

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why can more children now attend school?

The government wants children back into education as soon as the scientific advice allows 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.

As a result of the huge efforts everyone has made to adhere to strict social distancing measures, the transmission rate of coronavirus has decreased. It is anticipated that with further progress that we may be able, from the week commencing 1 June, to welcome back more children to school. This will only happen provided that the 5 key tests set by government justify the changes at the time, including that the rate of infection is decreasing and the enabling programmes set out in the recovery strategy are operating effectively. As a result, we are planning ahead of confirmation that these tests are met.

2. What does the latest scientific advice say?

The latest scientific advice to government is that:

- there is high scientific confidence that children of all ages have less severe symptoms than adults if they contract coronavirus and there is moderately high scientific confidence that younger children are less likely to become unwell if infected with 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
- schools and other settings can make changes to how they are organised and put measures in place to reduce risks

The Department for Education has provided advice on the steps we should consider taking, this includes:

- limiting the amount of contact between different groups of children (such as smaller class sizes with children and staff spread out more)
- additional protective measures, such as increased cleaning and encouraging good hand and respiratory hygiene

3. Can my child return to school?

From the week commencing 1 June:

- we are welcoming back children in reception (Red class), year 1 (Orange class) and year 6 (Violet class)
- continue to offer places to the priority groups – vulnerable children and children of critical workers – we have been supporting since the end of March

This approach aims to limit numbers within the school, while ensuring that the an increasing number of pupils can benefit from attending.

4. What if my child is eligible but has siblings who are not?

We are asking that only children in Reception (Red Class), Year 1 (Orange Class) and Year 6 (Violet Class) return to schools from 1 June. This does not include siblings in different year groups unless those siblings are in a priority group, for example, the children of critical workers. Reducing the risks for children and staff is our utmost priority.

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

We have received guidance and support from the Department for Education, Waltham Forest Local Authority and Trade Unions on [implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#) to help us to reduce the risk of transmission as more children return.

To prevent the spread of coronavirus, we will use a range of protective measures to create safer environments in which the risk of spreading the virus is substantially reduced. All the measures are designed to minimise risks to children, staff and their families.

Approaches we are taking include:

- carrying out a risk assessment before opening to more children - the assessment directly address risks associated with coronavirus so that sensible measures can be put in place to minimise those risks for children and staff
- making sure that children do not attend if they or a member of their household has symptoms of coronavirus.
- promoting regular hand washing for 20 seconds with running water and soap or use of sanitiser and ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the catch it, bin it, kill it approach
- cleaning more frequently to get rid of the virus on frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles, handrails, tabletops, play equipment and toys
- minimising contact through smaller classes or group sizes and altering the environment as much as possible, such as changing the layout of classrooms
- reducing mixing between groups through timetable changes, such as staggered break times
- Children will be released at different exits:

Reception - The Drive main gate

Year 1 - Rectory Rd green gate

Year 6 - The Drive Ark gate

Key worker children with a sibling in Reception – The Drive main gate

Key worker children with a sibling in Year 1 - Rectory Rd green gate

Key worker children with a sibling in Year 6 – The Drive Ark gate

Key worker children with no siblings in Reception, Year 1 or Year 6 –
Rectory Rd green gate

6. If my child is eligible, is it compulsory for them to attend school?

We strongly encourage children in the eligible year groups (Reception, Year 1 and Year 6) and priority groups (such as children of critical workers) to attend school unless they are self-isolating or there are other reasons for absence (such as shielding due to health conditions).

You should notify the school as normal if your child is unable to attend so that staff are aware.

Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time.

7. Do all vulnerable children who are not currently attending have to go back to school?

School will continue to offer places to priority groups. In particular, as per the existing guidance on [supporting vulnerable children and young people during the coronavirus outbreak](#), vulnerable children of all year groups continue to be expected and encouraged to attend school where it is appropriate for them to do so.

For children who have a social worker, attendance is expected unless their social worker decides that they are at less risk at home.

For children who have an education health and care (EHC) plan, attendance is expected where it is determined, following a risk assessment, that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the school environment.

For children who are deemed otherwise vulnerable at school, attendance is expected where this is appropriate.

