

# The Good Shepherd Centre

## Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID-19 in our school



Updated: 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
V 1.0	30/7/2020	First version of document
V 2.0	25/8/2020	Update to guidance on face coverings in Key Public Health Measures section and Dedicated School Transport section. Updates effective from 31st August 2020
V 3.0	11/9/2020	Various updates for clarification of key issues, including self-isolation, testing procedures, quarantine, outbreak and case management, and links to updated guidelines on Physical Education and Home Economics. The revised and additional text introduced in this version of the guidance is highlighted in yellow.
V 4.3	30/10/2020	Shifting the emphasis of the guidance from “reopening schools” to “protective measures in schools”. Further changes resulting from feedback on the experience of implementing the guidance at local level. Key changes include updated guidance on: ventilation as we head into autumn/winter; shielding and individual risk assessments and Additional Support Needs. Updates to versions 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3, to take account of comments from CERG members where possible, the latest advice from the sub-group, and to align with the levels approach within the Strategic Framework. A summary of the key changes in this guidance is available on the Education Scotland Education Recovery page.

**This document should be read in conjunction with the most recent GSC COVID 19 Policy**

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## Overview

We were all delighted that we were able to return to full-time Education for pupils on Thursday 20th August 2020, with enhanced health and safety measures in place that follow the current public health and government advice.

The GSC school has remained open for the entire duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing Pupils with continuous education, support and stability throughout.

This guidance was initially developed to support a safe return to full time Education for all children, young people and staff in August 2020. It has since been updated on a regular basis to support the continuing safe implementation of a full-time return to school, and most recently to reflect the levels approach within 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): Scotland's Strategic Framework' (herein the 'Strategic Framework'). It takes full account of the evolving COVID-19 situation in Scotland, the experience of facilitating our school day in GSC to date, the advice received from scientific and public health experts and the advice of the Education Recovery Group and other key stakeholders including children and young people.

The Education Recovery Group continues to monitor carefully the incidence and prevalence of COVID-19 in Scotland and in school communities, to inform guidance around safety and wellbeing in schools. Infographics providing a weekly snapshot of current COVID-related data in relation to children and young people, and their associated workforce, such as the number of tests and positive cases reported, and the attendance and absence of both children and staff in childcare and school settings.

As set out in the Strategic Framework, to best tackle the virus and protect people, Scotland has moved to an approach based on five levels of protection. This allows for rapid and proportionate responses to be taken – locally or nationally – using a transparent range of measures and options. It also allows us to avoid a 'one size fits all' approach, where a part of the country with lower rates of infection lives with restrictions designed to suppress the virus in higher rate areas.

The Strategic Framework also reiterates that the unique impacts of the pandemic on children and young people, coupled with the necessity to ensure it does not prevent them receiving the best start in life, mean we must prioritise keeping our school safe, open and welcoming. It is recognised that, to enable this to happen, enhanced mitigations may need to be put in place in other parts of society.

The protective measures set out in this guidance represent the 'core' or standard protective measures that are in place in our school across all five protection levels. These measures have been augmented in line with scientific and public health advice in the current context of rising prevalence levels. Implementation and adherence to these measures is essential to ensuring the ongoing safety of children and young people, as well as the staff who have worked hard to keep settings open.

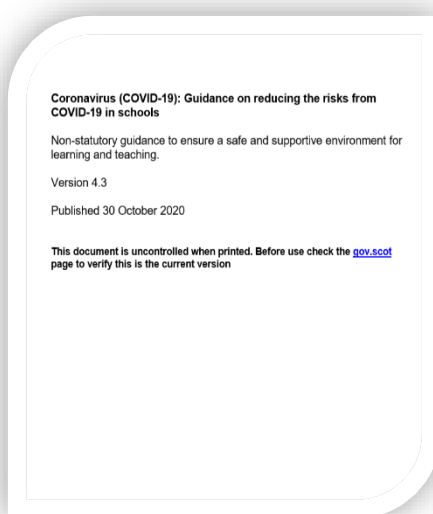
These standard protective measures represent the full suite of measures required at levels 0-2 of the Strategic Framework. At levels 3 and 4 of the Strategic Framework, some enhanced protective measures have been identified which aim to tackle specific areas of higher potential risk as prevalence increases, including for those people most clinically at risk.

In addition to the implementation of these mitigations, we will also need to be able to adapt to local issues, and specifically to local outbreaks. This will closely involve our local authority and our local Public Health Team.

The measures put in place across wider society at different levels of the Strategic Framework have been designed precisely to avoid this eventuality, and to reduce community transmission sufficiently to allow schools to remain open safely. However, the use of targeted remote learning remains an important contingency for us at all levels of the Strategic Framework.

Any external organisations who are involved in delivering on-site services within GSC are required to follow this guidance. On-site services can only be facilitated within permitted tiers.

GSC will exercise our judgement when implementing this guidance, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our Young People and staff taking into account local circumstances. Changes in incidence of COVID-19, and the impact of implementation of this guidance, will be closely monitored at the national and local level. The guidance will be kept under review and updated when necessary.



**The continued focus for the school whilst continuing to reduce the risks from COVID-19 will be:**

- Health and Wellbeing, particularly nurture
- Working in partnership with staff and the team around each Young Person to deliver learning and support where required to address Learning Loss
- Continuing to ensure equity and excellence including educational continuity:
- Continuing to raise attainment and achievement
- Blended Learning: In school and home learning provision. This provision will support the further development of digital learning, promote independent learning skills and will support contingency planning should there be any disruption to learning due to the COVID-19 virus.



### [Key Public Health Measures](#)

This section of the guidance sets out the key public health measures that GSC will implement to minimise the risks of COVID-19 transmission and infection. These controls, when implemented alongside updated risk assessments, will help substantially reduce the risks to young people and staff and ensure a safe, successful return to school.

This guidance is designed to promote a consistent approach against the context of the nationwide health emergency. It is essential that everyone is aware of the measures put in place that prioritises the health, safety and wellbeing of young people and staff, and ensure that the risk mitigation measures set out in this guidance are implemented effectively.

## Risk Assessment

In order to protect people from harm, GSC has taken reasonable steps to protect children, young people, staff and others from COVID-19 within the education setting.

Where applicable, risk assessments are conducted and regularly reviewed and updated. All of our risk assessments are proportionate to the relevant protection level specific circumstances, and reviewed and updated as appropriate as these circumstances change.

GSC continues to ensure that we implement pragmatic and proportionate control measures which reduce risk to the lowest reasonably practical level. We meet regularly to ensure that our control measures are:

- effective;
- working as planned;
- aligned with the appropriate mitigations for their protection level; and
- updated appropriately as per the above, including considering any issues identified or changes in public health advice.

GSC communicate with all school staff, children, young people, professionals, parents and carers regarding health and safety. It is imperative that all members GSC understand what measures are being put in place and why, and how everyone should cooperate to make them work. GSC place great importance on ensuring that we consult children, young people and parents/carers on these arrangements to help ensure that they feel safe and comfortable in school.

Our COVID-19: Risk Assessment sets out measures put in place to maintain the opening of the education facilities within GSC and the process put in place to help reduce the risk to the young people we support and the staff who support them.

