

# Roadmap – Return to full attendance at Education Settings

On the 22 February, the Department for Education announced that all schools, colleges and further education settings should allow full attendance from 8 March. Furthermore, higher education providers are asked to recommence in-person teaching and learning in a phased manner from the 8 March for students on practical or practice-based (including creative arts) courses who need access to specialist equipment and facilities.

## **Key messages**

- Our shared goal now is to support pupils and students returning to face-to-face education, and to reverse the long-term impact of the pandemic on their education.
- The Government will review, by the end of the Easter holidays, the options for timing of the return of remaining students. This review will take account of the latest data and will be a key part of the wider roadmap steps. Students and providers will be given a week's notice ahead of any further return.
- Although the public health picture is improving, it remains crucial that steps are taken to reduce and mitigate any risks within education and childcare settings. DfE has worked closely with PHE to develop and refresh the system of controls to reduce the risk of transmission in education and childcare settings, based on scientific rationale.

## **Key Q&A**

**Infection rates within the community continue to remain high. Why have you asked schools and colleges to return to full attendance?**

- We are committed to getting all pupils and students back as soon as it is possible to do so.
- We are clear that the decision is based on the balance of risk: to the NHS of rising admissions, but also to students and pupils of the continued educational, social and psychological harms of missed education.
- In doing so, the Department for Education will be informed by the scientific and medical experts, where data and evidence is considered regularly including by SAGE, the Joint Biosecurity Centre, Public Health England, and the Chief Medical Officers.

**Why are you not asking remaining HE students to return?**

- We are committed to getting all students back into university as soon as the public health situation allows, taking into account the spread of the virus in communities and the pressures on the NHS. In doing so, the government has been informed by the scientific and medical experts, where data and evidence is considered regularly including by SAGE, the Joint

Biosecurity Centre, Public Health England, and the Chief Medical Officers.

- The Government will review, by the end of the Easter holidays, the options for timing of the return of the remaining students. This review will take account of the latest data and will be a key part of the wider roadmap steps. Students and providers will be given a week's notice ahead of any further return.
- Until then, we ask universities to continue to provide high-quality remote education, enabling students to access the help that they need to continue learning whilst at home.

### **What about clinically extremely vulnerable pupils, students and staff?**

- People in the highest risk category (the clinically extremely vulnerable) are currently advised by the Government to shield and stay at home as much as possible until further notice, except to exercise or to attend health appointments (including your vaccination appointments). These individuals will know who they are as they will have been written to, informing them that they are on the list.
- CEV children and young people are advised not to attend educational settings and wraparound childcare. Education settings should make appropriate arrangements for them to continue their education remotely.
- CEV staff should not attend their workplace. Staff should talk to their employers about how they will be supported, including to work from home. Schools and colleges should continue to pay clinically extremely vulnerable staff on their usual terms.
- CEV advice applies to individuals, not households. Those individuals who live with someone who is CEV, but who are not CEV themselves, can still attend education and wraparound childcare settings and work (if they are unable to work from home).

### **Can parents send their children to wraparound childcare or out-of-school settings to support them to work?**

Until 8 March, wraparound childcare providers and out-of-school settings should only offer face-to-face provision to children of critical workers and vulnerable children and young people, in line with those children eligible to attend school for onsite provision.

- From 8 March, wraparound childcare providers and out-of-school settings will be able to offer provision to all children, in line with those returning to school. However, parents and carers will only be able to access settings for certain essential purposes. Providers will be able to offer provision to vulnerable children and young people as normal, but other children should only be accessing this provision, where it is:
  - o Reasonably necessary to enable their parents or carers to work, seek work, undertake education or training, or attend a medical appointment or address a medical need.
- Being used by electively home educating parents, as part of their

arrangements for their child to receive a suitable full-time education.

- Being used for the purposes of obtaining a regulated qualification, meeting the entry requirements for an education institution, or to undertake exams or assessments.
- Schools should be working to resume all their breakfast and after-school clubs for their pupils, where this provision is necessary to support parents to important for providing enriching activities which support children's education, vulnerable children's wellbeing, as well as supporting parents to work, attend education and access medical care, and to support pupil's wider education and training.
- From the start of the school summer term, it is our ambition that all children will be able to access this provision for both indoor and outdoor activities as normal. This will be no earlier than 12 April and will be confirmed as part of Step 2 of the Government's Roadmap.