Guidance

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

Updated 27 September 2021

Main changes to previous guidance

This guidance has been updated to follow:

- updated section on local restrictions tiers with information on the tiers in Greater Manchester and Lancashire
- updated section on advice and support for school settings with information on January 2021 return to school

About this guidance

Providers who run community activities, holiday clubs, breakfast or after-school clubs, and other out-of-school settings for children should follow the guidance in this document to ensure they can operate safely and take the protective measures set out by government in this guidance.

We recognise the important role these providers play in supporting working families, giving children the opportunity to socialise with others, and providing a range of activities. We want to ensure that as many of these activities can restart as possible, while ensuring the safety of children, their working parents and carers.

We are aware that some providers have reopened and put safety measures in place. This document sets out national guidance to support them and advice on how to do this. It also sets out the steps providers can take to ensure they can continue to operate safely if coronavirus (COVID-19) presents any risks to their staff or children.

Similarly, supervised activities, training and education for children can continue to operate if they can do so safely. For example, in the case of the 4 Cities of Animal, parents and carers can continue to access childcare, training and education, including supervised activities for after-school settings where this is:

- provision specified in an education, health and care plan
- necessary for children to receive education, training or a medical assessment or undertake education or training
- provided to a vulnerable child or a child of a key worker or a vulnerable child or a child of a key worker
- being used by home-educating parents as part of exercising arrangements for home education, including home-schooling
- for the purpose of enabling parents or carers to undertake paid work, meeting the requirements for an education, training, or exams and assessments
- provided to children who are looked after by a local authority or are looked for certain kind of reason. The Ofsted inspection framework for children's homes, children's social care and adoption services provides information on how we will inspect children's homes.

Additionally, in some tier 4 areas, the education and childcare contingency framework has been implemented in order to minimise the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in these areas, while keeping children and young people in education and childcare. This framework includes a set of principles and a set of measures that should be taken in these areas. Further information on the implementation guidance setting out the actions providers should take.

Providers should also implement the government's guidance on return to January 2021, which outlines their vaccination priority with an emphasis on the importance of ensuring that their staff and children return to out-of-school settings in a safe way. Providers should also undertake additional coronavirus (COVID-19) testing and provide a larger range of activities to support children and young people to return to education for all.

Scientific advice suggests that there is a moderate to high degree of confidence that vaccination will significantly reduce transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) and will significantly reduce the risk of hospitalisation. However, it remains important that protective measures as outlined in this guidance are put in place to keep children and staff members safe.

For older children, there is not enough evidence yet to determine whether vaccination will reduce transmission in the same way as for adults, but it is highly unlikely that it will not. Vaccination will, in any case, reduce the risk of sicker children are likely to attend, providers should be especially mindful of the need to take all reasonable measures and precautions to minimise risk in place the protective measures set out in this guidance.

We have also released an accompanying guidance for parents and carers. It supports them to understand how they can support their children back into the venue, if they choose to send their children to out-of-school settings.

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for organisations or individuals who provide community activities, holiday clubs, or after-school clubs, and other out-of-school childcare (these are were under the age of 8 years old), for children, as well as their staff and volunteers. This guidance will be relevant for:

- providers who offer holiday activities and support programme activities
- providers caring for children aged 5 and over and registered with Ofsted or either the compulsory or voluntary childcare register
- schools or colleges which offer extra-curricular activities or provision for children and young people

Some of these providers may also need to follow other sector-specific guidance. Refer to the guidance for out-of-school settings providers, sports clubs, and other providers of activities for children and young people. Providers should also refer to the National Governing Bodies for sport's guidance for resuming youth sector courses and activities during COVID-19 as well as their corresponding bodies and resources to support safe and secure activities.

What is an out-of-school setting?

Out-of-school settings are organised activities for children and young people, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) aged 5 to 18 or 25 August 2020 in England without their parents' or carers' supervision, but are not:

- schools[Footnote 1]
- 16 to 19 provision
- 16 to 19 apprenticeships[Footnote 2]
- providers caring for children that are registered with Ofsted or a childminder agency (Ofsted)

Out-of-school settings generally provide culture, training, instruction or activities for children and young people, including those with SEND and disabilities, although children and young people may not use all of the activities out-of-school hours to help meet the needs of those who are typically educated at home. Out-of-school settings may be run by a wide range of providers, such as (presently a full list of providers is available on request from the DfE), for example, include tuition or learning centres, extra-curricular clubs, community groups, or other organisations providing activities, including activities offering tuition in their own fields, and holiday clubs.

Venue-specific guidance

Out-of-school settings can occur in many venues, ranging from a person's home to much larger and more formal places such as community and youth centres, sports clubs, and venues for hire.

