

Headteachers' Update

The Daily 5 O'Clock Update For Schools

Easter Holiday Update

Yesterday, on the first day of the Easter 'holiday', we had 98 schools and Alternative Providers open. The number of pupils fell from the 800-900 we have been averaging to around 600, which was expected over this period. In addition, we have 186 pre-school provisions open and, to date, we have been able to find a place for parent that wanted one for their child(ren). We estimate that over 7500 meals are being provided each day of the holidays with the vast majority being provided through vouchers, either organised locally or through the national scheme. There are, however, some schools still delivering packed lunches and food parcels to their children. Overall, this is a tremendous effort by our schools, and we are enormously grateful.

DfE Home Learning Online Resources

Further to yesterday's 5 O'Clock Update, the DfE has today issued a document that brings together an initial list of online educational resources to help children to learn at home. The DfE states that these websites have been identified by some of the country's leading educational experts and offer a wide range of support and resources for pupils of all ages.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources>.

In addition, Northumberland County Council and Northumbria Healthcare Trust have produced a 'Coronavirus: Factsheet for Kids'.

<http://northumberlandeducation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Coronavirus-Fact-sheet-for-kids.pdf>

Update DfE Guidance

Coronavirus (COVID-19): free school meals guidance

The DfE have added guidance about free school meal support over the Easter holidays which confirms that the national voucher scheme WILL now cover the Easter holiday period and costs will be covered by DfE. **The link is below but the key paragraph says:**

Free school meals should be offered to eligible pupils not attending school during term time weeks and the Easter holidays, and these costs will be met by DfE. The addition of the Easter holidays reflects the unprecedented levels of disruption and uncertainty for schools during this time. This support will not cover future holidays. Free school meal pupils in school during the Easter holidays should also continue to receive a free meal if eligible, and these costs will be met by the school.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance>.

Coronavirus (COVID-19): financial support for schools

The DfE has published **new guidance on additional financial support** available to schools to cover costs related to the Coronavirus outbreak, please read this carefully as it sets out how the government will reimburse, with examples of limits and types of specific items they will be likely to reimburse e.g. additional premises costs, support for FSM children not attending school where not covered by the national voucher scheme and cleaning costs but note:

“If schools faces other, extraordinary costs to deliver appropriate support to their pupils through this period that are not covered by this list and cannot be met by existing budgets, they should contact DfE.CoronavirusHelpline@education.gov.uk. Other queries should continue to be directed towards central enquiry channels.”

Please also note the following extract from the guidance: - *“While we are not asking schools to draw on existing reserves to meet these costs, we do not expect schools to make a claim against this funding if they are anticipating that they will be able to add to their reserves in the 2020 to 2021 financial year.”*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-schools>.

The Secretary of State has also issued a press statement on these issues:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/extra-support-for-schools-and-parents-to-help-cope-with-coronavirus>

Implementing social distancing in education and childcare settings

Both the guidance and the Q&A section of the guidance has been updated today.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings>