

Early Years Workforce Newsletter

Spring 2021

Welcome to the Early Education Development Team newsletter. This issue contains:

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Lockdown guidance for early years and childcare providers

The Early Years guidance is supplementary to the [main early years and childcare guidance](#). The sector should continue to refer to the main guidance except for policy areas where the lockdown guidance supersedes it. Schools guidance is different in that they have replaced their main guidance with one document for national lockdown. There will be a second wave of other guidance updates over the next few days.

Early Years: [Education and childcare settings: national lockdown from 5 January 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[New Foundation Years Frequently asked Questions](#)

This document answers the FAQs from the early years sector on the national lockdown. These answers have been checked with the Department for Education (DfE) and cover:

- Safety of settings
- Attending more than one setting
- Testing, vaccinations and PPE
- Support groups
- Funding and financial support
- Census collection

EY attendance reporting

DfE require Early Years attendance data reporting weekly.

Please can all early years providers send details of the numbers of children attending your provision via families.leicester.gov.uk/coronavirus-attendance

It is important that we provide a full picture of attendance patterns to government in order to be able to highlight the impact of Covid and any concerns this raises.

Early Years Census

The EY census form is now live and available at families.leicester.gov.uk/census

PPE distribution update

We have received an update from the DfE in relation to supplies of PPE for early years settings and childminders. The supplies available through this scheme have been very much reduced. As you will know, the PPE which will be provided free of charge is for very limited Covid-related use. We are awaiting delivery of these supplies and will inform you about collection arrangements as soon as we are able.

Reporting positive Covid cases

Please report positive cases of Covid of staff or children in your setting using the link:

families.leicester.gov.uk/informthela

Close Contact Guidance January 2021

Identification of close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases

Here is updated guidance on identifying close contacts. These must now be traced to 2 full days rather than counting 48 hours from the start of symptoms or a positive test result in an asymptomatic person:

- The first day of symptoms or a positive test result in an asymptomatic person is day Zero.
- Track back 2 full days for example, if day zero is 11 January, day 1 is 10 January and day 2 is 9 Jan.
- Identify and trace all close contacts during that period and ask them to self-isolate for 10 days from their last contact with the confirmed positive case. For example, close contacts would need to be identified for the 11, 10 and 9 January.

If a person develops symptoms this evening (day zero), look all the way back to Saturday morning (day 2) rather than to Saturday evening (48 hours).

The East Midlands PHE team are working with the national team to ensure all guidance on the website is updated, but at the moment you may still see reference to 48 hours rather than 2 days. Please use the 2 days as your measure from now on.

Definition of Close Contact:

The updated definition and the full guidance of a close contact is as follows:

You can be a contact anytime from 2 days before the person who tested positive developed their symptoms, and up to 10 days after, as this is when they can pass the infection on to others.

A close contact can be:

- anyone who lives in the same household as someone with COVID-19 symptoms or who has tested positive for COVID-19
- anyone who has had any of the following types of contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19:
 - face-to-face contact including being coughed on or having a face-to-face conversation within one metre
 - been within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact
 - sexual contacts
 - been within 2 metres of someone for more than 15 minutes (either as a one-off contact, or added up together over one day)
 - travelled in the same vehicle or a plane

The change in guidance is that the 15 minutes at 2 metres is now cumulative, not just in a single contact. All other definitions remain the same and remain in place.

- someone who has been within 2 metres of a person confirmed positive, for more than 15 minutes **(either as a one-off contact or added up together over one day)**.

More information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>

Paediatric First Aid requalification training

DfE have taken the decision that if Paediatric First Aid certificate requalification training is prevented for reasons associated directly with the COVID-19 pandemic, or by complying with related government advice, the validity of current certificates can be extended to 31 March 2021 at the latest. This applies to certificates expiring on or after 1 October 2020.

