

## **Guidance on what the new national restrictions mean for education and childcare settings**

We have published information on what the [new national restrictions mean for education and childcare settings](#). This guidance is for early years providers, schools, further education providers and children's social care settings.

We have also published [information for higher education providers](#) on how the new national restrictions affect the higher education sector.

## **Guidance on school attendance**

Our guidance on the [new national restrictions](#) makes it clear the government is continuing to prioritise the long term future of children and young people therefore early years settings, schools, colleges and universities will remain open.

It is very important for children and young people to attend their education setting for their wellbeing and long-term development.

School attendance continues to be mandatory although the expectations have changed for children who have been identified as clinically extremely vulnerable.

Schools should consider any concerns from pupils, parents and households, who may be reluctant or anxious about attending school and put the right support in place to address this.

The usual school attendance powers and duties continue to apply, including schools and local authorities' ability to use parental responsibility measures, such as fixed penalty notices, where appropriate.

Further information can be found in our [guidance on recording attendance in relation to coronavirus \(COVID-19\) during the 2020 to 2021 academic year](#).

## **Guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable staff and children**

The Department of Health and Social Care has published [guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

This guidance advises individuals who are clinically extremely vulnerable to work from home and not to go into work. Individuals in this group will have been identified through a letter from the NHS or from their GP. Staff should talk to their employers about how they will be supported, including working from home where possible, during the period of national restrictions.

All other staff should continue to attend work, including those living in a household with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable.

We now know more about the virus, and most children who were identified as clinically extremely vulnerable at the beginning of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak are no longer identified as such. Schools should encourage parents to speak to their GP or specialist clinician, as soon as possible, if they have not already done so, to understand whether their child should still be classed as clinically extremely vulnerable.

Those children whose doctors have confirmed they are still clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend school whilst this advice is in place. Where a conversation with a GP or specialist clinician has not taken place, the public health advice is that the

child is still clinically extremely vulnerable and they are advised not to attend school. In these situations, we expect schools to be able to offer clinically extremely vulnerable children access to remote education, in line with previous guidance.

## **Guidance for clinically vulnerable staff and children**

Staff and children who are clinically vulnerable or have underlying health conditions but are not clinically extremely vulnerable, may continue to attend early years, childcare and school settings in line with current guidance.

## **Trainee teachers are critical workers and able to go on placement in schools**

Initial teacher training trainees are classed as [critical workers](#) and are therefore able to undertake practical training experience in schools and to travel to and from their placement, in line with the arrangements agreed with their host school. We are asking local authority public health teams to ensure they make this position clear in their discussions with schools.

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The information below hasn't changed since our last update

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## **Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline – opening hours**

The Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline is available to answer questions about coronavirus (COVID-19) relating to education settings and children's social care.

Please listen carefully to all of the available options before selecting the most appropriate option for your nursery, school, college or university.

Please select option 1 or 2 if you require specific advice on the action to take to respond to a positive case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in your setting. This option will take you through to a dedicated team of NHS Business Services Authority advisors who will work through a risk assessment with you to identify close contacts and will inform you what action is needed based on the latest public health advice.

Please select option 3 or 4 for any other questions about coronavirus (COVID-19) relating to education settings and children's social care.

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Opening hours: Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm

Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 6pm

## **Look up your unique organisation number (UON)**

If you have not received your unique organisation number (UON) for ordering new coronavirus (COVID-19) test kits you can [look it up using your unique reference number \(URN\) or your UK provider reference number \(UKPRN\)](#) or by calling the Test and Trace helpdesk on 119.

## **Department for Education guidance**

Our guidance to support education providers, local authorities and parents during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak can be accessed using the links below:

- [Guidance for early years and childcare providers](#)

- › [Guidance for schools](#)
- › [Guidance for further and higher education providers](#)
- › [Guidance for local authority children's services](#)
- › [Guidance for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings](#)