# WVC COVID-19 Risk Assessment – environment and operations

## Updated 2nd June 2020

This document sets out the potential risks surrounding a return of some students and staff to college and how these risks can be mitigated. It is a lengthy document and should be read in full as it summarises all the key elements that we need to be mindful of when coming back to college as staff and students.

**The general premise underscoring all elements of this risk assessment is to proceed as though we, as individuals, are already unknowingly infected with the virus and therefore we are responsible for our safe interaction with the environment and with others**.

The college is aware of the joint union publication, on May 13th , that has been signed by UNISON, AEP, GMB, NAHT, NASUWT, NEU, NSEAD, Prospect and Unite setting out the 5 tests that the joint unions want the Government to address prior to re-opening schools and colleges to staff and students. We are also aware of guidance issued to union members of the NEU advising them not to engage with any plans for re-opening until the Government meets the five tests the joint unions have put in place. The NEU is also promoting a petition to “open schools when it is safe” which currently has over 401, 000 signatures.

We are also aware of recent developments regarding the DfE’s Chief Education’s Scientific Adviser, Osama Rhaman, and his evidence to the HoC Science and Technology Committee that he hadn’t assessed the reopening guidance and that the current advice is “draft”.

The drafting of this document must be an attempt to work with all stakeholders to provide some clarity and reassurance that staff, parents and students will undoubtedly require before a decision can be made about staff and students returning to college. We will actively seek guidance with unions although we understand and accept their position about not engaging until the Government addresses their concerns. The five tests that the joint unions have set out will certainly ease many concerns about the re-opening of schools and we support the action of the unions to gain these assurances from the Government. However, at some point in the future the college will need to re-open and provide a safe environment to all staff and students – we hope this document goes a long way to addressing the concerns of the WVC community.

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## Expectations of staff for the phased return of students

The staff survey that was set out in early May consisted of 96 responses from staff and was extremely useful in providing a clear picture to the leadership team of the potential availability and concerns that staff had about the possible return of students to college this academic year.

51% of the 96 responders indicated that there were no overriding reasons that could prevent them from returning to work. 11.5% (11) indicated that they potentially had some underlying health problem, and 18% indicated that they had members of their household that had underlying health issues (pre updated govn guidance on criteria). 6% (6) had children of pre-primary school, age, and 13% had children of primary school age.

We also asked for some further clarity in relation to staff who work part-time; this related to 23 staff. 6 could change their day off with adequate warning, 10 for some of their days, and 7 said that they were unable to do so.

The COVID-19 concerns could be broadly categorised as follows:

* Lack of clarity from Government so unable to see how social distancing/PPE/student numbers could be managed in our setting
* Impact on relatives – we have a number of staff living with elderly relatives to support them during the lockdown – children might not suffer severe COVID-19 symptoms (although we are aware of the notification of a COVID-19 related inflammatory illness that is being reported) but their role as vectors is not clear
* Some responders consider themselves to be vulnerable to COVID-19
* Some responders wanted to see more guidance from the college on how risk assessments could be generated to ease their concerns

We also had some specific email follow up from staff setting out some personal concerns that were very helpful in understanding how this virus has impacted them over the past few months but is also creating a great deal of uncertainty for the future. We hope that the details set out in this, lengthy, document ease many of the general concerns staff will have regarding social distancing, but we want to be very clear about our expectations of staff so will set these out here.

* Staff who are instructed to shield or live with close relatives expected to shield will not be expected to return to work – and they must not do so
* Staff who expect to experience challenges with childcare should communicate these to their line manager as soon as possible so that a flexible approach can be taken with staffing sessions in college – we understand this will mean that arrangements will need to dovetail with partners who teach/expected to return to work where they cannot work from home. However, a teachers’ role is as valid as many other job roles (with the exception of the NHS staff and care home staff) so teachers should not expect to stay at home to supervise children full time so that their partner can work – this needs to be balanced and fair. Part time hours as currently put in place will be respected but if PT staff do have any flexibility with their days then that would be great to know
* Staff who consider themselves to be vulnerable should review the guidance set in this document closely – the Government have indicated that all those defined as clinical vulnerable will have been provided with shielding letters and those who have not, but consider themselves to be at risk have had the right to appeal – we are confident that the provisions set out in this document will successfully mitigate the risk for all staff to be able to work from college in as much safety, if not more, than they would expect on their weekly shop or daily walk
* **However, we will not compel any member of staff to return to work if they feel that doing so risks exposure and the college is unable to put suitable provisions in place to reduce the risk of infection – there must be equality and fairness though for those who do come into college – staff not doing so will be expected to work from home under very clear and specific guidelines – these will be agreed individually but are likely to consist of**
  + **Following their contracted working hours whilst at home – this means staff will need to be reachable and responsive to communications with staff and students although this will need to be flexible when they are balancing childcare and wellbeing – we operate on a balance of trust that staff will find a hybrid that works**
  + **Staff who work from home will take the responsibility of setting and reviewing remote learning for their classes AND the classes of staff who come into college to teach – it is unrealistic for staff to come into college to teach and then go home to set remote learning for their classes**
  + **Staff working from home will be assigned tasks, by their lead teachers, that support the work of the faculty in their planning, preparation and assessments for the future**

Over the past few years, we have carried out extensive work on developing a culture of compassion and wellbeing and we are determined to protect this culture during this very stressful time.  We wish to avoid conflict with staff and unions and are confident that we can find a way that works for all, is fair and collaborative.

## Potential classroom and site use – broad initial plan

* Year 10 students will now be divided into 4 groups, each specifically allocated to one day per week – Monday to Thursday
* They will be brought in based on geographical location from around the catchment
* They will initially for the first two weeks only, complete a four period day
* All groups will be based in the same rooms allocated only in set rooms English and Humanities
* Departments will be split, and teachers will be allocated a particular group. Any need to teach across groups will be extremely restricted, and with safeguards in place such as on different days
* Students will be allocated to classes of no more than 10/12 and will remain in these classes each day. These classes will be based on the ability of the students based on the subjects they study
* Initially there will be no practical elements to any lessons and no PE
* Classes will be allocated to a specific room in the College and will use this room each day, including entering and exiting the building using specified entrances/exits
* During breaks students will remain in the indoor and outdoor spaces they have been allocated. Timings of these days will be shared once transport arrangements have been confirmed. It is likely to be 2x lessons, break, 2 x lessons then home.
* Teachers will be specifically allocated to the groups
* Whilst the initial face to face will mainly fall upon Maths, English and Science departments, the allocation will be spread amongst them fairly to ensure that staff have appropriate time away from groups.
* A fourth period will be allocated as a face to face sessions where option subjects can feed information about concerns etc via a conversation from an allocated tutor
* As and when the situation improves further we will look at opportunities for students to have face to face time with option subjects for example a different option block per day. This will be subject to review.
* Teachers and staff not allocated to specific sessions will be allocated to support other aspects of the school day for example supporting key worker students, the tutor session, supervising the start and end to the day, and break periods.
* Wherever possible those staff not directly allocated to face to face sessions will also continue their support of the other year groups with their home learning including providing learning resources and lessons for their colleagues
* Further details and strategies to limit touch contamination will be developed as the timetable and structure progresses

## Shielded and clinically vulnerable people

Students will be expected to attend college, however this requirement will be assessed based on the latest government advice issued. Staff with shielding requirements will be directed to work from home.

## Who is clinically vulnerable?

The definition we are working to is provided in the [document Staying Alert and Safe](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing#clinically-vulnerable-people): Italicised text is a direct quote from the guidance

*If you have any of the following health conditions, you are clinically vulnerable, meaning you are at higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. You are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if you do go out, take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household.*

*Clinically vulnerable people are those who are:*

* *aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)*
* *under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (that is, anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):*
* *chronic (long-term) mild to moderate respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis (*This is further clarified by Asthma UK as having ALL THREE of the following things applying to your condition
  1. You have asthma, AND
  2. You are taking certain extra controller medicines as well as a preventer inhaler (for example, you are taking Montelukast, salmeterol or formoterol, or you are on a combination inhaler like Seretide, Fostair, Symbicort, Flutiform, Fobumix, DuoResp Spiromax, Combisal, Sereflo, Sirdupla, Aloflute, AirFluSal, Relvar Ellipta, Fusacomb or Stalpex), AND
  3. You are taking continuous or frequent oral steroids.
* *chronic heart disease, such as heart failure*
* *chronic kidney disease*
* *chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis*
* *chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson’s disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), or cerebral palsy*
* *diabetes*
* *a weakened immune system as the result of certain conditions, treatments like chemotherapy, or medicines such as steroid tablets*
* *being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)*
* *pregnant women*

*As above, there is a further category of people with serious underlying health conditions who are clinically extremely vulnerable, meaning they are at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus. You, your family and carers should be aware of the guidance on shielding which provides information on how to protect yourself still further should you wish to.*

## Living with a shielded or vulnerable person

The following quote is taken from the document [Implementing Protective Measures in Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings)

*If a child, young person or a member of staff lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, they can attend their education or childcare setting.*

*If a child, young person or staff member lives in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable, as set out in the*[*COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable guidance*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19)*, it is advised they only attend an education or childcare setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of children, they are able to understand and follow those instructions. This may not be possible for very young children and older children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those individuals to attend. They should be supported to learn or work at home.*

Therefore, it is for the college to risk assess the danger posed to a person by attending college and put such measures in place that means the person can attend college. If the person affected feels that the measures set out in the risk assessment fall short of their requirements to work safely then we recommend the following procedures;

* 1. A meeting should take place between the member of staff concerned, their line manager and a representative of the leadership team so that the discrepancy between the colleges’ provision and the person’s expectations can be addressed
  2. Should this meeting fail to agree a way forward for acceptable work risk mitigation then we would encourage a meeting to be scheduled between the person concerned, the Principal and a union representative should the person concerned wish to be represented by their union.

