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| The summary below outlines the key messages from the DfE guidance……  Nurseries and other early years providers, including childminders, will be asked to begin welcoming back children, possibly from 1 June. Existing arrangements for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers in all settings will continue, and we encourage all eligible children in these priority groups to attend. We are asking nurseries and other early years providers, including childminders, to begin welcoming back all children.We are asking schools, colleges and childcare providers to plan on this basis, ahead of confirmation. Any educational or childcare settings which have closed should work towards reopening from the week commencing 1 June 2020 to cater for children in nurseries, Reception, year 1, year 6 and priority groups, and to provide some face to face support to pupils in years 10 and 12.  It is still important to reduce contact between children and staff as far as possible, and settings can take steps to achieve that and reduce transmission risk by ensuring children, and staff where possible, mix in a small group and keep that small group away from other people and groups. For pre-school children in early years settings, the staff to child ratios within Early Years Foundation Stage continue to apply, and we recommend using these to group children.  The Department for Education has confirmed that it does not expect providers to keep all children two metres away from each other, or to care for children while remaining two metres away, as this is simply not possible. Its guidance states: “We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2m apart from each other and staff.”  It has said that it is asking providers to try and minimise the risk of transmission by keeping children in smaller groups, and minimising the interactions between these groups  To support children’s early learning, settings should prioritise groups of children who are 3 and 4 years old followed by younger age groups.  No one with symptoms should attend a setting for any reason. Eligible children – including priority groups - are strongly encouraged to attend their education setting, unless they are self-isolating or they are clinically vulnerable (in which case they should follow medical advice). If someone in their household is extremely clinically vulnerable, they should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to, and the child is able to understand and follow those instructions. Families should notify their nursery as normal if their child is unable to attend so that staff can explore the reason with them and address barriers together.  The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that schools and childcare settings must meet for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years old. Early years settings should use reasonable endeavours to deliver the learning and development requirements as far as possible in the current circumstances, as set out here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>  Education and childcare settings should not require staff, children and learners to wear face coverings. Changing habits, cleaning and hygiene are effective measures in controlling the spread of the virus. Face coverings (or any form of medical mask where instructed to be used for specific clinical reasons) should not be worn in any circumstance by those who may not be able to handle them as directed (for example, young children, or those with special educational needs or disabilities) as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases including children whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs should continue to receive their care in the same way and for a child who becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home. Education, childcare and children’s social care settings and providers should use their local supply chains to obtain PPE. Where this is not possible, and there is unmet urgent need for PPE in order to operate safely, they may approach their nearest [local resilience forum](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-resilience-forums-contact-details#england).  We recommend you read the following for a full understanding of the government guidance:  [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/nP1nCZ8VGcMNzo1iKhkqM?domain=gov.uk)  <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>  DfE will be producing operational guidance for childcare settings. The decision to open will be confirmed on 28 May |
| Q: What information do I need to tell local authority? |
| * Family Information Service submit a return to DfE about settings that are open/ closed and the number of children they are supporting. We ask settings to complete a weekly Survey Monkey return to FIS via this link. <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/EYCOVID-19> The Department for Education will continue to monitor attendance at early years settings, via local authorities. This is to ensure that we have up-to-date information on available early years and childcare provision during the coronavirus (C19) outbreak, which children are accessing it and to monitor sufficiency in particular areas. * The LA requests a ‘one off’ return to list the vulnerable children that could attend your settings and their attendance status. We ask for this return to be updated as circumstances change.   Contact : [educationsafeguarding@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:educationsafeguarding@solihull.gov.uk) |
| Q: How do I report a coronavirus outbreak in my setting? |
| There is a new online method for reporting outbreaks in nurseries and schools, within the West Midlands to Public Health England. An outbreak is classed as where there are 2 or more people with symptoms within a 14-day period. In these instances please report the outbreak using the following link:  <https://surveys.phe.org.uk/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=n4KL97m2I>  You will then be given links and information on how to manage the outbreak. PHE office for URGENT advice that cannot be located online. .. 0344 225 3560 Option 0, Option 2. |
| Q: What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in my child’s school, college or childcare setting? |
| A: When a child or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. All staff and students who are attending an education or childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus.  Where the child or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class/group within their childcare or education setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class/group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms. |

**Recovery phase**

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| Q: When can we open? |
| **A:** In childcare settings, providers will be asked to welcome back all children *below statutory school age* from the week commencing 1 June 2020. Demand for childcare is likely to be lower than usual at first, and existing space requirements and staff to child ratios for these age groups should allow for small group working. Where the physical layout of a setting does not allow small groups of children to be kept at a safe distance apart, we expect practitioners to exercise judgement in ensuring the highest standards of safety are maintained. In some cases, it may be necessary for providers to introduce a temporary cap on numbers to ensure that safety is prioritised. From 1 June 2020, childminders can look after children of all ages, in line with usual limits on the number of children they can care for. |
| Q: Can we blend children from a mixture of settings/ ‘bubbles’ in ours? |
| A: We await further guidance however school ‘actions’ guidance says  **We normally run breakfast and after school clubs as part of our ‘wrap-around’ provision. Are we required to re-start them?** *No, you are not required to do so. You should only run such provision if you are able to keep children within the groups they are in during the day or safely distanced.*  This is because of the need to isolate class/ group members if a child tests positive for C19 or develops symptoms once isolated. Minimising the interactions between groups is important to prevent C19 spread.  Guidance on social distancing in society may change as the 5 ‘tests’ indicate that settings can re-open. |
| Q: When can child minders open? |
| **A:** The DfE also confirmed that if childminders *are not* providing care for vulnerable children or children of critical workers, from 13 May 2020 they can provide care for children from ‘one household’. This will help with the central government plans as more people return to work. There is no limit to the number or age of the children that childminders can reopen for, but they must live in the same household. If a child or children move(s) between the homes of separated parents for contact purposes, they can still be treated as belonging to a single household for the purposes of this government guidance. |
| Q: How can we help children transition back to our nursery or move to our nursery? |
| A: Settings need to support children’s **well-being**, to be guided by their needs and adjust routines and organisation for those who have remained in the setting as well as those transitioning back or between settings. Visual and online **communications** will help make the unfamiliar - familiar and will support parent-child discussion. Transition communications and information sharing should begin well before the start date where possible. What can families see on your website or in communications before they start? The environment, routines, key people, favourite activities, food routines and provision, and how you will keep children safe and well will be important to share through photographs and video where possible. Can they see a virtual tour and have a video welcome message from their key person or a person they will meet on the day they start? This allows children and families to **prepare for continuity** and have fewer surprises. Much of this will need to be done in small groups, through virtual communications. <https://www.babcockprime.co.uk/improving-schools-and-settings/early-years/early-years-inclusion/a-z-of-inclusion-resources/t-inclusion-resources> -transition kit.  **Important information** should be provided by the parent or carer to the setting on day one, including emergency contact details, dietary requirements and medical needs to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the child. Settings will need to be aware of the additional needs of vulnerable children/ parents.  Consider a shared story/ song that is available on-line, and as a book in some homes, to unify and prepare children for something that they know and can expect on their first day. Ensure children can play in role and act out what they are feeling and their experiences. Young children will not recall the ‘familiar’ from 6 weeks+ ago so assume they are new to you and you will need to build relationships. Above all, talk to them and their parent[s] about what they have enjoyed doing at home and can continue to experience, and how you can support the child to settle and feel safe. It may be wise for settings to re-visit their ‘**all about me’** information sharing arrangements with parents; to clarify family, health, contact, well-being and celebration details. There will need to be extra arrangements for information sharing before children start and during the early days of return. <http://evolutionaryparenting.com/daycare-and-cortisol-levels-what-does-this-tell-us/> Also s*ee FAQ below*  EYSAT Transition Guidance <https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/education/children-and-young-peoples-send-service/early-years-send-team-2/early-years-advice-sheets/> |
| Q: What will I need to consider as I re-open? |
| A: Management of people and spaces –**Risk Assessment**: Check premises that have been fully shut for **safety** – <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-school-premises-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak> . Opening times, numbers of children to be supported and staffing arrangements will be a priority and demand-management work in respect of people and resources/ stocks [such as PPE/ hand wash/care]. Safeguarding and welfare arrangements have been relaxed in some areas with the need for settings to use their best endeavours to meet them. Settings continue to have some challenges around sufficiency of first aid trained staff and suitably qualified staff which will continue. Rotas may need to be communicated to parents to ensure they know who their ‘**key person’** is each day and prepare children.  How will you **communicate** your ‘it’s safe here’ offer to parents? You will need to remove items that are difficult to clean and keep clean, rotas to frequently clean high traffic/ contact areas, individual towels/ bedding/ etc. so that children don’t share them and put up **posters** to remind staff about hygiene practices and expectations. What will you put in place for staff using public transport and larger **group** times [staff lunch and children’s **lunch** – serve not canteen style for now for example]? Can windows be open and outdoor spaces be used more frequently? How will you limit movement between rooms/ spaces? Parent drop off and collection for safe distancing and parent ‘meetings’ will need consideration. Where will buggies and things from multiple homes be stored safely? What will your ‘visitors’ policy be? How will you help adults to be calm to support children to feel safe? What will be your new **distancing** greeting promoted to be friendly but avoid hugs if you can – although you will hug them if they approach you for a cuddle? Will you keep children to key group social ‘**bubbles**’ to play together? Remember child development and the needs of young children. Parents and children will need support during this unsettling time and will need to know that appropriate safe physical contact continues for young children when they need it.  **Policies** may need to be amended for this time. The designated **safeguarding** lead and special needs co-ordinator, as well as those with specialism for health and safety and behaviour, will be key to supporting children. Staff may also need re-**induction** training on child protection and safeguarding, health and safety. Communication and consistent messages will be important to build trust and confidence.  **Important information** should be provided/ refreshed by the parent or carer to the setting on day one, including emergency contact details, dietary requirements and medical needs to safeguard the health, safety and **welfare** of the child. Building upon children’s **interests** and celebrations shared from their time away from the setting. There may also be changes to a **family context**, which settings would benefit from knowing, and which could be relevant to share to best meet child’s needs and emotional well-being. What has the child shown that they loved, learned, didn’t like during their absence? Settings may be **different** for those that remember – staff and children may not wear ‘uniform’ but wear gloves at times and some things may not be available [large group sessions] as before and families may need to be prepared. Meal times and outdoor play times may be staggered and hand washing more frequent.  **Routine** amendments: Regular activities and routines may need to be revised based on the context and needs of the children. – experiences during absence / attendance in the previous week , flexibility based upon current needs/ interests, additional hygiene requirements with potentially more children and their use of toys and the setting. How will positive **behaviour** be supported during this time? We need to be careful in the ways we encourage social distancing but encourage **social** skills. What visual props can be used for children to understand ‘**rules**’ and how can stories, songs, signs and language be used to make these **positive** rather than ‘don’t do’ messages? Settings will need to ensure that best practices are re-established for effective communication and optimal teaching interactions for staff who have either been off work or working in a different way. Settings will need to consider how to reduce the numbers of parents in a setting whilst continuing to share celebrations, worries and communicate ‘all’s well here’ in other ways such as through electronic communications.  Support for children’s **personal, social and emotional needs** will be a priority. Re visit your **transition** procedures. <https://www.unicef.org.uk/coronavirus-children-in-lockdown/> & <https://emergingminds.org.uk/co-space-study-1st-update/> show emerging findings such as those from the Co-SPYCE study [school and pre-school versions]. Staff will need to be aware of parent partnership **information sharing** for the home learning offer and how this compliments the settings offer. How will the setting manage toys and things bought from home? They may worry more about people.  **Curriculum**: intent> implementation> impact – what are your **priorities** for the first days/ weeks? Characteristics of learning, PSE, making the unfamiliar> familiar, communication, continuity of their learning from home> school. Consider songs, rhymes and spatial awareness (keeping spaces between you) activities to reinforce key rules and desired behaviour. Children may not have been used to learning in a group and show signs of worry or try to gain control of their experiences in different ways. <https://parentingfromscratch.wordpress.com/2014/08/11/behavior-is-an-iceberg/>  Pupils **voice**: Settings should ensure they give children a voice through the 100 languages they use to communicate how they are feeling and their needs. They may need to sleep more, need more cuddles, need more reassurance, etc. How will **key persons** get to know children and their needs now? <http://www.ncb.org.uk/resources-publications/listening-way-life-why-how-we-listen-young-children>  *See actions suggested by Dfe at the end of this guidance* |
| Q: What about those children moving on to a new setting? What information should I pass on? In Solihull 6th July 2020 is ‘transition week’. |
| A: The advice from public health is not to have new pupils into school before September. Therefore, we will not have pupils physically transitioning and this will need to be virtually until those pupils are on role from September.  Assessment – the statutory assessment arrangements have been relaxed but practitioners will continue to need to observe and respond to **children’s needs**. Practitioners will need to be aware of the need to pass on information about children’s learning characteristics and development to the next phase of their education in collaboration with [and the permission of] parents. Arrangements for continuity will be different depending on the timing of the next phases of return to education and care. SEN and vulnerable children and their families may need further discussion to support transition.  Face-to-face meetings will probably be reduced and the more the ‘new’ setting can share information through post, photograph, video, virtual meetings the better. Parents may refer to you to talk through this information. Consider continuing with the actions you usually take in this situation –but at a distance. |

