

Return to School - September 2020

FAQ's

Guidance from the Department of Education about the full opening of schools is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

School

1. **Will all schools re-open?** Yes – all schools should re-open at the start of September.
2. **Does my child have to go to school?** Yes – As of September 2020 the department of Education has reapplied the law. It is compulsory for your child to receive a full-time education. There is guidance available from the Department for Education (see above).
3. **Why does my child have to go to school?** Returning to school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing. Time out of school is detrimental for children's cognitive and academic development. Lower academic achievement also translates into long-term economic costs due to having a less well-qualified workforce. This affects the standard of living that today's pupils will have over the course of their entire life.
4. **What is the risk to my child?** Evidence suggests that the risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school.
5. **Will my child be safe in school?** Yes – each school is different, but all schools are following Government guidelines on reopening schools to children. Schools will have a bubble and your child will stay in this bubble. They will also have completed a risk assessment, and this will be regularly updated by them. They will also have enhanced cleaning arrangements. You can help by asking your child to wash their hands regularly, not touch their face, cough into their elbow, use tissues and bin after use and to do what school asks them to do to ensure their safety.
6. **How many children are in a bubble?** In primary schools, a bubble is usually a class of pupils. In secondary schools, a bubble is likely to be a whole year group. Secondary schools have larger bubbles to allow pupils to have access to the whole curriculum and specialist teachers.

7. **Can my child wear a mask/PPE in school?** Guidance from the Government says that wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended.
8. **Will my child's teacher be wearing a full mask?** In most cases teachers will not be wearing full masks. However, there are a few situations where this may be required - for example if a member of staff must provide close medical care for your child.
9. **What if another child in the class has symptoms?** Schools will be following Government guidance if this happens. The child will be sent home and asked to self-isolate. Children who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home to self-isolate unless the child tests positive, your child develops symptoms themselves or you have been requested to do so by NHS Test & Trace. Your child will be asked to wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser and the area around the person with symptoms will be cleaned with normal household disinfectant after they have left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.
10. **My children have different start times – why is this?** Schools will be trying to reduce contact between children at particular pressure points in the day. These include drop off and collection times. Please follow the guidance that school gives you. Children will still receive a full education – school will have adjusted the timetable or start/end times to accommodate this. If this causes problems, please talk to your school. Schools will be asking you not to gather at the school gate.
11. **Will I be allowed to go into my child's school?** School will inform you what to do if you need to visit. It may be that you need to make an appointment. If you need to collect an ill child, you may be asked to wait outside, and staff will bring your child to you.
12. **My child attends 2 schools – will this still be allowed?** Yes - the 2 schools will have discussed what needs to be done to reduce any risk. You should be part of the risk assessment process.
13. **I am concerned about my child sharing school resources. How can this be safe?** For individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pencils and pens, your child may be provided with their own items. Alternatively, you can provide these basic items in a pencil case, for your child. Secondary children are expected to have their own stationery and it is important that you provide these. Classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the bubble; these should be cleaned regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces. Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, such as sports, art and science equipment will be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between bubbles.

14. **Will my child's 'bubble' have separate toilet facilities?** This is unlikely – but schools will be cleaning the toilets regularly and children will be encouraged to wash their hands.
15. **I know of someone with Covid 19 and they are sending their child to school. What can I do?** Inform school of this. School will then be able to talk to the parents to undertake a risk assessment? and if there IS a confirmed case of Covid19, the child will stay at home until symptoms have passed as per Government guidelines. Parent will be instructed to keep their child at home by the school.
16. **Will my child have their temperature taken?** Public Health England does not recommend this as this is an unreliable method for identifying Covid19.
17. **Will my child still receive the full curriculum?** Schools will be trying to ensure that this occurs. Modifications to the curriculum may be needed at the start of the year, with the aim of returning to a normal curriculum content by no later than the summer term 2021.
18. **Will my child be in the same classroom all day?** Primary aged children already spend most of the day in one classroom and this will continue. Secondary children may find that movement around the school is reduced or that they are asked to proceed around school on specific routes. School may adopt staggered break times and lunch times and have time for cleaning surfaces in the dining hall between groups. Passing briefly in the corridor or playground is low risk.
19. **What will happen if I don't send my child to school?** From September onwards, the usual rules on school attendance will apply. If your child is of compulsory school age it is a parents' duty to ensure that they attend regularly at the school where they are a registered pupil. Your child's school is responsible for recording attendance and following up pupil absence. The aim would always be to work with parents/carers to resolve any issues or concerns around attendance. However, in some cases, sanctions could be issued, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct. <https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions/school-starting-age>
20. **Can my child attend for just a few days each week?** No - the guidance states that schools should not put in place rotas and it is compulsory for your child to receive a full-time education.
21. **Are breakfast clubs and wrap around care re-starting?** Yes - schools can now re-start breakfast clubs and wrap-around care. Pupils who attend these will be able to move from the activity into their normal bubble.

