Children and Families, Early Years Division

Weekly News Bulletin: **05 May 2021**



**Data collection frequency change**

As you are aware, following the announcement of the 3rd national lockdown in January, the DfE asked us to continue with a weekly data collection, we have now received notification that submissions for Early Years will now move to fortnightly collections. Please note that this therefore means that the **next submission will be due on Thursday 13th May 2021 before 12pm** and again on **Thursday 27th May 2021**.

Thank you for your continued engagement with the department and with the Early Years weekly data collection.

The Department for Education uses your data for the following purposes:

· Identifying attendance trends at a national level, which helps us to understand changes in the health of the childcare market.

· Identifying areas which are experiencing difficulties in meeting local demand for places and understanding the causes of these challenges.

· Targeting our communication with LAs, so that our regional leads can bring forward routine calls or offer more frequent check-ins if needed.

· Sharing the information, you provide with colleagues across Early Years and wider government to create an evidence base to inform policy development

If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact [earlyyears@slough.gov.uk](mailto:earlyyears@slough.gov.uk) or call **Clare Thompson on 07796 313786**



**Support available to providers**

We’ve heard through conversations with various sector stakeholders that some EY staff have reservations about engaging with the asymptomatic testing programme because they are worried about the impact on their income in the event of a positive test.

The Government has made available, through the Department for Health and Social Care,  a [£500 test & trace support payment scheme](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-increases-support-for-those-self-isolating), to support workers who are required to self-isolate or care for a child who is required to self-isolate, and are unable to work from home. As you may be aware:

* There are two schemes to which EY staff who test positive, or who have to care for a child who is required to self-isolate may be eligible to claim from, both of which are administered through LAs.
* The main scheme is intended for those who are working and in receipt of one of the following benefits: Universal Credit, Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Income Support, Income-based Job Seeker’s Allowance, Income-based Employment & Support Allowance, Working Tax Credit.
* There is also a discretionary scheme for those on low incomes who have lost income by being unable to work from home while self-isolating.
* Thus far (as at 26/3) Government has issued £176m to LAs, including £75m for the discretionary scheme.
* The ongoing uplift to LAs is over £30m per month to cover both schemes.

We would like to encourage more staff to participate in the testing programme. To support this we need to ensure that providers have accurate information about the test and trace support payments, so that they are able to provide assurances and accurate information to their staff about the support that may be on offer in the event of a positive test.

## **Coronavirus (COVID-19) test kit delivery schedules for schools and colleges**

Delivery schedules for the week commencing **Monday 3 May** are now available on the document sharing platforms. This schedule also includes which deliveries are planned for next week with further updates on timing provided by **Monday 10 May**.

Please check the published delivery schedule prior to contacting the DfE COVID-19 helpline in relation to expected timescales for receipt of deliveries and wait for 48 hours after a scheduled delivery date before calling.

The delivery schedule for primary schools and maintained nurseries is available on the [primary schools and nurseries document sharing platform](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1X4fLxy6_ppmpmKrv3hT2M6cduAN_GS54).

## **Department for Education COVID-19 helpline**

The Department for Education COVID-19 helpline and the PHE Advice Service (option 1) is available to answer any questions you have about 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

## **Department for Education guidance**

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

[**Guidance for early years and childcare providers**](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/early-years-and-childcare-coronavirus-covid-19?utm_source=04%20May%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19)

## **The Big Ask**

[The Big Ask](http://thebigask.uk/) – the largest ever consultation with children aged 4 to 17 in England aims to find out children’s concerns and aspirations about the future, so that we can put children at the heart of our country’s recovery from the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

All schools are encouraged to support their pupils to [complete this survey](https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigask/). A range of [teaching resources](https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigask/resources/) have also been produced, including lesson plans and activity packs, to help teachers incorporate this into their lessons.

The results from this survey will help the Children’s Commissioner identify the barriers preventing children from reaching their potential, put forward solutions and set ambitious goals for the country to achieve. For us at a local level…. the results of this research will be instrumental in guiding the content of our **‘Be Well’** web offering to younger residents.

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## [**Ofsted's return to routine inspection activity**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsteds-phased-return-to-inspection?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=f5e9e6b2-3ef4-439b-94d1-bfbd8dc57be7&utm_content=daily)

**Page summary:**  
Equality, diversity and inclusion statement on how Ofsted’s return to routine inspection activity enables us to fulfil the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

**Change made:**  
Updated the equality, diversity and inclusion statement to set out how our return to routine inspection in the summer term fulfils the requirements placed on us by the Equality Act 2010.

**Time updated:**9:30am, 4 May 2021

## [**Reported coronavirus (COVID-19) notifications by registered early years and childcare settings**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reported-coronavirus-covid-19-cases-by-registered-early-years-and-childcare-settings?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=b2602454-e7a2-4887-bdcc-14e8550a62e2&utm_content=daily)

**Page summary**:  
This data is published fortnightly. It gives the number of registered early years and childcare providers reporting one or more confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) by week.

**Change made**:  
Added data for weeks beginning 5 and 12 April.

**Time updated:**9:30am, 4 May 2021

[**Ofsted: coronavirus (COVID-19) rolling update**](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofsted-coronavirus-covid-19-rolling-update)

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

**Updated** : 26 April 2021

[**Huge rise in young children needing help with language skills during lockdown**](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-56889035)

According to research by the Education Endowment Foundation, the past year of lockdowns has had an impact on young children's language skills.

Data from 50,000 pupils and a survey of schools across England have shown an increase in the numbers of four- and five-year-olds needing help with language. The research suggests the measures taken to combat the pandemic have deprived the youngest children of social contact and experiences essential for increasing vocabulary. Less or no contact with grandparents, social distancing, no play dates, and the wearing of face coverings in public have left children less exposed to conversations and everyday experiences. The government says it is investing £18m in early-years catch-up, including extra help for those in Reception year.

This research is just the latest study looking at how the coronavirus pandemic has impacted the country’s youngest children.



[**I CAN’S Talking Point**](https://ican.org.uk/i-cans-talking-point/)

Talking Point is here to help professionals, parents and carers who are concerned about a child’s speech, language and communication needs.

[Here](https://ican.org.uk/i-cans-talking-point/) you can find information to help you understand and support children and young people’s speech, language and communication.

**Parent Updates**



## [**Local area SEND inspections: information for families**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-send-inspections-information-for-families?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=e006ec1b-f36a-4e97-9b8d-610403800a41&utm_content=daily)

**Page summary**:  
Information for families about inspections of local area services for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

**Change made:**  
Added visit dates and webinar links.

**Time updated**:  
11:11am, 29 April 2021



**New scheme to give people in problem debt breathing space launched**

Hundreds of thousands of people struggling with debt problems will be supported through a new debt respite scheme that launched **4 May 2021**.

Breathing Space will give those facing financial difficulties space to receive debt advice, or mental health crisis treatment, without pressure from creditors or mounting debts.

Under the scheme, people will be given legal protections from their creditors for 60 days, with most interest and penalty charges frozen, and enforcement action halted. They will also receive professional debt advice to design a plan which helps to get their finances back on track.

[Breathing Space HMRC](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-scheme-to-give-people-in-problem-debt-breathing-space-launched)