

Department for Education

This is your daily email to keep you updated on the government's response to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing extended to all essential workers who have symptoms

The Government has announced that all essential workers in England and Scotland, and members of their households who are showing symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can now be tested. This list of essential workers includes education and childcare staff: support and teaching staff, social workers and specialist education professionals in addition to social care staff.

Booking is done through a new online system. Employers can register and refer self-isolating staff, and employees are able to book a test directly for themselves or members of their household who are exhibiting symptoms.

Employees can choose to visit one of the drive-through testing sites across the country, or to receive a home testing kit.

To obtain a login to the employer referral portal, employers of essential workers should contact: portalservicedesk@dhsc.gov.uk
Full details can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

Disapplication and modifications to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory

framework

To support early years providers that remain open to vulnerable children and children of critical workers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, we have temporarily disapplied and modified elements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework. This will allow providers greater flexibility to respond to changes in workforce availability and potential fluctuations in demand, while still providing care that is high quality and safe.

The EYFS statutory framework can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Our guidance for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak has been updated to answer questions relating to the EYFS statutory framework.

The guidance can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures>

Updates to the school admission appeals process

It is important parents continue to have the right to appeal any school admission decisions. To enable this, we have made regulatory changes that came into force on 24 April 2020 and will remain in place until 31 January 2021. The new regulations give admission authorities the flexibility to manage appeals whilst ensuring families are supported and not disadvantaged by current measures to protect public health.

The guidance can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code>

Ofqual seeks views on awarding vocational and technical qualifications in summer 2020

Ofqual has published a consultation on the exceptional arrangements for awarding vocational, technical and general qualifications (other than GCSEs, AS and A levels) in summer 2020. The deadline for responses is 8 May.

Further information on this consultation can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofqual-consultation-on-awarding-vocational-and-technical-qualifications-in-summer-2020>

The information below has not changed since yesterday.

Department for Education coronavirus helpline

The Department for Education coronavirus helpline is available to answer questions about COVID-19 relating to education and children's social care. Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Opening hours:

8am to 6pm – Monday to Friday

10am to 4pm – Saturday and Sunday

If you work in a school, please have your unique reference number (URN or UK PRN) available when calling the hotline.

Handwashing advice

It is essential that everyone washes their hands more often, using soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand washing with soap employs mechanical action that loosens bacteria and viruses from the skin, rinsing them into the drain. Drying hands afterwards makes the skin less hospitable to the virus. Hand sanitiser can be effective if soap is not available or the situation makes using soap less feasible (i.e. when outside) but using hand sanitiser provides none of the virus-destroying friction that rubbing your hands together and rinsing with water provides.

The latest guidance and video on hand washing can be found at:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

The e-Bug project is led by Public Health England and has a dedicated webpage for learning resources on hand washing and respiratory hygiene.

Resources are currently available for KS1, KS2 and KS3 and can be used in various settings including schools and at home:

- <https://e-bug.eu/>

Collection of guidance for educational settings on GOV.UK

All of the Department for Education's coronavirus guidance for educational settings can now be found in one place on GOV.UK at:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19->

[guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings](#)

Our main schools guidance, the 'actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak' will be regularly kept up to date. Any new advice for schools on specific issues, such as food, exams or safeguarding, will be linked from:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures>