

## Principles for in person visits, support and Family Time

Following the transition from national restrictions to revised local tier arrangements on 2 December, these principles for safe, consistent delivery of in person social work and family support activities have been updated to reflect prevailing restrictions.

### Principles

- In person visits to children, young people and families should, in all cases, be considered an essential part of the social work task, with virtual arrangements being implemented by exception. Visits should prioritise children being seen alone.
- Family Time, including with brothers and sisters, should similarly be considered essential to promote wellbeing and nurture positive relationships. This is specifically exempted under all tiers of restriction (see [Exception 15](#))
- No 'blanket' approach should be applied to the use of [virtual visits](#) – which should be 'the exception' across all tiers. Decisions for virtual visits/[Family Time](#) must be made, authorised and recorded on a case-by-case basis (in line with [Coronavirus guidance for children's social care services](#))
- Travel by social workers and other children's workforce within and between areas under all tiers of restrictions should continue where needed to deliver essential services (See [Exception 4](#)).
- Support, including for vulnerable children, victims of domestic abuse and for parenting ([Exception 7](#)); in addition to respite for Looked After Children and children with disabilities ([Exception 8](#)) should continue safely, in line with relevant regulatory exceptions to national restrictions.

### Practical considerations

- Seeking and recording [views of children and young people](#) and the impact on them should inform the approach to decision-making in all cases.
- When [travelling](#) across areas in different tiers, restrictions in whichever is the highest tier should be observed i.e. if travelling from a Tier 3 area into a Tier 1 or 2 areas observe Tier 3 restrictions where you normally live/work whilst there. Verify local restrictions via gov.uk [postcode checker](#).
- Dynamic [risk-based](#) decisions (considering symptomatic/isolating members of households) and case-specific risk assessment (particularly for clinically extremely vulnerable children/carers) should inform safe decision-making for children, parents/carers and the workforce.

- Protection of those considered [clinically extremely vulnerable](#) under revised definition issued by Government – whether children, their families/carers or the social work and wider workforce - should be a key consideration in practical application of principles, regulations and guidance. Reference should be made to relevant additional advice for areas in [Tier 1 \(Medium\)](#), [Tier 2 \(High\)](#) and [Tier 3 \(Very High\)](#).