ACAS, in their [Coronavirus guidance](https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus), states that if an individual refuses to attend work without a valid reason then disciplinary action could result. We would always seek to avoid this and will always be keen to find a suitable agreement where the person concerned is able to contribute to their job responsibilities either inside the college building or by supporting the work of colleagues in a remote fashion – for this to happen it is vital that any concerns are shared with line managers at the earliest opportunity and once the full content of this document has been read thoroughly.

## The challenge of asymptomatic infection

This is still very early stages of the coronavirus infection and there is a wealth of research that needs to be done regarding testing and tracking of potential carriers. One of the most concerning elements of the infection is the wide range of carriers who do not display symptoms. Clearly the bulk of any approach of Risk Assessment will be based on the presentation of symptoms – have the COVID symptoms – then stay home for 14 days and minimise the risk posed to others. However, several studies have already been carried out looking specifically at the % of COVID infections who initially presented with no symptoms.

The WHO report on Influenza and COVID-19 – similarities and differences, indicated that potentially 80% of infections to date present with mild or no symptoms. The report does share more reassuring guidance however that the transmission studies in China seem to indicate that children are infected by adults rather than vice versa – adding more reassurance to the fact that infection in children and clinical attacks in the 0-19 age group are low (World Health Organisation, 2020).

The Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine produced a meta-analysis from a subset of PubMed reports to answer the question of what proportion of people with COVID are asymptomatic – their data included the WHO statistics listed above but also found that the proportion really varied from 18% in the Diamond Princess Cruise ship at Yokohama, 50 to 75% in the village of Vo near Venice, 50% of cases in Iceland and as many as 25% of individuals tested by the CDC might remain asymptomatic (CEBM, 2020).

Therefore, it is vital that the provisions set out in the risk assessment are followed to the letter regardless of how “well” individuals feel their own health to be. The college will need to engage the full cooperation of students, staff and parents to clearly set out that absence of illness does not mean they are free from the virus and that everyone associated with the college should work on the premise that they have the virus and they could share it without following the guidelines fully.

