

Excerpt from [Early years foundation stage: coronavirus disapplications - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-foundation-stage-coronavirus-disapplications) relating to Paediatric First Aid cover, qualification and requalification.

Statutory guidance: Early years foundation stage: coronavirus disapplications

Updated 15 January 2021

7.2 Paediatric first aid

Providers remain responsible for ensuring all children in their care are kept safe at all times.

The changes

The requirement for at least one person who has a full PFA certificate to be on the premises at all times when children are present **remains in place at all times where there are children below the age of 24 months**. Paragraph 3.25 and annex A of the EYFS set out more detail.

During any period of intervention relating to coronavirus (COVID-19), **if children are aged 2 to 5 within a setting**, providers must use their **'best endeavours'** to ensure one person with a full PFA certificate is on site when children are present. If after using best endeavours they are still unable to secure a member of staff with full PFA to be on site then they must carry out a written risk assessment and ensure that someone with a current first aid at work or emergency PFA certification is on site at all times children are on premises.

Please note that this change does not apply for childminders, who must already have a full PFA certificate as part of registration requirements.

'Best endeavours' means to identify and take all the steps possible within your power, which could, if successful, ensure there is a paediatric first aider on site when a setting is open, as per the usual EYFS requirement on PFA.

New entrants (levels 2 and 3) will not need to hold a PFA certificate within their first 3 months in order to be counted in staff: child ratios, during any period of intervention related to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Requalification

Additionally, if PFA certificate requalification training is prevented for reasons associated directly with the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, or by complying with related government advice, the validity of current certificates **can be extended to 31 March 2021 at the latest**. This applies to certificates expiring on or after 1 October 2020 and includes paediatric first aiders in provision registered on the General Childcare Register as well as Ofsted registered early years provision. Childminders can also apply this extension.

If asked to do so, providers should be able to explain why the first aider has not been able to requalify and demonstrate what steps have taken to access the training. Employers or certificate holders must do their best to arrange requalification training at the earliest opportunity.

Practitioners are strongly encouraged to use online resources to refresh their knowledge of Paediatric First Aid procedures if they need to extend their certificates while waiting to access face-to-face training. Providers such as St John Ambulance offer free online resources to support this.

The practical elements of PFA courses should be delivered face to face, so that competency can be properly assessed, as set out in Annex A of the statutory framework for the EYFS.

What this means in practice

For providers with children below the age of 24 months in their care, the requirements around PFA remain the same as in the current EYFS framework at all times. This is in recognition of the greater risk factors for babies and young children in this age bracket, including choking risks and different cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) procedures for those aged 0 to 1 as set out by the NHS.

During any period of intervention related to coronavirus (COVID 19), new entrants do not need to have a PFA certificate to be counted in ratios.

Also, for providers who have children aged 2 to 5 in their care, they must use 'best endeavours' to have one person with full PFA, as set out in the EYFS, on site. By best endeavours, we mean providers must be able to demonstrate they have identified and taken all the steps possible to appoint a suitable person.

This should include:

- liaising with their local authority to find a suitable person, this could include identifying and looking to appoint either:
 - a person with a PFA certificate and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check from a local provider who has closed
 - a registered local childminder with a PFA certificate and DBS check who is approved to work on non-domestic premises
- looking to secure full PFA training for staff that includes the specific risk factors and techniques required for the care of young children including but not limited to choking, seizures, and issues related to sleeping – annex A of the EYFS statutory framework sets out the criteria for effective PFA training

After these actions have been carried out and if it is still not possible for someone with a full PFA certificate to be on site at all times children are present, providers must undertake the following actions in order to remain open:

- carry out a **written risk assessment** to consider and mitigate the likely occurrence of a serious incident
- **ensure at least one person with a current first aid at work or emergency PFA certification is on site at all times children are on premises and must accompany children on outings**
 - paragraph 3.65 in the EYFS continues to apply and outings should only be undertaken if it is safe to do so
 - providers must take account of any government advice in relation to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

The **written risk assessment** should take into account all relevant factors with the aim of enabling the setting to ensure they can provide the safe care needed during any period of intervention related to coronavirus (COVID-19), including:

- the number of children on the premises
- the staff to child ratio
- the types of activities undertaken with the children on the premises
- the likely need for first aid based on the needs of the children attending the premises
- first aider knowledge among staff on the premises
- the mitigations available to reduce the risk of such an incident

Providers will need to ensure the written risk assessment is kept available in the setting. This does not need to be sent anywhere but must be available on request.

Providers could help members of staff who have a first aid at work or emergency PFA certificate to help bridge the gap between their current qualification and full PFA by looking to secure online training to cover elements required for the care of young children.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) provides [guidance on choosing a first aid training provider](#).

As set out in HSE guidance, any training in relation to paediatric CPR and choking should be in line with the [Resuscitation Council's guidance](#) and [NHS England guidance](#).