

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Early Years and Childcare Providers

*(please note these pages are continuously updated and where an update has been made, these will be shown in red)*

[Actions for Early Years and Childcare Providers during the Coronavirus Outbreak](#)

[Ofsted: Coronavirus COVID-19 rolling update](#)

[Implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#)

[Preparing for the wider opening of early years and childcare settings from 1 June](#)

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## 1. Prioritising Children – Critical Families

- 1.1. Is there a difference between Critical Workers and Key Workers? I keep reading these two phrases and wondering which category we should now be having if there is a difference?

The words Key and Critical Worker are being used interchangeably to denote a worker whose role is essential in the current situation facing the country. In Kent we are generally using Critical Worker to avoid any confusion with the term Key Worker used in relation to children.

- 1.2. Where do I go for help in finding a place for a Critical Worker's child?

Parents and carers should contact Kent Children and Families Information Service (KCFIS) on 03000 412 323 or email [kentcfis@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:kentcfis@theeducationpeople.org) who they will be able to contact settings to find suitable options for the family's needs.

The information families need to provide is:

- Number and ages of children
- Date childcare is required from
- Days and times childcare is needed
- Home and work postcodes of parents
- Other relevant information such as hours of funding child receives, specific needs of the child/ren

- 1.3. Who will be defined as a Critical Worker?

People working in health and social care, education and childcare, key public services, local and national government, food and other necessary goods, public safety and national security, Border Force, transport, utilities, communication and financial services.

Here is the link to [the Critical worker list](#) as set out by central government.

- 1.4. Does proof that a parent is a Critical Worker need to be supplied?

Yes, many employers are issuing letters for their Critical Workers; settings can also ask for simple evidence that the parent in question is a Critical Worker, such as their work ID badge or payslip.

- 1.5. We have a child whose parents are not living together, Dad is classed as a Critical Worker in the food industry and Mum is a self-employed cleaner for two hours a day. She has requested a pre-school place for her child as a Critical Worker. In these circumstances, does Mum meet the Government criteria?

If the child is living with Mum as the primary carer then no, the child should be cared for at home.

- 1.6. If a parent has confirmation from their employer to indicate their Critical Worker status but they are working from home, should we still take their children?

There are many occupations listed on the Government's Guidance, some of which could be undertaken at home. However, childcare providers are encouraged to discuss with parents the Government's principle for children to be kept at home wherever possible to stop the spread of the virus.

- 1.7. When should I accept a child back to my setting when they have self-isolated due to having the Coronavirus or a member of their household has had or currently has symptoms?

If the child lives with others and they are the first in the household to have symptoms of Coronavirus, then they must stay at home for 7 days. If anyone else in the household starts displaying symptoms, they stay at home for 7 days from when their symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14 day isolation period. Household members who remain well stay in self isolation for 14 days due to maximum incubation period, calculated from day 1 of first symptomatic person. Household members do not need to restart the clock if other members become symptomatic during the 14 days self-isolation. This [link](#) provides a useful visual explanation of the guidance.

## 2. Funding

- 2.1. If a setting is staying open for Critical Worker children, can they take children from other settings and what happens to the funding this term? If those children then choose to remain at the other setting for the Summer term, what happens to the setting that they were going to, do they lose the funding even if they had a Parental Declaration signed?

Settings/childminders can provide temporary care for those children who cannot be cared for by their usual provider. The usual provider will still receive the funding for this child if the child is included in the Summer Headcount. In the first instance, the setting/childminder giving temporary care should use the Free Entitlement funding they have received for children that are absent as a result of the Coronavirus, to fund the temporary child's Free Entitlement offer. If this is insufficient to cover the additional hours provided, then a request for extra funding can be made via the adjustment process (please see funding guidance issued on 27 March 2020 for more details).

At this stage it is unclear how long these temporary arrangements will be in place and KCC's future funding policy will need to adapt to the changing

circumstances and latest Government advice. However, it is expected that once early years providers return to business as usual, the normal process for dealing with a child moving between settings will resume and providers will be asked to register any permanent changes through the adjustment process.  
[https://www.kelsi.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/106569/Early-Years-and-Childcare-Funding-Guidance.pdf](https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/106569/Early-Years-and-Childcare-Funding-Guidance.pdf)

- 2.2. What happens if a funded Critical Worker child who doesn't usually take all their entitlement now needs to increase it due to working longer hours? Will we be able to claim for the extra hours?