## Summary of concerns raised during the staff survey (May 2020)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Concern | Risk | Actions | Outcomes |
| How can we ensure that students using school buses are protected prior to arriving at college? | Risk of direct and indirect transmission picked up when students are not closely supervised and on vehicles that might be used by a wider population than our student cohort | Guidance has been sought (12th May) from County and the bus companies about the measures that will be put in place to protect students and workers.  Based on the guidance received students may be required to wear face coverings on the bus (to be provided by parents) – they will need to be super aware of touching surfaces and avoiding touching their face and students will need to use sanitizer upon arrival in college | Will provide clear guidance and outcomes once the details from county and the bus companies has been produced |
| Hand washing – for students and staff | Direct transmission of coronavirus | Hand sanitiser will be provided for each classroom – students will be instructed to line up outside the room and use the gel as the enter the room and as they leave - bags should not be placed on the floor under their table  Hand sanitiser points will also be available at all entrances and exits and in other parts of the school  Hand dryers will be turned off across the site | Students will be using hand gel at least twice per lesson and this will drastically reduce the potential for spread indirectly |
| Social distancing – number of students per class | Direct transmission of coronavirus | Classes of year 10 students will be restricted to a maximum of 12 per classroom. Students should be sat at alternate seats if in linear rows or on one desk per student in a traditional spread out rows | This will comply with Government guidance on distancing and reduce the potential for indirect transmission through student to student or student to staff contact |
| Cleanliness of classroom surfaces as a direct and indirect form of transmission | Direct and Indirect Transmission | By insisting that students use gel when entering and leaving the classroom it is expected that this will reduce the potential for viral residue on desks – the desks and key surfaces such as light switches, door handles, chairs etc will be cleaned at the end of every day  Classroom doors are to be kept open to maximise air flow and reduce the need to touch handles – windows will need to be kept ajar to maintain airflow through the room  No materials will be left out, shared, or collected in from students  Cleaning boxes will be available in each room containing a range of materials including gloves. This is not for staff to use to clean, but for external cleaners to use as required  Fixed lid bins will be provided for all classrooms | Classroom surfaces will be protected from viral residue by the effective use of 70% alcohol-based gels upon entry and exit from rooms and they will be thoroughly cleaned by cleaning staff at the end of each day |
| Use of face coverings in college | Guidance from the government is ambiguous on the use of face coverings (perhaps to reduce the demand on clinical coverings) but the use on public transport and the widespread use of coverings in other countries means that we should support the wearing of face coverings by staff and students if they choose | Guidance will need to be issued to parents and staff prior to the college opening about the correct use of face coverings – their use is undermined if people regularly touch their face or remove the covering prior to cleaning hands | Staff and students may wish to wear coverings and will not be restricted from doing so |
| Social distancing of students - movement of students | Affects both the direct and indirect transmission of the virus – sneezing/coughing and less than acceptable hygiene practices will exacerbate the spread of coronavirus within social groups of less than 2m | Each class will have specific entrance and egress for their allocated classroom. The maps below highlight where these are. Also as indicated certain parts of the school will have soft barriers (physical barriers, which can still be passed by staff if required) which prevent students from leaving their particular area | This will reduce the likelihood of students moving against each other and breaking the 2m guidance – we can also prevent the milling of students in areas where they would usually congregate |
| Social distancing at break and lunch | Risk inherent with students not respecting the 2m distance rules during unstructured time  Potentially will be more of an issue the longer they have to mix | The maximum students will be present on the college site will be from 8.30am until 2.45pm (Key worker students) – For most students lunch will be provided either at home or via a packed lunch which can only be eaten at break time. Key worker students will continue to have a packed lunch as normal.  All rubbish will have to be taken home  Break times will take place in allocated areas as per the map. There will be no cross mixing of groups. | Will reduce the chance of cross contamination. |
| Students needing First Aid | Direct and indirect transmission from students either exhibiting covid-19 symptoms or at risk of producing bodily fluids that might possess a viral load | Any student presenting to the student office with COVID symptoms not present at the start of the day should be based in the cube – with a face mask provided – and parents called to collect – if students need to use the toilet they should use one not being used by other students and will require thorough cleaning at the end of the day  PPE will be available for all first aiders | We anticipate this the risk for staff in managing first aid procedures will be reduced by keeping suspected cases away from school – but it will be prudent to treat students presenting with any illness as potentially having the coronavirus – therefore, isolating them, using a face mask on the student and a member of staff if they need to approach the student will reduce the risk to acceptable levels |
| Shared offices – unnecessary contact with students and staff | Shared office spaces create the potential for the 2m distance spacing to be breached and increase the possibility that indirect infection can occur from more than one person touching surfaces | Please see the detail set out below for the specifics of how shared office spaces can be managed to reduce the risk | A combination of factors set out in the individual examples below means that it is possible for shared office spaces to present no more risk than would be expected or tolerated in a single occupancy office |
| Student use of the Cabin and SLH and need for PPE equipment | Indirect and direct transmission from students with high care needs or who lack the self-control or awareness to maintain the 2m distance from staff and other students | In the first instance of June opening SEND, the Pavilion key staff and SLH staff will make individual arrangements with students and their carers like the current arrangements that have existed during the current lockdown. In many cases parents have understood the challenge of intimate care and the burden this presents to pavilion staff and have kept their children at home – it is very likely that we will not have the PPE nor the staff available to provide intimate care for students during this stage of lockdown transition | The inherent risk of supporting students with intimate care needs is obviously mitigated if the students are not present in school – we will need to review this provision for the start of the next academic year so that effective plans can be put in place so as to support students in our setting.  The SLH and Cabin is currently being used as a base for mixed year group of vulnerable students so any student, not currently a member of this cohort, who usually accesses support in Cabin will need to be based elsewhere in the college. |
| Students showing symptoms being encouraged to stay at home | Direct and indirect transmission of virus – parents will need to be vigilant in reviewing their child’s health and setting a very low bar of tolerance in order to keep their child off school if they display any sign that indicates they are unwell – if they display any COVID symptoms – students should isolate at home for the 14 day period | Clear guidance provided to parents that students presenting with COVID-19 symptoms – Temp/Cough/Loss of taste should be kept off school for the mandatory 14 days | The guidance issued to parents BEFORE students come into college is fundamentally important – any student exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms should be kept off school for the 14 days however, due to the apparent fluctuation in statistics of asymptomatic patients developing COVID we must urge parents to show extreme caution with regard to their children's health and be encouraged to set a very low bar of tolerance with regard to COVID symptoms |
| I am feeling unwell (adult) am I able to access a coronavirus test? | The uncertainty that an illness might develop as COVID is clearly a stressful experience – additionally, isolating for 14 days from work if the illness is not COVID related can be frustrating and upsetting for the family | All staff involved in the safe functioning of WVC will be classified as essential workers and will be eligible for a test – this can be booked individually, or the college can book a test on an online portal | All staff to be reminded of their access to a test should they develop the symptoms of COVID |
| Student or adult is ill and tests positive for COVID | Risk that an ill person will infect others – even if class members are asymptomatic | If a student or adult tests positive for COVID then all members of the same class (with whom they spend the bulk of their time in college) will be required to go home and self-isolate for 14 days or until a negative test is carried out. It is not necessary for household members to self-isolate until the child sent home develops symptoms | If a teacher is sent home ill and then tests positive for COVID the college will need to carry out an urgent RA on the possibility of other adults being affected and requiring isolation and the inherent implications of the college remaining open |

### MET use of the site

There is currently enough space in the MET office for it be fully deployed and for staff to comply with the 2m distance rules. Staff should only work at their own workstations and be considerate of the 2m rule when moving about the office. MET staff should access this office directly and conversations with WVC staff should take place in one of the open areas of the college site

### House Offices

Houses on their allocated day will be temporarily based the Wellington Office area. Students wanting to see house staff should only see them at the start, end and break time during the day to reduce contact with staff and students. A table will be placed in the inside of the area to act as a mini barrier to prevent students entering the office area. Private conversations / meetings with students should take place in H4 only when clear and the door should be signposted as busy when these are taking place. Other locations for small individual meetings include the old conference room, and the Principals office.

### Reception

Reception staffing will need to be staggered so that only two people are present at any one time. A marked zone will be placed in front of the reception window behind which visitors must stand. We will limit the number of people in reception to no more than 2 at any one time. Other visitors will need to wait outside of reception on a one in one out model already well used in supermarkets and shops.

### Exams

It is possible to maintain the 2m rule in the exams office with the one member of staff. Any visitors to the exam’s office must not enter – knocking on the door for assistance will protect the environment inside the exam’s office.

### Cabin

A number of staff use the cabin office for a work base – clearly this will not be enough space for all to work safely so a computer room, IT2 will be closed to students and used exclusively for TAs and other staff to use as an office space – this should be possible with the reduced number of students and staff on site.

## Other offices and staff spaces

Where staff occupy an office on their own they can continue to do so, but should not invite others in for meetings if they cannot maintain the 2m distancing requirements. Staff who share offices should decide how they will safely share these spaces and may in fact decamp to another space if required. Each space will be looked at and decisions taken by SLT whether or not support staff in particular cab complete their roles either at home, part-time or a combination of both. Every space will be assessed and a decision taken.

Staff working areas will be confined to their individual classrooms (if not allocated for lessons), ICT4 which set up to maintain distancing and will be available exclusively for staff. Overflow space for staff with no ICT access will also be available via the tables set up in the Gym. Coffee and tea facilities will also be available here.

## Contractors

Contractors on site must be booked in in advance and the Principal and Front office informed beforehand. Contractors will not be able to work in the vicinity of students or staff. If they are cleared to work away from students and staff, access to these areas will be closed to all other members of the school.

## Visitors

The number of visitors on site should be limited as much as possible. Contact with parents/carers should be done via email or phone as much as possible. If it is unavoidable that a parent should attend meetings must take place in one of the spaces previously discussed and complete social distancing should be in effect.

## Buses and taxis

Students will be expected to travel using social distancing requirements, it is not envisaged that extra buses will be required, but also that there is likely to be an increase in the number of cars and subsequent drop-offs. Bus bays will be allocated for specific buses to enable an orderly egress, taxis will also be given specific drop off points and times. Student queuing at the end of the day will be facilitated via a supermarket style queuing system marked out on the car park.

## Fire and Lock down evacuations

The normal plans for evacuation will be adjusted to make use of the new locations for groups. Alarms will remain the same, and pupils will evacuate to their allocated outdoor space as in the plans set below. A full briefing will be given to staff and students as and when any opening is confirmed.

## Student Behaviour

All normal behavioural expectations will apply. Any student in deliberate breach of lock down requirements will be immediately removed from their room and will be isolated until collection. Students to be on-called will be collected by a member of staff on duty and removed.

