

# SAFE RETURN TO SCHOOLS & EARLY YEARS

## Information Pack & Safety Checklist

**Every School needs a Safety Rep!**

**Elect a safety rep in your setting:**

For those returning to work – or working alongside colleagues as they come back into the workplace – we need to ensure that the risks to staff and children are assessed and managed. The aim is to make workplaces “COVID secure”.

UNISON is negotiating with the Education Authority and employers constantly about staff safety. However every school setting needs a health and safety rep for a return to work.

Contact UNISON on 02890 270190 now. If you are already working in one of the schools providing service to key workers – we will support you to safety get together as a staff group to choose a H&S rep. Alternatively, UNISON can support you to set up an online meeting.

Protect your colleagues, build UNISON’s strength and make sure you and your colleagues are kept safe by becoming a UNISON safety rep.

For health and safety guidance visit our website: <https://www.unison.org.uk/health-safety-education>

**A safety rep tackles important issues:**

- Social distancing rules
- Any new working arrangements
- PPE
- Reasonable adjustments

**Your employer must:**

- Identify hazards that may harm their staff.
- Identify those staff at risk.
- Estimate the chance of harm occurring.
- Identify ways to avoid or reduce the risk.
- Record the assessment and keep it under review and up to date.

**We need to strengthen the union at your workplace to keep staff safe and informed!**

**How to raise a concern or become a H&S Rep?**

If you have concerns about what is happening in your workplace or would like to become a H&S rep, please contact UNISON on 02890 270190. You can also find your local branch details on our website: [www.unison.org.uk/branches](https://www.unison.org.uk/branches)

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Be on the **safe** side

Be a safety rep and make your workplace safer



For further information, or to join UNISON, contact 02890 270190

# SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

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## UNISON – Promoting the health & safety of all education workers

UNISON is the largest trade union representing education staff in NI.

We understand how important it is to open up schools again to all pupils, and especially how important it is that vulnerable children and the most disadvantaged pupils receive as much support as possible. However, UNISON has consistently opposed the premature expansion of pupil numbers in schools and nurseries due to health and safety concerns.

To open more widely, schools and nurseries must have produced a plan and a risk assessment to ensure the safety of pupils and staff. Government guidance also says that schools must work with unions on their plans.

Risk assessments and plans are vital, and employers must consult all staff on them in good time before it is safe to return.

Also, risk assessments are live documents and must be constantly updated to reflect changing circumstances.

UNISON'S aim in the extensive negotiations we are undertaking with the NI Executive, Department of Education and employers is to ensure the safety of staff who are currently working and other

workers as they return to workplaces in the coming weeks and months.



The purpose of this pack is to make UNISON involvement in Covid-19 related health & safety a reality on the ground for our growing number of members in schools.

Staff have skills, they know their jobs. They must be included at the start of any local planning of expansion and reopening.

We need risk assessments, staff training and clear guidance on safe working practices to ensure that children and staff are safe. This is no time for short cuts.

**If you would like to train for a role at your workplace in promoting Covid safety please contact UNISON on 02890270190.**

## UNISON's key health & safety concerns

Education staff can't avoid close contact with children, especially young children. They comfort them, give medicines, support children with disabilities, support children in the dining room, playground and classroom. The safety of all is vital and we need to all be properly prepared.

UNISON'S aim in our negotiations with the Government, the Department and employers is to ensure the safety of staff who are currently working and other workers as they return to workplaces in the coming weeks and months. There is a great deal more work to be done to ensure the safety of staff with increased numbers of children attending.

Our key concerns include the following:

- UNISON reps need to be involved in local planning to ensure agreement round safe opening of schools.
- There needs to be agreed risk assessments produced before workplaces become operational.
- Testing, tracing and isolation (TTI): needs to be in place to ensure children are not bringing Covid-19 into schools.
- Appropriate guidance round safety and infection control needs to be in place.
- Risk assessments need to be done for settings but also for staff and pupils who have specific health concerns.
- Training for staff re new ways of working re COVID-19.
- Cleaning plans and supplies for COVID-19: Who? What? When? how often?

- Appropriate PPE: what it is for settings and staff? PPE supplies need to then be available in appropriate quantities.
- Decisions need to be made about the safe capacity of individual settings.
- Space in school office? Should admin and clerical staff continue to work from home? What support and equipment will they need?
- Safe drop off and collection plans need to be organized.
- School transport plans need to be in place.
- Staff room space/cleaning needs to be reviewed.
- Equipment sharing; what can be shared and how is it kept clean?
- Changes to staff/child ratios to meet COVID-19 new ways of working.
- Utilising more outdoor space: a great deal of work is needed to put more outdoor space into safe use.



## Staff who will not return

General public health guidance remains in place. Education staff still require to follow the rules on self isolation; seeking tests if symptomatic; shielding if falling within that category due to underlying health conditions.

There are contractual arrangements in place to cover these absences and how they will be treated in relation to attendance management and sick pay. Please see relevant Education Authority guidance on this.

The 'blended' learning model is currently under discussion with teaching and support serve unions. It may mean that digital and paper resources require to be provided to those not attending in class.