Existing policies and guidance continue to apply alongside the actions within this document, including but not limited to:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- GSC COVID 19 Policy
- Attendance Management Policy
- Remote Working Policy
- COVID-19 related absence: Flowchart
- COVID-19 GSC Route Map Through and out of the crisis
- Scotland's Strategic Framework
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) Policy on Employees Being Vaccinated

## Assumptions

As with all risk assessments a number of assumptions and exclusions are made, these are noted below:

- GSC has continued to operate during this pandemic and continues, on a daily basis, to support some of the most vulnerable young people in the country. A number of processes and procedures relating to COVID-19 have been put in place within all of our houses and services and these will also apply to our education facilities.

- All of the young people GSC supports within education reside within our Secure, Close Support and Through Care Residential facilities, these facilities are following our strict infection control and hygiene policies. This in turn reduces some of the variables and unknowns that mainstream schools will have to deal with.
- Risk Assessments are based on a full return to education for all young people, while maintaining a form of house 'bubble' to reduce the risk of infection
- Risk Assessments will be conducted and/or updated to reflect the revised planning assumption of a full return to school. All aspects of the return to school have been considered, including transport for outings, Duke of Edinburgh Excursions, learners attending college and work placement activities.

### **Purpose**

GSC has and will continue to ensure a pragmatic and proportionate series of control measures which reduce risk to the lowest reasonably practical level. The goal of each Risk Assessment will be to

- identify what work activity or situations might cause transmission of the virus
- think about who could be at risk
- decide how likely it is that someone could be exposed
- act to remove the activity or situation, or if this isn't possible, control the risk

Practical Measures have already been taken by GSC in this regard, for example:

- putting in place social distancing measures
- smaller class sizes and grouping classes into cohorts
- providing additional handwashing/ hand sanitising facilities
- use of facemasks

It is the responsibility of all staff and pupils to work to ensure that the risk assessment and the measures to mitigate the risk of infection and transmission of the Covid-19 virus are implemented consistently within the school.

Time will be spent at in service days, collegiate sessions, morning handovers and teachers' meetings, ensuring that all members of the school community are clear on the revised organisation and operational arrangements within the school.

Training will be provided for all staff on an ongoing basis during in-service days and all staff will be required to sign to acknowledge receipt of the training. This will include a discussion of the Education Recovery Plan.



### [Public health measures to prevent and respond to infections](#)

In order to address the risks identified in our risk assessments, we will continue to embrace core public health measures appropriate to our context and setting.

Essential public health measures include:

- enhanced hygiene and environmental cleaning arrangements
- minimising contact with others (groupings, maintaining distancing for young people)
- wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) **where necessary**
- a requirement that people who are ill stay at home
- active engagement with Test and Protect.

The requirements, as detailed by NHS Public Health, must be rigorously implemented and adhered to in GSC. All staff will be provided with hand sanitiser, cleaning materials and appropriate PPE.

### [Enhanced hygiene and environmental cleaning Personal hygiene](#)

GSC strongly encourage and support all children, young people, staff and any others for whom it is necessary to enter the school estate to maintain COVID-secure personal hygiene throughout the day.

The key COVID-secure personal hygiene measures that all children, young people and staff should follow are:

- frequent washing/sanitising of hands for 20 seconds and drying thoroughly, and always when entering/leaving the building, before/after eating and after using the toilet;
- encouraging children, young people and staff to avoid touching their faces including mouth, eyes and nose; and



- using a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze, and use bins that are emptied regularly for tissue waste.

It will be the responsibility of every individual in GSC to observe good hygiene practice to minimise the risk of infection. We will continue to identify opportunities to reinforce for all children, young people and staff the importance of COVID-secure hygiene measures throughout the school day, as part of their work on responsible citizenship. Involving children and young people in discussions about how to manage mitigations is critical to their success. Appropriate signage has been applied appropriately throughout the centre, including in toilets.

In accordance with NHS Inform Covid-19 General Advice, GSC has ensured that adequate facilities are available for hand hygiene, including handwashing facilities that are adequately stocked or have alcohol-based hand rub at key areas. Hand sanitisers are available at entry/exit points, to allow all building users to wash/sanitise their hands as they enter/leave the building at pick up/drop off time and at break/lunch times. Help will be given to those children and young people who struggle to wash their hands independently where appropriate. Over time it is possible that children and young people will become complacent about hand hygiene and we understand that it is our responsibility to involve them in making plans to ensure continued rigour.

### **Enhanced environmental cleaning**

GSC undertake regular health and safety checks of the school estate, including water quality sampling for legionella and other bacteria.

GSC continues to ensure that an enhanced environmental cleaning regime is in place. The regime put in place is in line with Health Protection Scotland Guidance for Non-Healthcare Settings. This specifies in particular:

- Ensuring regular detergent cleaning schedules and procedures are in place using a product which is active against bacteria and viruses; ensure adequate contact time for cleaning products is adhered to.
- Ensuring hourly cleaning of commonly touched objects and surfaces (e.g. desks, handles, dining tables, shared technology surfaces etc.);
- Ensuring that where possible movement of individuals between work stations is minimised and where work spaces are shared there is cleaning between use (e.g. avoid hot desks and instead each individual, children, young people and staff, has a designated desk);
- Ensuring there are adequate disposal facilities;
- Wedging doors (other than fire doors) open, where appropriate, to reduce touchpoints;
- Setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and physical distancing is achieved as much as possible; and
- Cleaning work vehicles, between different passengers or shifts as appropriate.

There has been more frequent cleaning of rooms/areas that are used by different groups, including staff (e.g. classrooms, toilets, changing rooms and staff areas).

Movement of children, young people and staff between classrooms has been minimised through the implementation of cohort teaching and learning bubbles. If a situation occurs whereby this cannot

be avoided, GSC will ensure the provision of appropriate cleaning supplies to enable them to wipe down their own desk/chair/surfaces before leaving and, especially, on entering the room.

Careful consideration is given to the cleaning regime for specialist equipment (e.g. in practical subjects or for children with additional support needs), sensory rooms, practical subjects with specialist equipment and dining halls, etc. to ensure safe use. Staff have been advised to bring in their own packed lunch, crockery/cutlery and each individual has been asked to ensure these are cleaned with warm general purpose detergent and dried thoroughly before being stored for re-use.

We have advised that unnecessary resource sharing including textbooks should be avoided, especially where this does not contribute to education and development. Cleaning between uses should be in accordance with the Health Protection Scotland Guidance for Non-Healthcare Settings.

**Fomites** (*objects or materials which may carry infection – including text books and jotters, etc.*)

The updated advice of the COVID-19 Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children's Issues notes that recent studies suggest that environmental contamination leading to transmission of COVID-19 is unlikely to occur in real life conditions, provided that standard cleaning procedures and precautions are enforced. In GSC, it is recommended that we follow the general guidance on hand washing and respiratory hygiene, including cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces, and careful hand-washing with soap and warm water and / or use of alcohol-based hand sanitiser before and after handling jotters, text books (or other pieces of equipment). This section of the guidance has been updated in light of this more recent evidence.

There are two potential approaches to mitigating risks from surface contamination of jotters, textbooks and library books.

(i) quarantining books for 72 hours remains an effective measure to mitigate the risks of handling them. The amount of infectious virus on any contaminated surface is likely to have decreased significantly after this time.

(ii) Careful hand washing with soap and warm water/use of alcohol-based hand sanitiser before and after handling text books, jotters (or other pieces of equipment) mitigates the need for quarantine for 72 hours before, and 72 hours after. As far as possible and in line with effective practice, staff should avoid touching their mouth, nose and eye area. Good hand hygiene should be sufficient to prevent transmission of infection from these items, even if they are contaminated, as long as the person handling the item does not touch their face between handling the item and decontaminating their hands. Good respiratory hygiene ("Catch it, kill it, bin it") is also required at all times.

### Ventilation and heating

The latest scientific advice identifies that ventilation is an important factor in mitigating against the risk of far-field (>2m) aerosol transmission. The importance of far-field aerosol transmission is not yet known, but evidence suggests it is a risk in poorly ventilated spaces.

There is therefore a need for an appropriate supply of fresh air to assist with minimising the risk of virus infection. There is also a need to maintain indoor temperatures for reasons including user comfort, health and wellbeing, and learning and teaching.

GSC will continue to ensure a focus on implementation and maintenance of wider controls including personal hygiene, symptom vigilance, enhanced cleaning and distancing.

Where possible, GSC will ensure that adequate levels of ventilation and appropriate temperatures are maintained, with reference to the School Premises Regulations. While minimum requirements

vary depending on the specific part of the school estate, for classrooms the regulations stipulate 2 air changes per hour and a temperature of 17oC. Reference should also be made to the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 minimum temperatures.

### **Natural ventilation and temperature**

The primary effective method of increasing natural ventilation remains the opening of external doors, vents and windows. Wherever it is practical, safe and secure to do so, and appropriate internal temperatures can be maintained in line with statutory obligations. Due to the nature of our secure environment this is not possible within some areas of the school building. Windows are regularly opened in the classrooms where this is possible.

Our air conditioning system ensures that we have a constant supply of fresh air through mechanical means, into every area in the school. The air supplied throughout the centre passes through filters which extracts debris and dust particles.

The air handling units are maintained regularly beyond what is required from the manufacturer with filters being changed more frequently than recommended alongside the frequent cleaning of the grills supplying and extracting air, situated in each room. The fan motors are checked regularly to ensure they are operating, and any faults resolved promptly.

Internal fire doors should never be held open (unless assessed and provided with appropriate hold open and self-closing mechanisms which respond to the actuation of the fire alarm system). The Fire Safety Risk Assessment should always be reviewed before any internal doors are held open.

GSC is required to maintain internal temperatures and conditions in line with statutory obligations (see the School Premises Regulations and the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992). It is recognised that in the autumn and winter, schools are therefore unlikely to be able to keep external doors and windows open as often, or for as long, as in warmer weather periods.

Scientific and public health advice is that measures to introduce fresh air can have a beneficial impact on virus suppression.

Potential approaches that the GSC will implement, the suitability of which will depend on a range of local factors including weather conditions, may include:

### **Ventilation**

- partially opening windows to provide ventilation while reducing draughts where possible
- ensuring regular maintenance of the centre air conditioning system
- opening high level windows in preference to low level to reduce draughts
- purging spaces by opening windows, vents and external doors (e.g. between classes, during break and lunch, when a room is unused, or at other suitable intervals if a space is occupied for long periods at a time)

## **Temperature**

- we will provide flexibility in permissible clothing while indoors.
- designing seating plans to reflect individual student/staff temperature preferences. This is an approach which has been trialled in some schools and proven to be a useful measure when used in combination with other strategies.
- adjusting indoor heating to compensate for cold air flow from outside (e.g. higher system settings, increased duration)

## **Minimising contact between individuals and groups**

The COVID-19 Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children's Issues published scientific advice on physical distancing in schools. This advice was reviewed in October 2020. The original advice states:

"Subject to continued suppression of the virus, and to surveillance and mitigations being in place, the balance of the evidence suggests that no distancing should be required between children in primary schools. The evidence is less clear for older pupils but at present we support the same approach being taken in secondary schools on the basis of the balance of known risks, the effectiveness of mitigations and the benefits to young people of being able to attend school."

"In both primary and secondary settings, the preference would always be to avoid large gatherings and crowded spaces and, wherever possible, to keep children and young people within the same groups for the duration of the school day. In giving this advice we recognise the practical challenges. Where possible, timetabling should be reviewed to reduce movement of groups of pupils around the school estate as much as possible."

The evidence and experience of schools re-opening between August and October 2020, and recent scientific evidence means that previous advice on physical distancing in schools should be maintained, and the need for compliance should be strongly reinforced in all schools. At the GSC we will ensure there are no gatherings until it is safe to do so.

## **Maintaining distance between young people**

The scientific advice is that physical distancing between young people in secondary schools is not required to ensure safety in schools.

The evidence for this is less clear for older pupils, but at present this approach continues to be advised for schools on the basis of the balance of known risks, feedback from public health teams, the effectiveness of mitigations and the benefits to all young people of being able to attend school. However, to provide additional reassurance to young people, staff and parents/carers, where there are opportunities to further minimise risk these are actively encouraged in the Centre.

As a precautionary approach therefore GSC encourages distancing wherever practicable between young people. Distancing is implemented in a proportionate way, ensuring that the specific approaches adopted do not introduce capacity constraints and/or prevent full-time learning in school.

***Mitigations that GSC includes in daily practice:***

- We encourage young people to maintain distance where possible, particularly indoors.
- We discourage social physical contact (hand to hand greeting/hugs)
- We use all the available space available to us on our campus to promote distancing where possible.
- We have adjusted our class space to maintain spacing between desks or between individual young people
- We seat young people side by side and facing forwards, rather than face to face
- We avoid situations that require young people to sit or stand in direct physical contact with others.
- Where young people need to move about within the classroom to perform activities (for example to access a shared resource) this is organised to minimise congregation around the point of access to the shared resource.
- We have altered our class sizes to intensify support for young people and create more space.
- Where applicable, Young people who require to spend time in college environments are encouraged to ensure that they follow the COVID-19 guidance for universities, colleges and student accommodation providers on the appropriate approach to these specific circumstances while on campus. This has now been included in updated guidance for colleges.

**Minimising contacts (groupings)**

In line with the scientific advice, GSC will keep children and young people within the same groups for the duration of the school day. Consistent groups reduce the likelihood of direct transmission, allow for quicker identification of those who need to self-isolate and may reduce the overall number of children, young people and staff who need to isolate in the event of a positive test or COVID-19.

GSC has made every effort to keep groups apart from other groups consistently and we have reduced the movement of groups across different parts of the school estate altogether.

All of our events, assemblies, meetings etc have been conducted virtually so as to avoid other large group gatherings.

Where it is necessary to bring groups together, alternative mitigating actions will be put in place, for instance undertaking fire test drills or procedures. If the whole Centre is evacuated, we will of course prioritise fire safety, and use alternative muster points to ensure a greater degree of separation.

The approach taken to configuring groups has been risk-based and adapted to the specific circumstances of our school. Our general approach has been to keep groups consistent where practically possible, taking into account the feasibility of doing this while delivering as broad and meaningful a curriculum as is possible whilst promoting children, young people and staff's health and wellbeing.

### **Physical distancing and minimising contact for adults**

Two metre physical distancing between adults, and between adults and children and young people who are not from the same household should be maintained. This includes non-staff adult visitors to the GSC e.g. contractors, deliveries etc. Adult visitors to GSC should be strictly limited only to those that are necessary to support children and young people or the running of the Centre and will be determined through local authority tiers.

Maintaining 2m distancing between adults and children whenever possible will help mitigate risk, but it is acknowledged that this is not always possible, particularly when working with younger children or children with additional support needs who may require personal or intimate care.