## Uniform

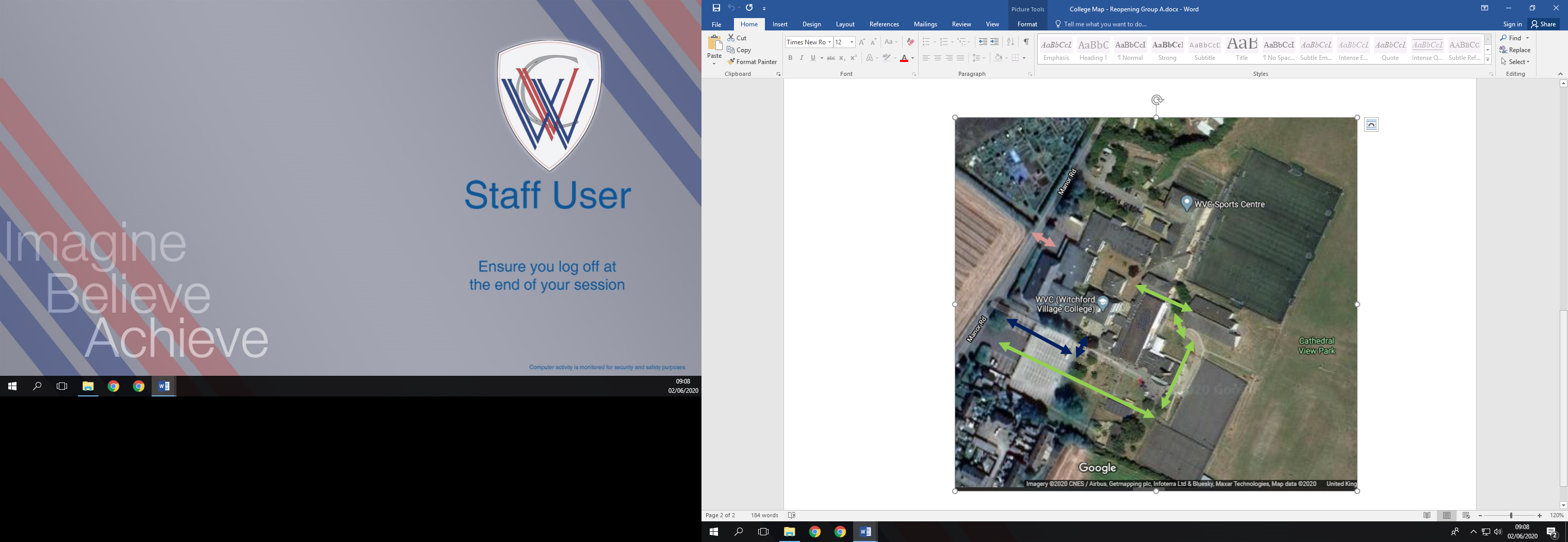
We will not be expecting students to be in uniform due to restrictions some may have in terms of regular cleaning. We will be issuing guidance to parents on what will be acceptable dress.

Staff will also not be required to wear normal formal dress, although we obviously expect staff dress to be appropriate for a school environment.

## Staff training

As and when we are in a position to restart face to face contact with year 10 students we will be running CPD sessions with staff to run through routines and expectations etc. This will be communicated to staff when we are in a position to do so, and with enough warning.

## Entrance and Egress of all student groups

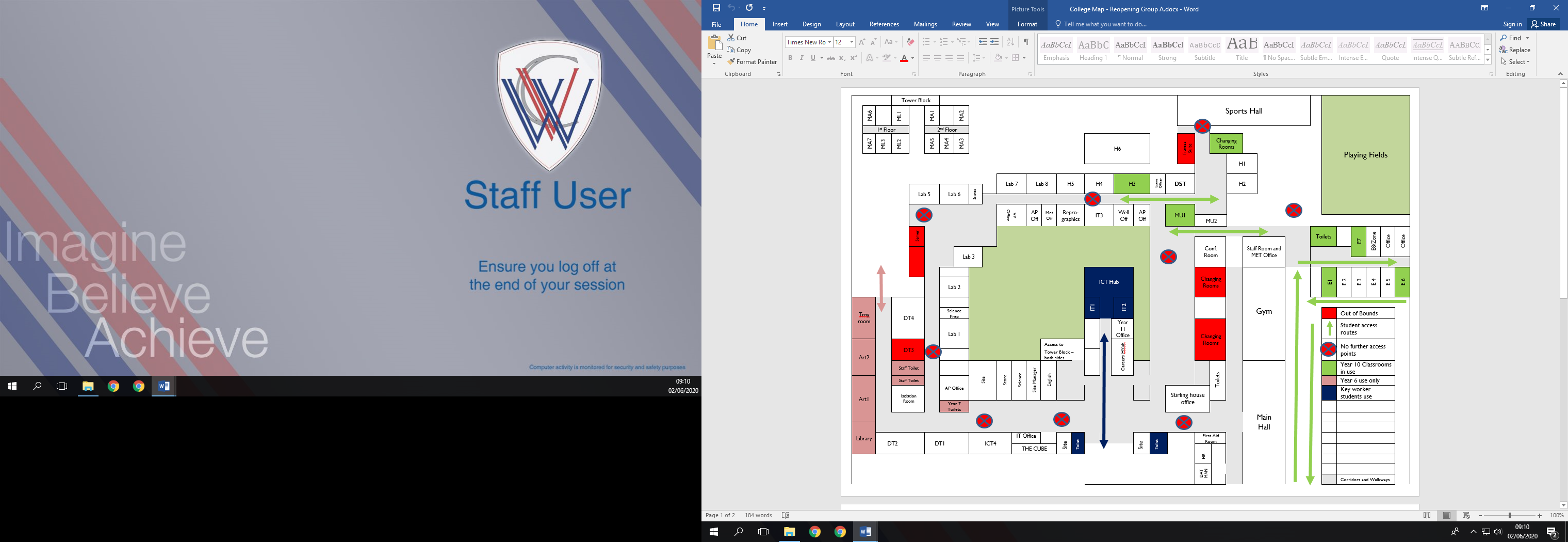
Internal access arrangements for all student groups

On meeting students from the bus, they will be directed towards their particular work area

