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| We are asking all childcare settings, including childminders, to provide care for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers where possible. Care should be provided to children of critical workers and vulnerable children only, in order to limit the spread of the virus. Other children should remain at home, in order to further reduce the number of social interactions and thus flatten the upward curve of the coronavirus outbreak. Children with at least one parent or carer who is critical to the coronavirus response can attend a setting if required. Many working parents who are critical workers may also be able to ensure their child is kept at home. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>  This poster may be [useful guidance](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/uD-jC99QAImX781tposVQ?domain=lnks.gd) when considering the needs of a child who becomes unwell  *The final section of this document includes some guidance to consider when ‘re opening’.* |
| Q: What is the local authority role in supporting sufficiency of childcare during this time? |
| A: The LA has a sufficiency duty and will work with local providers and neighbouring LAs to monitor demand from critical workers and for vulnerable children to support and broker places across the LA. Local authorities can now use their free entitlement funding differently, redistributing it – in exceptional cases and in a clearly focussed and targeted way – in order to secure childcare for the children of critical workers and for vulnerable children, where their usual arrangements are no longer possible. |
| Q: What information do we need to communicate to the LA? |
| A: We have asked all settings to keep us informed of their current position. Let us know if you are closed so that we can communicate this to parents and others settings via Social Solihull Family Information Service [FIS] <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/familyinfo> 🖰 [familyinfo@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:familyinfo@solihull.gov.uk) The LA need to submit data relating to the number of schools and setting open across the LA and the numbers of children they are caring for. Thankyou for submitting this information which enables an accurate picture of Solihull’s early years and childcare position to be communicated to the DfE. You have also been asked for a one-off return to tell us about each vulnerable child in your care and their attendance status.  <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/familyinfo> <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/Schools-learning/Coronavirus-Schools> sites indicate which settings are open  Please let us know if providers open in your area that may be unregistered or those who are not operating as per the government ‘partial closure’ guidance.  Whilst training and setting visits are suspended at this time, we will try our best to support you both through our children’s services Headlines publication and through e mail and telephone support. |
| Q:What is a critical worker? |
| A: The list is on <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures> parents have been asked to use the flow chart [below] to check whether their role is key to the local and national infrastructure, and where children cannot be cared for in their home. <http://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc/news/letter-to-early-years-and-childcare-providers-in-england/> - parents letter |
| Q: Who is considered vulnerable? |
| A: The guidance is at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people> –it includes children with Education Health and Care Plans and those children who have a social worker. Please keep the local authority SEND/ social care/ virtual school aware of children’s attendance. |
| Q: How can I help a child move to a new setting if mine has to close? |
| A: Social Solihull website is regularly updated by FIS. You can check which settings are open in the required locality. We ask you to support families to find alternative places. Where a child is more vulnerable, and needs a higher level of support, we ask for settings and parents to support the move to a new provider and share information that supports the child and families on-going well-being. Where social workers, or a wider range of professionals such as health care professionals, are involved, the setting should communicate with those needed to support on-going care. We ask key people to transfer with the child to their new setting where possible. |
| Q: Can I charge parents who pay for child care in my setting? |
| A: The government has urged childcare providers to be sensitive during these times. This question is part of the guidance in <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures>. We recommend you do not charge the parents of children, who are not in your care, for food and nappies etc. that they are not using. There are a selection of business support schemes to help childcare settings recover lost earnings. Payments already received [such as EEF] will be considered when calculating the financial support to cover lost income. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/eligibility-for-government-childcare-offers-protected> - Temporary measures ensure critical workers will still be eligible for childcare offers if their income has changed due to coronavirus. These arrangements will be reviewed over the summer. Parents are required to reconfirm their eligibility for 30 hours free childcare and Tax-Free Childcare quarterly. The 30 hours deadline for the summer term has been extended to the 31st August to give working parents additional time to protect their place. |
| Q: Does the EYFS still apply? For example ratios and the need for every early years provision to have an on-site Paediatric first aid trained practitioner where there are early years children |
| A: The EYFS has been updated to outline temporary amendments to the requirements. Full details of the amendments can be found in the link below, which also includes details about how the temporary arrangements will be brought to an end. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2> This includes those around: ratios and qualifications of staff, paediatric first aid certificates, learning and development and the progress check at age 2. |
| 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: Safety and personal protection equipment [PPE]- how do settings stay safe? |
| A: Guidance on hygiene, social distancing in education settings, and health and safety are outlined below. Settings are often working with very young children where social distancing is difficult.  Handwashing guidance is here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19> Soap and water, and regular handwashing for at least 20 seconds, is the best way of staying safe. Handwashing with soap employs mechanical action that loosens bacteria and viruses from the skin, rinsing them into the drain. Drying hands afterwards makes the skin less hospitable to the virus.  Staff should pay particular attention to handwashing before and after supporting children who need help with nappy changing, toileting or eating, as well as avoiding touching their own face whilst at work. Settings should clean and disinfect equipment, toys and surfaces more regularly. This includes keyboards, mouse, tables, chairs, door handles, light switches and bannisters.  Cleaning guidance- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings> As much as possible, settings should seek to prevent the sharing of food, drink, utensils, equipment and toys. Childcare practitioners do not need PPE. They should care for children as normal, although increasing the frequency of handwashing (and always doing so before and after, for example, feeding children or changing nappies) and cleaning of surfaces and toys. Soft toys should not be shared between children. If a child displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), they should not come to the setting, or should be sent home with their parents/carers if symptoms arise during the day. Staff should clean as normal after this. Settings remain safe as they have lower numbers of children attending. The above guidance outlines additional actions we can all take to reduce the risk of infection. Parents/carers and settings do not need to take children’s temperatures every morning, but should be vigilant about signs of a temperature ( [useful guidance](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/uD-jC99QAImX781tposVQ?domain=lnks.gd) )  <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19> PHE does not advise using face masks in public places and for those working in schools and similar settings  <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-testing-extended-to-all-essential-workers-in-england-who-have-symptoms> -links to details of testing arrangements for key workers; including early education and care staff.  Social distancing <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings> |
| Q: Ofsted- I’m due an inspection, will Ofsted visit my setting? |
| A: Ofsted produce a rolling guidance [ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofsted-coronavirus-covid-19-rolling-update> ]They have suspended all routine inspections and report publications but continue to contact/ visit where there are settings where safeguarding was judged not to be effective or where relevant complaints are received. |
| Q: Should I tell Ofsted that I am closing? |
| A: Early years and childcare Ofsted <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofsted-coronavirus-covid-19-rolling-update> At this time, you do not need to let Ofsted know if you are closed due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), whether that’s because you are not caring for the children of critical workers or vulnerable children, or because you are ill. Resignations should be communicated as usual. |
| Q: What business support is available to education and care settings? |
| There have been a variety of business announcements to support childcare. No organisation should profit from the exceptional financial support available, and should therefore only access the support required. An early years provider can access the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to cover up to the proportion of its salary bill which could be considered to have been paid for from that provider’s private income. This would typically be income received from ‘parent-paid’ hours and excludes all income from the government’s free early education entitlements (or ‘early years DSG income’) for all age groups. In line with the conditions of the scheme, providers should initially use the month of February 2020 to represent their usual income in calculating the proportion of its salary bill eligible to be covered by the scheme. The reason for using February is to provide the closest ‘usual’ month before any coronavirus (COVID-19)-related closures or absences. Full guidance materials can be accessed through the following links: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-free-early-education-entitlements-funding-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>  <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-education-early-years-and-childrens-social-care> , <https://www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder> , <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme> . Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership <https://www.gbslepgrowthhub.co.uk/business-advice/coronavirus> 0800 032 3488 offers business support. As do your professional organisations. A revaluation of business rates will no longer take place in 2021 to help reduce uncertainty for firms affected by the impacts of coronavirus.  See [www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc/eef](http://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc/eef) for early education funding information from FIS. |
| Q: How can we support parents and children at home? |
| A: We suggest you signpost to the Tiny Happy People and Hungry Little Minds websites. Those families with access to outdoor space should be encouraged to explore the outdoor environment at home [balcony’s, garden, yard] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers> [section 7] <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-children-aged-2-to-4-to-learn-at-home-during-coronavirus-covid-19> Ideas for activities for children can also be found at [www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc](http://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc) [www.solgrid.org.uk/fivetothrive/](http://www.solgrid.org.uk/fivetothrive/) and <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/socialservicesandhealth/childrenfamilies/fis/parentingsupport> |
| Q: I am not currently working in a setting but have relevant qualifications and a full paediatric first aid certificate- how can I help? |
| A: Your local setting or school may need you to volunteer to support them to keep the business open for early years children and to remain safe.If you are able to offer help to a Solihull school or setting please contact [seisenquiries@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:seisenquiries@solihull.gov.uk) stating your name, a contact e mail and phone number, dates and days you could be available and your location [so that we can match you with a school or setting that is near to you if this is possible] please tell us if you are paediatric first aid trained and the expiry date of your full 12 hour certificate. |
| Q: Have the rules on safeguarding changed? |
| A; We all continue to be responsible for children’s safety. If you have a concern about a child contact Solihull Local Safeguarding Partnership or NSPCC. <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/socialservicesandhealth/childrenfamilies/safeguardingchildren/safeguardingchildrenyoungpeople>  Education settings should also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>  Lorraine Lord, senior education safeguarding officer in Solihull, sends regular updates through Headlines news. |
| Q: Can a childminder look after children in the child’s own home? |
| A: Yes if they temporarily suspend their childminder registration and register with Ofsted as a nanny/ home child carer <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/childminders-and-childcare-providers-register-with-ofsted/nannies-registration> |
| Q: How can I keep myself safe and well? |
| A: You are very important to us and those around you. The following webpages may be useful.  Well-being guidance <http://mindsmatteruk.co.uk/minds-matter-stress-busters/>  <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/socialservicesandhealth/Coronavirus> <https://www.birminghamandsolihullccg.nhs.uk/your-health/mental-health-support-offer>  Guidance for children <http://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc/resources/> <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-health-development/child-mental-health> ,<https://www.bsmhft.nhs.uk/our-services/solar-youth-services/> |

