

Protective measures for out-of-school settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

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ABOUT THIS GUIDANCE

As the Prime Minister confirmed in his announcement on 23 June, providers who run community activities, holiday clubs, after-school clubs, tuition and other out-of-school provision for children can operate over the summer holiday, subject to the science and with safety measures in place. Adjustments to the current measures for these providers will be part of Step 3 of the recovery strategy (from 4 July).

We recognise the important role out-of-school settings (OOSS) play in providing enriching activities, giving children the opportunity to socialise with others outside their household and promoting their wellbeing. We also recognise the importance of these settings in providing additional childcare options to parents and carers, particularly those with younger children, who may need to return to or continue to work during the school holidays.

We are aware many providers are already considering what protective measures to put in place to allow them to reopen more widely and as safely as possible during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. This document sets out guidance to support their planning and advises on practical steps they can take to minimise the risk to children, staff and parents who attend their settings by reducing the risk of infection and transmission of the virus.

The scientific evidence suggests that there is a moderate to high degree of confidence that the susceptibility to clinical disease of younger children (up to age 11 to 13) is lower than for adults. However, it remains important that protective measures as outlined in this guidance are put in place to help reduce the risk of transmission.

For older children, there is not enough evidence yet to determine whether susceptibility to clinical disease is different to adults. Children and young people aged over 13 are still able to use out-of-school settings, but where older children are likely to attend, providers should still consider how to minimise any risk of infection and transmission of the virus. Providers should manage this risk by putting in place the protective measures as outlined in this guidance, for example, encouraging all children attending their setting to walk or cycle to the setting or get dropped off by a member of their household in a private vehicle rather than taking public transport.

We are seeking to amend the current Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020, to enable providers to be able to open for both outside and indoor provision from 4 July, provided that they follow the protective measures set out by government, such as those outlined in this guidance.

Providers of out-of-school and holiday activities operate from a range of premises including schools and other regulated educational institutions, by arrangement with the proprietors of those institutions, and other community premises such as village halls, by arrangement with the owners or managers of those premises. We want to ensure, with this change, that all providers are able to open in:

- their own premises
- education premises, such as schools or colleges (where providers would be using them outside of school hours, or when closed over school holiday periods)
- community-facing premises including village halls, community centres and places of worship.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDANCE

Providers who open should implement this guidance from the end of summer term, when state schools in their local area have closed. Until then, while schools are open in a provider's local area, they should follow the same protective measures as schools to limit different groups of children mixing. This means that if a setting opens before the end of the 2020 summer term, they should ensure they are:

- only caring for children from the eligible groups (children in early years, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6) and priority groups (children of critical workers and vulnerable children)
- only caring for children from one school or early years provider
- working closely with the school or early years providers that their children attend, to ensure that, as far as possible, children are kept in the same small consistent groups that they are in throughout the day, and otherwise maintain social distance

WHO IS THIS GUIDANCE FOR?

This guidance is for organisations or individuals who provide community activities, tuition, holiday clubs or after-school clubs for children, as well as their staff and volunteers. This guidance will be relevant for those providers which fall within the government's definition of an out-of-school setting (OOSS), as well as those providers caring for children over the age of 5 and registered with Ofsted on either the compulsory or voluntary childcare register. Providers caring for children under the age of 5 should refer to the guidance for [Early Years and Childcare providers during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#).

OOSS are organisations or individuals that provide tuition, training, instruction, or activities to children in England without their parents' or carers' supervision, but are not:

- schools¹
- colleges²
- 16-19 academies³
- providers caring for children that are registered with Ofsted or a childminder agency⁴

OOSS generally provide tuition, training, instruction or activities outside normal school hours (such as evenings, weekends, school holidays), although some OOSS are run part-time during school hours to help meet the needs of those who are typically educated at home. OOSS should not, however, be operating full-time (preventing a child attending a lawfully operating school). They may, for example, include tuition or learning centres, extracurricular clubs, supplementary schools, uniformed youth organisations, religious settings offering instruction in their own faith, and summer clubs. OOSS can occur in many kinds of venue, from a person's home to much larger and more formal places such as community and youth centres, sports clubs, and places of worship. Fees may or may not be charged, and some settings may operate on a commercial basis.

It is important that providers understand and follow current government guidelines on protective measures to prevent the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). Specific protective measures guidance has been released for different types of premises, for example places of worship and outdoor spaces. This guidance signposts to these, and more than one may be applicable to your provision. It is also important to note that some premises may only be able to open for certain limited purposes. You should check the latest [government guidelines](#) on which businesses and venues can open and for which purposes. Providers operating out of these premises should work with all the relevant parties (for example, the owner or voluntary management committee) to

identify, agree on and distribute responsibility for protective measures to help prevent the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). See [Carrying out a risk assessment](#) for more information.

HOME EDUCATION

Parents (including guardians and foster carers) who have chosen to home educate their own child are not OOSS providers for the purpose of this guidance. Any group activities undertaken by home educators involving their own children but taking place outside of their own household should be carried out in line with current government guidance, such as [Working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in other people's homes](#).

CARRYING OUT A RISK ASSESSMENT

There are important actions that providers should take during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, to help prevent the transmission of the virus. Before restarting your provision, it is important that you carry out or refresh your existing risk assessment in line with the [HSE guidance](#), identifying protective measures (such as those listed in the guidance on [Working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)).

Where premises may have been closed for several weeks, there are increased risks related to safety concerns around water hygiene as well as building and occupancy safety. You should ensure that all health and safety compliance checks have been undertaken before opening by checking with the owner of the premises. If you are the owner of the premises which you operate your provision out of, you may find it useful to refer to the guidance on [Managing school premises during the coronavirus outbreak](#), which outlines the type of checks you should undertake before reopening.

In most cases, risk assessments and preparation for reopening of OOSS should be carried out by a senior member of staff. However, you should also work with other relevant parties when carrying out your risk assessment, such as your staff members, the owner of the premises where your provision is being held (for example, if renting a school hall or community hall, the owners or voluntary management committee) and/or your local authority, to identify the risks, to determine protective measures to put in place and to establish who is responsible for implementing each protective measure.

We also strongly recommend that all OOSS providers consult [advice set out by the Health and Safety Executive](#) on coronavirus (COVID-19), including:

- [First aid at work](#)
- [First aid cover and qualifications during the coronavirus outbreak](#)

If you have fewer than 5 employees or volunteers, you do not have to write down your health and safety policy, but it might help if you do. You should share any significant findings of the risk assessment with your staff and on your website if you have one. You should, as a minimum, be able to explain to parents and carers the reasonable steps you have taken to reduce the health and safety risks in your setting, and outline the protective measures you have in place. Where parents and carers will also need to be aware of protective measures that have been put in place by the owner of the premises that you are operating your provision out of, for example, you should outline these to them or direct them to the relevant website.

INDOOR PROVISION

OOSS will have different risks depending on the type of activity or provision they offer. If your provision is classroom-based, you should find the Department for Education's [Planning guide for primary schools](#) or [Guidance for secondary school provision](#) helpful in determining how to carry out a risk assessment, depending on the age of the children you cater for.

OUTDOOR PROVISION

If your setting operates outdoors, you should also refer to DCMS's [Guidance on the phased return of outdoor sport and recreation](#).

IN-HOME PROVISION

If you normally offer provision in your own home or another home, for example if you are a private tutor, you should refer to the government guidance on [Working safely during coronavirus in other people's homes](#). You should still continue to work from home wherever services can be provided this way and you should minimise switching between work environments wherever possible.

CONSIDERING GROUP SIZES

Decisions on group sizes for your setting should be based on:

- the current government guidance on social distancing
- the ability of the children in attendance to maintain social distancing
- the age of the children in attendance
- nature of your activity or provision (for example, static, classroom set-up rather than an activity that requires a range of movement)
- the size or layout of your premises

However, to reduce the risk of transmission, children and young people who attend your setting should be kept in small, consistent groups, and of no more than fifteen children and at least one staff member. If possible, those attending out-of-school settings should practise social distancing in line with the [government's current guidance](#). As the risk of transmission is considerably lower outdoors, providers who normally run sessions indoors should consider whether they are able to do so safely outside on their premises.

This means that at the first session children should be assigned to a particular class or group and should then stay in those consistent groups for future sessions and avoid mixing with other groups in your setting. Parents and carers should also be encouraged to limit the number of settings their child attends, ideally ensuring their child only attends the same setting consistently. Dependent on the factors listed above, you may need to have groups of less than 15 children.

If you are operating provision for multiple small groups of children throughout the day, you should allow sufficient changeover time between different classes to allow for cleaning to take place and to prevent children and parents or carers waiting in large groups.

You should not offer overnight or residential provision to children for the time-being.

If you are unable to keep children in your setting in small consistent groups for future sessions, you should only operate your provision outside and follow the government guidelines on the [Phased return of sport and recreation in England](#), which allow up to six people from different households to meet outdoors. In doing so, providers should ensure, as far as possible, children practise social distancing in line with the [government's current guidance](#) and that they keep children in groups of no more than 6, including staff members.

EFFECTIVE INFECTION PROTECTION AND CONTROL

Many out-of-school settings operate in places that are normally open to members of the public, such as community and youth centres and places of worship. Therefore, as well as keeping children in small, consistent groups and ensuring that, as far as possible, the children, parents and staff that attend your setting follow the current government guidelines on social distancing, you should ensure that you have effective infection protection and control measures in place in your specific setting to reduce the risk of transmission.