Specific protective measures guidance has been released for different types of venues, such as for sports clubs, and for those who hire out their venues for school. It is important that you understand and follow this guidance alongside this guidance.

- guidance for places of worship
- guidance for community centres, village halls and other multipurpose community venues
- guidance for providers of personal care and support services in people's homes
- guidance for taxi drivers and private hire operators in other people's homes

Providers operating out of these premises should work with the relevant owner or operator of the venue to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to minimise the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission and to help prevent the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). See Carrying out a risk assessment for more information.

Home education

Parents (including guardians and foster carers) who have chosen to home educate their own children may want to provide additional physical activities either in out-of-school settings or in the homes of others who have made their premises available.

In these situations, the relevant premises should follow the relevant advice in this guidance with ease. This is the case regardless of whether the setting is a home or other premises, and regardless of the number of children and children attending, including where it is a home-to-home activity.

Where a child who is home educated takes part in a group activity of the type described in this guidance, the relevant provider of the activity, as far as possible, follow the guidance and also the guidance on sporting venues and other providers of activities for children and young people. Some activities which have the principal purpose of education and should be used to justify young social activities beyond those permitted under the government's guidance on meeting socially outside.

Parents and providers should be aware that the coronavirus (COVID-19) risk assessment for these activities should be carried out by the provider, not by the parents who have chosen to home educate their own children. Further information is available on the government's guidance on home education. Parents who have chosen to home educate their children should contact their local authority for advice on how to support their children.

Carrying out a risk assessment

There are important actions that providers should take during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak to ensure the safe operation of the venue. Before resuming your venue, providers should ensure they have all provided a risk assessment and follow the Health and Safety Executive on workplace risk assessments. Providers should:

- Prepare to reopen your venue
- Find out what work
- Find out what precautions during the coronavirus outbreak

Where premises may have been closed for some time, there are increased risks from Legionella and other bacteria in water systems. Providers should deal with health and safety considerations, including a Legionella risk assessment. Have been undertaken before opening by checking with the relevant owner or operator of the venue. Providers should also implement protective measures to prevent the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) when working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19).

In some cases, risk assessments and preparation for reopening of out-of-school settings should be carried out by organisations other than the providers themselves, for example, the owners or managers of the premises. In other cases, the providers may be responsible for undertaking the risk assessment. Providing a school hall or community hall, the caterer or catering company providing food, the cleaning company, or the sports club. In all scenarios protective measures should be put in place to minimise the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission and to help prevent the spread of it.

You should share any significant findings of the risk assessment with your staff and or your employer, and any trade unions representing your staff, and to explain to parents and carers the reasonable steps you have taken to minimise the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission. Ensure that the measures you have put in place are proportionate to the risk and that the seems of protective measures that have been put in place by the owner of the premises, and those that you have put in place yourself, are those which could outline those to them or direct them to the relevant website.

Considering group sizes

Decision on group sizes for the same children should be based on:

- the current government guidance on social distancing
- the ability of the venue and facilities to maintain social distancing and practise hand hygiene
- the age of the children in attendance
- nature of your activity or provision (for example, static, classroom set up rather than or activity that requires a range of movement)
- the size or layout of your venue

To reduce the risk of transmission within a setting, providers should aim to minimise the number of different people and groups of children they mix with.

Where it's possible to do so, providers should try to work with parents, the local community, and other providers in their area to ensure that, as far as possible, children are kept in the same groups and that they do not spend too long in close contact with other children and adults. This will minimise the amount of mixing between different groups of children, and reduce the number of people the risk of infection. For more information, see the government's guidance on working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19).

Providers should also consider the arrangements for reopening of out-of-school settings should be carried out by organisations other than the providers themselves, for example, the owners or managers of the premises. In other cases, the providers may be responsible for undertaking the risk assessment. Providing a school hall or community hall, the caterer or catering company providing food, the cleaning company, or the sports club. In all scenarios protective measures should be put in place to minimise the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission and to help prevent the spread of it.

You should share any significant findings of the risk assessment with your staff and or your employer, and any trade unions representing your staff, and to explain to parents and carers the reasonable steps you have taken to minimise the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission. Ensure that the measures you have put in place are proportionate to the risk and that the seems of protective measures that have been put in place by the owner of the premises, and those that you have put in place yourself, are those which could outline those to them or direct them to the relevant website.

Operating with multiple groups

If you are operating more than one of multiple small groups of children, you should follow the guidance on social distancing. Ensure that the different groups to allow for cleaning to take place and to prevent children and parents or carers coming into contact.

Multiple groups of 15 children plus staff can use the same shared space, if they are operating in different areas of the venue and at different times. In the case the other protective measures in place, such as hygiene measures, are important to minimise the risk of infection and transmission of the virus.

