



**In these fast moving and uncertain times, Oxfordshire County Council has compiled a list of frequently asked questions to support your tremendous efforts in keep children safe and learning as far as possible.**

Please follow the links below for the latest government advice  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/schools-colleges-and-early-years-settings-to-close>

Please note, these answers are correct as of 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

**1. What Attendance Code should be used in registers?**

# for whole or partial planned school closure

Y for unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (such as self-isolation)

I for illness

The national Association of Education Welfare Managers is advocating for the use of Y code as closures are not planned. To be consistent, OCC recommends Y code in favour of # pending clarification from the DfE.

**2. I have a pupil being educated by the Oxfordshire Hospital School, will this continue?**

The Oxfordshire Hospital School will not be teaching inpatients at any of the county's hospitals in person except The Highfield Hospital. However, they intend to continue lesson delivery using virtual means to children at home or in hospital. Children at The Highfield Hospital will continue to receive face to face lessons. QR codes to access virtual education are being widely displayed throughout hospitals for parents.

Children on Child Protection and Child in Need Plans will receive a blended learning package of online and face to face learning in the home for as long as staffing levels permit.

**3. Are education resources available through Elective Home Education officers within the County Attendance Team?**

Elective Home Education officers do not hold resources for education or deliver lessons.

**4. What will happen with outstanding Penalty Notices or Prosecutions for Non-School Attendance?**

This work will continue at the current time. However, should parents state financial hardship, this will be accepted, and the Penalty Notice or Prosecution will be withdrawn. Magistrates Courts are currently operating as normally as possible.

**5. Are all permanently excluded children accessing education?**

Tutoring alternative providers are now delivering lessons online. OCC has commissioned additional provision to ensure that all permanently excluded children have access to some form of provision.

**6. I have Learner Engagement and OXSIT training planned, what happens now?**

All planned trainings and briefings are postponed. There will be no charge for postponement where applicable.

**7. What about poor attenders, electively home educated children and children missing education who have social workers and are at home?**

OCC Children's Social Care is working at pace to RAG rate risk and attempt to sight children at home. Education officers are preparing to be redeployed to support this work.

**8. Will the Juvenile Work Permit, Chaperones and Child Performance licencing service continue to operate?**

At this point, licence applications will continue to be processed. However, it is expected that there will be a significant downturn in demand.

**9. We have outstanding Governors Disciplinary Panels and Independent Review Panels to consider permanent exclusion decisions, what about them?**

The best solution, in the interest of the child, would be to rescind any permanent exclusions yet to be fully processed, especially for Year 6 or Year 11 pupils.

Failing that, permanent exclusion processes will need to be suspended until governors and parents can reconvene as soon as possible as these processes do not lend themselves to virtual meetings.

#### **10. Will my school's School Nurse be available to support us?**

The Oxfordshire School Nursing Service is operating a skeleton service now and is expecting to be redeployed to support the wider NHS in addressing Covid19 demand in the wider population.

#### **11. What are the arrangements for In Year Fair Access?**

In Year Fair Access Panels are planned to continue virtually currently. Children placed will be admitted to roll with immediate effect. The law no longer requires a child to cross the threshold of a school to be on roll. Those children will then be educated in the same way as the majority of your all your pupils or on your site if they are vulnerable or have parents who are key workers.

#### **12. Will the Special School my child attends be open?**

You need to check with your child's school to see if it will be open, either fully or partially.

If you, your family or child is showing any of the signs of COVID-19 or you have been in direct contact with anyone that is showing signs, then you must take medical advice before sending your child to school.

#### **13. Will my child's Annual Review still be going ahead?**

You need to contact your child's school to discuss, as it may be due to the restrictions around numbers of people being together, this may have to be postponed. I am sure that alternative options around holding the meeting by skype might be explored.

#### **14. Will I still have transport for my child to get to school?**

Transport will be provided as now to the school site for those children remaining in school. The council is liaising with schools to understand where each child will be taught in this period and parents will be notified of any revised arrangements once this is known.

#### **15. Will I get transport to another school if my child's school closes?**

The council is liaising with schools to understand where each child will be taught in this period and parents will be notified of any revised arrangements once this is known.

**16. Will allocation of Reception places in schools for September still take place on 16<sup>th</sup> April?**

At this time the council is on track to issue offers of places as required by national deadlines.

**17. Will Early Years (EY) settings be open to the same pupil groups?**

The council is compiling a list of all open EY settings. This will be posted as soon as possible.

**18. What if my EY setting closes and I have a child in one of the categories for which education should be available?**

Parents can send enquiries to the Oxfordshire Family Information Service who will help identify alternative options in their area. [fis.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fis.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

**19. Will providers continue to be paid for places and how will that be administered?**

In line with government guidance providers will continue to be paid. The process for doing this will be posted later today.

**20. Schools are closed – but for how long?**

There has not been a date put on this. The government has previously said if schools close to limit the spread of the disease it would have to be for 13 to 16 weeks – which would pretty much take us to the summer holidays, so schools would effectively be re-opening in September.

This is likely to be the current thinking, unless the situation improves drastically. We will keep you informed.

**21. I do not have enough staff to open to any children. How do I meet the needs of the essential workers?**

The government has suggested that schools can 'pool' children. Please talk to nearby heads/partnership colleagues to see if you can work out a joint arrangement. Please keep us informed of your plan.

**22. How do I decide when and how the school will be open?**

This is for the Headteacher in consultation with the Governing Board and or Trust

**23. Who do I inform of our opening/key worker arrangements?**

The Department for Education has requested today that all schools in the county inform Oxfordshire County Council of plans (clearly subject to change) to open next week and numbers of children anticipated on site. This incorporates planned school

collaborations. The information has already been requested today and information is requested by tomorrow morning to [FIS@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:FIS@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

#### **24. I need to close. Who do I inform?**

Please email the Oxfordshire School Closure on [schoolclosures@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:schoolclosures@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

#### **25. Who are key workers and how do I identify them?**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers?utm\\_source=3af9bd53-8b24-49d0-92be-34d607ef773a&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers?utm_source=3af9bd53-8b24-49d0-92be-34d607ef773a&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

#### **26. Who are vulnerable children?**

Vulnerable children include pupils with education, health and care plans, as well as those who have a social worker.

These vulnerable children, plus key workers' children, account for around 10 per cent of the school population.

#### **27. Will pupils on free school meals still receive lunches?**

Please follow the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/plans-set-out-to-support-pupils-eligible-for-free-school-meals>

#### **28. Does this mean all special schools will stay open?**

This is still unknown. The Secretary of State made it clear that residential provision should stay open.

Special schools are advised to make assessment on a case by case basis of the health and safeguarding considerations of pupils on an EHCP.

#### **29. Will teachers get paid? What about staff on short-term contracts?**

Schools will continue to be funded as usual throughout this period and school staff on contracts will continue to be paid.

#### **30. What happens to trainee teachers who cannot finish their courses?**

This again seems to be something currently being worked out, with an announcement due over the coming days.

**31. Will schools be expected to provide work for children unable to attend school?**

Schools will be expected to signpost students to work

**32. Who can I contact if I have concerns or questions?**

Please email the School Improvement Team on:  
[schoolimprovementteam@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:schoolimprovementteam@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

**33. In terms of staffing our EY classes at present – do we still need to follow the Statutory EYFS Framework?**

Jill Jones, the Lead HMI for Ofsted Early Years, is providing regular updates on Twitter and Facebook. She has confirmed that the 'exceptional circumstances clause' can be evoked.

*3.30. The ratio and qualification requirements below apply to the total number of staff available to work directly with children<sup>34</sup>. Exceptionally, and where the quality of care and safety and security of children is maintained, changes to the ratios may be made. (EYFS 2017)*

**34. Will EYFSP Moderation still go ahead?**

No. The Secretary of State for Education announced that all statutory assessments and testing will not happen in 2020. This includes EYFSP. Reception teachers will not be required to attend a meeting/workshop or have a visit from a moderator.

**35. Will I be expected to submit data for my Reception class?**

No. All statutory assessments will not happen in 2020. So therefore, children will not be assessed against the ELGs and no data will be submitted at the end of the year. There will be no local or national GLD for 2020. This is the same for all other statutory assessments and tests.

**36. Will I be expected to write reports to parents on the EYFSP?**

No. It is at the discretion of each school if they still write a narrative for parents, but schools will not need to report on the ELGs.

**37. Can I use my on-line learning journal such as Tapestry to aid home learning?**

Yes. Tapestry and other on-line journals that link home and school can be used to 'check in' and to send messages/work and celebrate children's learning and development (at home and at school)

**38. How will my Reception cohort manage in Year 1 in September if schools are closed for the remainder of this academic year?**

Teachers will need to assess children's learning and development in September and liaise with previous teachers and parents. The curriculum will need to match

children's needs. Teachers may need to continue with an Early Years approach in Year 1 and teachers may require help with CPD and planning. Further guidance and on-line training will be available via Step into Training.

**39. Will the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) still be going ahead in September?**

As far as we are aware this will continue as planned. You can find out about the RBA [here](#).

**40. I have teachers booked onto training courses with Step into Training in the summer term, will these be going ahead?**

All face to face training has been cancelled until further notice. However, do watch out for new on-line training and check out the websites, toolkits and FaceBook Pages for ideas and help.

**41. My school is involved with a targeted project with the EY Advisory Team – such as Tales Toolkit. What will happen to this now?**

You will be able to continue accessing the resources and websites and on-line training with the Takes Toolkit Package. This also includes some great ideas for home learning.

**42. Should schools be combining?**

We discussed this with the Department for Education on 19 March 2020 and officials confirmed the default position is that each school is expected to make its own arrangement, but we know that in some cases clusters of school may work together or as part of Trusts.

**43. Is it safe to send children to other schools and have other schools' children at their school? E.g. combining primary schools within same partnership**

It is so long as staff who are responsible have DBS clearance

**44. If a parent has time off (e.g. a police officer whose rest days are Monday and Tuesday), does OCC expect that child to attend school on those days or stay at home with their parent?**

Children of key workers and vulnerable children should attend school in accordance with expectations from central government.

**45. Can Headteachers take home children's safeguarding files if the school is closed?**

Clarification has been sought from the Department for Education.

**46. Are schools expected to accept children from families where there is only one parent who is a key worker? Or do both parents need to be key workers?**

Latest guidance appears below, and further clarification will be sought from the Department for Education.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers?utm\\_source=3af9bd53-8b24-49d0-92be-34d607ef773a&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers?utm_source=3af9bd53-8b24-49d0-92be-34d607ef773a&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

**47. Is it reasonable for all the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) to be working from home, as long as they are contactable by phone? Where do they stand if none are on site?**

This may happen but links across to a DSL would be required.