Part of
Education and childcare during coronavirus

Department
for Education

Guidance

What parents and carers need to know about nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges until August 2020

Updated 1 July 2020

Contents
Opening nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges to more pupils
Main changes to previous guidance
Steps nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges are taking to make sure they are safe
Special schools
Nurseries and childminders
Attendance
Summer provision
Transport
Transport for students
Uniform
School meals
What pupils will be taught
Exams
Resources and support

This guidance applies to the 2020 summer term. It is for parents and carers of children and young people at:

- registered nurseries and childminders, pre-schools, playgroups and maintained nursery schools
- primary and secondary schools including independent schools, maintained schools, academy trusts, free schools and special schools
- colleges[1]

Main changes to previous guidance

On 26 June, we:

- added a new section on summer provision
- added a new section on school uniform
- updated content on school meals including the Covid Summer Food Fund
- added information on a package of support worth £1 billion to support pupils to catch up

On 1 July, we:

- 16 to 19 learners in the first year of a 2-year study programme

Colleges and schools continue to offer provision for children who are vulnerable and to children of critical workers in every year group.

Flexibility for primary schools to welcome back additional children this term

From 1 June, primary schools have the capacity to welcome more children back. A group could be more than 15, before the summer holiday, if this is because take-up amongst eligible children is lower than expected, there is additional capacity in the school or local area to accommodate more children, or if it is necessary to bring in additional children to welcome back additional children who have not been able to have the capacity to do so.

Your school will continue to be able to welcome back additional children. It will be up to individual schools to decide which children to invite back.

If you have a child in nursery, reception, year 1 or year 6 and have not got a place in school for June, you should contact your school to see if there is now capacity for your child back this term. If not, the school should be able to offer dates for another year.

Vulnerable children and young people

Vulnerable children and young people are a priority group and should attend their school, where it is safe and practical to do so. Vulnerable children and young people include those in care, those who are assessment for children with an education, health and care plan (EHCP), and those who are in need, including those with an ongoing safeguarding concern. This is so that they can gain the educational and wellbeing benefits of schooling.

Vulnerable children and young people are those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including those who are in the process of being formally looked after, a child in need or a child protection plan, or are a looked after child
- have an EHCP, plan and is determined, following a risk assessment, that their needs can be met safely and flexibly in a school or other educational setting
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by their nursery, childminder, school or college, local authority (including children's social care services) or other multi-agency partners, including those who are at risk of being in the category of children who are in the school attending early years, school or college except for protective and helpful at the time. We might include children and young people on the edge of receiving social care services, those who are being 'managed' by the Youth Offending Team (YOT) or unemployed, education or training 'NEETs', those who are at risk of being excluded from their school, those who are at risk of being victims of or from other disadvantages because of mental health and physical or sensory disabilities

The term 'year groups' in this guidance refers to children under 5 eligible for free early years entitlements and children and young people aged 5 to 16 (or aged 5 to 25 for children and young people with an EHC plan).

Critical workers

Children in any year group will at least one parent or carer who is listed as a critical worker can attend school.

You may be asked for evidence that you are a critical worker, such as a work ID badge or payslip.

Steps nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges are taking to make sure they are safe for pupils

We have worked closely with Public Health England (PHE) to develop guidance on implementing protective measures which nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges should have in place. Each school, college, childcare provider and local authority will update about the risk of transmission of infection is significantly reduced.

These controls are:

- avoiding contact with people with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms
- frequent hand cleaning and good hygiene practices
- regular cleaning
- minimising contact and mixing

We know that, with older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. In deciding to open more widely, we have taken into account that PHE has set out that:

Nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges should ensure that they can implement keeping children and staff in small consistent groups and keeping groups away from each other

Ensuring sufficient distance between pupils is likely to mean secondary school classes cannot be accommodated. This is not a change to the guidance on social distancing in circumstances (for example, a larger group could be taught in a larger space where social distancing can be maintained and mixing is minimised).

