

Summary of DfE Guidance for Return to School

Introduction

It is the Government's plan that all children in all year groups return to school full-time from the 8th March. Primary school aged children will return to school on the 8th March. Secondary school aged children will be offered testing from March 8th and are able to return to school following their first negative result. If you or your child refuses to consent to testing they will return to school in line with school or college's arrangements.

Returning to school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing. Time out of school is detrimental for children's cognitive and academic development, particularly for disadvantaged children. The risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school.

Government guidance has been provided to school leaders to put in place proportionate protective measures for children and staff, which also ensure that all pupils receive a high-quality education that enables them to thrive and progress. It is the expectation that all 'Looked After Children' in the London Borough of Enfield will return to school on the 8th March.

What might be new

When pupils return to school from March 8th the environment is going to be different from what they remember. School leaders have completed risk assessments and will introduce a system of controls that works for their school and allows them to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum for their pupils, including full educational and care support for those pupils who have SEND.

Pupils returning to school can expect new routines, habits and systems including;

- Expectations for arriving at and leaving school (including behaviour on public transport)
- Hygiene practices
- Lunch and break time routines
- Transitions between lessons
- Staff supervision of movement during social times
- Safe use of school spaces and equipment
- Restrictions on movement within school and new hygiene rules

Face Coverings

It is recommended that pupils in year 7 upwards (and associated staff) wear face coverings (unless exempt) when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained.

It is also recommend that face coverings should be worn in classrooms and during activities, unless social distancing can be maintained. This will not apply in situations where a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example PE lessons. Face coverings do not need to be worn by pupils or students when outdoors on the premises. Visitors to schools will also be asked to wear face masks.

This is due to be reviewed at Easter.

Behaviour

Teachers will need to teach students about the new behavioural expectations required to ensure the safety of everyone on the school site. It will be made explicit to students what behaviours are now considered more serious due to coronavirus (COVID19) outbreak, for example purposefully coughing on someone.

Many schools will update their behaviour policies to include new rules related to the controls put in place to reduce the coronavirus (COVID19) risks. We will expect our young people returning to school to be aware of new behaviour expectations and the potential sanctions for failure to comply with school policies.

Attendance

It is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development. Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence

You should not send your child to school or college if they:

- have symptoms of COVID or live in a household with someone who has symptoms
- have tested positive themselves, even if they do not have symptoms
- live in a household with someone who has tested positive, even if that person does not have symptoms
- are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)
- are required to self-isolate for travel-related reasons

Children who are considered CEV (Clinically Extremely Vulnerable) are expected to continue shielding and are not expected to attend school. These children should continue to access remote learning. Schools may request to see a copy of the shielding letter to confirm this. Those young people who have been shielding and have been vaccinated are expected to continue shielding.

Children who live with a Clinically Extremely Vulnerable person are still expected to attend school.

Assessments & Exams

Statutory key stage 1 and 2 tests and teacher assessments planned for summer 2021 have been cancelled. Schools will use their own assessments to inform their teaching and report on children's progress.

GCSE, AS and A Level exams for summer 2021 will not take place and grades will be awarded based on teacher assessments.

The arrangements to assess and award grades for Technical Vocational qualifications vary (BTECH's, Functional Skills, ESOL etc.). Some (most BTECH's) will be awarded grades based on teacher assessments, while others (ESOL and some functional skills) may continue be assessed in the normal

way if appropriate Public Health measures are put in place. If not teacher assessed grades will be used once again. Please speak to your child's school/education providers for clarification.

Support

There will be pupils who are likely to need some social and emotional support on their return to full time school. Some pupils will need extra support, such as those who have previously had poor attendance or fixed term exclusions as well as those starting a new school. Carers and social workers are encouraged to contact the school before the start of the school year, to set expectations, understand concerns and build confidence. Enfield Virtual School has encouraged all schools' Designated Teachers to put in place a transition plan and recommended these are returned to the Virtual School and allocated Social Worker. It is good practice to for these plans to be discussed with the foster carer.

Schools have been provided with extensive guidance on supporting pupil and student mental wellbeing. In particular school SEND teams have been given training on supporting pupils with SEND to return to their mainstream school after a long absence.

Schools should be offering pastoral and extra-curricular activities to all pupils designed to:

- Support the rebuilding of friendships and social engagement
- Address and equip pupils to respond to issues linked to coronavirus (COVID19)
- Support pupils with approaches to improving their physical and mental wellbeing

Schools should also provide more focused pastoral support where issues are identified that individual pupils may need help with, drawing on external support where necessary and possible.

Useful Links

[DfE Guidance What parents need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges during COVID-19](#)

[DfE Guidance on supporting children and young people in special residential settings](#)

[Keeping residential settings safe from coronavirus](#)

[COVID19 - cleaning of non-healthcare settings outside the home](#)

[Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care](#)

[Coronavirus testing and tracing](#)

[COVID 19 Safer travel guidance for passengers](#)

[DfE Shielding guidance for children and young people](#)

[Extra mental health support for pupils and teachers](#)