Dear Early Years and Childcare Providers

Please see below this week’s Government updates for you, your staff and families.  Also below are, Questions and Answers (Q and As) relating to Early Education and Childcare funding if a child cannot attend Headcount week as the parent is isolating, applications for school closing date and an invitation to take part in an Impact of COVID-19 2021 Survey from the Out of School Alliance.

**Updates for the Sector**

[Return to your claim for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/return-to-your-claim-for-the-self-employment-income-support-scheme?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=1bdd20e5-3387-450b-b234-ecdb7a8ad0d5&utm_content=daily) 11 January 2022

Change made: New section added called ‘If you still need to make a claim’. If you’ve not been able to make a claim due to an HMRC error or other exceptional circumstances, you must contact us by 28 February 2022. If you think your grant amount is too low, you must also contact us by 28 February 2022.

[Additional actions for childminders during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/additional-actions-for-childminders-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=bdeec428-f40e-4dcc-a07a-fe19a6779012&utm_content=daily) 12 January 2022

First Published: What childminders should do when someone they live with has COVID-19 symptoms, tested positive, or is self-isolating as a close contact.

[Protective measures for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings for children during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=03f27e7b-528c-4629-bca0-28800af2f47e&utm_content=daily)6 January 2022

Guidance updated in line with the UKHSA announcement about confirmatory PCR tests, clarification that children can return to the setting on day 7 if they’ve had two negative LFD tests and guidance on testing under 5s for household contacts.

[Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=28f3a77a-8bed-4918-ac94-4a51316328ed&utm_content=daily) 6 January 2022
Guidance updated in line with the UKHSA announcement about confirmatory PCR tests, clarification that children can return to the setting on day 7 if they’ve had two negative LFD tests and guidance on testing under 5s for household contacts.

**Updates for Families**

[COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=65949bff-6792-429b-9bf3-a563acf45752&utm_content=daily) 11 January 2022

Change made: Updated to remove requirement for people testing positive on an LFD test to have a confirmatory PCR test.

[Guidance for contacts of people with confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection who do not live with the person](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=468a91c9-04a7-46fc-b56d-f2b7cd6aad8b&utm_content=daily) 11 January 2022

Change made: Updated to remove requirement for people testing positive on an LFD test to have a confirmatory PCR test.

[People with a positive lateral flow test no longer required to take confirmatory PCR test](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/people-with-a-positive-lateral-flow-test-no-longer-required-to-take-confirmatory-pcr-test?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=c4085122-0188-4693-ac1c-d1fe8229477a&utm_content=daily) 11 January 2022

Page summary: From 11 January, most people with a positive lateral flow test do not need to take a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test to confirm they have COVID-19.

Change made: First published.

[What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges during COVID-19](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=a1277dbd-3e4c-44d0-9735-8afadb507ce4&utm_content=daily) 6 January 2022

[Guidance for parents and carers of children attending out-of-school settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-of-children-attending-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=7bd5f26d-5617-47f8-9e2c-aa88affb6210&utm_content=daily) 6 January 2022

Both the above documents were updated with the following guidance in line with the UKHSA announcement about confirmatory PCR tests and clarifying that children can return to school after day 7 if they’ve had two negative LFD tests.

**Applications for a School Place in September 2022 – Closing Date**

Please make families aware that the closing date for applications for those wishing to make an application for a September 2022 school place in the Reception class is next Monday, 17 January 2022.

Please also highlight to families that where they want to defer starting school until the next academic year for summer born children (those children born between 1 April and 31 August) they must email primaryadmissions@kent.gov.uk for more information.

All necessary information about applying for a school place can be found on the [Kent County Council website](https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/primary-school-places#tab-2).

**Early Education and Childcare Funding – Headcount Week, Attendance and Parental Declarations**

The following Q and As are to support you with your submissions for Free Early Education and Childcare (FEE) funding this term.

**Q - If a child cannot attend a nursery at Headcount as the parent is isolating, can I still claim for the child?**

**A -** To claim for a child on Synergy at Headcount providers must have a **fully** completed Parental Declaration for the child and should have evidence from the parent that the child is not attending due to them having to self isolate.

The evidence could be in the form of a text or an email and a copy of this should be saved with the Parental Declaration for compliance visits.

**Q - If a parent is working from home and is not needing all their FEE hours at Headcount week, can I claim for the hours that they would normally want to access?**

**A –** No, you can only claim for those hours that a child actually attends at Headcount week.

      Whilst parents have been asked to work from home where possible, children are still expected to attend school/nursery.

As per the Kent Provider Agreement

*6.7.2 In order to submit a claim for the term, providers* ***must*** *be open and offering funding during the* ***designated Headcount week****. Providers* ***must*** *also ensure that children are in attendance for their full hours during the designated Headcount week of the funding period unless they are known to be ill or on holiday.*

Providers should notify any parents that may be working from home that their children must attend their full hours at Headcount and at every subsequent week.

**Q - If the provider has not got a signed Parental Declaration for this term, can they still put the child on Synergy at Headcount week, as the parent has expressed that the child will return once covid free/isolation period has ended?**

**A –** No, you cannot add a child onto Synergy unless you have a fully completed Parental Declaration. Parental Declarations are available in word format and can be sent to parents to complete and send back. These can be found on [KELSI](https://www.kelsi.org.uk/early-years/sufficiency-and-sustainability/free-early-education/early-years-free-entitlement) along with guidance on how they should be completed.

**Impact of COVID-19 in 2021 Survey**

The Out of School Alliance is asking Out of School owners and managers to complete a survey to support the Department for Education’s understanding of the specific challenges the sector is being faced with, particularly with regards to decision making over the winter period should it be needed. The link to the survey is below.

[Impact of Covid-19 in 2021 Survey](https://click.mlsend.com/link/c/YT0xODQyMjEwNTg0ODA4OTIwNjUwJmM9ajdhNSZlPTY1MDgzMTE0JmI9ODM3NTE3ODIwJmQ9cjZzN3oxZg%3D%3D.img-u1aFMYBfkUT6bRLFz9yMFHwyL_0quk86Q1g0o6c)

The survey will run till 31 January 2022, but they would appreciate a speedy response to help them share your thoughts and the impact in real terms with those who make decisions.

In recognition that it’s not an ideal time to be releasing a survey, they have gathered a Santa’s sack of prizes that you could win by taking part. Just enter your email at the end to be in with a chance to win.

You can, of course, complete the survey anonymously but won’t be entered into the prize draw. All responses will be anonymised in the analysis of the survey responses and your email address will only be used by Out of School Alliance for the purposes of prize allocation.