Where a child of a Critical Worker needs to increase their entitlement over this period, the provider will be able to claim extra hours via the adjustment process.

- 2.3. Will we receive summer funding even if we are closed?

Yes, subject to completion of the summer term Headcount. Please refer to the email sent on 28/04/2020 from Management Information.

- 2.4. What will happen about Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF), Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and Disability Access Fund (DAF) for the summer term?

EYPP and DAF will be paid to the setting providing the care. Where a child is attending more than one provision, both EYPP and DAF funding will go to the setting providing most of the care.

Please refer to the SEN Inclusion Fund FAQ for further details about SENIF funding: [https://www.kelsi.org.uk/\\_data/assets/word\\_doc/0018/71154/SENIF-Frequently-Asked-Questions.docx](https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/word_doc/0018/71154/SENIF-Frequently-Asked-Questions.docx)

- 2.5. Is the 30 Hours included in the funding we are going to receive, as this was in our Estimate Headcount Claim?

Payments will be based on the summer term Headcount. Providers must remind parents to re-validate their codes and/or apply for codes for 30 Hours in the normal way.

- 2.6. If settings can re-open in the summer term can we definitely record children on Headcount if they have told us they are absent due to Coronavirus? What happens if we don't have signed Parental Declarations yet and are unlikely to now before headcount?

Yes. If a child is absent due to Coronavirus you can claim. An email, letter or a text message from the parent/carer to evidence the days and hours of FEE required (along with any other details relevant for the child this term) will

suffice. This should be dated and retained. Ensure you have the Parental Declaration signed/completed by 22nd July 2020. If you subsequently do not receive a signed/completed PD the money will be reclaimed.

- 2.7. Will the Government provide extra funding for those of us that won't receive payments from fee paying children?

The latest guidance on additional financial support that the Government has offered can be found using the following links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures#funding>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses>

- 2.8. If a setting is happy to open during the holidays when they normally open term-time only, can they claim stretched funding?

Yes, but they must inform Management Information as soon as possible.

- 2.9. If we are receiving funding for the summer term, can we also furlough staff?

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme means that for employees who are not working but kept on payroll, the Government will contribute 80% of each worker's wages of up to £2,500, backdated to 1 March 2020. However, employees are not able to receive public funding for staff costs as well as Government furlough payments for the same staff. Providers can access this scheme for private income while continuing to be paid the Early Entitlements Funding by local authorities.

- 2.10. If we are taking on a child from another nursery that has closed and the child has claimed 30 hours at that nursery, where does that leave us in terms of funding?

In the first instance, the setting/childminder giving temporary care should use the Free Entitlement funding they have received for children that are absent, as a result of the Coronavirus, to fund the temporary child's Free Entitlement offer. If this is insufficient to cover the additional hours provided, then a request for extra funding can be made via the adjustment process (please see [funding guidance](#) for more details)

[https://www.kelsi.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/106569/Early-Years-and-Childcare-Funding-Guidance.pdf](https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/106569/Early-Years-and-Childcare-Funding-Guidance.pdf)

2.11. I have arranged for my Critical Worker children to attend another setting as I am unable to open. Can the setting ask me to transfer the funding for these children?

No. we do not expect funding to be transferred. In the first instance, the setting/childminder giving temporary care should use the Free Entitlement funding they have received for children that are absent, as a result of the Coronavirus, to fund the temporary child's Free Entitlement offer. If this is insufficient to cover the additional hours provided, then a request for extra funding can be made via the adjustment process (please see funding guidance for more details).

2.12. If a setting receives Free Early Education Funding only and no other income can they furlough staff, not claim from the government and pay their staff 80% from their FEE money?

If the only income a setting receives is EY funding, then that would fall into the definition of wholly publicly funded posts, and therefore not eligible for furloughing. Any business can negotiate with their staff team to agree them paying whatever percentage proportion, in this case 80%. It would not be able to go below the level of NMW, there would need to be a consultation process to reach the agreement.

<https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

2.13. A Critical worker is eligible for 30hrs free childcare but has never claimed more than 15hrs before so has never applied for their eligibility code. That parents working hours have increased so now requires the 30hrs but if they obtain their eligibility code this term it will not be valid until September. Is there any discretion as this is a critical worker? A critical worker has fallen out of eligibility for Summer 2020 term, can we still claim their 30hrs funding?

