

Dear Early Years and Childcare Providers

As many of you break up for Easter, we have provided below this week's Government updates for you, your staff and your families.

We have also included information on the funding, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Coronavirus Disapplications – Paediatric First Aid Training and a Letter to Children and Young People from the Secretary of State for Education. All of these articles were included in the Early Years and Childcare Bulletin March 2021 which was emailed to you yesterday, but which we are including in this communication to ensure these important messages reach you.

We would also like to advise you that the Department for Education has informed us they will **not be making the weekly data collections** over the next two weeks (on **8 and 15 April 2021**); therefore we will not be asking you to provide us with data during this period.

Updates for the Sector

[Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#) 31 March 2021

Change made: Guidance updated to reflect the DHSC announcement that a confirmatory PCR test is required following a positive LFD test result in England. Taken from the document *'Confirmatory PCR tests - Staff or pupils with a positive LFD test result must self-isolate in line with the stay-at-home guidance. They will also need to arrange a lab-based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test to confirm the result. If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test and the pupil can return to school. Those with a negative LFD test result can also continue to attend school and use protective measures.'*

[Households and bubbles of pupils, students and staff of schools, nurseries and colleges: get rapid lateral flow tests](#) 31 March 2021

Added that you can collect tests from local pharmacies. Updated collection site opening hours to 2.30pm to 8pm. You can check online if the location is open or busy before you go. You do not need to make an appointment.

[Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) 29 and 31 March 2021

On 30 March 2021, we updated the following sections:

- system of controls and childminder sections: take PCR test after positive LFD test
'Staff with a positive LFD test result must self-isolate in line with the stay-at-home guidance. They will also need to arrange a lab-based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test to confirm the result. If the PCR test is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test and the staff member can return to the early years setting. Those with a negative LFD test result can also continue to attend the early years setting and use protective measures.'

On 29 March 2021, we also updated the following sections:

- clinically extremely vulnerable (shielding): staff
- clinically extremely vulnerable (shielding): children

- asymptomatic testing: for childminders
- test and trace payments: parent/carer claims and template letters
- system of controls: definition of a close contact
- educational visits - In line with the roadmap, should step 2 commence as planned, settings can resume educational day visits no earlier than 12 April 2021.
- resuming Ofsted visits - On 29 March 2021, [Ofsted announced plans to return to on-site EIF inspections of registered early years providers from 4 May 2021](#).

[COVID-19 PCR home test kit instructions](#) 1 April 2021

Added information about the 'Be My Eyes' app, where you can have a live video call with specially trained NHS Test and Trace staff to help you register and take a home coronavirus test.

[What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges during COVID-19](#) 30 March 2021

Updated guidance on Test and Trace support payments, wraparound provision, school trips, and Ofsted Inspections.

Taken from the document regarding accessing wraparound provision:

'From 29 March, you will also be able to access provision for one of these additional purposes:

- *where the provision is taking place outdoors – your child may access outdoor provision regardless of circumstances*
- *your child is eligible for free school meals and is attending provision as part of the holiday activities and food programme*

As part of step 2 (no earlier than 12 April) of the [COVID-19 response roadmap](#), you may access wraparound and extra-curricular provision, without any restrictions on the reasons for which they may attend.

Nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges will not currently go on educational visits.

In line with the COVID-19 roadmap, we are advising nurseries, childminders and schools that they can resume educational day visits at Step 2 and no earlier than 12 April.'

[Maintaining records of staff, customers and visitors to support NHS Test and Trace](#) 29 March 2021

Updated to reflect the change in rules for when a group enters a venue. From 29 March 2021, every customer or visitor should be asked to scan the NHS QR code or provide their name and contact details, not just a lead member.

[Protective measures for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings for children during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) 26 March 2021

Changes made to the sections 'Considering group sizes', 'Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing', 'Educational visits and trips', and 'Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable'

Updates for Families

[\(COVID-19\) Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do](#) 30 March 2021
Updated to reflect the changes that took place on 29 March about who and where you can meet.

[COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](#) 30 March 2021

This was updated to reinforce Government advice for those who have been fully vaccinated. Guidance updated regarding follow-up PCR for positive assisted LFD tests. The Government is advising while COVID-19 vaccines have been shown to reduce the likelihood of severe illness for those who have received them, they do not yet know for certain by how much they reduce the likelihood of a vaccinated person spreading COVID-19 to others.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or have received a positive test result, you should still follow this guidance and self-isolate even if you have received one or more doses of COVID-19 vaccine. This will reduce the risk of spreading infection and help to protect other people.

If your LFD test was taken at home (self-reported), you should self-isolate immediately. You and your household members should follow all this guidance. You should also arrange to have a follow-up [PCR test](#) as soon as possible. If the follow-up PCR test result is negative, you and your household contacts can stop self-isolating.

[COVID-19: Guidance for managing beaches, the countryside and coastal areas](#) 29 March 2021

Guidance for the owners and operators of beach, countryside and coastal destinations during COVID-19. This has been updated to reflect the latest guidelines but also give helpful links to beach websites and national landmarks where additional provision is in place, for example, a ticketing system or parking restrictions.

[Guidance for parents and carers of children attending out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) 26 March 2021

Changes made to the sections 'Bubbles and group sizes' and 'Children with health concerns'.

Taken from document: 'From 29 March, in line with the widening of access to organised outdoor activities for children, if an activity is taking place outdoors, providers may keep children in groups of any size. This is because the risk of transmission is lower outdoors. However, it will still be important for providers to ensure the groups are consistent, as far as possible, which means the same children in the same group each time they attend.'

Providers will need to regularly review groups to minimise the amount of mixing.

From 1 April, all clinically extremely vulnerable children and young people can attend wraparound childcare and out-of-school settings where they are eligible to do so, unless they are one of the very small number of children or young people under paediatric or other specialist care and have been advised by their GP or clinician not to attend.'

Free Entitlement Funding 2021/22

The Department for Education (DfE) has recently announced its intention to change the way local authorities are funded for Free Entitlement payments for the 2021-2022 financial year. Early years local authority funding is normally based on spring term headcounts; however, for 2021-2022 it will be based on headcounts taken in the summer, autumn and spring terms. This will require local authorities to submit additional PVI Early Years Census data to the DfE for summer and autumn terms. The DfE has requested that these headcounts are aligned with School Census weeks where possible. Kent County Council (KCC) has put forward a proposal to the DfE to accommodate this request without impacting the traditional headcount week or payment dates to Kent early years and childcare providers as set out in the PVI calendar (already posted on Kelsi but accessible [here](#) for ease of access). Therefore, if this proposal is accepted by the DfE, KCC does not anticipate this change in local authority funding (or additional data requirements) will have any impact on Kent early years and childcare providers in the coming financial year.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Coronavirus Disapplications – Paediatric First Aid Training

The current [disapplications](#) cover the period between 26 September 2020 and 31 August 2021. If during this time the Government confirms that an area will be subject to coronavirus (COVID-19) related requirements or restrictions, and those restrictions prevent an early years provider from meeting the requirements of the EYFS, the disapplications can be used. There will be a two-week transition period once the relevant restrictions are lifted.

Within the disapplications, those with an existing Paediatric First Aid certificate expiring on or after 1 October 2020 have been able to extend validity of the certificate until 31 March 2021.

Please take this as a reminder that if you extended the validity of your own or a staff member's certificate, you should by now have undertaken new training.

Letter to Children and Young People from the Secretary of State for Education

On 26 March 2021, the Secretary of State for Education wrote to children and young people to recognise the impact of the disruption they have faced over the past year and to thank them for their resilience. He outlines his continued commitment to supporting children and young people to recover from the disruption now that they have returned to school and college. The letter also highlights the importance of coronavirus (COVID-19) testing and the vital role this plays in helping to prevent the virus spreading.

The letter is published on the [DfE media blog](#) and on DfE's [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).