

Department for Education

This is your daily email to keep you updated on the government's response to coronavirus (COVID-19).

## **Guidance on the induction of newly qualified teachers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak**

We have published guidance on the induction of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. We recognise that the current situation will impact on the number of absences newly qualified teachers take this academic year.

We will be making regulatory changes that, subject to parliamentary agreement, will mean that NQTs absent for reasons related to coronavirus (COVID-19) will not have their induction period automatically extended.

Details of the regulatory changes being made, and a series of frequently asked questions, can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-induction-for-newly-qualified-teachers>

## **Updated guidance on early years and childcare closures**

We have updated our guidance on early years and childcare closures for local authorities, early years settings and childminders. This update provides clarification on the income support available and the requirements for providing safe, quality care for vulnerable

and critical workers' children.

The guidance can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures>

## **Update on national voucher scheme for schools providing free school meals**

On Tuesday 31 March, we announced that schools can provide children eligible for benefits-related free school meals with a weekly shopping voucher worth £15 while schools are closed due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Schools can continue to provide meals for collection or delivery themselves, but where this is not possible, the scheme will allow schools to provide vouchers to families electronically, or as a gift card for those without internet access.

If schools have not received their activation email from the Department for Education's supplier, Edenred, they should check their 'junk' folders before contacting the DfE helpline on 0800 046 8687.

Once verified, schools will receive an activation email containing a step-by-step user guide to ordering vouchers.

Full details of this scheme can be found here:

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

## **Reminder to submit the daily online attendance return to the Department for Education**

Settings should continue to submit their daily online attendance form throughout the Easter holidays. Your data helps us build a national picture of educational provision so that we can focus support more effectively, monitor the impact of the virus, and ensure children are safe.

The online form can be found at:

- <https://form.education.gov.uk/service/educational-setting-status>

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The information below has not changed since yesterday.

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## **Collection of guidance for educational settings on GOV.UK**

All of the Department for Education's coronavirus guidance for educational settings can now be found in one place on GOV.UK at:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>

Our main guidance for schools, the 'school closures guidance', will be regularly kept up-to-date. Any new advice for schools on specific issues, such as food, exams or safeguarding, will be linked from it:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures>

## **Handwashing advice**

The most important thing individuals can do to protect themselves is

to wash their hands more often, for at least 20 seconds, with soap and water. Public Health England recommends that in addition to handwashing before eating, and after coughing and sneezing, everyone should also wash hands after using toilets and whenever you return home.

The latest guidance and video on hand washing can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

## **Department for Education coronavirus helpline**

The Department for Education coronavirus helpline is available to answer questions about COVID-19 relating to education and children's social care. Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday), 10am to 4pm (Saturday to Sunday)

If you work in a school, please have your unique reference number (URN or UKPRN) available when calling the hotline.