Further support in difficult times : <https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer/education/children-and-young-peoples-send-service/community-educational-psychology-service/>

### Solihull community educational psychology service (CEPS) family support line, Solihull Council's **community educational psychology service have a** family support. CEPS has produced a leaflet aimed at parents and carers. Please select this [link](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/nJh2CK8Z7cqYVlRHZ4HOk?domain=lnks.gd)to download the leaflet for parents and carers.

**Solihull bereavement support** - <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/news/ArtMID/820/ArticleID/2928/New-bereavement-helpline>

**Hub Guidance:**

When a setting works with others to meet the needs of critical worker families and vulnerable children…

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/using-clusters-and-hubs-to-maintain-educational-provision>

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| **Q: Are childcare settings expected to share resources?** |
| A: If settings are experiencing high demand for places or severe staff shortages, local authorities will coordinate support from other settings in the area. Settings are expected to be flexible and work together where required. |
| **Q: Early years settings in some areas are operating in ‘hubs’, involving groups of settings operating at a single site. Is this permitted?** |
| A: Childcare settings who are experiencing staff shortages should work with their local authority to identify how appropriate provision can be put in place. They can pool staff with another setting, or take on qualified and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked staff from other educational settings (including local registered childminders) which have been closed, or invite local registered childminders to work with them at the setting. Registered childminders can already do this under the 50/50 registration flexibility they have. Further guidance can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/using-clusters-and-hubs-to-maintain-educational-provision/cluster-and-hub-provision-coronavirus-covid-19>  <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures> |
| **Q: What if a member of staff already has an enhanced DBS check but is moving temporarily to another early years setting?** |
| A: Where members of the early years and childcare workforce are already engaging in regulated activity and already have the appropriate DBS check, there is no expectation that a new DBS check should be obtained for them to temporarily move to another setting to support the care of children.  The onus remains on the receiving setting to satisfy themselves that someone in their setting has had the required checks, including by seeking assurance from the current employer rather than requiring new checks. |
| **Q: Can childminders get involved in supporting the continuation of provision for priority children?** |
| A: Under existing registration arrangements, childminders can work for up to 50% of the time on non-domestic premises. Childminders who do not already have approval to work up to 50% of their time on non-domestic premises will need to seek approval from Ofsted, after seeking initial support from their local authority. If you would like to do this, email your [application form](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childcare-providers-eya-approval-to-operate-from-non-domestic-premises) to [regulatoryteam@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:regulatoryteam@ofsted.gov.uk). Ofsted will review the details and contact you as quickly as possible to discuss your request.If childminders have the capacity and there is a local need, they could help support with staff shortages in centre-based childcare provision.  **Can childminders work with other childminders to look after more priority children together?** Yes – up to 3 childminders (or a mix of up to 3 childminders and assistants) can work together in the same domestic premises. However, if more than 3 childminders work together they will need to apply to Ofsted to register childcare on domestic premises. |

Recovery phase

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| Q: When can we open? |
| A: It remains the case that all educational settings – including early years – are closed, except for children of critical workers and vulnerable children. 05/05/20 |
| 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, - think ‘what do I want to know before going somewhere new such as choosing a holiday home?’ now how does this transfer to a child/ family joining you? <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* |
| Q: What will I need to consider as I re-open? |
| A: **Management** of people and spaces: 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 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 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 to be friendly but avoid hugs? Will you keep children to key group social ‘bubbles’ to play together?  **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.  **Information**: 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 [walks to forest school] 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 those they can’t see. **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 workers get to know children and their needs? <http://www.ncb.org.uk/resources-publications/listening-way-life-why-how-we-listen-young-children> |
| Q: What about those children moving on to a new setting? What information should I pass on? |
| A: 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 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. |

Since the crisis broke, we have been amazed but not surprised by the resourcefulness, determination and kindness shown by teachers, social workers, childminders and all those who work in education and social care. [*Comment from Ofsted rolling update].* We appreciate the selfless dedication that childcare staff demonstrate in their work every single day. [*DfE C19: Early years and childcare closures*]

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/>