These can be seen as a hierarchy of controls that, when implemented, creates an inherently safer system, where the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced. These include:

- minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does or have been advised by NHS Test & Trace to self-isolate, do not attend your setting
- cleaning hands more often than usual - wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered
- ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- cleaning frequently touched surfaces more often than usual using standard products, such as detergents and bleach
- minimising contact and mixing by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as layout) and timetables (such as allowing for sufficient changeover time to clean the area between different classes or groups of children and ensuring areas do not become overcrowded)

Where possible all spaces should also be well ventilated using natural ventilation (opening windows) or ventilation units.

Providers should note that there may be an additional risk of infection in environments where you or others are singing, chanting, shouting, or conversing loudly. This applies even if others are at a distance to you. You should consider this added risk in environments that require children or adults to raise their voice to communicate with anyone outside their household and consider how to reduce the risk by avoiding particular activities in your setting, such as group singing activities for example. Further, more detailed DfE guidance on music and singing for September onwards will be published shortly.

INDOOR PROVISION

As the risk of transmission is considerably lower outdoors, providers who normally run sessions indoors should consider whether they are able to do so safely outside.

However, where this may not be possible, providers who offer classroom-based provision should refer to the [guidance for schools](#) for more advice on practical steps that can be taken to implement the control measures outlined above, such as ensuring desks are spaced as far apart as possible.

If you operate your OOSS in a shared space such as a community centre, you should discuss infection protection and control measures with the owner of the space. For instance, you should discuss with the owner what measures are in place to clean the space between different groups of people using it and be clear on who is responsible for taking action if, for example, the timetable changes to more groups using the setting more frequently or government advice on cleaning changes.

The owners of these shared spaces must continue to meet all existing health and safety obligations with regard to ensuring that their premises are safe for providers to hire and to operate from. It is also the responsibility of the OOSS providers that operate from these shared spaces to ensure that they are implementing the protective measures as set out in this guidance.

OUTDOOR PROVISION

Even though the risk of transmission is considered to be lower outdoors, it is still important that providers who offer outdoor activities for children put in place the hierarchy of controls outlined above. The [guidance for providers of outdoor facilities on the phased return of sport and recreation](#) advises on specific protective measures that should be put in place to run safer outdoor provision during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, including:

- minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, or who have been advised by NHS Test & Trace to self-isolate do not attend your setting
- keeping facilities and equipment clean - touch points (e.g. handrails and gates) should be particular areas of focus for increased cleaning
- using signs, posters, and regular reminders to build awareness of good handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing frequency, avoid touching your face, and to cough or sneeze into your arm rather than your hand
- providing more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection
- providing hand sanitiser in multiple locations
- using disposable paper towels in handwashing facilities, where possible
- minimising use of portable toilets
- setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and social distancing is achieved

IN-HOME PROVISION

If you typically run provision in other people's homes - for example if you are a private tutor - you may find it helpful refer to the guidance on [working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in other people's homes](#). We acknowledge that this is a complex environment, however you should still as far as possible implement protective measures including:

- minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does or who have been advised by NHS Test & Trace to self-isolate, follow guidance to stay at home
- increasing the frequency of handwashing and surface cleaning

- following current government guidelines on social distancing
- ensuring good respiratory hygiene by following the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach
- communicating with parents and carers before visiting the household to discuss how the session will be carried out in a way that minimises risk

If you run provision out of your own home, you should also consider whether a specific, well-ventilated room could be designated for this.

HOW SHOULD YOU MANAGE TOILET USAGE?

It is not necessary for each class or group to use a separate toilet. However, you should consider how you can limit the number of children using the toilet at any one time and, where possible, you should avoid different groups using the same facilities at the same time. Importantly, you should promote good hand hygiene and encourage all children to wash their hands thoroughly, with soap and running water for 20 seconds, after using toilet facilities.

As with all frequently used surfaces, toilets should be cleaned thoroughly using standard products such as detergent and bleach. The frequency of cleaning required will depend on usage but is advised to be more frequently than might have been previously considered appropriate. In most cases we expect cleaning of toilet facilities to take place at least twice a day, and in particular between use by different classes and groups.

Please see [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance](#) for advice on cleaning facilities when they have been used by someone suspected of having coronavirus (COVID-19).

REVIEWING STAFF AVAILABILITY

As part of your risk assessment, you should consider appropriate staff: child ratios for your setting. You should have no more than 15 children per small consistent group and should have at least one staff member per group, though dependent on the circumstances of your provision you may need to have groups of less than 15 children. More detail on group sizes is outlined in the section [“Considering group sizes”](#).

