

Covid-19: HR Guidance - School and Nursery closures

Last updated: 15 June 2020

This guidance is regularly being reviewed.

Employees with a child/children who cannot attend nursery/school

These employees fall into two categories: those who are designated as key workers and those who are not.

Employees who are designated as key workers

Members of the Corporate Management Team are able to designate employees within their directorate as key workers, drawing on the [guidance about key workers](#) published by the government. These employees are able to access nursery and school places during term-time, irrespective of their child or children's year group.

In common with all employees, these individuals should work from home wherever possible. However, if their job role cannot be undertaken effectively at home, managers may ask these employees to attend the workplace.

Employees who are not designated as key workers

From 1 June onwards, it is likely that many of these employees will be able to access a school place where their child or children are in reception, year 1 or year 6. In addition, childminders have also commenced reopening from 1 June. In common with all employees, individuals in this category should work from home wherever possible. However, if their job role cannot be undertaken effectively at home and there is a nursery or school place or normal care arrangements available for their child or children, then managers may ask these employees to attend the workplace.

If an employee has caring responsibilities for their child or children and they are not yet able to access nursery or school places, the council's existing arrangements will continue to apply. These are as follows:

- Employees who are able to work from home and flexibly balance their caring and work responsibilities should be supported to do so. This may include agreeing variations to working hours and job role. Given the exceptional circumstances, managers should consider flexibilities that exceed those they might ordinarily consider with the aim of enabling the employee to find a way of continuing to safely work.
- Sometimes it will not be possible for an employee to continue working – for example, where no alternative childcare arrangements can be found and the

employee's child or children require constant supervision. In these circumstances:

- the manager and the employee should discuss the employee's normal childcare arrangements and the reason why they have not been able to find alternative arrangements
- the council is extending its special leave provisions and will ensure the employee continues to receive their normal pay
- the manager should keep in regular contact with the employee to review the situation, including progress towards identifying childcare arrangements (for example, as more nursery and school places become available or as other childcare arrangements become available)
- the manager must record the absence on Oracle as Special Paid Leave using the category "unable to work due to caring responsibilities associated with Covid-19"