**Useful weblinks:**

[www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc](http://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc) - resources and EEF pages

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2> - revised and temporary EYFS

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofsted-coronavirus-covid-19-rolling-update> - Ofsted

<https://www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder> - business finance guidance

<https://foundationyears.org.uk/2020/05/vodcast-on-early-years-funding-arrangements-to-support-childcare-sufficiency/> - vodcast

Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership 0800 032 3488 offers business support <https://www.gbslepgrowthhub.co.uk/business-advice/coronavirus>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings> - DfE collections of useful guidance

<https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/socialservicesandhealth/childrenfamilies/fis/parentingsupport> - parent support

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-children-aged-2-to-4-to-learn-at-home-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

<https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/socialservicesandhealth/Coronavirus> -support for you

<https://famly.co/blog/covid-19/denmark-reopening-child-care-corona/> - we are not promoting the product but the information from Denmark and the associated resources may be useful ☺

<https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/nurseries-childminders-reopen-after-coronavirus-lockdown> -FAQ from EY Alliance

For further support please contact:

Solihull Family Information Service - <http://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc/eef/>

Solihull EYSAT <https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/education/children-and-young-peoples-send-service/early-years-send-team-2/>

##### Early Years and Education Improvement - <http://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc/support/>

The checklist for opening follow on the next pages….