This is in recognition of the fact that some practitioners are facing difficulties in accessing requalification training due to courses being cancelled. If asked to do so, providers should be able to explain why the first aider has not been able to requalify and demonstrate what steps have taken to access the training.

Employers or certificate holders must do their best to arrange requalification training at the earliest opportunity.

Paediatric First Aid – Managing statutory training

We recognise that national lockdown may have further impacted on providers ability to update expired (or soon to expire) PFA training.

Whilst this challenge is acknowledged, it is necessary that you reflect on your situation and consider what proactive steps you can take, to mitigate the impact of statutory training lapsing. This will allow you to build the evidence required to support your situation and will allow you to plan accordingly. The following reflective questions have been pulled together to support providers in this process;

- How many staff have up to date PFA training?
- Has training lapsed due to the pandemic, or have you identified that there is room for improvement in how you manage statutory training needs of the team?
- Can you adequately cover each session with a staff member that has a valid PFA certificate?
- What steps have you taken to secure training for staff that require PFA training?
- What evidence have you maintained of the steps you have taken to source training?
- What have/could you do to ensure that staff have maintained a sound knowledge of how to administer first aid effectively during the period that their certificate is invalid? E.g. posed scenarios, role play, online learning (not to be used as an alternative to face to face learning) etc.
- When sourcing a PFA course, how do you ensure that it meets the requirements as stipulated in [EYFS Statutory Framework](#) (See page 36)

For further information regarding PFA training during the pandemic, please see point 7.2 of the following guidance;

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

Safeguarding – Remaining vigilant

Keeping in touch

With such a lot to contend with at the moment in the early years, continuing best practice within all areas of our work can be challenging. Despite the many obstacles we have been forced to overcome over the last year, we must continue to remain focused on our safeguarding responsibilities. With many families choosing to remain at home, it can be an additional challenge to have continued contact. Providers should be actively 'checking in' with all children on roll that are not attending, with vigilance for those identified as vulnerable. To support you in reflecting on best practice, please find below the two Q cards that were developed following the initial national lockdown for your reference;

Safeguarding

COVID 19 – The Impact



The impact of this global pandemic is far reaching. Families will be affected in profound ways that many of us will not have experienced in our lifetime.

We must ensure that as early years professionals, we are responsive to the changing landscape of our communities and continue to apply established safeguarding practices to enable us to offer the most effective support to children and families.

TASK

- Looking at the following prompts, consider how the impact of the pandemic may present itself in the future.
- What new signs and indicators may you need to look out for?
- Is there further learning that you will require to enable you to better support children and families moving forward?

Domestic violence

Boredom

Anxiety

Stress

Extended periods of time spent at home

Lack of engagement with services

Bereavement

Frustrations

Change to routine

Care giver becoming unwell

Self-care

Panic

Lack of focus on anything constructive

Hunger

Unemployment / Loss of earnings

Loneliness

Training

The Leicester Safeguarding Children Partnership Board continue to offer online safeguarding learning opportunities accessible to the sector. Be sure to prioritise safeguarding competence throughout the pandemic, engaging in targeted learning to meet individuals identified needs. To find courses available please see visit [safeguarding training](#).

Prevent

Happy New Year,

I hope you are all well and managing to navigate your way through these challenging times. I wanted to take this opportunity to engage with you all and remind you that it's 'business as usual' for Prevent and myself, and whilst I am unable to deliver face to face training at this time, I am still delivering training online and can use either Teams or Zoom as a platform. I wanted to reiterate the continued importance of Prevent staff training to ensure children are safeguarded appropriately, and to reassure you that Prevent support is still available whenever you may need it.

As you may expect, the risk for children and young people from unhealthy influences, whether online or in the home, has not gone away since COVID began, if anything this risk is more prominent due to more time being spent online (in lots of cases largely unsupervised). Obviously, these unhealthy influences are not just around Prevent related risks, however we need to ensure that staff are still following the 'Notice, Check, Share' process if they have concerns, and are giving consideration to support from Prevent if it is appropriate.

The updated 2021 Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP)- a document detailing the risk around radicalisation and extremism within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland- was released in December, and Prevent staff training reflects the information within this document, including the current threat level and high priority risks for Leicester.

To book Prevent staff training or to speak with the Prevent Education Officer about any concerns or queries please see below for contact details:

Ailsa Coull
Prevent Education Officer
Community safety Team
Leicester City Council

Ailsa.Coull@leicester.gov.uk

01164 546923/07519 069833

Ofsted updates

New early years inspection arrangements and plans for a phased return to inspections

This year has seen considerable change which has inevitably impacted on the cycle of inspections undertaken by Ofsted. The current national lockdown has resulted in further changes to Ofsted's plans for a phased return of inspections from the Spring Term. To ensure that providers continue to keep abreast of these changes, we have provided a timeline of Ofsted plans for inspections from the start of the pandemic:

- On 17 March 2020, **all routine Ofsted inspections were suspended** however, Ofsted have continued to carry out registration and regulatory work
- August 2020: As part of a [phased return to routine inspection from autumn 2020: the interim period \(September-December 2020\)](#)
Ofsted carried out [interim visits](#) to providers currently judged less than good with safeguarding and welfare actions raised at their last inspection
- November 2020: [Ofsted announces new early years inspection arrangements](#)
These arrangements outline a new more proportionate and flexible approach to inspection to enable Ofsted to prioritise the inspection of providers rated less than good.
- December 2020: Her Majesty's Chief Inspector announced [Ofsted: phased return to inspections](#) These plans outline a phased return to inspections for early years.

From the start of the Spring term, Ofsted will be carrying out **assurance inspections** to confirm whether or not providers are meeting the EYFS requirements. These will be risk based and prioritised based on, the length of time since providers last inspection, and any other relevant information.

Assurance inspections will not result in a judgement of quality but will consider whether the setting continues to meet EYFS requirements. The inspection will therefore result in 1 of 3 possible outcomes:

- met
- not met with actions
- not met with enforcement

[Assurance inspections 2021: registered early years providers](#)

Routine graded inspections will resume in the summer term of 2021.

- January 2021: [Ofsted inspections to be done remotely until half term](#)

It is not possible to provide the necessary level of assurance of early years providers without an on-site inspection of the premises therefore, **early years assurance visits will be paused until after the February half term.**

Ofsted will continue with vital regulatory work in early years. This work will sometimes require on-site visits, which will be risk-assessed based on the nature of the premises and the urgency of the work.

Further details about changes to Ofsted inspections can be found in [Ofsted: coronavirus \(COVID-19\) rolling update](#). Please continue to check this guidance for updates.

Telling Ofsted about significant events

From the end of January 2021, childminders, nurseries and all other childcare providers must use an online notification form to tell us about significant events. Further information is available at [Childcare providers: telling Ofsted about significant events - GOV.UK](#)

Foundation Years

The National Children's Bureau recently hosted five free Learn – Explore – Debate events focused on putting wellbeing at the heart of early years practice. The events brought early years practitioners, local authorities, consultants and academics together with officials from the Department for Education and Ofsted to discuss practical ways to support the wellbeing of children and staff.

The recordings, slides and case studies from the event, including a video from the Department for Education, thanking the early years sector for their hard work, are now available on the [Foundation Years website](#)

Coronavirus financial support for your business

A range of Coronavirus (COVID-19) support is available, from the Government. Use the [business support finder](#) to see what support is available for you and your business.

Support you may be entitled to:

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme ('Furlough Scheme')

[Check if your employees are eligible for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#)

The scheme is open until 30 April 2021.

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the government guidance in relation to CJRS (furlough) claims. This includes the specific guidance for early years providers which is available via [coronavirus: financial support for education, early years and children's social care](#)

Statutory Sick Pay rebate

[Claim back Statutory Sick Pay paid to employees because of coronavirus](#)

You can reclaim Statutory Sick Pay you've paid for employees who are off sick, self-isolating or shielding because of coronavirus.

Self-Employment Income Support Scheme

[Self-Employment Income Support Scheme Grant Extension](#)

The scheme has been extended to April 2021.

Support for nursery businesses that pay business rates

Nurseries in England do not have to pay business rates for the 2020 to 2021 tax year. The council will do this automatically.

Coronavirus Bounce Back Loan Scheme and Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

[Find out how to apply for a Coronavirus Bounce Back loan](#)

[Find out how to apply for the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme](#)

These schemes are open until 31 March 2021.

Support for businesses paying tax: Time to pay service

[Find out what to do if you cannot pay your tax bill on time](#)

If you cannot pay your tax bill on time because of coronavirus, you may be able to delay it without penalty using HMRC's Time to Pay service.

FEEE places – information and updates

Funding for Spring Term 2021

Early Years providers should remain open for all children and FEEE funding will continue to be paid for children enrolled and included in the FEEE headcount.

Due to the current lock-down some children will not be attending due to various reasons and providers must ensure that they are available if the parents need to contact them and have processes to support the children remotely. Remember to complete and retain a Parental Declaration form for all FEEE children on your headcount.

Deposits and Registration Fees for FEEE places

The FEEE Provider Agreement has clear guidance on these (Par 3.28 and Par 3.32).

- Registration Fees **must not** be charged for 2, 3 and 4-year-old FEEE places where the children are only accessing the funded entitlement hours.
- Deposits **must not** be charged/held for 2-year-old FEEE places where the children are only accessing the funded entitlement hours.

Deposits can create a barrier of access and we recommend that providers do not charge/hold these for 3 and 4-year-old FEEE places too, where children are only accessing the funded entitlement hours.

Admissions Criteria – making your offer for FEEE places very clear for parents to understand

The guidance for this is included in the FEEE Provider Agreement.

- Providers must publish their admissions criteria including reference to managing applications.
- This and other information about how they offer FEEE places must be made available to parents who are enquiring for funded places.
- Providers should ensure that parents understand the information and be clear and transparent about charges for additional hours and services which parents optionally choose to access.

families.leicester.gov.uk/providersagreement

Important - Licences and permits for distributing and displaying marketing material

We have recently been made aware of enforcement action being taken and 'on-the-spot' fixed penalty notices being issued for the display of banners promoting childcare services in locations where it is not permitted by the local authority or where prior permission should have been obtained.

We therefore recommend that providers should check if restrictions apply and if permission is required for leaflet distribution or for display of advertising material (e.g. signage, posters and banners) especially when it is not on their property.

The local authority investigates complaints and takes action on a wide range of environmental issues, including fly-posting and unauthorised leaflet distribution in restricted zones, and further information can be found via the following links:

[City wardens \(leicester.gov.uk\)](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/city-wardens/)

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/business/licences-and-permits/trade-and-industry/distribution-of-free-printed-materials-licensing/>

You can make General Enquiries by:

Phone 0116 454 1000 (Mon - Fri 10.30am - 3.30pm) or

E-mail customer.services@leicester.gov.uk

Provider Agreement (Terms and conditions for FEEE 2020)

We would like to thank providers for submitting their signed [Provider Agreement](#) documents within the deadline date. However, we have a few providers that have still not completed this task. We would urge you to do this with urgency as it could affect your FEEE payments. If you have any queries, please email the team eedteam@leicester.gov.uk

Provider Business Sustainability Survey (2020)

A big thank you to all the providers who took the time to complete the survey. We received a total of 119 responses (48 Nurseries, 26 preschools and 45 Childminders).

This information will be used to assess the impact of Covid-19 on the childcare market, highlighting the challenges and issues you currently face. A summary of the findings will also be escalated to senior management and aid strategic planning.