

Headteachers' Update

For Schools and Academies

[Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#)

Page summary - What all schools will need to do during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak from the start of the autumn term.

Change made - Updated guidance to reflect the local restriction tiers.

[Exploring flexible working practice in schools](#)

Page summary - Findings from a four-stage survey of teachers and senior leaders exploring flexible working practice in schools.

Change made - Added final report, pilot school summaries report, research appendix, and the previously published literature review.

[Guidance for full opening: special schools and other specialist settings](#)

Page summary - What all special schools and other specialist settings will need to do during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak from the start of the autumn term to support the return of children and young people with special education needs and disability (SEND).

Change made - Guidance updated to address the lifting of the national restrictions from 2 December 2020. Amendments to key policy areas have been made to reflect the local restriction tiers.

[Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)

Page summary - What childcare services early years settings, childminders and local authorities need to provide during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Change made - Updated to address changes for the exit from National Restrictions on 2 December. New and updated guidance on managing safety in settings and staffing, 30 hour entitlements and information on business support. A full list of updates is included at the beginning of the guidance document.

[Protective measures for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings for children during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)

Page summary - Protective measures for providers of community activities, holiday or after-school clubs, tuition and other out-of-school settings offering provision to children during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Change made - Updated guidance in the following sections: home education; educational visits and trips; providers of music, dance and drama or sports provision; who can attend your out-of-school setting; and equality. Added guidance about social distancing. These updates apply from 2 December.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) contingency framework for education and childcare settings](#)

Page summary - How settings can prepare for restrictions to help contain community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Change made - First published.

[New funding to support schools and colleges during Covid pandemic](#)

Page summary - Covid workforce fund to support with costs of staff absences in schools and colleges.

Change made - First published.

[Guidance for parents and carers of children attending out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)

Page summary - Guidance for parents and carers of children attending community activities, holiday or after-school clubs, tuition and other out-of-school settings.

Change made - Updated sections on 'Children with health concerns' and 'Live performances of children's dance, music and drama'. Added section on 'Parent and child groups'.

[Transport to school and other places of education: 2020 to 2021 academic year](#)

Page summary - What local authorities will need to do during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak for the 2020 to 2021 academic year.

Change made - Updated guidance about the use of face coverings and about the workforce from 2 December. We have also renamed the guidance to reflect that it remains in use during the 2020 to 2021 academic year.

[What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)

Page summary - Information for parents and carers about going back to schools, nurseries and colleges in the autumn term.

Change made - Updated to reflect the local restrictions, including changes to the sections on shielding, face coverings, school and college trips and extra-curricular activities. We have also added information about performances in schools.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): reducing burdens on educational and care settings](#)

Page summary - List of data collections, services or requests which will be cancelled, paused or will continue.

Change made - Updated the current status of data collections and services.

[School governance update](#)

Page summary - Important news and communications from the Department for Education (DfE) relating to governance in maintained schools and academy trusts in England.

Change made - Added 'School governance update: December 2020'.

[Extra measures to support students ahead of next summer's exams](#)

Page summary - Students sitting exams and other assessments next year will benefit from a package of exceptional measures to improve fairness and prevent disruption.

Change made - First published.

LA Public Health Update

Thank you for all the hard work in managing your responses to the pandemic. We hope those of you who have received support from the Local Authority have found it helpful.

Please see below some guidance and common considerations which may be useful in supporting your decision making.

Close Contact Identification

When identifying close contacts to any positive case it is important to look back on the full 2 days prior to the day when the person became symptomatic. This means anyone starting to display symptoms on a Wednesday was potentially infectious on the Monday and Tuesday. Symptoms starting on a Sunday (even if 11pm at night) would indicate they will have had close contacts throughout Friday which will impact on school decisions.

Isolation Periods

The day a positive person becomes symptomatic is classed a day 0 of their isolation period, therefore their 10 days absence begins the following day. For any close contacts their day 0 is on the day they were potentially last exposed, and their self-isolation needs to cover the following 14 days.

Household Isolation Periods

Anyone who lives in the household of a positive case must self-isolate for 14 days, starting the day after the positive case started their symptoms.

The positive case must self-isolate for 10 days, starting the day after their symptoms started.

Household members of any close contact who is self-isolating do not need to self-isolate.

When a household is in self isolation if any other members of the household then start to develop symptoms, even if on Day 14 of the isolation period, the rest of the household DOES NOT have to restart the self-isolation period as they have completed their whole incubation period.

This is clarified in this guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Video to explain self isolation to pupils

Michelle from the Communications team has produced a video describing what self isolation means. It may be useful to share with those you need to send home.

The video can be viewed at https://youtu.be/Blxl477Nk_o. If any school wants the video to share on their channels directly please contact [Michelle Rose](#).

Model Covid19 School Risk Assessment - Update (version 4.4)

Following a revision of the [government guidance for schools](#) which was updated on 26 November, a review of the risk assessment has taken place. This takes into account the move from national restrictions to Tier 3 restrictions which come into force in Northumberland on Wednesday 2 December. The changes made have been highlighted in purple text and are also recorded in the table at the end of the document. Schools should review their own school specific risk assessment in light of these changes.

As always, the Corporate Health and Safety Team are available to discuss any specific queries you may have regarding Covid19 arrangements in place within your school. Please speak to a member of the team (Amanda Young, John Froud, Nigel Chopping or Bryony Smith) or email healthandsafety@northumberland.gov.uk.

First, Primary and Middle Schools - assessment update

DfE Press Release this morning - 3rd December 2020

Information for First, Primary and Middle schools - extract from the press release

For primary assessments, key stage 1 tests in English reading and mathematics, and the English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests at key stage 1 and 2 will be removed for one year, in recognition of the challenges posed by the pandemic.

Schools can take a flexible approach to the administration of the key stage 2 tests and phonics screening check, by extending the original timetable by a week, until 26 May and 25 June, respectively. Although primary performance data will not be published, teacher assessment in English reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 1, and all other assessments at key stage 2, will remain. These measures will help to understand pupils' lost time in education and support those that need it most, providing vital information to parents and assisting with pupils' transition to secondary schools.

Full press release here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/extra-measures-to-support-students-ahead-of-next-summ-exams>

New Funding to Support Schools and Colleges during Covid pandemic

On Friday 30 November Gavin Williamson announced a Covid workforce fund, to support schools with the costs of staff absences, exacerbated during the current Covid pandemic. A link to the article is provided [HERE](#).

Further guidance is to be announced "shortly" but the following conditions were highlighted in the article:

Financial: Schools will first need to use any existing financial reserves, as we would typically expect when facing unforeseen costs. They will be eligible for this additional funding once they have used these down to a level at 4% of the annual income. Colleges' eligibility will be based on their cash position set out in the November financial return.

Absence rates: Mainstream schools and colleges must be experiencing a short-term teacher absence rate at or above 20%, and/or a lower long-term teacher absence rate at or above 10% - costs can only be claimed when incurred above this rate.

Absence rates: Special schools and Alternative Provision schools must be experiencing a short-term teacher absence rate at or above 15%, and/or a lower long-term teacher absence rate at or above 10%, to be eligible - costs can only be claimed when incurred above this rate

The article indicates the eligible period will be from 01 November to the Christmas holidays, but Schools are recommended to record details of all absences and related costs incurred for the Autumn term, until further information is made available.

National Funding Formula and Schools Funding Consultation 2021/22

As highlighted in last week's Ecourier, Northumberland County Council is currently consulting with Schools on its proposals for transition to the National Funding Formula and Schools Block Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for the financial year commencing April 2021, following the agreement of the Schools Forum on Wednesday 18 November 2020 to its proposals. Full details of the consultation are available at the - [Northumberland School Funding Consultation 2021-22](#)

The deadline for responses is 12.00 noon on Monday 14 December. Further information and a link to the Schools Forum website is provided in the consultation but if you have any queries please contact Bruce Parvin, Education and Skills Business Manager via bruce.parvin@northumberland.gov.uk.