Colleges should plan to keep students in groups that are as small as possible and that do not mix with other students.

If you are worried about your children returning to school, speak to the school about your concerns and the support available.

Actions nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges will take if there is a suspected case of coronavirus (COVID-19)

If a child, young person or staff member has symptoms compatible with coronavirus (COVID-19), they should not come into school or college. Instead, they should follow the PHE guidance on isolating and testing their nursery, childminder, school or college will be sent home and told they and their households must follow the guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

Anyone with symptoms should not go to school. Then, follow household members' instructions and get a test.

Everyone has access to free NHS testing. If people are in one of the priority groups, they should follow the guidance on how to arrange to have a test, or contact NHS 119 as requested if they do not have internet access.

If your child tests positive you should inform their nursery, childminder, school or college. Your child should then follow the guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection and your child must self-isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have a temperature and have been feeling well for 48 hours. If your child has received a cough or anosmia (not can't for sense) assess once the infection has cleared. Tells parent/carer. From the day when they first became ill. If they still have a high temperature or feel unwell after 7 days, they should continue to self-isolate until they do.

Your nursery, childminder, school or college will then follow the local authority if your child tests and no longer has symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can return to school. Their household can also end self-isolation. If a child, young person or member of staff has been in close contact with other people, as a result.

Schools should not request evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before permitting children or welcoming their back after a period of self-isolation.

Actions nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges will take if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19)

The NHS Test and Trace service will contact anyone that tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) and those who have been in close contact with them to ask them to self-isolate.

Local Public Health England teams and contact tracers will contact the nursery, childminder, school or college to ask for information about those who have tested positive (COVID-19). They will carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm the identity of those that were in contact with the person during the period that they were infectious and should be asked to self-isolate.

In most cases, this will be the child or member of staff's immediate class or group who have been in close contact with them if they were said to have been in close contact with a person with the coronavirus (COVID-19).

In some cases, a larger number of other children or young people may be asked to self-isolate or home, as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole class, year group or even school. This will be based on the advice we receive from our local Public Health England and Health Protection Team and their assessment of infection prevention and control, which will be based on the specific circumstances of the whole nursery, childminder, school or college will not generally be necessary.

Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless they develop symptoms or fall member who is self-isolating. Their subsequently develop symptoms, if someone in a class or group that has been asked to self-isolate tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), then the other members of their household follow the guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection. They should get a test, and:

- if the test delivers a negative result, they must remain in isolation for the remainder of the 14 day isolation period. This is because they could still develop the coronavirus (COVID-19) disease within this period
- if the test results positive, they should inform their setting immediately, and remain isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms (which could mean the end of their household's isolation period). If they still have a high temperature or feel unwell after 7 days, they should continue to self-isolate until they do.

Your nursery, childminder, school or college will then follow the guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection

Special schools

From 1 June, we have asked special schools and hospital schools to work towards a phased return of more children, in line with capacity, without 2 metres and social distancing groups and informed by risk assessments.

From 15 June, we have also asked specialist post-16 institutions to work towards a phased return of more students, in line with capacity and informed by risk assessments of pupils and students.

Read the guidance for special schools, specialist post-16 institutions and hospitals to find out how they are supporting children and young people with SEND during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Nurseries and childminders

We have asked nurseries and childminders to open for children of all ages.

Childcare fees and charges

We expect nurseries to comply with the law and take a reasonable and proportionate approach to charging parents. Parents should be considered in particular, and to communicate arrangements clearly with them.

You can find more information and guidance on parent complaints during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, you can report it to the Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA) using their online form.

30 hours free childcare and/or tax-free childcare

If you are temporarily not meeting the minimum income requirement for 30 hours free childcare or tax-free childcare because of a reduction in your earnings, you should still be able to access and apply. Your entitlement will be paid retrospectively if your circumstances change and you are eligible.

You should continue to apply or re-confirm if you have a childcare account already. You will be able to use your funds to pay for a childcare provider.

Subject to parliamentary approval of a temporary amendment to the 30 hours free childcare and tax-free childcare regulations, parents will be able to continue to access the maximum income threshold (£100,000 per year), due to increased income as a result of furlough payments, for a period of 3 months after furlough ends, or for the current 2020 to 2021 tax year (up to a cost of £100,000).

We have previously asked local authorities to use their discretion to take the relaxing dates on 30 hours where critical workers and parents of vulnerable children were eligible and expecting to take up a 30 hours childcare place between 1 April 2020 and 31 August 2020. We have now extended this until 31 March 2021. We have asked them to take up their place in the summer term.

Previously, only the children of critical workers and children who are vulnerable were able to access childcare. We have now extended the entitlement to all 2 year olds who are eligible and expecting to take up a 30 hours childcare place between 1 April 2020 and 31 August 2020. We have now extended this until 31 March 2021. We have asked them to take up their place in the summer term.

This allowed local authorities to use their discretion to take the relaxing dates on 30 hours where critical workers and parents of vulnerable children were eligible and expecting to take up a 30 hours childcare place between 1 April 2020 and 31 August 2020. We have now extended this until 31 March 2021. We have asked them to take up their place in the summer term. Previously, only the children of critical workers and children who are vulnerable were able to access childcare. We have now extended the entitlement to all 2 year olds who are eligible and expecting to take up a 30 hours childcare place between 1 April 2020 and 31 August 2020. We have now extended this until 31 March 2021. We have asked them to take up their place in the summer term. This allowed local authorities to use their discretion to take the relaxing dates on 30 hours where critical workers and parents of vulnerable children were eligible and expecting to take up a 30 hours childcare place between 1 April 2020 and 31 August 2020. We have now extended this until 31 March 2021. We have asked them to take up their place in the summer term.

This continue to apply for your 30 hours entitlement even if you are not currently accessing childcare.

Read the guidance on further childcare and 30 hours free childcare during coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak for more information.

Attendance

We strongly encourage children and young people who are in the eligible year groups to attend, unless they are self-isolating or there are other reasons for absence in line with the guidance on school absence.

You should notify your child's school or college as normal if your child is unable to attend or that staff can expect your child to discuss with you.

Parents will not be penalised for non-attendance at this time.

If you are a parent of a vulnerable child and do not want them to attend school, speak to your school about your concerns.

If you are concerned about the risk of your child contracting coronavirus (COVID-19) when attending, speak to your nursery, childminder, school or college about the measures they are putting in place to reduce the risks of transmission for all children and staff.

Opening hours

We expect nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges to be open for their normal hours and if possible, continue with breakfast club and after school provision.

Breakfast / after school clubs

School-based expanded care providers, such as breakfast and after school clubs, can operate for children in eligible year groups or providing groups. They are:

- operating on the same premises as the school or early years provision those children are attending
- only caring for children of that school or early years provision and their siblings

Provisions should follow the same protective measures being taken by nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges during the day, such as keeping children in the same groups and ensuring they are kept 2 metres apart.

If wraparound providers are unable to implement the same protective measures they should only offer provision to groups. In particular, they should not mix children from different cohorts social distanced and in a group of no more than 6, including staff members, in line with guidance on social distancing.

Summer provision

Providers of nurseries, schools, summer clubs, tuition and other out-of-school activities will be able to open for summer provision, including:

Adjustments to the current restrictions on these providers will be made as part of step 3 of the government's roadmap (linked to step 2). Providers who open should follow the guidance on protective measures for:

- community activities
- holiday or after-school clubs
- camps
- other out-of-school settings

Providers that open before 4 July should only offer outdoor provision. In doing so, providers should ensure they minimise social distancing and mixing between groups. Providers may also open from 4 July, including overnight or residential provision.

Transport

Local authorities continues to be under a statutory duty to provide home to school transport for eligible children that are able to attend school.

Colleges and schools also have the capacity to support transport costs where necessary for 16 to 19 year olds.