Group sizes for children under 5

Early years settings are not required to keep children in small, consistent groups or to limit the number of children they can accept. Providers should ensure that in other activities, early years settings should follow the guidance for schools, and the rules relating to the youngest children. Settings should also follow the guidance for schools, and the rules relating to the children under the age of 5 years old. Further information is available on the news and blog providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, instead of this guidance.

Providers caring for children both under the age of 5 and aged 5 and over should follow the guidance for schools, and the rules relating to the youngest children providers caring for children aged 5 and over should follow the guidance for children under the age of 5, and the measures outlined in the guidance in relation to children aged 5 and over. Providers caring for children aged 5 and over should keep groups of children, as far as possible, separate from children aged under 5 and should consistent groups of no more than 15 children, plus a member of staff, or with more staff members to meet ratios requirements.

Social distancing

Providers should implement the measures and policies people to maintain social distancing where possible, and particularly:

- where young people and children are expected to be in close contact for a prolonged period
- where they are indoors
- where young people and children are expected to be in close contact with people who are not their usual contacts, and where they are unable to maintain distance

Providers should ensure that social distancing is observed by parents or carers or drop off or pick up times, and should also consider social distance in wave challenging (whether indoors, or outdoors).

Providers should also ensure that social distancing may come into flashing but not outstanding.

Where it is not possible for children and young people in the setting to maintain social distancing, it is even more important that other measures are in place to minimise the risk of coronavirus outbreak in the providers, such as frequent cleaning and hand washing.

Educational visits and trips

The guidance for high schools, sets out the department's position in relation to educational visits.

Overseas educational visits

We continue to advise against overseas educational visits. This advice remains under review.

Domestic (UK) overnight educational visits

We continue to advise against domestic (UK) overnight educational visits.

The department recognises the enormous benefits overnight educational visits can provide to children and young people.

In February 2021, we will review the possibility of changing our advice for overnight educational visits, and plan to resume from April 12th on the premise the scientific evidence supports any such change.

This advice will therefore be reviewed and updated again in February 2021.

Non-overnight domestic educational visits (day trips)

Out-of-school settings can take pupils on non-overnight domestic educational visits (day trips) in line with the guidance. Advice is connected with the preparation for and return to school, including the guidance on social distancing.

Providers offering non-overnight domestic trips should undertake full and thorough risk assessments to ensure that the risks to pupils and staff are minimised and carried out safely and in the with relevant local restriction tiers. Providers should also ensure that they are prepared to adapt their consistent group and and contingency plans in the event of a local lockdown, transport and at the destination.

Providers should consider the health and safety of educational visits guidance when considering visits and make sure that the appropriate insurance arrangements are in place. Further information is available on the DfE website information on school journeys and educational visits following the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. If provision takes any further questions or queries, providers should contact the further resources. they should contact their based insurance provider.

Effective infection protection and control

You must ensure that you have effective infection protection and control measures in place. Ensure that you have a plan in place for how you will ensure these outlined in this section.

These can be seen as a 'system of controls'. then, when implemented, creates a secure environment for children and young people to attend and be substantially reduced. They are grouped into 'prevention' and 'response'.

System of controls

Prevention

Measures associated with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have symptoms of COVID-19, or who test positive, do not attend or return to school/college/other venue or have been advised by NHS test and Trace to self-isolate, for example, because they are a contact.

1) cleaning hands more often than usual, wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds and use hand sanitiser gel that kills viruses and bacteria on arrival and at regular intervals throughout the day

2) ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach

3) cleaning frequently touched surfaces more often than usual using standard products, such as detergent and disinfectant, in line with Public Health England's guidance on cleaning surfaces outside the home

4) minimising contact and mixing by keeping children in their groups, as far as possible, and by ensuring that they are not in close contact for sufficient changeover time to clean the area between different groups, and by staggering arrival times, drop off times, and lunchtimes if necessary

5) where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)

Numbers 1 to 4 must be in place in each school settings, all the time.

Number 5 must be properly considered and providers must put in place measures that suit their particular circumstances.

Number 6 applies in specific circumstances. See the section on personal protective equipment (PPE) for more information.

Response to any infection

1) engage with the NHS Test and Trace process

2) manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the children and young people and staff members

3) contact any outbreak management advice from the local authorities

Numbers 7 to 9 must be followed in every case where they are relevant.

Where possible, all people should be tested twice weekly using natural ventilation (opening window) or ventilation units.

If you run an outdoor activity as part of your venue, then you should consider whether a specific, well-ventilated room could be designated for this.

Indoor provision

As the risk of transmission is increased in indoor settings, providers offer normally run sessions indoors should consider whether they are able to do so safely outside.

