face covering (e.g. during classes), it should be placed in a washable, sealed bag or container. Avoid placing it on surfaces, due to the possibility of contamination. • Re-usable face coverings should be washed after each day of use in school at 60 degrees centigrade or in boiling water. • Disposable face coverings must be disposed of safely and hygienically. Children and young people should be encouraged not to litter and to place their face coverings in the general waste bin. They are not considered to be clinical waste in the same way that used PPE may be.
	Exemptions for Face Coverings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should also be aware that some persons (including children) are exempt from wearing face coverings and this should be treated sensitively. • <u>No one should be excluded from school or transport for failure to have or wear a face covering.</u> • Examples of reasonable excuses can be found at Appendix Six of this document and include physical or mental impairment or disability, and causing severe distress. •
	Visors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visors only protect the eyes and are only required where there is a risk of splashing. They are therefore only recommended for basic PPE when worn with a mask, plastic apron and gloves, as they do not offer the same protection as a mask or face covering which cover the nose and the mouth. • They offer little protection worn on their own and are not recommended for routine use in schools. Staff remain free to procure and wear them at their own expense.
Covid19 Response	Covid19 Risk Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools and EOTAS settings must review and update their risk assessments regularly to reflect any adaptations introduced to their operations. • The EA have reviewed and revised risk assessment templates. These can be accessed





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		through the C2K exchange. Go to Exchange > Resources > Covid19
	Bubble Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the number of pupils are reduced during this period, it is reasonable to reduce interaction and contact by maintaining a bubble at single group level. Bubbles should however not exceed normal class size. • Where possible schools should operate single consistent groups (bubbles). These have two main purposes. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To reduce the total number of contacts every individual has 2. To make the identification of contacts easier should a case of COVID be confirmed within a school • Staff members can be included in the bubble. • At times it may be necessary to change membership of bubbles. For example, to provide safe staff cover. There is no requirement to have a period of “isolation” or break before an individual joins a new bubble. However, bubbles should be kept as consistent as possible and where possible staff should not move across multiple bubbles as a matter of routine. • With smaller numbers of pupils, it is acceptable to use a single room, with 2m social distancing. • If a new bubble needs to be formed this should be retained . • A new seating plan will need to be created to assist with contact tracing if needed.
	Confirmed Cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The confirmed cases helpline and PHA support to schools remains active during this time.
School Transport 	Is school transport operating?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School transport will continue to operate to Special Schools and EOTAS. • Please be aware that, as pupils return to school, it may not be possible to sustain the adjustments made to some special school services since January. • Post-primary pupils must wear a face covering on all school transport and we also strongly encourage younger pupils to wear a face covering (exemptions apply).
School Meals	Are School Meals available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Meals will be provided as normal at Special Schools and for EOTAS Centres. • No Direct Payment will be made. • Free School Meal Boxes will be available to those children enrolled in a Special School who cannot

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		attend school and meet the criteria / reasons currently in place under Covid 19.
<p>Devices</p> 	<p>Where can I find information on how to access IT devices or internet access for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on devices and a request form can be found on C2k exchange – click on the banner Requesting IT Devices & Wi-Fi.
<p>Online and Remote Learning</p> 	<p>Where can I get guidance on supporting remote / home learning?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EA ‘Supporting Learning’ website provides access to a range of support and guidance materials. It can be accessed through the ‘Supporting Learning’ icon on the front page of C2K ‘My-School’ or via the following link: https://sites.google.com/c2ken.net/teacherprofessionallearning-ea/home The sections titled ‘TPL’ and ‘Case Studies’ are of particular relevance.
<p>(Online and remote learning may be needed for pupils who are self-isolating)</p>	<p>How can I evaluate our readiness for Home Learning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In early December EA provided a checklist on readiness for home learning for all schools via the C2K noticeboard. We have attached it as Appendix Three of this document for your information.

3. Primary Schools

3.1 Key Points

From Monday 8th March until Friday 19th March:

- Primary Schools and Nursery Units are open for normal teaching and learning or Nursery, P1,P2 and P3 children only
- If a school has a composite P3/4 class, only P3 pupils are permitted to attend.
- Primary Schools and Nursery Units are not open for normal teaching and learning for P4 – P7 children.
- Primary schools should continue to accommodate registered P4-P7 pupils who are vulnerable or who are the children of key workers for supervised learning.

From Monday 22nd March to the planned Easter Break:


- Primary Schools and Nursery Units are NOT open for normal teaching and learning.
- Primary Schools and Nursery Units should accommodate registered pupils who are vulnerable or who are the children of key workers for supervised learning, and support remote learning for all other pupils.

After Easter

- Primary Schools and Nursery Units should plan to open for normal teaching and learning for Nursery, P1,P2 and P3 children only.

This situation remains under review by the NI Executive and is subject to change throughout March.

3.2 Common Questions for Primary Schools

Area	Question	Answer
Staff 	Are staff expected to be in school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Monday 8th March until Friday 19th March Primary Schools and Nursery Units are open for normal teaching and learning for Nursery, P1,P2 and P3 children only and these staff will need to be in school. • Primary Schools and Nursery Units are not open for normal teaching and learning for P4 – P7 children. These staff should work remotely where they can do so, but if required by their principal/line manager to attend school for an essential reason then they should do so. • Required attendance in school would of course be subject to any personal medical or exceptional circumstances. • From Monday 22nd March to the planned Easter Break it is expected that teaching and/or support staff will supervise and support vulnerable and key worker children in engaging with the remote learning tasks and activities provided to all pupils.