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| **DfE guidance checklist:**  Area to action ahead of ‘re-opening’ to a wider child intake ………………………………. | Relevant    done |
| Refresh your risk assessment in light of government advise and C19 including health and safety compliance checks –see details below. How will these be displayed around the setting? Include the action if a member of staff/ child falls ill. Do you need more PPE supplies [gloves]? How to ensure supported and frequent handwashing with flowing soap and warm water. Will there be a supply of cleaning equipment safely stored and available for each group? How will you ensure access to water? |  |
| Actions: |  |
| Look at the rooms and numbers of children that will/ could be in your settings [and staffing availability] to plan for group ‘bubbles’ using child:adult ratio, organisation routines and talk to staff/parents about their thoughts and concerns. How will you communicate this to parents? |  |
| Actions: |  |
| Decide content and timing of staff communication(s) including if bringing staff in in advance of pupils returning is necessary. What training is necessary for altered policies and procedures?  Consider options if necessary staffing levels can’t be maintained (including leaders and key staff like designated safeguarding leads and first aid providers). |  |
| Actions: |  |
| How will you accommodate the vulnerable and critical worker children that have been attending alongside the newer arrivals – how will this be communicated? |  |
| Actions: |  |
| Agree what returning support is available for vulnerable and/or disadvantaged children (including any with dual-attendance) and put in place provision for the return of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in conjunction with families and other agencies and engage with partners who will help to provide that support, for example, local authorities. |  |
| Actions: |  |
| Agree what safeguarding provision is needed to support returning children (e.g.new concerns, refresh staffs understanding of acting on concerns, ensuring you have all relevant/ accurate info for each child [incl emergency contacts], being mindful of staff well-being and process for acting on concerns about staff behaviour and potential risks to children, children at home [esp. vulnerable/ shielding] and process for parent- key person communication and consider any necessary changes and referrals as more children return). Check for revised protocols from your LSCP and update safeguarding policy if necessary. <https://solihulllscp.co.uk/latest/news/newsletters-4/lscp-newsletter-74> |  |
| Actions: |  |
| Update behaviour policies to reflect the new rules and routines necessary to reduce risk in your setting and agree how to communicate this to school staff, students and parents |  |
| Actions: |  |
| What other policies/ contracts need amending –consider visitors, contractors, pre-organised events, enhanced cleaning schedule. Source visuals to remind adults and children to wash hands regularly, tissue hygiene, etc Will each child have a bag of mark makers/ tools? |  |
| Actions: |  |
| Work with your catering supplier to ensure meals are available - will you need to change routines [if children usually share spoons to dish up you will want to alter this] |  |
| Actions: |  |
| Think about your curriculum priorities – your intent for the early weeks and later weeks…..your best endeavours to provide the EYFS learning requirements? How about support for PSE/ well-being/ characteristics of learning/ worries about family members they are seeing less? How will you support practitioners that are with an age group they are less familiar with? |  |
| Actions: *read FAQ above* |  |
| **Reduce mixing within education or childcare setting by:**  •accessing rooms directly from outside where possible |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •considering one-way circulation/ staggered breaks and ways to limit contact in shared corridors |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •staggering lunch breaks - children should clean their hands beforehand and enter in the groups they are already in, groups should be kept apart as much as possible and tables should be cleaned between each group. If such measures are not possible, children should be brought their lunch in their rooms |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •ensuring that toilets do not become crowded by limiting the number of children who use the toilet facilities at one time and help is available for children to wash their hands |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •noting that younger children need additional support to follow these measures (for example social stories and songs to support them in understanding how to follow rules)-curriculum |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •consider how to keep small groups of children together throughout the day and to avoid larger groups of children mixing and try to keep staff / key persons consistently with that group |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •ensure that wherever possible children use the same room or area of a setting throughout the day, with a thorough cleaning of the rooms and resources at the end of the day |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •tell parents that only one parent should attend. How will they pass on crucial information? Parents may need support – early help is crucial for children who have been in less advantaged circumstances. |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •tell parents (and children) their allocated drop off and collection times/ location and the process for doing so, including protocols for minimising adult to adult contact (for example, which entrance to use) |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •make clear to parents that they cannot gather at entrance gates or doors, or enter the site (unless they have a pre-arranged appointment, which should be conducted safely) |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •ensure parents are aware of recommendations on transport to and from the childcare setting |  |
| Actions: |  |
| **Use outside space:**  •as much as possible and let the outside in by keeping windows and doors open [safely- so head bumps and egress limited] |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •Outdoor equipment should be appropriately cleaned between groups of children using it, and multiple groups should not use it simultaneously. Read <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings> |  |
| Actions: |  |
| **For shared rooms:**  •use shared areas for lunch and exercise at half capacity. If groups take staggered breaks between sessions, these areas can be shared as long as different groups do not mix (or play sports or games together) and adequate cleaning between groups is in place. |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •stagger the use of staff rooms and offices to limit occupancy |  |
| Actions: |  |
| **Reduce the use of shared resources:**  •by limiting the amount of shared resources that are taken home and limit exchange of take-home resources between children and staff |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •by seeking to prevent the sharing of equipment where possible. Shared materials and surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected more frequently |  |
| Actions |  |
| •consider how play equipment is used ensuring it is appropriately cleaned between groups of children using it, and that multiple groups do not use it simultaneously |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •remove unnecessary items from rooms and other learning environments where there is space to store it elsewhere |  |
| Actions: |  |
| •remove soft furnishings, soft toys and toys that are hard to clean (such as those with intricate parts) |  |
| Actions: |  |
| • practical lessons can go ahead if equipment can be cleaned thoroughly and the learning environment is occupied by the same children in one day, or properly cleaned between cohorts |  |
| Actions: |  |
| **Adjust transport arrangements where necessary including**:  •encouraging parents and children to walk or cycle to their education setting where possible |  |
| Actions: |  |
| • follow the government guidance on how to travel safely when planning their travel, particularly if public transport is required |  |
| Actions: |  |
| **Further actions – see ideas ‘resources’** on [www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc](http://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc)  Eg completing LA data returns – opening & attendance status  Liaise with complementary settings – eg where you provider wrap around or after school care  How will you store and share ‘products’ made in the setting –such as pictures for home?  bins for safe tissue disposal, nappy safety [as numbers increase]  When will you have the first fire drill – to practice safety arrangements? |  |
| Actions: |  |

This is part of a longer check-list from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/opening-schools-for-more-children-and-young-people-initial-planning-framework-for-schools-in-england>

<https://foundationyears.org.uk/category/news/> - watch the foundation years vodcasts and those on Flavor.