If you operate your setting in a shared space, you should have regard to the guidance for those who share premises. Ensure that you have regard to this guidance and follow any specific guidance for your sector, such as the guidance of sports. It is the responsibility of providers that operate from shared premises to ensure that they have appropriate risk assessments in place, as set out in this guidance.

However, you should also discuss infection protection and control measures with the owner of the space, and ensure that you have clear lines of sight and the space between different groups of people and and that you take no in the case of the 4 Cities of Animal, that the number of people in the same group, using the premises, is kept to a minimum and that they are kept separate from other groups.

The owners of these shared spaces must continue to meet all existing health and safety obligations. Providers should ensure that their premises are safe for providers to hire and to operate from.

Providers of music, dance and drama or sports provision

Particular care should be taken to observe social distancing in the case of a sports setting because of the ways in which people breathe more heavily and exertion increases the risk of transmission. Sport England has published guidance for sports providers and guidance for sports organisations, providers of sports activities. Key also sent to the guidance from Sport England, and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport commissioned further scientific studies to inform guidance for the sports sector. Providers should refer to the guidance for sports providers and sports organisations.

Additional social distancing mitigations were previously required for singing, dance, and performance activities. Further information is available on the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport commissioned further scientific studies to inform guidance for the sports sector. Providers should refer to the guidance for sports providers and sports organisations.

Children and young people can now engage in singing, wind and brass in line with the guidance from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and attention to the various guidance in performing arts, subject to the following conditions. Performances and rehearsals should be conducted in a manner that minimises risk to participants and audiences. For example, studies have indicated that there may be a cumulative risk that can be associated with singing, playing wind and brass instruments, rehearsing and performing for extended periods of time.

We are continuing to develop more detailed risk understanding but in the meantime we have set out some considerations for schools and colleges. Additional aspects of risk mitigation will need to be considered in this, for example, by ensuring that:

- they are limiting the number of children singing or playing together as far as possible and ensuring that children attending are in small groups of no more than 15 at a time, and that they are kept apart from other groups and teachers as far as possible
- children are socially distanced (2 metres apart), are outside or in well ventilated spaces
- they are not singing loudly

Therefore, in summary, providers should ensure the following measures are put in place when conducting music lessons in a school or college setting:

- social distancing is observed at all times whilst playing wind or brass instruments, singing or using other musical instruments, and that pupils remain in the initial groups of no more than 15 people
- children should use seating where practical to help maintain social distancing
- bell tackle or a slider tube positioning (rather than face-to-face) is used when playing brass
- another wind or brass player is placed at the end of the chair (rather than next to) the other player
- the bell of the instrument should be pointed downwards, such as sitting or standing, and wind instruments should be pointed towards windows where encourage children to play quietly
- the use of fans and air conditioning units maximises ventilation, wherever possible
- if playing wind or brass instruments, the music stand should be placed at least the number of children attending to account for ventilation of the instrument, rather than the number of people
- where bay or bower stands are used, they should be placed at an angle or parallel, either through the use of mechanical systems and/or opening windows and doors
- if holding a performance, there is no mingling between the performers and audience members
- the use of any other musical wind or brass instruments, meeting the entry requirements for an educational institution and conditions of entry

Providers should also note that some premises are only permitted to open for certain exempt activities. The Covid-19 (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Wales) (No.2) Regulations 2020 sets out which music venues and those that can open for educational purposes.

In areas of Tier 3, schools and carers can continue to access registered childcare as normal, or wraparound childcare and after out-of-hours learning activities, including:

- provision specified in our guidance, health and care
- necessary to allow parents/carers to work, seek work, attend a medical appointment, or attend education or training
- for the purposes of respite care, such as for children with disabilities or complex needs
- being purely home educated (children who are home educated are exempt for their visits to receive a suitable full-time education
- for the purposes of providing childcare or supervision, meeting the entry requirements for an educational institution and conditions of entry

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- provision specified in our guidance, health and care
- necessary to allow parents/carers to work, seek work, attend a medical appointment, or attend education or training
- for the purposes of respite care, such as for children with disabilities or complex needs
- being purely home educated (children who are home educated are exempt for their visits to receive a suitable full-time education
- for the purposes of providing childcare or supervision, meeting the entry requirements for an educational institution and conditions of entry

Providers should also note that some premises are only permitted to open for certain exempt activities. The Covid-19 (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Wales) (No.2) Regulations 2020 sets out which music venues and those that can open for educational purposes.

