



EDUCATION RESOURCES

## Safe System of Work (SSOW)

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<b>Task: Ensuring a safe and supportive environment for learning and teaching during the coronavirus pandemic</b>	<b>Review Frequency:</b>	Every 3 months

### Induction and briefing arrangements

All employees should be made aware of this Safe System of Work (SSOW).

### Scope

This SSOW is intended to advise employees of the measures and actions required to minimise the risk of Covid 19 transmission in all educational establishments.

- Heads and other managers must monitor and enforce all of the measures contained within this SSOW, the Education Resources “Covid-19 Exposure Reducing the Risk in Schools” general risk assessment and any additional safety or public health advice.
- Employees must co-operate with managers in the application of workplace safety standards and must follow all the measures set out in this SSOW, associated risk assessments and safety alerts/bulletins.

It must be recognised that there will need to be flexibility in the use of this advice and some variation across areas depending on transmission rates within local communities, emerging national data and advice.

A zero tolerance of infection symptoms will be in place and staff must follow strict compliance with national and local public health instructions including Test and Protect or other health surveillance related processes.

### Risk Assessment

This SSOW supplements the information contained in the various Health and Safety procedures for Education Resources available online. Also NHS Public Health information and guidance on the nature of the Covid-19 virus, its spread and control.

It should be used in conjunction with SLC Risk Assessment “Covid-19 Exposure – Reducing the Risks in Schools from August 2021” and the associated information provided to Headteachers and Managers. This document supersedes previous SSOW versions and introduces information based on national guidance which aims to ensure a safe a supportive environment for learning and teaching through a staged mitigation approach i.e. the gradual removal of some mitigations where local conditions allow.

## Mitigations and Controls within Educational Settings

Since March 2020, Education Resources employee have worked to implement a number of key mitigations and controls across all establishments and Services. Evidence from national advisory groups suggests that these mitigations, along with the national vaccination programme, have helped control the spread of the virus.

These mitigations are subject to change depending on national and local prevalence of the virus. The following should continue to be implemented:

- Physical Distancing

To ensure alignment with wider society and planned changes in ELC, this requirement has now been updated to physical distancing of at least 1m.

However, as schools already have 2m physical distancing arrangements that work well and do not limit capacity, it is expected that schools will retain these 2m distancing arrangements for logistical reasons. It is therefore not anticipated there will be a logistical requirement to make changes to physical distancing arrangements in the school environment, including within meeting rooms and staff bases, and the 2m gap between the teacher's desk and the pupils. Moving to 1m distancing can only take place if it would otherwise materially inhibit professional interaction with colleagues. Retaining 2 metres between adults in schools who do not yet meet the criteria for exemption from self-isolation will also help to reduce the risk that they are identified as a close contact.

There is no requirement for strict physical distancing between children and young people in schools, although maintaining distancing between secondary school pupils is encouraged where possible. Associated mitigations such as one way / keep left systems, staggered lunches, staggered times for start and end of the day (including discouraging parents from congregating), using multiple entrances and avoidance of assemblies should remain in place. Avoid car sharing.

The revised approach to contact tracing means that groupings ("bubbles" or "pods") are no longer required to be maintained in schools and should be removed as soon as possible in the new session. Schools should, however, continue to avoid assemblies and other types of large group gatherings reflecting their unique environment, which will still involve bringing together large numbers of unvaccinated children and young people on a nondiscretionary basis (and which can therefore be differentiated from other situations in society in which large gatherings take place).

Heads and Managers considering reducing to one metre after 6 weeks, and following national and local advice, should assess the risk locally before implementation in any areas.

- Personal and Environmental Hygiene

The strong focus on good personal and environmental hygiene procedures will remain.

- Ventilation

The strong focus on good ventilation procedures will remain. In addition, further local CO<sup>2</sup> monitoring will take place in line with Scottish Government requirements to support the goal of all school (and early years) buildings, including learning and teaching spaces, being assessed for ventilation issues with a view to remedial action being taken where required.

- Face Coverings

Unless exempt, face coverings must be worn by adults wherever they cannot maintain distance from other adults and/or children and young people, and also in the following circumstances below:

- all adults and pupils in secondary schools during class and in communal areas (*beyond 6 weeks from the start of session the Scottish Government may advise that face coverings need not be worn in a secondary classroom environment*).
- all adults in communal areas of primary schools and early years establishments

- parents and other visitors including parents at drop-off and pick-up.
- Early Learning and Childcare staff do not need to wear face coverings when interacting with nursery children.
- In line with the current arrangements for public transport, where adults and young people aged 12 and over are travelling on dedicated school transport. (previously aged 5 and above)

Employees should stay prepared for strengthening the use of face coverings should Education Resources and local public health teams advise. See Appendix 3.

- Testing and Self-Isolation

Voluntary At home Lateral Flow Testing regimes remain in place. Staff and pupils should test before returning to school at the start of term. Self-isolation will follow current national guidance. The Scottish Government wish education establishments to more rigorously and actively promote and encourage uptake.

- PPE Assessment

The requirement for an individual assessment for those employees working in close contact with vulnerable pupils remains.

It is intended that these mitigations will be reviewed in late September 2021 with consideration given to further relaxation of distancing and face covering depending on local data and developments. Employees should be aware however that “baseline mitigations” such as hygiene, ventilation, PPE, asymptomatic testing and face covering on transport are likely to continue for a longer period.

Headteachers and Managers should also retain local plans for full mitigation should a return to these be advised by South Lanarkshire Council in partnership with our local Public Health Teams.

Appendix 1 contains further practical steps to be taken in relation to these mitigations.

### **Other Operational Risk Areas**

Some of the changes to mitigations outlined in this guidance will currently be included within related procedures and specific risk assessments and should therefore be taken into account when revising or updating these locally. This includes:

#### Early Learning and Childcare

Appendix 4 shows a summary of mitigations within Early Learning and Childcare

#### Practical Subjects

Distancing restrictions in drama, PE/Dance and music have been removed. Additional specific guidance on practical subjects is available from the National Improvement Hub. All staff involved in the delivery of these activities should review this guidance on a regular basis using the most up to date guidance to inform local risk assessment for each activity.

#### Existing Risk Assessments

Existing Risk Assessments should be reviewed on a regular basis to take account of any changes to mitigations. This include Breakfast Clubs, Transition Events and Visiting Services.

### **Other Health and Safety Arrangements**

Heads and managers will provide staff with full information on local arrangements for:

- Reporting concerns and seeking advice
- General risk assessment
- Good quality dialogue with staff, parents and pupils on progress
- Test and Protect processes
- Actions required where a case is suspected or confirmed
- Fast access to Covid-19 testing for staff and pupils

- Any further health surveillance programmes advised by public health

### Supporting Vulnerable Employees

Arrangements should be put in place to reflect individual circumstances in line with any specific clinical advice and discussions with managers. Further advice on this issue is available from the Council's Personnel Team.

The concerns within BAME communities must be recognised and individual requests for additional protections should be supported where possible. Care should be taken to ensure that BAME staff, pupils and families are involved in decisions about additional protections.

These may include, where practicable, working from home, extended use of face coverings, re-arranging workspace or minimising physical contact.

National guidance on supports for those deemed vulnerable is subject to change and fluctuations in transmission rates and Tier levels. Staff deemed vulnerable should stay informed on these issues and review local arrangements accordingly with their line manager.

### Self-isolation

- Adults who are double vaccinated and have a negative PCR will no longer have to isolate if a contact of a positive case
- Children and young people - Conditions – 5 to 18 years will not have to isolate for 10 days so long as they remain asymptomatic and have a negative PCR
- Under 5's will not have to isolate so long as they remain asymptomatic but there is no mandatory requirement for them to have a negative PCR
- There will no longer be a need, therefore, to isolate whole groups of children and contact tracing will pass back to Test & Protect rather than sitting with Education

### Working from home

Where working from home has been agreed locally, head teachers and other managers should take account of the employee's individual health status and:

- Arrange necessary support, equipment, advice and guidance.
- Keep in regular contact with employees working at home
- Ensure employees review the Council's "Remote Working Health and Safety Checklist" and managers carry out any required actions to ensure compliance - refer to SLC Health and Safety GD 3 Creating a Remote Workstation - [http://intranet.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/20620/topics\\_of\\_interest/300/covid-19](http://intranet.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/20620/topics_of_interest/300/covid-19)

### Employees falling ill at work

If an employee develops a high temperature, a new persistent cough, a loss of, or a change in, normal sense of smell or taste (anosmia) they should:

- Ensure that their manager or supervisor is informed.
- Return home. If this is not possible, they should move to an isolation area where the employee can wait until they are able to leave the workplace.
- Avoid touching anything.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue and put it in a bin.
- Follow Test and Protect guidance. Arrange for a test, follow the guidance on self-isolation and not return to work until their period of self-isolation has been completed.

### Wellbeing

- All staff should be fully aware of the supports available to them including those via the Council's Employee Assistance Scheme. Consider in-school support mechanisms for staff to talk, share concerns,

apply wellbeing approaches. Education Scotland have provided complementary information on Mental health & wellbeing : supports for practitioners, parents, carers & young people.

#### First Aid

- Consider how to provide first aid to a person who may become injured due to a work activity, including protection of both the injured person and the first aider(s) and appropriate PPE required.
- Sanitation and cleaning provisions are in place afterwards including handwashing.
- Amend the First Aid Assessment where necessary and review at appropriate intervals.

#### Fire Evacuation

- Heads will review fire evacuation arrangements to take account of mitigations.
- Review fire evacuation arrangements (EFAP) and (PEEPs) to ensure control measures are adequate.
- Ensure an adequate number of Fire Controllers are available.

#### Pupil Vaccination

South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources will work with local NHS partners to ensure any pupil vaccination programmes are supported with establishments.

#### **Communication**

It is important that senior leaders have systems in place to receive, review, retain and share all relevant information issued locally and nationally including information updates, newsletters and guidance notes.

#### **Further support and advice**

Further support and advice on managing this risk is available locally from Education Support Services Co-ordinators, Trade Union representatives and from the Council's Health and Safety Team.

#### **Useful Links and Further Reading**

Appendix 1 – Practical Steps on Day to Day Working with Covid Mitigations

Appendix 2 – Enhanced Cleaning Regime

Appendix 3 – Face Coverings and PPE

Appendix 4 – Summary of mitigation in Early Learning and Childcare settings

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on reducing the risks in schools - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advisory-sub-group-on-education-and-childrens-issues-return-to-school-in-august-2021/)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): school visits and trips - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advisory-sub-group-on-education-and-childrens-issues-return-to-school-in-august-2021/)

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advisory-sub-group-on-education-and-childrens-issues-return-to-school-in-august-2021/>

## Appendix 1 – Practical Steps on Day to Day Working with Covid Mitigations

### Arriving and leaving work

- Hand washing facilities or hand sanitiser must be provided at workplace entrance points.
- Employees must wash hands for 20 seconds using soap and water or hand sanitising gel (either anti-viral or if alcohol based then a minimum 60% alcohol content), employees should ensure they dry their hands thoroughly, and should always clean their hands when entering/leaving the building, before and after eating, changing classrooms and after using the toilet.
- Employees must avoid touching their face especially the eyes, nose and mouth.
- Signage posted at reception areas reminding employees of the importance of good hand hygiene and observing physical distancing measures.
- Limits on the use of touch-based devices such as keypads as far as practicable.
- Staggered start, finish and break times.
- Additional entrance points to further reduce congestion taking account of security and fire arrangements
- Additional parking or bike-rack spaces to help people walk, run or cycle to work.
- Avoid car sharing

### Movement around the building including corridors

- One-way or keep left systems to ensure a good flow of people around the workplace and in stairs and corridors consider using floor markings
- Movement between classrooms should be minimised wherever possible. Where this cannot be avoided, consider providing cleaning supplies to enable wiping down of their own surfaces on entry and leaving.
- Limit non-essential movement around the building and restrict some areas in consultation with staff.
- Reduce maximum occupancy levels in rooms, lifts and other spaces using signage and markings.
- Determine and adhere to safe levels of occupancy in heavy traffic work areas taking account of current physical distancing controls.
- Ensure staff with limited mobility can access lifts and occupancy is controlled.
- Stairs to be used in preference to lifts for those able to do so.
- It should be noted that, in line with the move to Level 0 and beyond, children and young people can now engage in all drama, music, PE and dance activity in schools, indoors and outdoors.

### Workplaces and workstations

- An enhanced cleaning regime will be in place
- Staff should keep workspaces free of clutter to assist enhanced cleaning.
- Reviews of office and classroom layouts to maintain physical distancing as required..
- Signage and floor markings to remind employees to regularly wash their hands, use resources provided and maintain physical distancing.
- Avoid sharing desks and other resources. Any shared equipment should be cleaned between use. Anti-viral spray and paper towels provided for regular personal use at computer keyboards, photocopiers, telephones and other equipment.
- Introduce a clear desk policy and remove unnecessary items from classrooms and work areas to ensure all areas are more easily cleaned.
- Ensure where possible that movement of individuals between work stations is minimised and where work stations are shared there is cleaning between use.
- Keep main reception windows closed.
- Visitors to workplaces to be kept to a minimum and access controlled.
- Employees and visitors must not enter the building if they have symptoms of COVID-19.

### Ventilation

The design of our modernised education estate allows for effective ventilation across the building, however during this pandemic we must seek to increase ventilation levels by actively opening windows and doors where practical and safe to do so. At the same time, heating systems have been increased in both temperature and running time to assist with maintaining room temperatures. Housing and Technical Resources have reviewed the ceiling units in classrooms and have assessed which units require to be on for

heating purposes. By opening windows and doors natural ventilation will allow fresh air to flow. Where there are no windows the space will be ventilated via a mechanical system and the appropriate air changes will be provided.

- Arriving in your classroom make sure your hands are clean, leave the door open (will also reduce contact with door handles), and begin the day by ensuring there are no obstructions to maximising ventilation by opening blinds/curtains and removing any items blocking vents.
- As soon as pupils occupy the classroom open windows to their fullest as allowed by the restrictor. Top windows should be open where possible.
- Should pupil occupancy levels exceed 25 in the secondary sector then windows should be opened to the maximum available, subject to any restrictors, for as long as possible.
- If the room is cold and feels well ventilated some windows can be closed. However, those windows which have the least impact, relative to causing draughts, should remain open to at least the minimum amount.
- At lunchtime, breaks and in between classes windows should be opened fully for 5-10 mins.
- Lower temperatures and likely windy conditions in the winter months will increase the natural ventilation through openings. This means that partially opening windows and doors can still provide adequate ventilation at the same time as maintaining room temperatures.
- During inclement weather, staff should consider the flexibility in permissible clothing while indoors and also the benefits of re-designing seating plans to reflect individual pupil or staff temperature preferences.
- At the end of the day, remember to close all windows for security reasons.
- Internal fire doors should not be held open unless they have a hold open and self-closing mechanism which responds to a fire alarm activation.
- Not all classrooms have opening windows and the flow of air in mechanical systems are designed to take account of normal occupancy capacities and have been set to run longer, however as with other classrooms consider leaving doors open to further enhance air flow.
- If there are any specific issues with regards your classroom these should be reported in the normal way which will allow a member of the technical team to carry out an assessment of any action required.
- Please take the time to watch this 3 minute practical guidance video:- <https://youtu.be/8Qmcs0kH-0Y>

#### Meeting Rooms and other common areas

- Use remote working tools (e.g. MS Teams) to limit in-person meetings.
- Make use of larger free or outdoor space.
- Hygiene and distancing signage / markings in areas where regular meetings take place.
- Numbers of participants attending meetings should be minimal.
- Hand sanitiser/ Anti-viral spray and paper towels available in meeting rooms.
- Review room layouts to maintain physical distancing.
- Ensure good ventilation by opening windows and doors.

#### Hygiene Facilities

- Hand washing facilities in the form of soap and running hot water must be provided.
- Hand sanitising gel (either anti-viral or if alcohol based then a minimum 60% alcohol content) must also be provided within offices, reception areas and throughout the building. Care should be taken in practical areas where naked flames can present an ignition risk. Soap and water is preferred in these areas.
- Soap and hand sanitiser gel will be replenished as necessary to ensure there is an adequate supply.
- Staff should use paper towels provided rather than hand dryers.
- When applying hand sanitiser gel allow the gel to dry fully before commencing work activities.
- Restrictions on the number of people using toilet facilities at any one time. Signage posted to provide specific guidance.

- Enhanced cleaning regimes established for toilet facilities particularly door handles, locks, toilet seats, flush and waste receptacles will be in place.
- Bins will be emptied regularly to avoid overflowing.
- Signage posted to raise awareness of good hand hygiene; in particular handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing frequency, avoid touching your face and to cough or sneeze into a tissue which is binned safely or into your arm if a tissue is not available.
- Where staff use shower and changing facilities, clear guidelines on use should be established to ensure they are kept clean and clear of personal items and physical distancing guidelines are met.

#### Staffroom and other welfare areas

- It is recommended that staff bring their own prepared meals, drinks and utensils from home.
- Staff should use their own crockery/cutlery in staff areas and ensure these are cleaned using detergent and dried thoroughly before being stored for re-use.
- Water dispensers can be used with care and those doing so should sanitise their hands before and after use. To reduce usage, staff should bring their own filled bottle each day which can be topped up during the day if required.
- Kettles, microwaves, toasters and other kitchen equipment and furniture can still be used provided staff adopt regular cleaning. Otherwise they may be removed from use.
- Staggered break times to avoid congestion and maintain a 2 metre distance.
- Hand cleaning facilities or hand sanitising gel (either anti-viral or if alcohol based then a minimum 60% alcohol content) should be available in staffrooms
- Review room layouts and occupancy levels to maintain physical distancing
- Signage posted to make employees aware of the rules in place regarding welfare arrangements.

#### Deliveries

- Cleaning procedures to be established for goods and merchandise entering the workplace.
- Delivery drivers should have clear guidance on using toilets and other facilities
- Enhanced hand hygiene regime for employees who handle goods and merchandise.
- Restrict non-business deliveries, for example, personal deliveries to employees.

#### Visitors

- Members of the public or adult visitors to the school should be strictly limited to those that are necessary to support children and young people or the running of the school including parents assisting with their child's P1 transition. Those providing essential services e.g. psychologists, social work should be able to visit schools with appropriate mitigations, adherence to local controls and in co-operation with the service provider. Alternative methods of communication to contact the council should be encouraged which would avoid the need for face-to-face contact such as e-mail, online services or telephone.

#### At Home Asymptomatic Testing

This is voluntary, however all employees and secondary pupils are strongly encouraged to participate in this scheme in order to support infection control measures where people may be asymptomatic and in attendance at school. A consent form must be signed, the process involves twice weekly home testing and the recording of the results on a national portal. If the test is positive the school should be notified and the Test and Protect process will begin. Full guidance on this process has been made available to all establishments and a separate risk assessment will be in place for the safe and effective operation of testing programmes.



## Appendix 2 – Enhanced Cleaning Regime

- Heads and managers will ensure enhanced cleaning arrangements will be in place including an increased focus on high intensity touchpoints such as door furniture (push plates, handles), wall furniture (light switches, sockets) and sanitary ware to ensure those spaces are sanitised more regularly using product which is active against bacteria and viruses, particularly in communal areas and at touchpoints including:
  - Welfare facilities including toilet flush buttons, taps etc.
  - Door handles and push plates.
  - Food preparation areas including electrical appliances.
  - Telephone equipment.
  - Desks.
  - Keyboards, photocopiers and other equipment.
  
- Ensure more frequent cleaning of rooms/areas that must be used by different groups including staffrooms.
- Introduce a clear desk policy and remove unnecessary items from classrooms and work areas to ensure all areas are more easily cleaned.
- Remove soft furnishings, soft toys and toys that are hard to clean (such as those with intricate parts). Children and young people should be encouraged not to bring toys from home or to share personal belongings.
- Limit the use of shared resources, including those usually taken home. Keep bags off desks and worktops. Any shared materials and surfaces should be cleaned more frequently.
- Anti-viral spray and paper towels will be provided for regular use of equipment such as computer keyboards, photocopiers and telephones.
- Consider additional cleaning arrangements for specialist equipment e.g. in practical subjects or ASN provision.

### Appendix 3 – Face Coverings and PPE

*Note that a face covering is not the same as a medical face mask (PPE).*

- Face Coverings can be worn by anyone wishing to do so in any part of the school.
- Should continue to be worn by adults and secondary pupils in class and communal areas. Also by ELC and Primary staff in communal areas; and on public / dedicated school transport for those aged 12 and over.
- By parents and other visitors.
- Early Learning and Childcare staff do not need to wear face coverings when interacting with nursery children.
- School Support Assistants and those supporting children with Additional Support Needs, who may routinely have to work closely with primary, secondary or ASN school pupils, should wear face coverings as a general rule. However, the use of opaque face coverings should be balanced with the wellbeing and needs of the child, recognising that face coverings may limit communication and could cause distress to some children – appropriate use of transparent face coverings may help in these circumstances.
- Staff, children and young people should receive clear guidance on how to put on, remove, store and dispose of face coverings.
- Consider regular messaging to staff and learners about face coverings, any equity concerns and having a contingency supply. Consider regular messaging to staff, parents and learners about face coverings, including guidance or practical demonstrations to support efficacy of wearing. Consider any equity concerns and have a contingency supply.
- Pupils must be reminded to comply with any wider societal rules in the wearing of face covering and of group sizes when entering shops.

If a face covering is worn it is important the following measures are followed:

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and after removing it.
- Avoid touching the face, including mouth eyes and nose or face covering as it could become easily contaminated.
- The face covering should be changed and washed daily.
- If the material is washable, wash it in line with manufacturer’s instructions at a minimum water temperature of 60C. If it’s not washable, dispose of it carefully in the normal waste stream.
- Continue to practice physical distancing as required.

#### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

- Staff will have access to, and are aware of, procedures for ordering replacement PPE in a regular and timely manner.
- The majority of staff in education settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need when supporting children and young people in their care. PPE will be provided in the following specific circumstances:
  - ✓ Work with children and young people whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs
- Where a child, young person or other learner becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus and needs direct personal care or there is risk of splashing from a cough, spit or vomit. (The child, young person or staff member feeling unwell should also wear their face covering or a mask if possible).
  - ✓ Any other task that would routinely involve PPE e.g. providing first aid.
  - ✓ First aids kits and the area where they are stored should ensure supplies to deal with covid-19 symptoms – masks, gloves, aprons and visors.
  - ✓ Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGP) – in a small number of complex medical cases staff may be involved in procedures with an increased risk of transmission through aerosols e.g. tracheostomy care.

**Appendix 4 – Summary of Scottish Government Advice on Mitigations in Early Learning and Childcare settings**

Mitigation	ELC settings
Staying vigilant and responding to COVID-19 symptoms	<p>It is essential that people do not attend a setting if symptomatic. Everyone who develops symptoms of COVID-19 must self-isolate straight away, stay at home and arrange a test via the appropriate method.</p> <p>Staff should be supported to follow up to date health protection advice on household or self-isolation and <a href="#">Test and Protect procedures</a> if they or someone in their household exhibits COVID-19 symptoms, or if they have been identified by NHS contact tracers as a close contact of someone with the virus.</p>
Physical distancing	<p>In level 0: 2 metre physical distancing between adults</p> <p><b>FROM 9 AUGUST</b>- Beyond level 0: At least 1 metre physical distancing. Settings can continue with 2 metre distancing arrangements that work well and do not limit capacity.</p> <p>Staff should be reminded that the requirement to physically distance applies at all times, including during breaks and before and after sessions and traveling to and from the setting.</p> <p>Children are not required to physically distance from each other, or from adults.</p>
Moving within settings	<p>Circulation of children and staff and transitions between different parts of the setting’s indoor spaces should be considered to avoid bottlenecks or crowding.</p>
Peripatetic staff	<p><b>FROM 19 JULY</b> - No restrictions on the use of peripatetic or agency staff but staff must not work across two premises if there is an outbreak in one.</p>
Face coverings	<p>Face coverings must be worn by adults wherever they cannot maintain the appropriate physical distance from other adults (e.g. in corridor and communal areas).</p> <p>Face coverings should be strongly encouraged when parents/carers are drop-off and pick-up their children.</p> <p>Face coverings are not required when working directly with children. However, staff who wish to wear a face covering in these circumstances should be supported to do so.</p>
Hand hygiene	<p>Ensure all staff and children frequently wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.</p> <p>Handwashing should take place: on arrival at the setting; before and after eating; after toileting; at regular intervals throughout the day; when moving between different areas.</p>
Cough etiquette	<p>Use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze into, dispose of tissues appropriately and ensure that bins are emptied regularly of waste. Encourage children to use a tissue or elbow to cough into.</p>
Enhanced cleaning	<p>Buildings should be checked if they have been closed or unused, including water quality sampling.</p>