Temporary measures have been implemented by the Government to ensure critical workers will still be eligible for childcare offers. If you are caring for a child of a critical worker or a vulnerable child who has recently fallen out of eligibility for the summer term, Management Information can now accept 30 Hour codes where the original 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 deadline was missed but has since been successfully applied/reconfirmed with HMRC. An adjustment can be made through Synergy but if you cannot add your extended hours into Synergy due to the code not having the correct dates applied please contact Management Information so the hours can be added manually.

2.14. If I am not able to reopen on 1 June or choose not to will I have to repay funding received for this term?

No.

### 3. Finance

- 3.1 If the school is closed our rental agreement says we must close, but what if we have Critical Worker children?

The Government now has powers granted by Parliament to enforce providers to either close or stay open if places are needed, hence we would expect this to override such agreements.

- 3.3 If providers that are open must then close for a deep clean, do they have to offer replacement sessions or as others are closed anyway, will they just keep the funding?

No. Cleanliness is paramount in stopping the spread of the Virus.

- 3.4 What happens to staff not paying National Insurance?

Please refer to guidance on ACAS or Government website on additional financial support to early years providers.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures#funding>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses>

- 3.5 Do we have to pay staff full wages? Can we reduce their hours?

You need to have discussions with staff about ways in which you can reduce your staffing bill during this difficult time. ACAS has guidance about what you can do if you are forced to reduce hours and/or lay staff off. Please also refer to the wider support packages being offered to businesses including the opportunity to apply for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/financial-support-for-businesses-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

- 3.6 I still need to pay my staff wages so do I need to transfer funding to another setting who is taking my Critical Worker/vulnerable children?

No. Please refer to the Government business support packages including the possible use of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme outlined by the Government which can pay up to 80% of staff salaries up to a maximum of £2,500. If you are a childminder this does not apply to you currently. Details of assistance for those who are self-employed were released on Thursday 26 March 2020.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses>

### 3.7 Where can we go to get information about the Government scheme to pay staff wages?

Please go to the Government website:  
[Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: step by step guide for employers](#)

or contact ACAS:  
<https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

## 4. EYFS – statutory guidance

The Government has put in temporary measures regarding the EYFS and they can be read [here](#).

### 4.1. Will Ofsted relax ratios?

Yes. Paragraph 3.30 of the EYFS states: 'Exceptionally, and where the quality of care and safety and security of children is maintained, changes to the ratios may be made.' Ofsted consider the extent of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak to be exceptional. Remember with an Early Years Teacher or Qualified Teacher you can apply 1-13 for three to four-year olds if you are a group setting.

### 4.2. Do we need to notify Ofsted if we remain closed or change our usual operating pattern?

If your operating circumstances do change (i.e. you open or close), please let Ofsted know by sending an email to [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) with 'Change in operating hours' in the subject field. In the body of the email, please confirm the Unique Reference Number for each setting and the details of the change. You can find your URN on your registration, your inspection report(s), and on your Ofsted report.

### 4.3. If a setting is inadequate and Ofsted now doesn't come for an extended period can we claim for new children?

No, but we expect that Ofsted would inspect as a priority.

### 4.4. Where children join a setting temporarily, what happens about paperwork and planning?

On 24<sup>th</sup> April the Government put in temporary measures owing to Covid 19 and providers should make 'reasonable endeavours' to meet the learning and development requirements as set out in section one of the EYFS. Children's

care is paramount and should receive a broad experience of educational opportunities.

They have also stated there is no requirement to complete a progress check at two during this time however providers must be alert to emerging concerns and provide or seek additional support if needed.

4.5. Can children under five attend schools if the schools are happy to accept them, even though their age range is 3-11?

Yes, children aged three and four can attend if they are registered on school roll. The guidance states children should attend their usual provision if open.

4.6. Can the DSL remain in self-isolation at home, but still be contacted by their setting? Or does the setting have to have a DSL on site?

As long as they are contactable at all times during opening hours. If they are self-isolating due to illness, then the setting would need to follow their own safeguarding policy. For example, many settings have a deputy DSL to cover the role.

## 5. SEND/Vulnerable Children

For more information around support for vulnerable children and children with SEND, click on the government guidance below:

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): SEND risk assessment guidance](#)

[Supporting vulnerable children and young people during the Coronavirus outbreak](#)

[Changes to the law on education, health and care needs assessments and plans due to coronavirus](#)

5.1. Who is a vulnerable child?

Vulnerable children include children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, looked after children, young carers, disabled children and those with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). [Supporting vulnerable children and young people during the Coronavirus outbreak](#)

5.2. Can you please tell me whether a FF2 adopted child who no longer has a social worker is classified within the vulnerable group?

Yes, they are.

- 5.3. If a child is in the process of acquiring an Education, Health and Care Plan, are they still able to attend the setting?

Yes, if a child has a draft EHCP.

- 5.4. Do parents with children in the vulnerable groups HAVE to send their children to Nursery?

The Government continues to encourage vulnerable children and young people to attend educational settings, unless they have underlying health conditions that put them at severe risk. Further detail on categories of vulnerable children is set out in [Supporting vulnerable children](#) guidance.

## 6 Out of School Providers

- 6.1. Are before and after school clubs allowed to operate?

All providers of wraparound childcare, and other out-of-school settings, are able to operate for both indoor and outdoor provision, provided they have safety measures in place.

Wraparound providers which are only registered with Ofsted on the early years register should continue to follow this guidance, and implement the protective measures set out for early years settings.

Where wraparound providers are caring for children over the age of 5, they should ensure that they are also following the [Protective measures guidance for out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#), including on group sizes. Providers caring for children over the age of 5 should ensure, as far as possible, that they are keeping children over the age of 5 in small consistent groups every time they attend.

In cases where providers care for both children under the age of 5 and over the age of 5, they may choose to apply the measures outlined in this guidance to those children under the age of 5, and the measures outlined in the [Protective measures guidance for out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) to those children over the age of 5. However, where providers have mixed age groups together, they will need to, as far as possible, keep all children irrespective of age in small consistent groups of no more than 15 with at least one staff member or with more staff members to meet relevant ratio requirements.

- 6.2. What is going to happen to out of school childcare that may literally not receive a single penny in income?

Out of school childcare is part of the offer for Critical Worker and/or vulnerable children. Central Government is referring providers to the wider support packages for businesses:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures#funding>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses>

## 7 Childminders

- 7.1. Are childminders considered to be self-employed, and what financial support is available to them if they have lost all their children?

Most childminders are considered to be self-employed, although some may be set up as a limited company. Childminders can check with HMRC their employment status for tax purposes. Please refer to the latest Government Advice for both businesses and employees (including self-employed).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses>

- 7.2. Can a childminder close if they have no Critical Worker children to care for?

From 1 June 2020 childminders are able to care for all children of all ages, in line with usual limits on the number of children they can care for. If families choose to keep their children at home and childminders have no children to care for they can choose to close. However, childminders may be asked to re-open if the authority has a shortage of childcare, unless you or your family members are in the groups identified as vulnerable/self-isolating.

- 7.3. If a childminder wishes to close to protect their own children by not having others in their home, are they able to if a child they are caring for has Critical Worker parents?

If you are a closed childminder it is possible that you may be required to open where there is a shortage of childcare. If you are a childminder about to close you should signpost families of key worker or vulnerable children to Kent Children and Families Information Service (CFIS) on 03000 41 23 23 or email [kentcfis@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:kentcfis@theeducationpeople.org) who will be able to assist in finding alternative care.

Childminders should follow Government Guidance in relation to clinically vulnerable people. If you are a childminder about to close and you are caring for vulnerable or Critical Worker children you should signpost families to Kent Children and Families Information Service (CFIS) on 03000 41 23 23 or email [kentcfis@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:kentcfis@theeducationpeople.org) who will be able to assist in finding alternative care.

The information families need to provide is:

- Number and ages of children
- Date childcare is required from
- Days and times childcare is needed
- Home and work postcodes of parents
- Other relevant information such as hours of funding child receives, specific needs of the children

- 7.4. If a child is attending school, should I be providing wrap around care particularly if it includes taking other children out to pick up?

The Government message is to maintain social distancing. Where childminders are able to walk to the school and avoid coming into close contact with others, this is something they may wish to consider. They may, however, consider it appropriate to speak to the families of existing children being cared for to seek their consent.

- 7.5. I am being asked by a teacher working from home to provide care for her funded child. She also has a school aged child and she wants me to care for that child if the care is funded.

Government guidance is that wherever possible children should be kept at home. Where schools are open care should be arranged through them for older children. There is currently no funding for childminders to provide this care. It is more difficult for younger children to remain safe where Critical Worker parents are working from home. Childminders should have a discussion with parents about the Government guidance and when childcare is necessary provide care if they are able to maintain safety for themselves, their own family and children currently in their care.

- 7.6. Is there any clarification on mixing settings? I have two children that spend half their time with me and half their time with a pre-school or nursery. I'm not sure I feel comfortable with the amount of exposure I'm putting my home and family.

In their latest actions for educational and childcare settings document the DfE have indicated they will provide further guidance and support over the coming weeks. We will share the link to this guidance when it becomes available.

7.7. Can I take children out in the car if we stick to our bubble?

In the Government guidance [Preparing for the wider opening of early years and childcare settings from 1 June](#) it states that, 'childminding settings should consider how they can work with parents and carers to agree how best to manage any necessary journeys, for example pick-ups and drop-offs at schools, to reduce the need for a provider to travel with groups of children'. Additional guidance around car sharing is also available [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safer travel guidance for passengers](#)

7.8. Am I able to have posters up on the wall?

Providers should remove from the setting, as much as possible, anything that cannot easily be cleaned. If a poster is displayed at child level, the provider may wish to consider moving it for use at a later time or laminating it to facilitate cleaning.

7.9. If the R rate does go up are we going to be like the North West where they have asked childminders to close?

We continue to follow guidance set out by government, which at present allows childminders to be open to care for children of all ages.

7.10. Should I let a child back to my setting that I feel has coronavirus symptoms but the parent refuses to get a test done?

Maintaining an open dialogue with parents around what is expected is key to communicating your policies and procedures. The Government is encouraging everyone with coronavirus symptoms to get tested and has given guidelines on self-isolation when symptoms present. See the [explanatory diagram](#)

7.11. How do I claim for the second payment of the self-employment grant?

This scheme is being extended. If you're eligible for the second and final grant, and your business has been adversely affected on or after 14 July 2020 you'll be able to make a claim in August 2020. You can claim for the second grant even if you did not make a claim for the first grant. [Find out more about the extension to the scheme](#)

7.12. What information should I give to parents about isolating if their child has coronavirus symptoms?

The Government has given guidelines on self-isolation when symptoms present. Please see [advice for households with possible coronavirus infection](#)

7.13. Do risk assessments need to be written?

Although it is not compulsory for risk assessments to be written, it is a good way to share these with families.

7.14. Do I need a separate handbasin in the garden?

No, normal hand washing facilities can be used, e.g. bathroom.

7.15. How can I show new parents round my setting?

Consider using online platforms such as Zoom to show parents around your setting. Depending on the risk assessment of your setting, you may be able to grant them access to your outdoor space, outside of your operating hours.

[Preparing for the wider opening of early years and childcare settings from 1 June](#)

**8. Wider opening, including staffing**

8.1. Can I reduce the number of children?

In some cases, it will be necessary for settings to introduce a temporary cap on numbers to ensure that children are kept in small groups.

8.2. Can I offer reduced hours to both funded and fee-paying children to enable us to have small groups?

Yes.

8.3. Can I change my pattern of delivery to enable children to return safely?

You need to discuss potential changes to their patterns with individual families.

8.4. If I don't have space for all the children to return safely on 1 June who will take priority?

You should focus first on continuing to provide places for priority groups and then in line with current guidance, prioritise 3- and 4-year olds.

8.5. Do children who receive 30 hours funding get preference over 15-hour children?

You need to consider the parental need to return to work and/or the needs of individual children.

8.6. Will it be mandatory for all registered childcare settings to open in some form?

No. The Government is asking settings to open more widely so that more children can be welcomed back but understands that some settings may be unable to open, especially if they are experiencing severe staff shortages due to self-isolation and sickness, or particularly low levels of demand. KCC will work with local settings to determine the best way to ensure sufficient childcare.

Settings should try to be as flexible as possible for parents and carers who work shifts or atypical hours and especially for parents who are critical workers.

- 8.7. If only a small number of families want to return on 1st June does the setting have to reopen?

The Government is asking early years settings to welcome back more children, including to reopen if they had previously closed. KCC will need to ensure there are sufficient places available to meet demand.

- 8.8. Do I need to supply you with regular information about children's attendance?

Yes, local authorities are required to continue to provide details of children in attendance at early years settings and the number of settings open, to the DfE.

- 8.9. If I have more than one setting can I offer the places in just one of them?

Yes, but this would need to be in discussion with the families to ensure they can access that setting.

- 8.10. If I need advice about my staff and their employment where do I go?

If you don't already have a contract with an HR company, please contact ACAS for guidance on staff and employment issues.

- 8.11. We closed because half our staff have underlying health conditions, but they are not considered to be extremely vulnerable, do we have to open?

Depending on the number of your children requiring a place, you may be able to open with the remaining staff who don't have underlying health conditions. Information on contract law and how to deal with staff in such circumstances is available from ACAS.

- 8.12. Where do we stand with staff refusing to come back?

As above. Information on contract law and how to deal with staff in such circumstances is available from ACAS.

- 8.13. Can we lay staff off while they are on furlough or do we have to take them off furlough and then lay them off out of our own money and not the government's money?

Please contact HMRC and ACAS for guidance.

- 8.14. I want my staff to work certain days, so they work and have contact with minimal numbers of other staff and children. What do I do if I cannot do this?

Early consultation with staff about your plans is always advisable. Please check the wording of staff contracts if staff are refusing to work in this new

way and refer to ACAS for advice and guidance on what to do in these circumstances.

- 8.15. I have taken a member of staff off furlough to come into work, but she also works in another setting which is currently closed. If the government deem it ok to reopen on 1st June 2020 can we continue to share?

We are awaiting further guidance from the DfE with regards to staff working at more than one setting.

- 8.16. If a setting is remaining open can its staff bring in their own children and if necessary, can the age range be extended to accommodate this?

Individual staff members will need to check with owners/managers if this is possible as it will depend on several factors. The following Ofsted restrictions apply:

- Early Years Register – up to five years
- Childcare Register (Compulsory) – up to eight years
- Childcare Register (Voluntary) – over eight

Providers can in principle have flexibility of changing/adding registers according to need. Ofsted must be informed of any change. All the required documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting and for the care of children still applies for the child(ren) of staff. For childminders who operate in their own home, consideration will need to be made regarding ratios if their own children are under the age of eight. In all relevant instances, care for children over the age of eight should not adversely impact on that for younger children.

- 8.17. Am I able to send a member of staff with Critical Worker children to another setting?

Staff who have had a DBS Check for the same regulated activity may work/attend another provision. This is set out in the [Actions for Early Years and Childcare Providers](#) document.

- 8.18. If schools can take early years children can we send a member of staff with them?

Childcare providers who are experiencing staff shortages should work with their local authority to identify how appropriate provision can be put in place. They can pool staff with another setting or take on qualified and DBS-checked staff from other educational settings (including local registered childminders).

- 8.19. Can the staff qualification levels be relaxed when a Level 3 manager is in self-isolation? So only a Level 2 left to open the setting?

No. Temporary revisions to the EYFS were made on 24/4/2020 to reflect the current situation however providers **must** continue to meet the requirements

for a manager and deputy as set out in the statutory framework paragraph 3.23.

- 8.20. Following the Government requirements that anyone with a high temperature or persistent cough must self-isolate for seven days if living alone or 14 days living with others, what do I do if that means not enough of my teachers can come in and therefore, we cannot maintain the required ratios?

Temporary revisions to the EYFS were made to the EYFS on 24/4/2020 to reflect the current situation COVID-19 is an exceptional circumstance and the EYFS states, exceptionally and where the quality of care, safety and security of children is maintained, changes may be made. EYFS paragraphs 3.30/3.42

In addition to this maintained and independent nurseries should use 'reasonable endeavours' to ensure that a qualified teacher is present, however if not possible then to meet the requirements as set out in paragraphs 3.33 and 3.34. See [Actions for Early Years and Childcare Providers](#) and [Early Years Foundation Stage: Coronavirus Disapplications](#)

## 9. Risk Assessment

- 9.1. Testing for a symptomatic under 5 at a setting will happen and their household, but does this include younger siblings at home?