Use of shared resources

Government guidance on managing the risks of use of shared activities. For individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pencils and keyboards, it is recommended that it is allocated to individual users or sanitised between uses. For other equipment, such as sports equipment and resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the group. Sharing between groups should be minimised and equipment used with all frequently touched surfaces cleaned regularly and thoroughly between groups or lockdowns, such as sports or art equipment should be cleaned thoroughly between groups using it, for example, at the end of the day. Hand washing should be encouraged before and after using any shared equipment, and children should be encouraged not to touch their faces during use.

Outdoor playground equipment should be cleaned more frequently than usual, and where possible, between each group using it. Schools should be sited recommended that children and young people limit the amount of time spent on playing fields, playgrounds and other areas, and that they should minimise access to other areas of the school or college where relevant. Maps are allowed. Children and young people attending your settings and their families should be encouraged to use active travel, such as unnecessary sharing should be avoided, and cycling and walking should contribute to education and development. Similar rules to hand cleaning, use of the resources and minimised should apply to these resources.

Managing toilet usage

Different groups being allocated their own toilet blocks must be considered but is not a requirement this year due to the pandemic. However, you should consider how you can limit the number of children using the toilet at any one time, and how you can ensure that children from different groups do not mix and wash hands thoroughly, and that children are encouraged to wash their hands after using toilet facilities.

As well as frequent hand washing, toilets should be cleaned thoroughly using standard products such as detergent and bleach. The frequency of cleaning should be increased to at least twice a day, including those that have high hand contact points (handles and flush buttons). In most cases, we expect cleaning of toilet facilities to take place at least twice a day, and in some cases, more frequently depending on usage.

The COVID-19 (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Wales) (No.2) Regulations 2020 in general cleaning of facilities when no one has symptoms of or is confirmed to have coronavirus (COVID-19) is not required. However, if a person who has been in the premises has someone suspected of having, or confirmed to have coronavirus (COVID-19),

Reviewing staff availability

As part of your risk assessment, you should consider appropriate staff cover and how you will ensure that you have sufficient staff to open and run your bubble or small, consistent groups. The Welsh Government has set out the expectations around cover.

Before deciding on whether to open your setting, you should consult your staff members to ensure that they are available to work.

Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable

Since the introduction of shielding, many new measures have been introduced in communities, including the rule of six, Coronavirus Restrictions (Wales) Regulations and local lockdowns. Many of these rules have reduced the need for extremely shielding people.

The government also has better data on new infections and has introduced a tiered system, with local authorities being placed into tiers based on risk factors. As such, the Welsh Government has updated its guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19 (Coronavirus) to reflect the changes to shielding and can take to protect themselves and their families from coronavirus.

In most cases, staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable can still attend work in your setting, as all workplaces in Wales (Tier 1) are now open and in areas where the local restriction in Tier 2 or 4, there more lenient than those that were in place in March. Most of the restrictions on shielding are suitable. The government has set out the expectations that they are advised to follow formal shielding and not attend the workplace.

Staff who are clinically vulnerable

Clinically vulnerable staff can return to work. While in your setting they should follow the guidance on social distancing and other measures to reduce transmission.

As for all staff, this includes continuing to observe good hand and respiratory hygiene, minimising contact and maintaining distance.

When working out staff rotas you should consider how many staff you have available to work in your setting. Consider:

- Do you have at least one person with first aid training available to work in your setting?
- Do you have at least one person with Emergency Paediatric Resuscitation (paediatric first aid) available to work in your setting? You may want to consider if this is a role that could be undertaken by a member of your leadership team.
- Do you have a caretaker and/or cleaning staff available to work in your setting?

If the answer to any of these questions is no, then you should find a solution before opening your setting. Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable cannot be found to have roles. It is important that you can put the appropriate pre-employment checks to assess their suitability to work with children and young people. Guidance on safer recruitment is available on references and the appropriate pre-employment checks. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks), including 'children's barred list' check and other checks.

Members of the School Governing Body/Board of Trustees, or governors, is engaging in regulated activity if they frequently teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children, or the board is likely to be in a position to engage in this activity. Governing bodies should be aware of the risks or activities could be eligible for a basic, standard or enhanced DBS check.

You should ensure that you have sufficient staff to open your setting and implement the practice the measures you have identified within risk assessment and other guidance. Consider how you will manage absences such as those outlined in the section effective induction and staff cover.

Who can attend your out-of-school setting

Children of all ages may attend out-of-school settings. However, in areas at local restriction tier 4, children are only able to attend out-of-school settings if they are in exempt provision. Please refer to the Coronavirus Restrictions Tier 4 for more information.

There is separate guidance outlining who can attend out-of-school settings in areas at local restriction tier 2 and 3 and Tier 4 areas. Please refer to the out-of-school settings: Wales in detail.

Children who are home educated are exempt from a requirement for school or early years attendance.

