

# Headteachers' Update

## **Information and Resources for Supporting Children and Young People**

The current situation has been very unsettling for adults and children alike. It's normal that we would feel anxious and upset by what is happening.

We all want to support the children and young people we are caring for, and working with, to understand their feelings and adjust to the current circumstances.

To assist adults in supporting children and young people during this time, we would like to share some resources, which you might have already accessed on the Northumberland Education website:

[https://nlandeducation.padlet.org/gill\\_finch2/SupportForChildrenandFamilies](https://nlandeducation.padlet.org/gill_finch2/SupportForChildrenandFamilies)

A range of information and resources are provided for schools, parents/ carers and young people. The following might be of particular interest:

- Supporting emotional wellbeing for young people and families
- Specific leaflets for Year 6 and Year 11 pupils
- Information designed for children and young people with additional needs
- Support for parents who now have their children at home
- Free CPD opportunities for school staff and others

## **Safeguarding Recording**

CPOMS, which well over 100 NCC schools currently use to track and monitor safeguarding, are offering a free service to all schools until September 2020.

Whilst it isn't the full CPOMS system, we are assured that it is enough to help you and your staff track pupils from disparate locations. CPOMS will

also provide online training free of charge to your safeguarding and pastoral team. There is absolutely no commitment for the school to continue using CPOMS usage post September – it is to assist you at this time. All information can be returned to you in a usable format once schools return to normal. For further information visit the CPOMS website ([www.cpoms.co.uk](http://www.cpoms.co.uk)).

## **Guidance on the National FSM Voucher Scheme (NFSNVS)**

As I indicated in my email this morning, details of the National FSM Voucher Scheme were launched this morning. Details can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance-for-schools>

The accompanying press release can be found at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/news/voucher-scheme-launches-for-schools-providing-free-school-meals?utm\\_source=1e8e0f2f-de27-4ddc-8bb7-4c57b4725211&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/voucher-scheme-launches-for-schools-providing-free-school-meals?utm_source=1e8e0f2f-de27-4ddc-8bb7-4c57b4725211&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

Schools should receive an email about it today from the supplier Edenred.

At the moment, only six supermarkets seem to be part of the scheme currently so schools may need to continue to provide local solutions for families who can't access those supermarkets. Our understanding is that other supermarkets wish to be in the scheme but do not have the appropriate technology to process the vouchers at the moment. A solution is apparently being worked on to include more supermarkets.

If we find out more, I will put the details on future Updates.

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A few NSFMS FAQs are below. There are more in the guidance. I have emboldened some key points.

**Will pupils who become newly eligible for free school meals be supported?**

*Yes. Schools and local authorities **should continue** to accept free school meal applications. Parents should contact the school or local authority, who will verify eligibility and award free school meals.*

**What about infants that receive a free meal under universal infant free school meals?**

*It is right that schools concentrate their effort and resources on those who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals at this time.*

*There is **no requirement** to continue to provide universal infant free school meals to pupils in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 who are unable to attend school. Children in those year groups who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals will be supported.*

**Our school is open over the Easter holidays and our food supplier is able to continue to provide food parcels to free school meals children not in school over the Easter holiday. Is that allowed?**

*Yes. It is for schools to decide locally how their arrangements for free school meals will operate. Whilst the vouchers are for **term time only**, if there is a local arrangement to supply food that the school and the supplier intend to continue over this period then that can be agreed and managed locally. This would need to be manageable within schools' existing resources, as there will not be additional funding available for this purpose.*

**What about families that do not have access to the internet?**

*Schools are best placed to decide how to support eligible families in their areas with access to free school meals. Where schools want to provide supermarket eGift cards to families that do not have access to emails, the school may choose to:*

- *print and post the eGift cards to families*
- *arrange for families to collect their vouchers*

**NCC Phone Call**

This is just an early heads-up that we will be phoning all our settings tomorrow (Wednesday) as well as sending out the daily questionnaire. The questionnaire will have some additional questions as we require additional information around your Easter/Bank Holiday arrangements so that we can plan provision and whether any of our secondary schools have any Personal Protective Equipment that could be redirected to the NHS (see below).

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Can any secondary schools that haven't yet done so consider donating any personal protective equipment that they feel they don't need to the NHS? You will be provided with further details tomorrow as to how we will organise but, in the meantime, please check your stockrooms, laboratories and cupboards to see what is possible. I am aware that some schools have already done this, for which I am extremely grateful, and it is these individual donations that have led us to try to organise a more coordinated approach across the county. Details tomorrow. (The different types of PPE include face shields, gloves, goggles and glasses, gowns, head covers, masks, respirators, and shoe covers).

**DfE Guidance Updates – A Quick Guide to the Updates**

Guidance on safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers (published 27 March 2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>

Guidance on vulnerable children and young people (updated 27 Mar 2020 - Updated the following sections of the guidance: 13, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27 and 30)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

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Guidance for schools on temporary closing (updated 27 March 2020 - Updated questions on 'How are vulnerable children defined', 'Is it compulsory for parents of vulnerable children to accept their place offer', 'Will critical workers or parents of vulnerable children be penalised if they do not send their child to school', 'What should schools do if vulnerable children do not attend school' and what public health advice should schools follow')

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing>

Guidance on supporting children's mental health and wellbeing:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-people-mental-health-and-wellbeing>

Guidance for the public on mental health and wellbeing:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing>