

# Headteachers' Update

## The Daily 5 O'Clock Update For Schools

### SUMMER HOLIDAY

I would like to thank you for all the time and trouble that you have taken to send such kind messages to me over the last few weeks. I have enjoyed working with you enormously and it will always be a source of pride for me that I have been both a headteacher and the Director of Education in a county that I chose to re-locate to nearly 30 years ago.

I wish each and every one of you the very best wishes and, as you know, I cannot thank you enough for your response to the crisis and for the care and consideration that you have given to all the children in Northumberland.

Have a good break – you deserve it.

### **Summer arrangements (1): 5 O'Clock Update**

We will continue to publish the 5 O'Clock Update throughout the six weeks of the summer holiday. From next week, it will be published twice a week on Tuesday and Friday evenings. We will review this after three weeks to decide whether to carry on publishing twice weekly or to reduce to once a week each Friday.

Just for your information, the 5 O'Clock Update you are now reading is the **80<sup>th</sup>** we have published! Thanks to all the contributors and thanks for reading it.

### **Summer arrangements (2): Locality Headteachers Meeting**

It was agreed yesterday at the Locality Headteachers Meeting that we would not hold any further meetings until the last week of the holiday. This meeting will be on **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> August at 11am**. Joining details will be circulated in that week's Update.

### **Summer arrangements (3): E&S Officer Availability**

Members of the Education & Skills Senior Management Team, including myself, will be available at various times, dependent upon leave, throughout the summer holiday. If you need to contact us, please feel free to do so. Please copy me in so that, if the colleague you need is unavailable, I can reallocate the call to someone else.

### **NCC Press Release today**

#### ***Praise given to Northumberland's schools***

Schools across Northumberland are being praised for their hard work and dedication over the past 17-weeks, through what can only be described as a 'crazy time.'

Over 10,000 children have been back in schools across the county, with every key worker who wanted a place for their child getting one since lockdown was announced on March 23.

Councillor Wayne Daley, Cabinet Member responsible for Children's Services said: "Our educational settings have been outstanding throughout this; they have continued to provide care for our children, aided in homeschooling, and supported our most vulnerable children and young people.

"Noone envisaged they would experience a time such as this, but our teachers and support staff have risen to a challenge like no other, and I speak on behalf of the Council when I say, I commend you!"

Northumberland's 122 first and primary schools, 14 middle schools, seven High schools, and nine Secondary Schools have remained open until the end of the 2019/20 school year.

Cath McEvoy-Carr, Executive Director for Adult and Children's Services said; "Our schools have all found their own ways to help children return to school whilst also following government guidelines. We know it has not been easy, and every school has faced their own challenges in ensuring a safe and secure environment, but it is through their commitment that children who needed to or could return to school were able to - so, thank you."

Schools are now closed for the summer holidays and will welcome all year groups back in September.

Should parents and carers be concerned about a return to school help and support is available. Access resources online at <https://padlet.com/nies1/parentcarerresources>.

### **Pupil Numbers**

The number of pupils in our schools and settings each day over the last few weeks has stabilised at between 9000 and 9,500, with a further 1200 children in pre-school provision. The percentage of the total cohort that is now back in school is well above the national average.

### **Offer of Support to Prevent Permanent Exclusions**

The main responsibility of the Inclusion Team is to manage and prevent permanent exclusions. We do envisage, however, that there will be several young people returning to school in September who may struggle to re-engage with education.

Colleagues within the Inclusion Team have a wealth of experience working with young people whose barriers to learning include:

- Emerging social, emotional and mental health issues
- Transition
- Disruptive behaviour that may result in exclusion
- Challenging family circumstances

The Inclusion Team can also support schools with signposting, implementing the graduated approach and preventing permanent exclusions.

If you feel that a young person would benefit from any inclusion support, please complete the attached google referral form. This form will go directly to Jenny Lee (Inclusion Team Leader), who will distribute the case to the relevant member of the team.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScjosSV E10oMUi0fVaZhMCb3PTdliXB00kRYhBmZUUoDq0z8A/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1>

### **Safe to Learn Edition 46 17<sup>th</sup> July**

This week's edition of Safe to Learn can be found at:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Child-Families/Looked%20after%20children/Safe-to-Learn-Bulletin-Issue-46-17-07-20.pdf>

### **DfE Updates**

#### ***Change in frequency of the coronavirus (COVID-19) email updates from Monday 20 July***

From Monday 20 July, the DfE will be reducing the frequency of email updates from every weekday, to one email per week which will be sent on a Monday for the duration of the summer holidays. The DfE plan to resume sending daily updates from Monday 24 August in preparation for the start of the autumn term.

#### ***UPDATED: School Governance update***

The Department for Education (DfE) has updated its guidance relating to governance in maintained schools and academy trusts in England.

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

#### ***Coronavirus (COVID-19): reducing burdens on educational and care settings***

The DfE has updated its list of data collections, services or requests which are due to continue - the full details are presented in the summary of changes.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-reducing-burdens-on-educational-and-care-settings>

### CYPS Trailblazer Wave 3

We are delighted to announce that Northumberland has been successful in the 20/21 bid of Wave 3 monies for the CYPS mental health support team (MHST) in schools trailblazer initiative, one of only four areas in the region to gain additional funding. This will allow us to build on the excellent work that has been developed and implemented across our existing trailblazer sites of Blyth and Hexham.

Unfortunately due to a reduced centralised budget, the financial envelope released for Wave 3 will only be sufficient for the development of one additional mental health support team (MHST) in Northumberland and not the three new areas we had hoped for.

Whilst disappointing we are still pleased to have gained some funding when not all areas have and will continue to look at expansion in to new areas via future funding waves.

Feedback on our current trailblazer and the expression of interest we submitted from NHS England was very positive and the panel have stated that they would welcome and be keen to support us in further expansion moving forward. In order to ensure that this additional resource is directed most appropriately, collaborative work with stakeholders across health, education and social care has taken place around analysis of need. This has included data around levels of deprivation, open referrals for early help and child and family assessments completed over the last year where mental health issues have been specifically flagged for the child, as well as intelligence and referral numbers in to our core mental health teams. On the basis of this intelligence, it has been agreed that the new mental health support team will be focused on the Ashington and Bedlington areas.

The work undertaken by the MHST provides C&YP with tools to develop healthy mental health habits. They teach young people to use a combination of self-help techniques, building self-esteem and resilience to overcome difficult challenges, now and in later life and offer guidance at an early stage to prevent problems escalating. The MHSTs work closely with all stakeholders across the Northumberland system including our primary

mental health workers, social services, voluntary sector, and secondary care services. The teams link into schools offering group work for CYP which includes:

- Understanding emotions
- Managing anger
- Falling in and out of friendships
- Managing school issues

The teams also offer whole school lesson plans which include:

- Assembly talks
- Resilience training
- Promotion of national health and wellbeing campaigns in conjunction with Public Health