A proportion of the work undertaken by those in the school family may similarly still required to be undertaken from home.

School staff will have their own childcare and other caring responsibilities. Agreement will need to be in place to cover such absences.



# Current NI Department of Education guidance on schools reopening

On 23 June **New School Day guidance** was issued by the Department of Education. It is focused on how to phase staff back into the workplace and supplements any specific guidance and social distancing protocols linked to schools.

UNISON will be engaging with the EA on the implications for all support service workers and the issues raised by our members

The Guidance suggests:

- that for the majority of school based staff it may not be feasible to work from home.
- 2m social distancing rule would be reduced to 1m between pupils, when schools reopen in September.
- There will be an element of part-time learning due to limitations - such as small classrooms - in some schools
- Primary school pupils should be in school for at least two days a week.
- Post-primary schools might be able to return to full-time education if they implement a so-called bubble model.
- Post-primary schools that can't do that should have pupils in school at least half the time.
- Secondary schools are urged to consider a new model whereby the teacher would move between classes, not the children.

- Children will be prevented from bringing items such as bags into the school setting and taking items out of school at the end of day.
- Pupils will be asked to wash their hands on arrival at schools and at regular intervals throughout the day.
- Consideration to a "no bell" strategy to allow flexibility on class start/finish times and avoid "the intensity of (pupil) flow."
- Further specific guidance for special and early years schools is being developed.

This guidance will be kept under review and updated in line with PHA or NI Executive changes.

For the most up to date version of this guidance please go to the DE and EA website.



## SECTION B: SAFETY CHECK – THE UNISON VIEW – A RESOURCE FOR WORKPLACE REPS

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UNISON is committed to working with Government and employers for the recovery of education services in NI. We must work together to ensure the safety, health, and wellbeing of all the staff, children and parents.

This document sets out the provisional conditions that UNISON requires to be considered and signed off prior to any joint statement being issued for the return of all education and related services.

These considerations should apply to all establishments and all staff working in all education settings of whatever type.

All School and Education estates should have individual recovery plans which must include risk assessments for all areas. There will also be a requirement for individual risk assessments where required including:

- Additional support needs
- Administration of medicine
- Medical interventions
- Equality Act rights of pupils & staff

### Key Areas:

All employers are obliged to work with the education unions to create the conditions for a safe return to schools based on the principles and tests set out below:

- Safety and welfare of children and staff as the paramount principle

- Limited numbers of pupils to ensure social/physical distancing can be assured
- Consideration of the specific needs of vulnerable pupils and families facing economic disadvantage
- Additional resources for enhanced cleaning, PPE and risk assessments
- Training for staff and awareness sessions to ensure they are fully familiar with the new arrangements being put in place
- Binding procedures and protocols for children or staff who display symptoms
- Where there is a requirement for homeworking consideration should be given to physical or social issues, costs beyond HMRC provision, accommodation, and equipment



### Breaks

Staff should have safe areas for regular breaks that comply with all guidance.

### School Transport

Risk Assessments should include driver/bus escort duties and safe working (cleaning of vehicle & limits on capacity) - current transport may not be suitable such as taxis etc.

## Peripatetic workers

Specific guidance and risk assessment will be required as they move from location to location.

The above list covers the main elements to facilitate dialogue and negotiations during these unprecedented times.

Also note that every school is unique and, whilst there will be many common features, each will need to consider any additional relevant risk factors beyond what is set out in this joint commentary and checklist. This will include when a high incidence of infections develops in a particular area.

## Questions for reps to answer

### Overall

Have you been consulted on the risk assessment for extended opening of your school? Yes No

Are you satisfied that it addresses all key issues?

 Yes  No

## Step 1

### Preparing the Site

#### Health and Safety Check of the Building

Are you satisfied that these checks will be complied with in time for extended opening?

 Yes  No

## Step 2

### Reviewing staff for availability in school

#### Audit of staff

Are you satisfied that safe staffing levels will be in place from when the school starts to open more widely?

 Yes  No

#### If there is no Head/Deputy, DSL, SENCO, caretaker/cleaning staff available

Will the school close if any of these key staff are unavailable? If not, are you satisfied that a safe environment can be maintained from when the school starts to open more widely?

 Yes  No

#### Cleaning and hygiene

Are you satisfied with the cleaning and hygiene arrangements that will operate from when extended opening begins?

 Yes  No

## **Movement around the school to reduce contact**

Are you satisfied that staff and children will be able to move safely through the corridors and up and down stairs from the date when the school opens more widely?

 Yes  No

## **Step 3**

### **Familiarise yourself with the maximum safe group size**

Are you satisfied that adequate arrangements for group sizes, social distancing and PPE where necessary will be in place when extended opening begins?

 Yes  No

### **Site Examination**



Are you satisfied that these arrangements will be in place in time for extended opening and they will work on a practical level?

 Yes  No

## **Step 4**

### **Creating and staffing your temporary teaching groups**

Are you satisfied that the arrangements to operate from when the school opens more widely are safe and fair and will be acceptable to both teachers and learning support workers?

