

Learning and teaching in Art and Design and Photography Key Messages from the Covid-19 sub-group advice

Following the return to full-time schooling in Scotland in August 2020, it has become apparent that specific advice on the teaching of art and design in schools would be a helpful addition to the advice set out in the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance on preparing for the start of the new school term in August 2020](#) document.

These guidelines must be used alongside the recently published [Prioritising the return of senior phase learners](#): technical guidance for providing senior phase practical work in-school.

This guidance document has been prepared by Education Scotland based on the scientific advice provided by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children's Issues and with input from key stakeholders.

While acknowledging the importance of art and design education in terms of developing skills and supporting health and wellbeing, and the negative impact of limiting art and design in schools, the guidance here follows a precautionary approach based on the latest scientific advice with the aim of minimising the risk of transmission of Covid-19 and allowing schools to remain open.

Local authorities and schools should exercise their judgement when implementing this guidance, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their children, young people and staff taking into account local circumstances.

The guidance will be kept under review and updated when necessary. Local authorities and schools will also need to be able to adapt to local issues, e.g. outbreaks or local increases in cases of COVID-19, and follow any locally-determined advice and guidance.

Version	Date	Summary of changes
V 1.0	21/09/20	First version of the document
V 2.0	27/10/20	Updates for clarification
V 2.1	02/11/20	Various updates in line with Coronavirus (COVID19): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID19 in schools document (30 October 2020).
V 2.2	17/02/21	<p>Various updates in line with Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance on reducing risks from COVID19 in schools document (14 December 2020). Prioritising the return of senior phase learners: Technical guidance for providing senior phase practical work in-school (February 2021).</p> <p>The revised text is highlighted in yellow.</p>

The advice is reviewed regularly and can change as evidence is published and more about the virus is understood.

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1. Overview and purpose

The reopening of schools is a major and significant step. It is important to ensure that the necessary actions become established to prevent transmission of the virus. These actions should be continuously monitored over a further period of time, before resuming activities which might carry an increased risk. Staff should adopt a cautious approach to the delivery of these activities and there will be a further review later in the school year at a point when we have a clearer understanding of the virus and its transmission.

Senior phase learners timetabled in school to undertake practical work at any one time should be no more than 5-8% of the secondary school roll. That figure is additional to those children and young people already in attendance as a result of being classified as vulnerable or through key worker status.

Schools should ensure that arrangements for individual subjects stay within the existing schools guidance and accompanying mitigations.

Art and Design and Photography bring many benefits to children and young people. These benefits include important contributions to their health and wellbeing; social, physical and cognitive development; creativity, communication and team working, and discipline. These activities ensure key opportunities for equity and inclusion, and provide a basis for further education and employment for many young people. For all these reasons, it is important to find safe ways of offering these activities wherever possible, even partial, until they can be recommenced safely in full.

A number of steps can be taken to reduce the risk associated with learning and teaching in Art and Design and Photography, at all times guided by a precautionary approach. Individual lessons can carry a low risk where 2 metre physical distancing can be applied, the environment is well ventilated and equipment is not shared among children and young people or staff. Virtual lessons, using digital forms of communication, carry even less risk. Teachers of Art and Design and Photography should consider alternative methods of sharing, demonstrating and supporting young people in their classes to minimise the risk of viral transmission.

2. What mitigations are recommended for Art and Design and Photography?

Particular attention should be paid to the processes surrounding the relevant activity. This is particularly important when children and young people share equipment and resources. In these situations, close attention must be paid to good hygiene, cleaning of surfaces, and physical distancing between adults, and between adults and children and young people. If any equipment or resources have been shared as part of the activity, these should be sanitised carefully before next use/between each lesson. As an overriding principle, activities which involve contact with shared equipment should be kept to a minimum. Opportunities to wash or sanitise hands thoroughly should be built into the activity and teachers' planning. Hand-washing facilities or hand sanitiser stations should be available and easily accessible when entering or leaving a learning space.

Practitioners should continuously seek creative solutions to the challenges they face in keeping themselves and children and young people safe. Some of these solutions may be digital. As always, careful consideration should be given to the planning of activities for children and young people requiring additional support for their learning.

3. Suggested mitigations for Art and Design and Photography

Risk is reduced in environments that are well ventilated, when activities take place for a shorter period of time, and when young people do not work face-to-face.

The risk for staff and for children and young people can be reduced where lessons can take place outdoors or under an open-sided gazebo (or equivalent) with appropriate physical distancing in place where possible.

In Art and Design or Photography, it would be advisable to complete a virtual portfolio. Photographing the work of young people through the developmental stages and the final pieces will provide ongoing evidence for the purposes of assessment at all levels.

4. Current additional subject specific support for Art and Design and Photography

Art and Design spaces

- Where appropriate, teachers may wish to work with young people out of doors. This approach can also provide rich contexts for learning.
- Staff should ensure that they make best use of the building and space out learners to ensure they adhere to 2 metre physical distancing.
- Adults and young people working with young people must adhere to physical distancing rules, remaining 2 metres apart at all times.
- The layout of practical art rooms should follow current advice on physical distancing and health and safety, wherever possible and practical. Staff should follow current advice in respect of face coverings for themselves and for children and young people.
- Consideration should be given to ventilation in all indoor spaces. Staff should liaise with senior leaders and follow local/school guidelines. [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID-19 in schools](#) Para 50 – 54.