Where adults cannot keep 2m distance and are interacting face-to-face with other adults and/or children and young people, face coverings (or, in certain specific circumstances, PPE - see section on PPE and other protective barrier measures, below) should be worn at all times. This applies to all staff including support staff and classroom assistants. Transparent face-coverings may be used where appropriate if there is a risk of detriment to the child's health and wellbeing.

Movement between schools or Centres should be kept to a minimum. Those providing essential services key to the delivery of children's care or educational plans, for example visiting teachers, psychologists, nurses, social workers, youth workers and those providing therapeutic support, will be able to visit schools; however, appropriate mitigations to prevent transmission of the virus in and between settings will be undertaken. This will be determined through local authority tiers.

In partnership with related partners and local public health teams, GSC will pay very close attention to any evidence suggesting the potential for emerging bridges of transmission between settings. In the event that any such evidence is identified, we will consult immediately with local public health teams on any requirement to pause or further reduce such movement between centres.

Staff can operate across different classes and year groups within a setting where this is necessary in order to facilitate the delivery of the school timetable. Where staff need to move between classes, they should try to keep 2m distancing from learners and other staff as well as wearing face coverings as appropriate. A cohort system will be implemented during times of lockdown or elevated tiers.

GSC has carefully planned how shared staff spaces are set up and how they are used to help staff to distance from each other. The number of people in rooms at any one time has been limited to ensure 2m distancing can be maintained and face coverings should also be worn.



## PPE

Where PPE is required or necessary, the following arrangements will apply.

Use of PPE will comply with all applicable legislation, including the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999 which outlines the process of, and legal requirements for, risk assessment.

The use of PPE by staff within GSC, for example support staff, support assistants, staff with vulnerabilities, are based on a clear assessment of risk and need for an individual child or young person, such as personal care, where staff come into contact with blood and body fluids or lift children and young people. Where the use of PPE is risk assessed as being required, staff will be trained in how to put on and take off PPE (as required by Health and Safety Regulations) and suitable waste facilities provided.

Risk assessments already exist for children and young people with more complex needs, including those with emotional and behavioural needs. These risk assessments are updated as a matter of priority in light of changes to provision such as environment and staffing. GSC's risk assessments are mindful of the additional distress children and young people may be experiencing due to measures introduced such as the use of face coverings or PPE due to COVID-19, and the need for continued protection of staff.

Local infection control procedures that outline safety and protocols are stringently followed at all times. This includes procedures for putting on and taking off PPE, the disposal of soiled items; laundering of any clothes including uniform and staff clothing, towels or linen; and cleaning equipment for children and young people.

Specific guidance has been developed and published for first responders (COVID-19: guidance for first responders) who, as part of their normal roles, provide immediate assistance requiring close contact until further medical assistance arrives. This guidance sets out clearly what a first responder is required to do if they come into close contact with someone as part of their first responder duties. It covers the use of PPE and CPR.

The types of PPE required in specific circumstances are set out below:

- Routine activities: No PPE is required when undertaking routine educational activities in classroom or school settings.
- Suspected COVID-19: A fluid-resistant surgical mask should be worn by staff if they are looking after a child or young person who has become unwell with symptoms of COVID19 and 2m distancing cannot be maintained while doing so.
- If the child or young person who has become unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 needs direct personal care, gloves, aprons and a fluid-resistant surgical mask should be worn by staff.
- Eye protection should also be worn if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes such as from coughing, spitting, or vomiting.
- Gloves and aprons should be used when cleaning the areas where a person suspected of having COVID-19 has been.
- Intimate care: Gloves and aprons should continue to be used when providing intimate care to a child or young person. This can include personal, hands-on care such as washing, toileting, or first aid and certain clinical procedures.

- Fluid-resistant surgical masks should be used. Eye protection should also be worn if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes such as from coughing, spitting, or vomiting.
- Gloves and aprons should be used when cleaning equipment or surfaces that might be contaminated with body fluids such as saliva or respiratory secretions.

### **Face Coverings**

The advisory sub-group has moderated its advice regarding requirements to wear face coverings when adults are interacting within 2m with children in all schools. Use of face coverings within GSC is just one mitigation within a package of measures. Other mitigation measures, including physical distancing for adults, environmental cleaning, personal hand and respiratory hygiene, grouping of young people, maintaining distancing between young people in GSC where possible and remaining off work and school when COVID-19 symptoms develop, remain vitally important.

It is important to recognise that some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings.

Face coverings should be worn by adults and young people wherever they cannot keep 2m distance with other adults and/or children and young people.

Face coverings should also be worn at all times when adults and young people are moving around the school in corridors, office and admin areas, kitchens (except when dining) and other confined communal areas, (including staff rooms and toilets); and

Face coverings should be worn by parents and other visitors to the Centre (whether entering the building or otherwise), including parents at drop-off and pick-up.

Classroom assistants and those supporting children with Additional Support Needs, who may routinely have to work within two metres of pupils, should wear face coverings as a general rule.

Local Incident Management Teams, led by Health Protection Teams, may recommend a further strengthening of the use of face coverings in all classrooms when dealing with local outbreaks.

Where local decisions on the strengthened use of face coverings are made, it will remain vitally important to consider the potential impact on children and young people, including via the appropriate use of Equality Impact Assessments.

The impact of wearing a face covering for very young learners and/or learners with additional support needs, including any level of hearing loss, will be carefully considered. Communication for many of these learners (including hearing impaired young people) relies in part on being able to see someone's face clearly.

In classes where any such impacts are anticipated and no alternative mitigations are reasonable, GSC will consider the use of transparent / see-through face coverings which are increasingly available. Some children and young people may need additional support/reassurance about the reasons for adults wearing face coverings. However, as face coverings become more prevalent in wider society, this may be less of a concern.

It is vital that we continue to provide clear instructions to staff and children and young people on how to put on, remove, store and dispose of face coverings in all of the circumstances above, to avoid inadvertently increasing the risks of transmission. The key points are as follows:

- Face coverings should not be shared with others.



- Before putting on or removing the face covering, hands should be cleaned by washing with soap and water or hand sanitiser.
- Make sure the face covering is the right size to cover the nose, mouth and chin. Children should be taught how to wear the face covering properly, including not touching the front and not pulling it under the chin or into their mouth.
- When temporarily storing a face covering (e.g. during classes), it should be placed in a washable, sealed bag or container where possible.
- Re-usable face coverings should be washed after each day of use in school at 60 degrees centigrade or in boiling water.
- Disposable face coverings must be disposed of safely and hygienically. Children and young people should be encouraged not to litter and to place their face coverings in the general waste bin. They are not considered to be clinical waste in the same way that used PPE may be.



No-one should be excluded from education solely on the grounds that they are not wearing a face covering. Each individual Young person's behaviour or actions should be discussed with them to resolve those concerns as quickly as possible.

### Staying vigilant and responding to COVID-19 symptoms

Everyone at GSC should be vigilant for the symptoms of COVID-19, should understand what actions they should take if someone develops them, either onsite or offsite. The most common symptoms are:

- new continuous cough
- fever/high temperature
- loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste (anosmia).

All staff working in GSC, along with the children and young people in our care, will be supported to follow up to date health protection advice on household or self-isolation and Test and Protect procedures if they or someone in their household exhibits COVID-19 symptoms, or if they have been identified by NHS contact tracers as a close contact of someone with the virus.