 Yes  No

## **Step 5**

Practical steps to reduce risk

Are you satisfied that these issues have been resolved to your satisfaction in time for the start of extended opening? Yes No

 Yes  No

## **Step 6**

### **External support for SEND and behaviour**

Are you satisfied that these issues have been considered and that measures covering these areas will be in place in time for extended opening?

 Yes  No

## **Step 7**

### **Changes to routines for staff and pupils**

Are you satisfied that these issues have been adequately addressed before extended opening begins?

 Yes  No



## Step 8

### Communicating with staff

Are you satisfied that this issue has been adequately addressed before extended opening begins?

Yes  No

## Step 9

### Communicating with parents

Are you satisfied that parents are aware of what is expected of them?

Yes  No

## Step 10

### Managing pupil and staff wellbeing and mental health

Are you satisfied that appropriate measures will be in place when the school begins to open more widely?

Yes  No

## Step 11

### Planning what to teach and how

Are you satisfied that these issues will be adequately addressed by the time extended opening begins?

Yes  No

## Step 12

### Remote education during wider opening

Are you satisfied that the school will be able to operate on both levels with the staffing available and without increasing the pressure on staff, when extended opening begins?

Yes  No

# Questions for reps to ask

## Step 1

### Preparing the Site

#### Health and Safety Check of the Building

##### Questions for reps to ask:

Has the safety check been through consultation between the union and management?

Has confirmation been given to you that each of these points will be addressed in advance of reopening for schools that have been entirely closed?

Have assurances been given in writing about the safety of the following areas?

- hot and cold water systems
- gas safety
- fire safety
- kitchen equipment

- Specialist equipment used by pupils (eg for access/mobility/changing)
- security including access control and intruder alarm systems
- ventilation

Are you satisfied that these checks will be complied with in time for extended opening?



### Cleaning and hygiene

Guidance states education providers should make clear to school staff and parents what their 'expectations' are about cleaning and hygiene.

It suggests that they 'may wish to consider plans' for the following:

- The availability of soap and hot water in every toilet and any areas used for personal care of pupils eg changing (and if possible in classrooms).
- The location of hand sanitizer stations, for example at the school entrance for pupils and any other person passing into the school to use, and their replenishment.
- The location of lidded bins in classrooms and in other key locations around the site for the disposal of tissues and any other potentially infected waste, their double bagging and emptying.
- Ensuring you have a good supply of disposable tissues in each classroom and enough to top up regularly, as well as lidded bins with double

bagging for disposal, with any other potentially infected waste, and where these should be located.

### Questions for reps to ask:

Reps need assurances about the systems that the head teacher will be able to implement. Without these assurances there can be no 'expectations' on either staff or parents.

- ⓐ Will soap and, preferably warm, water be available at all times, with systems in place to ensure continuity of supply of soap and sanitizer?



- ⓐ How will the school ensure that children and staff arriving can safely queue up, at 2-metre distance from each other, to access the sanitizer on arrival?
- ⓐ Will staffing levels (and PPE) allow for enough staff to support those pupils in special schools to do this who are unable to do it independently?
- ⓐ Are lidded bins available in every classroom? Unless operated by pedal, the lids will need to be regularly sanitised throughout the day. How will this happen? Who will empty them during the day?
- ⓐ What arrangements are in place to keep every classroom supplied with tissues?
- ⓐ Will staff and children wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with water and soap on arrival, before departure and regularly throughout the day, including before and after every break and

lunchtime, and how will this be supervised and monitored?

- ⓐ Will pupils be regularly reminded to catch coughs and sneezes with a tissue or elbow?
- ⓐ Will appropriate PPE be provided in schools where pupils are unable, or less able to catch their sneezes and coughs?
- ⓐ Will hand dryers be disconnected and replaced with paper towels and bins?
- ⓐ Will drinking fountains be taken out of use?
- ⓐ Will only rooms with windows that can be kept open be used?
- ⓐ Will doors be kept open where possible to aid ventilation?
- ⓐ Will separate risk assessments take place in classes where leaving a door open will expose children to additional risks (e.g. runners)?
- ⓐ Will air conditioning systems not be used unless it can be confirmed that there is no additional risk?
- ⓐ Will all areas of the premises be thoroughly cleaned on a daily basis with particular focus on surfaces that are touched by multiple people such as photocopiers, door handles, table/counter tops, computers including mouse and keyboard, light switches, telephones, chairs, bannisters, shared learning resources or toys, specialist equipment for ASN pupils, toilets and toilet handles, sinks, taps and other areas touched regularly, with additional cleaning during the day as necessary?
- ⓐ Will each classroom be provided with gloves and disinfectant spray in case a

pupil coughs or sneezes on a piece of equipment?

- ⓐ Is there capacity amongst the cleaning staff to meet these requirements?



- ⓐ

Are you satisfied with the cleaning and hygiene arrangements that will operate from when extended opening begins?

Yes  No

### **Movement around the school**

The guidance states that corridors to be used on a one-way basis.