The Document '[Preparing for the wider opening of early years and childcare settings from 1 June](#)' states that children of this age can be tested if they display symptoms of coronavirus. The parents/carers of the child need to call 111 requesting a test.

- 9.2. How can we access tests for key workers and children?

There is guidance on obtaining testing for key workers in the Government guidance: '[Implementing protective measures for education and childcare](#)'

- 9.3. Can we ask parents/carers to take their child's temperature before arriving to school?

There is no Government guidance to say you must or must not do this. However, the Government document '[Preparing for wider opening for the early years and childcare settings from 1 June](#)' states that '*Public Health England's guidance is that routine testing of an individual's temperature is not a reliable method for identifying coronavirus*'.

- 9.4. Does anyone know where I can obtain `fluid retention` masks for staff to use in an emergency. I have been advised not to order and leave for NHS supplies?

KCS stock these.

- 9.5. Would you advise staff wear PPE to meet and greet children into the setting? As this is not our normal procedure?

The Government advice for education is that *'The majority of staff in childcare settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain distance of 2 metres from others. PPE is only needed for children whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE, or if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from any child displaying coronavirus symptoms'*.

- 9.6. Are we able to wear masks if we choose to? If the Government has advised us to wear masks when leaving the house it makes no sense to then not wear them at work to reduce the risk of spread.

The *'[Implementing protective measures document](#)'* states that *'wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended. Face coverings may be beneficial for short periods indoors where there is a risk of close social contact with people you do not usually meet and where social distancing and other measures cannot be maintained, for example on public transport or in some shops. This does not apply to schools or other education settings. Schools and other education or childcare settings should therefore not require staff, children and learners to wear face coverings. Changing habits, cleaning and hygiene are effective measures in controlling the spread of the virus'*.

- 9.7. Can I ask about staff toilets and expectations on users to clean after themselves?

Currently there is no specific guidance on the use of staff toilets, but they will be a high touch point and as such it is up to you to determine how hygiene practices are implemented, to ensure the toilets are disinfected regularly.

- 9.8. Is it safe to open with only 2 staff?

You can open with two staff if you are meeting the ratio requirements as stated in the EYFS, but you will need to assess the risk and explore control measures.

- 9.9. Soft furnishings - we have carpet throughout our room so should we stay shut?

The Government has advised educational settings to remove soft furnishings where it is practical to do so. It has not asked educational settings who have carpet to remain closed. As with any surface it should be cleaned more frequently to maintain high hygiene measures.

9.10. What happens if we have to take a young baby from a parent?

You will need to reflect on what control measures you can put in place to receive the care of the baby.

9.11. My nursery is child led free flow indoors and outdoors with children aged 2-4 in one big room with free flow to the garden and a woodland area. Our children do not have key person time, circle time, structured activities, this key person globe would be very difficult to implement into our setting without changing our ethos and the way we run our sessions.

The Government has stated that if any setting cannot operate in small groupings (maximum of 16 children) to discuss this with the local authority. You can do this by emailing [eycimprovementservices@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:eycimprovementservices@theeducationpeople.org) or [childminding@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:childminding@theeducationpeople.org) if you are a childminder, leaving your contact details and someone will contact you.

9.12. Could staff bring their own tablets/iPads in and only use those throughout the day to avoid sharing devices?

You need to consider the safeguarding implications and your own policies and procedures around staff using their own electronic devices within the setting. Consider, how you can monitor access of devices away from the setting, how can you be sure that other adults/young people cannot access the device? In addition, consider hygiene and the virus being transported between home and the setting on the device. The guidance is that this should not happen.

9.13. How do we manage children who attend more than one setting?

In the '[Preparing for the wider opening of early years and childcare settings from 1 June](#)', it states, '*to minimise contact between groups of children and staff, children should attend just one setting wherever possible and parents and carers should be encouraged to minimise as far as possible the number of education and childcare settings their children attends*'. With this in mind you should work with each family and provider to agree how this can best be achieved.

9.14. We understand in the disapplication document that we aren't expected to do the 2-year-old checks at the moment. Are we still expected to complete the school transition documents as normal?

Transition documents are not statutory unlike the 2-year-old progress check, so are not a legal requirement. However, to support transition we would recommend information is shared with the receiving schools.