Before deciding on whether to open your setting, you should consult your staff members to ensure that they are available to work.

Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals, including OOSS staff, should follow the latest government advice on shielding to keep themselves safe. From Saturday 1 August the guidance will be relaxed so clinically extremely vulnerable people will no longer be advised to shield. Those who need to work and cannot do so from home will be advised to return to work as long as their workplace is coronavirus (COVID-19) secure. Read [COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable](#) for more information.

Clinically vulnerable individuals may also be at higher risk of severe illness (for example, people with some pre-existing conditions as set out in the [Staying at home and away from others \(social distancing guidance\)](#) have been advised to take extra care in observing social distancing. If any clinically vulnerable individuals, including those that are clinically extremely vulnerable, cannot work from home, they should be offered an individual discussion with their manager to ensure the safest available on-site roles.

When working out staff ratios you should consider how many staff you have available to work in your setting, as well as:

- Do you have at least one person with first aid training available to work in your setting?
- Do you have at least one person with up-to-date Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) training available to work in your setting? You may want to consider a deputy DSL to cover in the event of the DSL being unwell or otherwise unavailable.
- Do you have a caretaker and / or cleaning staff available to work in your setting?

If the answer to any of these questions is no, then you should find a solution to this before going further. If you are seeking a suitable person to temporarily cover these roles, it is important that you carry out the appropriate pre-employment checks to assess their suitability to work with children before allowing them to take up their post, such as taking up references and the appropriate level of criminal records checks (Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks), including a 'children's barred list' check where relevant for the role.

In terms of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, a person is engaging in regulated activity if they frequently teach, train, instruct, supervise, or care for children. If an individual is barred by the DBS, but is engaging in this activity, including in out-of-school settings, they would be committing a criminal offence.

An unsupervised person undertaking these activities on a regular basis would also be eligible for an enhanced DBS check with barred list information, as part of this process. To understand which kind of check is right for your staff, DBS provides an [eligibility tool](#) which tells you which roles or activities could be eligible for a basic, standard or enhanced DBS check.

You should ensure that new staff members and volunteers understand and implement the protective measures you have identified while [carrying out a risk assessment](#) to help prevent the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), such as those outlined in the section "[Effective Infection Protection and Control](#)".

WHO CAN ATTEND YOUR OUT-OF-SCHOOL SETTING?

If your setting opens before the end of the 2020 summer term, while schools are still open in your local area, you should ensure that you are:

- only caring for children from the eligible groups (children in early years, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6) and priority groups (children of critical workers and vulnerable children)
- only caring for children from one school or early years provider
- working closely with the school or early years providers that their children attend, to ensure that, as far as possible, children are kept in the same small consistent groups that they are in throughout the day, and otherwise maintain social distance

When state schools in your local area have closed for the summer term, children of all ages may attend out-of-school settings. However, as mentioned above you should be aware of additional risks that may relate to older children, such as use of public transport and mixing outside of settings. You should consider this as part of your risk assessment.

Attending OOSS can have a positive impact on the wellbeing of children and young people. However, it is crucial that we ensure we are minimising the risks to the nation's health. It is for this reason that

parents and carers are being encouraged to limit the number of settings their children attend as far as possible, and ideally to ensure their children attend the same setting consistently.

Providers are encouraged to consider measures they can put in place to reduce the extent to which children are mixing with others, by ensuring that children who attend your setting are assigned to a particular class or group when they return and stay in those consistent groups for future sessions. You should also discourage attendance from children who live outside the local area. Ideally, children who attend your setting should live within walking or cycling distance.

As education settings welcome back more of their pupils, children in the priority groups (i.e. [vulnerable children](#) and the [children of critical workers](#)) and eligible groups (i.e. early years, reception, years 1 and 6) are being encouraged to resume full-time attendance at their usual school or early years setting. OOSS should not be used as a replacement for school or early years attendance.

Additionally, parents and carers of children who are clinically vulnerable or extremely vulnerable or live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable should refer to current Public Health England's [Guidance on Shielding and Protecting People who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable from COVID-19](#).

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

The majority of staff in OOSS will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases:

- children, young people, and learners 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
- PPE should be worn if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from any child, young person or other learner displaying coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms

The Department for Education has published guidance on [Safe Working in Education, Childcare and Children's Social Care Settings, including the use of Personal Protective Equipment](#) which may be helpful for OOSS providers to refer to in order to understand when PPE should be used.

Providers should use their local supply chains to obtain the very limited amounts of PPE required. Providers may also be able to source PPE and cleaning products through The [Crown Commercial Service \(CCS\) 'Safer Working Supplies' Portal](#). We have assurance that the suppliers and products listed on this portal have met standards set out by DHSC and that this route does not detract any supply from medical settings. In addition, Public Sector Buying Organisations (PSBOs) have pre-existing experience and relationships across our sector. Some of these organisations have e-catalogues offering PPE and cleaning products, including: [ESPO](#), [YPO](#), and [NEPO](#).

