

into



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

BULLETIN 2

PRIORITISE SAFE SCHOOLS

OCTOBER 2020

COVID-19 cases are increasing in schools and communities. Now is not the time to relax safety procedures.

DE Education Restart Guidance for School and Educational Settings in NI (29 Sept 2020) has seen a tightening, not relaxing, of safety procedures. There should be no relaxation of the current guidance in schools. Thorough risk assessment remains key to ensuring a safe working environment and any changes to current school day procedures/practices must be fully risk assessed.

All schools must have completed whole school risk assessments – these should be shared with staff and school specific guidance provided.

INTO advises all members to resist the introduction of practices which may increase identified risks. Current safety guidance includes:

Classrooms	<p><u>DE Guidance:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protective Bubbles are a “key mitigating factor” Social distancing within classes should be maximized based on physical capacity Risk assess circulation/transitions through school Maximize ventilation Items that cannot be cleaned easily should be removed Regular hand hygiene & good respiratory hygiene <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desks and frequent touch points should be cleaned regularly Discourage children from bringing items home or into school Where social distancing is not possible PPE is to be provided as required and the outcomes of and risk assessments implemented Classroom layouts should be maintained and there should be no relaxation of the COVID-19 guidelines already in place in schools incl. canteens and assembly hall
Staggered arrival & departure times	<p><u>DE Guidance</u> Circulation/Transitions pg23-24</p> <p>The arrangements for parents to drop off and collect children/young people require careful consideration, to ensure that large gatherings of people can be avoided and social distancing maintained.</p>
Face Coverings	<p><u>DE Guidance</u> pg. 34-36</p> <p>Schools are strongly recommended to implement the use of face coverings in corridors, communal areas and staff rooms and to be worn on all school and public transport.</p>
PPE	<p><u>DE Guidance</u> pg. 33-34</p> <p>“When it is appropriate to the task they are undertaking” or identified as part of a risk assessment.</p> <p>Visors do not offer protection unless worn with a mask.</p>
Transfer of books/lunchboxes etc between home and school	<p><u>EA Risk Assessment</u> – During Day</p> <p>One bag should be used and plastic folders which can be wiped down can be used to transport any learning materials to and from school. Items should not be taken home and returned the next day without proper mitigation of risk. INTO advise that 72 hours is identified as a quarantine period this would apply to home and school.</p> <p>Essential medication, such as EpiPen, should be brought in, kept and stored in school in line with the schools Storage and Administration of Medicines policy.</p>
Whole Staff Meetings	<p>DE Guidance -Social distancing pg16, point 9</p> <p>Tele-conferencing or video conferencing is recommended. Should it be necessary to hold a face to face meeting a risk assessment is required to be completed and shared with all concerned.</p>
Marking	<p>When marking work, it should be marked within the classroom; apply good hand washing procedures or use hand sanitiser at regular intervals, do not touch your face after handling pupils' books. The use of gloves is not recommended as the misuse or removal of gloves incorrectly, could inadvertently cause contamination. Consider the use of other forms of feedback techniques such as verbal feedback, whole class feedback, self-assessment or comments written onto post-it notes etc.</p>
PHA Guidance	<p>Follow PHA Guidance</p> <p>If you test positive – inform your Principal, Track and Trace, close contacts. Isolate for minimum 10 days or until symptoms have gone</p> <p>If you are contacted by track & trace or identified as a close contact, you MUST stay at home and self-isolate for 14 days from the last contact with the case regardless of you receiving a negative test.</p>

With the increase in daily COVID-19 cases now is NOT the time for the relaxation of safety procedures and protocols in schools.
Members should continue to be diligent in their safety measures and if concerned should raise with management.

For up to date information check out the FAQs on the INTO website.

[StopCOVIDNI App](#) aids contact tracing and is being extended from 11years old.

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