Some of the key points to ensure that children, young people and staff are aware of are as follows:

- It is essential that people do not attend school if symptomatic. Everyone who develops symptoms of COVID-19 – a new, continuous cough; fever or loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste - should self-isolate straight away, stay at home and arrange a test via the appropriate method (see below).
- People who live in the same household as a person with symptoms must also self-isolate straight away and stay at home. Only those developing COVID symptoms should be tested. Other members of the household do not require a test, unless they are also symptomatic. If the test result for the symptomatic person is negative, and they are not already isolating as a 'close contact' of a confirmed case, they can end isolation and return to work or school when they are well enough and have not had a fever for 48 hours assuming also that they are not quarantining for foreign travel reasons. The rest of their household can end isolation straight away. Ideally, testing should be undertaken in the first 3 days of symptoms appearing, although testing is effective until day 5.
- GSC staff who opt to undertake asymptomatic testing do not need to self-isolate while awaiting results, as long as no symptoms develop.
- If the test is positive, the symptomatic person must remain in isolation until 10 days from symptom onset, or longer if symptoms (e.g. fever or breathlessness) persist (with the exception of cough or loss of/change of sense of taste or smell, as these symptoms can persist for several weeks after the infectious period). They must otherwise be well and remain fever-free for 48 hours without medication. The rest of the household must remain in isolation for 10 days from symptom onset in the symptomatic person, even if they don't have symptoms themselves, as they may be incubating the infection.
- Everyone who tests positive for COVID-19 will be put in touch with the local contact tracing team so that other close contacts can be identified. All close contacts who are in the same household as confirmed cases must self-isolate immediately. They will usually be contacted by Test and Protect to reinforce self-isolation for 10 days from symptom onset in the symptomatic person. Contacts from outside the household of the confirmed case will be asked to self-isolate at home for 10 days from the date of last exposure to the case. Sometimes this advice is given locally via the school on the advice of the Health Protection Team.
- Everyone who needs to self-isolate as close contacts of confirmed cases must continue to do so for 10 days, even if they have a negative test result.

- Unless otherwise advised by Test and Protect or local Incident Management Teams, where children, young people or staff do not have symptoms but are self-isolating as a close contact of person who is a confirmed case, other people in their household will not be asked to self-isolate along with them.
- The Protect Scotland app from NHS Scotland's Test and Protect is designed to help people and reduce the spread of coronavirus. It is suitable for people aged 16+. The app will alert an individual if they have been in close contact with another app user who has tested positive for coronavirus and can help in determining contacts that may have otherwise been missed while keeping people's information private and anonymous. Advice from Health Protection Teams may override advice from the app to self-isolate.

All children, young people and staff must inform a member of staff or responsible person if they feel unwell with symptoms of COVID-19.

GSC will manage single cases and outbreaks (i.e. 2 or more confirmed cases within 10 days) in line with the guidance on outbreak response (below), by contacting the local Health Protection Team. 149.

### Enhanced surveillance, testing and outbreak management

The public health measures set out above will go a long way to ensuring that schools are a safe environment for everyone.

There will also be, in parallel, a number of measures, involving testing, identifying close contacts and other steps, designed to monitor developments and allow for rapid response to any cases of COVID-19.

#### **Enhanced surveillance programme**

Scotland has an excellent programme of community surveillance which allows us to monitor actively trends in the pandemic, both nationally and more locally.

An additional surveillance programme (CASS), introducing antibody testing for substantial numbers of educational staff volunteers to identify the prevalence of COVID-19 antibodies over time.

A further surveillance study will look at risk in teachers which will improve the understanding of the likelihood of COVID-19 infection and illness within this education workforce, and the effectiveness of measures to reduce transmission.

Taken together, these sources will allow regular reporting on indicators such as: overall incidence and swab positivity for Scotland; incidence and swab positivity for school-age children; number and proportion of all cases that are among school workers; hot spots by local authority area; number of clusters or outbreaks that are under investigation within educational settings; levels and changes in antibodies in educational staff; risks in teachers; and asymptomatic transmission among older children and school workers.

#### **Test and Protect**

The effective application of Test and Protect in GSC is an important means of preventing any spread of the virus. Further information on Test and Protect is available here:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/campaigns/test-and-protect>

All educational establishments are considered complex settings and cases will be prioritised and escalated to specialist HPTs.

If a young person or staff member tests positive, the HPT will assess what action is needed, taking into account the close contacts the person has had within the school and other factors such as the implementation of mitigating measures, eg cleaning, ventilation and PPE. The key initial step is the self-isolation and rapid testing of all symptomatic young people and staff. Other young people and staff members will not be required to self-isolate unless contacted by the contact tracing service.

Staff working at GSC are regarded as keyworkers and in Scotland, if you are a key worker and you, or a member of your family, is symptomatic; there are two routes through which staff can access Covid-19 Testing. They are self-referral and employer referral:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested/>

In addition to staff members being able to self-refer, GSC can register and refer staff members or their household. GSC has issued advice and a process chart (Appendix 1) to senior staff via HR in relation to the Testing Process. This sets out the process and how GSC will ensure that staff are supported during that process and depending on the outcome of test results. Any questions from employers or workers about accessing testing, the website, or results should be made by phoning: 0300 303 2713.

Staff members may be advised by Public Health services to completely self-isolate at home and refrain from work or leaving the house for any other reason; for 14 days if they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19.

(<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-test-and-protect/pages/how-to-selfisolate-effectively/>)

If a young person or staff member is contacted by a contact tracer and told to self-isolate for fourteen days, the person should leave school to self-isolate at home straight away and, if possible, wear a face covering en-route and avoid public transport.

### **Outbreak management**

The management of outbreaks (if GSC has two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 within 14 days) and cases of infectious disease is led by local health protection teams (HPTs) and GSC and our host Local Authority.

The procedures for outbreak management are well established. Public Health Scotland now ask that if there is either a single confirmed (test positive) case of COVID-19 or any suspicion that there may be an outbreak of cases in a setting (e.g. an increase in background rate of absence due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19), GSC will make prompt contact with our local HPT and local authority so they can assess the situation and offer advice.

If an outbreak is confirmed, GSC will work with our local HPT to manage it and we will be expected to work closely with our local HPT to resolve the situation. COSLA and Public Health Scotland are currently developing a national protocol for managing cases and outbreaks. Actions that may need to be considered include (but are not restricted to):

- attendance at multi-agency incident management team meetings;
- communication with children, parents/carers and staff;
- providing records of school layout / attendance / groups; and
- implementing enhanced infection, prevention and control measures.

The HPT will make recommendations to the incident management team on self-isolation and on testing of Young people and staff and the arrangements for doing this. The IMT (Incident Management Team) will discuss and agree additional measures to deal with the specific situation faced in GSC. These may include reviewing risk assessments and compliance with existing guidance, the greater use of face coverings, reviewing and reducing higher risk activities, and/or a move to blended learning. Any discussion of possible school closures should take place between GSC, Renfrewshire Council and local HPTs. GSC will maintain appropriate records to support outbreak control measures, e.g. young people and staff attendance, details of pupil groups, visitors to schools, and clinically vulnerable/extremely vulnerable children and young people who are attending school.



### [Special Considerations for certain groups](#)

There are new levels of advice to protect people with the highest clinical risk (shielding), setting out clearly how advice will change depending on the rates of infection in local areas. As the levels in a local area change, the protection advice for people on the shielding list in that area will change as well. People at highest risk should still follow the advice for the general public as a minimum.

Workplace risk assessments will take account of age, sex, ethnicity, BMI as well as clinical conditions and recommend practical protective measures. The outcome of those risk assessments may include implementation of specific mitigations in the workplace, undertaking different duties, working remotely, including from home, or being advised not to attend work, in line with medical advice to do so.

Appropriate arrangements for remote learning are in place for children and young people who cannot attend school in person due to shielding (or self-isolation) requirements.

Clinically vulnerable staff (including those who have underlying health conditions, but who would not be on the shielding list) can continue to work in school, subject to a dynamic risk assessment confirming it is safe to do so. Arrangements will be made to enable appropriate physical distancing staying 2 metres away from others wherever possible, in line with current advice on the return to school. If they have to spend time within 2 metres of other people, GSC will carefully assess and agree with them whether this involves an acceptable level of risk and face coverings should be worn.

### [Support for children and young people with Additional Support Needs](#)

Every child and young person will have different levels of required support. Where there is a need to work in close proximity with adults and children and young people the safety measures to protect adults and children and young people alike should be followed. Staff should wear a face covering or PPE (where appropriate), and regularly wash their hands before and after contact.

The past few months have been a time of considerable change and there will undoubtedly be moments of anxiety. It will be important to take gradual steps in terms of reintroduction to safe practices and intervention with others.

### Young people in the senior phase who attend Further Education

Young people in the senior phase may require to spend time in college environments.

Evidence to date suggests there has not been significant transmission in the educational aspects of HE / FE settings, while it is clear that there would be significant disadvantage to young people in these circumstances were they not to be able to attend HE / FE to complete these courses. On this basis, the COVID-19 Advisory Sub-Group have maintained their previous advice on attendance by these students, but noted the need for compliance with protective measures to be strongly reinforced.

GSC will work with FE/ HE settings to establish whether remote or blended learning arrangements can be put in place for school pupils.





## SCHOOL OPERATIONS

### Promoting attendance and reducing absence

It is recognised that some parents and carers may be concerned about Young People returning to school until reassurance is provided. National guidance on promoting attendance and managing absence makes clear the importance of relationships with families and the team around every child in promoting good attendance. The National Parent Forum has produced guidance for parents on the return to school. More information can be found here:

<https://www.npfs.org.uk/2020/07/23/back-to-school-guidance-for-parents-and-carers/>

There is a requirement under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to provide education for every child. It is important that children and young people are able to benefit from their right to education; are able to see their friends and have social contact and benefit from the learning, care and support that GSC provides. The need to maintain normal patterns and routines in Young People's lives will be important and reassuring to them.

## **The School Day**

### **Organisation**

GSC has implemented a series of additional precautionary mitigation measures that will provide reassurance to pupils, parents and the team around every Young Person.

These measures include:

- Young People will attend school in consistent House groups
- Every Class will have a maximum of 3 pupils
- All pupils should wash their hands or use hand sanitiser on entering the school.
- In classrooms, Young people will be encouraged to sit side by side and face forwards
- We will minimise the time spent congregating as a group – for example round a shared resource
- The school will make use of enhanced hand hygiene – use of hand sanitiser and hand washing
- There will be a 'clean as you go' process in place for staff and pupils, when they move to another classroom
- Whole school assemblies should not take place in order to avoid large gathering of pupils.
- Safe Movement procedures will continue to be in place for moving around the school; although short contact in a corridor has a very low risk.
- We will continue to operate a staggered entry and exit to the school
- It will be important for teachers to consider that Pupils are clear on the arrangements within the school and so this will require to be done in small class groups rather than whole year groups.

## Timetabling

The following timetabling model will be used to maintain physical and social distancing.

The School Day	
11:10 pm to 11:25 am (Break)	
11:25 am to 12:20 pm (Period 3)	
12:20 pm to 1:15 pm (Period 4)	
1:15 pm to 2:00 pm (Lunch)	
2:00 pm to 2:55 pm (Period 5)	
2:55 pm to 3:50 pm (Period 6)	
Young People will be grouped in small house classes of 3 and each classroom will have a maximum occupancy number clearly placed on the door.	





## Curricular and assessment matters

### Outdoor learning

Throughout the Pandemic, GSC has made increased use of our outdoor spaces for teaching and learning activities. The outdoors can provide extra space for distancing between consistent groups of learners, help to decrease the risk of transmission and improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of young people.

Children's Minister Maree Todd has said:

*“Playing, learning and having fun outdoors helps to improve children’s wellbeing and resilience, as well as their physical and mental health. It also gives children the opportunity to develop a life-long appreciation of the natural world.*

*“This is particularly important during the current circumstances, when we are all having to spend so much more time indoors.”*

Teaching and learning are not only for the indoor environment, and the latest advice from the Government outlines how transmission of the coronavirus is significantly lower in outdoor spaces.

The benefits of using an outdoor environment for Education are numerous and we will continue to provide as many opportunities as possible to undertake outdoor learning activities.

The outdoors can provide extra space for distancing between consistent groups of learners, help to decrease the risk of transmission and improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of young people.

### Practical activities, experiments and investigations

Practical, “hands-on” learning and activities, experiments and investigations are an important part of the curriculum across all subject areas. We recognise that practitioners may need to adapt their approaches to enable learners to carry out these activities in a safe way. SSERC has produced guidance on carrying out practical work in Sciences and Technologies, including links to helpful resources.

### Physical activity and sport

Opportunities to participate in physical activity and sport have the potential to enhance children and young people's mental and physical wellbeing and will support children and young people to lead healthy, active lifestyles now and in the future. Guidelines on Practical Activities have been prepared by Education Scotland and physical education practitioners to assist with decision-making and the safe implementation of timetabled physical education. These will be updated to ensure appropriate alignment with wider advice including that set out in the Strategic Framework.

The COVID-19 Advisory Sub Group on Education and Children's issues has published advice on PE, music and drama in schools, which has more recently been updated upon the latest evidence. The advisory sub-group has indicated that advice on physical education in schools should remain broadly in line with advice in the community going forwards, in order to ensure consistency and better support compliance. The guidelines for Level 4 Protection determines that the GSC cannot currently offer Physical Education as a curricular subject.

### Home economics

Guidelines on safe practice in home economics have been prepared by Education Scotland and practitioners and were published on 14 September 2020 on the Education Scotland website. There is a maximum of 3 young people in every Home Economics class with strict sanitisation procedures in place. Every practical activity is subject to risk assessment.

### Guidelines on expressive arts

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children's Issues published its advisory note on physical education, music and drama in schools on 10 September, and since updated it on 30 October. Education Scotland has produced specific guidelines covering art and design and photography, music (including singing), dance, and drama. These documents set out the hierarchy of risk in terms of the different types of activities and the different kinds of mitigations which can be put in place, providing schools with guidance on how to facilitate these important learning elements as fully as they can while remaining safe within the confines of public health advice. Guidance has been updated to take account of the new Strategic Framework.

In the GSC we adhere to these guidelines by facilitating music lessons virtually that do not involve singing or close physical contact. Drama activities are conducted on a one to one basis.

### Senior phase/SQA National Qualification Courses

There will be no external assessment of National Qualifications this academic year and an alternative certification approach will be put in place based on teacher and lecturer judgement supported by assessment resources and quality assurance. The SQA has published broad guidance on evidence gathering and estimation with a clear focus on the quality, not quantity, of evidence. This is accompanied by an SQA Academy Course on quality assuring estimates. Subject specific guidance on the work that learners need to complete has been published by the SQA.

### Use of GSC Vehicles/ Transport

This guidance has been informed by the scientific advice of the COVID-19 Advisory Sub Group on Education and Children's issues, published on 16 July.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advisory-sub-group-on-education-and-childrens-issues---advisory-note-on-school-transport/>

The scientific advice is that face coverings are not necessary on dedicated school transport for children and young people (those clinically advised to wear a covering would be an exception). Those who wish to wear a face covering should be permitted to do so.

Use of GSC vehicles is deemed to be an extension of the Centre and as such mitigation measures, including cleaning, will be in place. All Young People will be required to use hand sanitiser on entering a GSC vehicle and they will not be permitted to eat or drink on the bus. In line with Scottish Government advice, staff and Young people must wear a face mask/covering and gloves in the car to protect their mouth, nose and hands. In addition, driver and passenger should face away from each other as much as possible to help reduce the risk of transmission (for example the passenger sits in the rear passenger seat).

The key messages from the scientific advice include:

- hygiene, ventilation, improved cleaning regimes including regular and thorough cleaning of surfaces, and regular handwashing.
- Hand sanitising is required for everyone prior to using a GSC vehicle and processes are in place to ensure that Young People can sanitise their hands immediately on arrival
- Young people and adults must not use a GSC vehicle if they, or a member of their household, have symptoms of COVID-19. If a child or young person develops symptoms while at school they will be returned to their House.
- Wherever vehicle capacity allows, distancing between individual passengers, or groups of passengers, is helpful
- The consumption and sharing of food and drink should not be allowed.
- keep windows open, where possible, and to ensure that mechanical ventilation uses fresh rather than recirculated air; or use air conditioning with attention paid to the appropriate frequency for changes of filters.

Any adults travelling in a GSC vehicle should conform with the requirements for public transport (1 metre distancing with appropriate mitigation measures in place and the wearing of face coverings, at the time of writing). Drivers and passenger assistants may wish to use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser at intervals throughout the journey and should always do so after performing tasks such as helping a child into the vehicle or handling a child's belongings.

### National Transport Guidance

Everyone in GSC should be aware of the latest guidance on how to remain safe when walking, cycling and travelling in vehicles or on public transport as we transition through and out of the COVID-19 outbreak.

More information can be found here:

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/transport-transition-plan/>

It will be the responsibility of GSC to:

- ensure understanding is shown to young people, staff and parents/carers who may be delayed in getting to the Centre due to transport issues.
- additional support should be available for vulnerable families for planning their journey to GSC.
- Where necessary or appropriate, GSC should involve Colleges and other relevant partners in planning for school transport, as young people in the senior phase may also be doing some of their learning in colleges, or work placements.
- ensure that all young people travelling on dedicated or public transport have access to hand sanitiser.

### Encouraging active travel

As far as it is safe to do so, the use of active travel routes by parents/carers, staff and children and young people should be encouraged. Walking and cycling, scooting etc should be strongly encouraged. In view of the potential for capacity constraints on public transport to impact anyone's ability to attend GSC, all sustainable and active travel modes should be

considered. If bikes are stored in bike sheds/racks consideration should be given to the cleaning of these areas and to reducing time spent at the bikes stores/shed.

### [Adults travelling with children and young people with Additional Support Needs:](#)

Adults travelling with children and young people with Additional Support Needs should be very alert to them displaying symptoms. As a general rule, these adults should wear face coverings. However, this requires to be balanced with the wellbeing and needs of the Young Person: face coverings may limit communication and could cause distress to some children and young people.

There should be careful consideration of how children and young people with additional needs can be provided with safe, bespoke transport arrangements. This could include the use of Perspex shields (taking into account relevant safety concerns) or finding larger vehicles for transportation.



### [Improvement planning and reporting](#)

Our planning for 2020-21 will focus on recovery, and then continuity of provision under these changed circumstances. There will be a continued emphasis on issues such as: supporting student and staff health and wellbeing; transitions at all levels; the impact of tragedy in communities; identifying gaps in learning; and a renewed focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap. In particular, there will be a focus on what can be done to remedy any impact that there has been around the widening of inequalities of outcomes experienced by children and young people.

GSC will complete our annual reporting, as a record of progress towards meeting our improvement priorities up until the period when mainstream schools closed on 20th March 2020. It is important to us that we capture the impact of work which has been undertaken during this academic session.

### [Workforce planning and support](#)

GSC may require additional staffing and the flexibility to deploy staff appropriately over the current school year to best support children and young people whose progress with learning has been impeded during lockdown, as well as to bring much needed resilience to the education system at this time (e.g. to cover for staff absence).

Should our Local Authority move into Protection Level 4, there may be additional strain on workforce capacity, for example as a result of fit notes for those in the shielding group or increased requirements for self-isolation.

### Workforce capacity

GSC will consider carefully our requirements for additional wider workforce staff, such as cleaners and other facilities management staff to implement enhanced environmental cleaning regimes.

GSC will consider working through the following actions as part of any teaching/auxiliary education workforce planning activities:

- ensure that teachers who have not yet secured permanent employment are considered as an integral part of their planning;
- consider the potential for teachers with strong digital teaching skill sets to support remote learning.
- ensure that supply lists are as up to date as possible and include the full pool of available staff. Supply staff are an important aspect of maintaining educational continuity and should be fully utilised in local planning around workforce capacity where needed;
- consider at a local level how all staff who are having to stay at home due to self-isolation can support educational continuity, for example by supporting remote learning;
- consider the availability of health and social care and other multi-agency partners as part of planning for support for children and young people;
- consider any other opportunities to ensure existing qualified teaching staff and wider workforce capacity, such as classroom assistants, cleaners etc, can be effectively deployed.

Throughout this process potential workload issues will be carefully considered.

### Identifying additional workforce capacity

If the existing capacity in our teaching workforce is insufficient to meet the challenges of fulltime school, partners have agreed that action will be taken to quickly mobilise additional teachers, for what may be a temporary period. The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland) have made contact with individuals whose teacher registration has lapsed within the last 3 years, including recently retired teachers, to establish their willingness and availability to return to teaching. Existing current teachers (including supply teachers) who have not yet secured permanent employment should be considered first.

### Workforce support

The health and wellbeing of staff is a key principle of education recovery and support should be developed collegiately with staff. GSC will ensure that appropriate support for professional learning and wellbeing is provided to all staff, some of whom will be working in unusual circumstances. This includes a range of employee assistance programmes and online professional learning and support that covers the health and wellbeing of the workforce, colleagues/staff and of children and young people.

### Supporting the wellbeing of children and young people

Given the wider impact of the pandemic, the wellbeing of all children, young people and staff will be the central focus for schools. The Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach is key to that, ensuring that local services are co-ordinated, joined up and multidisciplinary in order to respond to children and young people who require support, and everyone who works in those services has a role to play.

Balancing efforts to address lost learning with children and young people's social and emotional needs will be a priority. The guidance on support for continuity in learning also highlights the

expected impacts on children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse, and those who are in need of care and protection as a result of lockdown, and an increased need for support for mental health and wellbeing. Children and young people may not immediately disclose these concerns, and therefore there is a need for a sustained approach.

