

Headteachers' Update

The Daily 5 O'Clock Update For Schools

Daily Returns

The information that you have been returning each day has been immensely helpful in ensuring that the local authority can coordinate provision and ensure that our key workers and most vulnerable children are able to access continuing childcare. We are, therefore, going to continue to ask schools to complete the return each day throughout the Easter period including the two Bank Holidays for those of you that will be open on these days.

OFSTED and Safeguarding

We have been informed that a school in the north-east received a thirty-minute phone call today from an OFSTED Senior HMI asking about the safeguarding of vulnerable children registered at the school during the current coronavirus crisis. They were asked about their record keeping, contact, monitoring and the changes to existing procedures and practices made in light of the current school closures. We will endeavour to keep you updated should we hear of any more.

Guidance on Vulnerable Children Updated Today

The guidance on vulnerable children was updated yesterday (01/04/2020) to include guidance for schools and special schools covering the Easter holiday:

<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>

I have reproduced the two key paragraphs:

Para 14. Does the provision for vulnerable children include the Easter holidays?

Education is a protective factor for vulnerable children and we want to make sure that protection remains in place during the Easter holidays given the current circumstances. We are asking providers, wherever possible, *to maintain provision for children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response and vulnerable children over the Easter holidays*. We are asking social workers and schools, wherever possible, to encourage vulnerable children who have a social worker to continue to attend an education setting during the Easter holidays, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that puts them at severe risk.

Para 26. Do special schools and specialist colleges need to open over the Easter holidays?

We are asking providers - including special schools and colleges, wherever possible, to maintain provision for children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response and vulnerable children over the Easter holidays. Local authorities will need to ensure, as usual, that provision continues to be available to meet education, health and care needs. Following discussion with schools, this may involve some special schools and colleges continuing to offer some or all of their provision over the Easter holidays.

New Guidance on Newly Qualified Teachers

This has been published today and can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-induction-for-newly-qualified-teachers/covid-19-induction-for-newly-qualified-teachers-guidance>

The local authority has produced a briefing note to reassure NQTs, their mentors and headteachers as to how the induction process will operate going forwards. The briefing note is [here](#). Please contact [Dave Cookson](#) or [Carol Green](#).

Children Moving Between Schools During the Current Period

We know that schools are working together to keep educational provision available for those children and young people who need it during the current situation with Covid-19. Practically, and as some schools start closing, this means that some children and young people could be going to a different school or setting than the one they usually attend and, potentially, are being supported by adults who do not know them as well as their usual class teachers and support staff do. *This will not involve a change in school roll.* The Schools' Safeguarding Team has published a checklist that has been developed from [government guidance](#) to ensure that this process is managed safely for vulnerable learners. Any school or college whose children are attending another setting must ensure they do whatever they reasonably can to provide the receiving school with any relevant welfare and child protection information. This checklist [Safeguarding Procedures for Children Moving Schools](#)- will help DSLs, DTs and SENDCos to ensure they have taken the necessary steps.

Volunteers in School During the Coronavirus Crisis

We are not getting the impression from schools that, currently, you are using many volunteers in school. We are aware, however, that this could change over time.

Should you recruit any volunteers, then to support you in their training, Waltham Forest have shared a video with the Northumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Northumberland and North Tyneside Safeguarding Adults Board and this has been endorsed by both Northumberland's Safeguarding Partnerships.

The short video is available on YouTube and is accessible on laptops, tablets and Smart Phones for ease - <https://youtu.be/HHQG8CJROhU>.

It is three minutes long and gives a simple message of:

- if you see something, say something,
- as volunteers you have a safeguarding role,
- some people may volunteer for the wrong reason and
- tells volunteers we want them to be safe too.

The simplest message is to tell volunteers to talk to their single point of contact if they have any concerns or want advice. This also makes it easy for anyone to use the video in their areas as it doesn't have any local information. All volunteers should have a single point of contact and if this person is not a safeguarding lead, they should know who is in their organisation.

In Northumberland, we have a Single telephone line for making referrals through OneCall on **01670 536400**. This should be used by the SPOC to pass on any significant concerns raised by the volunteers.

Northumberland and North Tyneside Safeguarding Adults Board and Northumberland Children's Safeguarding Partnership: Where can I go to get support to help keep my child safe online?

With children and young people being educated at home there will be more opportunities for unsupervised internet access. The UK Government has provided guidance that can be shared with staff and service users:

There is a lot of support available to keep your child safe online. Below are some useful links to help parents and carers:

[Thinkyouknow](#) (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online)

[Internet Matters](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)

[Parent Info](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)

[LGfL](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)

[Net-aware](#) (support for parents and careers from the NSPCC).

The DfE has updated its information for parents and carers to include a section on keeping children safe online. It provides links to online resources that will help support parents and carers in keeping their children safe online. Details can be found in Sec 6.3 of the guidance for parents and carers on the closure of educational settings:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>