

Frequently asked questions for parents

Please see below some FAQs for parents and carers of early years and school age children.

The DfE has also published additional FAQs [online](#) to help parents and carers and you should also look at these. You can also keep up with the [latest government advice](#)

Only those children of critical workers or vulnerable pupils should be in school. The aim of the partial school closure measures set out by the Secretary of State for Education is to reduce the overall population of children moving around local areas as far as possible, in order to further reduce the number of social interactions and thus flatten the upward curve of the COVID-19 outbreak

When will the schools and early years settings be open again?

Due to the coronavirus outbreak, schools, colleges and childcare providers will be closed to the majority of pupils until further notice.

My school/childcare provider has hardly any staff and I am a key worker – what will I do if they close?

We are in regular contact with our schools so where needed, schools can join together and provide childcare facilities. We can also move children to a different childcare provision where possible.

If I am a key worker should my child be at school during the Easter break so I can work?

The government is asking where possible childcare providers, schools and colleges to continue to look after critical workers' children and vulnerable children throughout the Easter holidays.

I'm worried my child will lose a large chunk of their education – what can I do to help?

Schools are providing home learning resources. We have also provided examples and there are many helpful links online. The DfE is working with the BBC and others to provide resources for children to access while at home. The government has also cancelled all exams for this year.

I am worried about my child attending school when everyone else has been told to stay at home.

Your child only needs to attend school if they are vulnerable or you or your partner are a critical worker. The government advice is to keep your child at home if at all possible. Key worker children do not need to attend if someone can look after them.

I'm concerned about my child's mental health. Are there any resources I can point them to for support?

There is lots of information online you can access.

There are a number of online resources that provide ideas on how to talk through concerns with your child. Please have a look at the links below for ideas.

[Triple P website](#) has a parenting area with information, tips, tools and strategies for parents and carers of children and young people as well as a [Facebook](#) page.

[Care for the Family](#) has specific information for parents and carers of children with additional needs as well as generic parenting information as well as a [Facebook](#) page.

For support on other issues you can access [On Your Mind](#) and [Kooth](#) which provides free, safe and anonymous online support for young people.

My child is due to start primary school in September. Will we still find out the outcome our application in April?

Primary national offer day is the 16th April. At the present time we are on schedule to still make offers on this day. However we will be unable to send out offer letters in the post. Parents and carers who have applied online will be able to log back into the online system and view their place offer. People who have submitted a paper application form will be able to call us for their decision on or after the 16th April. We will update our webpage with this information and contact numbers in due course.

I put in a late application for a school place. When will I find out?

We are also processing late applications submitted already as usual. We will be working with schools on applications made to enable us to do this. There is no statutory deadline for these offers.

I want to transfer my child to another school can I do this?

Any new applications for primary or secondary places, including transfers between schools during the school year, now all need to be emailed to us. The application forms are all on our website pages. They can be printed and then scanned or photos can be taken of each page and then emailed to us. This information has been added to our webpages today. We are also asking people to state whether they are

critical/keyworkers so that we can prioritise those applications. Proof of this will need to be provided.

Are SATS and other exams going to happen?

Primary assessments, including SATs, and exams including GCSEs, AS levels and A levels will not go ahead this summer.

The exam regulator, Ofqual, and exam boards will work with teachers to provide grades to students whose exams have been cancelled this summer. Further information on the [cancellation of GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2020](#) is available.

What if I have to leave my child unattended?

Read the government advice on [the law on leaving children unattended](#).

There is no law about when you can leave your child on their own but it is an offence to leave them alone if it places them at risk. As parents, you should use your judgement on how mature your child is before you decide to leave them at home.

It is important to be aware that you can be prosecuted if you leave a child alone 'in a manner likely to cause unnecessary suffering or injury to health'. If you are at all unsure, the NSPCC recommends that children under 12 are rarely mature enough to be left alone for a long period of time, children under 16 shouldn't be left alone overnight and babies, toddlers and very young children should never be left alone.

My child is eligible for Free School Meals – how do I receive them?

Headteachers will decide which of the available options will be best for families in their area. Schools can provide food on site, arrange deliveries or purchase a voucher to be given to the family.

My child minder is asking me to continue to pay. What should I do?

The government continues to pay funding to local authorities for the free entitlements for two, three and four year olds. It has also introduced a number of measures to support workers which will help support private early years providers. The government is asking providers to be reasonable and balanced in their dealings with parents

If only one parent or carer is a critical worker, can I send my children into school?

Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical to the COVID-19 response can attend school if required.

However, many families with a parent or carer working in critical sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

I am a critical worker and my child is vulnerable do I have to send them into school?

Children with a parent or carer who is listed on the government's [critical worker list](#) should be considered for a school place. However, many parents working in these sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

What happens if council employees are unable to provide core services is that going to affect our schools?

We will prioritise statutory work and will continue to run lots of essential services however for some enquiries some processes will be slower than normal.

What should I do if I think we may have coronavirus and yet I'm a key worker?

The advice is to stay at home and follow the government advice [online](#).

Do not leave your home if you have either:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

To protect others, do not go to places like a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. Stay at home.

You can also [Use the 111 coronavirus service](#) and put in your symptoms. You can also call 111.