Children and Families, Early Years Division

Weekly News Bulletin: 19 May 2021



## **COVID-19 variant – information for education settings**

On **Friday 14 May** [the Prime Minister announced](https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-statement-at-coronavirus-press-conference-14-may-2021?utm_source=17%20May%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) that we have seen further clusters of the new COVID-19 variant (B.1.617.2), especially in some areas of England and set out the measures needed to tackle this new Variant of Concern. The [Contingency Framework for Education and Childcare](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-local-restrictions-in-education-and-childcare-settings?utm_source=17%20May%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) sets out the principles to apply and ease measures necessary to contain the virus in local areas and we are working closely with local authorities in the areas affected by the new variant. There is [further guidance](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do?utm_source=17%20May%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) available for anyone living in one of the areas affected by the new variant.

Given the increased risk of transmitting COVID-19 in areas where the new variant is spreading fastest, everyone is advised to take particular caution when meeting anyone outside your household or support bubble in these areas. This will keep yourself and others safe. In particular, wherever possible, you should try to:

·       Meet outside rather than inside where possible

·       Try to keep 2 metres apart from people that you don’t live with (unless you have formed a
 [support bubble](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household?utm_source=17%20May%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) with them), this includes friends and family you don’t live with

·       Get tested twice a week and isolate if you are positive

·       [Get vaccinated](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/?utm_source=17%20May%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) when you are offered it, and encourage others to do so as well

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

Delivery schedules for the week commencing **Monday 17 May** are now available on the document sharing platforms. A further updated delivery schedule for next week will be published by Monday 24 May. Please check the published delivery schedule prior to contacting the helpline in relation to expected timescales for receipt of deliveries. Please wait for 48 hours after a scheduled delivery date before contacting the helpline.

The delivery schedule for primary schools and maintained nurseries is available on the [primary schools document sharing platform](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1X4fLxy6_ppmpmKrv3hT2M6cduAN_GS54?utm_source=17%20May%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19).

**Every school with Reception class offered early language training**

Every state school with a Reception class in England can now apply for training and resources through an early years catch-up programme funded by the Government, to support thousands more pupils with vital communication skills.

Delivered by the Nuffield Foundation and backed by an extra £8 million of investment, recruitment has launched for the second wave of the Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI), a programme proven to be effective in raising outcomes in Reception-age children’s early language, communication and speech skills – particularly those who need the most support to overcome the disruption of the pandemic.

Part of the Government’s major investment to build back better from the pandemic, it builds on last summer’s £9 million investment to launch the [first wave](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/early-years-support-package-to-help-close-covid-language-gap) of NELI, which means 62,000 four and five-year-olds are receiving extra support to get their education back on track after time spent away from the classroom.

The £8 million expansion was [announced](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-education-recovery-package-for-children-and-young-people) by the Prime Minister in February as part of the new £700 million package to tackle lost learning, following the original £9 million investment as part of the National Tutoring Programme in June 2020.

The expansion for the 2021-22 schools year will be managed and delivered by the Nuffield Foundation on the Government’s behalf, supported again by the University of Oxford and Oxford University Press.

Developed by researchers at the Universities of Oxford, Sheffield and York, NELI helps young pupils identified as needing targeted language support, offering individual and small-group language teaching sessions to between three and six pupils, run by a trained teaching assistant or early years professional.

Nearly 20,000 staff members have already received online training and the intervention is run over 20 weeks. Sessions with the children feature ‘Ted’ the NELI puppet for games that help them concentrate on their speaking, listening and learning.

Findings from the most recent trial of NELI funded by the Education Endowment Foundation found that children receiving the intervention made an extra three months additional progress in their oral language skills compared to children who did not.

Alongside the investment in NELI, the government also announced in February a £10 million investment for an early language programme to help nursery-age children affected by the pandemic. The Department for Education is separately investing £20 million in a professional development programme for staff working in pre-reception early years settings to boost standards in early language, literacy and maths among young children in disadvantaged areas.

Schools can find out more information and complete their registration to receive NELI [here](https://www.teachneli.org/). Places on the programme are limited and registration is offered on a first come first served basis

## **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

**Bank holiday opening hours:
Monday 31 May from 10am to 4pm**



## [**Supporting SEND**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-send?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=8ed06412-1742-4ac2-bb9a-e3c69760bd6b&utm_content=daily)

**Page summary**:
How children and young people’s special educational needs (SEN) are met in mainstream schools.

**Change made**:
Added a summary of the report for children and young people.

**Time updated**:
2:31pm, 13 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=3019a9cd-5c32-4e09-8ba1-4fe88ed4beb8&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 19 and 26 April.

**Time updated**:
9:30am, 17 May 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=ec78be4f-489d-48e8-8dbf-f7b140f57aa7&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 30 April 2021.

**Time updated**:
9:30am, 17 May 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=52cbd77c-44eb-41f2-8bf4-068bacb800fd&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 April 2021.

**Time updated**:
9:30am, 18 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** : 7 May 2021

**Queen’s Speech 2021**

**Government to prioritise Early Years**

As part of the Queen’s speech to the House of Lords (11.05.21) the Government has committed to “prioritising the early years” as the UK recovers from the Covid-19 pandemic "to ensure that children have the best start in life” and "address lost learning" so that they can fulfil their potential.

Some of the key Government commitments identified were:

* An increase in minimum funding £4,000 per pupil in primary schools and £5,000 per pupil in secondary schools
* Continued commitment to deliver a single national funding formula that determines every school’s funding
* £14 million investment in Family Hubs as part of the **Early Years Development Review (Leadsom review)**, alongside which will be the Healthy Child Programme
* £220 million investment in the Holiday Activities and Food programme
* £79 million to boost children and young people’s mental health support

The Leadsom Review made recommendations based on the impact of care during the critical 1001 days on a child’s future life opportunities, health and wellbeing. The £14 million investment in Family Hubs will support Local Authorities to develop their Start for Life offer; including childcare, early education and health services; as well as information for families such as services they should expect to receive like health visits, and localised and specialist services; for example help to quit smoking and intensive parenting support. Family Hubs will provide families access Start for Life services, as well as advice on jobs and training.

[Government publishes review to improve babies' and children's healthy development - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-publishes-review-to-improve-babies-and-childrens-healthy-development) Early Years Development Review (Leadsom review)

 

**From 17-23 May**, **Thames Valley Police** is focusing activity to better educate the public about County Lines, disrupt those involved in County Drugs Lines and safeguard vulnerable people linked to County Lines.

During the week, all forces are supporting The Children’s Society Look Closer campaign. If you would like to support this as well the materials are available to [download from this wetransfer link](https://we.tl/t-CcDsV9AiPp) and a timetable for their Programme of Learning during the week is attached. *(The link will expire after 7 days)*

All sessions are free of charge and will be delivered via Microsoft Teams. The timetable below has links to the Eventbrite booking page for each event, where tickets can be booked. There are limited spaces for each session, so please sign up at earliest opportunity to guarantee your place.

Please feel free to join as many of these sessions as you like throughout the week. Unless otherwise stated, all of our sessions have been designed to be accessible and relevant to multiple professional audiences and stakeholders.



**Family Information Service**

The Family Information Service are recruiting Parent Champion Volunteers. We would appreciate it if you could display the attached poster and information at your setting /school. We would also ask if you could please include the information in your next newsletter.

Parent Champions are volunteers who

* Can spare up to 5 hours per week
* live in Slough
* have at least one child that they care for
* Are able to signpost to local services
* promote 2, 3 & 4 year old Funded Early Education and childcare.
* promote Slough For You website: [www.sloughcyp.org.uk](http://www.sloughcyp.org.uk)

As a Parent Champion volunteer you

* Meet like minded people and help make a difference to children and families
* Have the opportunity to complete Level 1 / Level 2 Volunteers qualification
* Have access to national network
* Gain experience and training to add to your CV
* Make friends and be part of a supportive network

[Click here](https://www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk/kb5/sloughcst/directory/service.page?id=5bxw4jW0ioY) for more information and [volunteering opportunities](https://www.slough.gov.uk/council-jobs/volunteering-opportunities)

**Updates for Parents**