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		<p>This will include providing support, explanations and directions in regard to the remote learning materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be teachers available on site to provide the necessary oversight and direction where they are not directly involved in supervising remote learning. • From Monday 22nd March to the planned Easter Break Classroom Assistants who provide support to children with statements should continue to support these children - directly for those who attend school and remotely where they are at home. • All school staff are defined as Key Workers and so can access supervised learning in their child's own school for school aged children. Childcare provision remains unchanged. It is understood that there may be some staff who still have difficulties due to caring responsibilities. In these circumstances, staff should liaise with their Principal/Line Manager regarding potential alternative working options, in line with normal arrangements.
	<p>Can schools access additional staff to support a mixture of face to face teaching, remote learning and supervision?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Minister has agreed flexibility to maximise the use of COVID funding in 2020-21. NISTR teachers may be engaged where required. If a school requires additional Classroom Assistants, please contact the EA Emergency Resourcing Team by emailing Emergency.Resourcing@eani.org.uk. All Covid related expenditure should be recorded.
	<p>Are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) staff expected to be in school?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) people who are working and are unable to do so from home are advised not to attend the workplace. (Currently being reviewed by PHA) • The Department would emphasise that this is advice only. People are free to make their own judgements about whether or not they should attend work, depending on the Covid-security of their working environment. However, the general restrictions which apply to everyone must be followed https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you. • Anyone who cannot attend work due to this advice will be eligible for their normal pay, as was

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		<p>the case when shielding was introduced at the start of the pandemic. CEV people will receive a letter for their employer, and they do not need to get a fit note from their GP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This advice applies to clinically extremely vulnerable individuals only. Others living in a household with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable are not advised to follow it, but should continue to stringently follow the guidance on social distancing, face coverings and hand hygiene.
<p>Pupils</p> 	<p>Will I still be paid if I am unable to attend work as a result of the change in restrictions and I am <u>not</u> Clinically Extremely Vulnerable?</p> <p>What is expected for our pupils during these restrictions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff impacted by the changes who are unable to attend the workplace or unable to be given alternative working options will be paid as normal, including substitute teachers who were booked to work from 4 January 2021 and staff scheduled to work hours for Extended Schools programmes. <p>From Monday 8th March until Friday 19th March:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Schools and Nursery Units are open for normal teaching and learning or Nursery, P1,P2 and P3 children only • If a school has a composite P3/4 class, only P3 pupils are permitted to attend. • Primary Schools and Nursery Units are not open for normal teaching and learning for P4 – P7 children and will support remote learning for these year groups. • From Monday 22nd March until the planned Easter Break Primary schools and nursery units are required to provide remote learning at home to their pupils rather than face to face teaching in school, until the half term break in the middle of February. • Childcare settings, including those based in primary schools, are to remain open to all and childminders are also allowed to continue their provision. • School provision is mandatory for children of key workers and vulnerable children and this provision should operate over normal school hours. It is not, however, mandatory for these children to attend school during the period of remote learning. • The Board of Governors and Principals are reminded that the Department’s policy is that

		only one parent needs to be a key worker for a pupil to be allowed to attend school. (See Appendix 2) This will be kept under review by DE
	Can my school cluster with other schools to provide supervised learning for Key Worker and Vulnerable Children?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the period Monday 22nd March to the planned Easter Break schools should first assess the level of demand for and uptake of provision in their own school first. If demand is very low then they can make local arrangements with schools in their immediate area. • Schools must ensure that they remain contactable by their own parents and pupils; and schools are required to respond to requests for support with remote learning.
	How should absences be recorded?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Monday 8th March to Friday 19th March attendance is recorded as normal for those attending school and the remote learning codes are used for P4-P7. • Attendance and absences should be recorded on SIMS, as is usual practice. • From Monday 22nd March the majority of pupils should again be undertaking remote learning (and attendance should be recorded as Code] “Covid-19 Learning from home – Social Distancing”). • If pupils are not engaging in learning then schools need to ascertain why. Attendance Code options include (per DE Circular 2020/08 and associated addendum(effective from 04/01/21): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Code D “No reason provided ○ Code H “Other Absence” ○ Code N “No reason yet provided” ○ Code } “Covid-19 Self-Isolating – No evidence of learning from home” • Principal discretion is important. Some pupils may not be capable of engaging in remote learning due to health or other challenges. In these cases Principals and Senior Teachers should use a Code that reflects the individual's circumstances.
	If there is a special unit in my school does it remain open as usual? (Should Terminology be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Special Unit will be open for pupils in P1-P3, but will not be open for normal teaching and learning for pupils in P4-7, however, vulnerable or key worker children can still attend the school for supervised learning. • Where a number of children from a unit are attending school, the school should work to maintain their routine environment.


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	Specialist provision?)	
	How will targeted services be delivered by Children and Young People's Services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact can be made directly with all CYP Services. Service contact details can be found on the EA website. • The online Training Calendar can also be accessed at https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-11/Supporting%20Children%20and%20Young%20People%27s%20Training%20Booklet%20V3.7%20131120.pdf • Advice, guidance and support to school staff, and families where appropriate, will be done on a remote basis, but can be arranged for school sites as is necessary. • Child Protection Support Service continues to operate within the context of COVID to support all schools and young people. Schools should continue to follow Child Protection Guidance and procedures. • The Educational Psychology Service will use a blend of remote assessment and face-to-face assessment, test administration, as well as indirect and direct consultations with parents and teachers and other professionals depending on the individual circumstances of each case The SEN Assessment and Review Service (Statutory Operations) continue to deliver through; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Referral and progression of statutory assessments ○ Annual Reviews and maintenance of statements of Special Educational Needs, ○ Management of the statutory processes linked to the Transfer and placement of pupils to Nursery, P1 and Post Primary Schools. • A suite of SEN resources relevant to each service can be found on EAs website https://www.eani.org.uk/services/pupil-support-services/. • Services supporting pupils directly will plan with the school or parents of pupils known to services to determine, plan and facilitate an appropriate pathway as appropriate. Services will prioritise vulnerable young people accessing school sites, and will provide services as usual within the setting, as is possible and appropriate to do so.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, Services directly supporting young people will be delivered in school in accordance with presenting need and risk assessment. Independent Counselling for Schools continues to deliver on a flexible model of support including onsite provision, telephone and online sessions. • .EOTAS and ETA continue to deliver to young people • Principals and Senior Teachers should plan locally for vulnerable young people who attend Partnership Placements at EOTAS. • Generic youth provision has moved online under the discretion of Management Committees and EA Youth Service will continue to lead on targeted provision for vulnerable and at risk young people, including limited face to face work (with mitigations in place to limit the spread of the virus) where this is deemed appropriate and to provide support under existing protocols to PSNI. • Appendix Four of this document contains details of how targeted services for pupils will be delivered.
<p>Face Coverings</p> 	<p>Rational for Face Coverings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The latest scientific advice from the World Health Organisation, and from the Chief Medical Officer and Chief Scientific Officer, is that face coverings should be worn within education settings, unless a reasonable excuse applies under public health guidance.
	<p>In Primary School Settings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Primary schools children are recommended not to use face coverings because of the range of mitigation measures schools have in place, the reduced rate of transmission to and from children of this age.
	<p>Face Coverings for Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside of classrooms, face coverings must be worn by adults and pupils where they cannot keep 2m distance and are interacting face-to-face with other adults and/or children and young people; and, by all adults visiting the school site. • Face coverings must be worn for activities that entail large numbers of staff or pupils within an enclosed space where social distancing is not possible. • As Post-Primary pupils must use face coverings during the routine school day, it is considered best practice for teachers and support staff to wear them. Schools should also be aware that some persons (including children) are exempt

