



Education Restart – New School Day / Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance for Schools and Educational Settings in Northern Ireland

From: Education Restart Programme

To: All Schools, Education Sector Partners

Date: 24 September 2020

Dear Colleague,

A further iteration of the New School Day guidance is now available.

Whilst the document has been retitled (*Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance for schools and educational settings in Northern Ireland*), this edition of the guidance fully incorporates all of the measures and mitigations contained within previous iterations of New School Day guidance. However, the document has been restructured to reflect that schools have now re-opened and are moving to the delivery of education in our 'new normal'.

Whilst there are a number of cosmetic changes throughout the document, for ease of reference, in terms of more significant changes to the document, you will wish to note the following.

- Section 1 – Clarification that it is **recommended that tele-conference or videoconference be used for parent-teacher meetings or staff meetings in schools**. When face to face meetings are required, the **current public health advice on social distancing must be followed**. (Page 14 - see table)
- Section 2 – Guidance from the PHA on **cleaning post a positive COVID-19 case** has been updated removing the need to quarantine a room for 72 hours. (Pages 30-31)

- Section 2- The guidance on **Face Coverings** has been updated to reflect the Minister’s decision on 25 August 2020. Additional information on the **Using Face Coverings** and **Visors** is also included. (Page 33-35, paragraphs 30-37)
- Section 5 has been updated to provide clarifications in respect of **Remote Learning** and **Blended Learning**. (Page 49, paragraphs 19-25)
- Section 7 – Pupil Attendance has been updated to reflect the **latest public health advice in respect of pupil attendance** for those who are “clinically extremely vulnerable” or those who live with someone who falls into this category. (Pages 56-58, paragraphs 1-8)
- Section 8 has been revised and updated to provide fuller details of the **actions to be taken where an individual becomes symptomatic onsite, or where a positive COVID-19 case is confirmed**. (Pages 59-64)
- Section 8 also provides clarification in respect of ‘**isolation**’. (Page 59, paragraph 4)
- Section 8 also provides further clarification in respect of ‘**close contacts**’. (Page 61-62, paragraph 23)
- Recent guidance from PHA on managing **Aerosol Generating Procedures** has been referenced and will be published in parallel with this document. (Page 14)
- **Supplementary Guidance for Boarding Schools** has been separated from the document and published separately.

The Department would take this opportunity to highlight the need to adhere to this guidance and particularly that **strict social distancing requirements remain in place between adults (at 2m) and, as far as is practicable between adults and pupils**. Social distancing applies to staff, older pupils, parents (and any others who may attend the school) and any external contractors or delivery people.

In addition, further documentation from the Public Health Agency on the operation of the test and trace system will issue to schools following engagement with the Practitioners’ Group and TUS.

Education Restart Programme