



Department  
for Education

# **Additional actions for childminders during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic**

**January 2022**

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## Summary

This guidance contains information on childminding when:

- someone who lives with you is self-isolating because they have symptoms of COVID-19, has tested positive or are a close contact
- you cannot childmind in your home<sup>1</sup> and the alternative options you may wish to consider

## Who this guidance is for

This guidance is for all childminders registered with Ofsted or a childminding agency.

## When someone who lives with you has COVID-19 symptoms or has tested positive

You cannot childmind in your home when someone living there has any of the main symptoms of COVID-19, or a positive test. You cannot childmind children in your home until everyone living with you who has symptoms, or a positive test, has finished self-isolating.

You should follow the guidance [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection](#).

## When someone who lives with you is self-isolating as a close contact

You can continue to childmind in your home if the person self-isolating is a [close-contact](#) and are not [exempt from self-isolation](#) and all the following apply:

- the person self-isolating does not have any of the main symptoms of COVID-19 or a positive test
- the person self-isolating does not have any contact with the children being cared for in the setting - for example, the person self-isolating must use a separate bathroom where possible. If the person self-isolating has to use a shared bathroom or other communal areas, these must be thoroughly cleaned after every use

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<sup>1</sup> This also applies to childminders who work at a registered domestic premises<sup>2</sup> other than their home and the person self-isolating is living at the address the childminder is registered.

- you follow [the additional actions to take when someone you live with is self-isolating](#) in [Annex A](#) of this guidance

## **Why children can attend the setting when they are living with a positive case, but not when there is a positive case living in the childminder's home**

It is important that we all take steps to reduce the spread of COVID-19 infection in the community to save lives and protect the NHS. When someone in a childminder's household has any of the main symptoms of COVID-19, or a positive test, the childminder cannot care for children in their home. This is because there is a higher risk of transmission to those attending the provision for childcare as they are in close proximity of the case and for extended periods of time.

The same principle applies to children (and adults) who must stay at home and not receive visitors into the home when they test positive or have symptoms. They can pass the infection to others, even if they have mild symptoms or no symptoms at all, which is why they must stay at home.

The success of the UK's vaccine programme has allowed the government to ease self-isolation rules for fully vaccinated people and those aged under 18 years and 6 months. This enables both eligible childminders and children - when they are exempt from self-isolation - to leave their homes and visit other homes when someone they live with is self-isolating.

## **Alternative childminding options when you cannot childmind at home**

You may wish to consider the following options, to continue childminding as long as you are not personally required to [self-isolate](#).

You should discuss and agree any option you might choose with parents and carers well in advance of such an event and:

- check you have adequate public liability insurance for the temporary change
- follow the [additional actions to take when someone you live with is self-isolating](#) in [Annex A](#) of this guidance

## Options

### A. Another registered domestic premises

If you want to work from another registered domestic premises<sup>2</sup>, such as another childminder's home, you should tell Ofsted or let your Childminder Agency (CMA) know before you start. To notify Ofsted, please contact [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) from an email address that is known to them. You should also notify Ofsted or your CMA if you intend to care for a child at the child's own home.

You do not need to wait for an updated certificate to start working, but you must be able to demonstrate to parents or carers that you are registered with Ofsted and awaiting a new certificate. More information about childminder registration is available in [Ofsted's registration](#).

### B. Unregistered domestic premises

If you want to work from another domestic premises which is not already registered, such as a relative's home, you should tell Ofsted or let your CMA know before you start (see Option A for more information about notifying Ofsted).

This should only be considered if a longer-term option is required because any new people aged 16 or over who live and work on the premises where childminding will take place will have to be suitability checked, which includes the requirement to apply for a DBS certificate for each new person, and at cost to the childminder. You can tell Ofsted about new people [using their online service](#). If you are registered with a CMA, contact them for more information.

### C. Non-domestic premises

You can childmind from non-domestic premises for up to 50% of your time. If you are registered with Ofsted, you must [complete an application form](#) and be approved before starting. If you are registered with a CMA, contact them for more information.

### D. Public places

You can continue to childmind if, for example, you were to collect children from school and take them to their parent or carer without taking them into your home. This could include an activity along the way, such as a visit to the park.

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<sup>2</sup> Domestic premises refers to any premises which are used wholly or mainly as a private dwelling.

## E. Outbuildings and gardens

If you are one of the very small number of childminders who have a **suitable** outbuilding/extension and garden within the boundary of your registered address, you may be able to childmind if you meet all the following requirements:

- the outbuilding/extension:
  - has its own entrance/exit and you don't have to enter your home to access it
  - doesn't have direct access to the main house
  - is not being used by the person who is self-isolating
- you can continue to deliver the statutory requirements of the [early years foundation stage framework](#) including
  - the environment being safe and suitable for the children and does not compromise safeguarding, their welfare or their individual needs
  - there is access to a toilet and washing facilities and (where appropriate) adequate sleeping facilities - all of which are separate to those being used by the person self-isolating
- you discuss your arrangements with Ofsted before you start
- you follow the [additional actions to take when someone you live with is self-isolating](#) in [Annex A](#) of this guidance

# Annex A

## Additional actions to take when someone you live with is self-isolating

1. You should make every effort to notify parents and carers of the children attending the setting, and any assistants, about the self-isolation, as soon as reasonably possible and maintain open communication with them throughout the period of self-isolation.

2. You must comply with health and safety law by reviewing your risk assessment. The risk assessment must demonstrate:

- that the provision of childcare in your setting is safe,
- how it aligns with the [control measures](#) and
- how you will put into place any additional but proportionate measures

3. You should have arrangements in place to monitor whether the measures you have put in place are:

- effective
- working as planned
- reviewed frequently
- updated appropriately (for example when any issues are identified, or when there are changes in public health advice)

4. You must report positive cases to Ofsted or your childminding agency. Guidance is available in [actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

5. Further guidance is available:

- in the section on risk assessments in [actions for early years and childcare providers during the covid-19 pandemic](#)
- [COVID-19: cleaning in non-healthcare settings outside the home](#)
- [health and safety: responsibilities and duties](#)



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