You are encouraged to walk or cycle where possible and avoid public transport wherever possible. If you do need to travel by car, you should consider using public transport, see guidance for safer travel guidance for passengers.

You should do all you can to help make sure you and others can travel safely. This can be done through:

- not leaving home if anyone in your household has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- avoiding travelling on public transport, particularly at peak times
- maintaining 2 metres distance, where possible, from other who are not in your household
- ensuring good respiratory hygiene by using the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- avoiding touching your face
- washing your hands thoroughly before and after travelling
- wearing a face covering if you need to use public transport

School transport provided by local authorities, academy trusts or schools for the children who are eligible to travel will be able to continue to operate.

Children are not required to wear face coverings on school transport, but they can wear one if they wish. School transport is provided specifically for the purpose of ensuring that children can attend school and it is limited to children travelling to school, and children who are eligible for free school meals. Children will be travelling in groups of the same bubble as members of their pupils. The transport is arranged in advance and is for a planned number of children which means demand for services can be managed in a way that is not possible for other services. This means that it is possible to keep to social distance, where possible, from other children not in the same bubble where possible. School transport often carries the same children on a regular basis, which may reduce the risk of transmission.

When deciding whether children should wear a face covering on school transport, it is important that parents consider:

- children and staff are not expected to wear face coverings in school
- it's important that those using face coverings are able to do so properly – guidance on how to wear and make a cloth face covering is available
- children under 3 years old should not wear face coverings
- children under 11 are not expected to wear face coverings on public transport

Uniform

There is no need for anything other than normal personal hygiene and washing of clothes following a day in school. Children do not need to be cleaned any more often or differently than usual.

School meals

Schools should provide meal options for all children attending school. Pupils should be able to collect their food and drink and pupils who meet the eligibility criteria receive free school meals eligibility criteria.

If your child usually receives free school meals and is not attending school, then the school should provide you with an alternative.

At school kitchens, reopen, we expect schools to make food parcels available for collection or delivery for those children that are eligible for free school meals and are staying at home. Where schools are able to provide meals or food parcels for children who are at home, they can continue to offer vouchers for children of eligible pupils.

We know due to coronavirus (COVID-19) families will have increased pressures on their finances. We have set up a new Covid Summer Food Fund to help children over the coming months. That's why we are putting in place the new Covid Summer Food Fund which will enable children who are eligible for free school meals to claim vouchers for food covered, summer holidays.

You can still apply for free school meals. Contact your local authority who will verify your eligibility.

Meals in further education colleges

We expect colleges to continue to support students who are eligible for and usually receive free meals in colleges. This includes students who are receiving bursary funds and may be continuing to attend the college or are studying remotely due to coronavirus (COVID-19) related reasons.

What pupils will be taught

Schools continue to be best placed to make decisions about how to support and educate all their pupils during the school year, based on the local context and capacity.

Where year groups are returning to school, we would expect school leaders and teachers to:

- consider their pupils' mental health and wellbeing and identify pupil which may need additional support from their teachers
- assess where pupils are in their learning and gaps what adjustments may be needed to the school curriculum over the coming weeks
- consider how to support those who are vulnerable or of high needs groups, including disadvantaged pupils, and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and pupils with EHCP
- consider how to also add resilient their primary and secondary schools to work together to support their upcoming transition to year groups
- consider how to bring an additional content into to support those in years 10 and 12 and the first year 9 to 10 focus, and to ensure that they have the support they need to make the transition to the next stage of their education

Schools and colleges should continue to support pupils attending school as well as those remaining at home, making use of the available remote learning resources.

No school will be penalised if they are unable to offer a broad and balanced curriculum for their pupils during this period.

Exams

Primary assessments, including SATs, and exams including GCSEs, AS levels and A levels, have been cancelled this year.

Students taking GCSEs, AS and A levels will receive calculated grades this summer. Read more about how GCSEs, AS and A levels will be awarded in summer 2020.