Working together

- Teachers should ensure children's and young people's use of sinks is controlled to ensure physical distancing and maximum safety.
- Teachers should consider how equipment will be assigned to class groups for the duration of a project/unit, in order to avoid cross-contamination.
- Intensive group projects should be avoided wherever possible, to minimise close contact with others. Where this is not possible, physical distancing should be observed as much as possible, and to comply with Scottish Government guidance, senior pupils and staff within local protection levels 3 and 4 should wear a face covering at all times in classrooms.

Hygiene measures

- In lessons, children and young people should clean their own equipment and tools. These steps should be built into typical routines in practical classrooms, such as cleaning down work areas and drawing boards and general cleaning up.
- Young people should use disinfectant wipes or similar approaches to clean their desks and drawing boards at the end of each lesson.
- Young people should wash their own palette and brush at the end of a lesson.
- Young people should wash their hands regularly and frequently.
- Taps and sinks should be wiped down with disinfectant wipes or using available cleaning materials at the end of each lesson, by children and young people wherever possible, or by staff when necessary.
- To comply with Scottish Government guidance, senior pupils and staff within local protection levels 3 and 4 should wear a face covering at all times in classrooms.
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID-19 in schools](#) Para 33 states: 'Local authorities and schools should ensure that an enhanced environmental cleaning regime is in place. The regime put in place should be in line with Health Protection Scotland Guidance for Non-Healthcare Settings'. This specifies in particular: 'Ensuring regular (at least twice daily) cleaning of commonly touched objects and surfaces (for example, desks, handles, dining tables, shared technology surfaces etc)'
- Para 35 states; 'Movement of children, young people and staff between classrooms should be minimised wherever possible. Where this cannot be avoided, the provision of appropriate cleaning supplies to enable them to wipe down their own desk/chair/surfaces before leaving and, especially, on entering the room should be considered as part of overall hygiene strategies for secondary schools'.

Creative solutions

- Using visualisers for demonstration purposes can support learning, avoiding the need for children and young people to gather in close proximity.
- Using creative blended learning approaches can support learning and further minimise risk, where children and young people are encouraged to do research/initial sketches and developmental work at home.
- Children and young people may be able to use online platforms from home, to share their work with teachers and enabling them to provide regular feedback without direct interaction or contact.
- Staff should consider possible adaptations to the Art and Design curriculum, for example encouraging young people, particularly in the Broad General Education, to focus on the fundamentals of drawing. Additionally, Staff may be able to focus on topics such as mastery of observational drawing or understanding aspects of art history, allowing them to conduct lessons in a variety of settings and using only minimal equipment.

Planning lessons

- Regular hand washing / hand sanitising should be built into teacher planning.
- Physical distancing mitigations should form part of teacher planning. **It is important that teachers monitor this work to ensure young people maintain 2 metres apart from each other to minimise risk.**
- Use one way systems where possible in art rooms to maximise the opportunity for physical distancing
- Staff should plan collaboratively to minimise sharing of equipment by rotating areas of learning where possible. This is particularly important where teachers share teaching areas and/or tools and equipment.

Delivering the Art and Design and Photography curriculum

- Where practical, children and young people should only use the equipment assigned to them and should not share these with others. For example, in a lino printing lesson, children and young people should only use their own, assigned cutting tool.
- Where possible, a class group should be assigned individual tools for the duration of the project/unit of learning and these should be stored in named bags (or similar) between lessons.
- Where equipment such as ink tubes and rollers have to be shared, these should be wiped clean between uses.
- Where possible, Photography equipment should be issued on an individual basis. Where this is not possible, young people may use their own devices to capture images. Additionally, there may be a range of other creative solutions to developing their understanding and appreciation of photography and their visual literacy. This may include studying the history of photography, examples of portraiture or aspects of photo journalism.

5. External and private providers working within schools should follow this guidance.

Individuals and organisations working with children and young people outwith schools should consider the relevant Scottish Government guidance available through the links below.

Safer workplaces guidance can be found on our returning to work safely webpage:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-returning-to-work/pages/employers/>

In particular, providers are encouraged to follow the relevant links below:

- [Prioritising the return of senior phase learners: Technical guidance for providing senior phase practical work in-school \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-returning-to-work/pages/employers/)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID-19 in schools 14 December 2020](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-returning-to-work/pages/employers/)
- The Coronavirus (COVID -19) guidance for sport and leisure: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-sport-and-leisure-facilities/>
- The Coronavirus (COVID-19): general guidance for safer workplaces: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-general-guidance-for-safer-workplaces/>;
- the Coronavirus (COVID-19): small and micro businesses guidance: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-small-and-micro-businesses-guidance/>;
- the Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for the performing arts and venues sector: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-the-performing-arts-and-venues-sector/>;
- Where children are being taught, the Coronavirus (COVID-19): organised activities for children provisional guidance: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-organised-activities-for-children/>

