



HM Government

# Taking your child to nursery or a childminder: what parents need to know



**Childminders and nursery staff continue to provide a safe and happy environment where children can learn and develop.**

**All families have been able to send children under 5 back to nurseries and childminders since 1 June. If your usual nursery or childminder isn't open, your local authority can help with finding a place that is right for your child.**

### **Why should I send my child back to their nursery or childminder?**

Nurseries and childminders are wonderful places for children to learn and have fun with friends. Early education supports children's development and their overall wellbeing, and helps to give them a routine. Children develop quickly in the earliest years, which is why it is so important that children do not miss out on time with their nursery or childminder.

### **What protective measures have nurseries and childminders put in place to make sure they are safe?**

Nurseries and childminders have put enhanced cleaning procedures in place for shared surfaces such as door handles, tabletops, play equipment and toys. They are also promoting more frequent hand washing and minimising contact between groups where possible.

Nurseries and childminders are also engaging with the NHS Test and Trace process to take swift action if they become aware of someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19).

### **Is it safe for my child to return to their nursery or childminder?**

Public Health England (PHE) is clear that the risk of transmission and infection is low if nurseries and childminders apply regular hand washing and cleaning measures. Evidence shows that children usually have mild or no symptoms and may have a lower risk of catching the virus compared to adults.

It is important that if your child (or anyone in your household) has any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, they do not attend and stay at home.

### **What if my child has special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)?**

Talk to your nursery or childminder and plan together for your child's return so that it is as smooth as possible.

### **Is there different advice for children who are clinically extremely vulnerable?**

Shielding advice for all adults and children paused on 1 August. This means that even the small number of children who are still on the

shielded patient list and those who have family members who are shielding can return to their nursery or childminder.

### **Do children transmit coronavirus (COVID-19) more than adults?**

No. Children are no more likely to transmit the virus than adults. In fact, there is reasonable evidence that young children have a significantly lower rate of infection than adults, although this is not yet conclusive.

### **Will young children at nurseries or childminders be expected to socially distance?**

No. We understand that young children find it hard to socially distance. Nurseries and childminders are using a range of other protective measures, including regular hand washing and enhanced cleaning, to reduce the risk of transmission. Your child will be able to play with their friends and be comforted by staff as normal.

### **Do both parents need to be critical workers to get a place with a nursery or childminder?**

No. All children under 5 have been able to attend nurseries and childminders since 1 June.

### **What should I do if my child or someone in my household has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)?**

It's important that if your child (or anyone in their household) has any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, they should not attend their nursery or childminder and should stay at

home. You should arrange for them to get a test and tell your nursery or childminder the test results. This will help the NHS Test and Trace process. If you have a positive test result, your household should remain at home and follow the Test and Trace self-isolation guidance.

### **What happens if another child at the same nursery or childminder tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)?**

If your child has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), you will be asked to make sure they isolate for 14 days. Other members of the household would only need to isolate if your child started developing symptoms. Anyone who has symptoms can get a test, including children under 5.

### **Is government help with childcare and nursery costs available for families?**

Yes. A wide range of financial support is available for families with children aged 0-5. All 3 and 4 year olds and some 2 year olds are able to access 15 hours a week of funded early education, worth around £2,500 per year on average. Working parents of 3 and 4 year olds may also be eligible for an additional 15 hours per week of funded childcare, saving them up to £5,000 per year. To find out what support you can access visit [childcarechoices.gov.uk](https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

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