**Children and Families, Early Years Division**

**Weekly News Bulletin: 17th March 2021**



## **Delivery of face coverings to support contingency stock in early years and primary schools**

In line with Public Health England (PHE) advice, the Department for Education has temporarily extended its policy on the use of face coverings in education and childcare settings, as an additional precautionary measure during this period of high coronavirus (COVID-19) prevalence in the community.

In **primary schools and early years settings,** we now recommend that face coverings should be worn by staff and adult visitors where social distancing between adults is not possible (for example, when moving around in corridors and communal areas). Children in these settings should not be asked to wear face coverings.

We expect that most adults will already have access to face coverings from their wider use in society, however, it is recommended that all settings have a small contingency stock of face coverings available, should an individual have forgotten, lost or damaged their own.

To support the return to full attendance and ensure maximum compliance with the system of controls, the Department of Health and Social Care is completing a one-off delivery of approximately 450 ‘Type IIR’ masks to early years providers (maintained nursery schools, school-based nurseries, and private, voluntary and independent nurseries) and primary schools where there are multiple members of adult staff and visitors on the premises. This supply is to be used as a contingency stock and you should expect to **receive your delivery by Wednesday 17 March.**

**Childminders** will not receive a direct delivery of contingency face covering stock, however you can request a small number (approximately 2 to 5 per childminder) of face coverings from your local nursery or primary school to use only as contingency stock. Nurseries and primary schools should consider how much stock they have available and should use their discretion when deciding if they can support childminders.

These face coverings are being provided by the Department of Health and Social Care at no cost to your setting. They cannot accept any returns for these items.

If you have any queries or complaints on delivery or missing items, please contact the Department of Health and Social Care personal protective equipment (PPE) helpline (provided by UNIPART) on 0800 876 6802, identifying yourself as an education setting. Alternatively, you can email [dfeppequeries@unipart.com](mailto:dfeppequeries@unipart.com) and your query will be handled by the helpline team.

Further information on the [use of face coverings in education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education?utm_source=12%20March%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) can be found in our guidance.

## **Easter holidays – launch of the Holiday Activities and Food Programme**

This Easter sees the expanded launch of the Holiday Activities and Food programme, as well as easing of restrictions on wraparound care and out-of-school activity providers for children and organised sport for all ages. We are therefore asking schools to discuss with their local authorities what support they might be able to provide, for example by making premises available for external wraparound childcare, or to other out-of-school activity providers.

**Free school meals**

Now that pupils have returned to face-to-face teaching, all children should be able to access a nutritious meal at school. These meals should be free to those who are eligible for free school meals. Where pupils who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals are required to stay at home, you should work with your catering team or food provider to offer good quality lunch parcels.

To support schools during this period, we will continue to provide an additional £3.50 per lunch parcel per week until the start of the Easter holidays. The claims window for these costs will open in April. Claims need to be based on eligible pupils, with support provided over the specified timeframe and to the values specified in the [guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance-for-schools?utm_source=10%20March%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19#claiming-additional-costs). There are no other criteria that claims will be subject to.

The government also has a scheme in place to support individuals, families and children with food and other essentials outside of term-time through the **COVID Winter Grant Scheme, which will operate through the Easter holidays.** This scheme, run by local authorities, operated successfully in the Christmas and February half-term holidays and ensures that families and children who require it, including those eligible for free school meals, can receive the support they need.