Year 10 students

Key worker students

Year 6 students (Rackham staff led)



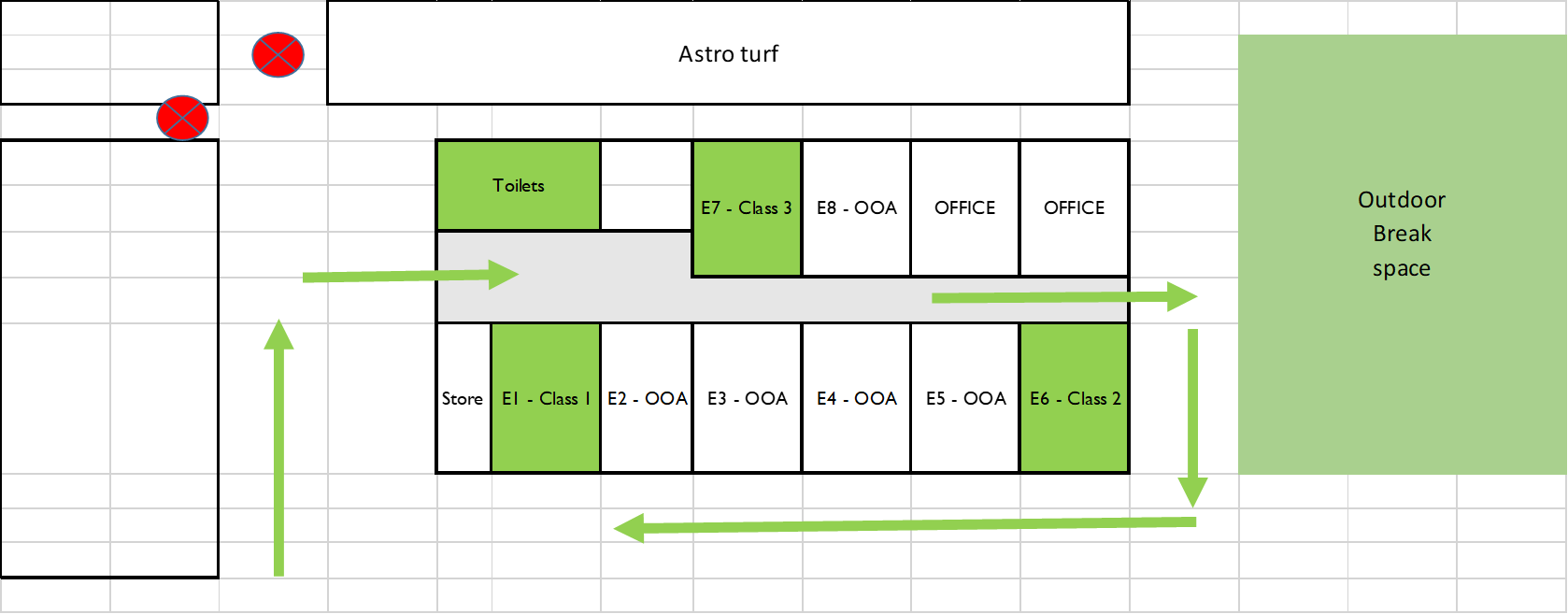
All students will be allocated in to specific groups:

**Year 10 Rooms and spaces**

**Key worker rooms and spaces**

**Year 6 Rooms and Spaces**

All groups have their own toilets allocated to them and their own outside space if required. In the case of poor weather, breaks will be taken inside allocated rooms.



## Classes 4-5 – Humanities area



## Frequently asked questions

These questions and answers are taken from a range of sources set out below. They present the guidance offered to school and college leaders and we will use these as a basis for our decisions and actions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Document link | Significance |
| <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings> | Gov document setting out how to implement protective measures in education – covers the following elements:   * Use of PPE in education (face masks) * Shielding and vulnerable adults * Living with a shielded or vulnerable person * What happens if someone becomes ill at WVC? * What happens if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 at WVC? * Should parents or WVC staff take children’s temperatures at the start of the day? * Will children or parents be able to access COVID tests? * Can adults at WVC access COVID tests? * How should schools manage students with complex needs? |
| <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings> | This document sets out how non healthcare settings should be cleaned if a case of COVID has been confirmed – it presents the worst case scenario for cleaning and if we follow many elements of this guidance for the end of the day cleaning then we reduce the risk to acceptable levels |
| <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers> | This document sets out how passengers can use public transport safely – in essence:   * Wear a face covering * Keep to the recommended 2m distance from others * Be aware of the surfaces you touch and avoid touching your face * Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or elbow when coughing or sneezing |
| <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june> | Opening schools and education settings – guidance for parents and carers |
| <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19> | Guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable |
| <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing#clinically-vulnerable-people> | Guidance on staying alert and safe – clinically vulnerable people |

## Personal protective equipment (PPE) including face coverings and face masks

Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended. Face coverings may be beneficial for short periods indoors where there is a risk of close social contact with people you do not usually meet and where social distancing and other measures cannot be maintained, for example on public transport or in some shops. This does not apply to schools or other education settings. Schools and other education or childcare settings should therefore not require staff, children and learners to wear face coverings. Changing habits, cleaning and hygiene are effective measures in controlling the spread of the virus. Face coverings (or any form of medical mask where instructed to be used for specific clinical reasons) should not be worn in any circumstance by those who may not be able to handle them as directed (for example, young children, or those with special educational needs or disabilities) as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.

Many 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 2 metres from others. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases including:

* children, young people and students whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs should continue to receive their care in the same way
* if a child, young person or other learner becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home. A face mask should be worn by the supervising adult if 2 metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the child or young person is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a face mask should be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn

## Shielded and clinically vulnerable adults

**Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals** are advised not to work outside the home. We are strongly advising people, including education staff, who are clinically extremely vulnerable (those with serious underlying health conditions which put them at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus and have been advised by their clinician or through a letter) to rigorously follow shielding measures in order to keep themselves safe. Staff in this position are advised not to attend work. Read [COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19) for more advice.

Clinically vulnerable individuals who are at higher risk of severe illness (for example, people with some pre-existing conditions as set out in the [Staying at home and away from others (social distancing) guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing#clinically-vulnerable-people) have been advised to take extra care in observing social distancing and should work from home where possible. Education and childcare settings should endeavour to support this, for example by asking staff to support remote education, carry out lesson planning or other roles which can be done from home. If clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the safest available on-site roles, staying 2 metres away from others wherever possible, although the individual may choose to take on a role that does not allow for this distance if they prefer to do so. If they must spend time within 2 metres of other people, settings must carefully assess and discuss with them whether this involves an acceptable level of risk.

## Living with a shielded or clinically vulnerable person

If a child, young person or a member of staff lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, they can attend their education or childcare setting.

If a child, young person or staff member lives in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable, as set out in the [COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19), it is advised they only attend an education or childcare setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of children, they are able to understand and follow those instructions. This may not be possible for very young children and older children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those individuals to attend. They should be supported to learn or work at home.

## What happens if someone becomes unwell at an educational or childcare setting?

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in an education or childcare setting, they must be sent home and advised to follow the [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance).

If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age of the child and with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.

If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.

PPE should be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).

In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If a member of staff has helped someone who was unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves (and in which case, a test is available) or the child subsequently tests positive (see ‘What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in a setting?’ below). They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. Cleaning the affected area with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. See the [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings).

## What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in a setting?

When a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. All staff and students who are attending an education or childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario.

Where the child, young person or staff member tests negative, they can return to their setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation.

Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive, 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.

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England’s local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise schools and other settings on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases, a larger number of other children, young people may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole class, site or year group. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.

## Should educational settings ask parents to report pupils’ temperatures at the start of each day?

Parents, carers and settings do not need to take children’s temperatures every morning. Routine testing of an individual’s temperature is not a reliable method for identifying coronavirus. Educational and childcare settings should reiterate to parents the need to follow the standard national advice on the kind of symptoms to look out for that might be due to coronavirus, and where to get further advice. If anyone in the household develops a fever or a new continuous cough they are advised to follow the [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance) (which states that the ill person should remain in isolation for 7 days and the rest of the household in isolation for 14 days).

## Will children and young people be eligible for testing?

When settings open to the wider cohort of children and young people, all those children and young people eligible to attend, and members of their households, will have access to testing if they display symptoms of coronavirus. This will enable them to get back into childcare or education, and their parents or carers to get back to work, if the test proves to be negative. To access testing parents will be able to use the 111 online coronavirus service if their child is 5 or over. Parents will be able to call 111 if their child is aged under 5.

## Will teachers and other staff be able to get tested if they have symptoms?

Access to testing is already available to all essential workers. This includes anyone involved in education, childcare or social work – including both public and voluntary sector workers, as well as foster carers. See the [full list of essential workers](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested#essential-workers). Education settings as employers can book tests through an online digital portal. There is also an option for employees to book tests directly on the portal.

## How should special schools and colleges consider and manage risks in supporting children and young people with complex needs?

We have published [guidance for special schools, specialist colleges, local authorities and any other settings](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance) managing children and young people with education, health and care plans, including those with complex needs. This covers recommendations for educational settings, working with local areas and families, on how to assess risks in supporting children and young people.

# References

CEBM. (2020, April 6th). *Covid-19: What proportion are asymptomatic?* Retrieved from Centre for Evidence Based Medicine: https://www.cebm.net/covid-19/covid-19-what-proportion-are-asymptomatic/

World Health Organisation. (2020, March 17). *Q&A: Influenza and COVID-19 - similarities and differences.* Retrieved from World Health Organisation: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/q-a-similarities-and-differences-covid-19-and-influenza