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Irish National Teachers' Organisation
Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann

A nation's greatness depends upon the education of its people



BULLETIN 9

Phased Reopening of Schools

26th February 2021

INTO highlight the Minister's statement, *"It is likely that schools will require additional resources to manage these different stages of pupils returning and my officials will work to identify what is required, including the use of substitute teachers if needed."*

Members are instructed not to deliver face to face teaching and remote learning simultaneously. Schools must have in place additional teachers where necessary. **This applies to composite classes where remote learning will continue for P4 pupils.**

INTO encourages school leaders to explore additional resources and use additional substitute teachers to ensure support for all pupils. INTO continues to push DE to clarify covering additional costs and in the meantime, principals should continue, as per employing authority instruction, to record COVID specific spending.

All COVID spend must be recorded as such. There is an expectation at EA & DE that schools will continue to require additional resourcing. While money has not been delivered to school year budgets INTO continues to lobby DE and EA to release this money to school budgets as a matter of urgency.

It is likely that numbers of key workers' children will increase due to the reopening of P1-3 this may lead to a requirement for more staff to be in schools. **This does not mean that all staff should be brought in. Public health guidance remains that when staff can work from home they should. Meetings remain virtual as per existing guidance.**

The school risk assessment (EA template) must be reviewed upon return to reflect all existing mitigating factors. Any additional mitigations arising from and identified through the risk assessment must be implemented.

All DE Guidance MUST be adhered to. If a member believes the guidance is not being followed, they should immediately bring this to the attention of their school rep or health & safety rep. This should also be simultaneously reported to the Principal and INTO.

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Coronavirus%20Guidance%20for%20Schools%20and%20Educational%20Settings%20-%20December%202020.pdf>

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Pre-School-Education-Guidance-for-re-opening-settings-17-August-2020.pdf>

To support returning teachers, INTO have insisted that any updated guidance for schools is presented in sufficient time to permit the implementation of any changes.

Teachers who are CV, CEV, pregnant, living with someone who is CEV must have an individual risk assessment completed prior to a return to the classroom. This risk assessment may identify a need to continue working from home or establish additional mitigations including a 'best practice' safer option in school.

If any member has individual concerns, they should, in an effort to have the matters resolved, either inform the principal or inform their school rep who will communicate this to the principal.

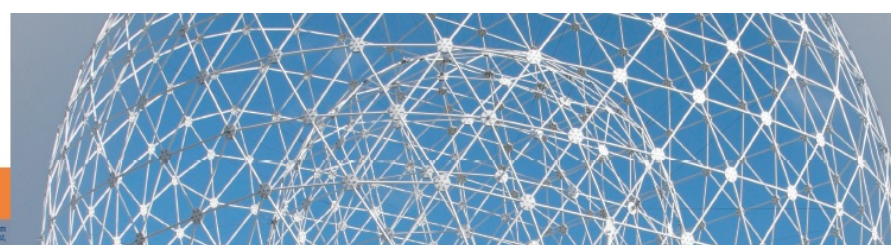
Principal members have the full support of the INTO. Principals should communicate concerns with their COLO and EA Advisor, ensure the school Governors are kept updated and contact the INTO in the event they feel their requests for additional help and support are not being met to their satisfaction.

INTO continues to push for the vaccine to be made available to teachers urgently.

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