

Department for Education

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

## **Secretary of State for Education writes to education providers about vulnerable children and young people**

The Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, has sent a letter to all education providers sharing his gratitude for your support in caring for our most vulnerable children and young people. This letter places special emphasis on your continued efforts to ensure as many of these children and young people are supported to attend an education setting where it is in their best interests to do so.

This letter can be found here:

· <https://twitter.com/GavinWilliamson/status/1253421199775817729>

## **Further support for schools and colleges on online learning**

Today we have written to local authorities, academy trusts and other responsible bodies overseeing schools, colleges and children's social care outlining the process for ordering devices for vulnerable and disadvantaged young people.

We have updated our guidance for school and colleges on how to order internet access and digital devices and access support to provide remote education during the coronavirus (COVID-19)

outbreak.

The guidance can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

## **Safeguarding and security considerations for video conferencing in education**

Whilst there is no expectation for teachers to stream or provide recorded videos, many schools, colleges and universities are using video conferencing platforms to provide remote education. It is important for educational settings to ensure that they are making use of the security features and filters on any service they choose to use. You should refer to the service providers' official support site which will assist in setting the right security features and filters.

We also recommend reviewing the guidance from the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) for organisations and individuals using video conferencing services securely:

- <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/video-conferencing-services-using-them-securely>

For business managers and IT staff considering which service to choose, you can refer to guidance from NCSC on considerations around video conferencing here:

- <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/video-conferencing-services-security-guidance-organisations>

We have published guidance to help education settings to follow safeguarding procedures when teaching remotely during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The guidance can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>

## **16 to 19 providers with an allocation for free meals in further education are now able to apply to the national voucher scheme**

Earlier this month, the Department for Education confirmed details of a national voucher scheme for schools to provide vouchers to families eligible for free school meals. Schools with 16 – 19 pupils are already included in this scheme. Other 16 – 19 providers with an allocation for free meals will now be able to apply to the national voucher scheme, with the value of the vouchers being claimed back via Free Meals in FE/ 16 – 19 Discretionary Bursary allocations.

Should you wish to access the voucher scheme, providers will need to submit a business case to the ESFA. You will also need to submit a business case if you need to apply for additional funding to cover support for student meal costs that you cannot service from your existing Free Meals in FE or 16 – 19 Discretionary Bursary allocations.

Full details can be found here:

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

## **Updated guidance on maintaining further education provision**

We have updated our guidance for further education providers on maintaining education and skills training provision. This guidance now includes more information on vulnerable young people, industry placement through the Capacity and Delivery Fund and support for

young people unable to access remote education.

The guidance can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-further-education-provision>

## **Updated guidance on apprenticeship programme**

We have updated our guidance on apprenticeships and the response to coronavirus (COVID-19). This guidance now includes information on end-point assessment flexibilities, qualification certificates, and functional skill requirements.

The guidance can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-apprenticeship-programme-response>

## **Guidance on managing school premises during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak**

We have published guidance on managing school premises which are partially open during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. This guidance explains what educational settings need to do to make sure children and staff are kept safe during reduced occupancy arrangements.

In all educational settings, a member of staff should be identified with responsibility for managing premises. In the case of staff illness, cover arrangements should be put in place as soon as possible.

This guidance can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-school-premises-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

## **Updated guidance for parents and carers on the closure of educational settings**

The guidance for parents and carers on the closure of educational settings has been updated with additional information on the resources available to parents to help them educate their children at home, eligibility for device and connectivity at home, and keeping children safe online.

The guidance can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

## **Guidance on provision through cluster and hub models**

Guidance for educational settings considering, or already operating, a cluster or hub model has been published outlining the considerations which should be made.

The guidance can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/using-clusters-and-hubs-to-maintain-educational-provision>

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The information below has not changed since yesterday.

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**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 and Sunday

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

## Handwashing advice

It is essential that everyone washes their hands more often, using soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand washing with soap employs mechanical action that loosens bacteria and viruses from the skin, rinsing them into the drain. Drying hands afterwards makes the skin less hospitable to the virus. Hand sanitiser can be effective if soap is not available or the situation makes using soap less feasible (i.e. when outside) but using hand sanitiser provides none of the virus-destroying friction that rubbing your hands together and rinsing with water provides.

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

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

The e-Bug project is led by Public Health England and has a dedicated webpage for learning resources on hand washing and respiratory hygiene.

Resources are currently available for KS1, KS2 and KS3 and can be used in various settings including schools and at home:

- <https://e->

[bug.eu/](http://bug.eu/)

## **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>