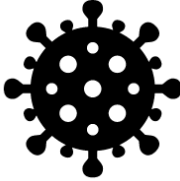
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		<p>from wearing face coverings and this should be treated sensitively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No one should be excluded from school for failure to have or wear a face covering. • Face covering for teachers is a permitted expense under Covid expenditure.
	Using Face Coverings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face coverings should not be shared with others. • Before putting on or removing the face covering, hands should be cleaned by washing with soap and water or hand sanitiser. • Make sure the face covering is the right size to cover the nose, mouth and chin. Children should be taught how to wear the face covering properly, including not touching the front and not pulling it under the chin or into their mouth. • When temporarily storing a face covering (e.g. during classes), it should be placed in a washable, sealed bag or container. Avoid placing it on surfaces, due to the possibility of contamination. • Re-usable face coverings should be washed after each day of use in school at 60 degrees centigrade or in boiling water. • Disposable face coverings must be disposed of safely and hygienically. Children and young people should be encouraged not to litter and to place their face coverings in the general waste bin. They are not considered to be clinical waste in the same way that used PPE may be.
	Exemptions for Face Coverings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should also be aware that some persons (including children) are exempt from wearing face coverings and this should be treated sensitively. • <u>No one should be excluded from school or transport for failure to have or wear a face covering.</u> • Examples of reasonable excuses can be found at Appendix Six of this document and include physical or mental impairment or disability, and causing severe distress. •
	Visors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visors only protect the eyes and are only required where there is a risk of splashing. They are therefore only recommended for basic PPE when worn with a mask, plastic apron and gloves, as they do not offer the same protection as a mask or face covering which cover the nose and the mouth. • They offer little protection worn on their own and are not recommended for routine use in schools.




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		Staff remain free to procure and wear them at their own expense.
Covid19 Response 	Do I have to update Covid19 Risk Assessments?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools must review and update their risk assessments regularly to reflect any adaptations introduced to their operations. The EA have reviewed and revised risk assessment templates. These can be accessed through the C2K exchange. Go to Exchange > Resources > Covid19
	How will Bubble Management work for supervised learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the number of pupils with settings are reduced it is reasonable for schools to reduce interaction and contact by maintaining a bubble at year group level. Bubbles should however not exceed normal class size. Where possible schools should operate single consistent groups (bubbles). These have two main purposes. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To reduce the total number of contacts every individual has To make the identification of contacts easier should a case of COVID be confirmed within a school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff members can be included in the bubble. At times it may be necessary to change membership of bubbles. For example, to provide safe staff cover. There is no requirement to have a period of “isolation” or break before an individual joins a new bubble. However, bubbles should be kept as consistent as possible and where possible staff should not move across multiple bubbles as a matter of routine. With smaller numbers of pupils, it is acceptable to use a single room, with 2m social distancing. If a new bubble needs to be formed this should be retained . For supervised learning children from the same household should be placed in the same bubble where possible.
	Are Confirmed Cases helplines still in place?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The confirmed cases helpline and PHA support to schools remains active during this time.
School Transport	Is school transport operating?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School transport will operate as normal from Monday 8th March to Friday 19th March (with the exception of 17th March) for P1 – P3 children.



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport for children of key workers or vulnerable children, who are entitled to transport assistance, will continue to operate from Monday 8th March to Wednesday 31st March (with the exception of 17th March). • Schools should submit new requests for transport assistance for KW & V pupils via C2K.
<p style="text-align: center;">School Meals</p> 	<p>Are School Meals available?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Monday 8th March to Friday 19th March the school meals service will operate as normal for all children who are in school. • If a child cannot attend school during this period, due to the revised reasons set out by DE, and are entitled to a FSM and wish to order a FSM Box they should order these boxes through the Principal and the Unit Catering Manager as they did previously in 2020. • From Monday 22nd March all key worker and vulnerable children must bring a packed lunch each day they are attending school. • In schools that remain open to key worker and vulnerable children if a child has not brought a packed lunch and is in need, a lunch should be provided. Schools should liaise with school catering staff who will be on call as necessary. • Direct payment is being made to all children entitled to Free School Meals with the exception of children attending Special Schools.
	<p>How will Free School Meals be paid/provided?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During period where the specific year group is engaging in remote learning, provision in lieu of free school meals will be made (by direct payment) to those children entitled to free school meals while normally in school.
	<p>Will the EU Milk in Schools scheme continue?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your school avails of the '<i>EU Milk in Schools Scheme</i>', and if you require a reduced delivery for the children of key workers, please contact Dale Farm as soon as possible with your amended order details. Dale Farm's customer service number is 028 9037 2000.
<p style="text-align: center;">Devices</p> 	<p>Where can I find information on how to access IT devices or internet access for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on devices and a request form can be found on C2k exchange – click on the banner Requesting IT Devices & Wi-Fi.
<p style="text-align: center;">Online and Remote Learning</p>	<p>Where can I get guidance on</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EA 'Supporting Learning' website provides access to a range of support and guidance materials. It can be accessed through the

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	<p>supporting remote / home learning?</p> 	<p>‘Supporting Learning’ icon on the front page of C2K ‘My-School’ or via the following link: https://sites.google.com/c2ken.net/teacherprofessionallearning-ea/home The sections titled ‘TPL’ and ‘Case Studies’ are of particular relevance.</p>
	<p>How can I evaluate our readiness for Home Learning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In early December EA provided a checklist on readiness for home learning for all schools via the C2K noticeboard. Attached as Appendix Three

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4. Post-Primary Schools

4.1 Key Points

From Monday 8th March until Friday 19th March:

- Post-Primary schools should continue to provide remote learning for all pupils and supervised learning for vulnerable children and the children of key workers.