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

Children and young people who are considered [extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding](#) should continue to shield and are not expected to attend.

Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. A minority of children will fall into this category, and parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category.

Children who live in a household with someone who is [extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding](#) should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and the child or is able to understand and follow those instructions.

Children and young people who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) as defined in the [social distancing guidance](#) and including those who are pregnant, can attend.

9. Can children be tested for the virus?

Children and staff will be eligible for testing if they become ill with coronavirus symptoms, as will members of their household. This will enable children to get back to school and their parents or carers to get back to work, if the test proves to be negative.

A positive test will ensure rapid action to protect their classmates and staff. Tests can be booked online at the following link:

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

10. What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in the school?

When a child or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, they will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. All staff and students who are attending school will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus.

Where the child or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class/group within the school will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class/group do not need to self-isolate unless the child or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the child's cohort or in the school, Public Health England's local Health Protection Teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise the school on the most appropriate action to take.

11. Will education be provided as normal to children who are attending?

School will be providing support and education to children attending school in the way we see fit during this time. We will also focus on pupils' emotional wellbeing, their spiritual and physical development.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that schools must meet for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5

years old. Our Early years settings will use their best endeavours to deliver the learning and development requirements as far as possible in the current circumstances.

We will continue to make decisions about how to support and educate the children during this period. This will include:

- consideration of pupils' mental health and wellbeing
- assessment of where pupils are in their learning in order to make any necessary adjustments to their curriculum over the coming weeks
- prioritisation of high needs groups and support for those in transition years

We will use our best endeavours to support pupils attending as well as those remaining at home, making use of the available remote education support of ECS online.

12. How should my child travel to and from school?

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

13. Will school meals be available for children who are in school?

We will provide meals for all children who are in school. Meals will be available free of charge where pupils meet the free school meal eligibility criteria. The kitchen is open and risk assessment carried out to ensure their staff are able to work safely.

Parents can send their child in with a packed lunch if they do not want to purchase a meal.

We will continue to provide food parcels or vouchers for benefits-related free school meal pupils not attending school.

14. Will school keep the usual opening hours?

School will be open from 9am to 3.30pm as usual Monday to Thursday and 9am to 1pm on Friday. The drop-off, collection times and process has been planned to keep children and families safe and is outlined here:

The school gate on Rectory Road will open at 8.45am and will be closed by 9.15am. There will be different collection gates for different year groups. Collection gates will open at 3.15pm.

Based on DfE Guidance - Opening schools to more pupils from 1 June: Guidance for parents and carers (Updated 20 May 2020)

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

15. Will the school have testing equipment on site or refer our family for testing?

No the school will not have testing equipment on site. If a parent or child has symptoms they should not attend school but should apply online for a test <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

16. Will staff be tested for Covid 19 before they return to teach my children?

Once settings open to more children and young people, staff and pupils in all settings will be eligible for testing **if they become ill** with coronavirus symptoms, as will members of their household. This will enable children and young people to get back to childcare or education, and their parents or carers to get back to work, if the test proves to be negative.

17. Will I need to make an appointment to come into the school office?

Yes, parents will need to make an appointment to come into the school. They can do this by contacting the school office and this will be arranged when it is possible to do so and will be conducted safely. We are seeking to keep visits to the school to an absolute minimum, so ideally a telephone appointment can be arranged at a mutually convenient time.

18. Will there be a breakfast club or after school club?

It will not be possible to open the breakfast/after school club as we would be unable to maintain the 'bubble groups'.

19. My children remain at home because their class is not returning will they receive a third home learning pack?

Children not returning to school will be able to make use of material posted on the class pages of our school website and access work from this link <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources>

Your child can also access lessons at the Oak National Academy available at this link <https://www.thenational.academy/online-classroom>

20. My child has a cold? When should I keep my child at home, what symptoms should I be looking out for?

If you child has a temperature, a new continuous cough, loss of smell or taste you should keep your child at home and apply for a test at the following link. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

21. Will my class teacher be wearing protective masks or gloves?

Your class teacher is not required to wear a mask or gloves.

In deciding to bring more children back to school ECS has completed a risk assessment and will use the following measures.

- avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
- frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices
- regular cleaning of settings
- minimising contact and mixing

22. At lunchtime will the cook be wearing protective mask and gloves? Will the midday staff be wearing any protective equipment?

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

The majority of staff in education settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from others.

23. I am concerned about school trips and events? Will my child be expected to participate if I bring them back into school.

There will be no school trips or group assemblies until such time as it is safe to do so.

24. If my child is showing symptoms and they are asked to leave? Will I be allowed inside the school to collect them?

If a child becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home the supervising adult will wear PPE if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained

The school office will contact the parent and the child will be safely brought to you at the school gate for pick up.

25. If my child falls down in the playground. Will I be allowed to come into school to take care of them? How will they be treated at a distance?

If a child falls over and hurts themselves in the playground the supervising adult will administer first aid and will take all necessary precautions to minimise risk to themselves and the child. The school has a supply of personal protective equipment (face masks, aprons, gloves) which can be used for first aid if necessary.

26. What if I change my mind and my child no longer wants to attend school? Will I be able to withdraw my child?

Yes, you will be able to withdraw your child but we would encourage you to bring your child if they are healthy and in either Reception, Year 1 or Year 6.

27. How can I get more information about the back to school protective measures in my school?

ECS are using the guidance set out by the Department for Education to prevent the spread of coronavirus. ECS will use a range of protective measures to create safer environments in which the risk of spreading the virus is substantially reduced. Please see the following link to the DFE's guidance: <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>

28. Will children be allowed to wear masks coming back into school if they choose to do so?

Face coverings (or any form of medical mask where instructed to be used for specific clinical reasons) should not be worn in any circumstance by those who may not be able to handle them as directed for example children as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.

29. Will my child be 2 metres away from other children in the playground and in the classroom?

Procedures will be in place to facilitate social distancing in keeping with Department for Education guidance we recognise that it is impossible to ensure primary school children will remain 2 metres apart at all times.

30. How often will equipment be cleaned during the day?

We will have staff on site whose responsibility it is to clean frequently touched surfaces. Internal doors of common areas will be propped open to reduce touching of handles. The whole school site will be cleaned frequently.

31. Will children be allowed to come home for lunch?

Children will not be allowed home for lunch. This will minimise the risks associated with frequent or multiple entry into the school. Children can bring in a packed lunch should they so wish.

32. In the classroom if children use tissues / wash hands - who will monitor what happens to this waste?

All adults and children will:

- frequently wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly.

- Will clean their hands on arrival at the setting, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing
- Will be encouraged not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose
- Will use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use covered bins for tissue waste ('catch it, bin it, kill it') the bins will be emptied throughout the day by onsite cleaning staff.

33. Will my child have to wear the summer school uniform and do I need to wash it daily?

Your child can wear either normal or summer school uniform. There is no guidance that uniform must be washed more frequently than it was before.

34. I am concerned the children will be sitting closely together in the hall. Will the school begin daily assembly for children or Friday assemblies again for parents in the hall?

Children will not sit together in the hall or have group assemblies in the hall. Parents/carers will not be allowed to enter the school without prior appointment and there will not be Friday group assemblies as school will finish at 1pm on a Friday. The school has introduced timetables and systems to reduce the size of the groups coming into contact with each other – such as smaller class sizes spread out across the setting.

35. Is my child allowed to bring in sunscreen? A hat and a water bottle from home?

Your child should bring in a water bottle with your child's name written on it as the school fountains will be out of use. A hat with your child's name can also be brought in. Sunscreen should be applied before children leave home

36. What happens if I am late picking up my child from school and I miss my pick up slot?

It is important that parents arrive at school during the allocated time slots to minimise risk.

37. Can I give permission for my child to walk home alone or be picked up by another parent?

Year 6 children who already have permission to walk home on their own can continue to do so. Please remind your child to maintain social distancing with friends while walking home.

38. What happens if my child needs to attend a family appointment during school hours? Can I come inside the school to pick up my child?

If your child has to attend an appointment during school hours please telephone the school office to advise. When you arrive the child will be brought to you at the gate and staff will keep a safe distance from you. Please do not bring your child back to school on the same day once they have left for an appointment.