### **Questions for reps to ask:**

- ⓐ Will a one-way system be introduced? If not why is it not needed?
- ⓐ What arrangements are proposed for safe movement on staircases?
- ⓐ What arrangements are in place for use of lifts - can social distancing be achieved if a staff member travels in the lift with a child?
- ⓐ How will staff and children be made aware of the new arrangements, with particular reference to very young children and those with special needs?

- ⓐ Who will monitor that the systems are being complied with? Will a member of staff be on duty at all times?
- ⓐ Are other measures needed in corridors, for example floor markings or removal of furniture or students walking in single file without holding hands?
- ⓐ Is there provision for the movement of pupils around the school who may need additional assistance from an adult?
- ⓐ How will pupils and staff keep 2-metres apart, even with these arrangements?
- ⓐ That arrangements are proposed around access to pupil toilets to ensure no overcrowding during lesson and break times?
- ⓐ What signage will be displayed to support these new systems?

Are you satisfied that staff and children will be able to move safely through the corridors and up and down stairs from the date when the school opens more widely?

Yes  No

### Site Examination

Head teachers are advised to examine the classrooms available and any other rooms that can be used as temporary classrooms. Suggests that essential resources may need to be moved from one classroom to another where classes are split and that non washable resources, other than books, should be taken away or put out of reach.

### Questions for reps to ask:

- ⓐ Given that classes will be split, how in practical terms can resources be split between two classrooms?
- ⓐ Will additional resources be needed to ensure that both classes have what they need?
- ⓐ How will young children be taught (reception especially and nursery) without physical resources?

Are you satisfied that these arrangements will be in place in time for extended opening and that they will work on a practical level?

Yes  No

## Step 2

### Reviewing staff for availability in school.

#### Audit of staff

Employer should undertake an audit of how many staff are available, both teaching and support staff.

### Questions for reps to ask:

Are you satisfied with the proposed rota arrangements?

Yes  No

Have you been given an assurance that there will always be a head/deputy, first aider, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Janitorial, catering and sufficient cleaning staff on duty at all times?

Yes  No

Are you satisfied that consistency can be ensured to minimise staff movement between classes?

Yes No

Has it been confirmed that sufficient cleaning staff will be engaged to allow for the enhanced cleaning levels required?

Yes No

Have you been given an assurance that non cleaning staff will not be expected to undertake cleaning work?

Yes No

Has the site been measured to ascertain what the maximum capacity is and proportion of pupils that can be accommodated to allow safe distancing? (This needs to adopt a cautious approach in relation to staff availability, taking into account those who must work from home because they are vulnerable or may need to self-isolate and likely future levels of absence.)

Yes No

Is it clear to all staff and parents that only healthy staff and pupils who are not exhibiting symptoms, and who do not need to self-isolate, may attend school?

Yes No

Is it clear that pregnant staff and those with underlying health conditions that make them vulnerable, or who live with or care for vulnerable or shielding household members or those over age of 70 are permitted to continue to work from home?

Yes No

Government advises that if 'vulnerable' as opposed to 'extremely vulnerable' staff cannot work from home 'they should be offered the safest available on-site roles,' also that a member of staff who lives with someone who is vulnerable can attend work. The joint unions disagree, both should be allowed to work from home.

Evidence from the Office for National Statistics shows a greater impact of Covid-19 on Black communities with a disproportionate number of deaths being recorded.

Have the risks to Black staff been assessed when planning rotas?

Yes No

Will parents be advised that the school cannot guarantee to be able to keep their children socially distant, with support for parents to assess the risks to themselves and other family members of sending their child to school?

Yes No

Are satisfactory arrangements in place for safe induction of new staff during this period?

Yes No

Have catering staff been involved in discussions about how meals will be served and are there sufficient catering and lunchtime supervision staff to ensure that children can safely eat their lunch?

Yes

No

Is there a procedure to close the school or college at short notice if staffing levels fall to levels where safety cannot be assured?

Yes

No

Are you satisfied that safe staffing levels will be in place from when the school starts to open more widely?

Yes

No

**If there is no Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher, Janitorial/adequate numbers of cleaning staff available**

**Questions for reps to ask:**

Will the school close if any of these key staff are unavailable?

Yes

No

If not, are you satisfied that a safe environment can be maintained from when the school starts to open more widely?

Yes

No

### Step 3

Familiarise yourself with the maximum safe group size.

The Planning Guide is explicit that 'unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff'.

**Questions for reps to ask:**

Given that social distancing is expected in all other areas of society, it is unacceptable that the Government expects schools to open without the protections that are recommended for other environments, e.g. shops and public transport. Are there satisfactory arrangements to address this issue?

Yes

No

Where there is a risk of airborne contamination, because social distancing cannot easily be adhered to, particularly where staff are at risk from spitting or biting and where pupils are unable to catch or control coughs and sneezes, the joint unions believe that PPE must be provided and training given on its use and disposal. Will this happen?

Yes

No

Will PPE be available for emergency situations, for example when a pupil develops symptoms during the school day and is awaiting collection?

Yes

No



- ⓐ What assurances can be given about secure arrangements for sourcing PPE? Can confirmation be given that, if any member of staff wishes to wear a face covering, they will not be prevented from doing so?

Yes  No

- ⓐ Are you satisfied that adequate arrangements for group sizes, social distancing and PPE where necessary will be in place when extended opening begins?

Yes  No

## Step 4

### Creating and staffing your temporary teaching groups

The next step is to work out how to accommodate the eligible pupils.

#### Questions for reps to ask:

- ⓐ How many pupils can each individual classroom safely accommodate to ensure that they and staff remain 2-metres apart on entry and departure and during the lesson? This needs to take account of the additional staff numbers in classes with SEND pupils who have individual adult support. How many people altogether will be in a classroom should be the measure.
- ⓐ What areas are safe to use for different purposes than usual to aid social distancing?
- ⓐ How many per class? Has account been taken of the fact that some staff, in particular support staff, normally work at close proximity to individual pupils and

how this work can continue in a safe manner?

- ⓐ In special schools, given the level of adult support required for pupils, what is a safe number of people to have in a classroom and how is this determined?

- ⓐ In special schools, where social distancing will be impossible, what measures are in place to protect staff and pupils?

- ⓐ To what extent can parents of ASN children be reassured that their child will still be working with, or have access to, their key worker/learning support assistant?

- ⓐ Is the school prepared to consider attendance on a rotational basis in order to reduce class sizes?

Yes  No

- ⓐ Can an assurance be given that classroom assistants, will not be expected to lead classes? Will supply teachers be brought in as necessary?

Yes  No

- ⓐ Will senior leaders be available to cover classes if needed?

Yes  No

- ⓐ Will parents be told not to bring their children to school if there is a shortage of staff for a particular class?

Yes  No

- ⓐ Are you satisfied that the arrangements to operate from when the school opens more widely are safe and fair and will be acceptable to both teachers, classroom assistants and ASN auxiliaries?



## Step 5

### Practical steps to reduce risk

#### Questions for reps to ask:

- ⓐ How does the school propose to ensure social distancing at the start and end of each school day?
- ⓐ What measures are in place to protect staff and pupils who may at times need to use physical interventions (in alternative provision (ASN) and mainstream) to protect pupils from harming themselves or others? (They will clearly not be able to socially distance when doing this)
- ⓐ In ASN and mainstream what measures are in place to ensure that enough appropriately trained staff are on site to support pupils with behavioural issues to keep safe? How and what PPE will be used in this situation?



- ⓐ Is it practical to stagger arrival times, if so how?
- ⓐ How will parents be informed and the system monitored?
- ⓐ Is there sufficient staffing to monitor the safe arrival and departure of children at varying times?
- ⓐ How will overcrowding at the school gates or in the playground be prevented?
- ⓐ What will be expected of parents/carers in terms of social distancing and how will they be informed of arrangements?
- ⓐ Will parents/carers be instructed that they may not enter the premises other than in an emergency situation?
- ⓐ Will there be clear guidelines on entry to school about the procedures in place for essential visitors to the school?
- ⓐ Will there be social distancing measures in place for visitors to the school?
- ⓐ Will visitors working closely with pupils be offered PPE where necessary?
- ⓐ How will other unauthorised visitors be kept away?
- ⓐ Will enough staff be available at the beginning of the day (and able to socially distance) to assist children in coming into school where needed (younger children/ children with ASN/anxiety etc)?
- ⓐ How will break times operate to ensure social distancing?
- ⓐ What will happen in wet weather at break and lunchtimes?
- ⓐ What arrangements are in place to ensure that meals can be safely prepared and served?



- ⓐ How many separate lunch sittings will be needed to ensure social distancing and is sufficient staffing in place to manage this, even where someone may be absent?
- ⓐ Have families been told to provide water bottles?
- ⓐ How will breaks for staff operate?
- ⓐ Have assemblies and the coming together of other large groups, both staff and pupils, been suspended?
- ⓐ Is there a system in place for isolating children who develop symptoms during the day, while they wait to be picked up?
- ⓐ Will all staff be sent home as soon as they report symptoms during the school day and will arrangements be in place to provide cover as necessary?
- ⓐ Have off site visits been suspended?
- ⓐ What are the plans for ensuring that staff can travel safely to and from school?
- ⓐ For those who have no car and cannot walk or cycle, how can they safely travel to school, when use of public transport is discouraged? (note: car sharing other than between members of the same household should not happen). A safe travel plan for each individual member of staff needs to be agreed.
- ⓐ Where school transport operates under normal circumstances, how will this operate at this time, ensuring social distancing and hygiene arrangements?
- ⓐ Are you satisfied that these issues have been resolved to your satisfaction in time for the start of extended opening?