From Monday 22nd March to the planned Easter Break:


- Post-Primary Schools are open for face to face teaching and learning of pupils in years 12 to 14, who will be awarded qualifications in summer 2021.
- Post-Primary Schools are not open for face to face teaching of pupils in years 8-11 and should accommodate registered pupils from these year groups who are vulnerable or who are the children of key workers for supervised learning, and support remote learning for all other pupils.

After Easter

- Post-Primary Schools should plan to open for face to face teaching and learning of Year 12, 13 and 14 pupils who will be awarded qualifications in summer 2021 only.

This situation remains under review by the NI Executive and is subject to change throughout March.

4.2 Common Questions for Post-Primary Schools

Area	Question	Answer
<p>Staff</p> 	<p>Are staff expected to be in school?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff should work remotely where they can do so effectively and fully, but when required by their Principal / line manager to attend school for an essential reason they are expected to do so. This may mean that staff attend as the timetable requires plus any duties associated with supervised learning for key worker or vulnerable children. Required attendance in school would of course be subject to any personal medical or exceptional circumstances. • A virtual first approach should be taken with regards to other activities such as staff meetings, interviews etc. • It is expected that teaching and/or support staff will supervise and support vulnerable and key worker children in engaging with the remote learning tasks and activities provided to all pupils. This will include providing support, explanations and directions in regard to the remote learning materials. • There should be teachers available on site to provide the necessary oversight and direction


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		<p>where they are not directly involved in supervising remote learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom assistants who provide support to children with statements should continue to support these children - directly for those who attend school and remotely where they are at home. • All school staff are defined as Key Workers and so can access supervised learning in their child's own school for school aged children. Childcare provision remains unchanged. It is understood that there may be some staff who still find difficulties due to caring responsibilities. In these circumstances, staff should liaise with their Principal/Line Manager regarding potential alternative working options, in line with normal arrangements.
	<p>Can schools access additional staff to support a mixture of face to face teaching, remote learning and supervision?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Minister has agreed flexibility to maximise the use of COVID funding in 2020-21. NISTR teachers may be engaged where required. If a school requires additional Classroom Assistants, please contact the EA Emergency Resourcing Team by emailing Emergency.Resourcing@eani.org.uk. All Covid related expenditure should be recorded.
	<p>Are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) staff expected to be in school?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) people who are working and are unable to do so from home are advised not to attend the workplace. (Currently being reviewed by PHA) • The Department would emphasise that this is advice only. People are free to make their own judgements about whether or not they should attend work, depending on the Covid-security of their working environment. However, the general restrictions which apply to everyone must be followed https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you. • Anyone who cannot attend work due to this advice will be eligible for their normal pay, as was the case when shielding was introduced at the start of the pandemic. CEV people will receive a letter for their employer, and they do not need to get a fit note from their GP. • This advice applies to clinically extremely vulnerable individuals only. Others living in a household with someone who is clinically

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		<p>extremely vulnerable are not advised to follow it, but should continue to stringently follow the guidance on social distancing, face coverings and hand hygiene.</p>
	<p>Will I still be paid if I am unable to attend work as a result of the change in restrictions and I am not Clinically Extremely Vulnerable?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff impacted by the changes who are unable to attend the workplace or unable to be given alternative working options will be paid as normal, including substitute teachers who were booked to work from 4 January 2021 and staff scheduled to work hours for Extended Schools programmes.
<p>Pupils</p> 	<p>What is expected for our pupils during these restrictions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Monday 22nd March Post-Primary Schools are open for face to face teaching and learning of pupils in years 12 to 14, who will be awarded qualifications in summer 2021. • Post primary schools are required to continue to provide remote learning at home to their Year 8-11 pupils until further notice. • School provision is mandatory for children of key workers and vulnerable children in all year groups and this provision should operate over normal school hours. It is not, however, mandatory for pupils in Years 8-11 to attend school during this period of remote learning. • The Board of Governors and Principals are reminded that the Department's policy is that only one parent needs to be a key worker for a pupil to be allowed to attend school. This will be kept under review by DE • CCEA is providing specific guidance on the administration of the Summer 2021 examinations series. Further details should be sought from CCEA or other awarding bodies.
	<p>How should absences be recorded?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance and absences should be recorded on SIMS, as is usual practice. • Year 12, 13 and 14 pupils attending school from Monday 22nd March should be recorded using normal school attendance codes. • Pupils remaining as remote should be recorded as per DE Circular 2020/08 and associated addendum. • If pupils are not engaging in learning then schools need to ascertain why. Attendance Code options include (per DE Circular 2020/08 and associated addendum(effective from 04/01/21): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Code D "No reason provided"

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Code H “Other Absence” ○ Code N “No reason yet provided” ○ Code } “Covid-19 Self-Isolating – No evidence of learning from home” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Principal discretion is important. Some pupils may not be capable of engaging in remote learning due to health or other challenges. In these cases Principals and Senior Teachers should use a Code that reflects the individual's circumstances.
	If there is a special unit in my school is it open or closed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A Special Unit will be open for face to face teaching and learning for pupils in Years 12,13 and 14. ● A Special Unit will not be open for face to face teaching and learning for pupils in Years 8-11, however, vulnerable or key worker children can still attend the school for supervised learning. ● Where a number of children from a unit are attending the school should work to maintain their routine environment.
	Can my school cluster with other schools to provide supervised learning for Key Worker and Vulnerable Children?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Schools should first assess the level of demand for and uptake of provision in their own school first. If demand is very low then they can make local arrangements with schools in their immediate area. ● Schools must ensure that they remain contactable by their own parents and pupils, and schools are required to respond to requests for support with remote learning.
	How will targeted services be delivered by Children and Young People’s Services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact can be made directly with all CYP Services. Service contact details can be found on the EA website. ● The online Training Calendar can also be accessed at https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-11/Supporting%20Children%20and%20Young%20People%27s%20Training%20Booklet%20V3.7%20131120.pdf ● Advice, guidance and support to school staff, and families where appropriate, will be done on a remote basis, but can be arranged for school sites as is necessary. ● Child Protection Support Service continues to operate within the context of COVID to support all schools and young people. Schools should continue to follow Child Protection Guidance and procedures.


Information Correct at 03/03/21

This document will be kept under review and updates will be issued if required.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Educational Psychology Service will use a blend of remote assessment and face-to-face assessment, test administration, as well as indirect and direct consultations with parents and teachers and other professionals depending on the individual circumstances of each case. • The SEN Assessment and Review Service (Statutory Operations) continue to deliver through; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Referral and progression of statutory assessments ○ Annual Reviews and maintenance of statements of Special Educational Needs, ○ Management of the statutory processes linked to the Transfer and placement of pupils to Nursery, P1 and Post Primary Schools. • A suite of SEN resources relevant to each service can be found on EAs website https://www.eani.org.uk/services/pupil-support-services/. • Services supporting pupils directly will plan with the school or parents of pupils known to services to determine, plan and facilitate an appropriate pathway as appropriate. Services will prioritise vulnerable young people accessing school sites, and will provide services as usual within the setting, as is possible and appropriate to do so. • Where possible, Services directly supporting young people will be delivered in school in accordance with presenting need and risk assessment. Independent Counselling for Schools continues to deliver on a flexible model of support including onsite provision, telephone and online sessions. • EOTAS and ETA continue to deliver to young people with home sessions now delivered remotely, in the majority of cases. • Principals and Senior Teachers should plan locally for vulnerable young people who attend Partnership Placements at EOTAS. • Generic youth provision has moved online under the discretion of Management Committees and EA Youth Service will continue to lead on targeted provision for vulnerable and at risk young people, including limited face to face work (with
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Information Correct at 03/03/21

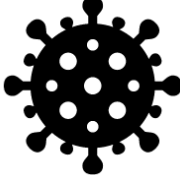

This document will be kept under review and updates will be issued if required.

		<p>mitigations in place to limit the spread of the virus) where this is deemed appropriate and to provide support under existing protocols to PSNI.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix Four of this document contains details of how targeted services for pupils will be delivered.
<p>Face Coverings</p> 	<p>Rationale for Face Coverings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The latest scientific advice from the World Health Organisation, and from the Chief Medical Officer and Chief Scientific Officer, is that face coverings should be worn within education settings, unless a reasonable excuse applies under public health guidance.
	<p>In Post-Primary School Settings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In post primary education settings it is recommended best practice for teachers, classroom assistants to wear face coverings when a physical distance of 2 metres from other staff and students cannot be maintained. • It is compulsory for post primary pupils to wear face coverings in school and at drop off pick up areas unless an exemption applies. • Face coverings are strongly recommended to be worn by adults and compulsory for pupils/young people in post-primary schools (including special schools and independent and grant aided schools) when moving about the school in corridors and confined communal areas (including toilets) where physical distancing is particularly difficult to maintain.
	<p>Face Coverings for Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside of classrooms, face coverings must be worn by adults and pupils where they cannot keep 2m distance and are interacting face-to-face with other adults and/or children and young people; and, by all adults visiting the school site. • Face coverings must be worn for activities that entail large numbers of staff or pupils within an enclosed space where social distancing is not possible. • As Post-Primary pupils must use face coverings during the routine school day, it is considered best practice for teachers and support staff to wear them. Schools should also be aware that some persons (including children) are exempt from wearing face coverings and this should be treated sensitively. • <u>No one should be excluded from school for failure to have or wear a face covering.</u> • Face covering for teachers is a permitted expense under Covid expenditure.

Information Correct at 03/03/21





This document will be kept under review and updates will be issued if required.

	Using Face Coverings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face coverings should not be shared with others. • Before putting on or removing the face covering, hands should be cleaned by washing with soap and water or hand sanitiser. • Make sure the face covering is the right size to cover the nose, mouth and chin. Children should be taught how to wear the face covering properly, including not touching the front and not pulling it under the chin or into their mouth. • When temporarily storing a face covering (e.g. during classes), it should be placed in a washable, sealed bag or container. Avoid placing it on surfaces, due to the possibility of contamination. • Re-usable face coverings should be washed after each day of use in school at 60 degrees centigrade or in boiling water. • Disposable face coverings must be disposed of safely and hygienically. Children and young people should be encouraged not to litter and to place their face coverings in the general waste bin. They are not considered to be clinical waste in the same way that used PPE may be.
	Exemptions for Face Coverings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should also be aware that some persons (including children) are exempt from wearing face coverings and this should be treated sensitively. • <u>No one should be excluded from school for failure to have or wear a face covering.</u> • Examples of reasonable excuses can be found at Appendix Six of this document and include physical or mental impairment or disability, and causing severe distress.
	Visors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visors only protect the eyes and are only required where there is a risk of splashing. They are therefore only recommended for basic PPE when worn with a mask, plastic apron and gloves, as they do not offer the same protection as a mask or face covering which cover the nose and the mouth. • They offer little protection worn on their own and are not recommended for routine use in schools. Staff remain free to procure and wear them at their own expense.
Covid19 Response	Do I have to update Covid19 Risk Assessments?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools must review and update their risk assessments regularly to reflect any adaptations introduced to their operations. • The EA have reviewed and revised risk assessment templates. These can be accessed

		<p>through the C2K exchange. Go to Exchange > Resources > Covid19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	<p>How will Bubble Management work for supervised learning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the number of pupils with settings are reduced it is reasonable for schools to reduce interaction and contact by maintaining a bubble at year group level. Bubbles should however not exceed normal class size. With smaller numbers of pupils, it is acceptable to use a single room, with 2m social distancing. • Where possible schools should operate single consistent groups (bubbles). These have two main purposes. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To reduce the total number of contacts every individual has 2. To make the identification of contacts easier should a case of COVID be confirmed within a school • At times it may be necessary to change membership of bubbles. For example, to provide safe staff cover. There is no requirement to have a period of “isolation” or break before an individual joins a new bubble. However, bubbles should be kept as consistent as possible and where possible staff should not move across multiple bubbles as a matter of routine. • If a new bubble needs to be formed this should be retained . • For supervised learning children from the same household should be placed in the same bubble where possible.
	<p>Are Confirmed Cases helplines still in place?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The confirmed cases helpline and PHA support to schools remains active during this time.
<p>School Transport</p> 	<p>Is school transport operating?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School transport will operate as normal from Monday 22nd March to Wednesday 31st March for Yr12-14 pupils. • Transport for children of key workers or vulnerable pupils, who are entitled to transport assistance, will continue to be available from 8th March to 31st March (with the exception of 17th March). • Any KW & V pupil who received a ‘bespoke’ Translink service should revert to their normal Translink service from 22nd March - www.translink.co.uk/usingtranslink/schoolservice_sNEW.

Information Correct at 03/03/21

This document will be kept under review and updates will be issued if required.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools should submit new requests for transport assistance for KW & V pupils via C2K. Post-primary pupils must wear a face covering on transport (medical exemptions may apply).
<p style="text-align: center;">School Meals</p> 	<p>Are School Meals available?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 22nd March until the planned Easter break, the school meals service will be operate as normal for years 12-14. If a child cannot attend school during this period, due to the revised reasons set out by DE, and are entitled to a FSM and wish to order a FSM Box they should order these boxes through the Principal and the Unit Catering Manager as they did previously in 2020. All key workers and vulnerable children must bring a packed lunch each day they are attending school. Direct payment is being made to all children on remote learning entitled to Free School Meals.
	<p>How will Free School Meals be paid/provided?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During period where the specific year group is engaging in remote learning, provision in lieu of free school meals will be made (by direct payment) to those children entitled to free school meals while normally in school.
<p style="text-align: center;">Devices</p> 	<p>Where can I find information on how to access IT devices or internet access for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on devices and a request form can be found on C2k exchange – click on the banner Requesting IT Devices & Wi-Fi.
<p style="text-align: center;">Online and Remote Learning</p> 	<p>Where can I get guidance on supporting remote / home learning?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EA 'Supporting Learning' website provides access to a range of support and guidance materials. It can be accessed through the 'Supporting Learning' icon on the front page of C2K 'My-School' or via the following link: https://sites.google.com/c2ken.net/teacherprofessionallearning-ea/home The sections titled 'TPL' and 'Case Studies' are of particular relevance.
	<p>How can I evaluate our readiness for Home Learning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In early December EA provided a checklist on readiness for home learning for all schools via the C2K noticeboard. It is attached as Appendix Three of this document for your information.

APPENDIX ONE

Department of Education Definition of a Vulnerable Child (Jan 21)

The definition of Vulnerable Children as set out in the cross-departmental Vulnerable Children and Young People's Plan 2020 is: (<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-cross-departmental-covid-19-vulnerable-children-and-young-peoples-plan>)

- A child who has an assigned social worker because he or she is a child in need, in need of protection (or on the child protection register) or is a looked after child.
- A child in need includes young carers, children with disabilities, and children living in families where there is domestic abuse, substance abuse, and / or mental health difficulties.
- A child who is receiving support from, or has been referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- A child who has a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), a child who is accessing EOTAS, or a child who normally accesses Education Nurture Units.
- A child who is 'on-the-edge' of receiving support from children's social services.
- A child who is in need, including in need of protection, but whose need is not known to statutory services.
- A child who is not known to statutory or voluntary and community support services but who is vulnerable because their family is under increased pressure due to Covid-19 related circumstances.
- A young person who was previously a looked after child, whether or not they are receiving support from statutory services.
- A child who has been placed for adoption.
- Asylum seeking and refugee children and children whose parents have no recourse to public funds.

APPENDIX TWO

Department of Education Definition of a Key Worker (Jan 21)

(This will be kept under review by DE)

The Board of Governors and Principals are reminded that the Department's policy is that only **one parent** needs to be a key worker for a pupil to be allowed to attend school.

- Health and Social Care. This includes doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, home carers and staff required to maintain our health and social care sector;
- Education and childcare. This includes pre-school and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who will remain active during the Covid-19 response;
- Public safety and national security. This includes civilians and officers in the police (including key contractors), Fire and Rescue Service, prison service and other national security roles;
- Transport. This will include those keeping air, water, road and rail transport modes operating during the Covid-19 response;
- Utilities, and Communication. This includes staff needed for oil, gas, electricity and water (including sewage) and primary industry supplies to continue during the Covid-19 response, as well as key staff in telecommunications, post and delivery, banking and waste disposal;
- Financial Services - This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure);
- Food and other necessary goods. This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution and sale, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (e.g. hygiene, medical, etc.);
- Retail. This includes those workers who have been working throughout the pandemic in food retail, for example, and will now extend to those working in other retail businesses permitted to operate by the Executive from June 2020;
- Other workers essential to delivering key public services such as the National Crime Agency; and
- Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.

APPENDIX THREE



Readiness for Continuity of Learning At Home

A basic checklist intended to help schools prepare for learning at home.

Access	<p><i>Please make sure that everyone can access learning.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Do all staff have internet access and a laptop or other device? b) Do all the learners have internet access and a laptop or other device? c) Do we know who has no internet/laptop/device? Can we address this? d) Do we know who has poor internet connection? e) In this case, how are we providing alternative learning materials, feedback and opportunities to speak with staff and peers? How often?
Routines	<p><i>Please do not try to replicate a school timetable.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Have we made online lesson protocols clear to keep everyone safe? b) Do we expect every learner to log in every day? c) What is our minimum expectation for teacher contact with each class? d) What is our minimum expectation of teacher-led lessons per day/week?
Wellbeing and engagement	<p><i>Please make sure the learners have regular two-way contact with their teachers and with peers.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Do we have a simple checklist for the learners of what the school expects of them? b) Do we have a daily point of contact for the learners with a pastoral focus, eg a morning greeting from Class Teacher/Form Teacher? c) Do we have a group online conversation for learners about how they are managing, eg with as a Form Class with their teacher? d) Do Classroom Assistants assigned to learners have a daily/weekly contact routine? e) If learners are not engaging, what are our approaches to help them? f) If a teacher is ill, what contingency do we have in place?
Teaching, Learning and feedback	<p><i>Please make sure there is a good balance of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) teacher-led, independent and collaborative learning; b) online and off-line learning; c) ways in which to collect the learners' work, eg typed and submitted; photographed pieces of writing or art; recorded piece; d) ways in which to provide feedback to the learners, eg individual, whole class, verbal, written, video, marks, grades and/or annotations.
Monitoring and evaluation	<p><i>Please make sure to keep regular checks that all of the agreed approaches, routines and structures are working well for the learners, their parents/carers and staff.</i></p>
Communication with parents/carers	<p><i>Please make sure there is regular two-way contact with parents/carers.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Do we have a clear and straightforward checklist for parents/carers, eg "What you can expect from our school"? b) Do we have clear and accessible guidance for parents on how to help their children access and engage in their learning and stay safe online? c) Are our parents/carers clear on how to make contact with the right staff member if their children have any difficulties related to their wellbeing or to their learning?