Mitigation	ELC settings
	<p>At least twice daily cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched objects and hard surfaces.</p> <p>Surfaces in dining or snack areas should be wiped down and disinfected in between use by each group of children.</p> <p>All crockery and equipment used in the provision of meals and snacks for children should be cleaned with general-purpose detergent and dried thoroughly before being stored for re-use.</p> <p>Cleaning of staff areas should be an integral part of the overall cleaning strategy. Staff should use their own cup/cutlery and ensure these are cleaned straight after use.</p> <p>Toys and equipment that children access should be cleaned daily or, if groups of children change during the day, on a sessional basis.</p> <p>Water and playdough should be replaced daily or, if groups of children change during the day, on a sessional basis.</p> <p>If soft furnishings (such as throws and bedding) have been used by a child who shows symptoms of COVID, they should be removed and laundered as quickly as possible.</p>
Sharing of resources between home and setting	Children should be discouraged from bringing toys from home to the setting. However, settings can share resources (such as story bags) between setting and home – unless there is a positive case in the home or an outbreak in the setting.
Ventilation	<p>All settings must ensure the opening of doors and windows to increase natural ventilation where it is practical, safe and secure to do so, while maintaining appropriate internal temperatures.</p> <p>Mechanical ventilation should be used where this is not possible, ideally set to full fresh air.</p> <p>Where settings have a CO2 monitor these should be used to assess settings.</p>
Visits by parents	<p><b>FROM 3 JULY</b> - Visits by parents/carers permitted to support children (e.g. during their transition to a new setting) but limited to three households at a time and per day when indoors. Up to 10 households can visit at a time and per day, provided they remain outdoors and the visit is planned in advance.</p> <p>Where virtual arrangements for parental engagement are already in place and working well, these should continue to be used;</p> <p>Parents should be encouraged to take part in the universal testing offer prior to entering the setting;</p> <p>The number of visitors from the same household should be kept to a minimum (no more than two and ideally one);</p> <p>The number of staff meeting with parents/carers in each visit should also be kept to a minimum; and</p> <p>Visits by parents must not take place if there is a positive case in the home or an outbreak in the setting.</p>
Pick up and drop off	Ensure large gatherings of people are avoided and physical distancing is maintained. Advice to wear face coverings, stagger timings etc.
Visits by specialist staff	<b>FROM 19 JULY</b> - No restrictions on visits by specialist staff (e.g. allied health professionals, local authority officers or inspectors).

Mitigation	ELC settings
Cohorting/limiting contacts between children	<b>FROM 19 JULY</b> - Settings must apply proportionate, risk-based approaches to limiting contacts, managing children within groups. However, the only restriction on group size is registration capacity.
Limiting contacts between staff	Staff members should work with the same groups wherever possible. When agreeing staff working patterns, settings are encouraged to maintain as much consistency as possible in the staff who work in close proximity, especially in areas where physical distancing is more challenging.
Blended placements	<b>FROM 19 JULY</b> - All blended placements can go ahead but if there is an outbreak within the child's cohort arrangement in either of the settings that the child attends, blended placements must be suspended.
Outdoor learning	Provision should maximise opportunities for outdoor play and experiences.
Dance, music, singing and drama	Singing is permitted indoors and outdoors.
Asymptomatic Testing programme	Staff and settings are encouraged to participate and to report their results.
PPE	<p>Use of PPE should be based on a clear assessment of risk and need for an individual child or young person, such as personal care where staff come into contact with blood and body fluids</p> <p>In cases of suspected COVID-19, the following use of PPE may be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A fluid-resistant surgical mask if 2 metre physical distancing cannot be maintained.</li> <li>• Where the child needs direct personal care, gloves and aprons, fluid-resistant surgical mask and eye protection (goggles or a visor) should be worn by staff.</li> <li>• Gloves and aprons should be used when cleaning the areas where the child has been.</li> </ul> <p>Where the use of PPE is risk assessed as being required, staff should be trained in how to put on and take off PPE (as required by Health and Safety Regulations), and suitable waste facilities provided.</p>
Notification of positive cases	<p>Setting must contact their local health protection team immediately if there is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• any suspicion that there may be an outbreak of cases, i.e. two or more confirmed cases in 14 days;</li> <li>• or an increase in the background rate of absence due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.</li> </ul> <p>Setting must also notify the Care Inspectorate in the event of a suspected case and all confirmed cases of COVID.</p>
Risk Assessments	Risk assessments remain a legal requirement – must be conducted and reviewed when circumstances change. Setting-level risk assessments are expected to consider all risks identified in respect of COVID-19
Communication with parents/carers	<p>Settings should to communicate any new arrangements to parents and carers, particularly where there are new routines and procedures that children and families will need to understand and follow.</p> <p>In the event that settings are informed of a positive case or cases amongst their staff or children, they should provide parents/carers and staff with a standard letter advising them of the facts and providing advice.</p>