



EA Guidance for Schools

10th January – February Mid-Term 2021

Issued 25/01/2021

On the evening of 5th January Education Minister issued a statement altering the approach to reopening schools in early January 2021. A letter was emailed to all schools by DE on the morning of 6th January providing more detail.

Please see EA Guidance for schools, which has been updated as follows:

Nursery and Pre-School Settings – The separate guidance issued directly to Nursery and Pre-School settings on 11th January has now been merged into this main document.

Primary Schools – No changes have been made.

Special Schools – No changes have been made in this document, but a range of other support and guidance remains available to Principals.

Post-Primary Schools – No changes have been made.

Appendix 4 - Delivery of Targeted Services by Children and Young People's Services (January to Mid-Term Break 2021) has been updated.

Pre-school settings, primary and post primary schools will be required to provide remote learning to pupils until the half term break in mid-February.

Special schools and EOTAS provision will continue to operate as normal.

Vulnerable children and children of key workers will have access to schools for supervised learning. Only one parent/guardian is required to be a key worker.

Other key points include:

- From 11th January home to school transport services will operate as usual to Special Schools and EOTAS (including private hire buses and taxis), but services to mainstream settings will not be operating.
- If there are children of key workers or vulnerable children (who are entitled to transport assistance) that still require transport assistance to access supervised learning, parents have been advised to notify their school. Schools should then contact their local transport office directly with details of the request, however schools can also advise EA 'yellow bus' drivers directly if they need transport w/beg 11th January and you want to avoid a break in service.
- Pupils with a Translink travel pass can use this pass on any scheduled bus or rail Translink service.
- School Meals will not be provided in mainstream schools. (Meals will still be provided for special schools and EOTAS Centres). Direct payments will be made to families whose children are entitled to free school meals;
- Childcare settings including those attached to primary schools to remain open;
- All GCSE, AS and A2 exams due to take place in January, February, May and June will be cancelled.

The Executive will keep this position under review.

Information Correct at 22/01/21

This document will be kept under review
and updates will be issued if required.

Schools should now make arrangements to support pupils based on the information in the Minister's statement. To support you in this we have prepared phase specific information on the following pages. **You only need to review the pages specific to your phase or setting.**

- **Nursery Schools and Nursery Units** **Pages 2 – 7**
- **Special Schools and EOTAS Settings** **Pages 8-12**
- **Primary Schools** **Pages 13-19**
- **Post-Primary Schools** **Pages 20- 26**
- **Appendices** **Pages 27- 34**

The Cross-Organisational Link Officer (COLO) support system is operational and you can contact your COLO for further advice.

1. Nursery Schools and Nursery Units

1.1 Key Points

From Thursday 7 January until mid-term in February:

- Nursery Schools, Nursery Units and DE funded Preschool settings are not open for normal teaching and learning
- Nursery Schools, Nursery Units and DE funded Preschool settings should accommodate registered pupils who are vulnerable or who are the children of key workers for supervised learning, and support remote learning for all other pupils

1.2 Common Questions for Nursery Schools and Nursery Units

Area	Question	Answer
<p>Staff</p> 	<p>Are staff expected to be in school?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff should work remotely where they can do so effectively and fully, but if required by their Principal / line manager / Preschool Leader to attend preschool for an essential reason they are expected to do so. Required attendance at the preschool setting would of course be subject to any personal medical or exceptional circumstances. • A “virtual first” approach should be taken with regards to other activities such as staff meetings, interviews etc. • It is expected that teaching and/or non-teaching staff and staff in preschool settings will supervise and support vulnerable and key worker children in engaging with the remote learning tasks and activities provided to all pupils. This will include providing support, explanations and directions in regard to the remote learning materials. • Classroom assistants who provide support to children with statements should continue to support these children in their supervised

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		<p>learning- directly for those who attend the preschool setting and remotely where they are at home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All preschool setting staff are defined as Key Workers and so can access supervised learning in their child's own school for school aged children. Childcare provision remains unchanged. It is understood that there may be some staff who still find difficulties due to caring responsibilities. In these circumstances, staff should liaise with their Principal/Line Manager/ Preschool Leader regarding potential alternative working options, in line with normal arrangements.
	<p>Are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) staff expected to be in their preschool setting?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) people who are working and are unable to do so from home are advised not to attend the workplace. (Currently being reviewed by PHA) The Department would emphasise that this is advice only. People are free to make their own judgements about whether or not they should attend work, depending on the Covid-security of their working environment. However, the general restrictions which apply to everyone must be followed https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you. Anyone who cannot attend work due to this advice will be eligible for their normal pay, as was the case when shielding was introduced at the start of the pandemic. CEV people will receive a letter for their employer, and they do not need to get a fit note from their GP. This advice applies to clinically extremely vulnerable individuals only. Others living in a household with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable are not advised to follow it, but should continue to stringently follow the guidance on social distancing, face coverings and hand hygiene. DE funded preschool setting staff should consult with their management committee about employment matters.
	<p>Will I still be paid if I am unable to attend work as a result of the change in restrictions and I am not Clinically</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff impacted by the changes who are unable to attend the workplace or unable to be given alternative working options will be paid as normal, including substitute teachers who were booked to work from 4 January 2021 and staff

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	Extremely Vulnerable?	<p>scheduled to work hours for Extended Schools programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DE funded preschool setting staff should consult with their management committee about employment matters.
<p>Pupils</p> 	What is expected for our pupils during these restrictions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursery schools, nursery units and pre-school settings are required to provide remote learning at home to their pupils rather than face to face teaching in the preschool setting, until the half term break in the middle of February. • Preschool provision is mandatory for children of key workers and vulnerable children and this provision should operate over normal school hours. It is not, however, mandatory for these children to attend the preschool setting during this period. • The Board of Governors and Principals are reminded that the Department’s policy is that only one parent needs to be a key worker for a pupil to be allowed to attend preschool. (See Appendix 2 - This will be kept under review)
	How should absences be recorded?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vast majority of pupils should be undertaking remote learning (and attendance should be recorded as Code J “Covid-19 Learning from home – Social Distancing”). • If pupils are not engaging in learning then preschools need to ascertain why. Attendance Code options include (per DE Circular 2020/08 and associated addendum): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Code D “No reason provided” ○ Code H “Other Absence” ○ Code N “No reason yet provided” ○ Code J “Covid-19 Self-Isolating – No evidence of learning from home” <p>Code XP should be used by the non-statutory pre-school settings on their roll book during the period of enhanced restrictions.</p>
	Can my preschool setting cluster with other preschool settings to provide supervised learning for Key Worker and Vulnerable Children?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preschool settings should first assess the level of demand for and uptake of provision in their own setting first. If demand is very low then they can make local arrangements with preschool settings in their immediate area. • All preschool settings must ensure that they remain open and contactable by their own parents and/or pupils. • Preschool settings are required to respond to requests for and support their pupils in supervised learning.

	<p>How will targeted services be delivered by Children and Young People's Services?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact can be made directly with all SEN Services. Service contact details for each service can be found on the EA website. • Advice, guidance and support to preschool setting staff, and families, where appropriate, will be done on a remote basis, but can be arranged for preschool setting sites as is necessary. • A suite of SEN resources relevant to each service can be found on EAs website https://www.eani.org.uk/services/pupil-support-services/. • Services supporting pupils directly will plan with the preschool setting and/or parents of pupils known to services to determine, plan and facilitate an appropriate pathway for the period of restrictions, as appropriate. Services will prioritise vulnerable young people accessing preschool settings where necessary. • Where possible, Services directly supporting young people will be delivered in preschool settings in accordance with presenting need and risk assessment. If young people are not accessing preschool settings, services will be delivered remotely as appropriate and possible during the period of school restrictions. • Child Protection Support Service continues to operate within the context of COVID to support preschool settings and young people. Schools should continue to follow Child Protection Guidance and procedures. • The Educational Psychology Service will use a blend of remote assessment and face-to-face assessment, test administration, as well as indirect and direct consultations with parents and preschool setting staff and other professionals depending on the individual circumstances of each case during the period of restrictions. • The SEN Assessment and Review Service (Statutory Operations) continue to deliver through; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Referral and progression of statutory assessments ○ Annual Reviews and maintenance of statements of Special Educational Needs, ○ Management of the statutory processes linked to the Transfer and placement of pupils to Nursery, P1 and Post Primary Schools.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The online Training Calendar can also be accessed at https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-11/Supporting%20Children%20and%20Young%20People%27s%20Training%20Booklet%20V3.7%20131120.pdf See Appendix 4 for further details on delivery of CYPs services during restrictions
Covid19 Response 	Covid19 Risk Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preschool settings must review and update their risk assessments regularly to ensure compliance and reflect any adaptations introduced to their operations.
	Bubble Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the number of pupils within preschool settings are reduced it is reasonable for preschool settings to reduce interaction and contact by maintaining a bubble at single group level. Bubbles should however not exceed normal class size. With smaller numbers of pupils, it is acceptable to use a single room, with 2m social distancing. If a new bubble needs to be formed this should be retained for the period of the enhanced restrictions. A new seating plan will need to be created to assist with contact tracing if needed. For supervised learning family/household bubbles should be considered and facilitated if possible.
	Confirmed Cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The confirmed cases helpline and PHA support to preschool settings remains active during this time.
School Transport 	Is school transport operating?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 11th January normal services to mainstream settings will not be operating. Parents of children of key workers or vulnerable children (who are entitled to transport assistance) who still need transport assistance to access supervised learning should advise their school. Schools can then contact their local transport office. Parents & schools should be aware that transport may take a bit of time to organise and will be based on a school's normal operating hours.
School Meals	Are School Meals available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any pupil attending school will be required to bring a packed lunch.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools that remain open to key workers' children and vulnerable children should provide food if necessary, for any child in need.
	<p>How will Free School Meals be paid/provided?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision in lieu of free school meals will be made to those children entitled to free school meals while normally in school.
<p>Online and Remote Learning</p> 	<p>Where can I get guidance on supporting remote / home learning?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Nursery and Pre-School Supporting Learning Portal for staff is available at: https://www.easds.org.uk/sds/portal2/createaccount/ One-Time Invite Code: a4815p **Please note that this is a one-time use code and is not your password. You will be sent an email with a password on creation of your account.
	<p>How can I evaluate our readiness for Home Learning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In early December EA provided a checklist on readiness for home learning for all schools via the C2K noticeboard. It is attached as Appendix Three of this document for your information.

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2. Special Schools and EOTAS Centres

2.1 Key Points

- Special schools and EOTAS Centres are open as usual providing teaching, learning and targeted support for all enrolled pupils subject to public health advice.

2.2 Common Questions for Special Schools and EOTAS

Area	Question	Answer
<p>Staff</p> 	<p>Are staff expected to be in school?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As these settings are open to all children it is expected that teaching and non-teaching staff will be in school, as required by the Principal or Senior Teacher. • Required attendance by staff in school would of course be subject to any personal medical or exceptional circumstances, and the number of staff required onsite may vary by the number of pupils attending. • School staff are defined as Key Workers and so can access supervised learning in their child's own school. • Appropriate risk assessments should be in place and followed by all teaching and support staff.
	<p>Are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) staff expected to be in school?</p> <p>This section is copied directly from DE guidance and should not be changed. Amendments have already been agreed with DE.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) people who are working and are unable to do so from home are advised not to attend the workplace. (Currently being reviewed by PHA) • The Department would emphasise that this is advice only. People are free to make their own judgements about whether or not they should attend work, depending on the Covid-security of their working environment. However, the general restrictions which apply to everyone must be followed https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you. • Anyone who cannot attend work, due to this advice will be eligible for their normal pay, as was the case when shielding was introduced at the start of the pandemic. CEV people will receive a letter for their employer, and they do not need to get a fit note from their GP. • This advice applies to clinically extremely vulnerable individuals only. Others living in a household with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable are not advised to follow it, but should continue to stringently follow the

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	<p>Will I still be paid if I am unable to attend work as a result of the change in restrictions and I am <u>not</u> Clinically Extremely Vulnerable?</p>	<p>guidance on social distancing, face coverings and hand hygiene.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff impacted by the changes who are unable to attend the workplace or unable to be given alternative working options will be paid as normal, including substitute teachers who were booked to work from 4 January 2021 and staff scheduled to work hours for Extended Schools programmes.
<p>Pupils</p> 	<p>What is expected for our pupils during these restrictions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special schools and EOTAS Centres are to be open providing teaching and learning for all enrolled pupils. Where this is not possible onsite for individual young people, remote provision should be made for all pupils following the Good Practice Guidelines on Remote Learning. Attendance during enhanced restrictions is at parental discretion. If parents decide to keep their child at home for remote learning, where agreement has been reached between the school and parent, this should be recorded as Code ["Covid-19 Learning from home – Social Distancing".
	<p>How will absences be recorded?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance and absences should be recorded on SIMS, as is usual practice. Pupils attending school or EOTAS will be recorded in the normal manner. If parents decide to keep their child at home for remote learning, where agreement has been reached between school and parent, this should be recorded as Code ["Covid-19 Self-Isolating & learning from home". If pupils are not engaging in learning then schools or EOTAS settings need to ascertain why. Attendance Code options include (per DE Circular 2020/08 and associated addendum (effective from 04/01/21): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code D "No reason provided" Code H "Other Absence" Code N "No reason yet provided" Code } "Covid-19 Self-Isolating – No evidence of learning from home" Principal discretion is important. Some pupils may not be capable of engaging in remote learning due to health challenges. In these cases Principals and Senior Teachers should use a Code that reflects the individual's circumstances.

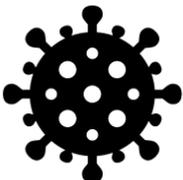
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	<p>How will targeted services be delivered by Children and Young People's Services?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact can be made directly with all CYP Services. Service contact details can be found on the EA website. • The online Training Calendar can also be accessed at https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-11/Supporting%20Children%20and%20Young%20People%27s%20Training%20Booklet%20V3.7%20131120.pdf • Advice, guidance and support to school staff, and families where appropriate, will be done on a remote basis, but can be arranged for school sites as is necessary. • Child Protection Support Service continues to operate within the context of COVID to support all schools and young people. Schools should continue to follow Child Protection Guidance and procedures. • The Educational Psychology Service will use a blend of remote assessment and face-to-face assessment, test administration, as well as indirect and direct consultations with parents and teachers and other professionals depending on the individual circumstances of each case during the period of restrictions. • The SEN Assessment and Review Service (Statutory Operations) continue to deliver through; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Referral and progression of statutory assessments ○ Annual Reviews and maintenance of statements of Special Educational Needs, ○ Management of the statutory processes linked to the Transfer and placement of pupils to Nursery, P1 and Post Primary Schools. • A suite of SEN resources relevant to each service can be found on EAs website https://www.eani.org.uk/services/pupil-support-services/. • Services supporting pupils directly will plan with the school or parents of pupils known to services to determine, plan and facilitate an appropriate pathway for the period of restrictions, as appropriate. Services will prioritise vulnerable young people accessing school sites, and will
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		<p>provide services as usual within the setting, as is possible and appropriate to do so.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, Services directly supporting young people will be delivered in school in accordance with presenting need and risk assessment. If young people are not accessing school settings, services will be delivered remotely as appropriate and possible during the period of school restrictions. • Independent Counselling for Schools continues to deliver on a flexible model of support including onsite provision, telephone and online sessions. • EOTAS and ETA continue to deliver to young people with home sessions now delivered remotely, in the majority of cases. • Principals and Senior Teachers should plan locally for vulnerable young people who attend Partnership Placements at EOTAS. • Generic youth provision will move online under the discretion of Management Committees and EA Youth Service will continue to lead on targeted provision for vulnerable and at risk young people, including limited face to face work (with mitigations in place to limit the spread of the virus) where this is deemed appropriate and to provide support under existing protocols to PSNI. • Appendix Four of this document contains details of how targeted services for pupils will be delivered.
<p>Covid19 Response</p> 	<p>Covid19 Risk Assessments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools and EOTAS settings must review and update their risk assessments regularly to reflect any adaptations introduced to their operations.
	<p>Bubble Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the number of pupils are reduced during this period, it is reasonable to reduce interaction and contact by maintaining a bubble at single group level. Bubbles should however not exceed normal class size. • With smaller numbers of pupils, it is acceptable to use a single room, with 2m social distancing. • If a new bubble needs to be formed this should be retained for the period of the enhanced restrictions. • A new seating plan will need to be created to assist with contact tracing if needed.
	<p>Confirmed Cases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The confirmed cases helpline and PHA support to schools remains active during this time.
<p>School Transport</p>	<p>Is school transport operating?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home to school transport will operate as normal to Special Schools and EOTAS.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-primary pupils must wear a face covering on all school transport and we also strongly encourage younger pupils to wear a face covering as well (exemptions apply).
<p>School Meals</p> 	<p>Are School Meals available?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Meals will be provided as normal at Special Schools and for EOTAS Centres. • No Direct Payment will be made. • Free School Meal Boxes will be available to those children enrolled in a Special School who cannot attend school and meet the criteria / reasons currently in place under Covid 19.
<p>Devices</p> 	<p>Where can I find information on how to access IT devices or internet access for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on devices and a request form can be found on C2k exchange – click on the banner Requesting IT Devices & Wi-Fi.
<p>Online and Remote Learning</p> 	<p>Where can I get guidance on supporting remote / home learning?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EA ‘Supporting Learning’ website provides access to a range of support and guidance materials. It can be accessed through the ‘Supporting Learning’ icon on the front page of C2K ‘My-School’ or via the following link: https://sites.google.com/c2ken.net/teacherprofessionallearning-ea/home The sections titled ‘TPL’ and ‘Case Studies’ are of particular relevance.
<p>(Online and remote learning may be needed for pupils who are self-isolating)</p>	<p>How can I evaluate our readiness for Home Learning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In early December EA provided a checklist on readiness for home learning for all schools via the C2K noticeboard. We have attached it as Appendix Three of this document for your information.

3. Primary Schools

3.1 Key Points

From Thursday 7 January until mid-term in February:

- Primary Schools and Nursery Units are not open for normal teaching and learning.
- Primary Schools and Nursery Units should accommodate vulnerable children and the children of key workers registered on their normal roll for supervised learning and support remote learning for all other pupils.
- It is mandatory for primary schools to accommodate vulnerable children and the children of key workers in all year groups from the start of term, for supervised learning. However, it is not mandatory for these children to attend.
- Childcare settings, including those based in primary schools, are to remain open for all, and childminders are also allowed to continue their provision.

3.2 Common Questions for Primary Schools

Area	Question	Answer
<p>Staff</p> 	<p>Are staff expected to be in school?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff should work remotely where they can do so effectively and fully, but if required by their Principal / line manager to attend school for an essential reason they are expected to do so. Required attendance in school would of course be subject to any personal medical or exceptional circumstances. • A virtual first approach should be taken with regards to other activities such as staff meetings, interviews etc. • It is expected that teaching and/or support staff will supervise and support vulnerable and key worker children in engaging with the remote learning tasks and activities provided to all pupils. This will include providing support, explanations and directions in regard to the remote learning materials. • There should be teachers available on site to provide the necessary oversight and direction where they are not directly involved in supervising remote learning. • Classroom assistants who provide support to children with statements should continue to support these children - directly for those who attend school and remotely where they are at home. • All school staff are defined as Key Workers and so can access supervised learning in their child's own school for school aged children. Childcare

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		<p>provision remains unchanged. It is understood that there may be some staff who still have difficulties due to caring responsibilities. In these circumstances, staff should liaise with their Principal/Line Manager regarding potential alternative working options, in line with normal arrangements.</p>
	<p>Are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) staff expected to be in school?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) people who are working and are unable to do so from home are advised not to attend the workplace. (Currently being reviewed by PHA) • The Department would emphasise that this is advice only. People are free to make their own judgements about whether or not they should attend work, depending on the Covid-security of their working environment. However, the general restrictions which apply to everyone must be followed https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you. • Anyone who cannot attend work due to this advice will be eligible for their normal pay, as was the case when shielding was introduced at the start of the pandemic. CEV people will receive a letter for their employer, and they do not need to get a fit note from their GP. • This advice applies to clinically extremely vulnerable individuals only. Others living in a household with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable are not advised to follow it, but should continue to stringently follow the guidance on social distancing, face coverings and hand hygiene.
	<p>Will I still be paid if I am unable to attend work as a result of the change in restrictions and I am <u>not</u> Clinically Extremely Vulnerable?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff impacted by the changes who are unable to attend the workplace or unable to be given alternative working options will be paid as normal, including substitute teachers who were booked to work from 4 January 2021 and staff scheduled to work hours for Extended Schools programmes.
<p>Pupils</p>	<p>What is expected for our pupils during these restrictions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary schools and nursery units are required to provide remote learning at home to their pupils rather than face to face teaching in school, until the half term break in the middle of February. • Childcare settings, including those based in primary schools, are to remain open to all and

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		<p>childminders are also allowed to continue their provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School provision is mandatory for children of key workers and vulnerable children and this provision should operate over normal school hours. It is not, however, mandatory for these children to attend school during this period. • The Board of Governors and Principals are reminded that the Department’s policy is that only one parent needs to be a key worker for a pupil to be allowed to attend school. (See Appendix 2) This will be kept under review by DE
	<p>Can my school cluster with other schools to provide supervised learning for Key Worker and Vulnerable Children?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should first assess the level of demand for and uptake of provision in their own school first. If demand is very low then they can make local arrangements with schools in their immediate area. • Schools must ensure that they remain contactable by their own parents and pupils; and schools are required to respond to requests for support with remote learning.
	<p>How should absences be recorded?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance and absences should be recorded on SIMS, as is usual practice. • The majority of pupils should be undertaking remote learning (and attendance should be recorded as Code] “Covid-19 Learning from home – Social Distancing”). • If pupils are not engaging in learning then schools need to ascertain why. Attendance Code options include (per DE Circular 2020/08 and associated addendum(effective from 04/01/21): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Code D “No reason provided ○ Code H “Other Absence” ○ Code N “No reason yet provided” ○ Code } “Covid-19 Self-Isolating – No evidence of learning from home” • Principal discretion is important. Some pupils may not be capable of engaging in remote learning due to health or other challenges. In these cases Principals and Senior Teachers should use a Code that reflects the individual's circumstances.
	<p>If there is a special unit in my school does it remain open as usual?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Special Unit will not be open for normal teaching and learning, however, vulnerable or key worker children can still attend the school for supervised learning.

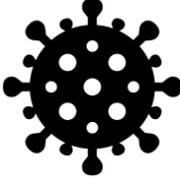
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a number of children from a unit are attending school, the school should work to maintain their routine environment.
	<p>How will targeted services be delivered by Children and Young People's Services?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact can be made directly with all CYP Services. Service contact details can be found on the EA website. • The online Training Calendar can also be accessed at https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-11/Supporting%20Children%20and%20Young%20People%27s%20Training%20Booklet%20V3.7%20131120.pdf • Advice, guidance and support to school staff, and families where appropriate, will be done on a remote basis, but can be arranged for school sites as is necessary. • Child Protection Support Service continues to operate within the context of COVID to support all schools and young people. Schools should continue to follow Child Protection Guidance and procedures. • The Educational Psychology Service will use a blend of remote assessment and face-to-face assessment, test administration, as well as indirect and direct consultations with parents and teachers and other professionals depending on the individual circumstances of each case during the period of restrictions. • The SEN Assessment and Review Service (Statutory Operations) continue to deliver through; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Referral and progression of statutory assessments ○ Annual Reviews and maintenance of statements of Special Educational Needs, ○ Management of the statutory processes linked to the Transfer and placement of pupils to Nursery, P1 and Post Primary Schools. • A suite of SEN resources relevant to each service can be found on EAs website https://www.eani.org.uk/services/pupil-support-services/. • Services supporting pupils directly will plan with the school or parents of pupils known to services to determine, plan and facilitate an appropriate pathway for the period of restrictions, as

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This document will be kept under review and updates will be issued if required.

		<p>appropriate. Services will prioritise vulnerable young people accessing school sites, and will provide services as usual within the setting, as is possible and appropriate to do so.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, Services directly supporting young people will be delivered in school in accordance with presenting need and risk assessment. If young people are not accessing school settings, services will be delivered remotely as appropriate and possible during the period of school restrictions. • Independent Counselling for Schools continues to deliver on a flexible model of support including onsite provision, telephone and online sessions. • EOTAS and ETA continue to deliver to young people with home sessions now delivered remotely, in the majority of cases. • Principals and Senior Teachers should plan locally for vulnerable young people who attend Partnership Placements at EOTAS. • Generic youth provision will move online under the discretion of Management Committees and EA Youth Service will continue to lead on targeted provision for vulnerable and at risk young people, including limited face to face work (with mitigations in place to limit the spread of the virus) where this is deemed appropriate and to provide support under existing protocols to PSNI. • Appendix Four of this document contains details of how targeted services for pupils will be delivered.
<p>Covid19 Response</p> 	<p>Do I have to update Covid19 Risk Assessments?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools must review and update their risk assessments regularly to reflect any adaptations introduced to their operations.
	<p>How will Bubble Management work for supervised learning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the number of pupils with settings are reduced it is reasonable for schools to reduce interaction and contact by maintaining a bubble at year group level. Bubbles should however not exceed normal class size. • With smaller numbers of pupils, it is acceptable to use a single room, with 2m social distancing. • If a new bubble needs to be formed this should be retained for the period of the closure. • For supervised learning children from the same household should be placed in the same bubble where possible.

