



Coronavirus protective measures in **primary education** and **childcare settings**

The information given is sourced from the government's guidance **Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings** and **Planning guide for primary schools** and other supporting documents.

The guidance given may vary between the different nations of the UK.



Health and safety compliance

There are increased risks related to safety around water hygiene, building hygiene and occupant safety due to reduced or no occupancy.

Settings should check that all health and safety compliance checks have been carried out before opening, as per normal procedure after a holiday period.

This should include:

- A site examination – identifying classrooms that can be used
- Cold water systems- checking tanks, sinks etc.
- Domestic hot water services- checking for hot water generation and function
- Fire safety – checking of alarm systems, call points and emergency lighting
- Kitchen equipment
- Gas safety
- Security
- Ventilation
- Lighting
- Drainage systems

All areas should be cleaned and disinfected. Risk assessments should be amended where necessary.

Staff availability

Work out staff ratios and include all staff. You should take into consideration:

- Which staff are available to work?
- Do you have at least one person with paediatric first aid training available for work in school?
- Do you have a designated safeguarding lead?
- Do you have a SEND coordinator?

You should be able to answer yes to the last three points.



Practical steps to reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19

■ Timetabling

Settings should consider the following.

- What curriculum will be delivered?
- What lessons will be delivered outside?
- Can you stagger break and lunchtimes?
- Can you stagger drop off and collection times? It is important parents and carers understand the protocol to minimise contact and people congregating.

■ Class sizes

Where settings can, they should keep children two metres apart from each other.

Primary schools are advised there should be no more than 15 pupils per group and one teacher and a teaching assistant, if needed.

The circumstances will be slightly different for every setting. Any setting that cannot achieve these small groups at any point should discuss options with their local authority or trust.

■ Classroom layout

Arrange classrooms, maintaining space between seats and desks where possible.

Settings should:

- remove soft toys and furnishings that are hard to clean
- remove unnecessary items if there is space to do so
- where possible access the classroom directly from outside.

Where possible all spaces should be well ventilated using natural ventilation. Prop open doors where it is safe to do so to avoid touching handles and help ventilation.



■ Moving around school

- Can you reduce movement around school?
- Consider a one-way system or a division down corridors.
- Make sure toilets do not become crowded by limiting the number of children that can use them at the same time.

■ Other important factors

- Settings should make sure they communicate plans with parents.
- Limit the use of shared resources such as stationery.
- Staff rooms and offices should have staggered use and occupancy.
- Check the availability of catering services.
- Uniform that cannot be machine washed should be avoided.
- Limit external visitors to the setting during operating hours.

■ Communication

Undertake an online staff meeting before wider opening to take staff through arrangements if possible.

Tell parents what they need to do and communicate the steps that have been put in place to make the school low risk.



Infection prevention and control

A range of actions are needed to help minimise the spread of Coronavirus either by direct or indirect transmission.

These include:

- minimising contact with individuals who have coronavirus symptoms or if they have someone in their home that does, they must not attend your setting
- cleaning hands more often
- ensuring good respiratory hygiene is promoted
- minimising contact and mixing.

Hand hygiene

- Wash your hands on a regular basis as follows:
 - when you get into work or home
 - after using the toilet
 - blowing your nose, sneezing, or coughing
 - eating or handling food.
- Use soap and water and wash for 20 seconds.

Where water is not available hand sanitiser should be used.

Sneezing and coughing

- Use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth if your hands are not clean.
- Encourage children to learn and practice how to do these things using games and songs.

Catch it - Bin it - Kill it

Public Health England have published an infographic schools can print off.



When a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for seven days. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days.



RESOURCE

How to wash your hands

NHS song

Cleaning

- Cleaning an area with normal household disinfectant will help reduce the spread of the virus.
- Clean surfaces that children are touching more regularly.
- Guidance on how to clean can be found on **COVID-19: cleaning in non-healthcare settings.**



PPE

Most staff in education settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of two metres from others.

PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases including:

- Children whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE.
- If a child becomes unwell with coronavirus symptoms and needs direct care before going home. This may include a surgical face mask being worn by the supervising member of staff if two metres cannot be maintained. Disposable gloves and a disposable apron should be worn if you need to touch the child.



Sign posting

There is a dedicated helpline number for education and children's social care related queries for anyone working in early years through to universities, plus parents.

Call 0800 046 8687

**8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)
or 10am to 4pm (Saturday to Sunday)**



Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for educational settings



Implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings



NHS information about Coronavirus



e-bug



Planning guide for primary schools



Supporting vulnerable children and young people during the coronavirus outbreak



Managing school premises during the coronavirus outbreak

Web links = 