TEST AND TRACE

The NHS Test and Trace service will help to manage the risk of the virus re-emerging as restrictions on everyday life are eased, as far as it is deemed safe to do so. The service:

- provides testing for anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) to find out if they have the virus
- gets in touch with anyone who has had a positive test result to gather information about any close recent contacts they have had

- alerts those contacts, where necessary, and notifies them they need to self-isolate to help stop the spread of the virus

It is vital that OOSS providers play their part by:

- making their settings as safe as possible for staff, children and parents
- promoting the need to get tested if anyone is symptomatic
- encouraging staff to heed any notifications to self-isolate and supporting them when in isolation.

More information on NHS Test and Trace for workplaces can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-workplace-guidance>.

If anyone in your setting becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they should be sent home and advised to follow the [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection guidance](#). For more information, see the section below on [what happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in a setting](#).

If a child is awaiting collection indoors, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age of the child and with appropriate adult supervision. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them or you offer provision outside, you should move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.

If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products and following the [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance](#) before being used by anyone else.

PPE should be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).

In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If a member of staff has helped someone with symptoms, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves (and in which case, a test is available) or the child subsequently tests positive (see 'What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in a setting?' below). They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. Cleaning the affected area of the setting with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. See the [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance](#).

WHAT HAPPENS IF THERE IS A CONFIRMED CASE OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IN A SETTING?

When a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus (COVID-19), they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days and arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus COVID-19. They can do this by visiting [NHS.UK](#) to arrange or

contact NHS 119 via telephone if they do not have internet access. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days.

Where the child, young person, or staff member tests negative, they can return to the setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation.

If the child, young person, or staff member tests negative but is unwell, they should not return to that setting until they are recovered.

Where the child, young person, or staff member tests positive, NHS Test and Trace will speak directly to those they have been in contact with to offer advice. This advice may be that the rest of their class or group within the setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days.

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the class or group or in the wider setting, Public Health England's local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases, a larger number of other children and young people may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole class, group, or site. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.

COMMUNICATING SAFE WORKING MEASURES WITH STAFF

You should familiarise yourself with the government [guidance on working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) and ensure that you have put in place measures to create a safe environment for the staff and children attending your OOSS, based on the five principles below:

- Carry out a coronavirus (COVID-19) risk assessment (see the section [“Carrying out a risk assessment”](#) in this guidance)
- Develop cleaning, handwashing, and hygiene procedures (see the section “Effective Infection Protection and Control”)
- Help people to work from home where possible
- Maintain social distancing, where possible
- Where people cannot maintain social distancing, do everything practical to manage the transmission risk (including considering whether the activity needs to continue for the business to operate)

Before reopening your provision, you should talk to staff about your plans and safety measures, including discussing whether training would be helpful.

If you employ cleaning contractors or staff then you should communicate additional cleaning requirements and agree additional hours to allow for this.

Arrange regular opportunities to get feedback from staff on the new arrangements.

The Department for Education's [planning guidance for primary schools](#) includes information on principles for staff that you may also be able to apply to your own setting, and will be especially relevant if you offer classroom-based provision.

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

You should communicate your plans for reopening your provision to parents, including new safety measures that you have put in place to reduce the risk of infection and transmission of the virus.

Consider the following steps:

- use technology to communicate with parents and carers digitally where possible.
- tell children, young people, parents, carers or any visitors, such as suppliers, not to enter your setting if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) (following the [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)).
- encourage parents to avoid using public transport to get to your setting. Ideally, they should walk or cycle where possible or use a private vehicle (provided they are only travelling with those from within their household).
- reduce contact between parents and carers when dropping off and picking up their children, for example by limiting drop off and pick up to one parent or carer per family and staggering timings.
- when allocating drop off and collection times to parents, avoid scheduling these during peak hours for public transport.
- tell parents and young people their allocated drop off and collection times and the process for doing so, including protocols for minimising adult to adult contact (for example, which entrance to use).
- work with parents and carers to consider how best to manage dropping off their children while maintaining physical distancing.
- avoid the need for parents and carers to wait, but where they have to, consider whether physical distancing markings could be used.
- make clear to parents that they cannot gather at entrance gates or doors.
- also think about engaging parents and children in education resources such as [e-bug](#) and [PHE schools resources](#).
- ensure parents and young people are aware of recommendations on transport to and from education or childcare setting (including avoiding peak times). Read the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safer travel guidance for passengers](#).

