

## Updated FAQs 28 August 2020

The Government have now made it compulsory to wear face coverings in community centres. Where do settings who operate in a community centre with one main hall for the children with a shared kitchen, staff toilets and office stand. My understanding is that we do not need to wear face coverings whilst with the children. However, are we exempt when leaving the childcare room e.g. to work in the office, use the kitchen or toilets?

*We would suggest if a setting is using a shared space with other members of the public then they should wear face coverings when in an indoor area with others who are not part of the setting "bubble". However, if no other people are in the building when the preschool is operating then a face covering would not need to be worn.*

*Please also see the following DfE guidance that was issued this week on wearing masks in educational settings <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education/face-coverings-in-education>*

We now need to have extra time allocated for cleaning resources and premises. Can we shorten the session times, therefore reducing the FEEE hours to allow for this?

*A setting should take whatever steps it needs to in order to keep everyone safe. If no other solution is viable a setting can change their session times but minimise any reduction in funded hours where possible. If a setting has to reduce session times they should inform the parents of the change in hours and times as soon as possible. Be aware that parents may decide to go elsewhere if they are not able to access their normal full hours. If you do need to reduce session times please ensure you make any necessary adjustments to the FEEE hours claimed at the actual headcount*

Can you please clarify Essex's stance and guidance for settings that provide mixed care for early years and after schoolers, such as childcare on domestic, nurseries and childminders? Especially where some of these children have been together throughout the holidays and some are from same households.

*This is an area that is continuing to cause a lot of confusion, but current guidance continues to state contact should be minimised where possible.*

*Therefore settings need to complete their own risk assessment and agree with parents and other providers how to work together to provide the level of cover for children whilst minimising contact and any risks identified.*

Can childminders and settings cook hot meals for children, or should they be asking parents to provide packed lunches or meals?

*This is a decision for each childminder, and this should be risk assessed as to whether it is more appropriate for a parent to bring a child's food or for the childminder to cook a hot meal. This risk assessment would need to cover cooking arrangements or being able to appropriately store individual children's food.*

*The only mention in the guidance on meals is around charging, as follows: -*

*10.11 What arrangements do settings need to make about providing meals?*

*Where maintained nursery schools are open, they should continue to provide free school meals to children who would normally receive them.*

*In all other settings where free school meals do not apply, settings may charge for meals in line with national entitlements guidance. As per existing guidance, they should consider the impact of charges on disadvantaged families*

*Am I able to continue to have childcare students in my setting from September?*

*We cannot find that this is specifically covered in the guidance anywhere and have raised the question with Ofsted. We will update when we get a response*

*In the meantime, childcare students should query with their college what guidance they have been issued with on this matter, and it is worth noting that there is advice from Government about student placements in schools continuing, via the usual Initial Teacher Training networks as far as is practically possible.*