Part of
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Department
for Education

Guidance

Protective measures for holiday and after-school clubs, and other out-of-school settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

Updated 10 February 2021

Contents
Main changes to this guidance
Who this guidance is for
Venue-specific guidance
Who can attend your setting
Home education
Staff and volunteers
Staff who are extremely vulnerable
Contacting people who
Visitor protocols
Cleaning premises, equipment and other facilities
Ventilation and heating
Testing
Identifying cases and managing outbreaks
Educational visits and trips
Risk assessment
Communicating with staff, parents or carers
Supporting children and young people's mental health
Annex A: measures for children social care and other children's services providers
Annex B: measures for children in care or care leaving

Print this page

Main changes to this guidance

- Amended the non-venue-based childcare section to outline which children and young people can attend childcare in tier 4 areas, from 5 January onwards.
- Added advice for personal staff members to the staff and workforce section.
- Updated the face coverings section to advise that children aged secondary school age (from aged 11 to 18 in the UK) are recommended to wear face coverings when they are in communal areas, such as when they are moving around a school or college, or when attending a period that is expected to include further information on expectations, access and safety wearing of face coverings.
- Updated the risk assessment section to remind you to make clear that:
  - you should not group children from different bubbles together where it is absolutely necessary
  - children should not be transported by at least one staff member
  - where it is not possible to follow social distancing guidance, you should ensure any children from the same school are kept together, and/or work with parents and carers to minimise the risk of infection
- Added a new section - venues in accommodation facilities, where available.

Who this guidance is for

This guidance is for out-of-school childcare providers and their staff, who provide, for children (who were under the age of 18 on 31 August 2020):

- community activities
- holiday
- after school clubs
- breakfast and after-school clubs for children

It applies to:

- providers that fall within the government's definition of an out-of-school childcare provider, and who are providing a service to children during the period of the coronavirus or coronavirus infection register
- schools or colleges that offer extra-curricular activities or provision for children before and after school, or during holidays or outside of term time

Providers that offer breakfast, after-school clubs or extra-curricular activities in schools, should also refer to the DfE guidance for schools, colleges and local authorities on providing education and learning opportunities and services during the children wave of the 2 strand, and to the guidance for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19).

Providers of youth services and activities should refer to the Institute of Youth Work's guidance for managers of youth centres spaces and activities during COVID-19.

There is separate guidance available for parents and carers of children attending out of school childcare during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Venue-specific guidance

If your out-of-school setting takes place in one of the following premises, you should also follow:

- guidance for spaces of worship
- guidance for community centres, village halls and other multi-purpose community facilities
- guidance for providers of grassroots sport and leisure facilities
- guidance for full operation of schools
- guidance on venues which are now operating or will be opening in future

Providers should also follow any other guidance that is relevant to their premises (for example, the warehouse operations management guidance) if you are responsible for premises that are required to help prevent the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). See coronavirus and workplaces for more information.

About this guidance

Out-of-school settings can continue to open for indoor and outdoor provision. They should follow the protective measures set out in this guidance.

Evidence continues to confirm that children can be susceptible to coronavirus (COVID-19) infection although a large proportion of children who have been tested for coronavirus infection appears less than adults. The evidence is stronger that pre-school and primary school children are less susceptible to infection than adults and more recent secondary age and older children.

We know that the new variant of coronavirus (COVID-19) present in the UK is more transmissible than previous versions of coronavirus. We know that children can transmit this variant to others, especially the members of children's bubble, or household, in schools and central settings. We have also recommended additional precautionary measures, where applicable, throughout this guidance to further reduce the risk of transmission.

Who can attend your setting

Until 8 March, out-of-school settings and wraparound childcare providers should continue to only offer indoor setting and outdoor provision for:

- children of key workers and vulnerable children
- children of 2 key workers, where the provision is reasonably necessary to enable their parents and carers to work, search for work, undertake education or training, or attend a medical appointment or address a medical need

From 8 March, out-of-school settings and wraparound childcare providers will be able to open to children in all groups. Providers in tier 4 areas will not, however, be only able to access settings for certain essential purposes.

Therefore, from 8 March, providers should offer indoor and outdoor face-to-face provision to:

- vulnerable children and young people
- other children, where the provision is:
  - reasonably necessary to enable their parents and carers to work, search for work, undertake education or training, or attend a medical appointment or address a medical need, or attend a school place
  - being used by electively home educating parents as part of their existing arrangements for their child to receive a broad and balanced education
  - being used as part of their efforts to obtain a regulated qualification, meet the entry requirements for an education institution, or to undertake exams and assessments

As set out in the COVID-19 Roadmap (Tuesday 22 February 2021 guidance), from 29 March, all children will be able to attend school, childcare, out-of-school settings and wraparound provisions will be able to offer:

- outdoor provision to all children, without restriction on the purpose for which they may attend
- indoor provision:
  - vulnerable children and young people
  - children or free school meals, where they are attending as part of the Department for Education's holiday activities and food programme
  - other children, where the provision is:
    - reasonably necessary to enable their parents and carers to work, search for work, undertake education or training, or attend a medical appointment or address a medical need, or attend a school place
    - being used by electively home educating parents as part of their existing arrangements for their child to receive a broad and balanced education
    - being used as part of their efforts to obtain a regulated qualification, meet the entry requirements for an education institution, or to undertake exams and assessments

Where school terms and holiday dates can vary between different areas, you should follow the DfE's guidance on school, college and childcare attendance. Providers should also be aware of and follow the local restrictions that may apply in your area, including those of different children, when children are also attending school.

