

National restrictions - Guidance November 2020

DfEE guidance – 4th November 2020 was published ahead of national restrictions coming into force.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-and-childcare-settings-new-national-restrictions-from-5-november-2020>

Extracts:

‘During the national restrictions, face coverings should be worn by students and staff in secondary schools and further education colleges in communal spaces, outside of classrooms, where social distancing cannot be maintained.

The guidance is clear that primary school children do not need to wear face coverings, and older children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities may be exempt from wearing them, depending on their need. No one should be excluded from education for not having a face covering.

Primary schools continue to have discretion to recommend staff and visitors wear face coverings in communal spaces where social distancing cannot be maintained, but this is not a requirement and it is for individual schools to make these decisions locally.

‘Education is a national priority and we cannot allow it to be disrupted again’ – Gavin Williamson.

Evidence has highlighted the risks of not being in education on young people’s development and mental health. As the UK’s Chief Medical Officers have made clear, the wider risks to children being out of school is far greater than the risk of catching coronavirus at school’.

Some more specific extracts:

Staff

Those individuals who are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) are advised to work from home and not to go into work. Individuals in this group will have been identified through a letter from the NHS or from their GP, and may have been advised to shield in the past. Staff should talk to their employers about how they will be supported, including to work from home where possible, during the period of national restrictions.

All other staff should continue to attend work, including those living in a household with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable.

Schools

Schools continue to remain open for all children and young people as they have since the start of the autumn term for the duration of the national restrictions.

Exams

The Prime Minister and Education Secretary have been clear that exams will go ahead next summer, as they are the fairest and most accurate way to measure a pupil’s attainment. Pupils now have more time to prepare for their exams next year, as most AS, A levels and GCSEs will be held 3 weeks later to help address the disruption caused by the pandemic.

Online delivery

For **16 to 19** study programmes, providers should continue to seek to deliver the majority of education on site unless they have had written public health advice to move

some groups to remote teaching, in which case they should inform their ESFA territorial team.

Providers should preserve provision on site for learners who need it, including vulnerable learners, children of key workers and learners without access to devices/connectivity at home.

For **adult education**, we are asking providers to consider moving to online teaching where possible to do so while still achieving educational objectives, using existing flexibilities within the FE Operational guidance. Where education needs to continue on site to enable access to equipment, or where students cannot access remote delivery, this can continue in a Covid-secure way.

Universities and **adult education** settings should consider moving to increased levels of online learning where possible

Like everyone, if students live at university, they should remain in their current accommodation and must not move back and forward between their permanent home and student home during term time. Students should only return home at the end of term for Christmas.