- 9.15. Is opening only permitted once all paperwork and assessments are completed?

Yes. How can you open before you know the building is safe to use? How can you identify all hazards and appropriate controls measures if the assessments are not in place? These procedures need to be understood and followed by all to ensure the safety of everyone.

- 9.16. The manager and deputy are shielding until 17<sup>th</sup> June. We do not have enough staff as we are a small preschool to open at this time. Do we put this in our risk assessment?

You need to ensure you are able to meet the EYFS statutory frameworks. You need someone who can lead and take responsibility for the setting.

- 9.17. If staff usually work split shifts could we look at them being there all day?

This is for you to decide the best way of working the government planning document states 'as far as possible the same members of staff should be assigned to each group and these should stay the same during the day and on subsequent days, keeping your staffing arrangements as consistent as possible.

- 9.18. If you must rotate staff owing to their own childcare arrangements can this be done?

The government guidance states '*as far as possible, the same members of staff should be assigned to each group and these should stay the same and on subsequent days. In instances where this is not possible that it is agreed on a weekly basis not daily, limiting contact*'.

- 9.19. Storage is a concern how can we store key worker resources to reduce the risk of transmission?

At this time you should be the only hall user and as a result items could be left out if an agreement was made with your hall hirer.

- 9.20. Can we take children on local walks in rural or urban areas?

If you go on outings you need to ensure you meet the requirements as set out in the EYFS statutory framework for outings. Pay attention to the first aid disapplication, if this applies. You also need to check with your insurance company if you plan to do this regularly as this may be a significant change to your usual operating for example using a hall.

- 9.21. One setting and only 4 children would you use the sandpit?

The advice is, if sand pits cannot be thoroughly cleaned between uses, they should not be used at this time.

- 9.22. Removal of soft furnishings does this include puppet, dressing up and carpet/rugs?

The guidance in '[Preparing for the wider opening of early year and childcare settings from 1st June](#)' states '**where practicable**, remove soft furnishing'. The removal of a rug would be more practicable than a whole carpet. Consideration also needs to be given if resources such as puppets and dressing up can be cleaned effectively.

- 9.37 Can we state that children do not change age groups/rooms in order to reduce the risk of transmission?

For children attending the same setting the guidance does say to minimise the contact between groups/rooms.

- 9.38 Would you encourage sanitising children's hands after handwashing to reduce the risk of contamination?

The government say ensure children are supervised when handwashing especially if using hand rub/sanitiser. Children should be taught how to effectively wash their hands or use rubs/sanitiser effectively.

- 9.39 As we are in one room will all staff and children need to self-isolate after a child/adult showing symptoms? If a child or staff member get sent home due to displaying symptoms should we inform the other parents?

You need to agree a protocol to responding to a suspected case of Coronavirus. Following the guidelines [What to do if you or someone in your household develops symptoms](#).

- 9.40 We want to use air conditioning units/fans as our building can become very hot and window ventilation is not sufficient. Can we use these electrical items?

The government document '[Implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#)' May 2020 states '*Where possible, all spaces should be well ventilated using natural ventilation (opening window) or ventilation units.*' Further information on ventilation units can be found in '[Managing school premises during the coronavirus outbreak](#)', which states that natural

ventilation from open windows and vents is best and should be used as far as possible. If ventilation systems have to be used these need to be set to full fresh air where this is an option.

- 9.41 Is there a specific minimum percentage of alcohol that is deemed 'safe' to use?

The advice is a minimum of 60% alcohol. Here is a [link](#) for further information.

- 9.42 Do I have to report to RIDDOR if I have a confirmed case of Coronavirus?

HSE have set [guidance](#) on when it is reportable.

- 9.43 Are staff expected to apply sun cream? We plan to ask parents to apply an all-day sun cream before arrival. Is that ok?

You need to assess any additional risks involved with applying sun cream during this time and what measures you would like to put in place to minimise risk of transmission.

- 9.44 The cleaning guidance mentions using bleach. Is it safe to use in a childcare setting?

In the planning guide it directs you to the [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings](#)

- 9.45 I run a pre-school in a multi-use hall, how can I be sure the hall has been adequately cleaned before I arrive?

You need to discuss and agree the level of cleaning you require with the hall hirer.