SAFEGUARDING AND MANAGING THE WELLBEING OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN YOUR SETTING

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

The coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak may have caused significant mental health or wellbeing difficulties for some children and they may be at increased risk of harm or abuse. Due to the current circumstances, vulnerable children may be particularly isolated, meaning that the family, community and professional networks they usually rely on may be unavailable or hard to access. Therefore, it is important that you and your staff are aware of the safeguarding issues that can put children at risk, such as abuse and neglect, and the signs to look out for.

Signs to look out for which may suggest that a child is being harmed or is at risk of harm include:

- unusual injuries, including bruises, burns, fractures, bite marks or signs of self-harm
- consistently poor hygiene, poor living conditions or inappropriate clothing
- communicating aggressively or using sexual language

- appearing withdrawn, guarded, anxious or frightened, particularly around certain individuals

If safeguarding issues come to light, they should be addressed using your setting's child protection and safeguarding policy, which you should consider updating ahead of reopening your setting.

If you have one or more employees or volunteers in your setting, then it is important to write down your child protection procedures to ensure that all staff members understand their responsibilities and know what to do in the event of a safeguarding concern, including what to do if a child makes a disclosure to you or your staff.

These should include details of your designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSL (if you choose to have one), and how to contact them, as well as contact details for local safeguarding services such as local authority [children's social care](#), the local authority designated officer (LADO) and the police.

In addition, you may want to include details of Barnardo's recently launched [See, Hear, Respond Service](#), which is a programme created to help children and young people in England who are experiencing harm and increased adversity during lockdown by providing support to those who are not being seen by schools or other key agencies.

You should review whether you or your staff need to refresh or undertake additional training on child protection and safeguarding issues before reopening your setting.

It will be especially important for providers to ensure that:

- the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- if anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child they should act immediately
- appropriate designated safeguarding lead arrangements are in place
- unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- any volunteers are appropriately supervised. Under no circumstances should a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

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SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S WELLBEING

It is important to recognise that you and your staff may also need to consider how to support:

- individual children who have found the long period at home hard to manage
- those who have developed anxieties related to the virus

Some children may also have experienced bereavements in their immediate family or wider circle of friends or family or had increased or new caring responsibilities.

As part of your provision, you may wish to provide:

- opportunities for children to talk about their experiences of the past few months
- opportunities for conversations with trusted adults where this may be supportive
- some lessons on relevant topics, for example, mental wellbeing or staying safe

EQUALITY

As a provider of services to children and young people, it is important that you ensure you create spaces, services and opportunities that enable everyone to engage equally.

This may require adjustments to your working practices and approaches to ensure that everyone benefits fairly. Your organisation's equality and diversity policy should be considered at all times and especially when making decisions and judgements related to the impact on individuals and groups with protected characteristics.

When applying this guidance, organisations should be mindful of the particular needs of different groups of workers and individuals. Providers should be aware that some parents and carers may look to holiday clubs and out-of-school settings to offer respite childcare during the summer for children with special educational needs or with an education, health and care plan (EHCP).

Providers are permitted to open for disabled children ⁵ who are accessing these services as a local authority funded short break, and ensuring that provision is available and accessible to these children, as far as possible, should remain a priority in these current circumstances.

Local Authorities will need to work with their short breaks provider base to explore maximum flexibility in delivery to enable children to attend services (and to ensure that these can operate during the summer holidays in particular, given this can be a key pressure point for families with caring responsibilities); for example, some local authorities have made more use of direct payments beyond their usual criteria.

It is breaking the law to discriminate, directly or indirectly, against anyone in employment and the provision of services because of a protected characteristic, such as age, sex, race or disability.

Employers and organisations (voluntary or otherwise) also have additional responsibilities towards disabled individuals and those who are new or expectant mothers.

There is emerging evidence that BAME individuals may be more severely affected than the general population by coronavirus (COVID-19). Providers should be especially sensitive to the needs and worries of BAME children and young people, parents and carers, and staff, and should consider if any additional measures or reasonable adjustments may need to be put in place to mitigate risk. This guidance is for parents and carers and covers changes to after-school clubs, holiday clubs, tuition, community activities and other out-of-school settings for children and young people over the age of 5 during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

These settings provide enriching activities that give children the opportunity to socialise with others outside their household and promote their wellbeing. We also recognise the importance of these settings in providing additional childcare options to parents and carers, particularly those with younger children, who may need to return to or continue to work during the school holidays.

Scientific advice suggests that there is a moderate to high degree of confidence that the susceptibility to clinical disease of younger children (up to age 11 to 13) is lower than for adults. However, it remains important that protective measures are put in place to help reduce the risk of transmission.

