

Headteachers' Update

The Daily 5 O'Clock Update For Schools

DfE Updates

Online education resources for home learning

Online educational resources for schools and parents to help children to learn at home during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

UPDATED GUIDANCE: The guidance on home learning has been updated with further resources and additional tips to help parents and carers with home education.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources?utm_source=e581791b-1ab6-4d87-849d-96dd902c749c&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

Coronavirus (COVID-19): keeping children safe online

Advice and guidance to help parents and carers to keep children safe online during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

UPDATED GUIDANCE: The DfE has provided new information on apps to help children stay safe online.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online>

DfE Statement on the £1bn Catch-Up Package (note the EEF guide link)

'The coronavirus outbreak has meant that all children and young people have missed out on time in education. We are rolling out a hugely ambitious £1 billion "catch-up" package to directly tackle the impact of lost teaching time. As plans continue for a full return from September, we have announced funding for the 2020/21 academic year:

- £650 million will be shared across state primary and secondary schools. The Education Endowment Foundation has also [published a guide](#) to help school leaders and staff decide how to use this funding to best support their pupils and their outcomes.
- A £350 million National Tutoring Programme will increase access to high-quality tuition for the most disadvantaged young people. This will help accelerate their academic progress and prevent the gap between them and their more affluent peers widening.'

DfE Statement on Current Class Sizes

'Yesterday (Tuesday), it was recommended that from 4 July 2020 people keep two metres away from others as a precaution or one metre when the risk can be mitigated by taking other precautions in the [staying safe outside your home](#) guidance. Over the coming weeks the Department for Education will publish further information and guidance to help schools prepare for a full return in September.

Primary schools should continue to operate in groups of no more than 15 and secondaries should not exceed 25% of Year 10 and Year 12 pupils in at any one time. The recent announcement will give more heads and teachers the confidence to maximise capacity within classrooms, ahead of all pupils returning from September. Primary pupils do not and have not needed to be kept apart in the classroom, and we are encouraging primary heads to use the capacity they have and the flexibility we have given them to bring more groups of children back into school, if they can work within the protective measures.'

COVID Summer Food Fund

NEW GUIDANCE: The DfE has issued new guidance for schools and local authorities on providing vouchers to support pupils eligible for free school meals over the summer holiday period during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-summer-food-fund>

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.

NEW INFORMATION: The DfE has added further information on the Covid Summer Food Fund, free meals in further education, the final ordering timescales for the national voucher scheme, and ordering vouchers in multiples of £5. There is also an update on school food contracts to include further guidance from the Cabinet Office on Procurement Policy Note 04/20.

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

Reception baseline assessment

Information about the development of an assessment for pupils in reception to measure their progress in primary schools.

UPDATED GUIDANCE: The DfE has updated the guidance to reflect the Reception baseline assessment changes due to Covid-19. An update from the Standards & Testing Agency states: *'Due to the challenging circumstances faced by schools in the context of the covid-19 pandemic, statutory introduction of the RBA has been postponed to Autumn 2021. Instead, schools have the opportunity to sign up to the RBA Early Adopter year.'*

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reception-baseline-assessment?fbclid=IwAR1Z19XH64jtpJ2teqLD9N9RVFxyTZ-QZ8eFI0hx47TnnadMk1J8h6c52gA>

Schools HR Update

The Schools HR Drop-In sessions continue to take place each Friday morning from 9.30-10.30 am.

Going forward, whilst the drop-ins will continue to provide the opportunity for general questions, a key focus over the coming weeks will be the 'return to work' in September. We know from talking to Head teachers that topical / most common queries appear to be about:

1. Changes to the 'Shielding' process which comes into effect from 1st August 2020 and what School leaders will need to do with their staff who are currently at home who fall into, either:
 - the Clinically Vulnerable group themselves or those who live with a family member who is Clinically Extremely Vulnerable as the current indicative guidance appears to be noting that this group of individuals will be able to return to work in September and there will be no expectation or provision for those individuals to continue to work from home.
 - for individuals who themselves are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable – again, the indicative guidance appears to be noting that they can return to work where stringent social distancing can be followed and where the workplace is COVID19 secure.
2. Individuals who are on sick leave or who were signed off as being fit to be at work during COVID-19.
3. Individuals who may be reluctant to return to work
4. Individuals who have some other reason/factor, which may mean they are unable to return to work in September.

We believe that a number of schools will begin to have conversations with their teams or individuals over the coming weeks in preparation for a September return where more children are expected to return to school. The drop-ins will provide generic advice in terms of planning and anything that schools may wish to include in those conversations based upon individual needs. For SLA schools, more specific advice can be provided outside of the meetings with the team.

Exceptional Costs associated with Covid-19

Further to the information we circulated in May, the ESFA have published further guidance and a claim form for schools and academies to claim exceptional costs relating to coronavirus (Covid-19). Further information is available [here](#).

The deadline for the submission of the online claim form is **21 July 2020** for eligible expenditure costs incurred at the time of submission. No extension to this claim window will be available although the ESFA state that further claims will be possible in a subsequent claim window in the Autumn.

A DfE sign-in account is required to make a claim. At this stage, Local Authorities are not able to submit claims on behalf of their maintained schools, so schools should prepare to submit their own claims and maintain evidence of any expenditure incurred. Academies should co-ordinate arrangements via their Trusts.

Schools are reminded that there are 3 agreed cost-categories:

- increased premises related costs of keeping schools open over school holiday periods, for vulnerable children and children of critical workers;
- support for free school meal (FSM) children who are not attending school, other than through the national voucher scheme;
- additional cleaning, over and above existing cleaning arrangements, where you have a suspected or confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19)

The [published guidance](#) has further details on each category.

If a school faces other extraordinary costs to deliver appropriate support to their pupils through this period that is not covered by this list and cannot be met by existing budgets, they have previously been advised to contact <mailto:DfE.CoronavirusHelpline@education.gov.uk> for further advice. There is the opportunity to include other exceptional costs not included in the above three categories, as "other costs" but these will be subject to further review and will delay the processing of any payment due.

The maximum amounts of funding available are between £25,000 and £75,000. Further details are available in the published guidance.

Schools are not eligible to make a claim against this fund if they expect to add to their existing historic surpluses in their current financial year (September 2019 to August 2020 for academies and April 2020 to March 2021 for maintained schools). This means that schools cannot claim if they began their current financial year with an accumulated historic surplus and expect to increase that surplus this year and thereby finish the year with a higher level of reserves than they started. Again further information is available in the [published guidance](#); schools are encouraged to review prior to the submission of any claim.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) for Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND): Free webinar on Tuesday 7th July 10.00 – 12.00

The Department for Education, and experts on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health education, are hosting a two-hour webinar covering key issues to support preparation for high quality RSHE.

The knowledge pupils will gain from RSHE will support their own, and others' wellbeing, and help them build positive and safe relationships. This will be particularly important in the coming months as pupils return to schools and start spending time with friends again.

This event is for teachers, teaching assistants, SENCOs and PSHE leads in local authorities to hear from experts who will share their experiences of getting it right in both mainstream and special schools.

Speakers include Ian Bauckham, DfE Education Adviser, the PSHE Association, the Sex Education Forum and Professor Barry Carpenter, professor of mental health in education from Oxford Brookes University.

This event is free to attend and open to more than one person from each school – please register here: <https://registration.livgroup.co.uk/rshesend/>