

Department for Education (DfE) Synopsis

1. **Still no Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) required**

The guidance states that “the majority of 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”.

The occasions where PPE is needed are for children whose care “routinely already involved the use of PPE due to intimate care needs” or if a youngster becomes unwell with coronavirus symptoms and needs “direct care until they can return home”.

A face mask should be worn by the supervising adult if a distance of two meters cannot be maintained, with gloves and an apron worn if contact is necessary.

2. **Primary students ‘can’t be expected to remain two metres apart’ (Can secondary??)**

The guidance admits that early years and primary students cannot be expected to follow the social distancing rule of remaining two metres apart from each other. Therefore, schools should work through a “hierarchy of measures”, that are:

- avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms;
- frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices;
- regular cleaning of settings; and
- minimising contact and mixing.

If schools are able to successfully implement this alongside regular hand cleaning, hygiene and cleaning measures, then the “risk of transmission will be lowered” Public Health England states.

It adds that “brief, transitory contact, such as passing in a corridor, is low risk”.

3. **Classes should be “split in half”** and desks should also be spaced “as far apart as possible” and it is “sensible to rearrange classrooms and workshops with sitting positions two metres apart”.

4. **Students or teachers with symptoms will be able to get tested.** However, where that is positive, guidance states “the rest of their class or group within their childcare or education setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days”.

“The other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.”

If other cases are detected, Public Health England’s local health protection teams will conduct a “rapid investigation” with the potential for the whole class or year group asked to self-isolate.

- 5. Still no guidance on travel yet** - Lots of school leaders, me very much included, are concerned about how students reliant on public transport will be able to get to and from the academy.

The guidance states schools should “consider how children and young people arrive at the education or childcare setting, and reduce any unnecessary travel on coaches, buses or public transport where possible” but provides no details of how to do this. It adds that “guidance will shortly be published on safe travel”.

There are some tips, however, in that schools should encourage parents/carers and children to walk or cycle to work or school. Councils are also urged, where school transport is used, to cordon off seats and eliminate face-to-face seating to “help passengers spread out”, and substitute smaller vehicles with larger ones.

- 6. Allocate drop-off rotas for parents and carers** - Under a heading of ‘how to implement protective measures’, schools are urged to “plan parents’ drop-off and pick-up protocols that minimise adult-to-adult contact”, and to communicate “allocated drop off and collection times and the process for doing so” to parents and carers.

Other proposals include discussing additional cleaning with contractors, stagger assembly groups and break times, and remove “unnecessary items from classrooms and other learning environments where there is space to store it elsewhere”.

- 7. Assign the same teacher to each group, clean classrooms daily and students should be in the same small groups “at all times each day”, with different groups stopped from mixing. Schools should also ensure the same teachers are assigned to each group.**

The groups should use the same classroom or area throughout the day, with a “thorough cleaning of the rooms at the end of the day”. Staff may also consider “seating students at the same desk each day if they attend on consecutive days”.

- 8. Set up corridor dividers and limit toilet visits.** Other ‘tips’ include considering one-way systems, or dividers down the middle of corridors to keep groups apart, as well as ensuring toilets do not become crowded by limiting the number of students using them at one time.

Halls, dining areas and sports facilities used for lunch and exercise should be at “half capacity”.