Exams and assessment

22. **My child has just finished Y1 and missed the phonics screening check, what will happen about this?** The government is consulting on this. The latest proposal is that pupils will do a phonics screen in the autumn and pupils who do not meet the threshold will do an additional check in later in Year 2 in 2021. This will allow schools to ensure that any interventions can be put in place to support pupils with their knowledge and use of phonics.
23. **What will happen with Key stage 2 SATs in 2021?** Year 6 SATs are currently expected to proceed as normal.
24. **What will happen with GCSEs and Post 16 qualifications in 2021?** GCSEs and Post 16 exams are expected to take place in 2021. The government is consulting on making them slightly later in the summer term.
25. **My child was disappointed with their GCSE or Post 16 exam results in 2020, what can they do?** Pupils will be able to resit any subjects they wish by doing the exams in the autumn. Your son/daughter should speak to their school/college following results day to consider if this is the right option for them.

School support visits

26. **What will happen if a professional needs to visit my child in school (SEN/EP) professionals** will be able to visit schools if essential but there is a protocol in which they must follow.

Transport

27. **Will school transport be running in September?** Yes – you should be contacted to inform you of the arrangements. Please note that if your transport has been allocated under the transport vacancy scheme you may find that you lose this.
28. **Will my child be safe on school transport?** Yes – transport companies and schools will have put in place the precautions needed to keep your child safe. This may require recommending the use of face coverings (mask or scarf) if they are over 11 years old, grouping, use of sanitiser, additional cleaning, organised queuing and boarding or distancing within the transport. Your school will be able to advise you on transport arrangements.
29. **My child uses the public bus service. Will this be safe?** Government guidance for using public transport should be followed and can be found [here](#). People using public transport must wear a face covering on public transport (very young children, disabled people, or those who have breathing difficulties and respiratory problems that may be exacerbated by wearing a

face covering, are exempt from the new regulations). You may want to consider whether cycling, walking or car sharing is a viable option.

School Lunches

30. **Will school lunches still be available?** Yes – school kitchens will be fully open from the start of the autumn term. School kitchens are required to comply with the guidance for food businesses, which has been put in place to ensure safe practices. To achieve this, lunch and break times may be organised differently. Your child may for example have breaks at slightly different times or be asked to eat in their classroom.

Medical Conditions

31. **What if my child is anxious about going into school?** You can get information that will help you support your child from these sites: [Kooth](#), [Young Minds](#), [BEAM](#), and [Explore Learning](#). Alternatively, you may like to discuss this with your school or contact the dedicated EAS helpline for help and advice.
32. **I'm really anxious about my child returning to school.** This is a time where everyone has anxieties. Be assured that your child's school will be following Government guidance and taking every precaution to ensure the safety of everyone working within the school. This includes all children, all staff and any visitors to school. Try not to show your child that you are anxious and if you find yourself continuing to worry, you may like to contact [the Samaritans](#) for support.
33. **My child has been shielded, can I keep them off school?** No - shielding advice for all adults and children **paused on 1 August, after a continued decline** in the rates of community transmission of Covid19. This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. If you have concerns, you may like to talk to the consultant/paediatrician working with your child.
34. **My child has a serious medical condition which has required them to be shielded, will they be safe at school?** Yes - your child's school will be following Government guidance and taking every precaution to ensure their safety. However, you may like to talk to the consultant/paediatrician working with your child for more specific information. Your school will work with you/the medical professionals to ensure any additional safety measures are put in place.
35. **My child has a serious condition and the medical professionals have advised against a return to school. Will I get in trouble?** School would like the medical professionals to confirm this is the case – (letter/phone call/email from the professionals). Then, and because they are complying

with medical/public health advice, schools will be able to immediately offer your child access to remote education. These activities will be monitored. Absence in this case will not be penalised.