



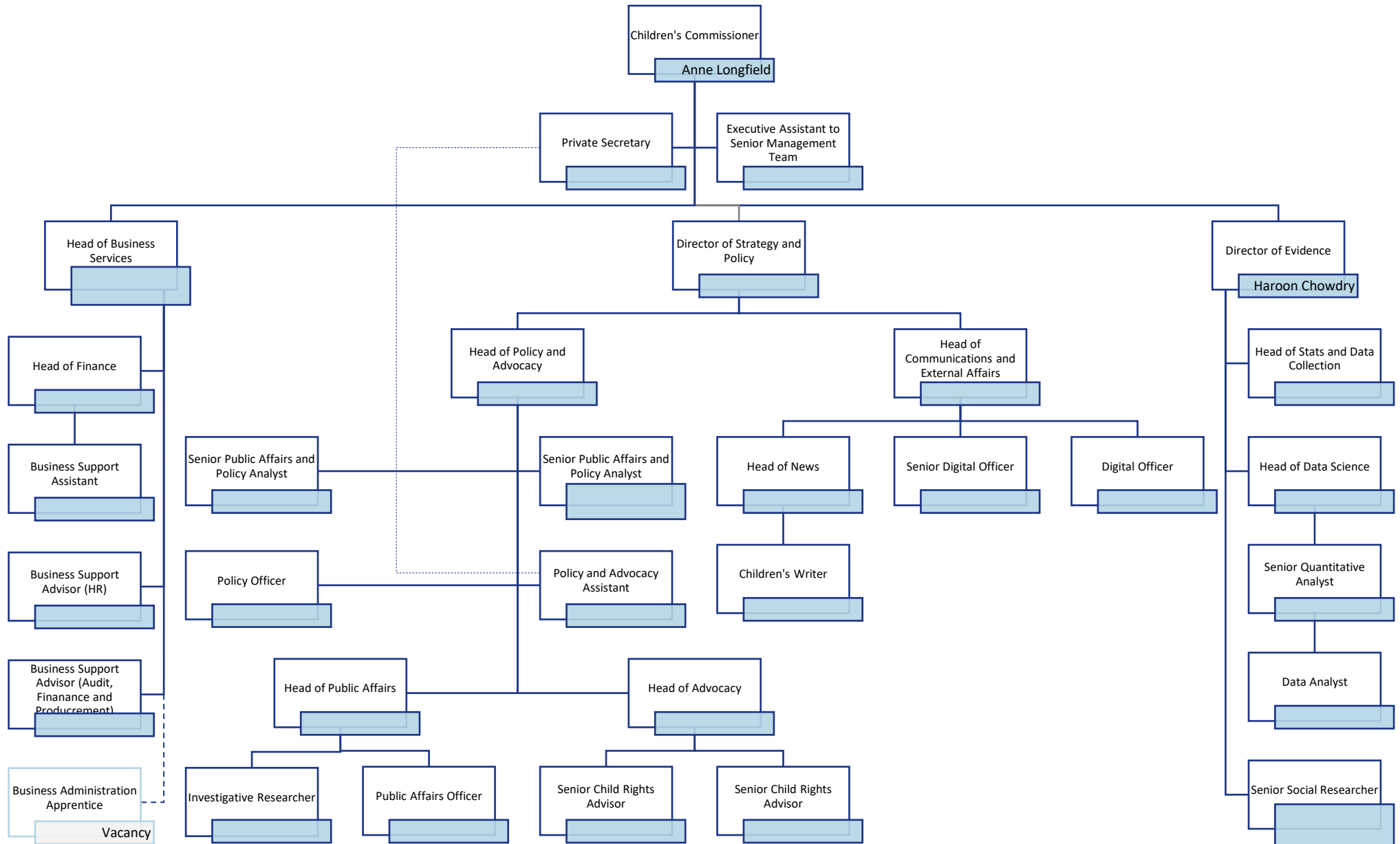
Education Select Committee evidence

October 2020

Contents

1. Organogram	2
2. Data requests made for 2019/20 and outcomes	3
3. Visits using powers.....	7
4. Help at Hand: The Children’s Commissioner’s advice, assistance and representation service	8
5a. Children’s guide to coronavirus	9
5b. Back to school guide	12
6. List of publications between April 2019 and September 2020.....	13
7. Impact	14
8. Media coverage between June 2019 and September 2020	18

1. Organogram



2. Data requests made for 2019/20 and outcomes

Between 1 May 2019 and 30 September 2020

The Children's Commissioner gathers data in a number of ways:

- > Data requests from public bodies (we assess all potential data requests to ensure they are addressing substantial issues that cannot be met using existing data)
- > Use of existing data sources and newly linked administrative data to provide a rounded picture of trends and issues in the welfare and well-being of children.

Review	Purpose	To whom	Number of requests	Year	Output/Impact
Stability Index 2020	To update the Stability Index with data on school and placement moves.	DfE	1	2019	The data collection from local authorities was suspended in April 2020 to minimise the burden on LAs during Covid-19. The 2020 Stability Index report will be published in Autumn 2020 using only centrally collected DfE data.
	To update the Stability Index with data on social worker changes.	All local authorities (LAs)	1	2019	
Vulnerability Framework 2020	To provide updated estimates of the numbers of vulnerable children at the local authority level under 'local area vulnerability profiles'.	All published sources	N/A	2019	Local area vulnerability profiles published in April 2020 CHLDRN interactive web application also now live and regularly being updated
	To use the Family Resources Survey to generate local authority level estimates of CCO's previously calculated aggregate number of children in families with complex needs	DWP	1	2020	Estimates to be published Autumn 2020.
Mental Health Briefing	To provide updated analysis of how much is being spent on CAMHS services locally and nationally, as well as variations in waiting times for these services and the numbers of children accessing them	NHS England	1	2019	Report published in January 2020
		NHS Digital	1	2019	
Elective Home Education	To gather numbers of children withdrawn from school into Elective Home Education (EHE), for each school in England in order to produce a comprehensive estimate of the scale of the practice and identify which schools are most engaged	All local authorities	1	2019	Report completed in February 2020. Publication held back because of Covid-19. Data included at LA level as part of CHLDRN app

Review	Purpose	To whom	Number of requests	Year	Output/Impact
Early Years Green Paper	To collect local data on the numbers of 2 ½ year checks being carried out, understand how well local areas are working in partnership and whether needs are being assessed and supported adequately.	All local authorities	1	2019	Report published Summer 2020
Unregulated accommodation for looked after children	Following reports of children in care being placed in temporary accommodation such as caravan parks and boats this data request collected information on specific types of accommodation being used for semi-independent and independent placements for looked after children aged 16-17.	All local authorities	1	2019	Report published September 2020
Education	Addition of the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) datasets to data received from DfE to understand education outcomes for young people entering apprenticeships and inform our education research.	DfE	1	2019/20	Used as part of unregulated placements report though data quality issues meant it was not used as part of the final publication
Gangs briefing	Understanding how local authority public health teams manage issues of youth violence through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and spending on preventative and intervention measures.	All local authorities	1	2019/20	Report delayed by Covid-19 crisis, planned publication autumn 2020.
	To understand the numbers of young people in treatment for substance misuse and how this has changed over time at the local level.	Public Health England	1	2019	Data published as part of local area vulnerability profiles
Children in CAMHS	To understand the numbers of children in inpatient CAMHS settings and their progression through treatment and discharge.	NHS England	1	2020	Data provided – to be used for Who are they, where are they? 2020 report due to be published Autumn 2020
Routes to citizenship	To understand the number of children applying for citizenship under different routes, how many are refused and for what reasons.	Home Office	1	2019	Report delayed by Covid-19 crisis

