

Coronavirus – children will go back to school this month

The First Minister announced that children, except those who are shielding, will all go back to school after the Easter holidays.

Those who are on the shielding list will stay at home until 26 April in line with guidance from the Chief Medical Officer.

At school strict two metre distancing will be removed and it appears that it will be up to individual schools to deal with all possible mitigations of the virus. But the government has issued [guidance](#) some of which is mandatory and other parts of which are advisory. Twice weekly tests are available for all staff in primary, secondary and special schools, and for secondary school pupils.

Nicola Sturgeon said at a briefing in St Andrew's House: "This I know, will be a huge relief to many children and young people – and of course to many parents and carers. I know though that the return to school, particularly for older pupils, will cause concern and anxiety – to pupils, to parents and of course to teachers and others who work in schools. So let me give an assurance that we will continue to give paramount consideration to safety.

"The return to school will involve the removal, where necessary, of strict 2m physical distancing between pupils in secondary schools – but we are asking schools to consider how they strengthen other mitigations. Twice-weekly lateral flow testing is already available for all school staff, in primary,

secondary and special schools and also for all secondary school pupils and I would encourage as many staff and pupils as possible to make use that testing.

“We will, of course, continue to study and assess the data, in order to quickly identify and limit any outbreaks that do arise, and make sure that we are also learning from them. For now, let me thank everyone who is working to make this return to school possible. For many teachers and school staff, I know, this has been the hardest year of your professional lives. I am very grateful for the way in which you have adapted to such difficult circumstances.”