For older children, there is not enough evidence yet to determine whether susceptibility to disease is different to adults. Out-of-school settings may open to children and young people of all ages, and if you decide that your older child will attend an out-of-school setting you should still consider how to minimise any risk of infection that they may face. The risk can be minimised for children of all ages by ensuring that you are sending them to a provider that has coronavirus (COVID-19) protective measures in place, and taking practical steps to reduce the risk of your child coming in contact with someone who has the virus, such as encouraging your child to walk or cycle to the setting rather than taking public transport and discouraging them from mixing with different peer groups outside of the setting.

As these settings reopen, it is crucial that we are minimising the risk of transmission of the virus due to increased mixing between different groups of children. For this reason, you should consider sending your child to the same setting consistently.

We have released [guidance for providers](#) to help them put in place protective measures to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus. While some providers will be Ofsted registered, not all will be, and there is no single responsible body with complete oversight of these settings, or the quality and safety of their provision. With this in mind, you will want to check with the provider that they have put in place protective measures to reduce the risk of infection before you send your child to a particular setting.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q1. WHAT ACTIVITIES AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL CLUBS CAN MY CHILD ATTEND?

As the Prime Minister confirmed in his announcement on 23 June, providers who run community activities, holiday clubs, after-school clubs, tuition and other out-of-school provision for children will be able to operate over the summer holiday with safety measures in place. Adjustments to the current measures for these providers are part of Step 3 of the government's recovery strategy (from 4 July). Children will be able to attend settings such as tuition and learning centres, extracurricular clubs (such as ballet classes, gymnastics training, football coaching), uniformed youth organisations (such as Scouts and Guides), supplementary schools, private language schools and religious settings offering education (for example madrassahs, yeshivas, and Sunday schools).

Before the end of the summer term, while state schools in your local area are open, providers will only be able to operate for children from the eligible and priority groups; these are vulnerable children, children of critical workers and select year groups (early years, reception, year 1 and year 6). However, during the summer holiday period these settings can open to all children, provided they put in place the appropriate protective measures.

As more settings reopen, it is important that we continue to put in place ways to minimise the transmission risks of the virus. This means that you should consider sending your child to the same setting consistently, in order to prevent your child from mixing with multiple different groups of children.

We are recommending that providers keep children in small, consistent groups of no more than 15 children and one or two staff members. Group sizes may need to be smaller than 15 children depending on a number of factors such as age of the children in attendance, size of the premises or the type of activity. This means that when your child attends the first session they will be placed in a particular group or class of children and they should remain in that group for future sessions.

You are also advised to choose settings that are local to you. Where possible, parents, carers and children are encouraged to walk or cycle to the setting or to use a private vehicle. If you are using a private vehicle to take your child to an activity, you should avoid using it to take other children from outside your household to the same activity even if they are in the same small, consistent group. You are also encouraged to avoid using public transport to get to activities, particularly during peak times.

Anyone who has coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, such as a raised temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste, should not attend an out-of-school setting and should follow the [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#).

Children who are clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19).

Very few children are clinically extremely vulnerable or live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable. The guidance for these groups is changing as the number of cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) declines in our communities. [Read the latest guidance](#).

We are aware that some parents and carers may look to holiday clubs and out-of-school settings to offer respite childcare during the summer for children with special educational needs or with an education, health and care plan (EHCP). We have asked providers to ensure that making provision available and accessible to these children, as far as possible, remains a priority in these current circumstances.

Q2. THE HOLIDAY CLUB THAT MY CHILD ATTENDS HAS CONTACTED ME TO SAY THAT THEY ARE REOPENING. WHAT PROTECTIVE MEASURES SHOULD I EXPECT THEM TO HAVE IN PLACE?

Before the end of summer term, while schools are open in a provider's local area, they should follow the same protective measures as schools to limit different groups of children mixing. This means that, if open before the end of term, they should ensure they are:

- only caring for children from the year groups and priority groups who are able to attend school
- only caring for children from one school or early years provider
- working closely with the school or early years providers that their children attend, to ensure that, as far as possible, children are kept in the same small consistent groups that they are in throughout the day and otherwise maintain social distance

For providers of out-of-school settings, like holiday or tuition clubs, that wish to operate over the summer holidays, the government has released [protective measures guidance](#) to help them put measures in place to reduce the risk of infection and transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). When state schools in the local area have closed for the summer term, children of all ages and from multiple schools may attend these settings.

The type of protective measures specific providers put in place will depend on their individual circumstances, such as the type of the activity they offer (for example whether children will be moving around rather than sitting at desks), the size and layout of their premises, and whether the activity is being held indoors or outdoors.

