

On May 11th, the Government issued new guidance to all educational settings about opening schools and educational settings to more pupils from 1 June within certain guidelines:

They also issued some Guidance for parents and carers, which we are referring to below to address any concerns or queries you may have.

You can read the full guidance here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

We understand that there may be some anxiety about sending your child to an early years setting, so we have prepared this factsheet using Government guidance and some local comments to help you.



Why can more children now attend childcare settings?

Government said: We want to get all children back into education because it is the best place for them to learn, and because we know it is good for children's mental wellbeing to have social interactions with other children, carers and teachers.

Can my child return to school / early years provision?

Government said: From the week commencing 1 June, we are asking:



- nurseries and other early years providers, including childminders, to begin welcoming back children
- primary schools to welcome back children in nursery (where they have them), reception, year 1 and year 6
- all schools and childcare providers to continue to offer places to the priority groups – vulnerable children and children of critical workers – they have been supporting since the end of March.

What does the Government say about the latest scientific advice?



- there is high confidence that children of all ages have less severe symptoms than adults if they contract coronavirus
- limiting the numbers of children going back to school initially then gradually increasing numbers, guided by scientific advice, reduces risk of increasing the rate of transmission
- settings can make changes to how they are organised and put measures in place to reduce risks.

How will risks to children, teachers and families be managed?

There is guidance and support both from the Government and locally to childcare settings on implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings.

Settings should communicate their plans to parents once they have had a chance to work through the guidance in detail. Approaches we are asking providers to take include:

- ❖ carrying out a risk assessment
- ❖ making sure that children do not attend if they or a member of their household has symptoms of coronavirus

- ❖ promoting regular hand washing and promoting the catch it, bin it, kill it approach
- ❖ cleaning more frequently
- ❖ minimising contact through smaller classes or group sizes and altering the environment as much as possible
- ❖ reducing mixing between groups through timetable changes, such as staggered break times or by introducing staggered drop-off and collection times.
- ❖ limiting the amount of contact between different groups of children (such as smaller class sizes with children and staff spread out more)

BUT: Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended

In the past two weeks, providers have been really busy devising their plans to ensure they can provide childcare as safely as possible and within the guidelines above.

You will therefore find that for now, the provision at all settings will look very different and settings may need to adjust their routines as they go along to ensure continued safety.

This might be because there are not enough rooms or spaces available, or because they do not have enough available staff, to supervise the small groups.

Some childcare providers also may not want to provide care for children who will be attending more than one setting because of the risk of the virus spreading.

Please contact your local setting to understand about any changes that might impact on you individually.

If my child is eligible, is it compulsory for them to attend early years provision?

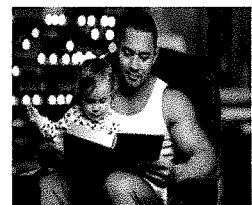


No. Government has said: We strongly encourage children and young people in the eligible year groups and priority groups (such as children of critical workers) to attend, unless they are self-isolating or there are other reasons for absence (such as shielding due to health conditions).

But this is not compulsory, you don't have to send your child back if you can safely care for them at home.

Should I keep my child at home if they have an underlying health condition or live with someone in a vulnerable group?

Children and young people who are considered extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding should continue to shield and should not be expected to attend.



How should my child travel to and from their childcare?

Children, young people and parents are encouraged to walk or cycle where possible and avoid public transport at peak times.

Will childcare keep their usual opening hours?

It is possible that some settings will make changes to their start and finish times or introduce processes for drop-off and collection times to keep children and families safe.

Here are some concerns/questions parents have shared with Nottinghamshire County Council and childcare providers.

If you have any questions you can email us at eycovid19@nottscc.gov.uk

Does my provider HAVE to offer me a place after 1st June?	No. Some providers are going to be unable to re-open because their risk assessment might show it is not safe Some providers might be limiting numbers to keep children and staff safe. They have been advised that they should prioritise • Vulnerable children • Children of Key workers • 3 and 4 year olds • If they have space, they can offer places to other children Some providers might not want to offer you a place if you are using other childcare as well
So, if my childcare remains closed, or is full, can I get childcare somewhere else?	Yes. We suggest you first talk with your usual provider and see if they can help you. You can find out more about other provision at Notts Help Yourself You can contact the Early Childhood Services team by email at eycovid19@nottscc.gov.uk or call Customer services on 0300 500 80 80 and we have a dedicated team who can help you
Can I transfer my Early Years Entitlement funding (for 2,3 ad 4 year olds) to another childcare provider?	Sometimes. The advice we give to parents needing to move their child during summer term is for them to try to find a place in a setting that still has some vacant funded places. You can do this using the same route as above and won't need to transfer your funding We do have systems in place to re-distribute your Early Years Funding if there are no other options available to you We cannot fund additional places if you are not eligible for Early Years Funding for your 2,3 or 4 year old and you usually pay for your place
I use two providers. My child goes to school in the morning and a childminder in the afternoons. How will this work?	The Government have not issued specific guidance on children moving between settings, but it is acknowledged that this should be avoided if possible. As we said above, some providers are choosing not to allow children to attend if they are also using another setting If you decide that it's best not to continue using two settings, we suggest you speak to them both about this and find the best solution for you