Review	Purpose	To whom	Number of requests	Year	Output/Impact
Impact of Covid-19 on youth justice settings	To understand how regimes in YOIs and STCs have changed during the Covid-19 crisis. In particular exploring time out of cell, availability of education and ability to communicate with family/friends.	YCS	1	2020	Report published and updated information provided to Justice Select Committee
Impact of Covid-19 on Early Years Settings	Rapid data collection with nurseries and childminders to understand how they have operated since the 23 rd March and the impact that Covid-19 has had on the setting, children and staff.	Early years settings	1	2020	Briefing published May 2020
Children's mental health	Collection of the Mental Health of Children and Young People (MHCYP) 2017 survey data from NHS Digital to conduct research into the relationships between mental health, socio-economic characteristics, behaviour and outcomes.	NHS Digital	1	2020	Data to be provided by Spring 2021
Numbers of children in Tier 4 CAMHS	Collection from NHS England of the weekly situation reports (SitRep) from Tier 4 CAMHS units to understand how many children have experienced the Covid crisis in these settings.	NHS England	1	2020	Data for internal review to inform understanding of issues
School attendance during Covid-19 lockdown	To analyse and report on rates of school attendance during Covid-19 by school and by types of pupil, in order to inform local analysis and engagement with local areas	DfE	1	2020	Data provided – to inform ongoing monitoring of the impact of Covid-19 on school attendance
Under 18's with learning disabilities in inpatient mental health settings	To inform the 2020 'Who are they, where are they' (WATWAT) report of the numbers of children in secure settings.	NHS Digital	1	2020	Data provided – report to be published Autumn 2020
Mental health briefing	To provide updated analysis of how much is being spent on CAMHS services locally and nationally, as well as variations in waiting times for these services and the numbers of children accessing them	NHS England NHS Digital	1	2020	Data requested – report to be published Winter 2020

Review	Purpose	To whom	Number of requests	Year	Output/Impact
Child poverty	Using the Understanding Society (USoc) survey waves administered during the coronavirus crisis to understand the impact of the coronavirus crisis on children and poverty.	UK Data Archive	N/A	2020	Series of blogs published [Blog 1 , Blog 2] Analysis included in upcoming Coronavirus summary report
Laptop scheme	Collected data from DfE on the numbers of laptops and internet 'dongles' allocated to vulnerable children and schools under the scheme to support vulnerable children with home schooling	DfE	1	2020	Brief published
Homeless families	Data on the number of families with children accommodated in a B&B by their local authority before and during lockdown. Collected from 15 Local Authorities who had the highest numbers of children accommodated in B&Bs in Quarter 4 2019. To find out how many families had been accommodated in a B&B during lockdown and for longer than the maximum 6 weeks.	15 local authorities	1	2020	Report published August 2020

3. Visits using powers

The Children's Commissioner conducted unannounced and announced visits to settings where children are living away from home. In addition to custodial settings, visits were made to secure and unregulated children's homes and secure and forensic child and adolescent mental health service units. These visits enabled the Commissioner to gain an understanding of children's experiences and to identify any issues of concern. Visits to mental health provision enabled the Commissioner to understand better how the units work and the experiences of young people.

The Commissioner and her team conduct regular visits to speak to children in schools, youth clubs, family hubs and many other settings, in addition to these formal visits using the power of entry.

16/04/2019	Rainsbrook YOI & STC	Warwickshire
05/09/2019	Children's home	Kent
05/09/2019	Children's home	Kent
05/09/2019	Children's home	Kent
05/09/2019	Children's home	Kent
09/09/2019	Children's home	Kent
09/09/2019	Children's home	Kent
12/09/2019	Parc Prison YOI & STC	Wales
17/09/2019	Children's home	Bedfordshire
17/09/2019	Children's home	Bedfordshire
17/09/2019	Children's home	Bedfordshire
23/09/2019	Children's home	North Yorkshire
23/09/2019	Children's home	North Yorkshire
23/09/2019	Children's home	North Yorkshire
24/09/2019	Unregulated accommodation	Sunderland
08/10/2019	Children's home	Lincolnshire
08/10/2019	Children's home	Lincolnshire
08/10/2019	Children's home	Lincolnshire
08/10/2019	Mental health setting	Birmingham
30/10/2019	Unregulated accommodation	North West London
03/12/2019	Children's home	Bedfordshire
12/12/2019	Feltham YOI & STC	Feltham
09/01/2020	Unregulated accommodation	Merseyside
07/01/2020	Unregulated accommodation	Birmingham
11/01/2020	Cookham Wood YOI	Rochester
11/01/2020	Medway STC	Rochester
13/01/2020	Unregulated accommodation	East London
28/01/2020	Unregulated accommodation	West Yorkshire
04/02/2020	Residential special school	Cambridgeshire
04/02/2020	Children's home	Lancashire
05/02/2020	Children's home	County Durham
06/02/2020	Children's home	Cambridgeshire
07/02/2020	Children's home	Suffolk
07/02/2020	Children's home	Oxfordshire
12/02/2020	Inpatient Mental Health Ward	London
13/02/2020	Children's home	Nottinghamshire
14/02/2020	Inpatient Mental Health Ward	Gloucestershire
26/02/2020	Residential special school	Hertfordshire
28/02/2020	Inpatient Mental Health Ward	Norfolk
29/02/2020	Oakhill STC	Milton Keynes
06/03/2020	Inpatient Mental Health Ward	Staffordshire
17/04/2020	Children's home	North Yorkshire (via phone)
17/04/2020	Children's home	North Yorkshire (via phone)
23/04/2020	Children's home	Blackpool (via phone)
28/04/2020	Wetherby YOI	Leeds
29/04/2020	Wetherby YOI	Leeds
13/05/2020	Oakhill STC	Milton Keynes (via phone)
15/05/2020	Oakhill STC	Milton Keynes (via phone)
12/06/2020	Clare Lodge SCH	Peterborough (virtual)
19/06/2020	Interview with young person under Deprivation of Liberty order	Yorkshire (virtual)
23/06/2020	Clare Lodge SCH	Peterborough (virtual)
01/07/2020	YOI & STC visit	Wetherby
10/07/2020	YOI & STC visit	Wetherby
17/07/2020	Medium secure MH unit	Greater Manchester

Terms

STC
Secure Training Centre

YOI
Youth Offending
Institution

SCH
Secure Children's Home

MED MHU
Medium Secure Mental
Health Unit

4. Help at Hand: The Children's Commissioner's advice, assistance and representation service

Help at Hand is the Children's Commissioner's advice, assistance and representation service for children in care, care leavers, those living away from home or working with local authority children's services. This includes children living away from home in specialist provisions such as residential schools, hospitals or youth custody.

The primary purpose of Help at Hand is to ensure that all decisions and plans made for children living away from their families take children's views and wishes into account, are in their best interests, and uphold their rights. Unlike other advocacy services, the Children's Commissioner is able to make formal representations to senior leaders of public bodies where children's rights are not being upheld.

Overview of enquiries

- > In 2019/20 there were 995 enquiries for advice and assistance or representation.
- > Help at Hand made representations in 46% of cases. This is an increase on the year before. These representations are made to a wide range of professionals and agencies on behalf children. For example, Directors of Children's Services, Chief Executives of NHS organisations, officials in the Department for Education, the Home Office and prison governors. The issues raised by children and care leavers continue to be disparate and varied, they have included: being secluded in mental health hospital, being restrained inappropriately, not wanting to move from a foster or children's home and needing immigration legal advice.
- > Between 1st April and 25th September 2020 there were 501 cases received. Help at Hand made representations in 48% of these (242 cases).

Key themes (Between April and September 2020)

The majority of enquiries concern children in care and care leavers who are at the centre of the remit of the Help at Hand service. Children and young people in care and living away from home all over England contact Help at Hand to seek advice and high-level assistance with a variety of issues and concerns.

Since April 2020 43% of children and young people who contact Help at Hand where their age is known (or for whom others make contact on their behalf) are aged between 14 and 17, and a further 25% are aged 18 to 25.

The key themes of calls have been:

- > 14% of new cases have raised concerns about children not being heard, included or treated fairly.
- > 13% of new cases involved children wanting an assessment, service or resource which they were not currently getting. Sometimes this was a direct result of changes relating to Covid-19, as local authorities amended thresholds for their services and scaled back support in some areas.
- > 8% related to a child being told they had to move from their current home (e.g. foster home) and 7% related to children wanting to move from where they currently were. Unwanted moves has been a reoccurring theme over 2019-2020. Children (and adults acting on their behalf) often contact Help at Hand about plans to move them against their wishes. Children are often told that they are being moved to a new home at short notice, without their views being consulted and without the required reviews. This results in disruptions in education and other critical support such as CAMHS and SEND provision.
- > 7% were about care leaver rights and entitlements - 51 enquiries have related to care planning, transitions at 18 and care leavers' rights. Covid-19 brought a fresh set of challenges for care leavers, with a reduction in the usual support network of care leaver groups and face-to-face catch ups with personal advisors. Among other issues, young people were scared about falling ill and worried about who would support them if this happened.
- > 7% of calls were about contact with families, an issue of particular concern during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Help at Hand was contacted by families in distress who were suddenly unable to see their children in-person. Often these were children in care under voluntary care orders due to their disability, who were used to frequent family visits and overnight stays at home. Many residential special schools stopped allowing face-to-face visits, moving instead to video calls which can be challenging for children, especially those with severe cognitive processing difficulties.

- > 7% of calls focused on access to education. Several families whose children have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) reached out to Help at Hand from March onwards. Despite these children being eligible to attend school during the lockdown, some schools closed or did not have the resources to continue supporting everyone. As a result, some children did not have a school place and their parents were struggling to manage their children's behaviour at home.
- > Housing (5%), finances (5%), access to legal advice (4%) and advocacy (4%) were other notable themes.
- > In 206 cases closed during this period, Help at Hand made referrals to local advocacy services to obtain an advocate. Help at Hand is often contacted by care leavers who need support with housing or their finances but often do not understand their entitlements and are not receiving what they should from the LA.

Key themes (Between April 2019 and March 2020)

- > As above, unwanted moves was a key theme of calls prior to Covid-19. Similarly, children contacted Help at Hand about being moved far from their home areas and support networks.
- > The team often hears from children in secure settings (e.g. custody, secure children's homes) and hospitals who are approaching the end of their stay but who have no accommodation to move to. Local authorities say that they are struggling to find suitable places for these children, resulting in children either staying in institutional settings longer than necessary or being accommodated in places which are not safe for them.
- > Unregulated accommodation has also been a common theme. Help at Hand has received calls about children placed in settings which are not inspected by Ofsted, where it has been felt these settings are not meeting the children's needs.

Safeguarding

Where Help at Hand receives enquiries that suggest children are likely to suffer significant harm, these are treated as urgent safeguarding matters and referred without delay into the relevant local authority's front door service. Help at Hand also speaks to the relevant social work manager to ensure that appropriate action is being taken. Often the social work service is already aware of the issues but Help at Hand intervention can bring a greater sense of urgency to dealing with the concerns. Where safeguarding concerns or representations to social work staff in a local authority are not being responded to adequately, if children and young people's needs or rights are being potentially neglected, the Children's Commissioner will write a formal letter to the relevant Director of Children's Services. 19 such letters have been sent since April 2020.

Feedback

Some examples of feedback received about the work of the Help at Hand service:

*"Thank you so much for all your help and advice, without it we would not have had such a great outcome."
(Mother of a severely disabled child, August 2020)*

"Thank you so much for your action, support and involvement in this case. It is the first time I have had to deal with such a challenging case and feel that I am punching well above my weight as an advocate. However, with your support I am hopeful of achieving the justice X deserves." (Advocate, August 2020)

*"So far he seems to be doing well in the community. Thank you again for your help with the matter!"
(Caseworker from Secure Training Centre regarding our assistance in getting a college place for a child upon release, September 2020)*

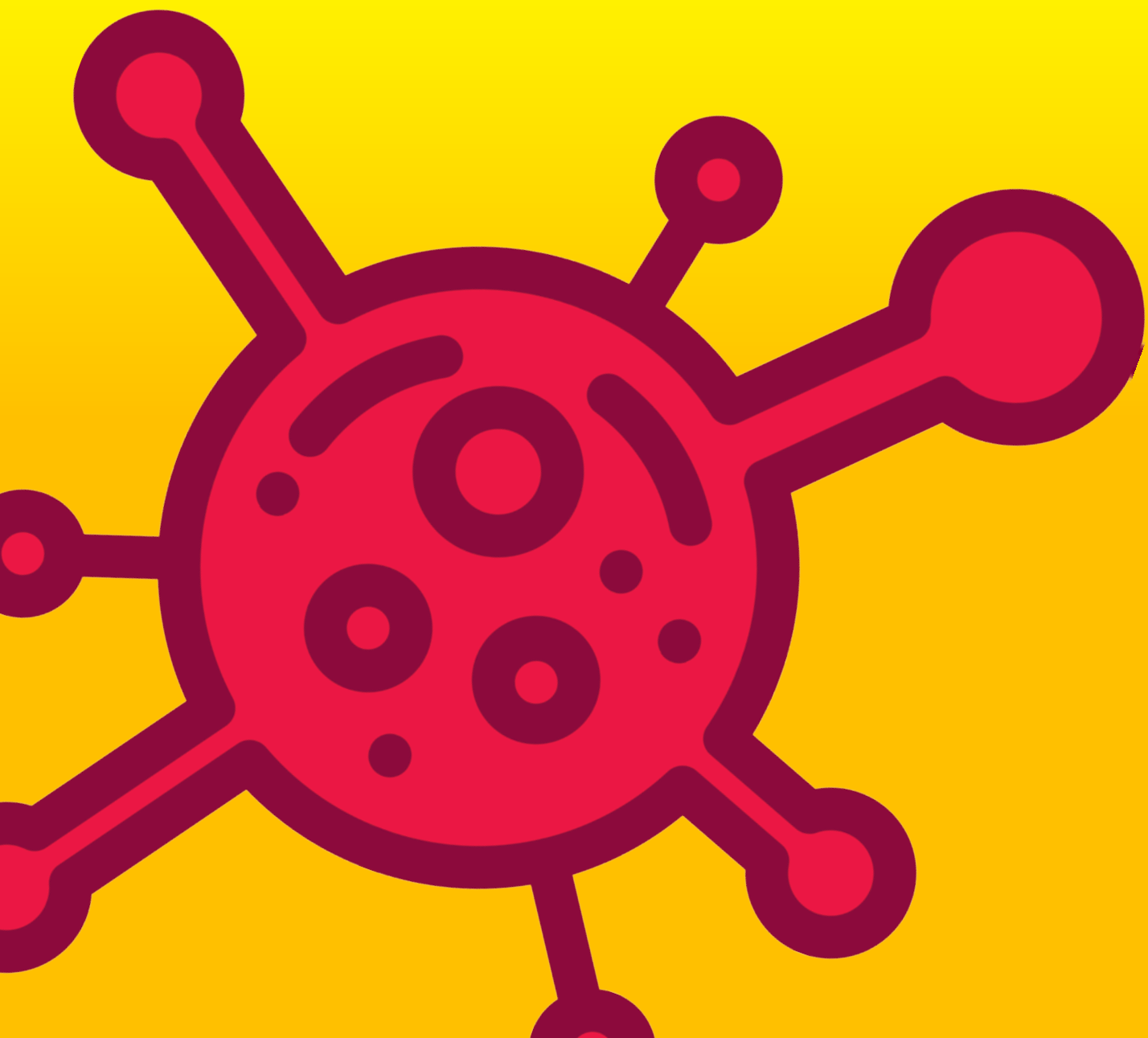
“Hello, thank you I’m moving to a permanent placement today” (*Child moving to a new home, July 2020*)

“It was because of you and your organisation that X now has a chance in life, and for that we will always be grateful. I will keep you updated because we may still need you if social services stop providing care and support.” (*Foster father, April 2020*)

“I would like to thank you for your support in ensuring that X had access to solicitors. Whilst the outcome for him may not change with your help we were able to show X that people do listen, and that people wanted to support him.” (*Support worker, April 2020*)

5a. Children's guide to coronavirus

Find the children's guide to coronavirus on the following pages



Children's guide to coronavirus

Children's
COMMISSIONER

Your guide to coronavirus

There have been big changes in our lives because of coronavirus.

Schools have closed and we have to stay at home.

So, coronavirus is probably making your life feel really different right now.

All these changes might make you feel scared or worried. That's OK. It's totally normal to feel like this.

We are going to:

- Answer your questions about coronavirus
- Tell you how to stay safe and protect other people
- Help you make the best of your time at home

Why do I feel worried?

Lots of children are telling us they are scared and worried about coronavirus. We understand this.

When we feel scared, it's our body's way of telling us we need to take extra care to protect ourselves. And there are some important things we all need to do to stay safe, like wash our hands and stay at home.

Feeling worried is one way our bodies remind us to do these things. So being worried is normal! But there's no need to worry too much. We want to help you understand what's going on and how you can do your bit to help.

But we also want you to know that this won't last forever. And while we are at home keeping each other safe, we can still enjoy life and do fun things – it's time to be creative!

What is coronavirus?

Coronavirus is an illness that affects people's breathing and lungs. It can be spread from person to person by coughing or by touching surfaces or areas of skin that have been contaminated by the virus.

What happens if I get coronavirus?

Children who get corona virus will usually only get a little ill, like a regular cold. Many don't get it at all.

The same goes for mum and dad, if they get it. Grown-ups with healthy bodies are not likely to become very ill.

But coronavirus can be dangerous to people who already have serious diseases. It can also be dangerous to those who are elderly.

That is why we must do everything we can to protect them from getting it, and this includes closing schools.

How do you know if you have it?

If you get coronavirus you may feel unwell and your body will have some or all of these symptoms

**High
temperature**



Coughing

**Breathing
difficulties**

How do we stop coronavirus from spreading?

The government is telling us that we need to:

Stay at home

At the moment we are being told to stay at home.

We are not allowed to hang out in groups and we can only leave the house for exercise and “essential” things like food or getting medicine.

We have to stay at home to stop the disease spreading.

We understand that this means you can't play with your friends. Or maybe your birthday party or a football match you were looking forward to was cancelled.

This is upsetting. But...

We can't change the fact that we're going to be stuck indoors for a while. So... we need to get creative to find other ways to hang out with friends online. We will give you some ideas later on about how you can cope with staying at home.

How do we stop coronavirus from spreading?

Wash your hands

We all need to wash our hands often.

Click the video below which shows you how to wash your hands properly.



Where do I put my worry?

Feeling worried is normal. Don't bottle up your feelings. Talk to an adult you trust about how you feel.

Worry buster!

If you find it hard to talk to an adult, you could fill out our worry buster.

Print the next page

Write down or draw all your worries about coronavirus.

Show it to a trusted adult and ask them to talk to you about each of your worries.

Worry buster!

I'm worried about...



Being safe at home

Most children are safe at home. But we know that some of you aren't. If your school has closed and you are not feeling safe at home, here are some people to call.

childline.org.uk
0800 1111

In an emergency, always call the police on 999

Keeping busy now life has changed

Life is really different right now because of coronavirus. Some of these changes are difficult and upsetting.

You might be

Feeling bored or lonely.

Sad that you missed your last day of school.

Worried about exams and school work.

Missing your friends.

Worried about mum and dad's jobs.

Sad you can't see grandma and granddad or worried that they may become seriously ill.

Unable to see your boyfriend or girlfriend.

So, there are lots of bad things about this virus and we need to take care and look after ourselves.

But it's important we don't spend all of our time worrying about it. Because it won't last for ever.

When we look back on this time we might find we have learned some really interesting things about ourselves and each other.

We can't change this situation. But we can find new and different ways to enjoy life and stay happy.

So... it's time to get creative

Here are some tips on how to keep happy and busy while you're stuck inside

Be kind

This is a difficult time for everyone. So if your little brother or sister is getting on your nerves, before arguing, see if you can understand how they're feeling – and maybe help them!

Look after each other

We all might feel a bit worried or lonely along the way, it's good to take care of each other, and sometimes helping someone else, makes you both feel better!

Don't worry too much

This won't last forever, and even when times are tough, everyday can have something amazing up its sleeve.

Organise your day

The school bell might not ring in your house but you still need a plan. Make time for school work, but also for relaxing.

So... it's time to get creative

Talk about how you feel

Don't believe everything you hear from friends

Get your information from a trusted place.

Stay in touch with your friends and family online

If you can't see grandma and grandad at the moment, stay in touch with them on Facetime or Skype.

And if you're missing your friends, arrange a Google Hangouts / Zoom at the same time everyday.

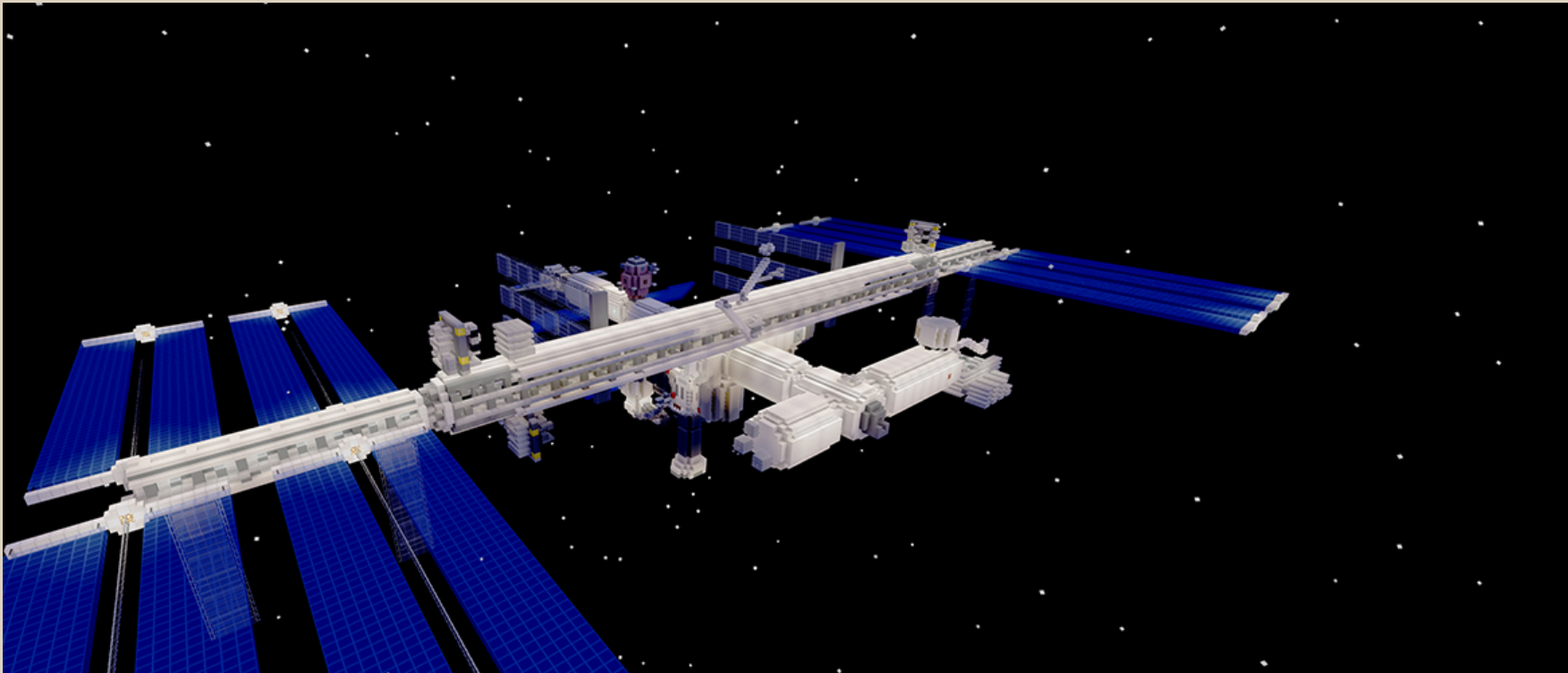
Try and find the opportunities in this situation

It feels a strange time, but you might be surprised at what you can achieve.

What to do

You have probably heard of Joe Wicks and his PE classes – they're amazing.
There's loads of stuff on offer.

From celebrities reading stories to art classes on Insta – and until 30th June,
[Minecraft has some free content!](#)



Here's a selection of stuff you can get up to while at home

Become a DJ!

Become a DJ from your phone [with these free DJ apps](#)

Keep active

[PE with Joe Wicks](#)

There's no need for any equipment with Joe's lessons designed to be done in living rooms using only bodyweight. Joe's sessions will provide relief for parents who are indoors with children all day while they're off school.

Taking to Instagram last week, Joe said: "It's called PE with Joe. It's a workout specifically designed for children because when the schools are closed there is no PE. "Don't worry I've got you, I'm going to take this over and get your children moving and feeling energised, positive, optimistic"

Here's a selection of stuff you can get up to while at home

Audio books

Audible has made many [books available for free](#) including books by David Walliams.

Start a film club

Watch movies with your friends on Google Hangouts / Zoom. Pick a different film each week - you could even start a vlog of your reviews.

There's also [Netflix Party](#), which you can use to watch Netflix shows at the same time as your friends.

Art class

Learn to [draw with Rob on YouTube](#).

Become a tech genius!

Check out [Geek Gurl Diaries](#) for all stuff tech.

Here's a selection of stuff you can get up to while at home

See the universe!

Explore the world with a [virtual tour of the Great Wall of China](#).

Or, go to another world and experience a [virtual tour of Mars!](#)

Learn a new language

Rosetta Stone are offering three months free to [learn a new language](#).

Become a quiz master

Make up a quiz and invite your friends to a Zoom / Hangouts to play. Something simple like Survey Monkey will do.

Write a short story

Want to be the next David Walliams or JK Rowling. All you need is a pen and paper!

Here's a selection of stuff you can get up to while at home

Become a rock star!

Learn an instrument - and if you don't have one, download a [free piano app on your phone](#).

Retro games night

Have a dig through your cupboards and find some old board games – and challenge your family to a games night!



For more information, check out our website

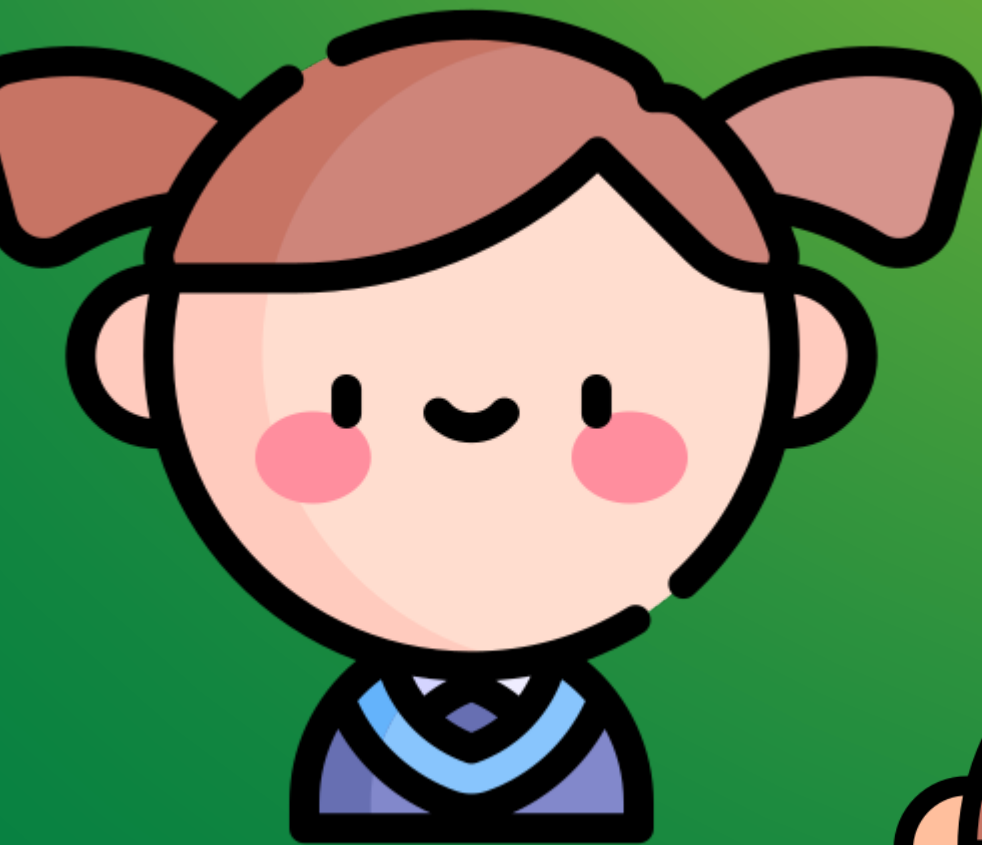
childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/coronavirus

Information correct as of 27 March 2020

5b. Back to school guide

Find the children's back to school guide on the following pages

Going back to school guide



Going back to school

Life has been really different recently because of coronavirus. Lots of children stopped going into school and we had to spend more time at home.

But after the summer holidays, all children in England will be going back to school. This is because children are at very low risk of becoming ill from coronavirus

We have spoken to lots of you about how you feel about going back to school.

Some of you went back to school before the holidays, so you already know what it's like.

For those who stayed at home, we know that some of you are feeling excited but also a little bit nervous.

It's totally normal to feel like that.

When you go back to school, some things will be the same, and some things will be different.

In this guide we will:

tell you some of the changes you might see when you go back to school

give you some tips on how to cope if you're feeling worried or nervous

Is it safe to go to school?

Children are at very low risk of becoming ill from coronavirus.

Coronavirus hasn't gone away completely, but because we all stayed at home there is a lot less of it around at the moment. This means that the Government has decided it is safe for children to go back to school.

To make sure it is as safe as possible, there will be some changes to school life.

What will it be like at school?

Not every school will do the same thing. Your school should tell you what will be the same and what will be different, and if they don't, it's OK to ask them.

Getting used to being back at school

You might be excited to see your friends again, but some of you might find that when you get to school you miss your mum / dad / carers a bit more than you expected. That's totally OK.

Add that to the changes you're seeing at school and things might feel a bit much to start off with. But give yourself some time and you'll soon get used to the changes.

Will I have to wear a mask?

The Government has said you don't have to wear masks in classrooms. There may be times when teachers do wear masks.

In secondary schools, in areas where new restrictions have been put in place, you may be asked to wear a mask in confined areas such as corridors and common spaces. This is an added precaution to keep everyone safe.

You might have to wear a mask to and from school if you are aged 11 or older.



