

Main changes to previous guidance for parents re wider opening of schools **(DfE: 18.6.20)**

Summary

- new section on flexibility for primary schools to welcome back additional children this term
- amended definition of vulnerable children and young people
- added further information on safety in schools and the national NHS Test and Trace programme
- updated content 30 hours free childcare and/or tax-free childcare
- updated content on transport which includes information on using face masks on transport
- revised section on school meals, adding more information on the reopening of school kitchens as well as meals in colleges
- updated content on exams in 2021

Changes from 15th June

SECONDARY

Secondary schools, sixth form and colleges can offer some face-to-face support for:

- pupils in year 10 and year 12
- 16 to 19 learners in the first year of a 2-year study programme

Secondary schools should ensure sufficient distance between pupils by keeping classes no more half their size.

Colleges should plan to keep students in groups that are as small as possible and that mix as little as possible with other groups

PRIMARY

Flexibility for primary schools to welcome back additional children this term

- in some schools, there will be capacity to welcome more children back, in group sizes of no more than 15, before the summer holidays.
- This may be because take-up amongst eligible children is lower than expected, or because there is additional space still available within the school and available staff to teach and supervise.
- There is no expectation on primary schools to welcome back additional children where they do not have the capacity to do so.
- It will be up to individual schools to decide which children to invite back.
- If parents have a child in nursery, reception, year 1 or year 6 and have not yet taken up on the offer of a place for your child, schools may be in touch to confirm whether the family intends to accept this. If they do not, the school may offer this capacity to another pupil.

EARLY YEARS

The DfE recognises that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff and have advised that:

- Early years providers, schools and colleges should reduce the risk of transmission by keeping children and staff in small consistent groups and keeping groups away from each other.
- Early years providers including nurseries should open for children of all ages.
- Nurseries should comply with the law and take a reasonable and proportionate approach to parents' fees, considering these unprecedented circumstances, and to communicate any arrangements clearly with them.
- If parents are temporarily not meeting the minimum income requirement for 30 hours free childcare and/or tax-free childcare as a direct consequence of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and would normally meet the threshold for these schemes, they will be deemed eligible

BREAKFAST/ AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

School-based wraparound care providers, such as breakfast and after school clubs, can operate for children in eligible year groups or those within priority groups if they are:

- operating on the same premises as the school or early years provision those children are attending, keeping children in the same small consistent groups that they are in during the day
- only caring for children of that school or early years provision and no others

SPECIAL SCHOOLS

From 15 June, the DfE have asked specialist post-16 institutions to work towards a phased return of young people, **without a focus on specific year groups** or proportion of learners and informed by risk assessments

ACROSS ALL SECTORS

- Vulnerable children and young people in any year group should attend school, where it is appropriate and there are no shielding concerns for the child or their household, and/or following a risk assessment for children with an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- Vulnerable definition includes those children and young people supported by a CIN or CP plan, is a child looked after, holds an EHCP or identified as otherwise vulnerable: this might include:
 - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, adopted children
 - those at risk of becoming NEET
 - those living in temporary accommodation
 - young carers, those who would benefit from attendance because of a mental health need
 - others at local-level discretion
- Children in any year group with **at least one** parent or carer who is listed as a critical worker can attend school.
- Parents will not be penalised for non-attendance at this time.
- There is an expectation that all schools and settings will be open for their normal hours and, if possible, continue with breakfast club and after school provision

SAFETY IN SCHOOLS

- If a child, young person or staff member has symptoms compatible with coronavirus (COVID-19), or someone in their household does, they should not attend their school or other educational setting. If they develop symptoms while attending their setting, they will be sent home.
- Anyone with symptoms should self-isolate for 7 days. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days.
- The [NHS Test and Trace](#) service will contact anyone that tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) and ask them to share information about people with whom they have had close, recent contact and places they have visited.
- NHS Test and Trace will contact under 18 year olds who have tested positive by phone wherever possible. They will ask for consent from a parent or guardian to continue the call.
- When NHS Test and Trace identifies that a child, young person or member of staff who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) has spent some time in an education or childcare setting while they could have been infectious, they will take details of the setting and those with whom the person had contact.
- Local Public Health England health protection teams will contact the early years provider, school or college attended by someone that tests positive for coronavirus (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. **A template letter will be provided to the school to send to parents and staff if needed.**

- In most cases, this will be the child or member of staff's **immediate class or group who will be asked to self-isolate for 14 days** since they were last in close contact with the person with the positive test. The other household members of that class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live within that group subsequently develops symptoms
- In some cases, a larger number of other children or young people may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole class, site or year group.
- **Where early years providers, schools and colleges are observing the protective measures guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.**

TRANSPORT

- Local authorities continue to be under a statutory duty to provide free 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.
- All are encouraged to walk or cycle where possible and avoid public transport, particularly at peak times.
- All should wear a face covering if using public transport; children are not required to wear face coverings on school transport however they can wear one if they wish.

SCHOOL MEALS

The DfE has confirmed that there will be additional funding for a summer food scheme.

- The scheme will enable children who are eligible for free school meals to claim vouchers for the 6 week summer holiday period.
- Colleges are expected to continue to support students who are eligible for and usually receive, free meals in colleges. This includes students who are newly eligible, whether they are continuing to attend the provider or are studying remotely due to coronavirus.

EXAMS IN 2021

- The DfE recognises that students who are studying GCSE, A level or equivalent courses, but are not due to take exams until 2021, will have experienced disruption to their education this year
- Work is underway with Ofqual and the exam boards to develop a revised approach to next year's exams in light of this.

WIDER WELL-BEING

All NHS mental health trusts are setting up 24/7 helplines and seeking to use digital and virtual channels to continue delivering support during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak