

THE HEALTH PROTECTION (CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS) (NO. 5) (WALES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2021

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Introduction of a local COVID-19 Infection Control Decision Framework for schools from autumn 2021

Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on people with protected characteristics as described in the Equality Act 2010

We made changes to our Operational guidance for schools and settings, to take effect from September 2021. Briefly, these changes mean that face coverings are no longer routinely recommended for staff or learners in the classroom, schools and settings return to their normal session times and contact groups are no longer necessary. An Equality Impact Assessment for these changes can be accessed [here](#).

The First Minister announced on 6 August that Wales would move to Alert Level Zero on 7 August. As part of this move, all adults who have been fully vaccinated and children under the age of 18 will no longer have to self-isolate if they are identified as close contacts of someone who has tested positive for Covid-19. This Impact Assessment does not consider these changes as they are included within the Impact Assessments undertaken for the 21 day review periods and these can be found [here](#).

We have developed an Infection Control Decision Framework ('[The Framework](#)') for schools and settings which sets out arrangements for the delivery of learning in schools. The Framework will enable schools and settings to tailor interventions to reflect local risks and circumstances.

The general proposals are outlined in brief below. We fully accept that any change to education arrangements has a varied and broad impact on different groups including learners, staff, families and communities.

Proposal

In July 2021 the First Minister published the updated [Coronavirus Control Plan for Wales](#), which sets out arrangements to move to "alert level zero" – a new phase which is designed to ensure a proportionate approach to COVID-19, reflecting the impact of vaccination and the balance of risks and harms.

The Control Plan signals the expectation that education settings should operate as normally as possible at alert level zero. Baseline measures including risk assessments, hygiene, ventilation and preventing attendance by individuals with COVID-19 symptoms will continue to be in place, but other measures are being relaxed as part of a proportionate system of controls. For schools, this will allow

some flexibility for local decision-making and tailored interventions, supported by local authorities, Incident Management Teams (IMTs) and public health.

Wales moved to alert level zero on the 7th August 2021. But COVID-19 has not gone away and it remains a health risk. The intention of the Framework is to allow some measures to be escalated/deescalated dependent on the level of risk identified locally. These measures could include the wearing of face coverings and use of rapid testing.

The overall risk level for Wales will be determined nationally by Welsh Government and will be communicated to all.

If, through local intelligence, it is assessed that the risk level – for a region, area or individual school– differs from the national risk level, for example, due to a school case or potential cluster, schools will be supported to review their risk assessment and put additional proportionate tailored interventions in place. Any decision to recommend the reintroduction of tailored interventions for a period of time such as face coverings or contact groups would be taken by the school or setting locally in discussion with public health, TTP and the local authority (the school will not be expected to make decisions in isolation).

What does this mean for measuring equalities actions?

The aim of the Framework is to enable schools and settings to be equipped to manage risks locally (see above), with the goal of which will provide consistency and minimise the time that pupils spend away from face-to-face learning by enabling schools to operate as near to normal as possible from September.

The Children's Commissioner for Wales' [Coronavirus and Me](#) consultations with children and young people (May 2020 and January 2021) [sought](#) the views and experiences of 19,737 children and young people aged 3-18 in the COVID restrictions. The top three things young people (12-18) said the stay at home rules impacted on the most were 'not being able to spend time with friends' (72%), 'not being able to visit family members' (59%) and 'school or college closing' (42%). The report outlines in its summary findings that life has generally been difficult for all age groups with many expressing frustration and sometimes anger about the impact of the pandemic on their lives. Many spoke about missing their friends, teachers, schools and families.

Focus groups were organised by Children in Wales and the office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales in July 2021, with children and young people to obtain their feedback on operational arrangements in schools. The consistent message was that pupils wanted disruption to their school day minimised as much as possible, to be in school and not having to learn remotely, and to avoid the need to self-isolate as much as possible. Pupils accepted that measures would still need to be place within schools and settings and that there would not be an immediate return to pre-pandemic days and ways of working. They also referenced significant impact to their

education caused by the pandemic as a result of school closures or missing face-to-face learning as a result of self-isolation.

