

Dear early years and childcare providers

Finishing Early for Christmas

Many of you may know that schools have been advised by the Department for Education (DfE) that they can move one of their inset days planned for later in the year to 18 December to enable them to finish this term early for the children by one day. This enables schools not to be having to contact families on Christmas Eve to inform them of the need to self-isolate. The DfE has been clear these are **not** additional inset days.

KCC has therefore agreed that early years providers can amend their term dates so that this term ends for children on Thursday 17 December. Providers choosing to finish a day earlier this term need to check there are sufficient days within the funding periods set by KCC Finance to allow them to make up this day by the final day of Term 6 2021 and to ensure that all children receive their full funding entitlement.

Department for Education Weekly Data Collection

The DfE has thanked everyone for their continued engagement with the local authority weekly data collection at what has been a very busy time. The data is really important because it helps them to understand what is happening locally and nationally and ensure that they design their support accordingly. Attached to this email is a letter from Minister Ford thanking providers and confirming that the data collection will be moving from weekly to fortnightly in January.

Government Updates for the Sector

[Early years foundation stage statutory framework \(EYFS\)](#) Updated 9 December
Updated 'Early years foundation stage: coronavirus disapplications' with a link to Ofsted's operational notes, which set out in further detail, how providers will be inspected from January 2021. Provided further clarity on the definition of 'reasonable endeavours'.

[Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) 8 December

Change made: Sections added 'Side effects of children taking a vaccination or teething' and 'Malleable materials (messy play)' have been added.

[Ofsted's plans: 2021](#) First Published 7 December

Page summary: Guidance and details of our plans from January 2021 as part of a phased return to full inspection.

Below are some notes from the document of what inspections will look like:

From January 2021, we will carry out assurance inspections under the [education inspection framework \(EIF\)](#). Inspectors will use the [early years inspection handbook](#) ('the handbook') when carrying out these inspections. The differences in inspection approach are outlined within this note. Inspectors will refer to part 2 of the handbook and consider the criteria against the 4 key judgements in the usual way

when gathering and recording their evidence. When inspectors are considering the criteria, they will have due regard to the limitations the pandemic may have caused and any disapplications or modifications of the [early years foundation stage \(EYFS\)](#), as set out in the Department for Education's (DfE) [coronavirus disapplications guidance](#), which a provider may be relying on or may have relied on.

[Ofsted Annual Report 2019/20: education, children's services and skills](#) Published 1 December

Page summary: Ofsted's Annual Report presents our findings for the areas we inspect in early years childcare, schools, further education and skills and social care.

Government Updates for Families

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

This document is for early years and childcare providers but it was updated to say '*Vaccines may cause a mild fever in children. This is a common and expected reaction, and isolation is not required unless coronavirus (COVID-19) is suspected. Whilst teething can cause some known side effects such as flushed cheeks and sore gums, [NHS guidelines](#) state that fever is not a symptom of teething.*' If you are concerned about your child's health you should seek medical advice from your doctor or GP or NHS 111.

[Making a childcare bubble with another household](#)

This was updated to make it clearer how these bubbles work if you are in more than one bubble and simplified the guidance on travelling to form a support bubble.