The psychological impact of the outbreak and the necessary public health control measures are likely to have had significant social, emotional and developmental effects on many children and young people and, consequently, achievement. Many children and young people may experience anxiety about being back in school, many of them will also have enjoyed the experience of spending more time at home. Children and young people may need additional time and support now they are back in the school environment. For some children and young people who were unable to access therapeutic support, the return to that support will have been welcome, but the changes within school environments, and routines, may continue to impact on their wellbeing.

It remains essential that we recognise that children, young people and staff may be affected by trauma and adversity, and to be capable of responding in ways that prevent further harm and which support recovery. The National Trauma Training framework and plan are designed to support the development of a trauma-informed workforce and this will have relevance to school plans.

As always, GSC will ensure that all staff are aware of safeguarding procedures.

### [Contingency Planning](#)

In the event of a local outbreak of the virus, school at GSC may be closed temporarily to help control transmission. If this happens, we will ensure the preparation and maintenance of clear, strong contingency plans for providing education remotely and include the possibility of using online national resources such as digital class.

We have asked our staff to identify the essential items and information that would be needed in the event of a school closure, for example access to contact information, the correspondence that would be used to inform parents and others of the arrangements for closure and re-opening for example.

Resources to support learning have been developed within local authorities and Regional Improvement Collaboratives, and through national initiatives and partnerships. A variety of options could be considered, for example written work, online tasks using Glow or Google Classroom, access to live lessons through Glow (for example, by communicating through the chat function or through live video links with learners), or access to recorded lessons.

### [Special considerations for certain groups](#)

#### [Children, young people and staff who are clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable \(shielding\)](#)

GSC carefully consider the arrangements for children, young people and staff who are clinically vulnerable, in the event of a localised outbreak of COVID-19. This includes communicating with families, the actions to be taken immediately on the emergence of a local outbreak, the arrangements for returning clinically vulnerable children, young people and staff to their homes, the arrangements to support children and young people's learning and care, and staff wellbeing. This may include seeking advice from the health protection team who are managing the response to the potential localised outbreak.

### Support for children with Additional Support Needs

GSC will consider the arrangements required to support children with additional support needs during any localised outbreaks of COVID-19 as part of our contingency planning. For some children and young people with additional support needs the return to home learning may have a significant impact on them, due to further changes in their learning approach. Wherever possible, consistency in learning approaches and support should be maintained. It is recognised that this will be balanced against the need to ensure that any outbreak of COVID-19 is contained and managed.

### Communications

Transparent communication and dialogue with trade unions, staff, parents/carers and children and young people is encouraged, to ensure confidence in the revised arrangements across all GSC staff, partners, families, professionals and service users.

There has been extensive consultation and engagement with the Education Leadership Team, MOSEL, Education Scotland, Scottish Government and colleagues from Secure, independent and residential schools across Scotland on the recovery planning within GSC in conjunction with the guidance that has been issued by Scottish Government, Education Scotland and NHS .

We welcome and encourage frequent engagement with Trade Unions regarding the information contained within this Recovery Guidance.

There is a need to ensure a collegiate approach in schools in relation to the aspects of implementation within establishments. This will be built into the Working Time Agreement. Communication with staff will be on going as the recovery planning evolves.

Information will be shared with the Trade Union representatives within GSC. Regular discussions and engagement on the revised organisation and operational arrangements will be essential to ensure these are in line with the guidance but also ensure effective delivery of education and support to pupils.

### Parents and carers

The main concerns for parents and carers are likely to be the safety and wellbeing of their Young People in schools. In line with requirements under the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 we will make arrangements to involve and communicate with all parents and carers. Two-way communication is vital. The gathering of questions, issues or concerns from parents and carers is important to us and opportunities to enter a dialogue will be encouraged.

National information, Q&As and other material on Covid-19 arrangements, education recovery, parental communication and home learning will be used to complement any communications from GSC. This includes Parent Club's dedicated COVID-19 web pages, the National Parent Forum (website and newsletter), Education Scotland's "Scotland Learns" micro site, Parentzone Scotland website and other sources.

### Children and young people

GSC will continue to ensure good quality dialogue with and communication with children and young people about the return to school. A variety of methods will be used to gather young people's views, questions and issues, and can help to clarify and address difficulties prior to return. Pupil voice and participation remains very important at this time.

Further information on good practice can be found here:

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/learner-participation-in-educational-settings-3-18/>

Education Scotland have developed an Education Recovery webpage that will provide a single point of access to information about education recovery for practitioners and education stakeholders. This resource will be developed to include examples of emerging good practice in COVID recovery, and highlight any published changes to guidance.

### Enhanced and targeted protection in Levels 3 & 4

In addition to the suite of protective measure outlined throughout the core guidance, the following, enhanced protective measures should also be applied for schools within a local area that has been designated as at Protection Level 3 or 4. These measures have been designed to enhance protections in areas where evidence suggests there may be higher potential risks as prevalence increases, including for those people who are at the highest clinical risk. It is important to note that these measures are in addition to, not instead of, the protective measures set out in the main guidance.

During Level 4, further, enhanced measures may be introduced that requires the closure of schools to all pupils, with the exception of vulnerable young people and children of key workers. A blended learning approach will be adopted in these circumstances.

### Protection Level 3 – Enhanced protective measures

- All staff and pupils should wear a face covering in classrooms during lessons in the senior phase.
- Parents or guardians should discuss with their GP or clinician whether children with the highest clinical risk should still attend.
- The majority of workplaces can be made safe for staff. To ensure this remains the case, GSC ensure that individualised risk assessments for school staff members with the highest clinical risk are in place and updated appropriately.



#### Protection Level 4 - enhanced and targeted protective measures

The current advice is that children on the shielding list should not attend in person. However, there will be further consideration of how individualised risk assessments can be used to maximise school attendance, and remove barriers to access to regulated childcare services, for children who continue to shield during Level 4 restrictions. It is expected that these should be informed by the secondary care (hospital) clinical team caring for the child or young person.

- The majority of workplaces can be made safe for staff. To ensure this remains the case, GSC will ensure that individualised risk assessments for school staff members with the highest clinical risk are in place and updated appropriately.

At Level 4, to provide additional assurance, the Chief Medical Officer will issue a letter which is similar to a fit note that will last for as long as the local area is under Level 4 restrictions. This letter can be used in the few cases where, following updating of risk assessments and discussions with employers, it is not possible to make a workplace safe for staff. Being in receipt of one of these letters does not automatically mean that staff should not attend work if appropriate protections are in place. Staff should use the period covered by the letter to discuss any concerns further with their employer or an occupational health adviser, and if, following individualised risk assessments, action results in adequate protection in the workplace then they may continue to attend work.

Decisions on appropriate protections should be informed by individual risk assessments, and may include protective measures in the workplace, mitigations such as working remotely (e.g. at home or in different settings), or carrying out different tasks within their usual workplace.

- GSC will be prepared to engage with enhanced testing responses to Covid outbreaks where recommended by the Incident Management Team.
- Physical education within school settings should only take place out of doors. Schools should consider what types of activity and clothing may be most appropriate in view of weather conditions. While physical education should continue to be considered a priority, if weather is extremely bad then schools may use their judgement as to whether it is safe for children to be outside.
- Pausing of the provision of non-essential activities or clubs outside the usual school timetable.