



Department for Education

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

Information to cascade to parents and carers

From Friday 20 March schools, childcare and other educational settings are closed for everyone except:

- children of critical workers
- vulnerable children

We have published guidance for parents and carers:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

Critical workers

If parents' work is critical to the coronavirus response, their children will be prioritised for early years and education provision.

The Government has published a list of critical workers:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Please cascade the above information to parents and carers where possible.

Handwashing advice

The most important thing individuals can do to protect themselves is to wash their hands more often, for at least 20 seconds, with soap and water. Public Health England recommends that in addition to handwashing before eating, and after coughing and sneezing, everyone should also wash hands after using toilets and travelling on public transport.

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

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

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 to Sunday)

Please note, we are currently experiencing high volumes of calls. We appreciate your patience at this time and apologise for any wait that you may experience. To ensure that we answer your calls as quickly as possible, we have now extended our opening hours to cover weekends and are increasing the number of call handlers available to answer your calls.