Further information on the provision of free school meals and the COVID Winter Grant Scheme can be found in our guidance on [providing school meals during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance-for-schools?utm_source=10%20March%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19)

## **Additional materials available to support at home rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing**

Tailored information and guidance to support rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing in schools is available on the [primary schools document sharing platform](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1tuYvRbcoXYvnxuv4OLhfK55j9ervL21d)

Additional resources are now available to support communications on the testing programme as young people move to testing themselves at home. These materials are easy to download and include:

* a poster for pupils
* an introduction to rapid self-testing for coronavirus (COVID-19)
* lateral flow device (LFD) self-test 4 step reminder guidance
* easy read SEND schools – swabbing yourself for coronavirus (COVID-19)
* leaflet for parents – a guide to regular testing for parents with children at nurseries, schools and colleges

**The** [**instructions for coronavirus (COVID-19) self-testing**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/instructions-for-covid-19-self-test?utm_source=10%20March%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) **are available online in English and 12 other languages. We encourage you to include the link to the translations in your testing communications.**

## **Asymptomatic testing of staff and pupils in schools over the Easter holiday**

It is important for staff and students to keep testing through the Easter holidays to manage the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), as part of a regular habit of testing at home **every 3-4 days** (twice a week). NHS Test and Trace will be supplying sufficient test kits to schools to enable this to happen.

## **Webinar on the testing programme for private, voluntary and independent nurseries**

Nurseries in the private, voluntary, and independent (PVI) sector can now access an [introduction to rapid testing webinar](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8p-x_HYHYN8) which provides information on how the testing programme should be managed by settings.

Further guidance on asymptomatic home testing is available for you to view on the [primary schools and nurseries document sharing platform.](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1X4fLxy6_ppmpmKrv3hT2M6cduAN_GS54)

## **Test kit supplies for primary schools, school-based nurseries and maintained nursery schools**

You will need to use the [contact us form](https://form.education.gov.uk/service/rapid-testing-contact?utm_source=12%20March%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) to place orders for additional test at home kits to enable twice-weekly testing of staff to continue over the Easter period.

**Orders placed before 5pm on Wednesdays will arrive the following week, after this time orders will be processed and delivered the subsequent week. Therefore, we advise that you place an order no later than 5pm on Wednesday 17 March to ensure delivery in week commencing Monday 22 March.**

Further information on how to order additional test at home kits and details on the national testing policy can be found on the [primary schools and nurseries document sharing platform](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1X4fLxy6_ppmpmKrv3hT2M6cduAN_GS54?utm_source=12%20March%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19).

## **Test kit supplies for private, voluntary and independent nurseries**

Settings will start receiving deliveries of lateral flow device (LFD) from 11th March, to be used from the week beginning 22 March. Staff will be asked to take their test kits home and carry out the test twice a week, preferably in the morning. **Please note that you should not offer testing to children in early years settings.**

Further guidance on asymptomatic home testing is now available for you to view on our document sharing platform [here](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1X4fLxy6_ppmpmKrv3hT2M6cduAN_GS54). This platform has the latest testing guidance, which includes:

* Guidance to support set-up of testing for staff, including a [‘How To Guide’](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RUHh7zDVVXi2fbS23vC_bKrne1Wq3vmE/view?usp=sharing)
* In-depth information and videos on how to self-test from home
* Clinical standard operating procedure for the tests. This provides comprehensive step by step information for settings delivering the testing programme.
* Frequently asked questions

   A [delivery schedule](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uRG20r2gryxSBrUHgijxX-rLmA2Fg_HU/view?usp=sharing) providing you with your expected delivery dates and testing supplies

If you have any queries about your expected delivery date and supplies, please check the delivery schedule in the first instance. You will be able to report any delivery issues using an online form from **15th March** and more information will be shared on that day.

The number of testing kits that you will receive for workforce testing is based on a workforce estimation using the number of childcare places on record with Ofsted. If this data is no longer up to date and thus you do not think you have received the correct number of test kits, please use the online form available from **15th March** to report this to us.

We will provide you with further information on how to order further testing supplies by the beginning of **April**.

Going forward, we will be providing you with the latest information and announcements through our daily DfE sector bulletin. If you have colleagues who would like to receive the daily email directly, please ask them to use [this subscription form](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=yXfS-grGoU2187O4s0qC-QqN_lFznWdElvOZAsgLa61UMlVaSEZWQVA3RDE1VU05SlVOQVFDNVlINy4u).