When carrying out a risk assessment for your setting, you should consider the number of children attending and their ability to socially distance, such as the tendency for older children to mix with other commonly groups outside your setting or to use public transport to travel to and from your setting.

Attending out-of-school settings can have a positive impact on the wellbeing of children and young people, and it is vital that they can access the support they need to be able to return to their normal lives. Children and young people should be encouraged to attend their out-of-school setting unless their clinician attend as far as possible, and steady to ensure their children attend school or college. Children and young people who are shielding can be exempt from attending school or college if they are advised by their clinician not to mixing with others, such as by ensuring that children who attend your out-of-school setting are not in contact with children who are in their school. Children who are shielded should be encouraged to attend school or college. Children and young people from different schools can attend the same out-of-school setting, as long as children from different schools do not mix with the schools that they attend. Children and young people can also attend the same consistent groups or bubbles that they are in throughout the school day.

You should also discourage attendance from children who live outside the local area, as this will increase the number of people travelling to your setting or putting distance.

All children can continue to attend out-of-school settings and wraparound childcare. Children who are in Tier 4 areas, and who are not in exempt provision, and/or in clusters or bubbles in school, should be encouraged to attend but have attended their off-or-school not to attend an education setting. Shielding children can attend out-of-school settings. Children who are shielding are extremely vulnerable are advised to shield and should not attend school. Children and young people whose parents or carers are clinically extremely vulnerable can attend out-of-school settings. Children who are Home Educated and Social Care children can attend out-of-school settings. Children who are not exempt from attendance at school or college should not attend out-of-school settings in areas at local restriction tier 4 or Tier 4 areas and should be encouraged to attend school or college.

Local restriction tiers

The government has introduced a system of local restriction tiers. If you live, work or volunteer in an area that is in tier 2, or 4, there are additional restrictions in place. Please refer to the Coronavirus Restrictions Tier 4 for more information.

Currently, supervised activities, training and education for children can continue to operate in all restriction tiers. Children can continue to access at tier 4, parents and carers can continue to access registered childcare or childcare for children who are in exempt provision, and children can continue to attend school.

- provision specified in our education, health and care plan
- necessary to allow parents/carers to work, seek work, attend a medical appointment, or undertake education or training
- for the purposes of respite care, such as for children with a disability or complex needs
- being cared for home educating parents as part of existing arrangements (children who are home educated are exempt from attendance)
- for the purposes of providing childcare or supervision, meeting the entry requirements for an education institution, or exams and assessments

In tier 4 areas, children should be encouraged to attend school or college if they are not in exempt provision. Children who are shielding are exempt from attendance at school or college, training or activity is taking place in a school or college setting, and children who are shielding can continue to attend school with other members of the school or college, including children who are clinically extremely vulnerable.

In addition, when we are in tier 4 areas, we are advised that children in Tier 2, or 4, face coverings should be worn by adults and children aged 11 and above when in communal areas, such as in corridors and communal areas, such as in corridors and communal areas.

Out-of-school settings providers should take a process for removing face coverings outside of lessons and when it is safe to do so, for example, when eating and communicate it clearly to them. Children and staff should be not asked to wear face coverings if they are exempt from wearing a face covering. They must wear them if they travel on school transport. Staff should be aware of children and staff, disposal of temporary face coverings in a manner that is consistent with the school's waste management plan. Staff should be aware of the exemptions and how to deal with any concerns or queries regarding the setting. Guidance on safer recruitment, children and children's services provides more information.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

The majority of staff in out-of-school settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work.

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

- children young people and learners whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE, such as those with complex medical needs to support their care in the same way.
- PPE should be worn if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from a person who is coughing or sneezing or otherwise unable to cover their respiratory droplets.

The Department for Education has published guidance on Safe Working in Education, Childcare and Children's Services, which includes a section on the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in these settings. It is important to refer to it in order to understand when PPE should be used.

Providers should also make sure they are aware of the risks that are linked around PPE, expected. Providers may also be able to source PPE and training through their local authority, or through the Health Protection Response Service Tracker. Please contact your local authority in the first instance. products listed on this page have met standards set out by DHSC and are suitable for use in the context of COVID-19 (Coronavirus). Please refer to Health Protection Response Service Tracker for information on how to access and redeemption across our sector. Please contact your local authority, or the Health Protection Response Service Tracker, for information on how to access and redeemption across our sector.

Tests and trace

Tests for Test and Trace services will be used to manage the risk of the virus to emerging as restrictions on everyday life are eased. As far as it's deemed safe to do so, Test and Trace services:

- provides testing for anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) and their household
- aims to reach anyone who has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) and ask them to self-isolate to stop the spread of the virus

It's vital that out-of-school setting providers play their part by:

- making their settings as safe as possible for children and their parents
- promoting the need to get tested if anyone is symptomatic
- requesting that workers and children self-isolate if they are asked to do so
- supporting their workers when in isolation
- ensuring that they have the right information and advice
- this information should be kept up to date
- where required, displaying an NHS Test and Trace poster from 24 September 2020 in a prominent place in your setting, and encouraging people to scan the QR code and sign up to provide contact details

For more information, read NHS Test and Trace in the workplace.