Estyn has published the findings of its engagement work with [primary schools](#) and [secondary schools](#) in June 2021. In summary, school leaders reported that the most recent period of distanced learning had a detrimental effect on pupils' wellbeing. One of the guiding principles of the framework, that schools should operate as 'business as usual' as far as possible, is likely to improve overall wellbeing and mental health for learners.

The (EHRC) Equality and Human Rights Commission's report *How coronavirus has affected equality and human rights*, October 2020

As part of its *Is Britain Fairer?* report series the EHRC reports on how the pandemic has affected different groups. The key findings about school closures and remote learning include:

“There is a real danger of a lost ‘COVID generation’ as young people miss out on education and are likely to be hardest hit by job losses.

“Differences in support for remote learning during the pandemic threaten to widen inequalities for those who already perform less well than their peers, particularly boys, Black pupils, some Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils, pupils who need support in education, and those who are socio-economically disadvantaged.

“The response to the coronavirus pandemic has created gaps in the education of most children in Britain. These gaps threaten attainment at primary and secondary level.

“Boys continue to perform worse than girls and attainment by children with SEND / ASN / ALN is much lower than those without such needs.

“Black pupils have lower attainment levels than other ethnic minority groups although Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils continue to have the lowest attainment levels of any ethnic group by a significant amount.

“Children eligible for free school meals or from deprived areas perform below the average. These groups are at risk of falling further behind. There are also inequalities in the amount of time spent on home-learning, with some indication that boys are spending less time on home learning than girls.

“Research suggests that 20% of pupils on free school meals in the UK had no access to a computer at home, compared with 7% of other children.

“In Wales, there are also concerns that pupils attending Welsh language schools who do not have Welsh-speaking parents are not getting sufficient attention.”

We have identified some specific impacts by protected characteristic and have listed these below.

In general, where we refer to staff, we refer to the full range of staff involved in schools and settings including all teaching and non-teaching, administrative, facilities, and school transport staff.

Disability

Staff with disabilities

It is likely that a higher number of staff in schools and settings with physical disabilities will need to take precautions within the school or setting compared with staff without a disability. Some of these will be clinically extremely vulnerable and may previously have been shielding. It is likely that a higher number of staff in schools and settings with physical disabilities will need to take precautions within the school or setting compared with staff without a disability. Some of these individuals may be clinically extremely vulnerable. The framework states that staff who are identified as clinically extremely vulnerable should follow the published [guidance](#). These members of staff should continue to discuss with their schools how they will be supported.

For members of staff with additional support needs it will be important for any changes to routine to be clearly communicated.

Staff mental wellbeing

Staff suffering with mental ill health may have found limitations to operational arrangements have a greater negative impact on their wellbeing than their peers. The same group of people may be more likely to be anxious about further changes to operational arrangements in schools and settings. The Framework will enable schools, in partnership with their local authority and public health bodies, to use local intelligence to prioritise risk control measures based on how effective different types of control are. These measures will assist schools to achieve our aims of enabling schools to operate as ‘business as usual’ as far as possible (including the provision of free breakfast and after school clubs, extra-curricular activities and practical subjects) in order to secure the best outcomes for all learners by considering both their educational needs and wellbeing by managing ongoing risks of COVID -19 as safely as possible (as with other infections) and ensure clarity of actions required if there is a case in the school.

Routine testing

School staff and secondary age learners are encouraged to undertake Lateral Flow Tests just before the return to school. Tests will be accessed through community channels during this time. We will undertake further communication activities in the run up to the start of the autumn term to support this. As schools transition to the Framework, the role of testing will be dependent on the level of risk. Further guidance will be issued to schools to explain more about how such changes will be realised.

Sex

Caring responsibilities

The Framework will enable schools, in partnership with local authorities, to escalate or deescalate measures accordingly, based on local risk. This should help to minimise disruption to the school day caused by enforced closures or periods of self-isolate.