	Are Confirmed Cases helplines still in place?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The confirmed cases helpline and PHA support to schools remains active during this time.
School Transport 	Is school transport operating?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 11th January normal services to mainstream settings will not be operating. Parents of children of key workers or vulnerable children (who are entitled to transport assistance) who still need transport assistance to access supervised learning should advise their school. Schools can then contact their local transport office. Parents & schools should be aware that transport may take a bit of time to organise and will be based on a school's normal operating hours.
School Meals 	Are School Meals available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All key workers and vulnerable children must bring a packed lunch each day they are attending school. In schools that remain open to key worker and vulnerable children if a child has not brought a packed lunch and is in need, a packed lunch meal organised by the school, should be provided. Schools should liaise with school catering staff who will be on call as necessary. Direct payment is being made to all children entitled to Free School Meals with the exception of children attending Special Schools.
	How will Free School Meals be paid/provided in January?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision in lieu of free school meals will be made (by direct payment) to those children entitled to free school meals while normally in school.
	Will the EU Milk in Schools scheme continue?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If your school avails of the '<i>EU Milk in Schools Scheme</i>', Dale Farm has confirmed they will cancel all orders relating to the milk in school scheme, unless they are notified otherwise by 12 noon on Thursday 7 January 2021. If you still require a reduced delivery for the children of key workers, please contact Dale Farm as soon as possible with your amended order details. Dale Farm's customer service number is 028 9037 2000.
Devices 	Where can I find information on how to access IT devices or internet access for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on devices and a request form can be found on C2k exchange – click on the banner Requesting IT Devices & Wi-Fi.

<p>Online and Remote Learning</p> 	<p>Where can I get guidance on supporting remote / home learning?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EA 'Supporting Learning' website provides access to a range of support and guidance materials. It can be accessed through the 'Supporting Learning' icon on the front page of C2K 'My-School' or via the following link: https://sites.google.com/c2ken.net/teacherprofessionallearning-ea/home The sections titled 'TPL' and 'Case Studies' are of particular relevance.
	<p>How can I evaluate our readiness for Home Learning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In early December EA provided a checklist on readiness for home learning for all schools via the C2K noticeboard. Attached as Appendix Three

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This document will be kept under review and updates will be issued if required.

4. Post-Primary Schools

4.1 Key Points

- Post primary schools are required to provide remote learning at home to their pupils (all year groups) rather than face to face teaching in school, until the half term break in the middle of February.
- All GCSE, AS and A2 exams due to take place in January, February, May and June will be cancelled. Work will continue on the alternative awarding arrangements and further details will be brought forward as soon as possible.
- Vocational and technical exams that are due to take place in January may still take place, where learning centres judge it right to do so. Alternative arrangements will be put in place by individual awarding organisations where it is not possible for learners to sit their exams in January. Schools will therefore be permitted to facilitate these exams in January if they wish to do so. Further details should be sought from individual AOs and CCEA Regulation.
- It is mandatory for post-primary schools to accommodate vulnerable children and the children of key workers in all year groups from the start of term, for supervised learning. However, it is not mandatory for these children to attend.

4.2 Common Questions for Post-Primary Schools

Area	Question	Answer
<p>Staff</p> 	<p>Are staff expected to be in school?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff should work remotely where they can do so effectively and fully, but if required by their Principal / line manager to attend school for an essential reason they are expected to do so. Required attendance in school would of course be subject to any personal medical or exceptional circumstances. • A virtual first approach should be taken with regards to other activities such as staff meetings, interviews etc. • It is expected that teaching and/or support staff will supervise and support vulnerable and key worker children in engaging with the remote learning tasks and activities provided to all pupils. This will include providing support, explanations and directions in regard to the remote learning materials. • There should be teachers available on site to provide the necessary oversight and direction where they are not directly involved in supervising remote learning. • Classroom assistants who provide support to children with statements should continue to support these children - directly for those who

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		<p>attend school and remotely where they are at home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All school staff are defined as Key Workers and so can access supervised learning in their child's own school for school aged children. Childcare provision remains unchanged. It is understood that there may be some staff who still find difficulties due to caring responsibilities. In these circumstances, staff should liaise with their Principal/Line Manager regarding potential alternative working options, in line with normal arrangements.
	<p>Are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) staff expected to be in school?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) people who are working and are unable to do so from home are advised not to attend the workplace. (Currently being reviewed by PHA) The Department would emphasise that this is advice only. People are free to make their own judgements about whether or not they should attend work, depending on the Covid-security of their working environment. However, the general restrictions which apply to everyone must be followed https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you. Anyone who cannot attend work due to this advice will be eligible for their normal pay, as was the case when shielding was introduced at the start of the pandemic. CEV people will receive a letter for their employer, and they do not need to get a fit note from their GP. This advice applies to clinically extremely vulnerable individuals only. Others living in a household with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable are not advised to follow it, but should continue to stringently follow the guidance on social distancing, face coverings and hand hygiene.
	<p>Will I still be paid if I am unable to attend work as a result of the change in restrictions and I am not Clinically Extremely Vulnerable?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff impacted by the changes who are unable to attend the workplace or unable to be given alternative working options will be paid as normal, including substitute teachers who were booked to work from 4 January 2021 and staff scheduled to work hours for Extended Schools programmes.
<p>Pupils</p>	<p>What is expected for our pupils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post primary schools are required to provide remote learning at home to their pupils in all year

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	<p>during these restrictions?</p>	<p>groups rather than face to face teaching in school, until the half term break in the middle of February.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School provision is mandatory for children of key workers and vulnerable children in all year groups and this provision should operate over normal school hours. It is not, however, mandatory for these children to attend school during this period. • The Board of Governors and Principals are reminded that the Department’s policy is that only one parent needs to be a key worker for a pupil to be allowed to attend school. This will be kept under review by DE • All GCSE, AS and A2 exams due to take place in January, February, May and June will be cancelled. Work will continue on the alternative awarding arrangements and further details will be brought forward as soon as possible. • Vocational and technical exams that are due to take place in January may still take place, where learning centres judge it right to do so. Alternative arrangements will be put in place by individual awarding organisations where it is not possible for learners to sit their exams in January. Schools will therefore be permitted to facilitate these exams in January if they wish to do so. Further details should be sought from individual AOs and CCEA Regulation.
	<p>How should absences be recorded?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance and absences should be recorded on SIMS, as is usual practice. • The majority of pupils should be undertaking remote learning (and attendance should be recorded as Code J “Covid-19 Learning from home – Social Distancing”). • If pupils are not engaging in learning then schools need to ascertain why. Attendance Code options include (per DE Circular 2020/08 and associated addendum(effective from 04/01/21): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Code D “No reason provided ○ Code H “Other Absence” ○ Code N “No reason yet provided” ○ Code } “Covid-19 Self-Isolating – No evidence of learning from home” • Principal discretion is important. Some pupils may not be capable of engaging in remote learning due to health or other challenges. In these cases

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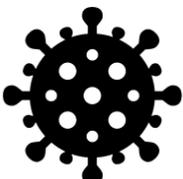
This document will be kept under review and updates will be issued if required.

