

## Email from Carolyn Terry to Essex early years and childcare and childcare providers

**From:** Free Entitlement Funding Queries <[FEEEQueries@essex.gov.uk](mailto:FEEEQueries@essex.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 13 December 2020 14:19

**Cc:** Free Entitlement Funding Queries <[FEEEQueries@essex.gov.uk](mailto:FEEEQueries@essex.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Urgent - Please Read - Covid-19 Update 13 December 2020

Dear All

### **COVID Self Isolation Period Shortened to 10 days**

We are experiencing a high number of queries regarding the announcement that self-isolation for contacts of people with confirmed coronavirus will be shortened from 14 to 10 days across the UK from Monday. This [press release](#) explains the changes announced by Chief Medical Officers, which will come into effect from Monday 14 December 2020.

To confirm there is no firm guidance for Education yet. We have contacted Public Health and the DfE for guidance around what we should do with closed bubbles that will be impacted by the change i.e. should they reopen. As soon as we have more information, we will be in contact to update you. In the meantime, our advice is that you **do not change any plans** at the current time until we have more information.

**Contact Tracing over the Christmas break** - we are also receiving a lot of enquiries as to whether early years settings should be implementing the 6 day of contact tracing that schools have been asked to put in place at the end of term. At this point, all guidance received refers to schools and colleges and does not reference early years settings. Please see the attached email from the DfE dated 8 December 2020. However, we are seeking clarification from the DfE on this point and will also update as soon as we have more information

Also included in this email: -

- Early Years Foundation Stage : Coronavirus Disapplication updated
- Phased return of Ofsted early years inspections
- DfE Attendance data survey update
- Advice for professionals working with children and young people during the coronavirus outbreak
- Autism Education Trust Training
- Updated FAQs

**The [EYFS : Coronavirus Disapplications](#) have been updated** - a summary of the changes are below: -

- provide a link to Ofsted's operational notes that set out further detail on how providers will be inspected from January 2021
- provide further clarity on the definition of 'reasonable endeavours' to be clear that it is not reasonable for providers to do nothing to meet the requirement
- move the statement that section 7.2 does not apply to childminders to the top of the section to give this greater prominence

**Phased return of Ofsted early years inspections** following on from the point above, Ofsted has announced a phased return of early years inspections. In summary, for early years settings: -

- Ofsted will carry out a programme of assurance inspections from the start of the spring term. These inspections will confirm whether or not a provider is meeting the early years foundation stage (EYFS) requirements.
- Assurance inspections will be proportionate, and risk based. Providers will be prioritised based on the length of time since their last inspection, and any other relevant information.
- Routine graded inspections will resume in the summer term of 2021

You can read the [full statement from Ofsted here](#).

**DfE Attendance data survey update** - the DfE have confirmed that the attendance survey will continue into the Spring 2021 term, but this will change to a fortnightly submission instead of on a weekly basis.

The last data collection for this term will be week commencing 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020. A new survey link will be sent out in the new year for the fortnightly submission which will commence week beginning 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021. We will continue to use the most recent data you have submitted so you will only need to complete a new survey if the attendance levels change

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and co-operation in completing the attendance data survey, especially as we know how busy you all are with running your setting as well as supporting families and children throughout the term.

**The Essex Teaching Awards 2021** would like to give you the opportunity to ensure those individuals, settings (including childminders) or schools get the recognition they deserve. Please share this with your parents too. See the following for more information [Essex Teaching Awards](#).

Nominations close on 31 December 2021, to nominate please follow this link - [Nomination Form](#)

**Autism Education Trust Training** – please find attached a flyer with information and links to the details and booking forms on the AET training for the spring 2021 term.

**Advice for professionals working with children and young people during the coronavirus outbreak** - services working with children and young people are well aware of the uncertainty which communities are facing, and the impact this could have on mental health. There are ways in which you can provide key support in your own setting in the midst of changing times. When external events are creating a sense of anxiety, trusted professionals can be seen as vital sources of support for both children and their families – even if contact is digital or over the phone.

Adults have the opportunity to model positive behaviour which gives reassurance to children, enabling them to better understand the situation and what they can do to look after themselves. So, as an early years practitioner, teacher or youth worker, staying calm and thoughtful is important. If you are sharing information about coronavirus - or indeed any other issue of wider concern – use materials from trusted sources and with sensitivity to the appropriate level of detail for the age of the child or young person. If you're supporting a child who is already vulnerable, they and / or their parents could be experiencing unmanageable increases in their anxiety levels. In your role, you may be well placed to spot this. Be ready to talk about whom they can turn to within your setting (e.g. the child's key worker, a counsellor, or a pastoral lead within a school), and externally within your wider community, as well as which kinds of support can be accessed remotely. To read the full article from Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families [click here](#).

We are also currently offering the Youth Mental Health awareness course, for more information on this [click here](#).

**Updated FAQs** – please see the attached updated FAQs.

Best wishes.

Carolyn

**Carolyn Terry**

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