We recognise that women who are staff are more likely to have been juggling caring responsibilities for their own children when required to self-isolate whilst continuing with supporting learners. The steps taken to minimise numbers of children required to self-isolate are envisaged to have a positive impact on this, with one of the guiding principles of the framework being that schools should operate as 'business as usual' as far as possible. The recent changes to the [self-isolation policy](#) in Wales will also have a positive impact as people who have received both vaccinations, or are aged under 18, will no longer be required to self-isolate if they have been in contact with someone who has tested positive (although they will be encouraged to take a PCR test).

Women's health

At any one time, a proportion of the female education workforce will be dealing with the often debilitating effects of the menopause and other menstrual health issues such as endometriosis. Stress, which we know has increased for some as a result of lockdown periods and restrictions, can exacerbate a number of the symptoms associated with these conditions. With workplaces moving towards being 'menopause friendly' schools should consider how they offer support in this context.

Gender reassignment

Transgender members of the workforce may have experienced delays to gender-affirming treatment due to COVID-19, which could have a negative impact on mental health and wellbeing. There is no data available to know how many members of the workforce may be impacted.

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnant members of the workforce should continue to follow the latest guidance set out in the Framework, and employers should conduct risk assessments.

Returning to work

Some members of staff will be returning to the workforce after maternity leave and some aspects of operational arrangements will have changed on their return.

Experts have warned Covid-19 has had a negative impact on maternal mental health beyond that seen in the general population, where reported rates of anxiety have more than doubled. Consideration should be given to their re-induction to the workforce.

Religious spaces

It should be ensured that provision remains available for staff to access religious spaces at expected times of day.

Wellbeing

We recognise that supporting staff wellbeing remains paramount. We continue to emphasise that staff should consider both their health and well-being as part of any risk assessment processes.

Low-income households

The Framework approach for schools, in partnership with their local authority and health body, will allow risks to be assessed locally should there be outbreaks of Covid -19 in the school or community, and thereby escalating or deescalating some measures should the local risk differ to the national setting (set by Welsh Government). As stated earlier, the guiding principles of the framework will help to enable schools to operate as 'business as usual' as far as possible by managing ongoing risks of COVID -19 as safely as possible. An unexpected closure of the school could adversely affect the income of some school or support staff if, for example, they are only paid for actual hours worked especially with the furlough scheme being wound down and ending completely from the end of September.

Record of Impacts by protected characteristic

Children and young people

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
Age	<p>Children and young people may be adversely impacted by a loss of access to onsite provision, routine and social contact. One of the core aims of the changes introduced from September is to minimise the number of children required to self-isolate. This policy change was made prior to the First Minister's announcement that self-isolation rules will change (from 7 August) for under 18 year olds (see page 1) and both of these changes will help ensure that fewer children are required to self-isolate, helping ensure as many children as possible can continue to access on-site provision.</p>	<p>Children and young people are the groups most directly impacted by school and college closures.</p>	<p>One of the guiding principles of the framework is that schools should operate as 'business as usual' as far as possible. The recent changes to the self-isolation policy in Wales will also have a positive impact.</p> <p>Schools and settings have been open for vulnerable children and children of critical workers, and this will continue to be a requirement.</p>

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
Disability	Children and young people with disabilities and additional or special learning needs may be more adversely impacted by not attending school or college. One of the core aims of the changes introduced from September is to minimise the number of children required to self-isolate.	We aim to ensure the number of children required to self-isolate is minimised. Vulnerable learners identified by educational providers or Local Authorities (including children's social care services), should continue to be able to access on-site provision during periods of closure.	All children and young people who are identified as vulnerable or who have a statement of SEN could be expected to attend their usual school or college as normal as stipulated in the Regulations. Ability to attend their own school or setting mitigates some of the impact of access to familiar support, social interactions and routine. We recognise the continued impact of the pandemic on support for these learners.
Gender Reassignment	None	--	--
Pregnancy and maternity	We understand there could be cases of pregnancies in young people who may still be in attendance at school or college.	Studies from the UK show that pregnant women are no more likely to get seriously unwell from coronavirus but pregnant women have been included in the list of people at increased risk as a precaution. Pregnant	Central messaging and information made available may be relevant and provide reassurance. Ensuring as many of these individuals are able to attend school is likely to help with ensuring appropriate, timely support can be