Yes No

## Step 6

### External Support for ASN and Behaviour

#### Questions for reps to ask:

- ⓐ Will individual risk assessments and discussion with parents/carers have taken place and been agreed by the date when extended opening begins, to ensure that any provision required by a child in order to attend school is safely in place?
- ⓐ Where LAs cannot, despite 'best endeavours' provide the support listed in an EHC plan can pupil safety in school be guaranteed? Eg behaviour support.
- ⓐ Will there be clear guidelines on entry to school about the procedures in place for essential visitors from external agencies visiting pupils at the school (eg educational psychologists, child and adult mental health services (CAMHS), behavioural support, advisory teachers etc)?
- ⓐ Will there be social distancing measures in place for visitors from external support agencies visiting pupils at school?
- ⓐ Will visitors working closely with pupils be offered PPE where necessary?
- ⓐ If LAs cannot provide additional trauma support for pupils can another provider be quality assured and risk assessed in time for when the school begins to open more widely?
- ⓐ Are you satisfied that these issues have been considered and that measures covering these areas will be in place in time for extended opening?

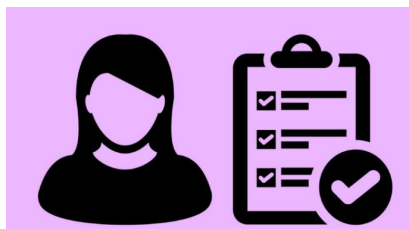
Yes No

## Step 7

### Changes to routines for staff and pupils

#### Questions for reps to ask:

- ⓐ Will guidance and training be provided for staff to ensure they understand, and can enforce, the new routines and support pupils in understanding them and are familiar with revised physical arrangements, well in advance on when wider opening begins?



- ⓐ Will individual pupil risk assessments be in place for all pupils who exhibit anti-social behaviour, eg biting, before a decision is made about admitting them under the new arrangements?
- ⓐ Will compassionate and proportionate behaviour policies that protect health and safety, while also supporting pupils who may exhibit problematic behaviours as a response to trauma they may have experienced during lockdown, be in place by the time wider opening begins?
- ⓐ It will not be safe to mark children's books during this period. Will clear instruction be given that no marking should take place and the books should not be taken to and from home/school?
- ⓐ Will staff be told to wash their hands before and after handling pupils' books?
- ⓐ Will library books be regularly sanitised?
- ⓐ Some teaching assistants will be used to working in very close proximity to

individual pupils, so how can this work continue in a safe manner?

- ⓐ Have parents been informed about new arrangements for drop off and pick up routines?
- ⓐ Have other regular visitors to the school, eg parent volunteers, been informed that they should not attend at this time?
- ⓐ Do essential contractors, including those who deliver food, understand how they may access the premises and what precautions are expected of them while they are on site?
- ⓐ Are catering staff aware of new safe working practices?

Are you satisfied that these issues have been adequately addressed before extended opening begins?



## Step 8

### Communicating with staff

The planning guide recommends that on-line meetings be held before reopening and that senior staff are on hand to support staff.

#### Questions for reps to ask:

- ⓐ Will senior staff be visibly present around school during the day?
- ⓐ What arrangements will be put in place to ensure regular staff feedback on arrangements?
- ⓐ Are you satisfied with on-going communication arrangements?



## Step 9

### Communicating with parents

Head teachers are advised to communicate with parents so that they know who is eligible to attend school and from when and what measures will be in place to 'make the school a low-risk place for their child.'

Are you satisfied that parents are aware of what is expected of them?

Yes  No

## Step 10

### Managing pupil and staff wellbeing and mental health

It is recognised that school closure may have caused significant mental health difficulties for some children and some may have suffered a bereavement. Staff may be similarly affected.

### Questions for reps to ask:

- ⓐ What guidance will be given to staff on how to support children?
- ⓐ What pastoral support services will be available?
- ⓐ Does the school recognise its duties under health and safety law to protect the mental as well as physical health of staff?
- ⓐ What plans are in place to ensure that this duty is applied?
- ⓐ What counselling services are available for staff and pupils who may need support?
- ⓐ How will the school monitor workload at this time to ensure a reasonable work/life balance for staff?

Are you satisfied that appropriate measures will be in place when the school begins to open more widely?

Yes  No



## SECTION C: UNISON ACTIVITY, GUIDES & USEFUL LINKS

### Covid Safety Campaign

UNISON is recruiting an army of new safety reps to join our many hundreds of accredited reps to make sure public services in NI are Covid Secure.

If you work in education, why not think about becoming a health and safety rep. in your school? Never have safety reps been more important. We need to ensure the risks to staff and children are assessed and managed.

You can help keep us all safe by becoming a UNISON health and safety rep. Contact UNISON on 02890270190 for more information.



### Useful links

This pack is based on the guidance as at 23 June 2020. Some of these guidance documents change as the pandemic progresses. If you need more detail or just want to keep up to date UNISON has produced a range of new health and safety advice and guidance for activists and members, whether they've been working throughout the pandemic or are returning to work now.

This can be accessed on the UNISON NI website - [www.unison-ni.org.uk/health-safety-covid-19-what-you-need-know](http://www.unison-ni.org.uk/health-safety-covid-19-what-you-need-know)

Here you will find information on how to work safely, risk assessments and current guidance on social distancing, use of PPE and other resources.

As guidance changes on a regular basis you should also access:

- the EA website [www.eani.org.uk/](http://www.eani.org.uk/)
- NI Government website - <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-and-what-they-mean-you>

## SECTION D: COVID-19 Workplace Checklist

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The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to assist the responsible person in the management of Health and Safety and arrangements during pandemic

**Location:**

**Date:**

**Carried out by Whom:**

**Comments**

No	SUBJECT	Comment
1	Displayed Site PaperWork	
2	Site Safety Management	
3	First Aid	
4	Health and Wellbeing	
5	Welfare	
6	Fire Arrangements	
7	Personal Protective Equipment	
8	Waste and Laundry	
9	Plant and Equipment	
10	Site Security	
11	General Workplace	
12	Office	
13	Storage and Operations	
14	Working Practices	

Serial	Recommendations	Action By	Date By
Observations			

## COVID-19 Workplace Checklist

### 1. DISPLAYED SITE PAPERWORK

		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
1.1	Is the health & safety law poster displayed?				
1.2	Is the Employers liability insurance displayed?		X		Information is available through council's website
1.3	Have emergency arrangements been displayed?				
1.4	Is suitable signage in place with regards to COVID-19, social distances?				
1.5	Is there COVID-19 guidance displayed?				
1.6	Is there adequate hand washing guidance posted?				
1.7	Is statutory Inspection Documentation available (or available on CAMIS)?				
<b>Print Name</b>		<b>Signature</b>			<b>Date</b>

### 2. SAFETY MANAGEMENT

		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
2.1	Is there a known point of contact - providing names and contact details - is this made available to all occupants?				This should be detailed on Health & Safety Law Poster
2.2	Are screens, barriers or markings in place to separate and control personnel at a reception area?				2m social distancing. Consideration to be given to reception staff / visitors signing visitors in.
2.3	Are there authorised access arrangements in place both for visitors and employees?				Maximise "visits by appointment only". Queuing outside the building if required and where possible.
2.4	Is there a building specific procedure with regards to COVID-19?				
2.5	Is there a screening questionnaire for staff and pupils?				
2.6	Is there a dedicated Isolation area?				
2.7	Are there floor markings for distancing?				
2.8	Is there one-way systems needed and in place? Stairwells, classrooms, Corridors etc				
<b>Print Name</b>		<b>Signature</b>			<b>Date</b>

### 3.FIRST AID ARRANGEMENTS

		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
3.1	Does site provide sufficient trained first aid persons and notification posted of who and where?				
3.2	Does site provide sufficient first aid kits?				
3.3	Do the First Aiders know the advised procedure for a casualty suspected or confirmed COVID-19?				Follow risk assessment in relation to a person suspected with COVID-19
3.4	Is there disposable gloves, masks and anti-septic wipes held within the first aid kit updated for COVID-19?				
3.5	Is there a suitable location to treat a casualty?				
3.6	Do pupils and staff carry their own Inhalers, epi-pens etc?				Detailed in child's plan
3.7	Is there a dedicated Isolation area, for someone with suspected COVID symptoms?				
<b>Print Name</b>		<b>Signature</b>			<b>Date</b>

### 4. HEALTH and WELLBEING

		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
4.1	Is there sufficient information made available to staff and visitors in relation to mental health and awareness?				
4.2	Are staff informed through official sources?				
4.3	Is there a good network and information with regards to mental health?				
<b>Print Name</b>		<b>Signature</b>			<b>Date</b>

### 5. WELFARE

		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
5.1	Are site toilets sufficient for number of persons on site – is there a sign on the toilet door - regards social distancing?				Consideration of “member of the public” toilets where applicable.
5.2	Are eating facilities provided? Can they adopt the 2m social distance rule?				
5.3	Is sufficient drying room available for work personnel's clothes? – Can they adopt the 2m social distance rule?				
5.4	Does the building have suitable hand washing facilities, is there a suitable supply of hand wash soap and or hand sanitiser?				
5.5	Are there suitable disposable towels available?				
5.6	Are the toilet facilities well maintained and kept clean and adequate ventilation provided?				
5.7	Are the eating facilities clean and tidy - is there a cleaning regime in place? Is it suitable? Are patrons 2m apart?				Consider for classroom environments also.
5.8	Are water fountains/ stations disconnected or removed?				
<b>Print Name</b>		<b>Signature</b>			<b>Date</b>

### 6. FIRE ARRANGEMENTS

		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
6.1	Are weekly fire alarm checks in place?				
6.2	Are the fire doors checks in place?				
6.3	Does the location have a designated fire warden?				
6.4	Are there suitable fire assembly point(s) and Social distancing being observed?				
6.5	Are personnel fully aware of the fire arrangements – what to do in the event of a fire?				
6.6	Are escape routes clear?				
6.7	Are the fire extinguishers in place - have they been tested, is there any damage?				
6.8	Are any PEEPS needed reviewing and PEEP equipment clean e.g. Evac Chair?				
<b>Print Name</b>		<b>Signature</b>			<b>Date</b>

### 7. P.P.E.

		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
7.1	Is suitable personal protective equipment supplied to all personnel for their role?				
7.2	Is personal protective equipment being worn as required?				
7.3	Does the site have sufficient stocks of PPE where required, disposable masks, disposable gloves?				
7.4	Do personnel know how to don and doff the PPE - has training been made available?				This information is available on RENFO
7.5	Are arrangements in place for the disposal of waste PPE?				Refer to Risk Assessment
<b>Print Name</b>		<b>Signature</b>			<b>Date</b>