How things might be different

1

Start time

You might be asked to start school at a different time than you are used to. This is to help keep people apart as much as possible.

2

Hand washing

You will be asked to wash your hands regularly. This includes when you arrive, when you return from breaks, when you change room and before and after eating.

3

Who you hang out with

One way to reduce the risk of people passing on the virus is to limit who you come into contact with.

You may be put into groups or 'bubbles' and you will not be able to mix with people who are not in your group. Depending on your school, this group might be your class, or even your whole year group. You will probably have your breaks and lunch at different times.

The older you are the more likely you will be asked to keep your distance from other people in your group.

4

In your classroom

You might find some of your class sizes are smaller.

In the classroom, your school might change the desk layout so that you are all facing forward or there is more space between desks.

There may be some games, toys and equipment that you can't use.

5

Getting around

There may be a one-way system to move around the school.

Getting to and from school

The Government is asking everyone who can walk or cycle to school to do so.

If you do get a bus that is for school children only and you do not mix with the public, your school should try and arrange for you to travel with people in your group or bubble. You don't have to socially distance, but if you can, you should.

You will have to use hand sanitizer before and after your journey.

If you are aged 11 or older and you are mixing with people outside your group or people who you don't normally meet, you might be asked to wear a face mask, just like you have to when you go into a shop.

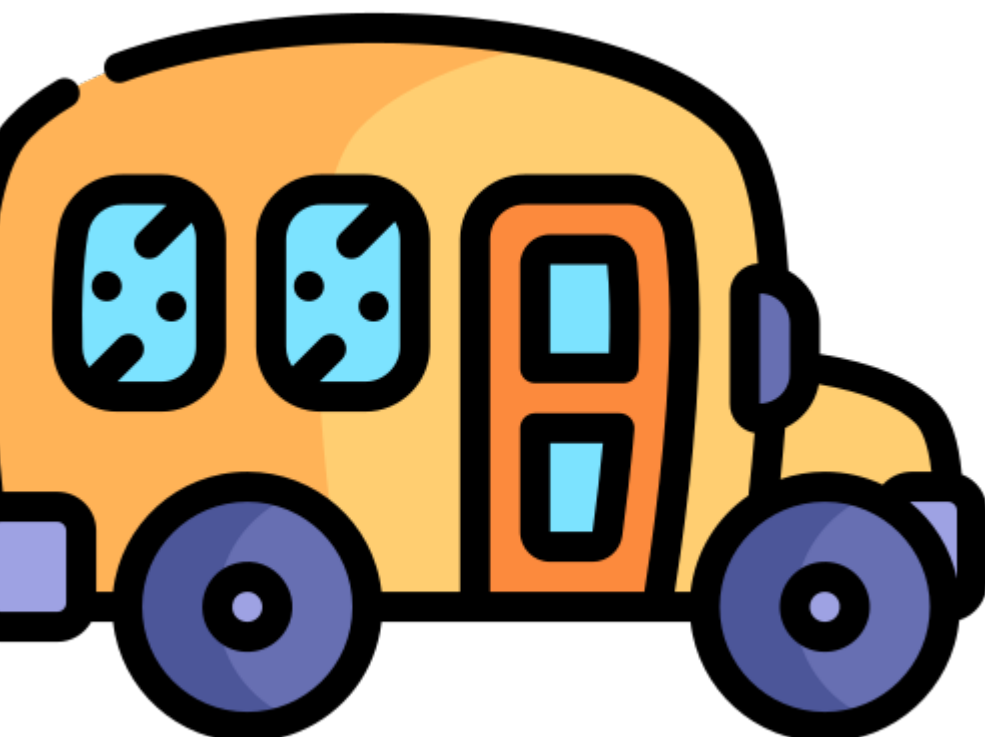
If you take a bus or a train that also carries people who don't go to your school, you should try to stay 2 meters away from other passengers and wear a mask if you are aged 11 or older.

Catching up on work you have missed

A lot of children are worried about catching up on they have missed while they have been at home.

Remember that many of your friends will be feeling the same, and that most other children were also out of school for six months.

The Government has given schools some money to help children catch up, and you can ask your Mum, Dad or carer to ask your school what support is available if you are feeling worried.



How to cope if you are feeling worried

Let's find out how you're feeling

Write down all the things you're excited about here:



And write down all the things you are worried about here:



You can show what you have written to an adult you trust (like your mum / dad / carer) and they can talk about it with you.

Sometimes we worry about something new because we don't know what it will be like. When we get there it isn't anywhere near as bad as we thought it was going to be. And all that worry was for nothing!

A good tip is to be prepared. Ask your school to give you as much information as they can about what changes there will be. You can spend some time thinking about this and getting used to the idea so that when your school welcomes you back, it isn't a total shock.

Who to talk to

If you have a school counsellor they are there to listen to you and support you.

Child line offers online and telephone support

www.childline.org.uk

0800 1111

Some tips on hygiene

We all need to wash our hands often

Click or tap the video below which shows you how to wash your hands properly.



Catch it! Bin it! Kill it!

When we cough or sneeze we can pass on infections.

We can reduce the risk by coughing or sneezing into a tissue, putting it in the bin and then washing our hands thoroughly.



Children's Commissioner for England

Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

Tel: 020 7783 8330

Email: info.request@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Visit: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Twitter: [@ChildrensComm](https://twitter.com/ChildrensComm)

6. List of publications between April 2019 and September 2020

Date	Type	Name
29/09/2020	Report	Childhood in the time of Covid
29/09/2020	Report	Stress among children in England during the coronavirus lockdown
10/09/2020	Publication	Unregulated
24/08/2020	Report	Going back to school guide
21/08/2020	Publication	No way out
05/08/2020	Policy Briefing	Putting children first in future lockdowns
17/07/2020	Report	Best beginnings in the early years
07/07/2020	Report	Teenagers falling through the gaps
09/06/2020	Policy briefing	The need for summer scheme support in response to Covid-19
02/06/2020	Policy Briefing	What Covid-19 means for young apprentices
31/05/2020	Report	Children in Custody
16/05/2020	Policy Briefing	We don't need no education?
07/05/2020	Policy Briefing	Lockdown Babies
25/04/2020	Report	We're all in this together?
21/04/2020	Policy Briefing	Tackling the disadvantage gap during the COVID-19 crisis
02/04/2020	Policy Briefing	Children, domestic abuse and coronavirus
31/03/2020	Report	Childhood in 2020
31/03/2020	Report	Business plan 2020-21
27/03/2020	Report	Children's guide to coronavirus
04/03/2020	Policy Briefing	Health inequalities briefing
30/01/2020	Publication	The state of children's mental health services
24/12/2019	Report	Pass the parcel: Children posted around the care system
05/11/2019	Report	UK Children's Commissioners' UNCRC mid-term review
29/10/2019		EU Children in Britain
22/10/2019	Report	Gaming the system
22/10/2019	Children's Insights	Children's insights: Issue 1
07/09/2019	Report	A Manifesto for Children
21/08/2019	Publication	Bleak houses
01/08/2019	Publication	Stability Index 2019
01/08/2019	Report	Children's Voices: Children's experiences of instability in the care system
04/07/2019	Publication	Childhood vulnerability in England 2019
13/06/2019	Report	Advocacy for children
11/06/2019	Publication	We need to talk: Access to speech and language therapy
20/05/2019	Publication	Far less than they deserve
16/05/2019	Publication	Who are they? Where are they?
07/05/2019	Report	Exclusions from mainstream schools
10/04/2019	Report	Early access to mental health support

7. Impact

Impact 2019/20	
Mentions in Commons debates	53
Mentions in Lords debates	26
Mentions in Early Day Motions	2
Mentions at PMQs	2
Mentions in Parliamentary Questions (oral)	10
Mentions in Parliamentary Questions (written)	31
Mentions in Commons Emergency Summits	2
Mentions in stakeholder reports	6

