

Guidance

Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing social distancing in education and childcare settings

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To help ensure that the risk of virus spread for both staff and children is as low as possible, education and childcare settings should:

- tell children, parents, carers or any visitors, such as suppliers, not to visit the education or childcare setting if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- consider how children arrive and reduce any unnecessary travel on coaches, buses or public transport
- ensure class sizes reflect the numbers of teaching staff available and are kept as small as possible
- stagger lunch times, break times and the movement of pupils around the school to reduce large groups of children gathering
- discourage parents from gathering at school gates
- try to follow social distancing guidelines <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

Social distancing with very young or vulnerable children will be harder to maintain. Staff should implement the above as far as possible, and:

- make sure anyone who is feeling ill stays at home (for residential special schools and colleges, this means self-isolating as a school or college 'household' if a resident is ill). See the guidance on isolation for residential educational settings <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>
- ensure all staff and children wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds frequently, and are encouraged not to touch their face, while using a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and using bins for tissue waste. If children or young people have trouble washing their hands, ensure help is available
- inform parents and communities about the measures that you are taking and get their help to implement them
- increase cleaning of surfaces in classrooms, including desks and handles, and within toilet blocks and changing rooms, adhering to guidance on cleaning of non-healthcare settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

- for children and young people with an EHC plan, work with the local authority as well as with parents to decide how best to continue supporting these children and young people to stay healthy