

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

Guidance on the use of free early education entitlements funding during coronavirus (COVID-19)

This new guidance sets out how, in exceptional circumstances, local authorities may use their dedicated schools grant (DSG) funding differently during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. This is so the children of critical workers and vulnerable children who are eligible for the free early education entitlements are able to receive their places.

The guidance can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-free-early-education-entitlements-funding-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

Updated guidance on the actions for schools during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

We have updated our guidance on the actions for schools during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. This update includes information on the testing of education and childcare workers, provision of education on the 08 May Bank Holiday, and the continuation of recruitment.

The guidance can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures>

Students in England encouraged to apply now for student finance

The Student Loans Company has confirmed that the application service will remain open to students as part of its response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and are encouraging students in England to apply for student finance as soon as possible to ensure their finances are in place for the new academic year.

New students are being asked to submit their applications before 22 May 2020. The Student Loans Company is contacting returning students to remind them to reapply for their next year's student finance. The deadline for these applications is 19 June.

Applications for student finance can be made here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/student-finance>

Public Health England has updated their guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection

Public Health England has published guidance for households with grandparents, parents and children living together where someone is at risk or has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

The guidance can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing eligibility extended to help protect the most vulnerable

The government has announced that anyone in England showing symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) who has to leave the home to go to work, or is aged 65 and over, is eligible for testing along with members of their households with symptoms. This is in addition to all essential workers with symptoms. Testing can be booked through a new online system.

Guidance on coronavirus (COVID-19) testing, including who is eligible for a test, how to get tested and the different types of test available can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

The information below has not changed since yesterday.

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 and Sunday

If you work in a school, please have your unique reference number (URN or UK PRN) available when calling the hotline.

Handwashing advice

It is essential that everyone washes their hands more often, using soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand washing with soap employs mechanical action that loosens bacteria and viruses from the skin, rinsing them into the drain. Drying hands afterwards makes the skin less hospitable to the virus. Hand sanitiser can be effective if soap is not available or the situation makes using soap less feasible (i.e. when outside) but using hand sanitiser provides none of the virus-destroying friction that rubbing your hands together and rinsing with water provides.

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

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

The e-Bug project is led by Public Health England and has a dedicated webpage for learning resources on hand washing and respiratory hygiene.

Resources are currently available for KS1, KS2 and KS3 and can be used in various settings including schools and at home:

- <https://e-bug.eu/>

Collection of guidance for educational settings on GOV.UK

All of the Department for Education's coronavirus guidance for educational settings can now be found in one place on GOV.UK at:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>

Our main schools guidance, the 'actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak' will be regularly kept up to date. Any new advice for schools on specific issues, such as food, exams or safeguarding, will be linked from:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures>