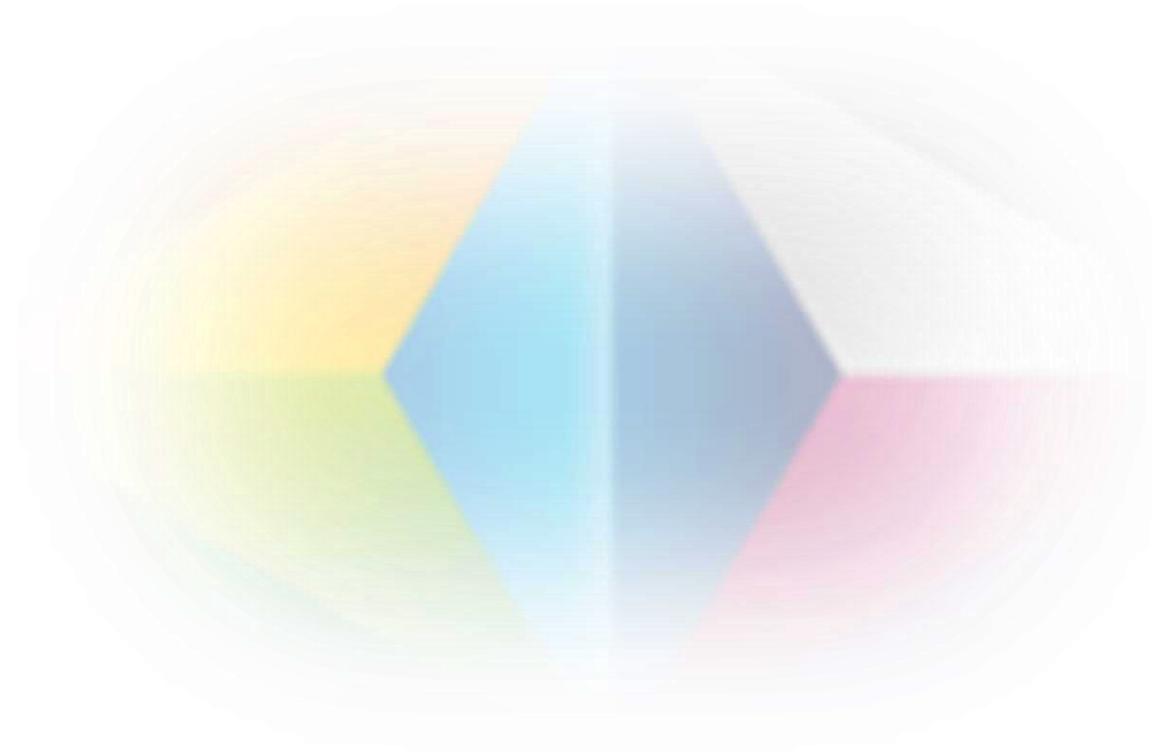


# Weekly update

W/B 11-1-21

## 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021



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## News just in...

- *Good morning all, we are sending out a briefing today as well as Friday this week as there is a lot going on. Don't forget to sign up for a briefing to keep receiving these. You have done an incredible job in managing your schools through this period of disruption and ongoing last minute changes. If you have any questions please get in touch. Look after yourselves. I hope you are all well, you know where I am if I can be of any help. AP*
- It is being reported that the campaign to have parents 'complain' positively about how wonderful their school's remote education is to Ofsted has passed 10,000 emails. Ofsted are concerned that genuine complaints may take longer to address.

## School meals

- On the 8<sup>th</sup> January, the DfE updated its [guidance](#) on providing school meals during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.
- This makes clear that, for pupils **in school**, meals should be available free of charge to:
  - all infant pupils;
  - pupils who meet the benefits-related free school meals eligibility criteria.
- Schools should still provide support for children eligible for benefits-related free school meals **who are at home** during term time.
- Schools can work with caterers to provide food parcels. (*The voucher scheme opens on Monday, see below. AP*)

## School meals

- If schools decide to provide food parcels then they will be able to claim additional funding of **£3.50 per week** for each eligible pupil receiving food parcel provision at home.
- There is advice on what should be in them [here](#).
- Schools can also use local voucher schemes and can claim to be reimbursed up to **£15** per eligible FSM pupil per week.
- Any food parcel or local voucher scheme costs incurred by schools until the national voucher scheme is open will be reimbursed:
  - ‘Schools should be **assured** that valid claims for costs will be met in full.’
- The guidance then references other press releases in terms of support for families: the Holiday Activities and Food programme, and the Covid Winter [Grant Scheme](#).