If anyone in your setting has been unwell with one of:

- a new continuous cough
- high temperature
- loss of, or changes to, their normal sense of smell or taste (anosmia)

they should be sent home and advised to follow the COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

It's critical to your setting has discussed unwell with any of these symptoms and their household should:

- Have, if possible, the arrangements in place to ensure they can be isolated a closed door, depending on the age of the child and with supervision if appropriate.
- Ensure an area where it is safe to isolate people with coronavirus. If it is not possible to isolate them or you offer provision outside
- use a separate bathroom where possible. If not possible, ensure it is disinfected using standard cleaning products and following the COVID-19: guidance for cleaning non-healthcare settings after they have left the premises.

If the child or adult in your setting has a test to check for the virus they would collect from a drive-through or walk-through coronavirus (COVID-19) test site, or a child with complex needs.

In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is in danger and call 111 if you need to get medical help or advice.

If a member of staff has helped a child with symptoms, they do not need to self-isolate themselves unless they subsequently develop symptoms. They should be tested for the virus as soon as they develop a new cough. This happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in a setting. If a member of staff has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive with coronavirus, or who is shielding, they will be informed by the national household disinfectant offer someone with symptoms but will not need to self-isolate themselves unless they develop symptoms. See the COVID-19: guidance on cleaning in settings' guidance.

Use of the NHS COVID-19 app in out-of-school settings

Following the launch of the NHS COVID-19 app in England, out-of-school settings and educational providers in Wales will be able to use the app to support the use of the app in schools and further education colleges to support the test and trace system. The app is a part of the country's ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) response, aiming to prevent people who are at risk of being infected with coronavirus from passing it on to others, and to help slow the spread of some aspects of the process of contact tracing. Blocking together, NHS Test and Trace, the app will notify users if they have been in close contact with a COVID-19 by alerting people who have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus.

The app is available to download for anyone aged 16 and over if they choose to do so. Staff members will also be able to use the app.

You should understand how the app works, including what it's primary for managing a positive case or an outbreak. The agreed process for managing a positive case in your setting, and how to use the app to support the test and trace system in out-of-school settings and educational providers in Wales, is still in place and is not changed by the introduction of this app.

What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in a setting

Where a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) and they are in your setting, they should be sent home to isolate for 10 days. They should not return to your setting until they are recovered.

Where a child, young person or staff member tests positive, NHS Test and Trace will be in touch with your setting to provide advice on next steps and support. This advice may be that the rest of their class or group will be asked to self-isolate for 14 days from the last day they met the case. This is because they may have been exposed to the virus and may be at risk.

- children and staff in specific groups/sets
- the whole school/college, if appropriate
- Parents/carers and children
- the living of the children/children

This should be a proportionate recording process but detailed enough to ensure that NHS Test and Trace can contact people if they need to do so. Staff members should be aware of the process.

Depending on your setting's local arrangements, you may also want to inform your local authority of a positive case in your setting. Where more cases are linked, or there is a concern that the virus is spreading in your setting, your local authority can provide extra support through their ready to take action in response to a positive case.

Communicating safe working measures with staff

You should familiarise yourself with government guidance on working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19) and ensure that you have put in place the measures it outlines to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus.

Before reopening your premises, you should take to staff about your plans. Staff members should be given the opportunity to express any concerns.

If you employ cleaning contractors or staff then you should communicate additional cleaning requirements and the measures you have in place.

Arrange regular opportunities to get feedback from staff on the new arrangements.

The Department for Education's guidance for full opening of schools outlines that schools will be able to plan for a return to full opening, subject to a pause over setting, and will be expected to implement if you offer classroom based provision.

Communicating with parents

You should communicate your plans for reopening your provision to parents. You should let parents know that you have put in place to reduce the risk of infection and transmission of the virus.

- use technology to communicate with parents and carers digitally where possible
- tell children, young people, parents, carers or any visitors, such as suppliers, not to enter your setting if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) (following the COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection)
- encourage parents to avoid using public transport to get to your setting. Ideally, they should walk or cycle where possible or use a private vehicle (provided they are only travelling with those from within their household)
- when allocating drop off and collection times to parents, avoid scheduling these during peak hours for public transport, this will be particularly important as more people return to work and school
- tell parents and young people their allocated drop off and collection times and the process for doing so, including protocols for minimising adult to adult contact (for example, which entrance to use or limiting drop off and pick up to one parent or carer per family and staggering timings)
- avoid the need for parents and carers to wait, but where they have to, consider whether physical distancing markings could be used and make clear they cannot gather at entrance gates or doors

Safeguarding and managing the wellbeing of children and young people in your setting

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. Therefore, it is important that you and your staff are aware of the safeguarding issues that can put children at risk, such as abuse and neglect, and the signs to look out for.

Signs to look out for which may suggest that a child is being harmed or is at risk of harm include:

- unusual injuries, including bruises, burns, fractures, bite marks or signs of self-harm
- consistently poor hygiene, poor living conditions or inappropriate clothing
- communicating aggressively or using sexual language
- appearing withdrawn, guarded, anxious or frightened, particularly around certain individuals

If safeguarding issues come to light, they should be addressed using your setting's child protection and safeguarding policy, which you should consider updating ahead of reopening your setting.

If you have one or more employees or volunteers in your setting, then it is important to write down your child protection procedures to ensure that all staff members understand their responsibilities and know what to do in the event of a safeguarding concern, including what to do if a child makes a disclosure to you or your staff.

These should include details of your designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSL (if you choose to have one), and how to contact them, as well as contact details for local safeguarding services such as local authority children's social care, the local authority designated officer (LADO) and the police.

In addition, you may want to include details of Barnardo's recently launched See, Hear, Respond Service, which is a programme created to help children and young people in England who are experiencing harm and increased adversity during lockdown by providing support to those who are not being seen by schools or other key agencies.

You should review whether you or your staff need to refresh or undertake additional training on child protection and safeguarding issues before reopening your setting.

It will be especially important for providers to ensure that:

- the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- if anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child they should act immediately
- appropriate designated safeguarding lead arrangements are in place
- unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- any volunteers are appropriately supervised. Under no circumstances should a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Supporting children and young people's wellbeing

It is important to recognise that you and your staff may also need to consider how to support:

- individual children and young people who have found the long period at home hard to manage
- those who have developed anxieties related to the virus

Some children may also have experienced bereavements in their immediate family or wider circle of friends or family or had 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 where this may be supportive
- some lessons on relevant topics, for example, mental wellbeing or staying safe

Equality

As a provider of services to children and young people, it is important that you ensure you create spaces, services and opportunities that enable everyone to engage equally.

This may require adjustments to your working practices and approaches to ensure that everyone benefits fairly. Your organisation's equality and diversity policy should be considered at all times and especially when making decisions and judgements related to the impact on individuals and groups with protected characteristics.

When applying this guidance, organisations should be mindful of the particular needs of different groups of workers and individuals. Providers 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 guidance for children's social care services.

Providers are permitted to open for disabled children [footnote 5] who are accessing these services as a local authority funded short break, and ensuring that provision is available and accessible to these children, as far as possible, should be remain a priority in these current circumstances.

Local Authorities will need to work with their short breaks provider base to explore maximum flexibility in delivery to enable children to attend services (and to ensure that these can operate during the school holidays in particular, given 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 breaking the law to discriminate, directly or indirectly, against anyone in employment and 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 emerging evidence that BAME individuals may be more severely affected than the general population by coronavirus (COVID-19). Providers should be especially sensitive to the needs and worries of BAME children and young people, parents and carers, and staff, and should ensure interventions in the work setting to manage risk are carefully and appropriately communicated.

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

Here are some links to resources which may be helpful in supporting the children that attend your setting to learn about coronavirus (COVID-19) and promoting safety measures, such as frequent handwashing.

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

- Horrid hands
- Super sneezes
- Hand hygiene
- Respiratory hygiene
- Microbe mania

Busy Bees has produced activities for children to promote safety measures, such as Our hand washing song (PDF, 958KB).

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. 'School' means all schools whether maintained, non-maintained, or independent, including academies and free schools, alternative provision academies, and pupil referral units. It includes maintained nursery schools. ↩
2. 'College' means further education colleges and sixth-form colleges as established under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and institutions designated as being in the further education sector. ↩
3. Most providers caring for children under eight years old must register with Ofsted (on The Early Years Register or The Childcare Register) or a childminder agency, unless the law states otherwise. Exemptions are set out in the Childcare (Exemptions from Registration) Order (SI 2008/ No 979) and are summarised in the Registering with Ofsted guidance for childminders and childcare providers. Providers who are exempt from compulsory registration may still apply to register on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register if they meet its requirements. ↩
4. Full-time is not defined in law. Further information on institutions that must register at schools is contained in the department's guidance on registration. ↩
5. If a child meets the definition of disabled child within the meaning of s.17(11) of the Children Act 1989, the LA 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 LA 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

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