

Headteachers' Update

The Daily 5 O'Clock Update For Schools

Letter from Cath McEvoy-Carr, Executive Director of Children's and Adult Services

All headteachers have been emailed a letter from Cath McEvoy-Carr this afternoon.

DfE Updates

Two key school reopening guidance documents were published late yesterday. I know that you will all have read them as they contain a wealth of extremely useful advice and guidance. Whilst expecting you to take account of what is in the two documents, I would not expect you to fundamentally change your working plan for reopening on the 1st June.

Should you have decided to open in a different way to that being suggested in the guidance, it is important, as has been said at all our meetings this week, that you have a strong rationale for doing so and that it has been shared with your governing body, your staff and your parents.

Be assured that we will continue to support you throughout the proposed reopening process.

Preparing for the wider opening of schools from 1 June

A planning guide is available for primary school leaders to help prepare them to open their schools for more pupils during the coronavirus outbreak.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june>

Actions for FE colleges and providers during the coronavirus outbreak

Guidance is available for further education (FE) providers on maintaining education and skills training, changes to funding arrangements, data collections and assessment.

Guidance has been updated to provide further information to plan for wider opening, including what to consider and steps to take when planning increased attendance. Other updates include vulnerable young people, safeguarding and mental health support.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-further-education-provision>

Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care

Preventing and controlling infection, including the use of PPE, in education, childcare and children's social care settings during the coronavirus outbreak.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care>

Critical workers who can access schools or educational settings

List of critical workers (key workers) who can send their children to school or other educational settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Updated to reflect that children of critical workers are encouraged to attend school, and to reflect plans for wider opening of schools from 1 June, at the earliest. Updated information defining vulnerable children, in line with existing guidance, for the purpose of continued education.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision-guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Providing free school meals during the coronavirus outbreak

Guidance for schools and local authorities on free school meals arrangements during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The information about claiming for additional costs, providing meals or food parcels through your food provider and ordering vouchers to cover multiple weeks has been updated.

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

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for educational settings

Guidance for schools and other educational settings about the novel coronavirus, COVID-19.

Further clarification on the guidance and legislation has been added.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for schools and other educational settings

Guidance and advice about coronavirus (COVID-19) in educational settings for staff, parents and carers, pupils and students.

A section on 'Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care' has been added.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>

Overview of scientific information on coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Department for Education's response to issues raised regarding the science on coronavirus (COVID-19).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/overview-of-scientific-information-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

Awarding qualifications in summer 2020

Information is available for schools, students and parents on how GCSE, AS, A level, vocational and technical qualifications will be graded and awarded in summer 2020.

Guidance for Centres - The awarding of vocational and technical qualifications, and other general qualifications, in summer 2020 has been added.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2020?utm_source=188a3b85-e919-4a6c-8eb3-d9a47a498a0d&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

How Denmark reopened its primary schools - BBC News

I meant to put this on last night's Update so you have probably now seen it by now, but it is an interesting insight into the Danish school re-opening experience:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-europe-52649919/coronavirus-inside-a-reopened-primary-school-in-the-time-of-covid-19>

Access to a new service to support mental health in young people 11-25

NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group is in the process of commissioning a new resource to support the mental health of children and young people in Northumberland aged 11-25. It is a web based, digital and interactive resource which is currently in use within 160 CCG areas across the UK.

'Kooth' is an online counselling and support service which will supplement the early help offer around mental health and provide children and young people with access to self-help resources, forums, articles and links to crisis support (if needed) through any device with internet access. It will also provide access to up to six scheduled 1:1 counselling or drop-in sessions with trained professionals; it is a safe and viable alternative to face to face sessions for those who need help at an early stage.

The online counselling will support children and young people to move forward positively or be escalated into the more specialist and additional service provided by the Children and Young Peoples' Service (CYPS). Part of the support available is an online forum several times a week which young people can join, moderated by trained professionals. As it will interconnect with our local services, the Kooth staff will utilise local pathways to ensure that referrals are made through to appropriate safeguarding channels as necessary.

Kooth will become part of Northumberland's graduated approach to mental health and will fit within our referral and safeguarding pathways in an integrated way, supporting the building of resilience and intervening early to the best effect. Importantly,

it will provide additional support for increasing demand during and after COVID 19; especially around anxiety and depression, both of which are predicted to rise.

It is a confidential and anonymous service which operates 365 days of the year and will be available in Northumberland within the next six weeks. Individuals can self-refer, or referrals can be made by education staff, GPs and other professionals. Further details about referrals and about the services it offers will be made available as we approach the launch.

Return to School - New Padlets

We have brought together and developed resources and information about the transition back to school, which is for use before, during and after the transition. The link below provides a theoretical and practical roadmap of things to explore:

https://padlet.com/nies1/return_to_school

The new content covers:

- **DfE / NCC guidance** - this will be updated as new guidance is released
- **Staff Wellbeing / Planning as a team** - staff wellbeing and videos/ documents providing structure/ theory to the return to school process and a roadmap planning tool
- **Safety and Security / Explaining and Embedding the new normal** - materials to explain and establish new rules and routines
- **Transitions / Endings and New Beginnings** - including materials for those changing settings
- **Acknowledging experiences** - resources to encourage reflection on the experience and to highlight positives as well as negative experiences and personal development
- **Managing Emotions and building resilience** - Recognising and working with the range of emotions that young people and staff will be bringing back into school

The resources and information are for the whole school community. While there are some resources particularly designed for children with SEND and/ or ASD, many approaches designed for these young

people are likely to benefit a much wider section of the school population. There is generally heightened anxiety and a need for security and stability so, for example, all children and adults will benefit from knowing how school will be different before they return.

This is very much a work in progress, and we would like it to showcase resources and ideas that schools across Northumberland are using / planning. If you would like to share any of your practice on these padlets please email them across to Katinka.Bryan@Northumberland.gov.uk or iulia.udrescu-clarke@northumberland.gov.uk

Safe to Learn

This week's edition of the schools' safeguarding newsletter, Safe to learn, is available at:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Child-Families/Looked%20after%20children/Safe-to-Learn-Bulletin-Issue-37-15-05-20.pdf>

Northumberland County Council Press Release:

Technology helps to keep the music playing

The council's music service has launched a series of online resources for the county's young musicians.

Under normal circumstances Music Partnership North would deliver music lessons in schools across Northumberland, reaching 6500 pupils every week. Faced with school closures, innovative solutions were developed to support children's musical learning during lockdown, providing a replacement to the face to face lessons.

The team adapted quickly by changing its delivery model and music tutors have even begun one-to-one music lessons with pupils using video calls.

The online resources take the form of real-time video lessons on Google Meet and are delivered weekly to support children's learning and development.

Cllr Wayne Daley, deputy leader and cabinet member for children's services at Northumberland County Council said: *"Our music service is working very hard to support young people while they are unable to carry out face to face music lessons.*

"The team's incredible work has ensured that safeguarding measures are in place and that staff have the training and support needed to make these lessons a huge success.

"These online lessons will ensure music will continue to play during this difficult time."

Cath McEvoy-Carr, Executive Director of Adults and Children's Services, said: *"The initial response from parents has been very positive. It is great for children to get back to their musical activities after a few weeks without lessons.*

"We are also exploring future possibilities of using technology to reach more children. We may be able to take advantage of this technology to overcome some of the challenges of rural isolation and make sure that music lessons are more accessible to children right across the county."

Information on how to access music lessons can be found here:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Music-Service/Whats-on-in-the-Music-Partnership.aspx>