For students taking other qualifications instead of or alongside GCSEs and levels, awarding organisations will also be providing calculated grades.

There will be some qualifications where this is not possible, such as those that need to demonstrate a more practical set of skills. These assessments will be delivered as soon as possible so that students can receive a full result this summer.

Where it is not possible to adapt the assessments, these will be delayed. Ofqual – the qualifications regulator – is working with the awarding bodies who provide the qualifications to make sure students are not disadvantaged.

We recognise that students who are studying GCSE, A levels or equivalent courses, but are not due to take exams until 2021, will have experienced disruption to their education this year. We are working with Ofqual and the exam boards to develop our approach to next year's exams in light of this.

Resources and support

We have published a list of online educational resources to help children to learn at home. We have also published guidance on supporting your child's education during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Further support includes:

- a list of online education resources which have been identified by some of the country's leading educational experts to help pupils to learn at home
- a list of online resources for SEND pupils and their families
- resources from Ofsted, including its guidance, to support children and their teachers educating their pupils remotely during the coronavirus pandemic
- the Ofsted inspection of home education and other providers of learning while

Minds. Read further guidance on how to help children 2 to 4 to learn at home during coronavirus (COVID-19).

Every pupil in the country has experienced unprecedented disruption to their education as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19). That is why the government has announced a package worth £1billion to support pupils to catch up. Next academic year, all state-funded primary and secondary schools in England will receive additional funding which they can use to support pupils to catch up.

They can choose to spend this on effective interventions such as:

- extra teaching time
- small group tuition
- holiday clubs

In addition, the government will be launching a national tutoring programme in autumn 2020, to provide extra support for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, who will be amongst those hardest hit by the disruption to education.

Keeping your child safe online

With children spending more time online to do schoolwork and other activities, there could be an additional risk in relation to online safety.

It is important that you talk to your children about online safety, show an interest in what they are doing online, including knowing the sites they will be accessing and who your child is interacting with online. In talking to your children, you can discuss age-appropriate 'ground rules' such as how much time they spend online doing different things, what games and apps are appropriate to use and what your children like and dislike about being online.

You should also consider setting up and reviewing age-appropriate parental controls. Setting parental controls can be a quick and effective tool to help protect children online.

Here are some useful links to help you keep your children safe online:

- government guidance on keeping children safe from online harms such as child sexual exploitation, cyberbullying and harmful content
- government guidance on staying safe online including parental controls, fact-checking information, communicating with family and friends while social distancing is in place and taking regular breaks from the screen
- Thinkuknow is the education programme from the National Crime Agency (NCA) proving age-appropriate resources for children and support for parents
- Parent Info is a collaboration between Parentzone and the NCA providing support and guidance for parents from leading experts and organisations
- Childnet provides a tool kit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support
- Internet Matters provides age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls on a range of devices and a host of practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
- LGfL provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including 6 top tips to keep primary aged children safe online
- Net Aware provides support for parents and carers from the NSPCC and O2, providing a guide to social networks, apps and games
- Let's Talk About It provides support for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation
- UK Safer Internet Centre provides tips, advice, guides and resources to help keep children safe online, including parental controls offered by home internet providers and safety tools on social networks and other online services

Age-appropriate practical support for children on reporting concerns is available from:

- Childline – for general support
- UK Safer Internet Centre - to report and remove harmful online content
- CEOP - for advice on making a report about online abuse

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1. For the purposes of this guidance 'colleges' means publicly funded sixth form and further education colleges, independent training providers and special post-16 institutions. ↩

Is this page useful? Yes No Is there anything wrong with this page?

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance and support

The UK has left the EU

Transition period: get ready for 2021

Services and information

Benefits
Births, deaths, marriages and care
Business and self-employed
Childcare and parenting
Citizenship and living in the UK
Crime, justice and the law
Disabled people
Driving and transport
Education and learning
Employing people
Environment and countryside
Housing and local services
Money and tax
Passports, travel and living abroad
Visas and immigration
Working, jobs and pensions

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