

Dear Early Years and Childcare Providers

Please see below an extract of a letter sent by Kent County Council's Director of Education to schools this week which concerns transition. Also below are this week's Government updates for you, your staff and families and a reminder about the importance of submitting information for the Department for Education's (DfE) Data Collection on a fortnightly basis.

Extract from Director of Education Letter -Transition into Year R

Year R transition days will be impacted much in the same way that the Year 7 transition has been. Early years settings are advised to minimise mixing within their settings, so it is logical to minimise mixing between settings. This will be challenging given that pupils arrive from a wide variety of settings, childminders or in some case they have been at home. Many schools offer play and stay where parents are allowed into the classroom on the first visit to support pupils settling into their new environment. Again, this would be difficult to manage within current guidelines. Therefore, it is with sadness that we would recommend that Year R transition is postponed.

Should schools still decide to offer EYFS events or open days, they will be expected to complete thorough risk assessments to ensure that they are run in line with their system of controls and align with the advice contained within the Government guidance and the [roadmap out of lockdown](#).

DfE Data Collection

Along with all local authorities, The Education People's Early Years and Childcare Service, on behalf of KCC, is required by the DfE to collect data from all providers across Kent on a fortnightly basis, with the next data collection due the week beginning 21 June 2021.

The DfE has stated that this is a crucial data collection, and transparency around the availability of childcare settings is critical to helping decision making at this unprecedented time. Providing data is also part of the Kent Provider Agreement:

*16.4 Providers must ensure they submit timely and accurate information, including, **but not limited to**, headcount data, census data, parental declarations and invoices. Failure to do so may result in inaccurate, delayed or suspended funding.*

Group settings are asked to provide this information via a survey link sent by their Childcare Sufficiency Officer and are asked to supply data on a fortnightly basis. Childminders have a separate survey link and are asked to update their data when the number of children in their setting changes.

Providers who are not regularly providing data are asked to ensure they provide information during the week beginning 21 June and then on a fortnightly basis (or for childminders when their information changes).

The DfE has also advised us that they will be reviewing the data collection frequency and end date so the frequency may change.

Updates for the Sector

[Education recovery support](#) 11 June 2021

A list of resources to help early years settings, schools and 16 to 19 education providers support children and young people's wellbeing and education recovery.

Change made: First published.

[Use of the NHS COVID-19 app in education and childcare settings](#) 15 June 2021

Page summary: Actions for leaders and staff when using the NHS COVID-19 app in education and childcare settings.

Change made: Added further information on app features and situations for pausing it.

It is possible to pause the contact tracing function ('trace') in the app. If it is paused, the phone and Bluetooth remain on but the phone does not record contacts. Pausing contact tracing is only recommended in four situations:

- when an individual is not able to have their phone with them, for example, because it is stored in a locker or communal area – this is to avoid the app picking up contacts when the individual is not with their phone
- when an individual is working behind a Perspex (or equivalent) screen, fully protected from other colleagues and members of the public, as the individual is considered to be adequately protected from contracting COVID-19
- for staff in a health or care setting who are wearing medical grade PPE (for example, a surgical mask) as these individuals are also considered to be adequately protected
- for healthcare workers working in a healthcare building, such as a hospital or GP surgery.

Settings should also discuss with staff and students their own use of the app, including pausing it if there are periods of time when they will not be near their phone, and appropriate processes to follow should they receive a notification themselves. Settings might wish to recommend that staff download and use the app, if they think this would be beneficial.

Where the setting recommends pausing the contact tracing feature on the app some or all of the time, processes may be put in place and supporting materials, such as posters, used to help remind people to do so, and to reactivate it as soon as they

retrieve their phone. NHS Test and Trace have [published posters](#) on the pause function.

[NHS covid – 19 app Factsheet for parent, carers and those who are 16 and over.](#)

[Download a template if you're claiming for 16 to 99 employees through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#) 10 June 2021

The template for 16 to 99 employees has been updated.

[Claim for wages through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#) 10 June 2021

Claims for furlough days in May 2021 must be made by 14 June 2021. Further guidance added on what to do if you've missed the claim deadline.

For claim periods from 1 November, HMRC may accept late claims if you have (all of the following):

- a reasonable excuse
- taken reasonable care to try and claim on time
- claimed without delay as soon as you were able to.

Updates for Families

[Guidance for parents and carers of children attending out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) 14 June 2021

Change made: Updated section on educational visits.

Until 21 June, out of school settings and wraparound childcare providers should undertake overnight stays or residential visits with children in groups of no more than six people or two households (including at least one member of staff). From 21 June, overnight stays can take place with groups of up to 30 children. Children should be kept within consistent groups (bubbles) for the purpose of the visits.