

Headteachers' Update

The Daily 5 O'Clock Update For Schools

Update on School Transport September 2020

1. Dedicated School Transport

It will be largely a “business as usual” approach to school transport from the start of the new academic year but with some additional control measures in place to ensure safe travel for children. We have now received Government guidance specific to school transport and are busy updating the council's School Transport & Covid-19 Risk Assessment. Once it is signed-off by the Public Health team, it will be issued to all schools via the currently twice-weekly headteachers briefing mechanism.

2. Students using Public Transport

We are aware that issues with overcrowding on public transport are likely to occur on some corridors next month. The Government has recently announced additional funding that can be used to address issues of social distancing on public transport. We are awaiting details of the funding allocation for Northumberland but we have commenced dialogue with the bus companies to address. This remains work in progress though and we will need to understand the extent of the problems first before reacting to them.

3. School Transport Arrangements - Communicating Key Messages to Parents etc

The council's school transport webpage will be updated with FAQs with links to the home page and our Comms team will also assist in getting key messages out via the usual channels.

It is also the intention to send correspondence to parents outlining the measures we are putting in place in relation to the school transport service but also what we require of them and their children to ensure safe travel on board school buses and taxis.

We will also be briefing transport operators on the requirements as they relate to them.

4. Timescales

Clearly there is a pressing need to get all of this done urgently at what is always an extremely busy time for the school transport team. We are unable presently to give a specific date for when the updated risk assessment will be with you or when letters will be issued to parents but, suffice to say, they will be issued prior to the start of the new academic year and, hopefully, at the beginning of w/c 24 August.

5. Loading Lists

Usual arrangements will apply for sending details of updated “loading lists” to schools via the school admin email addresses. This will be done as late as possible to ensure they are as up to date as possible. Historically, we continue to receive significant numbers of applications for school transport throughout most of September.

6. Changes to School Opening Hours

The school transport team was informed of 51 schools changing their opening hours at the end of the last academic year. Of these, 39 are served through the provision of 117 home to school transport routes.

57 of these routes have been amended to take account of the revised opening hours of schools. This has been possible because they are effectively "stand alone" routes. The remainder has not been altered. The reason for this is that these routes have feeder connections with other routes that transport different cohorts of children to alternative schools. To alter them is far from a straightforward exercise and will require a fundamental review of the school transport network. This cannot be undertaken at the present time.

Northumberland Schools HR Briefing on School Staff Pay Awards for 2020

You will find the latest Schools HR Briefing – *School Staff Pay Awards 2020* – attached to this alongside this Update.

DfE Updates

DfE PRESS RELEASE: Response to the Secretary of State's announcement of 12 August 2020

Ofqual responds to the statement by the Secretary of State for Education about 2020 GCSE, AS and A level results.

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/response-to-the-secretary-of-states-announcement-of-12-august-2020?utm_source=f8086164-bd77-4af2-8494-24842349ef52&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

UPDATED GUIDANCE: Responsibility for autumn exams

A guide for schools and colleges on who should enter students for autumn exams. It also explains the support DfE is giving for sites, invigilators and exam fees.

The DfE has updated its guidance and has set out the support that it is providing for the autumn exams through the DfE Exam Support Service.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/responsibility-for-autumn-gcse-as-and-a-level-exam-series>

DFE PRESS RELEASE: Triple lock for students ahead of A level and GCSE results

The DfE has said that students could receive the higher result out of their calculated grade, valid mock grade, or autumn exam grade to bolster fairness

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/triple-lock-for-students-ahead-of-a-level-and-gcse-results>

NEW GUIDANCE: Awarding qualifications in summer 2020

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

The DfE has provided new guidance on the arrangements for the assessment and awarding of Vocational and Technical Qualifications and Other General Qualifications in 2020 to 2021 and has added a link to the General resources for Vocational Qualifications section.

In addition, the DfE has also provided guidance for teachers, students, parents and carers on the Summer 2020 grades for GCSE, AS and A level, Extended Project Qualification and Advanced Extension Award in maths.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2020?utm_source=198d7aa5-4509-469c-8d8e-9a19d856046a&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

UPDATED GUIDANCE: Student guide to post-16 qualification results: summer 2020

A guide for those receiving qualification results in England this summer.

The appeals process for GCSE, AS and A level section of the guide on page 11 has been updated and provides additional information. The BSL signed version of the guide has also been updated to reflect the same information.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/student-guide-to-post-16-qualification-results-summer-2020?utm_source=5bcfd872-cb41-4ff1-b42d-f0d4d2885d60&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

ANALYSIS: Awarding GCSE, AS & A levels in summer 2020: interim report

The DfE has published a report into the grading of GCSE, AS, A level, advanced extension awards and extended project qualifications in summer 2020.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-gcse-as-a-levels-in-summer-2020-interim-report?utm_source=a9b98d7d-a2af-480c-84d2-cf0aacce2c82&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

UPDATED: Induction for newly qualified teachers during the coronavirus outbreak

Guidance about changes to newly qualified teacher (NQT) induction during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

This has been updated to extend the period to 1 September 2021 during which NQT absences related to coronavirus (COVID-19) will not contribute towards the absence limit that would extend statutory induction.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-induction-for-newly-qualified-teachers?utm_source=a4cd5449-3ed8-41b8-bde8-c7af68070d98&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

UPDATED: Young carers and young adult carers: providing care during coronavirus

Guidance and information for people under the age of 25 who are providing care for someone during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The DfE has updated several sections of the guidance to reflect the most recent government advice. These sections are: 'shielding', 'if you have coronavirus symptoms' and 'wearing a face covering if you have to go out'. The DfE has also added two new sections: 'if transmission of coronavirus increases' and 'local restrictions'.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-carers-and-young-adult-carers-providing-care-during-coronavirus?utm_source=730e9e9c-1b2d-4900-bba1-01897957d27e&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

NEW GUIDANCE: Transport to school and other places of education: autumn term 2020

The DfE has produced new guidance as to what local authorities will need to do about transport during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak from the start of the autumn term.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020?utm_source=de9e20dc-895e-4cd3-baad-06e6b2575eb7&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

DfE NEWS: Ofsted to visit nurseries and childminders this autumn

Ofsted has announced that it will start carrying out visits to some nurseries and childminders from September 2020.

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofsted-to-visit-nurseries-and-childminders-this-autumn?utm_source=8da3e1c5-b21c-4d03-93fa-f8d885acddf2&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

UPDATED GUIDANCE: Education plans from September 2020

Guidance for education providers about Ofsted's phased return to inspection.

Ofsted has provided further details of early years interim visits and has added a link to a new early years' operational note.

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-plans-from-september-2020?utm_source=ad55a8d0-ca54-4ade-9fc1-86235d8d0999&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

NEWS: Ofsted's Autumn 2020 plans

Ofsted has announced its plans for visiting schools, further education and skills, early years and children's social care providers this autumn and has added guidance for early years providers about its interim visits, starting from September 2020.

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ofsteds-autumn-2020-plans?utm_source=c0f20f6d-0363-499d-805b-d9ff363de347&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

Public Health England Marketing Materials

I have been asked to forward to schools the link below to Public Health England Marketing. Public Health England is developing its public facing marketing campaigning and making resources available to order from:

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources>

Schools can register here and sign-up for email updates. Given what has taken place in the last six months and the forthcoming extended flu vaccination campaign, I thought that many schools would find the PHE materials useful.