The government's intention is that for out-of-school settings and wraparound childcare providers to be able offer provision as normal, to all children, from the start of the summer term, on Monday 12 April 2021. This is in line with the roadmap and statement of step 2 of the COVID-19 Roadmap, Tuesday 23 February 2021.

We will amend the relevant regulations to allow for each of these arrangements to take place.

You should note that some premises are only permitted to open for certain essential purposes. This includes, for example, some community centres, village halls and spaces and venues which must close, and those that can open for certain purposes, including registered childcare and supervised activities for children or where applicable, for education or training.

Children should be encouraged to attend settings close to where they live or go to school, and should not travel to other areas to access childcare.

Children attend childcare settings sometimes on advice of a health or social care professional, or because they are a looked after child, or a child in need. The Department of Health and Social Care has published guidance for providers of children and vulnerable people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19.

Home education

Where a child who is electively home educated takes part in an out-of-school setting, this may mean that the child is in contact with other children who are not part of their bubble, using the children who are electively home educated in a combination of bubbles or groups, or in a way that is not in a bubble or group at all.

Until 8 March, children who are electively home educated should not attend out of school settings for face-to-face provision unless they are vulnerable children or young people, or children of critical workers.

Providers should continue to offer remote education as far as possible for those not eligible to attend for onsite provision.

From 8 March, in line with those children returning to school, children who are electively home educated will also be able to attend out-of-school settings, where the provision is reasonably necessary to enable their parents and carers to work, search for work, undertake education or training, or attend a medical appointment or address a medical need, or able to use these settings for a limited set of other essential purposes. For example, where the provision is being used by electively home educating parents as part of their education or training, attend a medical appointment or address a medical need, or to attend a supervised group. See who can attend your setting for more detail. This section also applies to children who are electively home educated who are attending out-of-school settings, and for which purposes, during the March to April period and from the start of the summer term (which will be earlier than 12 April).

Staff and workforce

You should ensure you have enough staff available to meet the required ratios for your setting. You should have:

- at least one person with first aid training
- all staff members should be trained in Prevent Safeguarding Level (Dfs) training, so they want to consider a refresh. Training is free to DfE staff members
- a caretaker or cleaning staff if available

If supporting a person to use their toilet, you should carry out the appropriate and proportionate checks, as set out in the DBS guidance.

You should ensure that your staff members and volunteers follow the protective measures you have in place to help prevent the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable

Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) are advised not to attend the workplace and should follow the guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19.

Those living with someone who is CEV can still attend work where home working is not possible. Those living with someone who is shielding should continue to work from home and follow shielding.

The shielding guidance is reviewed regularly. CEV individuals will be advised in advance of any extension or end date from shielding or changes in combination of risk factors.

CEV individuals (over 18) have been prioritised for vaccination in phase 1 before the general population. Vaccination is the priority shielding is lifted. See the guidance on vaccination and immunisation.

Current SHIELD guidance, informed by PHE, currently advises that CEV individuals should continue to shield even after they have been vaccinated. This may change as we get further data on the effects of vaccination.

Staff who are clinically vulnerable

Clinically vulnerable staff can continue to attend the setting where it is not possible to work from home. They should follow the general and respiratory hygiene, enhanced cleaning and maintain social distancing.

Those living with someone who is clinically vulnerable can attend the workplace but should ensure they maintain good prevention practice in the workplace and in home settings.

Pregnancy

You will need to follow the specific guidance for pregnant employees because pregnant women are considered clinically vulnerable. In some cases pregnant women may also be at increased risk of severe illness if they do catch the virus. Pregnancy is not listed as clinically extremely vulnerable medical risk. COVID-19 vaccination, a guide for women of childbearing age, pregnant or breastfeeding contains vaccination advice.

Your workplace risk assessment should already consider any risks to employees of childbearing age and, in particular, risks to new and expected mothers. If you are pregnant, you should let your employer know as soon as you can, so that they can take the necessary steps to protect the health and safety of you and your baby, including your unborn child. Risk assessment may help identify any additional action that needs to be taken to protect you.

Any risks identified at this stage will vary during the pregnancy, so it is best to keep after birth, or while the employee is still breastfeeding, must be included and managed in the risk assessment. Employers should also take into account any new or expectant mothers' health and safety.

Current DHSC guidance, informed by PHE, currently advises that CEV individuals should continue to shield even after they have been vaccinated. This may change as we get further data on the effects of vaccination.

Staff who may otherwise be at increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19)

Current evidence shows that a range of factors mean that some people may be at comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19). Where it is not possible to work from home, risk assessments should be carried out, in line with existing practice, and put in the guidance and in place. You should consider and take into account the risk management for your workforce, recognising that staff may have a variety of underlying health conditions, and the potential intersectionality of wider factors and the increased risks they may face.

There is further information available on what is at higher risk from coronavirus. Staff who with those who may have comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19) can attend the workplace where it is not possible to work from home.

Carrying out a risk assessment

There are important actions that you should take during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, to help prevent the transmission of the virus.

Employers have a legal duty to protect people from harm. This includes taking reasonable steps to keep their workplace safe and to prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). You must comply with health and safety law.

We strongly recommend that you consult and carry out the Health and Safety Executive on coronavirus (COVID-19) including:

- managing risks and risk assessment at work
- COVID-19 secure workplace
- how to talk about health and safety during the coronavirus pandemic

As part of your risk assessment, you should identify protective measures to put in place, such as those listed in the guidance on venues open during coronavirus (COVID-19). You should also look at other disease transmission risks, such as the tendency for older children to want to touch their friends and engage in close contact, and take reasonable measures to prevent any spread.

In most cases, risk assessments and preparation for reopening or wider opening of out-of-school settings should be done in conjunction with your member of staff. However, you should also work with relevant parties, such as your staff members, the owner of the premises, and your local authority, to ensure that you have a safe place to work and take and determine protective measures to put in place. You also need to establish who is responsible for what in your risk assessment.

You should regularly review and update your risk assessments - treating them as 'living documents' - as the circumstances of your setting and the public health advice changes. This will be particularly relevant at each point you prepare to welcome back more children.

You should share any significant findings of the risk assessment with your staff and discuss it at your next staff meeting.

You should, as a minimum, be able to explain to parents and carers the steps you are taking to keep their children safe and minimise risk to them and others, and the additional measures you have in place. If parents and carers need to be aware of the protective measures you have put in place, you should share them with them, and you should outline these to them or direct them to the relevant website.

Considering group sizes

Decisions on group sizes for your setting should be based on:

- the current government guidance on social distancing
- the ability of the children in attendance to maintain social distancing and practise hand hygiene
- the age of the children in attendance
- the ability to maintain distancing (for example, static classroom set up rather than an activity that requires a large amount of movement)
- the size or layout of your premises
- the ability to maintain your premises effectively with fresh air

You should aim to minimise the number of different people each member of staff and children come into contact with. Ideally, children should be in groups with the same people, cases, schools and early years settings to ensure that children and staff in a group with children from the same bubble they are in during the school day. For more information, see the guidance on how to manage your bubble in your school.

Where it is not possible to group children in the same bubble as they are in during the school day - for example, if you have year one or two children attending your provision - you should ensure that they are kept in groups by year group and not mix children from outside their school bubble.

Where it is not possible to group children in the same bubble as they are in during the school day, you should try to keep them in small groups of no more than 15 children and at least one staff member, with the same children each time they attend, as far as practicable. Children should not be required to socially distance from their bubble. You should only group children from different schools together when it is absolutely necessary.

Where it is not possible to follow school bubbles, you should work with parents and carers to minimise the number of different people children come into contact with and minimise of mixing between different households and contacts.

Frequently review these groups to minimise the amount of mixing. For example, when new children register for your provision, you should determine whether they attend the same school as other children in your setting or other children in your setting and group children together if appropriate.

To help you, review your groups, you should keep up-to-date records of the children attending your setting for at least 21 days. These records should include the school or early years setting they attend and the specific groups and members of staff they have been in contact with each day.

There may be instances where you cannot maintain groups of no more than 15 children in groups of less than 15, because of:

- the premises not being large enough to ensure social distancing between groups
- the premises having insufficient safe ventilation capacity
- staffing arrangements
- additional bookings throughout the term and during school holidays
- safeguarding or welfare concerns
- children of different ages attending
- the 'drop in' nature of some services and activities, for example support groups for vulnerable young people

Any decisions should be taken with full consideration of any welfare needs and safeguarding concerns.

Operating with multiple groups

When operating provision for multiple groups of children throughout the day, you should ensure that children from different groups do not mix with children from other groups, children and people in carers waiting to drop-pick up. Multiple groups of 15 children plus staff can use the same shared space if necessary, with distancing between the groups and adequate ventilation. Although different groups sharing the same space should be avoided where possible.

Group sizes for children under 5

Providers caring for children:

- under 5 only should refer to the guidance for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak
- both under 5 and aged 5 and over, in mixed groups together should follow this guidance and follow children in small consistent groups, of no more than 15, where possible
- over 5 should follow this guidance

Indoor provision

If you normally run sessions indoors, you should consider whether you can run them safely outside instead, as the risk of transmission is lower outdoors.

If you operate in a shared space, you should also discuss the infection protection and control measures you have in place with the other organisations. You need to be aware of these shared spaces, most importantly of the impact of your and other bookings and obligations to ensure that their premises are safe for providers to hire and to operate from.

System of controls: Infection protection and control

In this section, where something is essential for public health reasons, as advised by Public Health England, we have made it a requirement. In other cases, we have provided as we have made that clear. This guidance does not create any new legal obligations.

This is the set of actions you must take. They are grouped into 'prevention' and 'response to any infection'. Taken together, they will minimise the risk of infection and reduce the spread of any infection that does occur, and protect vulnerable people.

These additional measures will be reviewed in partnership with health experts to decide whether evidence suggests that these measures can be scaled back of the summer.

Prevention

Providers (including their staff where applicable) must always:

1) Minimise contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring they do not attend your setting

2) Ensure face coverings are used in recommended circumstances.

3) Ensure everyone is advised to clean their hands thoroughly and more often than usual

4) Ensure good respiratory hygiene for everyone by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.

5) Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products, such as detergent.

6) Consider how to minimise contact across the site and maintain social distancing wherever possible.

7) Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.

In specific circumstances:

8) Ensure individuals wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary.

9) Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing, where available.

Response to any infection

Providers (including their staff where applicable) must always:

10) Promote and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.

11) Manage and support confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the setting community.

12) Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.

1. Minimise contact with individuals who are required to self isolate by ensuring they do not attend your setting

When an individual develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or has a positive test:

- member and young people, staff and other adults must not come into your setting if:
- they have one or more coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms
- a member of their household (including someone in their household) has coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms. If they have been tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms
- they are required to quarantine having recently returned from a country under the coronavirus quarantine requirements
- they have tested a positive test

They must immediately cease to attend and not attend for at least 10 days from the day after:

- the start of their symptoms
- the test date if they did not have any symptoms but have had a positive test - whether they live in a Local Tier Restriction or Tier Restriction Under Regulation 6 area

You must follow the process and ensure everyone onsite or visiting is aware of it.

Anyone not to isolating by NHS Test and Trace or public health teams should follow isolation. Test a large organisation to self-isolate, but you may want some to stay in or close or to test and trace. Test and trace will contact those who need to isolate. Test and trace will

If anyone in your setting develops a new cough or new and continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), you should:

- must send their home to begin isolation - the isolation period includes the day the symptoms first appeared and the next 10 full days
- advise them to follow the guidance for household with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection
- advise them to arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19)

Other members of their household (including any siblings and members of their support bubble) should isolate for the full period as set out in the guidance for those who have been in contact with a person who has tested positive for a PCR test. If anyone in your setting was taken if they did test positive, whether this was a positive PCR test or a positive lateral flow test (LFT) result, the rest of their household should isolate for 10 days (the household clock is ticking sometimes while self-isolating, they will need to restart the 10 day isolation period and book a test.

If a child or young person develops COVID-19 and is awaiting collection, they should:

- move to a well-ventilated room, if possible, where they can be isolated behind a closed door (for example, the room they have been using to undertake supervision - a window should also be opened for ventilation if it is safe to do so)
- stay at least 2 metres away from other people
- be given a face covering (unless they are exempt) to be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by another person

PPE should be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.

In an emergency, call 999 if someone is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Anyone with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms should not travel to hospital or other healthcare setting unless they are asked to do so. Further information on what to do can be found on coronavirus and seasonal confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the rest of school settings community.

When an individual has had close contact with someone with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms

Any member of staff who has provided close contact care to someone with symptoms, or who has had close contact with a person who is confirmed as a case of COVID-19 will have been in close contact with that person. do not need to go into self-isolation unless:

- the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive
- they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should self-isolate immediately and arrange to have a test)
- they are requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace or the Public Health England (PHE) advice service (in PHE local health protection team if escalated)
- they are notified to isolate for an LFT test as part of a coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in your setting

Everyone must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds and use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day. Hand washing should be done after touching any surfaces, any around the person will arrange for tests to be carried after the test result, to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. See COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance.

2. Ensure face coverings are used in recommended circumstances

Where possible if and follow, ensure a movement you which would the children who were aged from 11 to 18 years old, as educated, we recommend that face coverings should be worn in all communal areas where social distancing cannot be maintained such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. Face coverings do not need to be worn by pupils when outdoors on the premises.

In addition, we ask also recommend to these settings, that face coverings should be worn by adult visitors to the premises, unless they are exempt from wearing one. This does not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would interfere with the ability to take part in assessment or rehearsals activity, for example during sports.

Children in primary schools or of equivalent age (which would be children who were aged from 11 to 18 years old, as educated, we recommend that face coverings should be worn by staff and adult visitors in settings in situations where social distancing between adult visitors and children cannot be maintained or where it is not recommended. Children in primary school are not required to wear a face covering. We are taking this additional precautionary measure for a limited time during this period of high community transmission of the Delta variant of COVID-19 and in the run up to Christmas until Easter. As with all measures, we will keep it under review and update guidance at that point.

