

Frequently Asked Questions (Early Years)

Q: Young children and babies who attend nursery settings, for example, frequently get spikes in temperature e.g. due to teething, should they be sent home to self-isolate?

Any child with a temperature, a new continuous cough or a change in their usual sense of taste or smell should be considered a possible case and collected as soon as possible and asked to self-isolate.

Families should be encouraged to arrange a coronavirus test for the child as soon as possible. In the vast majority of cases the result will be negative, and the child can return to the setting and the family can stop self-isolation.

Q: Is testing available for children under 5 years?

Yes, children of all ages can now access testing for COVID-19, via the same route as everyone else <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/> . This applies in England only. Children under 5 years old who have symptoms of coronavirus and live with an essential worker can access [priority testing through gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/priority-testing-for-covid-19).

Q: Can children join an existing bubble as part of the phased return of children?

Yes, children can join an existing bubble as part of the phased return of children or new children joining the nursery. However, movement of children or staff between bubbles within the school or setting should be avoided.

Q: How can nursery / early years staff ensure the emotional wellbeing of a child where they are re-settling into their nursery or starting nursery for the first time?

As some young children will not have been attending a setting for a number of weeks and may be feeling anxious, work with parents and carers to consider how best to manage dropping off their children while maintaining physical distancing. When settling a child into nursery it is important that the child is not unduly distressed. It is recommended that parents only come into the setting where it is essential to ensuring the child's wellbeing. Any parent coming into the setting for settling in should follow strict hand hygiene measures and only have contact with their own child. It is advised that only one parent or carer is involved in settling in process and that their time spent in the nursery is kept to the absolute minimum.

Q: How should staff manage challenging behaviour in children e.g spitting, or dribbling in very young children e.g. when teething?

In these circumstances, staff need to increase their level of self-protection, such as minimising close contact and having more frequent hand-washing and other hygiene measures, and regular cleaning of surfaces. It is recommended that educational settings follow the Public Health England guidance on Cleaning in non-healthcare settings.

PPE is not needed in these situations. PPE is only to be used in the following situations:

- For children, young people and students 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.
- If a child, young person or other learner becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home.

In the above situation where a young child has symptoms of coronavirus, the following PPE should be used:

- If contact with the child or young person is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a face mask should be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, or spitting, then eye protection should also be worn

Q: Is it safe for staff to offer emotional support with physical contact to young children in early years settings?

While it is not expected that children and staff within a group will keep 2 metres apart, it is important for settings to consider how they can reduce contact between groups of children and staff as far as possible, for example by ensuring children and staff mix in a small consistent group and that small group stays away from other groups. If children need emotional support e.g hugging this can be given, but it should be limited if at all possible and staff should undertake frequent handwashing.

Q: Can staff still take breaks away from the school or setting?

It is important for staff wellbeing that they continue to take breaks as they would have done prior to COVID19. It is important that staff follow basic hygiene principles and ensure that they wash their hands thoroughly with liquid soap and water (or with alcohol based hand gel) on arrival and before leaving the setting. Staff should maintain 2m social distancing during their breaks and avoid touching the face, mouth etc.

Q: Can children be looked after by more than one setting e.g. a school based nursery and then a childminder or afterschool club providing wraparound care?

Providers which are registered with Ofsted or with a Childminder Agency which have before and after school clubs on school premises and can ensure they follow the protective measures guidance, are able to operate. This is only the case for registered providers which operate on school premises. All other out of school settings are not able to reopen.

Children should attend just one setting wherever possible and parents should be encouraged to minimise as far as possible the number of education and childcare settings their child attends. Childminding settings should consider how they can work with parents to agree how best to manage any necessary journeys, for example pick-ups and drop-offs at schools, to reduce the need for a provider to travel with groups of children.