

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

These guidelines must be used alongside the recently published

[COVID guidance for schools](#)

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 and Photography 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 | 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). |
| V 3.0 | 12/04/21 | Update in line with Updated Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on reducing the risks in schools 24 March 2021. The revised text is highlighted in yellow. |
| V 4.0 | 22/11/21 | Updated in line with COVID guidance for schools published November 22 nd 2021. Revised text is highlighted in yellow |

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 guidelines must be used alongside the recently published

[COVID guidance for schools](#)

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.

2. Key messages from the COVID-19 advisory sub group

[COVID guidance for schools](#) provides guidance to ensure a safe and supportive environment for learning and teaching during the coronavirus pandemic. On the basis of the scientific advice, physical distancing requirements in primary schools is not required.. However, adults and young people working together should continue to take a precautionary approach to physical distancing

While the need for strict physical distancing between pupils in secondary schools has been removed, all schools and local authorities should consider how they can further strengthen other mitigations such as ventilation and the use of outdoor learning.

Face coverings should be worn at all times by staff and young people in secondary schools in classrooms, in communal areas and when moving around the school.

3. 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 hands thoroughly should be built into the activity and teachers' planning. Hand-washing facilities or hand hygiene 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.

4. 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 considerably 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, practitioners should consider the use of 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.

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

Art and Design and Photography spaces

- Where appropriate, teachers may wish to work with young people out of doors. This approach can also provide rich contexts for learning.
- Adults and young people working together should continue to take a precautionary approach to physical distancing
- 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.

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.
- Activities where there is no sharing of equipment are safer than those that do, therefore activities that minimise the use of equipment should be considered.
- Intensive group projects should be avoided wherever possible, to minimise close contact with others. Where this is not possible, a precautionary approach to physical distancing should be taken, and to comply with Scottish Government guidance, secondary school and staff 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 all pupils and staff in secondary settings should wear a face covering at all times in classrooms.

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.
- A precautionary approach to physical distancing should form part of teacher planning. **It is important that teachers monitor this work to ensure young people continue to be cautious when working with each other in pairs and groups, in order 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.
- **Greater emphasis should be placed on ventilation, by keeping windows open as much as possible, and doors open when feasible and safe to do so.**

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.

- It is a legal requirement that local authorities and head teachers ensure that risk assessments are in place. All risk assessments should be reviewed regularly as circumstances change to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and adults is not compromised.

- Exhibiting and presenting work

Guidance has been published on visitors to schools. (COVID guidance for schools) Art and Design teachers should avoid any large scale events or gatherings at this time, for example to exhibit or showcase the work of children and young people. An online solution may be an alternative where this is a key element of an approach taken by a department or teacher, or where this enables evaluation of pupil work.

6. 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/>