Transparent face coverings which may assist communication with someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate can also be worn. Their use should be risk assessed and kept under review. Children who are in the protection from the waiver (course controls) but they are more likely to be affected to reducing the spread of coronavirus that wearing a face covering at all. There is also a small proportion of children for whom the effectiveness or safety of wearing face coverings

Those who rely on visual signals for communication, or provide support to such people, may find it difficult to benefit from any equipment to see lip movement, facial expressions or gestures.

Face visors or shields should not multiply be worn as an alternative to face coverings. They may protect against direct contact with specific circumstances but are not as effective in reducing aerosol transmission. They should only be used after carrying out a risk assessment for the specific situation and taking into account the following points:

Exemptions

Some situations are exempt from wearing face coverings. This applies to those who:

- carried out, or were or remove a face covering because of a physical impairment or disability that means they cannot safely do so
- speak to a person who is someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate

The same exemptions will apply in education and childcare settings and you should be sensitive to those needs, noting that some people are less able to wear face coverings and that the reasons for this may not be visible to others.

Access to face coverings

Children and young people in education or childcare settings:

- not touch the front of the face covering during use or when removing it
- dispose of temporary face coverings in a 'black bag' waste bin (not recycling bin)
- place reusable face coverings in a plastic bag they can take home with them
- wash their hands upon before heading to their classroom or activity room

3. Ensure everyone is advised to clean their hands thoroughly and more often than usual

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an easy virus to kill when it is on skin. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser. You must ensure that children clean their hands regularly, including:

- when they arrive at your setting
- when they return from breaks
- before eating
- before and after eating

Consider how children (children and staff) need to wash their hands and incorporate time into the day. Staff working with children with sort uncontrollably may need more opportunities to wash their hands than other staff. Children who use sides as a memory aid may need to be reminded to do it, but it is NOT a requirement for children under 5 to wash their hands.

Continue to help children with complex needs to clean their hands properly.

Frequent and thorough hand cleaning should not be regular practice. You should consider:

- whether you have enough hand washing or hand sanitiser stations available so that all children and staff can clean their hands regularly
- if your hand washing facilities are in a location that gets the roles around injection - child-friendly skin cleaning wipes can be used as an alternative
- building these routines into your school routine, supported by behaviour management and reward systems. Posters and pictures and other examples - collected the need to follow these

4. Ensure good respiratory hygiene for everyone by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach

The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important. Make sure enough tissues are available in your setting and that children, staff and visitors to the site are encouraged to use them to cover their coughs and sneezes and then to dispose of the tissue behind to get this right, and all pupils understand that this is now part of how the school operates. Ensure there are enough bins for the disposal of used tissues for schools, including instances to encourage good hand and respiratory hygiene.

Some children with complex needs will struggle to maintain as good respiratory hygiene as others and will need more support from their parents and carers to ensure this is managed. This should be considered in risk assessments and should be shared with children and the staff working with them and is not a reason to deny these children a place at your setting.

5. Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products, such as detergents

In line with the risk assessment and timetabling of activities in your settings, put in place and maintain an enhanced cleaning schedule. This should include:

- more frequent cleaning of rooms or shared areas that are used by different groups
- more frequent cleaning of frequently touched surfaces
- cleaning toilets regularly
- encouraging pupils to wash their hands thoroughly after using the toilet
- if your site is shared, disinfecting different groups their own toilet facilities

PHE has published guidance for cleaning non-healthcare settings. This contains advice on the general cleaning required in addition to the existing advice on cleaning when there is a suspected case.

6. Consider how to minimise contact and maintain social distancing across the site wherever possible

Minimising contacts and mixing between people reduces transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This is important in all contexts, and it should be kept in mind when planning your setting.

The exercise this principle to apply to reducing the number of contacts between children and staff. This can be achieved by adopting groups separate and minimising the number the section considering group size - and through maintaining distance between individuals.

You should encourage children and young people to maintain social distancing as far as is feasible, and could also be observed by staff members and parents and carers when they go and drop off.

Staff members and children and young people within the setting, should also maintain social distance as far as possible.

There will be some situations where social distancing is not possible, for example when children and young people are in classrooms. In these cases, it is recommended that the other protective measures outlined in this guidance are implemented.

7. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated

Good ventilation reduces the concentration of the virus in the air, which reduces the risks from airborne transmission. This happens when people breathe in small particles that remain in the air for a long time, and with the virus has occupied spaces.

When your setting is in operation, it is important to ensure it is well ventilated and a fresh supply of air is coming in. Ventilation can be improved in different ways, including by a variety of measures including:

- mechanical ventilation systems - these should be adjusted to increase the amount of fresh air circulated in the room, and should not be switched off unless ready current guidance and that they could be used safely and in accordance. Systems should be adjusted to full fresh air or, if not, then systems should be operated as normal. This may be only a single room and maintenance regarding outdoor air capture
- natural ventilation - opening windows (in cooler weather windows should be opened just a little, and windows on different sides of the building should be opened to ensure a cross flow of air. This is the same for the spaces. Opening doors can also assist with creating a throughout of air
- Ventilation should be increased when external opening doors may be used (as long as they are not fire doors and will not safe to do so)

The Health and Safety Executive guidance on air conditioning and ventilation during the coronavirus outbreak and CIBSE Coronavirus (COVID-19) Advice apply in this information.

To balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable environment, you could:

- opening high level windows in colder weather in preference to low level to reduce draught
- increasing the ventilation while spaces are unoccupied
- providing flexibility to allow additional, suitable outdoor clothing
- exercising hydrous where possible to avoid direct draughts

Heating should be used as necessary to ensure comfort levels are maintained particularly in occupied spaces.

8. Ensure individuals wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary

Most staff in a school setting will not require PPE beyond what they would normally use for their work. Face coverings are not classified as PPE (see section covering face coverings).

PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases, for example:

- children, young people and learners who require care routinely already involves the use of PPE
- if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from any child, young person or other learner displaying coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms

More information on the use of PPE is available in the guidance on safe working in education, childcare and children's social care.

Providers should use their local supply chains to obtain required PPE. They may also be able to source PPE and other products through the Crown Commercial Service COVID Safety Marketplace Service. In addition, public sector buying organisations have established a framework for the supply of PPE and cleaning products, including:

- NHSPS
- YPO
- NEPO

9. Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing, where available

Asymptomatic testing will help to lower the chains of transmission of coronavirus in education and childcare settings by identifying asymptomatic positive cases. This is important so up to time these people who have the virus have it without symptoms and are unknowingly transmitting it to others. Asymptomatic testing is in fact another level with suitable, testing will help to reduce transmission of the virus.

Primary, school boarders nursery and mainstream nursery staff have been supplied with lateral flow device (LFD) test kits by self-test.

For secondary schools we are moving to a home testing model. The lateral flow devices (LFD) test kits will be distributed to pupils/students from the PHE for self use. Home tests will be available for all staff for return.

More information can be found in:

- Schools: coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): testing in schools and colleges for staff and primary schools, school boarder and mainstream nursery settings
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) asymptomatic testing in schools and colleges

The asymptomatic testing programme is not mandatory for adults who are not in pupil, private, voluntary and independent (PVI) nurseries, who will start to receive deliveries of LFD test kits from 22 February 2021 and will be able to offer to all their twice weekly testing from next month.

If operating on a bubble by a school, including mainstream nursery sites, then you should offer the test to all bubble members, including those who are not participating in asymptomatic testing. Schools and nurseries should offer testing to all staff who are working in their settings including contractors or peripatetic staff. They should also offer it to those who are working in other settings where they are deployed to offer educating or support, such as staff members such as clinical psychiatrists, therapists, other support staff, cleaners and volunteers.

Staff working in wraparound childcare, such as childcare providers, are also being prioritised for asymptomatic testing through local community testing programmes - more information will be provided to childcare providers in the coming weeks.

The asymptomatic testing programme will replace the current testing in secondary schools for those with symptoms. Anyone with symptoms (even if they recently had a negative LFD test result) should still arrange a PCR test to confirm or disprove the presence of COVID and get a PCR test as soon as possible.

System of controls - response to any infection

10. Promote and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process

The NHS Test and Trace service will help to manage the risk of the virus re-emerging as restrictions on everyday life are eased.

Anyone contacted by NHS Test and Trace and told to self-isolate has a legal obligation to do so. Failure to do so may result in a fine. Further fines can be issued for repeat offences. More information can be found on NHS Test and Trace. Fines. Facts.

Staff members, parents and carers will need:

- book a test if they or their child has symptoms - the main symptoms are: a high temperature
- a new continuous cough
- a loss or change to sense of smell or taste
- to self-isolate immediately and not come to your setting if:
- they develop symptoms
- they have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)
- anyone in their household or support or children bubble develop symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- they are required to do so by mainstream testing hubbed into certain other counties
- they have been advised to isolate by NHS test and trace or the PHE local health protection team
- they have been identified as a close contact with a PHE local protection team for coronavirus (COVID-19) or based by NHS test and trace

Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) for symptomatic testing

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test to see if they have the virus. Tests are free of charge and can be booked online or by calling 119 for those without access to the internet.

Essential workers, which includes those involved in education or childcare, have priority access to testing. All children and young people can be tested if they have symptoms of COVID-19 and their parents and carers can be tested if they need to be mapped by their parents or carers if caring during teaching.

Use of the NHS COVID app

Please refer to the guidance on the use of the app in schools and further education colleges for more information. The app is available to download for anyone aged 16 and over.

Test and Trace support payments

Test and Trace support payments are available to work from home may lose income as a result. These individuals may be entitled to a Test and Trace support payment of £500, payable as a lump sum from local authorities.

To be eligible for a Test and Trace support payment, the individual must be living in England, meet the eligibility criteria and be formally advised to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, who will provide them with an NHS Test and Trace Account ID.

More information about assistance for a Test and Trace Support Payment is available.

11. Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the setting community

You must take swift action when you become aware that someone who has attended has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19).

If they test positive, NHS Test and Trace will speak directly to those they have been in contact with. This may mean that some of your children and staff members will be asked to self-isolate. Those who are not identified as a close contact do not need to self-isolate. Staff members can continue to go to work if they are able to do so, and children can continue to attend school.

Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the pupil or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops coronavirus symptoms or tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). This is because it is unlikely that such a contact will be a close contact of a close contact. Parents should be asked to self-isolate dexcophrin symptoms themselves within the 10 days from the day after the contact with the individual who tested positive. Further information is available at: Households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

You should not request evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or young people back to your school after a period self-isolation.

If a child, young person or staff member develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms and they have been in your setting in the days prior to testing, if they were unwell, they should not return until they have recovered.

12. Contain any outbreak by following PHE local health protection team advice

If you have 2 or more confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where coronavirus (COVID-19) is suspected, you may have an outbreak.

You should work with your local health protection team who will be able to advise if additional measures need to be put in place. Your local health protection team will also lead a proportionate or other initiation outbreak of home or a proportionate response. This could be the whole site or bubble.

If you are implementing the additional measures in this guidance, addressing any issues identified in your risk assessment, the Health Protection Unit, while other measures not generally be necessary. You should not consider closing except on the advice of health protection teams.

Safety measures for activities in out-of-school settings

Sports provision

Sports and exercise should only be offered to vulnerable children and young people, and children of critical workers. From 8 March, all children will be able to access indoor and outdoor sports provision, where it is being used for the purposes of education or training, or for the purpose of providing support to children in receipt of medical assessment or physical or medical care, or to attend a support group or other limited purposes. Vulnerable children will be able to access this provision only if their parents are working.

From 29 March, as set out in the COVID-19 Recovery - Series 2021 publication, all children and young people will be able to access outdoor sports provision, subject to the provisions of the wider lifting plan. Outdoor provision will be able to include provision with tenant. See also our general guidance on school settings.

Care should be taken to maintain social distancing in sports settings as people breathe more heavily when exercising. Sports should be organised in such a way that participants can be kept in small groups and remain as stable as it can, maximising natural ventilation where possible, ensuring that there is good ventilation in indoor sports facilities (where possible), observing hygiene practices, and paying scrupulous attention to cleaning and hygiene.

Where you are considering team sports you should only engage in those sports where national governing bodies have developed guidance under the principles of the government's sector guidance for sport and leisure. Sports governing bodies have an overall sports on the list available at sportscotland sports guidance for safe participation including team sport, contact sport and organised sport events. Competition between different schools should not take place.

Note that the complete of sportscotland sport and leisure facilities guidance for sports provision in sports activities. Consideration should also be taken to:

- Sport England
- Association for Physical Education
- Youth Sport Trust

Music, dance and drama provision

Singing, music, dance and drama can be a safe and useful activities for supporting children's well-being and development, including their social development.

Practitioners in private nurseries can take place, following the protective measures in this guidance, and additional following the government guidance for performing Series. However, there may be an additional risk of infection in environments where people are in close proximity, breathing heavily and in some cases, shouting or singing, in high-risk indoor settings. Additional risk assessments should be undertaken, with the volume and, in particular, with the combined numbers of individuals within a confined space. This is particularly important for singing and shouting.

When planning this provision, you should therefore consider additional safety measures, such as increasing the distance between people, or, if this is not reasonably practicable, to ensure for example, air flow mechanisms are in place and operating properly.

Wind instruments where possible or encourage children to stay outside. If possible, do not share instruments. If they are shared, they should be cleaned between uses.

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- limit the number of children to maintain social distancing and increase space ventilation.
- improve ventilation whenever possible, through the use of mechanical systems or opening windows and doors
- limit the length of activity as far as possible, considering the need for breaks

Providers should not host performances with an audience for the duration of the national lockdown.

Educational visits and trips

We advise against educational visits and trips at this time. This guidance will be kept under review.

Use of shared equipment

Equipment and resources are integral to many different out-of-school activities. For frequently used resources, such as pens and pencils, we recommend that staff, children and young people should have their own. Classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within groups.

Equipment that is shared between groups, such as sports or art equipment, should either be:

- cleaned frequently and in between use by different groups
- rotated to allow it to be left unused for 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different groups

Outdoor playground equipment should be cleaned more frequently than usual, and where possible, between use by different groups of children.

Children and young people should only bring essential items into your setting. Bags should be allowed.

Children, young people and staff need not be forbidden to take books and other shared resources home, although unnecessary sharing should be avoided. The same rules on cleaning and rotation should apply to these resources.

Managing toilet use

When managing toilet use you should:

- consider how to limit the number of children using the toilet at any one time
- encourage children to wash their hands thoroughly, with soap and water for 20 seconds, after using the toilet
- consider allocating groups their own toilet blocks, but only if the site allows it

Toilets should be cleaned thoroughly using detergent and bleach. The frequency of cleaning required will depend on usage, however we expect toilet facilities to be cleaned at least twice a day, and in between use by different groups.

