

Children and Families, Early Years Division Weekly News Bulletin: 23 June 2021

Please click the link to read the open letter from the Secretary of State for Education; although this was primarily aimed at parents of secondary aged children, we wanted to draw your attention and share the key information and links for you to read more:

[Letter to parents from the Secretary of State for Education](#)

The Secretary of State for Education has written an [open letter to parents](#) encouraging continued regular testing, to support all the hard work schools and colleges have been doing to increase participation.

The Public Health England COVID-19 resource centre has been updated [with new testing resources](#) to support your outgoing communications to parents and students in secondary schools and colleges. This includes:

- social and poster resources – to stress the importance of continued testing and reporting
- settings and on school social media channels
- a test explainer kit with practical resources to support self-testing at home, including the vital step of reporting



Department
for Education

[Update to the contingency framework following the announcement on enhanced response areas](#)

We have updated the [contingency framework](#) following the government's announcement on [enhanced response packages to tackle the Delta variant](#) in some areas.

The contingency framework describes the principles of managing local outbreaks of COVID-19 in education and childcare settings. It covers all types of measures that settings should be prepared for, which includes those that may be recommended as part of an enhanced response area.

All education and childcare settings should have outbreak management plans outlining how they would operate if any of the measures described within the contingency framework were recommended in their area for any reason.

Secondary schools and colleges should ensure their outbreak management plans cover the possibility that it is advised that face coverings should temporarily be worn more widely in settings in their area and that asymptomatic testing sites (ATS) may be required. Additional [guidance](#) has been issued to the Directors of Public Health advising that they work in partnership with schools and colleges before reinstating ATS. The green ['How to Guide'](#) details how schools and colleges should set up and run an ATS, as they did in March 2021.

If settings are concerned about COVID-19 issues in their area and think additional measures in their setting may be required, they should discuss with their Local Authority, Department of Public Health or Health Protection Team.

COVID-19 test kit delivery schedules for schools and colleges

Delivery schedules for the week commencing Monday 14 June were published on the document sharing platforms at the start of this week. 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](#).

New COVID-19 test kit ordering system for maintained nurseries and primary schools

The new ordering system for asymptomatic testing sites (ATS) and at home self-test kits is due to go live on Thursday 17 June. This is the same online system currently used to order PCR test kits.

From Thursday 17 June, you will need to use the [order COVID-19 tests for your organisation online form](#) to reorder the following test kit supplies and maintain regular asymptomatic testing of the staff and students within your setting based on your demand.

For further information, updated guidance, and a pre-recorded webinar about the new ordering process please look at the [primary schools document sharing platform](#).

If you already have sufficient test kit supplies to last you through the transition period, then you can cancel this final automatic delivery. To cancel your delivery, please contact the Department for Education COVID-19 helpline on 0800 046 8687.

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.

DfE coronavirus helpline: 0800 046 8687

Department for Education guidance

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

- [Guidance for early years and childcare providers](#)
- [Guidance for schools](#)
- [Guidance for further and higher education providers](#)
- [Guidance for local authority children's services](#)
- [Guidance for special schools and other specialist settings](#)

Coronavirus (COVID-19) local restrictions in education and childcare settings

How settings can prepare for restrictions to help contain community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

This guidance has been updated to reference enhanced response areas and information on the principles of managing local outbreaks including the types of measures that settings should be prepared for, who can recommend the measures, when measures should be lifted and how decisions are made.

Updated: 18 June 2021

Attendance in education and early years settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

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

A summary of attendance in education settings from 23 March 2020 to 17 June 2021, excluding out of term dates as data is not collected. The data covers England only.

This publication provides a high-level summary of estimates from the Department for Education's education settings survey and local authority early years survey. Further data at national and local authority level is available in the underlying data.

The early years local authority survey moved to fortnightly from 29 April 2021 with no publication due this week.

Updated: 22 June 2021

Coronavirus (COVID-19): reducing burdens on educational and care settings

List of data collections, services or requests which will be cancelled, paused or will continue.

'National offer day survey' added to the list of cancelled services and collections.

Updated 22 June 2021

The School Recovery Strategies (SRS) survey will close on Monday 28 June.

If your school has been invited to take part, we would like one school leader in your school, who has an overview of the current and planned recovery strategies across year groups, to complete the short online survey. Invites have been sent by email to your headteacher or school office and will have come from SRSstudy@ipsos-mori.com.

The research is being carried out by Ipsos MORI on behalf of the Department for Education. The findings will help to give the government a fuller picture of schools' views and experiences across the country and will be used to inform our policy on education recovery.

To check if your school has been selected to take part, or if you would like further information, please contact SRSstudy@ipsos-mori.com.

[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: 3 June 2021

SEND and Inclusion

[SEND: old issues, new issues, next steps](#)

The last 10 years have been a period of reform to the way in which the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified, assessed and met. This report reflects on these reforms and their impact. It also considers what has been working well in the SEND system over time and areas where the reforms have not had the desired impact. It looks at SEND at the start of 2020, when the pandemic began: the number of children and young people who are part of the 'SEND system', their outcomes and experiences at different ages, and their experiences of receiving services. This sets the context for the findings from Ofsted's visits to local areas, where we found out about the experiences of children and young people through the pandemic.

Published 16 June

[Read more here](#)

Updates for Parents

National Testing Kit Shortage: Effect on Slough Surge Testing

Due to the high numbers of Local Authorities required to surge test there is a national shortage of testing kits. Public Health have issued this letter to schools in Slough.



20210618 Surge Testing Update Letter East Berks DPH Slough Schools.pdf



This is an update on the **What Matters Most** survey results from [Healthwatch Slough](#).

We asked Slough residents to tell us [What Matters Most](#) to them when it comes to health and social care services. The survey ran from March to May 2021 and 101 people shared their views and experiences with us. A big thank you to everyone who participated.

We are delighted to now publish our full report which highlights the key issues which Slough residents are concerned about when it comes to health and social care. The report can be downloaded by [clicking on this link](#). We do ask that the link is passed on rather than the PDF report where possible, we can then best analyse our website traffic/viewing of the report. We will begin to post about the report on our social media accounts from today, please share where possible. Our social media accounts are:

- Facebook - [@HealthwatchSlough](#)
- Twitter - [@HWSlough](#)
- Instagram - [@Healthwatchslough](#)

As a result of what we have heard from this campaign, Healthwatch Slough will now begin work on setting our annual work priorities based on what residents have told us as well as setting further workstreams.

[Holiday Activities and Food Programme](#)

A new film featuring Marcus Rashford MBE has been launched calling on parents to sign up their children to the Government's expanded Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF). [Watch here](#)



Surge Testing in Slough

Surge Testing continues in Slough as follows: -

- Door knocking is taking place to ask people to undertake a PCR test in the postcode communities of SL1 3, SL2 1, SL2 5, so please support the Testing Team if you are approached
- Mobile Testing Units are stationed across Slough to support with testing at: Woodlands Gurdawara (SL1 3BU), Arbour Park Stadium (SL2, 3BU), Town Centre (SL1, 1JU) and The Sports Centre (SL1, 4UT)
- Staff in all schools and secondary aged pupils are to undertake Surge Testing. This has been prioritised into 5 Waves. Wave 1 is underway and preparations for Wave 2 are being made.
- Discussions around testing large businesses in the next phase are in the planning stages.

The Surge Testing in Slough will end on **7th July**

Unwell young children

There has been a recent increase in the numbers of young children who have been sent into Nursery or School when unwell. Please could parents not send their children in if they are unwell, particularly if they are showing mild symptoms of Covid-19. PCR tests can be booked via [Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) or by ringing 119

If a household member is showing symptoms of Covid-19 or has had a positive Covid-19 test, the **whole household** (including children) must self-isolate immediately for 10 days (or cease self-isolation if a confirmatory PCR test for the suspected positive household member comes back negative).

Community Collect sites continue to operate as usual for families to collect home testing kits or undertake asymptomatic Lateral Flow testing.

Education Contingency Framework

Slough is experiencing high numbers of the Delta variant amongst children, which has triggered Surge Testing across Slough. Additional guidance/restrictions have now been put in place in educational settings across Slough to try and combat the rising Covid case numbers. This means that additional restrictions are in place over and above the national guidance.