### 8. WASTE AND LAUNDRY

		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
8.1	Is there an appropriate storage area for suspected or confirmed COVID19 case related waste. (Not applicable if a clinical waste arrangement is in place?)				Refer to Risk Assessment
8.2	Are there suitable bags available to hold the waste prior to disposal?				
8.3	Is the waste kept secure?				
8.4	Is there a laundry procedure?				Refer to Risk Assessment
<b>Print Name</b>		<b>Signature</b>			<b>Date</b>



**9. PLANT AND EQUIPMENT**

		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
9.1	Portable appliance testing - have electrical items be tested and are they maintained?				
9.2	Is plant and equipment in good working order - is the statutory inspection in date, i.e. fork lifts, telehandler, vehicle ramps, axle stands/jacks, lifting accessories that may be in use – is there a quarantine for items overdue inspection?				Consideration for passenger lifts. Consider signage, number of persons, good hygiene protocols on entering and leaving the lift.
9.3	Guarding - Is the machinery guarding in place where required?				
9.4	Are vehicle/equipment before use checks being carried out and documented?				
9.5	Are there suitable cleaning products made available such as anti-bacterial wipes to clean the plant/equipment/vehicle/desks before and after use and COSHH assessment available?				
<b>Print Name</b>		<b>Signature</b>			<b>Date</b>

**10. SITE SECURITY**

		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
10.1	How is site/ plant protected from the public?				
10.2	Has the site adopted additional security measures – What are they?				
10.3	Does the building have arrangements/ safety notices informing visitors/clients/ contractors etc of the alternative COVID appointment system in use?				
10.4	Does the building have a form of security alarm and has this been tested?				
10.5	Is equipment stored securely at times when it is not in use?				
<b>Print Name</b>		<b>Signature</b>			<b>Date</b>

**11. GENERAL WORKPLACE (as per existing Children’s Services WOIR)**

		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
11.1	Floors & Workings Areas				
11.2	Stairs & Passageways				
11.3	Access, Egress & Exits				Consideration to social distancing, signage, hand sanitiser station, single access flow, keep left signage
11.4	Roadways				
11.5	Vehicle Parking				Maintain social distancing where possible. Car users use designated entrances
11.6	Pathways				
11.7	Ladders				
11.8	Authorised Access Arrangements				
11.9	Confined Spaces				
<b>Print Name</b>		<b>Signature</b>			<b>Date</b>

**12.OFFICE (as per existing Children’s Services WOIR)**

		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
12.1	Is there a management arrangement in place to ensure office spaces support the principles of social distancing?				
12.2	Furniture				
12.3	Chairs				
12.4	Filing Cabinets / Storage				
12.5	DSE Workstations				
12.6	Portable Steps				
12.7	Meeting rooms				Seating plan, consider 2m distancing. Remove excess furniture.

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**13.STORAGE AND OPERATIONS (as per existing Children’s Services WOIR)**

		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
13.1	Hazardous Substances – Storage				
13.2	Hazardous Substances – Identified				
13.3	Flammable Substances (including hand sanitiser) – Storage				
13.4	Flammable Substances – Identified				
13.5	Storage Cupboards & Shelves				
13.6	Stacking				
13.7	Workplace Tidiness				
13.8	Waste Disposal Containers				
13.9	Mechanical Handling Devices				
13.10	Lifting Tackle & Equipment				

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**14.WORKING PRACTICES (as per existing Children’s Services WOIR)**

		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
14.1	Manual Handling Techniques				
14.2	Communication				
14.3	Working Methods				

**14.4 Working Safely Additional Information as required**

**Print name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your school principle should be supplying your workplace rep with a completed risk assessment document that looks something like this**

**RISK ASSESSMENT** (Pre Identified)

Date of Assessment:

Service Location:

Date Reviewed:

Next Review Date:

Completed Sections (Cross Applicable)

**Once completed this document must be securely retained by line management for a period of 3 years after any revision and incident (40 years for prescribed diseases incidents e.g. Asbestos exposure etc.)**

**Assessment Contributors**

Name: Position:

**This Risk Assessment has been compiled during the Corona Virus Pandemic (2020) and must be reviewed when Government guidance changes**

**Work Activity: Infection Control procedures for dealing with coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.**

This Risk Assessment has been created in response to the national / international outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19).

It needs to be recognised by all staff that caring for children in school buildings **comes with an increased risk of exposure to COVID-19 for both young people and staff.**

The following controls **will reduce that risk so far as is reasonably practicable.**

Information in this risk assessment should be followed by all education and related services.

**IMPORTANT:** The following guidance is also being updated regularly so please continue to review

Hazard	H	Likelihood	L	Risk Rating (R)	H x L = R
Severe	3	Definite	3	High	6-9
Moderat	2	Likely	2	Medium	3-4
Low	1	Unlikely	1	Low	1-2

**Manager / school principle approval:**

**Manager/school principle name:**