		Principals and Senior Teachers should use a Code that reflects the individual's circumstances.
	If there is a special unit in my school is it open or closed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Special Unit will not be open for normal teaching and learning, however, vulnerable or key worker children can still attend the school for supervised learning. • Where a number of children from a unit are attending the school should work to maintain their routine environment.
	Can my school cluster with other schools to provide supervised learning for Key Worker and Vulnerable Children?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should first assess the level of demand for and uptake of provision in their own school first. If demand is very low then they can make local arrangements with schools in their immediate area. • Schools must ensure that they remain contactable by their own parents and pupils, and schools are required to respond to requests for support with remote learning.
	How will targeted services be delivered by Children and Young People's Services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact can be made directly with all CYP Services. Service contact details can be found on the EA website. • The online Training Calendar can also be accessed at https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-11/Supporting%20Children%20and%20Young%20People%27s%20Training%20Booklet%20V3.7%20131120.pdf • Advice, guidance and support to school staff, and families where appropriate, will be done on a remote basis, but can be arranged for school sites as is necessary. • Child Protection Support Service continues to operate within the context of COVID to support all schools and young people. Schools should continue to follow Child Protection Guidance and procedures. • The Educational Psychology Service will use a blend of remote assessment and face-to-face assessment, test administration, as well as indirect and direct consultations with parents and teachers and other professionals depending on the individual circumstances of each case during the period of restrictions. • The SEN Assessment and Review Service (Statutory Operations) continue to deliver through;

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Referral and progression of statutory assessments ○ Annual Reviews and maintenance of statements of Special Educational Needs, ○ Management of the statutory processes linked to the Transfer and placement of pupils to Nursery, P1 and Post Primary Schools. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A suite of SEN resources relevant to each service can be found on EAs website https://www.eani.org.uk/services/pupil-support-services/. ● Services supporting pupils directly will plan with the school or parents of pupils known to services to determine, plan and facilitate an appropriate pathway for the period of restrictions, as appropriate. Services will prioritise vulnerable young people accessing school sites, and will provide services as usual within the setting, as is possible and appropriate to do so. ● Where possible, Services directly supporting young people will be delivered in school in accordance with presenting need and risk assessment. If young people are not accessing school settings, services will be delivered remotely as appropriate and possible during the period of school restrictions. ● Independent Counselling for Schools continues to deliver on a flexible model of support including onsite provision, telephone and online sessions. ● EOTAS and ETA continue to deliver to young people with home sessions now delivered remotely, in the majority of cases. ● Principals and Senior Teachers should plan locally for vulnerable young people who attend Partnership Placements at EOTAS. ● Generic youth provision will move online under the discretion of Management Committees and EA Youth Service will continue to lead on targeted provision for vulnerable and at risk young people, including limited face to face work (with mitigations in place to limit the spread of the virus) where this is deemed appropriate and to provide support under existing protocols to PSNI.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix Four of this document contains details of how targeted services for pupils will be delivered.
Covid19 Response 	Do I have to update Covid19 Risk Assessments?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools must review and update their risk assessments regularly to reflect any adaptations introduced to their operations.
	How will Bubble Management work for supervised learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the number of pupils with settings are reduced it is reasonable for schools to reduce interaction and contact by maintaining a bubble at year group level. Bubbles should however not exceed normal class size. With smaller numbers of pupils, it is acceptable to use a single room, with 2m social distancing. If a new bubble needs to be formed this should be retained for the period of the closure. For supervised learning children from the same household should be placed in the same bubble where possible.
	Are Confirmed Cases helplines still in place?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The confirmed cases helpline and PHA support to schools remains active during this time.
School Transport 	Is school transport operating?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 11th January normal services to mainstream settings will not be operating. Parents of children of key workers or vulnerable children (who are entitled to transport assistance) who still need transport assistance to access supervised learning should advise their school. Schools can then contact their local transport office. Parents & schools should be aware that transport may take a bit of time to organise and will be based on a school's normal operating hours. Post-primary pupils must wear a face covering on all school transport (medical exemptions may apply).
School Meals 	Are School Meals available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All key workers and vulnerable children must bring a packed lunch each day they are attending school. In schools that remain open to key worker and vulnerable children if a child has not brought a packed lunch and is in need, a packed lunch meal organised by the school, should be provided. Schools should liaise with school catering staff who will be on call as necessary.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct payment is being made to all children entitled to Free School Meals with the exception of children attending Special Schools.
	How will Free School Meals be paid/provided in January?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision in lieu of free school meals will be made (by direct payment) to those children entitled to free school meals while normally in school.
Devices 	Where can I find information on how to access IT devices or internet access for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on devices and a request form can be found on C2k exchange – click on the banner Requesting IT Devices & Wi-Fi.
Online and Remote Learning 	Where can I get guidance on supporting remote / home learning? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EA 'Supporting Learning' website provides access to a range of support and guidance materials. It can be accessed through the 'Supporting Learning' icon on the front page of C2K 'My-School' or via the following link: https://sites.google.com/c2ken.net/teacherprofessionallearning-ea/home The sections titled 'TPL' and 'Case Studies' are of particular relevance.
	How can I evaluate our readiness for Home Learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In early December EA provided a checklist on readiness for home learning for all schools via the C2K noticeboard. It is attached as Appendix Three of this document for your information.

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This document will be kept under review and updates will be issued if required.