Heather Cook
COVID Schools Programme Officer



Salt Hill Activity Centre
Bath Road SL1 3SS
COVID-19 Vaccination Site

COVID-19 WALK-IN CLINIC

NO ID REQUIRED - NO APPOINTMENT REQUIRED

18+ - SLOUGH RESIDENTS ONLY

ASTRA ZENECA AND PFIZER AVAILABLE



VACCINE SURGE DAY

**SUPER
SATURDAY**

26/06/2021

9AM TO 8PM

#SAYYESTOCOVIDVACCINE

No ID
required

**OVER 18?
LIVE IN SLOUGH?**

First come
first served

**COVID-19 VACCINE
PFIZER & ASTRAZENECA
WALK-IN CLINIC**



Monday-Friday, 5pm - 8pm
Salt Hill Park Vaccination Centre
Bath Rd, Slough SL1 3SS

#OneSlough

News and events

Reminder Reception Classes



School recruitment now open for the Nuffield Early Language Intervention – every state school with a reception class can now [apply for training and resources through a DfE-funded early years catch-up programme](#) delivered by the Nuffield Foundation, to support thousands more reception aged pupils with vital communication skills.

International Mud Day 29th June 2021



A day to celebrate around the world and be connected with others who enjoy the wonderful world of **MUD**.

Muddy Faces, the advocates for all things outdoors have plenty of **FREE** resources and information to inspire you and give you the confidence to take part in **MUD DAY** this year. Now more than ever our children need to be outside and enjoying nature, including the muddy kind.....

Click on the links below:

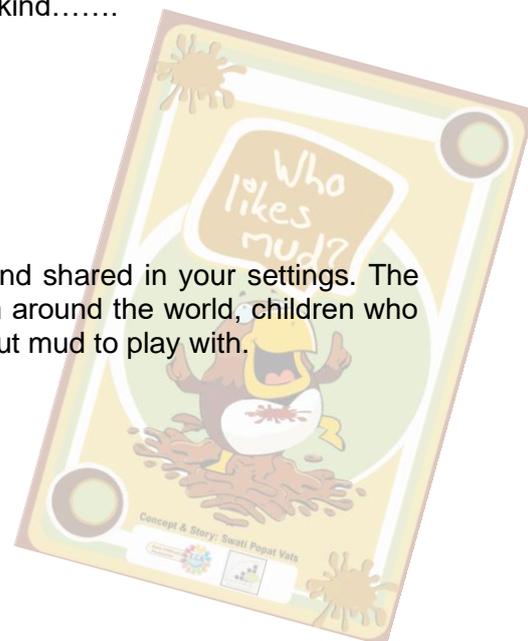
[International Mud Day | Mud | Muddy Faces](#)

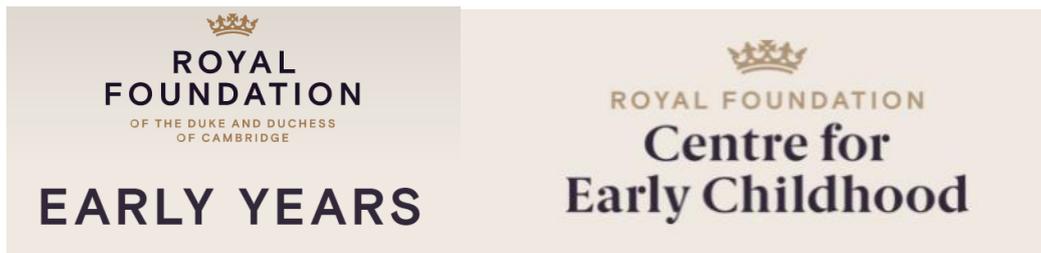
[Mud | Outdoor Hub | Muddy Faces](#)

Below is a link to the book “Who Likes Mud?” that can be printed and shared in your settings. The dedication in the book is “This little mud book is dedicated to children around the world, children who have nothing but mud to play with and children that have everything but mud to play with.

[Who Likes Mud?](#)

Enjoy the day, have fun, get muddy – but warn your parents first.....





The Duchess of Cambridge has launched the Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood in a bid to raise awareness of the importance of the early years.

*“The early years are not simply about how we raise our children.
They are about the society we will become” - Duchess of Cambridge*

In June 2021, The Duchess of Cambridge launched [The Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood](#), which will drive awareness of and action on the extraordinary impact of the early years, in order to transform society for generations to come.

In the years to come, the Centre will focus on three key areas of activity:

- Promoting and commissioning high-quality research to increase knowledge and share best practice;
- Working with people from across the private, public and voluntary sectors to collaborate on new solutions; and
- Developing creative campaigns to raise awareness and inspire action, driving real, positive change on the early years.

[The website](#) includes information from key research as well as links to [resources and help](#).

The launch of The Early Years Centre coincides with the publication of the report [Big Change Starts Small June 2021](#). It brings together science and research to evidence the importance of strategic investment in the early years; and how by working together caregivers, professionals, communities, businesses and wider society, the early years and childhood development can be prioritised, and in turn address the current mental health crisis and secure long-term health and wellbeing.

The report identified 6 key recommendations:

- Raising awareness of the extraordinary impact of the early years.
- Building a mentally healthier and more nurturing society
- Creating communities of support
- Strengthening the early years workforce
- Putting data to work for the early years
- Supporting long-term and intergenerational change

To find out more, click the links below:

- [Centre for Early Childhood](#)
- [Royal Foundation](#)
- [Big Change Starts Small June 2021](#)
- [Watch the video](#)



[We Are Educators: Putting early years at the heart of education policy](#)

The Early Years Alliance held their annual conference last week; key issues raised included:

- Impact of the pandemic on the EY sector and the Governments response
- Commitment by the EY Alliance to work with DfE to tackle investment and training for EY sector post pandemic
- EY alliance have set up an advisory group working on equality, inclusion, race and discrimination
- Dame Rachel de Souza; Children's Commissioner for England discussed the response to The Big Ask survey, and her commitment to quality provision for young children to prepare them for school, including health care and Family Hubs
- Guilaine Kinouani, author of 'Living While Black', talked about the case studies that formed the research for her book and the impact of racial trauma on parents and children.
 - Do you have deep genuine relationships with people with colour? – gives you authenticity
 - Think about role models, artefacts, toys, books – do they represent all your children?
 - Identify your own anxiety as a practitioner – start with yourself build your own capacity to address the issues
 - Talk with your parents of colour, become familiar and build relationships – ask questions

[Join the Alliance's National Week of Play: 21 - 27 June 2021](#)

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a hugely detrimental impact on children's access to play. It has caused their worlds to shrink and restricted their ability to play. Many playgrounds and outdoor recreation areas have been closed, and many children have been denied the opportunities to socialise with their friends and peers.

Enabling environments in early years settings that once encouraged risk, challenge and exploration were repurposed with the aim of keeping children away from each other. Positive relationships may have been compromised by the need to operate in 'bubbles'. The full impact on their health and wellbeing at such a crucial time in their development has yet to be fully understood.

Making sense of these confusing times

As early years educators we know that play is fundamental to a child's learning and development. Play is how children make sense of the world. It helps them express their feelings, manage emotions and find out about themselves and others. Practitioners only need to observe how children are playing together and interacting with their environment to see how the pandemic has affected them. We must not assume that the passage of time will make everything right again.

Some children are still unsure about the rules and are waiting for adult direction before deciding what to play with and how. Play is even more important now as it is the first step in giving them back a sense of control after a confusing time in their lives. It is through play that children will begin to make sense of what has happened and is still happening. It is through play that children who have been impacted the most will begin to heal and thrive as we look towards better times.

Putting play at the heart of practice

Prioritising play is not about doing anything differently but it is a timely reminder that having freedom and time to play supports development and learning across all areas. That's why from **21 June the Early Years Alliance is launching a National Week of Play** to encourage and inspire early years professionals to ensure that learning through play is at the heart of their practice, and to support parents to discover and explore new play ideas for the home learning environment.