The guidance on cleaning of non-healthcare settings outside the home provides general advice about the cleaning of facilities, as well as advice for the cleaning of facilities if they have been used by someone suspected of having, or confirmed to have coronavirus (COVID-19).

Communicating with staff and parents or carers

Please ensure you read and implement the guidance on working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19). Talk to staff about your safety measures and discuss whether specific training would be helpful. You should also arrange regular opportunities to get feedback from staff on these safety measures.

If you employ cleaning staff, you should tell them about the extra cleaning requirements and agree additional hours to allow for this.

The actions for schools during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak includes information for staff that you may be able to apply to your own setting.

When communicating with parents and carers about safety measures, you should:

- make clear to parents and carers which children are eligible to attend for which purposes - see who can attend your out-of-school setting
- advise parents and carers that they should be limiting their use of multiple out-of-school settings, and should as far as possible only be sending their children to one out-of-school setting, in addition to school, in order to minimise mixing
- encourage parents and carers to avoid public transport to get to your setting - where possible, encourage them to have their child walk or cycle to the setting, or have them dropped off by a member of their household in a private car
- ensure they know the process for pick-up and drop-offs, for example, which entrance to use or limiting drop off and pick up to one parent or carer per family and staggering timings

Try to avoid the need for parents and carers to wait if possible, but where they have to, consider whether distancing markings can be used and make clear they cannot gather at entrance gates or doors.

Safeguarding and wellbeing

Safeguarding and child protection

The coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak may have caused significant mental health or wellbeing difficulties for some children and they may be at increased risk of harm or abuse. Due to the current circumstances, vulnerable children may be particularly isolated, meaning that the family, community and professional networks they usually rely on may be unavailable or hard to access.

It is important that you and your staff are aware of safeguarding issues and the signs to look out for. Further information is available in the guidance for keeping children safe during community activities, after-school clubs and tuition.

Supporting children and young people's wellbeing

You and your staff may also need to consider how to support:

- children and young people who have found the long period at home hard to manage
- those who have developed anxieties relating to the coronavirus (COVID-19)

Some children may have experienced bereavements in their family or wider circle of friends, or may have increased or new caring responsibilities. As part of your provision, you may wish to provide:

- opportunities for children to talk about their experiences of the past few months
- opportunities for conversations with trusted adults
- lessons on relevant topics, for example, mental wellbeing and staying safe

Equality

It is important that you create spaces, services and opportunities that enable everyone to engage equally. This may require adjustments to ensure that everyone benefits fairly. Your equality and diversity policy should be considered at all times, especially when making decisions and judgements related to the impact on individuals and groups with different protected characteristics.

When applying this guidance, consider the particular needs of different groups of workers and individuals. You should be aware that some parents and carers may look to holiday clubs and out-of-school settings to offer respite childcare for children with special educational needs or with an education, health and care plan (EHCP). Parents or carers of disabled children may continue to access respite care to support them in caring for their disabled child. Further information on this is available in the guidance for children's social care services.

Providers are permitted to open for disabled children[footnote 1] who are accessing these services as a local authority funded short break or as respite care, and ensuring that provision is available and accessible to these children, as far as possible, should remain a priority in these current circumstances.

Local authorities will need to work with their short breaks/ respite care provider base to ensure children can attend services (and to ensure that these can operate during the school holidays, as this can be a key pressure point for families with caring responsibilities). For example, some local authorities have made more use of direct payments beyond their usual criteria.

It is against the law to discriminate, directly or indirectly, against anyone in employment and in the provision of services because of a protected characteristic, such as age, sex, race or disability.

Employers and organisations (voluntary or otherwise) also have additional responsibilities towards disabled individuals and those who are new or expectant mothers.

There is evidence that black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) individuals may be more severely affected by coronavirus (COVID-19). You should be especially sensitive to the needs and worries of BAME children and young people, parents and carers, and staff. Interventions in the work setting to manage risk should be carefully and appropriately communicated.

Annex A: resources to help children learn about coronavirus and how to keep themselves and others safe

The following links may be helpful in supporting the children that attend your setting to learn about coronavirus (COVID-19) and promote safety measures:

e-Bug has produced a series of helpful coronavirus (COVID-19) posters:

- Horrid hands
- Super sneezes
- Hand hygiene
- Respiratory hygiene
- Microbe mania
- Busy Bees handwashing song

Other resources you may find useful are:

- Professional association for children and early years (PACEY): supporting children in your setting
- Dr Dog explains coronavirus
- Bright Horizons: Talking to Children about COVID-19 (novel coronavirus)

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1. If a child meets the definition of a disabled child within the meaning of s.17(11) of the Children Act 1989, the local authority must provide short break services to the individuals who provide care for such children under paragraph 6 of Schedule 2 of the Children Act 1989. If a child with SEND does not meet the s.17(11) definition, the local authority can carry out an assessment of the child's needs and offer short break services if appropriate under s.17 (1). ↩

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Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance and support

Brexit

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