Consultation responses 2019/20		
What	Who	What we argued for
Children not in School	DfE	Increased oversight of children who are not on school rolls, and a register of children being electively home educated
Unregulated provision	DfE	Children under 18 to be accommodated in accommodation registered as children's homes
Online harms	DCMS	We argued that the White paper needs to be presented as a bill before parliament as quickly as possible. The Commissioners office would like to see the introduction of a children's Digital Ombudsman and for the DCMS Select Committee to hold accountability hearings with the regulator.
Age appropriate design code	ICO	We called for the provisions on profiling to be strengthened and that the code should ensure that online providers have the mechanism in place to determine the number of children using their services.
Draft inspection framework	Ofsted	We argued for a stronger emphasis on students' personal development and wellbeing and its link to behaviour. We also argued for a more distinct framework to inspect early years settings. We welcomed Ofsted focus on off-rolling.
Accommodation based support for victims of domestic abuse	MHCLG	Wider non-accommodation based support for children experiencing domestic abuse, including in peer-to-peer relationships
Use of restraint in mainstream schools and alternative provision	DfE	For the guidance on use of force to be made statutory so schools would be compelled to record every use of force incident and create more accountability for students. We also argued for greater guidance on de-escalation to avoid use of force and clearer guidance to ensure providers understood that it was illegal to use force and restraint as a form of punishment.

Select Committees 2019/20			
When	Committee and inquiry		What we argued for
18/04/19	Joint Cttee on Human Rights	Youth detention: solitary confinement and restraint	Evidence given by Commissioner 2018 on segregation in YOIs and STCs. April 2019 inquiry report references Commissioner's evidence and CCO report on segregation in youth custody.
30/04/19	Home Affairs Select Cttee	Serious Youth Violence	Evidence given by Commissioner calling for early intervention approach to youth violence
23/04/19	Joint Cttee on the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill	Draft Domestic Abuse Bill	Evidence given by Head of Policy argues for age limit in draft Bill to be removed to not exclude the under-16s experiencing abuse in intimate partner relationships.
01/05/19	Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Cttee	Funding of Local Authorities' Children's Services	Evidence given by Commissioner (25/02/19) discussed lack of funding for early help services and impact on LAs' budgets of unpredictable spending on children with complex needs. Called on the Government to introduce a marketing campaign to bring recruits into social work. OCC evidence referenced in committee report including Recommendation 130.
17/07/19	Joint Cttee on Human Rights	The Right to Privacy (Article 8) and the Digital Revolution	In oral evidence to committee, Dr Melanie Smallman – Director of UCL Responsible Research and Innovation Hub – referenced CCO Who knows what about me? report on data privacy.
15/04/20	Education Select Cttee	Home Office preparedness for Covid-19: domestic abuse and risks of harm within the home	Evidence given to committee on the impact of the crisis on children, particularly under-5s and teens at risk of exploitation . Discussed analysis by CCO on invisibility of child victims of abuse, and worries that the number of children who would be considered vulnerable attending school is lower than expected. Argued for reconfiguring the child protection system rapidly in order to maintain contact with families under lockdown.
27/04/20	Education Select Committee	Impact of COVID-19 on education and children's services	In oral evidence given to the Committee by Minister Vicky Ford, she mentioned the work the government was doing with the Children's Commissioner to set up a data tracking service to accurately estimate how children are connecting and accessing online learning .
05/05/20	Health and Social Care Select Cttee	Delivering Core NHS and Care Services during the Pandemic and Beyond	In oral evidence, Claire Murdoch – NHS Mental Health Director – referenced work of CCO to direct young people to services .
12/05/20	Education Select Committee	Impact of COVID-19 on education and children's services	The Committee mentioned several times the Commissioners work on a "Covid Catch up premium" and changes to adoption due to coronavirus regulations. Javed Khan who gave evidence praised the Commissioner's "focus and intervention" on vulnerable children during the coronavirus pandemic
20/05/20	Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Cttee	Impact of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) on homelessness and the private rented sector	Written evidence submitted to inquiry. Abena Oppong-Asare mentioned CCO evidence in question to Luke Hall, Homelessness Minister.

Select Committees 2019/20			
When	Committee and inquiry		What we argued for
21/05/20	No. 10	Hidden Harms Summit	Wider safeguarding support for children, particularly those at risk of exploitation and of domestic abuse
27/05/20	Education Select Committee	The impact of COVID-19 on education and children's services	Evidence published by the Children's Commissioner was mentioned by the chair in relation to laptops provided for disadvantaged pupils
08/06/20	Joint Committee on Human Rights	Government's response to COVID-19: human rights implications	In oral evidence Minister Lucy Frazer mentioned the work she does with the Children's Commissioner to keep both offices updated about children in custody
10/06/20	Education Select Committee	Commons education committee: The impact of COVID-19 on education and children's services	The Committee mentioned research carried out by the Children's Commissioner examining the learning loss of pupils due to the COVID lockdown
12/06/20	Joint Committee on Human Rights	Human Rights and the Government's response to COVID-19: the detention of young people who are autistic and/or have learning disabilities	In oral evidence the Commissioner's work with NHS England to improve specialist children and young peoples inpatient mental health, learning disability and autism services was mentioned.
17/06/20	Education Select Committee	Commons education committee: The impact of COVID-19 on education and children's services	The Committee mentioned research carried out by the Children's Commissioner examining the learning loss of pupils due to the COVID lockdown
24/06/20	Education Select Committee	The impact of COVID-19 on education and children's services	The Committee mentioned research published by the commission about the effect of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Apprenticeships
24/06/20	Commons Justice Committee	Children and young people in custody	The Committee mentioned research published by the Children's Commissioner regarding the use of segregation and separation in youth custody
02/07/20	HoL Select Committee on the Social and Economic Impact of the Gambling Industry	Social and Economic Impact of the Gambling Industry Committee	Evidence and recommendations submitted by the Children's Commissioner was cited by the committee in its report regarding gambling in video games
08/07/20	Public Services Committee	Lockdown lessons - Peers quiz health, local government and children's services leaders	Anne Longfield gave evidence on the impact of lockdown on children's services
13/07/20	Education Select Committee	Covid-19: the cancellation of exams and 'calculated' grades	The Children's Commissioner's work was cited on page 16 of the report
14/07/20	Commons Justice Committee	Children and young people in custody	Anne Longfield gave evidence on the impact of covid on children and young people in custody

Select Committees 2019/20			
When	Committee and inquiry		What we argued for
21/09/20	Joint Committee on Human Rights	Government's response to COVID-19: human rights implications	Evidence that Anne Longfield gave to the Justice Select Committee was mentioned by the committee in regard to children in custody
22/09/20	Education Select Committee	Accountability hearing	Evidence was submitted to the committee in regards to the lack of consistency of the online educational offer
30/09/20	Women and Equalities Select Committee	The Impact of Coronavirus on Childrens Education	Anne Longfield appeared as a witness for the committee on disparities in the impact of covid on children's education

8. Media coverage between June 2019 and September 2020

Over the last year, our reports and briefings have continued to receive considerable coverage in the media, across a wide range of outlets and platforms.

In June 2019, we published our report looking at the **experiences of children locked away in secure hospitals**. The report received considerable broadcast and newspaper coverage, starting with a story in the Times alongside a Times editorial, a piece the following day in the Mail on Sunday and widespread newspaper coverage on the day of publication in the Telegraph, Guardian, i newspaper and Mail. The report was covered by BBC Breakfast news bulletins, R4 news bulletins including an interview with the Children's Commissioner on the Today Programme, Sky News bulletins, a live interview on ITV Lunchtime News with Anne Longfield, another interview on Jeremy Vine's Radio 2 programme, an interview with the author of the report, Emily Frith, on Victoria Derbyshire and an interview on R4 You and Yours. The report was also covered on C4 News and LBC.

In July 2019 we published our **Annual Vulnerability report**, which received coverage from ITV lunchtime news, BBC Newsround and BBC Online, Five News, Sky News, The Times and the Independent, Children and Young People Now and tes. In August 2019, we published our Annual Stability Index, looking at the number of times children in care have to move schools, social workers or home. Anne Longfield did a number of interviews including for Radio 4's Today Programme, 5Live and BBC Radio London. She also appeared on the BBC's Victoria Derbyshire programme, Newsnight and pre-recorded packages for the BBC and ITV News bulletins. The story was covered in the Guardian, Telegraph, Mail, Independent, Schools Week, ITV online and a number of local newspapers.

Our report looking at **homeless families** published in August 2019 received a huge amount of coverage, spread out over a number of days, including featuring prominently on the BBC news website all day and appearing in news and radio bulletins from morning until evening. The report's author, Simone Vibert, appeared on a number of broadcast programmes including BBC Breakfast, Sky News, the Jeremy Vine show on Radio 2, Radio 5Live and Five News. The report was picked up by a number of news outlets globally, and details of the report appeared in the Times, Guardian, Telegraph, Mirror, Mail, Sun (including an editorial) and Metro. The report was continuing to receive coverage in newspaper columns and stories two weeks after publication.

Our **Children's Manifesto** published in September 2019 received media coverage from broadcast and newspapers, including the Mail, Telegraph, Guardian, Independent, BBC Breakfast and Sky News, including an editorial from The Guardian examining its 6 priority areas.

Our briefing revealing the **number of children leaving education without even basic qualifications**, published in September 2019, made the digital front page of the Independent, as well as the Telegraph, Schools Week and tes, while the Children's Commissioner gave broadcast interviews to the Today Programme, BBC Breakfast and Sky.

Our report '**Gaming the System**', published in November 2019, looking at the experiences of children who play games online received significant coverage, followed up by all of the national newspapers, a number of tech specialist publications, the BBC's Newsround and Sky News and ITV News. An op-ed by the Children's Commissioner was published in the Telegraph. The report was also covered by the Metro and regional titles. Radio 4's, 'You and Yours' programme dedicated a whole 45 minute phone-in to the report and ITV News carried a live interview with Anne Longfield.

We have been making ongoing contributions to BBC Newsnight's coverage of **children in care being placed in unrelated and unregistered placements**, which in turn has led to further media requests for contributions to long-term investigations, including an interview on Radio 4's Today Programme. An interview by Anne Longfield with the Guardian for their investigation into the youth justice system resulted in a front page story in December 2019.

In late 2019, IMO, our peer-led website for Children in care **launched a podcast series** which the Communications Team edited into a feature piece for magazine and online platform "Children and Young People Now".

Aside from regular requests for comment on a number of related issues, the Children's Commissioner made a series of media interventions from March to June 2020.

Our biggest intervention was a call for the teaching unions and Government to work together to see how a staggered return to school could be achieved. This intervention led the news for most of that day. It was reported in The Sun, Telegraph (front page), Daily Mail, The Guardian, Independent online, BBC online, ITV online, the Mirror and the Times (front page). Anne did a series of broadcast interviews including BBC Breakfast, the Today Programme, Sky News, ITV News, Bauer radio and LBC. Her intervention was in news bulletin packages on the BBC, ITV, Sky and C4. Her comments were reported the following day in The Observer (an editorial), Radio 4's Broadcasting House and the Andrew Marr Show.

Over recent months, the Children's Commissioner has also given interviews to BBC News, Newsnight, The Times, 5Live Breakfast, R4's The World at One and The Independent on the effect lockdown was having on vulnerable children. The Jeremy Vine Show on BBC Radio 2 asked Anne to contribute to its 'What Makes Us Human' slot, and Anne also appeared on The Steph Show on C4.

BBC 5 Live Breakfast interviewed Anne following our report into **lockdown babies** and The Telegraph and BBC News (Sima Kotecha) reported our views on the effect on children's mental health.

The Children's Commissioner's intervention in June 2020 calling for **school facilities to be open over the summer** was front page of the Telegraph, alongside an op-ed. This was followed up by The Sun, Mirror, Guardian, Times, 5Live, Sky News, LBC, the Independent, iPaper and Daily Mail. There were a number of follow ups to this over July.

Lockdown output

Over the spring and summer March to August 2020 of lockdown we promoted our own media output via our digital platforms of the CCO Website, Twitter and Facebook with considerable success

- > **Children's guide to coronavirus**
79,000 pageviews, over 40,000 downloads
- > **Digital 5 a day**
12,000 views
- > **Blog: "Angry, fed up, isolated": Coronavirus and children's mental health**
11,000 views
- > **Blog: Supporting children during the coronavirus outbreak**
9,750 views
- > **Local vulnerability profiles**
3,900 downloads
- > **Digital safety kit**
1,400 downloads

The first on this list was a compilation of all the best advice we could find on Covid 19 translated and simplified for children to read and then designed with them in mind. The Children's Guide to Coronavirus is one of the most shared and downloaded items we've produced.

The tweet promoting it was seen 240,000 times and engaged with 9,800 times with 1200 retweets. The highest any of our tweets have ever got¹.

In total, our tweets over this period were seen 2.2 million times

We completed this programme with **our Children friendly guide to going back to school** which was published in late August, a fortnight before children were due to return.

¹ <https://twitter.com/ChildrensComm/status/1243515131021189120>

In August 2020 CYPN covered the launch of a second series of podcasts with children in care, the first series of which (they had featured in 2019) was nominated in the Best Newcomer category of the prestigious British Podcast awards.

On 10th September 2020 we published a report called **Unregulated**, about Children in care living in semi-independent accommodation which was covered in detail by the BBC Newsnight programme and was picked up by BBC Radio bulletins, Telegraph and a specific piece in Children and Young People Now (CYPN)

In mid September Polly Toynbee wrote an opinion piece in the Guardian regarding what the Office would need form a new Commissioner, reflecting on Anne's tenure in the role as a champion for children and the successes she had.

A further intervention on schools return came in mid September regarding the need for schools and Government to hold their nerve on school return with 90% of children in school for the first 2 weeks but to emphasise a need for effective testing and a priority for schools.

This was covered by the BBC Week in Westminster programme, a contribution to the Sunday Times and a page 2 lead in the Sun the following day, with corresponding interviews with BBC Breakfast TV, and BBC 5 Live Breakfast.

On the 29th of September we published "**Children in a Time of Covid**" a comprehensive overview of what we felt had been learned and what was needed next for children, and that the focus on children for any "build back better" programme should prioritise them both in and out of school. It was matched by a survey on children's stress.

This was covered by Sky, BBC Online (a large and detailed piece) LBC, Talk Radio the Evening Standard and Channel 5 News and was previewed in part by Sally Weale of the Guardian who also followed up on the day.

We have contributed twice to the Municipal Journal, as well as Children and Young People Now, Mental Health Today, twice to Bright Blue think tank and The Lancet.

Our publication of **Local Area Profiles of pre-Covid children's vulnerability** published in May 2020 garnered many reports across regional press and local news. BBC Look North TV, BBC Look East and BBC Radio York used our work as the foundation for a special day of focus on vulnerable children and Coronavirus/Lockdown, while BBC London talked to Anne for National Children's Day on creative aspects of children's use of the internet to express how they felt in lockdown. Regional statistics in our local area profiles were used by a number of local newspapers around the country, including the Yorkshire Post, Liverpool Echo and Eastern Daily Press.



Children's Commissioner for England
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

Tel: 020 7783 8330
Email: info.request@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk
Visit: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk
Twitter: @ChildrensComm