**Guidance from our Department for Education contact**

Following the PM’s announcement on Monday, we have updated our out-of-school settings guidance to provide more information on who can attend out-of-school settings from 8th March, and what measures should be put in place to reduce the risk of transmission in these settings. As always, the updated guidance should hopefully provide you with all the detail you need, but we’ve tried to condense the main updates into the headlines below.

The updated guidance documents are available at the usual links here: [Protective measures for holiday and after-school clubs, and other out-of-school settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/BNOFCkZqVCAOMVsJkl85?domain=eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com) & [Guidance for parents and carers of children attending out-of-school settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/cDZtCl5rVcm2BJcY750F?domain=eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com)

**Main Updates to the Out-of-school Settings Guidance**

**Who can attend OOSS?**

Until 8th March

* Out-of-school settings and wraparound childcare providers should continue to only offer indoor/ outdoor provision for:
* [vulnerable children and young people](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/itTFCmQvVC8jmwHNe1si?domain=eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com)
* [children of critical workers](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/itTFCmQvVC8jmwHNe1si?domain=eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com), where the provision is reasonably necessary to enable their parents and carers to work, search for work, undertake education or training, or attend a medical appointment or address a medical need

New Position from 8th March

From 8th March, out-of-school settings and wraparound childcare providers will be able to offer indoor and outdoor provision to all children. However, parents and carers will only be able to access your settings for certain essential purposes.

Therefore, from 8th March, providers should only offer indoor and outdoor face-to-face provision to:

* vulnerable children and young people
* other children, where the provision is:
  + reasonably necessary to enable their parents and carers to work, search for work, undertake education or training, or attend a medical appointment or address a medical need, or attend a support group
  + being used by electively home educating parents as part of their arrangements for their child to receive a suitable full-time education; or
  + being used as part of their efforts to obtain a regulated qualification, meet the entry requirements for an education institution, or to undertake exams and assessments.

Easter Holidays

When schools close for the Easter holidays (from 29 March) out-of-school settings and wraparound providers will be able to offer:

* outdoor provision to all children, without restrictions on the purpose for which they may attend
* indoor provision to:
  + vulnerable children and young people
  + children on free school meals, where they are attending as part of the DfE’s Holiday Activities and Food Programme
  + other children, where the provision is:
    - reasonably necessary to enable their parents and carers to work, search for work, undertake education or training, or attend a medical appointment or address a medical need, or attend a support group
    - being used by electively home educating parents as part of their arrangements for their child to receive a suitable full-time education; or
    - being used as part of their efforts to obtain a regulated qualification, meet the entry requirements for an education institution, or to undertake exams and assessments.

Summer term and beyond

The Government’s intention is then for out-of-school settings and wraparound childcare providers to be able offer provision as normal, to all children, from the start of the school summer term. This will be no earlier than 12 April, and will be confirmed as part of Step 2 of the [COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/p94WCnrwVfg7J0u09lKr?domain=eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com).

**Specific updates to protective measures**

Where we know that the new variant of coronavirus (COVID-19) prevalent in the UK is more transmissible, we have also amended guidance to recommend some additional precautionary measures to help further reduce the risk of transmission. We will continue to keep these under review. The main ones are detailed below.

***Updates to Group Sizes***

We’ve updated the “considering groups sizes” section to make clear that:

* You should continue to group children in their same school day bubbles as far as possible.
* Where it is not possible to follow school day bubbles, you should:
  + ensure any children from the same school are kept together; and only group children from different schools together where it is absolutely necessary.
  + work with parents and carers, where applicable, to try and keep siblings together
  + Ensure you are continuing to group children in small, consistent groups of no more than fifteen children and at least one staff member.

***Updates to the System of Controls***

When many of you see the updated version of the guidance, you will notice that the “system of controls” section has become longer and has been restructured. The system of controls outlines the infection protection and control measures providers should put in place. Even though it will at first glance look like it’s changed a lot, the core pillars of the system of controls remain the same. The main changes that you will want to note are:

* The updated section on face coverings: This now advises that children who were aged 11 and above on 31st August 2020 are recommended to wear face coverings when they are being educated or cared for in classrooms or during activities, where social distancing cannot be maintained.
* We’ve added further information on how to keep settings well-ventilated
* We’ve added a new section on accessing asymptomatic testing, which includes information on how staff working in wraparound childcare or out-of-school settings can access testing either on school premises or through local community testing programmes

Where additional system of controls measures have been put in place, they will be reviewed in partnership with health experts to decide whether evidence suggests that these measures can be eased ahead of the summer.