

Headteachers' Update

The Daily 5 O'Clock Update For Schools

DfE Special Educational Needs Update

The DfE SEN Division yesterday issued a summary statement which I have reproduced below as I think that it acts as a useful catch-up on all the SEN guidance issued to date:

The DfE SEN Division would like to signpost three key publications and an announcement that have taken place over the past couple of weeks:

On Sunday 19 April, we published new [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): SEND risk assessment guidance written with input and steers from SEND sector organisations – this guidance builds on the COVID-19 guidance on vulnerable children and young people](#) guidance published on 22 March, and explains the practicalities for local authorities and other providers in undertaking risk assessments for vulnerable children and young people with education, health and care plans, in light of school and college closures. We are asking local authorities to work with educational providers, families and the child or young person to carry out a risk assessment to judge whether the child or young person's needs cannot be met safely at home. Where the risk assessment determines a child or young person with an EHC plan will be as safe or safer at an educational setting, it may be more appropriate for them to attend the educational setting.

Alongside the risk assessment guidance, we also updated the [Supporting vulnerable children and young people during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) guidance – it sets out the different groups of vulnerable children and young people who might benefit from being encouraged to attend educational settings, where appropriate, and how we recommend providers follow-up on non-attendance.

On 7 April we published an initial [list of free online education resources for home education](#) which includes SEND-specific home learning resources to help support parents, teachers and schools, during this period. These have been developed in collaboration with SEND organisations, charities, special school head teachers and multi-academy trusts. This list is by no means exhaustive, and we plan to refine and add to it over time. If you have recommendations for us to consider adding to this list of resources, please email Resources.SCHOOL@education.gov.uk.

Other DfE SEN Quick Links:

[COVID-19 guidance on vulnerable children and young people](#)
[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): SEND risk assessment guidance](#)
[Supporting vulnerable children and young people during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)
[Coronavirus \(COVID 19\): list of online education resources for home education](#)

BBC News Website: Vulnerable Children in School

Following the release of DfE attendance data today, it has been confirmed that only a tiny fraction of vulnerable children in England are taking up the emergency school places kept open for them, official figures show. As you are aware, the number of vulnerable children and children with an EHCP currently in Northumberland schools is increasing but there are still a substantial number of these children who are not in our schools and have not been since this crisis began. Please be reassured that we will continue to support you to get as many vulnerable children and children with an EHCP back into school as quickly as possible.

The BBC article is below:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/in-pictures-52370968>

DfE Updates

Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus outbreak

This updated guidance on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets out what childcare services, early years settings, childminders and local authorities need to provide during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures>

DfE Press release: Aldi joins Free School Meal voucher scheme

It was announced yesterday that Aldi has joined the other supermarkets signed up to Government's national voucher scheme:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/aldi-joins-free-school-meal-voucher-scheme#history>

Schools Week has an article about this on its website:

<https://schoolsworld.co.uk/coronavirus-aldi-joins-national-free-school-meal-voucher-scheme/>

Remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19)

Information, guidance and support is now available for teachers and leaders on educating children during the coronavirus outbreak. It now has BBC Bitesize Daily added

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): attendance in education and early years settings

A summary is now available showing how many children and teachers attended education settings between Monday 23 March and Friday 17 April 2020.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings>

Get help with technology for remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Department for Education is working in partnership with an industry coalition to provide technology to support remote education.

Clarification is now given on who digital devices and internet access will be provided to.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19#history>

Locality Headteacher Conference Call

This week's Headteacher Conference Call will take place tomorrow, Thursday 23rd April at 2.00pm. I am pleased to tell you that Graham Reiter, Director of Children's Social Care, will be joining us.

Please let me know if there are any further changes to the 'usual' participant list. All changes notified to me so far have been acknowledged by Deborah Anderson.