

## Warwickshire County Council

### Early Years and Childcare Frequently Asked Questions June 2020

#### Guidance

**There is so much guidance about re-opening of early years and childcare provision – which ones should I be looking at?**

Providers should refer to the government guidance below for detailed information. Clicking on the links will take you to the most up to date version of the guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/actions-for-education-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

#### **Do we have to follow the guidance?**

**Yes and No.** Providers are required to follow guidance issued by Public Health England; other aspects of the guidance are advisory. Providers need to undertake a risk assessment to help make an informed decision that is in the best interests of children and staff in their setting. Any aspects of the guidance which are a legal requirement are clearly stated as such e.g. maintaining ratios or space requirements for the EYFS.

#### PPE

**We missed the deadline for collecting PPE. Is there going to be another opportunity for providers to obtain the pack?**

If you were unable to attend you can still get hold of your emergency PPE supply by emailing [CV19PPE@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:CV19PPE@warwickshire.gov.uk) or click on the link [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/coronavirusppe](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/coronavirusppe) PPE will be delivered to you within FIVE working days. If you need your kit more urgently please let the PPE team know and they will do our best to get it to you sooner. PPE is not for general day to day purposes and is intended only for use when a child develops symptoms while in your care so you can continue to provide support until their carer arrives to take them home.

#### **Do staff need to wear PPE, aprons, gloves and masks?**

The current government guidance is that PPE over and above that which would be used under normal circumstances in non-coronavirus times, is not necessary for early years and childcare settings. Providers should however be prepared and have access to PPE in the event that a child or member of staff becomes ill with symptoms of coronavirus.

## **Re-opening of closed settings**

**We are a private day nursery and we were unable to re-open on 1<sup>st</sup> June due to reduced staffing. Is this ok and can we re-open at a later date?**

**Yes.** The government said that all early years and childcare providers could re-open **from** 1<sup>st</sup> June for all children starting with the 3 and 4 year olds and gradually taking back the under 3s. It is for providers to make a business decision on when they re-open.

**Do I need to let Ofsted know I have re-opened my setting?**

**Yes.** Providers who have re-opened their provision since 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 are required to notify Ofsted. If your operating circumstances change (you open or close), notify Ofsted by sending an email to [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) with 'Change in operating hours' in the subject field.

In the body of the email, please confirm the unique reference number for each setting and the details of the change. You can find your URN on your registration, your inspection report(s), and on your [Ofsted reports page](#).

**Now that we have re-opened we have more parents requesting that their children return to the setting. We already have one group of 8 children who have been attending since 1<sup>st</sup> June and now 6 more children want to return. Can we create one large group of 14 children?**

**No.** Public Health guidance is to avoid mixing groups. In some cases it may be necessary for settings to introduce a temporary cap on numbers, to ensure that children are kept in small groups, and to avoid mixing of children between groups. If this is necessary, settings should prioritise vulnerable children and children of critical workers, then 3 and 4 year olds, in particular those who will be transitioning to Reception in September, followed by younger age groups

## **Coronavirus Covid-19**

**Can children under the age of 5 years be tested for Coronavirus?**

**Yes.** Anyone who is showing symptoms of coronavirus can get tested. Parents can request a test for their child online:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

**If we have a confirmed case of coronavirus in our setting do we need to close?**

Anyone who has been in contact with a confirmed case or with anyone showing symptoms, will need to self-isolate - this includes other children, staff, and family members. This may mean the setting has to close depending on how the groups have been organised. NHS will use track and trace to identify and contact anyone who has been in contact with a confirmed case/symptoms.

**Do we need to take children's temperatures before they enter the setting?**

**No.** Public Health England's guidance is that routine testing of an individual's temperature is not a reliable method for identifying coronavirus."

## Childminders

**Do I have to take funded children back into my care from June 1<sup>st</sup> if one parent is still off work caring for an older sibling ?**

If you are open then the government is asking that you start to take other children back from 1<sup>st</sup> June - if the parent chooses to send their child it makes no difference if there is one at home who is unable to return to school.

**Can I care for children in the year groups who are not yet able to return to school?**

**Yes.** From 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 childminders can provide care for all children in line with their Ofsted registration.

**I care for a child who usually attends another setting one day per week and comes to me for the other four days. His parents would like him to attend for the full week but this will take me over my numbers on one day each week. Can I make an exception for this child in order to ensure continuity of care?**

**Yes.** If you can fully meet the needs of each child, and in order to ensure continuity of care for this child you can use the exceptional circumstances rule (**EYFS 3.42**) and then revert to your normal ratio as soon as possible. You should discuss with the other children's parents and keep a record that you have done this and of any feedback or concerns raised.

**Both of my funded children use me as part of their funded hours and I was wondering if they are able to still attend both settings as this increases the number of children they mix with and therefore increases their risk of transmission**

**Yes.** However, government guidance is for children to attend one setting wherever possible. You will need to discuss this with the parents and the other setting and undertake a risk assessment to help you decide what is the best option to meet the child and family needs.

**I have been told that I am no longer allowed to drop off or collect any of the children who are attending school. Is this correct?**

**No.** To minimise contact between groups of children and staff, children should attend just one setting **wherever possible** and parents and carers should be encouraged to minimise as far as possible the number of education and childcare settings their child attends. Where this is not possible providers are expected to undertake a thorough risk assessment and take steps to minimise risks to both children and adults. Schools and other providers should not restrict access to their own provision on the basis that a child may also be in attendance at another registered provision.

## **Before and after school provision**

### **I run before and after school provision in a community centre, for children who attend two local schools. Am I allowed to re-open?**

**No.** Providers of before and after school care are only allowed to run if they are based on school premises. They are also only allowed to provide care for the children who attend the school. Providers may wish to explore with the Headteacher of the school, the possibility of using the school site to deliver childcare. The government is currently working with early years and childcare organisations and local authorities to address this issue – the main aim currently is to keep children safe and well.

If providers are able to negotiate with schools and can relocate to use premises that are based on a school site they must inform Ofsted. Providers may be required to re-register the provision. For further information see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures>

### **If I am temporarily using a school site to deliver childcare do I need to notify Ofsted?**

**Yes.** You are required in law to notify Ofsted of changes to the address of your provision. It is likely that you will need to re-register even though the change may be short-term.

### **Is there any guidance on mixing the year groups as we look after 4-11-year olds in the same room on school premises?**

Whilst there is currently no specific or separate guidance for out of school provision you should still follow the government guidance and organise the provision so that small groups of children can be kept together and have the same member(s) of staff caring for them. There is no requirement to keep different age groups separate however you should work in partnership with the school and consideration should be given to which children go into which groups.

### **Will holiday clubs be allowed to run this Summer?**

The DfE has confirmed that holiday clubs are currently not permitted to open. It says this position will be kept "under review" as it follows scientific & medical advice.

## **Contact Details**

**Please continue to use the following email addresses for communication with Warwickshire Council early years teams:**

**ALL Coronavirus enquiries:** [EYCovid19@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:EYCovid19@warwickshire.gov.uk)

**Funding enquiries:** early years funding [eyfunding@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:eyfunding@warwickshire.gov.uk)

**Non-coronavirus enquiries:** early years sufficiency and business support [earlyyears@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:earlyyears@warwickshire.gov.uk)