

Headteachers' Update

The Daily 5 O'Clock Update For Schools

School Closure

You may be interested to know that yesterday, Thursday, we passed 50,000 pupil attendances in our schools and settings during the nine week so-called 'closure' period. Your contribution to the national effort has been remarkable and so, yet again, on behalf of Northumberland County Council, I would like to say thank you.

Test and Trace

The Government announced on the 27th May 2020 that the new NHS Test and Trace service would launch across England from Thursday 28th May 2020. The updates from the DfE were included in yesterday's 5 O'Clock Update but the details are summarised below.

From Thursday, 28th May anyone who tests positive for coronavirus will be contacted within 24 hours by the NHS Test and Trace service via text, an email alert or a call and will be asked to share information about their recent interactions. This could include household members, people with whom they have been in direct contact, or within 2 metres for more than 15 minutes. They will be given instructions on how to share details of people they've been in close, recent contact with and places they have visited and will be asked to provide this information online via a secure website or over the phone with an NHS contact tracer.

Anyone identified to have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus will be alerted by the NHS Test and Trace service via text or email. They will then need to log on to the NHS Test and Trace website. If this isn't possible, a trained call handler will contact the identified person about what they need to do.

The Government also expanded testing availability for children aged under 5, to help support the phased opening of schools and childcare settings in England from 1 June. Also from the Thursday 28th May, all symptomatic individuals in England will be able to access a test if they need one

If those in isolation develop symptoms, they can book a test at nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119.

DfE Updates

Providing free school meals during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

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

****IMPORTANT** UPDATED GUIDANCE:** The information about providing meals for pupils attending school, the national voucher scheme and providing meals or food parcels through your food provider has been updated.

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

NOTE: The DfE have also confirmed, in an email to the NE Regional Education Group, that: *Costs of the national voucher scheme to provide free school meals for eligible pupils will continue to be met over the May half-term break.*

Recording attendance during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

What educational settings will need to do when recording attendance after the wider reopening of schools from 1 June 2020.

NEW AND UPDATED GUIDANCE: New guidance has been added and the existing guidance updated to reflect the changes in how attendance should be recorded following the reopening of some schools from 1 June. Removed the spreadsheet tool and video tutorial.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

PM press conference statement on the five tests: 28 May 2020

SPEECH THAT REFERENCED REOPENING SCHOOLS: Prime Minister Boris Johnson gave an update on progress against each of the five tests.

https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-press-conference-statement-on-the-five-tests-28-may-2020?utm_source=59ee60a2-5724-490e-8c92-1543f07fc6c8&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

The slides are available here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/888353/2020-05-28_COVID-19_Press_Conference_Slides.pdf

School exclusion

Statutory guidance on the exclusion of pupils from local-authority-maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units.

NEW ADDED GUIDANCE: Changes have been made to the guidance on school exclusions during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

Help children aged 2 to 4 to learn at home during coronavirus (COVID-19)

Advice for parents and carers of early years children who have not yet started school.

UPDATED GUIDANCE: This guidance has been updated to include information on mental health and wellbeing.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-children-aged-2-to-4-to-learn-at-home-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Safe to Learn – Latest Issue

Issue 39, dated 29th May, of Safe to Learn, the Northumberland Schools' Safeguarding Team weekly update, is available from:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Child-Families/Looked-after-children/Safe-to-Learn-Bulletin-Issue-39-29-05-20.pdf>

An Update from Northumbria Health Care Primary Mental Health Work Service (from Rhian Davies Senior PMHW Lead)

'We would like to remind all school staff of the continued support and advice available from our early intervention children's mental health team:

Firstly, we wish to acknowledge and normalise the 'understandable' levels of heightened anxiety and uncertainty at this unusual time. We also recognise how important it is for school staff, children, young people and their families/carers across Northumberland to have access to the right level of information and support to help manage this current situation.

In response to this, the PMHW service are currently working closely with our colleagues across education, children's social care and health to consider a collaborative public health response to the phased return to school. This will also involve a plan to identify those vulnerable children and young people who may require more targeted support and advice.

Currently the Early Help service is in the process of identifying the cases discussed in the emotional health triage meeting over recent months that were recommended for school pastoral support, which clearly not be available under the current circumstances. For these cases, if a current concern is raised in relation to emotional health and wellbeing for the child or young person, where there is consent from the family, they are being signposted to the most suitable source of support, be that school health, the PMHW service or CYPS.

We have suggested that families can be provided with the PMHW telephone consultation line to seek a consultation. If an assessment and intervention is indicated that will be agreed and subsequently offered. This is currently being offered using a range of digital solutions.

The PMHW service have also started to make direct contact with all schools across the County to offer a supportive call to all of the designated senior mental health leads to remind schools of our service offer and referral processes and to help to identify any emotionally vulnerable pupils who may require support. Our Educational Mental Health Practitioners will replicate this process in the trailblazer schools.

In the meantime, you can access the additional information on our support offers at:
<https://www.northumbria.nhs.uk/.../primary-mental-health-work>