Appendix One

Department of Education Definition of a Vulnerable Child (Jan 21)

The definition of Vulnerable Children as set out in the cross-departmental Vulnerable Children and Young People's Plan 2020 is: (<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-cross-departmental-covid-19-vulnerable-children-and-young-peoples-plan>)

- A child who has an assigned social worker because he or she is a child in need, in need of protection (or on the child protection register) or is a looked after child.
- A child in need includes young carers, children with disabilities, and children living in families where there is domestic abuse, substance abuse, and / or mental health difficulties.
- A child who is receiving support from, or has been referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- A child who has a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), a child who is accessing EOTAS, or a child who normally accesses Education Nurture Units.
- A child who is 'on-the-edge' of receiving support from children's social services.
- A child who is in need, including in need of protection, but whose need is not known to statutory services.
- A child who is not known to statutory or voluntary and community support services but who is vulnerable because their family is under increased pressure due to Covid-19 related circumstances.
- A young person who was previously a looked after child, whether or not they are receiving support from statutory services.
- A child who has been placed for adoption.
- Asylum seeking and refugee children and children whose parents have no recourse to public funds.

Appendix Two

Department of Education Definition of a Key Worker (Jan 21)

(This will be kept under review by DE)

The Board of Governors and Principals are reminded that the Department's policy is that only **one parent** needs to be a key worker for a pupil to be allowed to attend school.

- Health and Social Care. This includes doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, home carers and staff required to maintain our health and social care sector;
- Education and childcare. This includes pre-school and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who will remain active during the Covid-19 response;
- Public safety and national security. This includes civilians and officers in the police (including key contractors), Fire and Rescue Service, prison service and other national security roles;
- Transport. This will include those keeping air, water, road and rail transport modes operating during the Covid-19 response;
- Utilities, and Communication. This includes staff needed for oil, gas, electricity and water (including sewage) and primary industry supplies to continue during the Covid-19 response, as well as key staff in telecommunications, post and delivery, banking and waste disposal;
- Financial Services - This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure);
- Food and other necessary goods. This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution and sale, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (e.g. hygiene, medical, etc.);
- Retail. This includes those workers who have been working throughout the pandemic in food retail, for example, and will now extend to those working in other retail businesses permitted to operate by the Executive from June 2020;
- Other workers essential to delivering key public services such as the National Crime Agency; and
- Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.

Appendix Three



Readiness for Continuity of Learning At Home

A basic checklist intended to help schools prepare for learning at home.

Access	<p><i>Please make sure that everyone can access learning.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Do all staff have internet access and a laptop or other device? b) Do all the learners have internet access and a laptop or other device? c) Do we know who has no internet/laptop/device? Can we address this? d) Do we know who has poor internet connection? e) In this case, how are we providing alternative learning materials, feedback and opportunities to speak with staff and peers? How often?
Routines	<p><i>Please do not try to replicate a school timetable.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Have we made online lesson protocols clear to keep everyone safe? b) Do we expect every learner to log in every day? c) What is our minimum expectation for teacher contact with each class? d) What is our minimum expectation of teacher-led lessons per day/week?
Wellbeing and engagement	<p><i>Please make sure the learners have regular two-way contact with their teachers and with peers.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Do we have a simple checklist for the learners of what the school expects of them? b) Do we have a daily point of contact for the learners with a pastoral focus, eg a morning greeting from Class Teacher/Form Teacher? c) Do we have a group online conversation for learners about how they are managing, eg with as a Form Class with their teacher? d) Do Classroom Assistants assigned to learners have a daily/weekly contact routine? e) If learners are not engaging, what are our approaches to help them? f) If a teacher is ill, what contingency do we have in place?
Teaching, Learning and feedback	<p><i>Please make sure there is a good balance of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) teacher-led, independent and collaborative learning; b) online and off-line learning; c) ways in which to collect the learners' work, eg typed and submitted; photographed pieces of writing or art; recorded piece; d) ways in which to provide feedback to the learners, eg individual, whole class, verbal, written, video, marks, grades and/or annotations.
Monitoring and evaluation	<p><i>Please make sure to keep regular checks that all of the agreed approaches, routines and structures are working well for the learners, their parents/carers and staff.</i></p>
Communication with parents/carers	<p><i>Please make sure there is regular two-way contact with parents/carers.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Do we have a clear and straightforward checklist for parents/carers, eg "What you can expect from our school"? b) Do we have clear and accessible guidance for parents on how to help their children access and engage in their learning and stay safe online? c) Are our parents/carers clear on how to make contact with the right staff member if their children have any difficulties related to their wellbeing or to their learning?

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APPENDIX FOUR**Delivery of Targeted Services by Children and Young People's Services (January to Mid-Term Break 2021)****1. Is support available to help me identify and support my vulnerable young people?**

- Education Welfare Officers (EWO) are available to support Principals and Senior Leadership Teams within Schools and statutory settings when identifying vulnerable young people, as required.
- Special School Support Officers will also provide support to Special School Principals.
- Cross-Organisational Link Officers (COLOs) are also available to provide support to school leaders through:
 - Providing accessible, one-to-one telephone/email/online contact :
 - Responding to queries;
 - Clarifying guidance as necessary and;
 - Engaging in conversations to support learning and well-being and signposting to further resources.
- EA Officers will work collaboratively to provide you with the support you require.

2. Is EOTAS open for young people currently accessing placement?

Yes, EOTAS Centres are open for all young people accessing a placement. Young people who access EOTAS on a part-time basis can continue to attend their placement if they are not attending the school site. Senior Teachers are available to discuss arrangements for individual young people, as necessary. All young people who were due to take up a full time EOTAS placement in January will be able to access this placement if they are attending on site. If they are not attending onsite, then the school will retain responsibility for this young person in the interim. All onsite provision is subject to necessary risk assessments, as appropriate.

3. If I have a Child Protection concern, who should I contact?

The Child Protection Support Service will continue to support schools and statutory settings with all child protection matters, including the identification and response required for children who may be at risk of significant harm. You should continue to follow the normal Child Protection Guidance and call **02895 985590**.

4. How will Exceptional Teaching Arrangements be delivered?

Exceptional Teaching Arrangements usually delivered within the home will be delivered remotely in most cases. Staff will contact families directly to make necessary arrangements.

5. How will counselling be delivered during restrictions?

Counselling will be provided by the EA's Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) for post primary pupils in accordance with a risk assessment and as appropriate. This may be onsite, via telephone or secure online video calling. Counsellors will be made available on the same day each week as they would normally have been in the young person's school.

Referrals will be made through the school's key contact as normal, who will then liaise with the school counsellor as appropriate. The key contact will provide the counsellor with the young person's contact details to facilitate the session(s).

