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This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/actions-for-education-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020>

As part of national social distancing measures to limit the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), we have had to limit the numbers of children and young people attending educational and childcare settings, to ensure that pupils and staff attending could do so safely. That is why, since 23 March 2020, education and childcare settings have only been open to priority groups ([vulnerable children](#) and [children of critical workers](#))<sup>1</sup>.

As well as offering face-to-face provision for those able to attend, settings have also done a huge amount to support the remote education of those who have been staying at home. Innovative and fast-paced work has taken place, by committed staff, to develop resources to make this education the best it can be.

Throughout this period, the work and dedication of critical workers has been crucial to our country. This of course includes all our critical workers working with children and young people – leaders, teachers, support staff, childcare workers, social workers and others, who have worked tirelessly to support the education and welfare of young people.

As a result of the huge efforts everyone has made to adhere to strict social distancing measures, the transmission rate of coronavirus has decreased. We therefore anticipate, with further progress, that we may be able, from the week commencing 1 June 2020 to welcome back more children to early years, school and further education settings. We will only do this provided that the five 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 UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy](#) are operating effectively. As a result we are asking schools, colleges and childcare providers to plan on this basis, ahead of confirmation that these tests are met.

We have worked closely with the sector, and will continue to do so over the coming weeks to support the wider opening of schools, colleges and childcare settings. In this document we are setting out the overarching aims and principles of this next phase, including information about protective measures which will be in place. We will work with the profession to produce more detailed guidance ahead of 1 June 2020.

## Next steps

Education and childcare settings are already open to priority groups. Now that we have made progress in reducing the transmission of coronavirus we are encouraging all eligible children to attend – it is no longer necessary for parents of eligible children to keep them at home if they can. In particular, as per the [existing guidance on vulnerable children and young people](#), vulnerable children of all year groups continue to be expected and encouraged to attend educational provision where it is appropriate for them to do so.

From the week commencing 1 June 2020 at the earliest, we will be asking primary schools to welcome back children in Nursery, Reception, year 1 and year 6, alongside priority groups. We will ask secondary schools, sixth form and further education colleges to offer some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of year 10 and year 12 students who are due to take key exams next year, alongside the full time provision they are offering to priority groups.

We are also asking nurseries and other early years providers, including childminders, to begin welcoming back all children. Alternative provision settings should mirror the approach being taken for mainstream schools and also offer some face-to-face support for year 10 and 11 students (as they have no year 12). Special schools, special post-16 institutions and hospital schools will work towards a phased return of more children and young people without a focus on specific year groups.

We want to get all children and young people back into education as soon as the scientific advice allows because it is the best place for them to learn, and because we know how important it is for their mental wellbeing to have social interactions with their peers, carers and teachers. Children returning to educational and childcare settings in greater numbers will also allow more families to return to work.

We are therefore gradually increasing the numbers of children and young people attending schools and colleges. This decision is based on the latest scientific advice. By returning pupils gradually, settings can initially reduce the number of children and young people in classrooms compared to usual and put protective measures in place to reduce risks. Children will need to stay within their new class/group wherever possible and we will ask settings to [implement a range of protective measures](#) including increased cleaning, reducing 'pinch points' (such as parents dropping children off at the start and end of the day), and utilising outdoor space. Staff and pupils in all settings will be eligible for testing if they become ill with coronavirus symptoms, as will members of their households. A negative test will enable children to get back to childcare or education, and their parents to get back to work. A positive test will ensure rapid action to protect their classmates and staff in their setting. Those who are clinically vulnerable, or are living with someone who is, should follow our [protective measures guidance](#).

In childcare settings, providers will be asked to welcome back all children below statutory school age from the week commencing 1 June 2020. Demand for childcare is likely to be lower than usual at first, and existing space requirements and staff to child ratios