

Dear Early Years and Childcare Providers

Please see below this week's Government updates for you, your staff and families, as well as a link to a survey from the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service.

Updates for the Sector

[Help and support if your business is affected by coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) 10 May 2021

Change made: A catch up webinar for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme – fourth grant has been added.

[Protective measures for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings for children during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) 10 May 2021

Change made: Updated to provide additional guidance on residential visits, which can commence from Step 3. Updated the guidance on use of face coverings, indoor group sizes and parental attendance at out-of-school settings.

[Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) 10 May 2021

Change made: The guidance has been updated to reflect Step 3 of the roadmap out of lockdown. Information has been included on staff wellbeing, clinically extremely vulnerable, safe removal of face coverings, attending more than one setting, visits to setting by external professionals, parent and child groups, organised performances, trips, childminders meeting other childminders.

Key updates:

Supporting staff wellbeing

- Hyperlink added for a list of [resources to support staff well being](#)

Staff who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable

- Since 1 April 2021, people who are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) are no longer advised to shield. Updated advice is for the group to continue taking extra precautions to protect themselves, and to follow the practical steps set out in the CEV guidance. Staff in early years settings who are CEV are advised to work from home where possible but can attend their place of work if they cannot work from home.

Safe wearing and removal of face coverings

- You should have a process for when face coverings are worn within your setting and how they should be removed. Additional guidance on how to wear, store, remove and when additional face coverings should be used has been added.

Attending more than one setting

- An example has been added to clarify, ***“Children attending a childminder before their nursery opens so that their parent or carer may go to work***

or to attend two settings part time. Children should be able to continue attending both settings”.

External professionals

- Specialists, therapists, clinicians and other support staff for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) should provide interventions as usual. Such specialists will be aware of the PPE most appropriate for their role.

Parent and child groups

- From 17 May groups must have no more than 30 attendees. Children aged under five years and someone who is working as part of the group, such as a group leader, are not counted in the number.
- Group singing can take place. Where singing is to take place indoors, no more than six adults in the room, including the group leader, should sing along with children aged under five. Singing should be limited to the same six adults for the duration of the group session. Where singing is to take place outdoors, multiple groups of 30 attendees can take part. This limit includes children aged under five, so where the parent and child group has more than a total of 30 attendees of all ages, they should divide into groups of 30 or less and remain in these groups for the duration of the session.

Organised performances

- If planning an indoor or outdoor face-to-face performance in front of a live audience, you should follow the latest advice in the DCMS [performing arts](#) and [Outdoor events](#).

Trips to indoor spaces

- If you are caring for children both under five years and aged five years and over in mixed groups together, you should follow the advice on considering group sizes in the guidance on Protective measures for holiday and after-school clubs, and other out-of-school settings during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Use of private and public outdoor spaces

- You can take groups of children on trips to outdoor public places and do not need to be restricted to limits on gatherings as long as you meet the criteria set out within the document.

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable children

- All children who are CEV should attend their setting unless they are one of the very small number of children under paediatric or other specialist care and have been advised by their GP or clinician not to attend.

Children travelling from abroad

- Families should follow the rules on arriving in England following international travel, as set out in [guidance](#)

Childminders meeting other childminders

You can meet with other childminders, when it is reasonably necessary, and do not need to be restricted to limits on gatherings as long as:

- it is for the purpose of education or childcare
 - you remain within the EYFS staff:child ratios
 - the guidance in the section on trips taken outside of the setting is followed.
- Ideally, adults should maintain a two metre distance from each other.

[New 'We Offer Testing to our Staff' scheme launched](#) 11 May 2021

First Published: A new sticker scheme will allow businesses to easily show they are testing their staff regularly.

[Maintaining records of staff, customers and visitors to support NHS Test and Trace](#) 11 May 2021

Updated in line with Step 3 of the roadmap to explain how certain venues should be collecting customer, visitor and staff contact details and displaying an NHS QR code poster.

[NHS Test and Trace in the workplace](#) 11 May 2021

Updated to reflect the easing of coronavirus restrictions.

Updates for Families

If you are planning a trip abroad please see guidance - you should follow the rules on arriving in England following international travel, as set out in the [guidance](#).

Specialist Teaching and Learning Service Survey

Kent County Council is conducting a review of the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS) to design and co-produce a new specification. As such, we are seeking the views of key stakeholders to help inform our planning and future service offer. The survey is completely anonymous and should take around 15 minutes to complete. The outcome of this survey will be further discussed and explored at a number of Working Group sessions with stakeholder groups to inform future design principles and commissioning options for the Service. This [survey](#) will be available for feedback until 31 May 2021.