

COVID-19 Secondary School Exit Strategy

- The five principles for returning to school
1. The safety and mental, emotional and physical wellbeing of students and staff
 2. Continuing contribution to the national effort and strategy to fight the spread of Covid-19
 3. Having the confidence of parents, staff and students - based on evidence and information - so that they can plan ahead
 4. Ability to prioritise learners at key points, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds
 5. Having guidance in place to support measures such as distancing, managing attendance and wider protective actions.


Questions to consider: On the assumption that there will need to be fewer pupils in school at first, what is your preferred model for achieving this? Is it better to have all students in on a rota basis, or specific year groups? How far should government mandate who should be in school and how much should schools be able to decide for themselves? If there were an announcement about some kind of return for more pupils to schools and a three-week lead-in period given, what are the specific actions and decisions schools/trusts would have to take in that time? *Purpose and expectations, Timescale, Safety Policies, Risk assessments and regulations, Site and facilities, Transport, Staffing, Teaching and learning*

What pre-requisites need to be in place before schools can open further? In particular, if schools were required to plan for the return of more pupils, how might social distancing be implemented, and how might this vary from school-to-school? Are there any situations that schools might be facing that would make it impossible for them to expand their opening in 3 weeks (e.g. contractors having gone bust), and would necessitate a 'window' of re-opening (i.e. between date A and date B)?

The following may be a starting point to scope your risk assessment and strategic response

Conduct a staffing profile → profile your accommodation capacity under current social distancing requirements → profile accommodation health and safety requirements → profile staffing deployment in relation to school based activity and distance learning requirements → profile transport implications → profile daily routines

Area of Concern	Existing Measures	Likelihood x Severity	Additional Controls	Likelihood x Severity	Additional Comments
Accommodation	School capacity calculation	4 x 3 = 12	Capacity calculations suggest that a standard 56 m ² could accommodate 8 pupils under 2 m social distancing. For a typical school with a variety of accommodation this would suggest a potential capacity of 35% of normal usage. The modal average classroom, with furniture and additional staff is 6 pupils. Schools may wish to apply other constraining factors or look to phase capacity from a range of 20% to 40% dependent on their individual constraints. Schools may wish to start at the lower range and on the basis of experience adjust capacity over subsequent weeks.	3 x 3 = 9	LAs have capacity data and it may be possible to run a variety of models as the advice on social distancing matures with the prevailing scientific advice.
Accommodation function	Health and safety requirements related to school classroom and infrastructure usage	4 x 4 = 16	Schools will need to conduct an audit of controls related to cleaning, hand washing, toilets, catering and social space usage.	4 x 4 = 16	Schools need to ensure that all the necessary health and safety checks have been undertaken after period of close down such as Legionnaires' disease, sprinkler and fire alarm testing, dust extraction etc. (please note this is not an exhaustive list and schools will need to liaise with their Health and Safety advisers for a comprehensive assessment)
