

# Headteachers' Update

## The Daily 5 O'Clock Update For Schools

### Michael Thompson

It is with real sadness that I have to tell you that Michael Thompson, the former head teacher of Hexham Priory school, passed away on Friday 10th April following an accident.

Michael was the head teacher at Hexham Priory for 23 years and, as you know, he was a highly respected and much-loved member of our Northumberland school community. Michael described being the head teacher at Hexham Priory as 'the best job in the world'.

I know that many of you will have worked with Michael over the years and I'm sure we will all join together in thinking of his family at this sad time.

### Payment of SEND Funding

In these exceptional times, I am writing to confirm arrangements for the payment of SEND funding for the Summer term. This will hopefully provide you with some clarity for the management of your funding and resources in the challenging situation we are all facing due to the COVID19 virus.

As confirmed in the ESFA bulletin sent on 08 April 2020, schools will continue to receive their core funding allocations – as determined by the local authority for maintained schools and through the general annual grant (GAG) for academies.

SEND funding will continue to be paid in-line with existing arrangements. This includes High Needs Education Health and Care Plan funding, Short Term Additional Resource (STAR) and other top-up and high needs funding.

All payments will be made regardless of any periods of partial or complete closure and will ensure schools can continue to pay staff and meet other regular financial commitments, as we move through these extraordinary times.

If you have any specific queries in relation to this please contact us via email to [sendfinance@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:sendfinance@northumberland.gov.uk). Please submit any invoices via email to the same email address in order that we can deal with them promptly.

Similarly, and **very importantly**, where schools pay top-up or other funding for pupils attending alternative provision (AP), or pay for other SEND or AP services, we expect these payments to continue so that teachers and other staff can be paid in accordance with their existing employment contracts.

William Healey from the DfE Funding Policy Unit summarised the position very succinctly last week when he said, '*... local authorities will continue to receive their high needs budgets and should continue to pay top-up and high needs funding to schools as normal. We also expect schools to continue to pay other top-up payments for AP and other SEND services.*

### Safe to Learn

The latest edition of the now weekly Safe to Learn (Edition 32) has gone to all DSLs and is also available on the Virtual School webpages: <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Looked-after/Virtual.aspx#virtualschoolforlookedafterandpreviouslylookedafterchildren> and at the link below: <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Child-Families/Looked%20after%20children/Safe-to-Learn-Bulletin-Issue-32-09-04-20.pdf>.

---

## T Levels – Updates to DfE Documents

Three documents regarding T Levels appeared on the DfE Update page on Friday:

Introduction of T levels Updated

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-t-levels>.

T Levels Capital Guidance Updated

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/t-levels-capital-fund>

Technical Qualifications Within T Levels Updated

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/technical-qualifications-within-t-levels>

### **DfE Update: Awarding Vocational and Technical Qualifications this Summer**

DfE Guidance has been provided on calculated results for qualifications used for progression to higher and further education. Arrangements for other qualifications will be issued after Easter.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/news/awarding-vocational-and-technical-qualifications-this-summer?utm\\_source=f9daa1ad-589a-4923-a884-49a6d8e40e46&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/awarding-vocational-and-technical-qualifications-this-summer?utm_source=f9daa1ad-589a-4923-a884-49a6d8e40e46&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate).

### **The British Psychological Society: Teacher Resilience During the Coronavirus School Closures**

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the British Psychological Society have produced a guide to explore how resilience can be promoted for teachers at this time. The paper might be useful for school leaders to consider as we move forwards. You can view the paper at:

<http://northumberlandeducation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Educational-Psychologists-Advice-Teacher-resilience-during-coronavirus-school-closures.pdf>.