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
		<p>women should follow the latest government guidance on social distancing and avoid anyone who has symptoms suggestive of coronavirus.</p> <p>Pregnant women in their third trimester should be particularly attentive to social distancing.</p>	<p>provided and any arrangements for the learning adopted if required.</p>
Race	<p>Some Black, Asian and minority ethnic learners, including Gypsy, Roma and Traveller learners may be adversely impacted by remote learning, particularly in accessing technology.</p>	<p>EHRC report: <i>How coronavirus has affected equality and human rights</i>, October 2020</p>	<p>The guiding principles behind the Framework include enabling schools to operate as 'business as usual' as far as possible and securing the best outcomes for all learners by considering both their educational needs and wellbeing. The recent changes to the self-isolation policy in Wales will also have a positive impact.</p>
Religion, belief and non-belief	<p>Children and young people who attend a school or college with a religious character may be adversely affected by closures if school or college represents their only access to collective worship or other</p>	<p>School or college may represent the only opportunity for some children and young people to practice religious observance with their peers.</p>	<p>Through Hwb, the digital learning platform for Wales, learners and practitioners from maintained schools have access to a range of online learning tools.</p>

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
	<p>teachings important to those individuals.</p>		<p>As stated above, the framework will enable schools to operate as 'business as usual' as possible (working in partnership with their local authority and public health body) to tailor measures in schools according to local risk should these differ from the national landscape.</p>
Sex / Gender	<p>All learners develop in different ways and whilst complex, we understand gender can be an influencing factor in cognitive development, in participation and achievement; though gender may also indicate the existence of other barriers and challenges which may have a greater impact.</p>	<p>Attainment information over time and international evidence from for example PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment)</p>	<p>The individual nature of learners and learning and the need for targeted support is being recognised in our action to support children and young people to move beyond COVID.</p>
Sexual orientation	None	--	--

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
Marriage and civil partnership	None	--	--
Children and young people up to the age of 18	A Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) for the framework approach has been carried out separately.	Children and young people are directly impacted by disruption to schools. A key principle of the framework is for schools to operate as near to normal as possible.	A full CRIA is available separately.
Low-income households	Learners from low income household may be disproportionately adversely impacted by disruption to school settings eg closures and lack of IT provision at home or requirement to provide face coverings in schools (examples only).	National Survey for Wales, 2018-19 <i>Internet use and digital skills</i> Evidence sessions with young people held by the office of the Childrens Commissioner for Wales and Children in Wales.	The guiding principles of the framework will help to ensure as minimal disruption to the school day as possible. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable schools to operate as 'business as usual' as far as possible including the provision of free breakfast and after school clubs, extra-curricular activities and practical subjects • secure the best outcomes for all learners by considering both their educational needs and wellbeing

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> manage ongoing risks of COVID-19 as safely as possible as for other infections, and ensure clarity of actions required if there is a case in a school.

Staff in schools and settings and families

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
Age	Working-age adults who are parents may be adversely impacted by the need to provide childcare and extra support to their children while home schooling. As part of the changes introduced from September, we aim to minimise the number of children required to self-isolate, thus reducing the impact on working-age adults with young children in particular who will need care and be	<p>Periods of self-isolation may have meant many working parents who are not critical workers have had to make arrangements with their employers to change working patterns and locations.</p> <p>Reliance on wider family and friend childcare networks has also been restricted under the wider COVID-19 measures in place in</p>	We continue to use campaigns and networks to distribute information and advice to parents and provide reassurance, for example the <i>Parenting. Give it Time</i> campaign which is used to get messages out to parents; the Flying Start Facebook page; and our Parenting Expert Action Group, Childcare, Flying Start and Families First Networks. Our recent reassurance

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
	<p>supervised when required to self-isolate.</p> <p>Some of these parents will have had to use leave or seek alternative employment where working from home has not been an option, and in some cases will have been furloughed or lost employment, which in turn could all lead to an increase in low income households.</p>	<p>recent months, however acknowledging that wider social mixing is possible now that we are in Alert Level Zero.</p>	<p>campaigns have focused on Keeping Wales Learning, Testing and Keeping Wales Safe.</p> <p>Public Health Wales data illustrates that as of 27 August 2021, 90.2% of people aged 16+ in Wales have received one Covid - 19 vaccine and 83.6% of people aged 16+ have now received both doses of the vaccine, mitigating these risks.</p>
Age	<p>Older staff members may also have concerns over health vulnerabilities of loved ones within their household or in care arrangements.</p>	<p>Age is known to be a factor in determining risk of developing more serious symptoms from Covid-19.</p>	<p>One of the guiding principles of the framework is that schools should operate as 'business as usual' as far as possible.</p> <p>The recent changes to the self-isolation policy in Wales will also have a positive impact.</p>

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
Disability	<p>Parents and carers with disabilities may be disproportionately adversely impacted by the need to provide additional childcare and support during periods of disruption in schools.</p>	<p>Physical disabilities and learning disabilities may affect a parent's ability to perform the role of both care giver and educator on a full-time basis, even for a short timeframe.</p>	<p>We recognise that some parents and carers may be more anxious about their children's attendance at school. It is critical that schools follow up on concerns around engagement, or the welfare of a learner. Schools and Local Authorities should work with the family to support learners to access the full curriculum and minimise disruption to their education.</p> <p>The framework is a way to prioritise risk control measures based on how effective different types of control are in reducing risks and will be a helpful tool for local authorities and schools when</p>

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
			<p>considering tailored interventions. If, through local intelligence, it is assessed that the risk level – for a region, area or individual school – differs from the national risk level, for example, due to a case or potential cluster, schools will be supported to review their risk assessment and put additional proportionate tailored interventions in place. This in turn will help to reduce the requirement for additional childcare and support for parents and carers.</p>
Disability	<p>Now that schools are fully open there will be greater numbers of staff on site. This may include staff with disabilities.</p>	<p>It is likely that a higher number of school staff with physical disabilities will need to take additional precautions compared to school staff without a disability.</p>	<p>Staff should talk to their employers about how they will be supported.</p> <p>Risk assessments will remain key to ensuring a covid safe and secure school environment. Schools should review their risk assessments, using the framework, at least termly or more</p>

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
			regularly depending on the covid position locally.
Gender Reassignment	<p>We recognise that transgender members of the workforce may have experienced delays to gender-affirming treatment due to COVID-19, which could have a negative impact on mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>There is no data available to know how many members of the workforce may be impacted.</p>	--	--
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Pregnant women and those with very young children as well as older children who attend school or college may be adversely impacted by the need to provide extra childcare and support.</p> <p>Those who have become unpaid carers are more likely to be women, younger and have young children.</p>	EHRC report: <i>How coronavirus has affected equality and human rights</i> , October 2020	We are using campaigns, and networks, to distribute information and advice to parents and provide reassurance, for example the <i>Parenting. Give it Time</i> campaign which is used to get messages out to parents; the Flying Start Facebook page; and our Parenting Expert Action Group, Childcare, Flying Start

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
	They have faced competing demands, which have challenged their physical and mental health and wellbeing and placed additional strain on their relationships, finances and ability to do paid work.		and Families First Networks.
Pregnancy and maternity	Staff working on site may include staff who are pregnant.	Pregnant women are in the people at increased risk category and are generally advised to follow the above advice, which applies to all staff in schools and the advice to general public but in doing so be aware that they are at increased risk	Pregnant staff and their employers should follow the advice in the framework which states that they should be encouraged to take up vaccination and have a workplace risk assessment. If home-working is not possible, pregnant staff and their employers should follow the advice in the COVID-19: advice for pregnant employees .
Race (include different ethnic minorities, Gypsies and Travellers and Migrants,	Staff working on site will include many Black, Asian and minority ethnic people, who we know are of higher risk of developing more	Whilst this proposal does enable staff members to engage with face-to-face learning with learners, ethnicity is known to be a factor in	The framework includes a hierarchy of controls which will support staff and enable prioritisation of risk control measures based on how

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
Asylum seekers and Refugees)	serious symptoms from Covid-19.	determining risk of developing more serious symptoms from Covid-19.	effective different types of control are in reducing risks.
Religion, belief and non-belief	Staff may be concerned that they will be unable to find suitable space onsite for religious worship.		It should be ensured that provision remains available for staff to access religious spaces at expected times of day.
Sex / Gender	Women are more likely to carry the burden of additional childcare and home schooling, even if they are in employment, than their male partners.	EHRC report: <i>How coronavirus has affected equality and human rights</i> , October 2020	We are using campaigns, and networks, to reassure and distribute information and advice to parents, for example the <i>Parenting. Give it Time</i> campaign which is used to get messages out to parents; the Flying Start Facebook page; and our Parenting Expert Action Group, Childcare, Flying Start and Families First Networks.
Sex / Gender	We know men are of higher risk of developing more serious symptoms from COVID-19.	Continuation of onsite provision. Age is known to be a factor in determining risk of developing more	Staff who are at increased risk can continue to attend school. While in school they should follow the interventions to minimise the risks of

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
		serious symptoms from COVID-19.	<p>transmission - including taking particular care to observe good hand and respiratory hygiene, minimising contact and maintaining physical distancing - and should have an individual workplace assessment.</p> <p>People who live with those who are at increased risk can attend the workplace but should ensure they maintain good prevention practice in the workplace and home settings.</p>
Sexual orientation	None	--	--
Marriage and civil partnership	None	--	--
Children and young people up to the age of 18	N/A – see section on children and young people	--	--
Low-income households	Parents from low income households may lack the intellectual resources to support their	We aim to ensure the numbers of learners required to self-isolate is minimised.	One of the guiding principles of the framework of the framework is that schools should operate as ‘business

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
	children through home schooling.		<p>as usual' as far as possible. The recent changes to the self-isolation policy in Wales will also have a positive impact.</p> <p>Schools and settings have been open for vulnerable children and children of critical workers, and this will continue to be a requirement.</p>
Low-income households	Members of the education workforce and others working in schools and settings may be concerned with financial matters and in need of additional support, including those in low-income households.	Whilst we do not measure free school meals eligibility by household, the data gathered by Data Cymru showing an increase in the number of pupils receiving free school meals may signal wider financial concerns.	The Welsh and UK Governments have put in place a number of support measures for people in low-income households including financial support, discretionary assistance and enhancement schemes.

Human Rights and UN Conventions

Whilst the Regulations engage individual rights under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Welsh Government considers that they are justified for the purpose of preventing the spreading of infectious diseases and/or the interference is permitted on the basis that it is in pursuit of a legitimate aim, namely of protecting public health and are proportionate.

Article 5 (right to liberty), Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life), Article 9 (freedom of thought, conscience and religion), Article 11 (freedom of assembly and association) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property) are engaged by these Regulations.

Each of these are qualified rights, which permit Welsh Ministers to interfere with the exercise of the rights if necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety or for the protection of health. All such restrictions and requirements must be justified on the basis that they are in pursuit of a legitimate aim, namely of protecting public health and are proportionate.

Any interference with these rights also needs to be balanced with the State's positive obligations under Article 2 (right to life). It balances the need to maintain an appropriate response to the threat posed by the coronavirus against the rights of individuals and businesses, in a manner which remains proportionate to the need to reduce the rate of transmission of the coronavirus, taking into account the scientific evidence.

Whilst we are making changes and introducing the framework approach to working, the following core measures should remain in place regardless of risk level:

- All staff and learners should be reminded to follow the [Welsh Government guidance for self-isolation](#).
- Staff and learners should not attend school if they have any COVID-19 symptoms. If a staff member or learner becomes symptomatic they should get a test as soon as possible, and self-isolate until the outcome of the test, if the test is negative they can leave self-isolation. Further guidance is available [here](#).
- Regular handwashing, and respiratory etiquette (Catch it, Bin it, Kill it) are key interventions to prevent spread and manage cases, incidents & outbreaks.
- Adequate ventilation by opening windows or adjusting ventilation systems are also important. Further guidance is available [here](#).
- Maintain appropriate levels of cleaning in line with other communicable diseases. There will, however, no longer be a need for schools to set aside specific days for deep cleaning. However if there is a confirmed cluster associated with one class in the school a deep clean of the immediate area will continue to be helpful in reducing transmission.