Going forward, the Department will be providing PVIs with the latest information and announcements using your Ofsted registered email account. They can also view the guidance on the document sharing platform here - [Primary Schools Document Sharing Platform - Google Drive](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1X4fLxy6_ppmpmKrv3hT2M6cduAN_GS54)

    

## **Contact tracing over the Easter holidays**

Schools continue to play an important role in contact tracing and the national effort to limit the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). We recognise the challenges of this responsibility during holidays and would like to thank everyone for their continued support. Asking establishments to provide contact tracing support is a key part of the test and trace process, as schools hold the data about close contacts and pupil contact details.

We will continue to keep these arrangements under review and will continue to try to reduce the burden on staff.

We need to ask schools to continue with contact tracing over Easter, similar to the arrangements over Christmas.

Staff, students, parents and carers only need to inform the school or further education provider of a positive case where they developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in their education setting. You are asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in their education setting.

Where pupils, students or staff test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) during the holidays, having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in an education setting, you are not required to take any action. Staff, students, parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.

Staff do not need to be available for contact tracing duties beyond the first 6 days of the Easter holidays, at which point all positive cases should be dealt with through NHS Test and Trace. This means that where a school or further education provider ends face-to-face education on Friday 26 March, there will be no need to remain on-call after Thursday 1 April.

Staff responsible for contact tracing are not asked to be on-call at all times and may designate a limited period in the day to receive notification of positive cases and advise close contacts to self-isolate (this can be done by text or email).

Where pupils or students need to self-isolate due to contact with a positive case during the holidays, settings do not need to be informed about this until the first day of the Summer term.

**The Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline and the PHE Advice Service will remain open over the Easter holidays to answer any questions you have** about coronavirus (COVID-19) relating to education settings and children’s social care.

## **Updated guidance on transport to school and other places of education**

We have updated our [guidance on transport to school and other places of education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020?utm_source=12%20March%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) to include additional information on identifying close contacts if someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) travelled on dedicated transport.

**DfE Early Years Entitlements newsletter**

**Published**: March 2021





## [**Changes to the early years foundation stage (EYFS) framework**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-the-early-years-foundation-stage-eyfs-framework?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=53c3af17-c517-4eb7-b1c9-aeff5d02c9ba&utm_content=daily)

**Page summary**:  
The EYFS framework changes in September 2021. Pre-reception early years providers can get the facts about the changes and what they mean here.

**Change made:**First published.

**Time updated:**  
4:41pm, 16 March 2021

## [**Attendance in education and early years settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak**](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=5de4ceac-10af-44ad-a964-c9b6e80540f8&utm_content=daily)

**Page summary:**  
Attendance in education settings since Monday 23 March and early years settings since Thursday 16 April.

**Change made**:  
Added ‘Attendance in education and early years settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak: 23 March 2020 to 11 March 2021’.

**Time updated:**12:00pm, 16 March 2021

## [**Attendance in education and early years settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak: 23 March 2020 to 11 March 2021**](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak-23-march-2020-to-11-march-2021?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=25b4eefc-33cb-4baa-96c5-9ebfff97d19b&utm_content=daily)

**Page summary**:  
Attendance in education settings since Monday 23 March 2020 and early years settings since Thursday 16 April 2020.

**Change made:**First published.

**Time updated:**12:00pm, 16 March 2021

## [**Ofsted: coronavirus (COVID-19) rolling update**](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofsted-coronavirus-covid-19-rolling-update?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=ab532f5a-2835-4357-80aa-0a2076c4cfee&utm_content=daily)

**Page summary:**  
Ofsted guidance and information relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) for schools, early years, children’s social care and further education and skills providers.

**Change made:**  
Updated the ‘Schools and further education’ section regarding new provider monitoring visits. Added new sections: ‘Children’s services inspection (ILACS)’ and ‘Inspecting social care providers under the SCCIF’.

**Time updated:**  
4:58pm, 12 March 2021

## [**Consented addresses for childminders and domestic childcare**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consented-addresses-for-childminders-and-domestic-childcare?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=1f998051-ca05-45b9-9f8f-da1bd9aec50a&utm_content=daily)

**Page summary:**  
This report details the names and addresses for childminders and childcare on domestic premises, where the provider has consented for their name and address to be published on the Ofsted inspection report website.

**Change made:**  
Updated consented addresses for childminders and domestic childcare as at 28 February 2021

**Time updated:**  
9:30am, 12 March 2021

## [**Joiners and leavers in the childcare sector**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/joiners-and-leavers-in-the-childcare-sector?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=4a29c351-d7ff-4a97-9569-80fb70a464b5&utm_content=daily)

**Page summary:**  
Management information aggregating monthly joiners and leavers on our registers. A time-series of joiners and leavers includes data since April 2020.

**Change made:**Published data on joiners and leavers in the childcare sector in February 2021.

**Time updated:**9:30am, 15 March 2021

**Slough Early Years Service**

**The COVID Winter Grant Scheme Easter 2021**

The COVID Winter Grant Scheme was made available to support those most in need across England with the cost of food, energy (heating, cooking and lighting), water bills (including sewerage) and other essentials. The aim was to give vulnerable households peace of mind over the Winter months during the pandemic by helping those who need it to have food on the table and other essentials, so every child could be warm and well-fed this winter.

**The DfE, in the last week, topped up this grant to cover Easter and must be spent by April 16th, hence we are approaching you now.**

With regards to the above scheme, we want to ensure all eligible early years children (funded 2 year olds and those in receipt of EYPP) in the LA receive food vouchers **over the Easter Break.**

Every qualifying child will be eligible for **a £30** payment, and we need your help to ensure that the children and their families in **PVI and childminder settings** are able to receive this.

Children qualifying for this grant in **PVI and childminder settings** are

- those in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium

- those in receipt of 2 year old funding

If you need a list of qualifying children in your setting, please email [Eyfunding@slough.gov.uk](mailto:Eyfunding@slough.gov.uk) where our staff will be happy to help. Alternatively. Please contact Sandra Andrews on 07749 709909 or Balli Grewal on 07523 933028.

We need you to provide vouchers (we suggest supermarket vouchers) in the sum of £30 to each of these children, and we propose to cover the costs of these in advance through a BACS transfer directly into your bank account

**Audit requirements**: we will need

- evidence of spend purchasing the vouchers

- evidence that the child’s family has received the voucher

**Monthly Payments for Free Early Education**

We are in the process of sending out your forecast yearly funding allocation for the monthly payments of FEE- they will be emailed to you this week. This breakdown is based on the last three terms figures.

**If you do not agree with your forecasted monthly payment, it is your responsibility to inform us immediately so we can re-calculate this figure**. Adjustments will not be made to the monthly payments, there will be an adjustment payment at the end of March for children who start partway through the term, or for children doing additional hours.

The only exception to changing monthly payments will be if the number of children is significantly lower than those forecasted, we will reduce or stop payments, to avoid an overpayment at the end of the year.

As you are aware, this has been an extraordinary year, and numbers have changed significantly due to lockdowns and parental concerns. We suggest that you under-estimate your attendance figures to avoid an overpayment at year end.

Please contact Balli or Sandra for further information

**Balli Grewal                                     Sandra Andrews**

Administrative Officer                     Administrative Officer

Early Years and Prevention            Early Years and Prevention

Slough Borough Council               Slough Borough Council

Tel - 01753 476575                        01753 875719

Mobile – 07523 933028                  Mobile – 07749 709909

[www.slough.gov.uk](http://www.slough.gov.uk)                         [www.slough.gov.uk](http://www.slough.gov.uk)



**Education & Skills Funding Agency**

Dear colleague

We’re writing to let you know that the coronavirus (COVID-19) workforce fund for schools and colleges online form is now live:

<https://form.education.gov.uk/service/workforce-fund-claim>

The deadline to submit your claim is **23:59 on 31 March 2021**.

We’ve published guidance to help you complete the form:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-workforce-fund-for-schools-and-colleges>

If you have any questions about the coronavirus (COVID-19) workforce fund for schools and colleges, please contact us:

<https://tinyurl.com/y5jep6wk>

Yours faithfully

**Mo Ahmed**

**Deputy Director for Operational Excellence  
Funding Directorate**



The Pan Berkshire **Safeguarding Children Procedures Manual** has been updated March 2021. The manual is available to view at <https://www.proceduresonline.com/berks/>

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Royal Holloway University are working with Slough Public Health to carry out targeted research into local Covid-19 response, testing and vaccine uptake.

We have launched a short anonymous feedback survey aimed at giving residents a platform to have a say about coronavirus testing and the vaccine [**https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/3QBT7KJ**](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/3QBT7KJ).

No personal information or contact details are collected. The responses will help improve our local coronavirus response’’

## **Brake's Kids Walk Wednesday 16 June 2021**

We are delighted to announce that Brake’s Kids Walk is back! We're inviting all school-aged children to join the thousands taking part in a walk on 16 June 2021 to shout out for safe and healthy journeys.  
  
Brake's Kids Walk is a short, supervised walk, involving thousands of children aged 4-11 walking at the same time to promote important road safety messages within their community. Children walk in pairs in crocodile formation, while holding hands, to emphasise the importance of being able to walk without fear or threat from traffic.   
  
Schools and families are invited to sign up to Brake's Kids Walk and to receive a free action pack. This includes guidance about how to take part as well as teaching

[**Register for Brake's Kids Walk**](https://brake.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8ace7c22f21669aa351b5d95a&id=c4369635e6&e=6693272001)

**Information for Parents**



As schools return to full attendance, we understand parents’ frustration when their child is asked to isolate at home either after testing positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), or because of being in close contact of someone who has tested positive.

However self-isolation is one of the most important things we can do to help stop the spread of the virus and help protect our friends, family and our community. Around one in three people with coronavirus (COVID-19) have no symptoms, and so finding and isolating these hidden cases quickly will help to stop outbreaks before they get a chance to develop.

If your child has tested positive having been tested using a lateral flow device (LFD) test at school, they **do not need a PCR confirmation** because these tests are done in a supervised environment. Lateral flow device tests are at least **99.9%** specific; meaning the likelihood of a false positive is extremely low – less than 1 in every 1,000. PCR testing will always carry a risk of producing false negatives. At the moment, carrying out LFD tests in supervised conditions and not carrying out confirmatory PCR testing means we capture the maximum possible number of coronavirus (COVID-19) infections during the initial return to school period.

**Once your child starts testing at home using lateral flow tests, positive results must be followed up with a confirmatory PCR test (as these tests are not conducted in a controlled environment).**



## [**What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges during COVID-19**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=a9969592-d462-4b99-b88a-91069d8ea63a&utm_content=daily)

**Page summary**:  
Information for parents and carers about attending schools, nurseries and colleges in the spring term 2021.

**Change made:**  
Updated information on returning to boarding school from overseas and elective home education.

**Time updated:**  
1:02pm, 16 March 202

## [**Information for parents and carers: coronavirus (COVID-19)**](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/information-for-parents-and-carers-coronavirus-covid-19?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=0b7d9288-ed6a-472f-bed2-0536d69d1188&utm_content=daily)

**Page summary**:  
Information and guidance for parents and carers of children attending early years settings, schools and colleges during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

**Change made:**  
First published.

**Time updated:**1:02pm, 16 March 2021



Michael Jarrett – Associate Director, Children and Families - Slough Family Services, speaks on encouraging residents to take up early education for their two year olds with breakfast host on Asian Star Mark Denholm

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/43917388>