The key measures that every setting should have in place are:

- minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms do not attend their setting. This also applies if a member of their family has symptoms or if they have been advised by NHS Test & Trace as 'a close contact' to isolate at home
- encouraging staff and children attending to clean their hands more often than usual, including before and after activities and before and after using toilet/washroom facilities
- ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- cleaning frequently touched surfaces more often than usual using standard products, such as detergent or bleach
- increased frequency of cleaning of toilets and washrooms
- minimising contact and mixing between groups of children by altering the environment to allow for social distancing between children and keeping children in small consistent groups

Before sending your child to a setting, you will want to ask providers what measures have been put in place to keep children, staff members and parents or carers safe, and any practicalities you need to be aware of such as collection and drop-off times and whether your child should bring their own water bottle or lunch to the setting.

Q3. WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS DISPLAYING CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) SYMPTOMS?

If your child becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they must stay at home and you should follow the [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection guidance](#).

If your child becomes unwell while at a setting, the provider should call you immediately to come and collect them. While your child is awaiting collection they will be kept separately from others by a distance of at least 2 metres, ideally in a well-ventilated room with appropriate adult supervision. When you collect your child you should take them straight home; do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital. In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk.

Your child should then self-isolate for 7 days and you should arrange a test for them as soon as possible to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). You can do this by visiting [NHS.UK](#) or contact NHS 119 via telephone if you do not have internet access. You and other fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days.

If your child tests negative, they can usually return to the setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation subject to confirmation from local health protection professionals.

If your child tests negative but is unwell, they should not return to the setting until they are recovered.

If your child tests positive, NHS Test and Trace will speak directly to those that have been in contact with your child to offer advice. This advice may be that the rest of their class or group within the

setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. Household members should always self-isolate at home.

Q4. CAN I ATTEND AN OUT-OF-SCHOOL SETTING TO SUPERVISE MY CHILD DURING A SESSION?

Out-of-school settings providers may not be able to accommodate parents and carers being present during a session due to guidelines on group sizes and social distancing.

Providers should be able to clearly communicate what protective measures they have put in place to minimise the risk to parents, children and staff in their setting by reducing the risk of transmission of the virus.

Some protective measures might limit parent and carer attendance. These may include:

- a limit of one parent attending the setting to drop off a child
- allocated drop off and collection times and the process for doing so
- protocols for minimising adult to adult contact, such as using physical distancing markers

It is good practice for providers to give parents and carers a parental consent form to complete when enrolling children in a setting so they have at least one emergency contact number for each child and are aware of any medical conditions or allergies. However, it is particularly important during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak that you ensure the provider has your most up-to-date contact details in case of an emergency, such as your child falling ill with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms while attending the setting. You should also keep an accurate record of when and where your child attends out-of-school settings to help NHS Test and Trace identify people who may have been in contact with your child should they test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19).

If you are unable to supervise your child during a session, you will want to satisfy yourself that a provider has put protective measures in place to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus, as well as having adequate health and safety and child protection procedures. We have included checklists to support you when choosing a setting for your child in Annex A, below.

ANNEX A: CHOOSING A SUITABLE PROVIDER

The information below provides some examples of positive signs to look out for to help you make good choices when choosing an out-of-school setting for your child, but this is not an exhaustive list.

ALL PROVIDERS:

- health and safety has been considered, specifically coronavirus (COVID-19) protective measures. Providers with more than 5 staff members should have a written policy. Small and self-employed providers do not need to have a written policy but should be aware of the risks and how to reduce them
- the environment appears safe (it is a well-maintained, clean building with a clear exit route in case of emergencies and a first aid kit available). The provider knows what to do in the event of a fire or emergency
- rooms are well-ventilated, either by a ventilation unit or naturally (for example, open windows)

- soap or hand sanitiser is readily available for staff, children and parents or carers to clean their hands. The setting may also have posters promoting frequent handwashing or the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- the setting is cleaned frequently (for example, cleaning checklists in toilets are visible and completed regularly)
- use of toilets and changing rooms is managed to prevent overcrowding
- children attending the setting are in small, consistent groups of no more than 15 children and one or two staff members
- social distancing is promoted, through physical markers for instance
- an appointed person is responsible for first aid
- the provider has relevant training to deal with child protection and safeguarding issues (for example abuse and neglect)
- a child protection policy can be given to parents on request. This should say how children can report concerns and how the provider will make parents aware of them
- there is an appointed safeguarding lead
- a parental consent form, which asks for medical information and emergency contact details, is needed before the child attends for the first time
- a complaints process is in place
-

PROVIDERS WITH STAFF MEMBERS:

- staff members and volunteers are aware of the new safety measures the setting has introduced during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak
- staff members and volunteers have relevant training to deal with child protection issues such as physical, emotional, or sexual abuse
- staff and volunteers have completed relevant qualifications and checks (for example pre-employment references, DBS checks and so on)