



Returning to early years childcare after Covid-19



It is the government's plan that all children and young people, in all year groups, will return to their early years setting, school and college full time from the beginning of the autumn term.

They have issued some Guidance for parents and carers, which we are referring to below to address any concerns or queries you may have.

You can read the full guidance here: [What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges in the autumn](#)

We understand that there may be some anxiety about sending your child to an early years setting, so we have prepared this factsheet using Government guidance and some local comments to help you.



Why can more children now attend childcare settings?

Children attending nurseries and childminders were able to return from 1 June, and from 20 July early years providers can return to their usual practice without limiting group sizes.

The Government have said: We want to get all children back into education because it is the best place for them to learn, and because we know it is good for children's mental wellbeing to have social interactions with other children, carers and teachers.

What does the Government say about the latest scientific advice?



- The prevalence of the virus has fallen
- The NHS Test and Trace system is up and running
- The scientific evidence shows that coronavirus (COVID-19) presents a much lower risk to children than adults.
- Early years settings are on average much smaller than schools, allowing a less restrictive approach to mixing than in schools.

If my child is eligible, is it compulsory for them to attend early years provision?

Attendance in nurseries, childminders and other early years providers remains optional, but we strongly encourage you to take up a place for your child. You can check if your child is eligible for any of the free childcare entitlements, worth on average £2,500 a year to parents of 2 year olds, and up to £5,000 a year to parents of 3 and 4 year olds, on the [Childcare Choices](#) website.

How will risks to children, teachers and families be managed?

There is guidance and support both from the Government and locally to childcare settings on implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings. From 20 July, early years settings will no longer be required to keep children in small, consistent groups within settings.

Approaches we are asking providers to take include:



- ❖ carrying out a risk assessment
- ❖ making sure that children do not attend if they or a member of their household has symptoms of coronavirus
- ❖ promoting regular hand washing and promoting the catch it, bin it, kill it approach
- ❖ cleaning more frequently
- ❖ minimise mixing within settings e.g. where they use different rooms for different age groups, keeping those groups apart as much as possible.

How will attending an early years setting help my child's development?

Nurseries, pre-schools and childminders are wonderful places for children to learn and have fun with friends, which supports their development and their overall wellbeing. Attending childcare can be an exciting and joyful experience for children and can also help provide a routine as they develop their social skills. Early years education is an important stage for children where they can flourish and get the best start in life.

If you have any questions you can email us at eycovid19@nottsc.gov.uk

Below parents have shared with us their experiences of their children returning to an early years setting.

"I was nervous as my son had spent a lot of time with me at home, I was worried he wouldn't settle with it being a little different and not socialising for a while.

Two weeks in and my son is back to his active motivated self.

I really don't regret getting him back into his normal routine. It has done him the world of good"

"My daughter had become really upset whilst being off, saying that she missed everyone. I still wasn't 100% sure if she should be going back.

When the day came, she was up bright and early. Seeing her excitement calmed me a little. Once we got closer, the smile on her face came back from seeing her friends. Then I knew she needed to go.

She told me everything that had been put in place, and how her class were working together to keep each other safe"



Isabelle has settled so well back into the swing of nursery.

I was quite worried as she had only been going a couple of weeks before lockdown started. You have all been great in calming fears and keeping us well informed of what you've put in place to keep yourselves and the children safe.

I'm proud she comes to such a brilliant nursery. Well done to you all. x

Sabrina (Isabelle's mum)

Nottinghamshire County Council

"An amazing welcome back for my daughter post COVID-19.

All the staff have adapted beautifully, they are happy, positive, encouraging and make everything feel as normal as possible for the little ones.

My daughter can't wait to get there each morning. Don't be afraid to send your children back, nursery have got it covered"