

Can my child go to school – or not?

Schools remain largely closed – but they are **open for children of critical workers and for children and young people classed as ‘vulnerable’**. This includes alternative provision (AP) and SEND schools.

Children and young people with **at least one parent who is a critical worker** can go to school if required. But ‘critical worker’ doesn’t just mean an NHS nurse on the Covid-19 frontline. It also includes parents working in many aspects of health and social care, education and childcare, key public services, local and national government, food (from production to retail), utilities, transport, and more.

It sounds vague, but with so many categories, you may qualify even if you think you don’t. Check the **Department for Education’s advice** or speak to your school for clarification.

Be aware, you cannot simply send your child but must instead speak to your school to confirm a place. It is **not compulsory for your child to attend school** if you or a partner is a critical worker.

There are also **many definitions of a ‘vulnerable child or young person’**. Speak with your school to clarify these.

If you are struggling to access technology, you can **ask your school for the loan of a device**. If this is not possible – or if your home environment is affecting learning as described above – your child has a right to an alternative, which may include face-to-face education.

What if my family doesn’t have enough devices or laptops for remote education?

State-funded schools have a duty to deliver remote education effectively – and that includes **loans of school laptops or devices if required**. The government says it has provided 560,000 out of an additional 1 million devices available.

Parents cannot directly apply for devices from the government but schools are able to apply for additional tech to support pupils and students who are without. The scheme is devised for Years 3 to 11 (ages 7-16), but infant schools (Reception to Year 2, ages 4-6) are not currently able to apply. However, some primary schools may still independently choose to loan additional devices to KS1 pupils.

If your child doesn’t have access, you can **make a request to your school for a loan**. If this is not possible, you can apply for your child to attend face-to-face education in school (see above) until it is. Please send a message via class dojo to Mrs Glossop or ring 01709 710270

What if we don't have broadband connection or enough mobile data for remote learning?

Broadband and mobile data is not cheap and you are entitled to support with internet access for your child's education during lockdown. **Two schemes are available**, and your child could qualify for one of them if they are not in face-to-face education, you don't have fixed broadband at home, and you cannot afford additional data.

The first scheme provides **temporary data increases for mobile devices during this period on some networks** – including EE, O2, Sky Mobile, SMARTY, Tesco Mobile, Three, Virgin Mobile and Vodafone.

It's available for children in Years 3 to 11 (ages 7 to 16), but the request needs to be made by the school, rather than the parent – so if you think you might qualify, speak to your child's school.

For children in Years 3 to 13 (ages 7 to 18), schools can alternatively apply for **4G wireless routers**, and parents should again speak to their school if they have the need.

Aside from that, some data providers have also made it free to access educational sites – such as **BBC Bitesize** for EE, BT Mobile and PlusNet Mobile customers. Check with your provider.

MORE HELP: [Explore Parent Zone's lockdown hub of advice and resources to support parenting during the pandemic](#)

Why does my child have so much work to do – and do they have to do it all?

Many parents have noticed an increase in the amount of daily school work for their child. The government has issued schools with a **minimum amount of remote learning per day**, depending on a child's age. For children in Key Stage 1 (*Years 1-2, ages 5-7*) this is 3 hours. For Key Stage 2 (*Years 3-5, ages 7-11*) it is 4 hours. For Key Stages 3 and 4 (*Years 7-11, ages 11-16*) it is 5 hours.

Schools are required to provide enough to fill this daily – but different parents may find their child manages different amounts, based on their circumstances. How much learning your child must complete depends on their school but the **expectation is that they will attempt to complete some**. Speak to your school if this is proving difficult.

How will my child be taught remotely?

Children will be taught using the following:

- Recorded teaching (e.g. Oak National Academy Lessons, video/audio recordings made by teachers)
- Printed paper packs produced by teachers
- Textbooks and reading books pupils have at home
- Commercially available websites supporting the teaching of specific subjects or areas, including video clips or sequences

Will my child be taught broadly the same curriculum as they would if they were in school?

- We will be teaching the same curriculum remotely as we do in school
- The only difference will be that the children in school will have a PE lesson and Forest School lesson

How will my child access the lessons offered online for remote learning?

- All learning will be published on class dojo
- All children have a personal log-in
- The lessons will be added each day on the class portfolio for children to access
- They will have the day and date the lesson is for
- Children are encouraged to add pictures or videos of their learning for class teachers to respond

Children with SEND needs or children who cannot access remote learning a paper pack will be available and differentiated tasks. The class teacher will be in touch with these children individually.

What are the expectations for my child's engagement and the support that we as parents and carers should provide at home?

- There is an expectation that children do the minimum number of learning hours per day – see above
- Children to complete all the lessons and tasks set for that day
- Parents to support where possible and seek help if needed
- Children/parents to upload evidence of work produced through class dojo

How will you check whether my child is engaging with their work and how will I be informed if there are concerns?

- Your child's class teacher will be taking a daily register of work received back from children each day and also if the child has accessed their portfolio on class dojo
- A register will also be taken at the weekly zoom sessions to check who is engaging
- Weekly phone calls will be made with children who do not appear to be engaging and school will offer support or ask them to attend school
- Home visits will also be undertaken for hard to reach parents who are not engaging with school either with the class teacher or the pastoral support manager.

How will you assess my child's work and progress?

Feedback can take many forms and may not always mean extensive written comments for individual children. For example, whole-class feedback/zoom sessions, quizzes, marked work, spelling shed, num bots, times tables rockstars validated through on line digital platforms. Our approach to feeding back on children's work is as follows:

- Feedback on work posted each day on class dojo
- Spelling shed games
- Num bots weekly certificates
- Times table rockstars – games
- Bedrock levels
- Weekly zoom assemblies show and tell
- Quizzes

Remote education for self-isolating pupils

Where individual pupils need to self-isolate by the majority of their peer group remains in school, remote learning will likely differ from the approach for whole groups. This is due to the challenges of teaching children both at home and in school.

If your child is not in school because they are self-isolating lessons will be provided through class dojo under the child's portfolio. Please note these lessons may not be the same as what is happening in school, but will follow the national curriculum and the topics being learned in class.

What's happening with exams?

The government has said that **there will be no GCSEs or A-Level exams this summer**. Instead, it is in the process of deciding how to grade young people and it is likely – although unconfirmed – that **these will be based on teacher-assessed grades** rather than using an algorithm, which proved highly unpopular last summer.

There will also be **no SAT exams for primary children in Years 2 and 6** – and these will be replaced by teacher assessments. For **vocational qualifications (VTQs) where exams are due to be cancelled** the government is currently seeking consultation on the best way to assess grades. Students, parents, teachers and school leaders can **share their views here**.

When can my child go back to school?

This is the big question for many families. As it stands, **most children in education will be required to learn remotely until February half-term** (15-19 February 2021 for most English schools). However, this is a provisional date based on the current Covid-19 situation and is under review as the situation develops.

You should **stay in contact with school communications** for more information as it comes.

What about Covid-19 testing in schools?

Testing has been planned for children in **Year 7 and up**, who are attending face-to-face education, including SEND and AP schools. The government plans include **two tests weekly, 3-5 days apart**, with school staff also tested weekly. However, the regulatory body, MHRA, has not approved these plans, **drawing concerns around their wider safety implications**. For primary ages, a plan of testing was due to be devised later in January and there are currently no confirmed details.