Information Correct at 03/03/21

This document will be kept under review and updates will be issued if required.

APPENDIX FOUR**Delivery of Targeted Services by Children and Young People's Services (January to Mid-Term Break 2021)**

- 1. How can I contact Services directly supporting young people?**
 - Child protection Support Service – 02895 985590
 - Critical Incident Support Service- 02837 512515
 - Primary Behaviour Support Service- 02838 314450
 - Post Primary Behaviour Support Service- 02890 566941
 - Children Looked After Helpline - 028 7051 1086
 - Statutory Operations - 028 9598 5960
 - Contact details for Pupil Support Services can be found here:
<https://www.eani.org.uk/services/pupil-support-services>

- 2. Is support available to help me identify and support my vulnerable young people?**
 - Education Welfare Officers (EWO) are available to support Principals and Senior Leadership Teams within Schools and statutory settings when identifying vulnerable young people, as required.
 - Special School Support Officers will also provide support to Special School Principals.
 - Cross-Organisational Link Officers (COLOs) are also available to provide support to school leaders through:
 - Providing accessible, one-to-one telephone/email/online contact :
 - Responding to queries;
 - Clarifying guidance as necessary and;
 - Engaging in conversations to support learning and well-being and signposting to further resources.
 - EA Officers will work collaboratively to provide you with the support you require.

- 3. Is EOTAS open for young people currently accessing placement?**

- 4. Yes, EOTAS Centres are open for all young people accessing a placement. Y Senior Teachers are available to discuss arrangements for individual young people, as necessary. If I have a Child Protection concern, who should I contact?**

The Child Protection Support Service will continue to support schools and statutory settings with all child protection matters, including the identification and response required for children who may be at risk of significant harm. You should continue to follow the normal Child Protection Guidance and call **02895 985590**.

5. How will Exceptional Teaching Arrangements be delivered?

Exceptional Teaching Arrangements usually delivered within the home will be delivered remotely in most cases. Staff will contact families directly to make necessary arrangements.

How will counselling be delivered during restrictions?

Counselling will be provided by the EA's Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) for post primary pupils in accordance with a risk assessment and as appropriate. This may be onsite, via telephone or secure online video calling. Counsellors will be made available on the same day each week as they would normally have been in the young person's school.

Referrals will be made through the school's key contact as normal, who will then liaise with the school counsellor as appropriate. The key contact will provide the counsellor with the young person's contact details to facilitate the session(s).

6. How will EA Support Services directly supporting children and young people be delivered in restrictions?

All Pupil Support Services continue to operate as critical services. EA Pupil Support Services will deliver a blended approach incorporating both remote support and face-face delivery as appropriate. All face-to face delivery will be in accordance with EA risk assessment processes and PHA guidance.

Contact numbers for each of the Pupil Support Services can be found on the EA Website. A suite of advice and guidance materials and resources are available on the EA website. SENCOs may also continue to access the G suite platform co-ordinated by the SEND Implementation team where further support can be accessed.

BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT AND PROVISIONS

The Services continue to offer training, advice and support, and targeted interventions as appropriate through usual referral processes. Guidance and support in relation to policy development and risk assessment requirements provided as requested.

Service staff can support with multi-disciplinary planning for young people accessing school during restrictions.

Both Services operate a fulltime telephone advisory support line for Special School staff.
Numbers as noted above

Primary Behaviour Support and Provisions issue a newsletter every other week.

<https://www.eani.org.uk/educational-resources-newsletters>

This is a resource pack for families in relation to staying safe physically but also emotionally and mentally at this time using the Health and Social Care Take 5 framework. The newsletter is packed with lots of suggestions linked to the five steps of wellbeing – Give, Be Active, Connect, Keep Learning, Take Notice. This can be used in the home or classroom.

YOUTH SERVICE

REACH (Resilience Education Allowing Change to Happen) is a service supporting pupils as part of the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Framework. Youth workers provide individual and whole class support both online and in person as requested within the themes of wellbeing for all; early support and enhanced support. A key part of the service is the support of parents and families which provides bespoke programmes and interventions with a focus on building family strengths. This service can be contacted by emailing youthoperations@eani.org.uk.

The Learning Together Programme is available to support KS2, 3 and 4 pupils on the themes of transitions; teambuilding, making positive choices, speaking up, build up, skill up. This service can be requested by emailing youthoperations@eani.org.uk.

7. How will the Education Psychology Service be delivered through the restrictions?

The Education Psychology Service will continue to carry out and progress:

- Consultations and Assessments
- Assessments as part of the Statutory Assessment process and Annual Reviews
- Pre-school Referrals/ Triage Arrangements with Health & Social Care Trusts
- Work within Multi-Agency Support Teams

The service will deliver a blend of remote support and face-to face support as appropriate.

Face to face support and assessments will be fully risk assessed in line with PHA guidance. Schools should continue to liaise with the Education Psychologist linked to their school. Schools, parents and other professionals can continue to contact their local Educational Psychology office if they have any concerns about a child or young person. Schools should continue to progress referrals through the Service's portal in line with agreed protocols.

8. Will Statutory Assessments and Annual Reviews continue to be progressed?

The SEN Assessment and Review Service (Statutory Operations) will continue to operate to ensure delivery of service to parents and schools. This will include progressing:

- The statutory assessment processes including referrals
- Annual Reviews and the maintenance of statements of Special Educational Needs,
- Management of the statutory processes linked to the Transfer and placement of pupils to Nursery, Preschool Primary 1 and Post Primary Schools.

Schools and parents can contact individual local offices and are encouraged to communicate, where possible, by email with their SEN Link Officer. The SEN Helpline **(028 9598 5960)** continues to be available to parents for general SEN advice and guidance. Schools can continue to use the SEN Office mailbox addresses to submit documentation and reports.

9. How will the Children Looked After Team continue to support schools?

Information Correct at 03/03/21

This document will be kept under review
and updates will be issued if required.

- The Children Looked After Education Project Team continues to provide support to the Team around all Children looked after of statutory school age through a Helpline (028 7051 1086) and Electronic Post Box lookedafterchildren@eani.org.uk
- The Children Looked After Project Team will provide targeted COVID-19 support to a specific cohort of primary Schools with the highest numbers of Children Looked After registered

10. Can vulnerable young people considered clinically extremely vulnerable access onsite provision?

Provision for CEV young people should be risk assessed using the Generic Covid-19 RA Template for 'CEV pupils. This should be completed after consultation with the parents and the child's doctor where appropriate. The control measures identified should be implemented. If one of those measures suggests that the child can only be considered safe from Covid when at home, then the parents/carers should respect this process of assessment and engagement. (I have asked PHA if this remains as appropriate advice)

APPENDIX FIVE

Provision for Vulnerable Children and Young People

It is the responsibility of the school Principal/Preschool Leader/Management Committee to continue to provide educational support onsite for all vulnerable young people. As all children who attend special schools and EOTAS are regarded as vulnerable, provision should be made available onsite at these settings. For mainstream schools this could be for a significant percentage of the school cohort. Although not mandatory to attend, some families may require this provision on the school site. The first point of contact for families and Health and Social Care Trusts should always be the school/DE funded preschool setting.

Identifying Vulnerable Children and Young People

It is recognised that school and education staff know their children and young people best and can work with families, Education Authority Services and Health and Social Care Services to identify a young person's needs and put appropriate provision in place at this time.

Schools and education settings should use information already available to them through the school's pastoral care and safeguarding systems, and their knowledge of children and families to identify those children who are vulnerable and/or those most vulnerable.

Support for Schools

If a statutory school or education setting requires further advice on Covid related issues they can liaise with the school's Educational Welfare Officer, their Special School Support Officer or Covid Cross Organisational Link Officer (COLO) for support and guidance, as below.

Cross-Organisational Link Officers (COLOs) are also available to provide support. The role of the COLO is as follows:

- Provide accessible, one-to-one telephone/email/online contact to all Special Schools;
- Responding to queries;
- Clarifying guidance as necessary;
- Engaging in conversations to support learning and well-being and signposting to further resources.

Where a school requires additional support to facilitate supervised learning of a vulnerable young person, the Principal should contact their Educational Welfare Officer or, where appropriate, the relevant SEN Support Service. Special Schools should contact their Special school Support Officer in this regard.

Where a school requires additional support to facilitate supervised learning of a vulnerable young person, the Principal should call a multi-disciplinary meeting with the necessary EA Officers, and Health and Social Care services, as is appropriate. This multi-agency approach will assist in finding resolution **in circumstances where a parent/carer disagrees with decision** regarding access to school for supervised learning for a vulnerable child/young person, the Principal should call a meeting for multidisciplinary consideration of the child's need and circumstance.

Information Correct at 03/03/21

This document will be kept under review
and updates will be issued if required.

- Mainstream Principals should contact their school Education Welfare Officer to arrange this meeting.
- Special School Principals should contact their Special School Support Officer to arrange this meeting.
- EOTAS Senior Teachers should contact their Advisor to arrange this meeting.

This multi-disciplinary meeting may include representatives from:

1. Education Welfare Service
2. Children Looked After Team
3. Child Protection Support Service
4. Youth Service
5. Special Education
6. SEN Pupil Support Services
7. Behaviour Support Services
8. Education Psychology
9. Health Services
10. HSC Children Services
11. Parents/Carers

Attendance will be dependent on the presenting needs of the child.

EA officers will work with the principal, family and Services to find resolution and seek to meet the child's needs within the context presented. This may include additional EA support for the school and/or child/young person.

Parents/carers can contact EA Support Services, as appropriate, dependent on presenting vulnerabilities and needs.

APPENDIX SIX

Exemptions from wearing a face covering

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-face-coverings#toc-5>

You don't have to wear a face covering in a public indoor place:

- if you are under the age of 13
- if you are a member of staff or employee of the shop, shopping centre or bank and are behind a partition, or if you are in an area not open to the public and can maintain a two metre social distance from your colleagues
- If you have a reasonable excuse not to

You do not have to wear a face covering on passenger transport or in a passenger transport station:

- if you are still at primary school
- if you are a member of staff and are behind a protective screen

An employee of a shop or shopping centre can tell you to wear a face covering, and can tell you to leave the shop or shopping centre if you refuse to wear one and do not have a reasonable excuse not to.

Some circumstances make it difficult for some people to wear face coverings. In these circumstances people may have a 'reasonable excuse' not to wear a face covering.

These reasonable excuses include:

- If you need to seek medical assistance or to provide care to someone who needs assistance, such as a vulnerable person or in an emergency
- if you have a physical or mental illness or impairment, or a disability that means you cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering
- if putting on, wearing or removing a face covering would cause you severe distress
- if you are travelling with, or providing assistance to, someone who relies on lip reading to communicate
- if you need to remove it to avoid harm or injury or the risk of harm or injury to yourself or others
- if you need to eat, drink, or take medication
- if you are asked to remove your face covering by a police officer or someone who may need to check your identity, for example, when buying alcohol, when you are at the bank, or in an airport or when boarding an aircraft

There is no need to get a letter from a doctor or the government to show that you do not need to wear a face covering.

If you have a condition (for example, a disease such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis) which means you cannot wear a face covering you only need to say, if asked, that you cannot wear a face covering because you are exempt.

It is important that we all respect one another and remember that the reasons for not wearing a face covering may not always be visible.

If you do not wear a face covering and you are not exempt or do not have a reasonable excuse for not wearing one, you are committing an offence and could be fined.

Information Correct at 03/03/21

This document will be kept under review
and updates will be issued if required.