Identification of pupils to reintegrate	Currently working on WG definition of vulnerable and key workers- current numbers requiring support increasing	4 x 3 = 12	Needs led reintegration. No mix of needs/ phases. Individual risk assessments of all pupils with care plans. Begin with 20% capacity and increase as successful. Unless managed very carefully this could cause the school to be closed for a long period.	3 x 3 = 9	Support required from all LA services to manage parent/ carer expectations. This could depend on why schools are re-opening - education, well-being or economy. In secondary schools - curriculum may be project based dependent on staffing availability. Consideration may need to be given to families with siblings in the school. Are Year 10, Year 12, Year 6 priorities for example or is it families in need, working families? Welsh language? Has to be clear national directive on who is prioritised based on the reason for re-opening schools. School then have find the local solutions. 3 identifiable groups - 1st in school but in unfamiliar circumstances, 2nd not able to come in (vulnerable etc) 3rd group not willing to come (suggested link with SE and 3rd group) - Schools would be unwise to force anyone to come to school - schools may need an interim attendance policy. Schools may wish to consider if a priority is vulnerable then digitally disadvantages then SEND.
Staff availability	Due to rota system, staff availability is currently appropriate. Around 10% are shielding and 5% unavailable for work for other reasons.	3 x 3 = 9	As contact with more pupils increase risk of staff requiring self-isolation increases. Staff with asthma are less likely to attend work- national guidance required. Staff who suffer with anxiety may find it difficult to attend work without reassurances.	4 x 2 = 8	National/local guidance on asthma required. Therefore identify staff who are at home working and staff available at school. Additional issue is staff who have school age children, this needs to be identified and worked into the rota. Schools should give consideration to the deployment of staff - staff working at school will not be able to undertake the same distance learning functions. A redeployment of groups may need to be considered to ensure equity and balance amongst staff.
Transport	Very school specific, ranging from minimal requirements with the majority living within 3 miles with safe travel to school to schools who require the majority of their pupils to be transported to school. In addition, consideration needs to be given to vulnerable students requiring bespoke arrangements.	3 x 4 = 12	Liaise with LA over transport related to revised school day and volume required. Continue to reduce numbers in transport.	4 x 4 = 16	All gates other than front gate will be closed. SLT on gate to let buses and taxis in and out once safe. This has to be relevant to each site - should be flexible for each school. Children on buses will need to be on a rota as well. Drop off zones created - nearby car parks etc
Arrival at school	All transport arrive at school and drop off in one central point. Parents requested not to bring children onto the school site or restrict access to school accommodation.	3 x 3 = 9	Schools may wish to consider staggered start times or phase Year Groups over separate morning and afternoon sessions. All pupils to remain in taxis until staff come to pick them up. Pupils to enter through one designated door and to wash hands prior to going to class. Schools may wish to consider that pupils to remain in designated classes and staff move to these classes.	4 x 4 = 16	Pupils not required in school may be drawn to meet friends outside of school and thereby posing additional risks. Parent/carer contact should still be done remotely.
Arrival in class	Accommodation constraints may mean very few pupils per class. If operating the policy of static pupils and mobile staff this would have to be on the basis of project based work.	3 x 2 = 6	Desks to be moved to ensure social distancing is abided to. Each pupil to have a designated workspace and equipment. Timetabling will need to consider time for phased toilet breaks.	3 x 4 = 12	Are there sufficient toilets / washing facilities in the restricted teaching block? Is there sufficient hand washing facilities? Consideration of a one way system inside and outside school. Doors (apart from fire doors) left open so need to touch handles etc

Break times/Lunchtimes	These pose a significant risk to the social distancing requirement and for staff's ability to police requirements safely.	4 x 3 = 12	Consideration should be given to truncating the day to minimise mass groupings at breaktime. Further consideration should be given to removing the requirement for lunchtimes by truncating the day and phasing year groups between mornings and afternoons. Current arrangement for FSMs could remain enforce.	4 x 3 = 12	This would be dependent on number of pupils and size of grounds available - possible zoning of areas etc - rules of play / engagement etc - done with pupils
Catching / Spreading. Unable to remain social distancing whilst carrying out first aid.	Does the school follow PHW guidance around gloves and aprons. Face masks should also be available for staff.	4 x 3 = 12	Follow guidance re PPE, including face masks, aprons and gloves. Double bagging for waste. Ensure that waste bins are emptied daily by caretaking team. Increase cleaning hours to ensure that all surfaces are deep cleaned at the end of the day/ shift.	3 x 3 = 9	Review cleaning hours/ routines to build public confidence. Strategy required for any member of the school exhibiting Covid 19 symptoms. Policy in place for informing school community of any confirmed cases and the ability to track, where reasonable, others who may have come into contact with the confirmed case.
Visitors at school	Only essential visitors present at main reception and wait for staff to meet them. No visitors allowed in school unless pre-arranged.	3 x 3 = 9	All visitors will be pre-arranged. No external visitors other than key visitors e.g. school nurse, child protection social workers. All non-statutory visits/ contact to be cancelled or done through virtual meetings.	4 x 3 = 12	LA support to manage external agencies and parental expectations of schools running 'as normal' immediately. No unnecessary visits or meetings - can be via telephone or Teams etc. A balance has to be maintained between site security and the policy of all doors apart from fire doors and toilet doors to be kept open.
Cleaning routines	Cleaning routines changed to focus on surfaces, doors and communal areas. All staff requested to be mindful of supporting cleaning routines.	4 x 3 = 12	Focus cleaning on the restricted blocks and develop a policy for deep cleaning	3 x 3 = 9	Associated costs due to risk assessment response.
Review of Key Policies	Evaluate current policies to ensure that they will stand-up to scrutiny under the current demands	3 x 3 = 9	Set a policy review structure to ensure scrutiny and approval of Governing body	4 x 3 = 12	Liaise with LA to share best practice and compliance
Create New School Guidance	The current working practices have evolved during the school re-purposing period. Schools should consider setting down new guidance for this next phase of re-engagement	3 x 3 = 9	Develop a set of expectations and guidance principles for all school stakeholders	3 x 3 = 9	Check with HR that any revised guidance complies with agreements reached with Unions and Association. Schools may wish to consider developing a handbook (hard copy and/or on-line) to act as an easy reference point for the new operating procedures
Review distance learning approach to include more learners having school contact	Many schools operating are engaging with approximately 2% of their school population. Any re-engagement will significantly impact on these current arrangements	4 x 3 = 12	Capacity calculations and modelled expectations suggest that initial re-engagement could be between 15% and 40%	4 x 3 = 12	Operating procedures should look at the logistical impact of re-engagement starting initially at 15% and phasing up in 10% increments .
Induction day for staff to new processes	As part of the planning programme schools should look to have professional development programmes based around the new operating procedures	3 x 3 = 9	Schools may wish to consider phasing this training to ensure the appropriate social distancing guidance	3 x 3 = 9	A phased programme consisting of training and guidance on the new operating practices, procedures and policies and time for staff to undertake personal preparation. Time should also be given to adjusting their classroom bases in-line with the new operating practices.
Reviewing curriculum offer	It is unlikely that the standard curriculum offer that the pupils experienced in the Autumn Term (2019) could be replicated under the revised constraints	3 x 3 = 9	Schools should give consideration to restructuring their curriculum offer either on a core offer, core + offer or a project based offer	4 x 3 = 12	Guidance to curriculum re-design has been shared across the region in the curriculum design training run by Ian Gerrard. This is a link to his PowerPoint presentation 
Clarifying purpose of educational attendance on school sites	Standard attendance demands will be difficult to enforce as the wishes of parents/carers will vary significantly in relation to their expectations about the safety and security of their children under a re-engagement programme	4 x 4 = 16	Schools will need to liaise with their LA to determine the guidance and expectations to be shared with parent/carers and to create the checking and follow-up procedures if they feel that pupils are falling outside of these expectations.	4 x 4 = 16	Any revised guidance needs to be shared well in advance with all stakeholders to ensure consistency of expectation and the right to ask schools and LAs to consider individual circumstances. This should be a process of encouragement rather than enforcement, unless it falls under a safeguarding concern.
Risk assessing vulnerable staff and learners	Schools will need to develop a register of staff and pupils who are defined as 'vulnerable' under the prevailing demands	4 x 4 = 16	This will need to be updated as this dynamic situation changes and any adjustment to status will need to be communicated in advance of the new status taking effect.	4 x 4 = 16	This should be done in partnership with the LA to ensure consistency and appropriate consultation with all stakeholders.

GUIDANCE NOTES						
SEVERITY	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5
		1	2	3	4	5
LIKELIHOOD						
1 - 4 LOW		5 - 9 MEDIUM		10 - 15 HIGH		16 - 25 VERY HIGH
Continue with existing control, however monitor for changes. Implement any additional control measures required, within the timescales given in the risk assessment.		Requires attention to reduce the rating as well as regular ongoing monitoring. Implement any additional control measures required, within the timescales given in the risk assessment.		Requires immediate attention to bring the risk down to an acceptable level. Implement the control measures required, within the timescales given in the risk assessment and continue to review working practices to reduce the probability of an accident to the lowest possible level.		Stop immediately – the risk is too high. Take immediate action to reduce the risk to the lowest level possible.