6. How will EA Support Services directly supporting children and young people be delivered in restrictions?

All Pupil Support Services will continue to operate as critical services. Where appropriate Services directly supporting or carrying out assessments for children and young people will operate a 'virtual first offer' in agreement with the child, their parents/carers and the educational setting. EA services may be delivered in schools/DE funded educational settings in exceptional circumstances where no other type of virtual support will address the presenting need in accordance with EA risk assessment processes and PHA guidance.

If children and young people are not accessing schools or settings, services will be delivered remotely as appropriate and possible during the period of restrictions. Priority will be given, where appropriate and or necessary, to supporting Vulnerable Children and Young People. Schools/DE funded preschool settings and parents can contact services directly to access advice and guidance in relation to services. Contact numbers for each of the Pupil Support Services can be found on the EA Website.

Information, advice and guidance can also be found on the EA website for individual services.

7. How will the Education Psychology Service be delivered through the restrictions?

The Education Psychology Service will continue to carry out and progress:

- Consultations and Assessments
- Assessments as part of the Statutory Assessment process and Annual Reviews
- Pre-school Referrals/ Triage Arrangements with Health & Social Care Trusts
- Work within Multi-Agency Support Teams

This Service will focus on offering remote consultations and assessments primarily. The EA Education Psychology Service will gather information from questionnaires and other screening tools administered using virtual platforms, telephone or videocall; telephone consultations with school sources such as the school's SENCO; previous assessments; scores from standardised tests or other attainment information; and analysis of the child's developmental checklist.

In exceptional circumstances and where no other type of virtual assessment can be progressed in accordance with EA risk assessment processes and PHA guidance, the EA Psychology Service will liaise with schools and, if possible and safe to do so, arrange to carry out an assessment in

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the school. In a minority of circumstances where it is not possible to carry out a virtual assessment or an assessment in school, a series of 'assessment rooms' established across the EA's three localities will be deployed. These assessment rooms are fully compliant with PHA guidance.

Schools should continue to liaise with the Education Psychologist linked to their school. Schools, parents and other professionals can continue to contact their local Educational Psychology office if they have any concerns about a child or young person. Schools should continue to progress referrals through the Service's portal in line with agreed protocols.

8. Will Statutory Assessments and Annual Reviews continue to be progressed?

The SEN Assessment and Review Service (Statutory Operations) will continue to operate to ensure delivery of service to parents and schools. This will include progressing:

- The statutory assessment processes including referrals
- Annual Reviews and the maintenance of statements of Special Educational Needs,
- Management of the statutory processes linked to the Transfer and placement of pupils to Nursery, Preschool Primary 1 and Post Primary Schools.

Schools and parents can contact individual local offices and are encouraged to communicate, where possible, by email with their SEN Link Officer. The SEN Helpline **(028 9598 5960)** continues to be available to parents for general SEN advice and guidance. Schools can continue to use the SEN Office mailbox addresses to submit documentation and reports.

9. How will the Children Looked After Team continue to support schools?

- The Children Looked After Education Project Team continues to provide support to the Team around all Children looked after of statutory school age through a Helpline (028 7051 1086) and Electronic Post Box lookedafterchildren@eani.org.uk
- The Children Looked After Project Team will provide targeted COVID-19 support to a specific cohort of primary Schools with the highest numbers of Children Looked After registered

10. Can vulnerable young people considered clinically extremely vulnerable access onsite provision?

Provision for CEV young people should be risk assessed using the Generic Covid-19 RA Template for 'CEV pupils. This should be completed after consultation with the parents and the child's doctor where appropriate. The control measures identified should be implemented. If one of those measures suggests that the child can only be considered safe from Covid when at home, then the parents/carers should respect this process of assessment and engagement.

APPENDIX FIVE

Provision for Vulnerable Children and Young People

It is the responsibility of the school Principal/Preschool Leader/Management Committee to continue to provide educational support onsite for all vulnerable young people. As all children who attend special schools and EOTAS are regarded as vulnerable, provision should be made available onsite at these settings. For mainstream schools this could be for a significant percentage of the school cohort. Although not mandatory to attend, some families may require this provision on the school site. The first point of contact for families and Health and Social Care Trusts should always be the school/DE funded preschool setting.

Identifying Vulnerable Children and Young People

It is recognised that school and education staff know their children and young people best and can work with families, Education Authority Services and Health and Social Care Services to identify a young person's needs and put appropriate provision in place at this time.

Schools and education settings should use information already available to them through the school's pastoral care and safeguarding systems, and their knowledge of children and families to identify those children who are vulnerable and/or those most vulnerable.

Support for Schools

If a statutory school or education setting requires further advice on Covid related issues they can liaise with the school's Educational Welfare Officer, their Special School Support Officer or Covid Cross Organisational Link Officer (COLO) for support and guidance, as below.

Cross-Organisational Link Officers (COLOs) are also available to provide support. The role of the COLO is as follows:

- Provide accessible, one-to-one telephone/email/online contact to all Special Schools;
- Responding to queries;
- Clarifying guidance as necessary;
- Engaging in conversations to support learning and well-being and signposting to further resources.

Where a school requires additional support to facilitate supervised learning of a vulnerable young person, the Principal should contact their Educational Welfare Officer or, where appropriate, the relevant SEN Support Service. Special Schools should contact their Special school Support Officer in this regard.

Where a school requires additional support to facilitate supervised learning of a vulnerable young person, the Principal should call a multi-disciplinary meeting with the necessary EA Officers, and Health and Social Care services, as is appropriate. This multi-agency approach will assist in finding resolution **in circumstances where a parent/carer disagrees with decision** regarding access to school for supervised learning for a vulnerable child/young person, the Principal should call a meeting for multidisciplinary consideration of the child's need and circumstance.

Information Correct at 22/01/21

This document will be kept under review
and updates will be issued if required.

- Mainstream Principals should contact their school Education Welfare Officer to arrange this meeting.
- Special School Principals should contact their Special School Support Officer to arrange this meeting.
- EOTAS Senior Teachers should contact their Advisor to arrange this meeting.

This multi-disciplinary meeting may include representatives from:

1. Education Welfare Service
2. Children Looked After Team
3. Child Protection Support Service
4. Youth Service
5. Special Education
6. SEN Pupil Support Services
7. Behaviour Support Services
8. Education Psychology
9. Health Services
10. HSC Children Services
11. Parents/Carers

Attendance will be dependent on the presenting needs of the child.

EA officers will work with the principal, family and Services to find resolution and seek to meet the child's needs within the context presented. This may include additional EA support for the school and/or child/young person.

Parents/carers can contact EA Support Services, as appropriate, dependent on presenting vulnerabilities and needs.