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## National voucher scheme (FSM)

- On the 13<sup>th</sup> January, the DfE updated their [guidance](#) on providing school meals during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.
- The national voucher scheme will commence from the **18<sup>th</sup> January**.
- Schools should receive an email by 14<sup>th</sup> January advising how to reset passwords or activate an account for the first time. Schools can then:
  - order a single voucher to cover multiple weeks, for example, a £30 voucher to cover one eligible child over 2 weeks;
  - order a single voucher to cover more than one eligible child within the same household, for example, £60 to support 2 eligible children over 2 weeks;
  - set a weekly £15 rolling voucher, up to the week commencing 8<sup>th</sup> February.

## National voucher scheme (FSM)

- Schools are advised to submit one spreadsheet to order eCodes for all eligible families to speed up processing.
- Once the voucher value is confirmed schools can:
  - send an eCode directly to the parent or carers of the pupils(s) eligible for free school meals - they will need to choose an eGift card from a range of supermarkets;
  - select an eGift card on the parent or carer's behalf, and print and post the eGift card to them;
  - select an eGift card on the parent or carer's behalf, print the eGift card and arrange for families to collect it or deliver it to them in person.
- The Edenred system can send redemption codes directly to parents. It will monitor where emails have not been successfully delivered.

## National voucher scheme (FSM)

- Alternatively, schools can choose a supermarket on a families behalf and post egift cards if families do not have email addresses.
- The supermarkets available are Aldi, Iceland, McColl's, Morrisons, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda, Waitrose, M&S, Company Shop Group.
- Schools are still able to purchase vouchers from other supermarkets and [claim back](#) the costs.
- As before, families can redeem vouchers by presenting it on a smartphone, tablet or on paper.
- Interestingly, the paragraph which 'strongly encouraged' schools to work with their catering team and said this is the approach which '**should be** taken' has been changed to 'schools **may consider** working with their school catering team'.

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# Remote education

- On the 11<sup>th</sup> January, Ofsted [published](#) 'What's working well in remote education'.
- We will cover this in detail in our main briefing, but some immediate messages are:
  - the curriculum should be sequenced and remote learning is a **method** of delivery;
  - live lessons **are not** the gold standard, sometimes externally produced lesson explanations are more effective; (*Ofsted are saying this clearly. AP*)
  - focus on the basics, keep it simple;
  - feedback and retrieval practice are more important than ever.

# Remote education template

- On the 11<sup>th</sup> January, the DfE updated their [guidance](#) - providing remote education information to parents: template.
- This is the DfE template designed to help schools to explain their remote education offer. This template is **not mandatory**.
- Schools should publish information about their remote education provision on their websites by **25<sup>th</sup> January** 2021.
- This template has not changed significantly, it now reflects (and has links to) the [updated expectations](#) for remote education.

## Review remote education

- On the 12<sup>th</sup> January, the DfE published a [framework](#) to help schools to review their remote education provision.
- This is a word document which forms an audit to identify strengths and areas for improvement in remote education provision.
- This framework is ‘not intended as a compliance or accountability tool. It is **not statutory**, and you can adapt it to fit your school context’. (*and it’s late, after the horse has bolted, and is 28 pgs. long! AP*)
- It allows you to score your performance in areas such as leadership; remote education context and pupil engagement; curriculum planning and delivery; capacity and capability, communication, and safeguarding and wellbeing.

# Review remote education

- It is detailed but the DfE state it could be completed as a senior leadership group activity in about an hour. (!)
- An example of the scoring is below. The guidance then links to DfE advice if schools have scored themselves as a 1 or 2 in any aspect.

## Remote education context and pupil engagement

The school understands the remote education context of pupils, and plans its provision to ensure pupils can remain engaged in education.

### Scoring

1. Identify	2. Develop and plan	3. Implement	4. Embed	5. Sustain
Not yet in place or there are major gaps.	Identified gaps but a plan is being developed to address them.	In the process of implementing systems and practices to address this.	Practices and systems are in place with minor gaps.	Practices and systems are fully embedded, and there are examples of best practice.

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## Review remote education

- It is worth noting that this audit does not specify a preferred style of remote learning. It talks about a well sequenced curriculum for pupils in class or at home and states:
  - ‘This could include a remote curriculum that is **identical** to the one taught in class, one that is **similar** but adapted or one that is **completely different**.’
  - ‘..it should include recorded **or** live, direct teaching time from the school or other educational providers (such Oak National Academy), and time given for pupils to complete tasks and assignments independently’.
  - ‘Pupils are given regular opportunities to attend and participate in shared, interactive lessons and activities to maintain a sense of community and belonging, especially disadvantaged and SEND pupils.’

# Laptops

- All primary schools are now being invited to apply for their full allocation laptops. (*Be aware that this should be at least back to what you were initially offered. Complain if it isn't. AP*)
- If you have not had an email inviting you, sign in to the [get help with technology](#) service and place your order.
- The DfE have [announced](#) a further 300,000 devices for school.
- Details on how to order these will be published '**soon**'.

# Educational settings form

- The DfE are requesting that, from this week, school resume filling in the [educational settings status form](#).
- They have updated the questions. In particular, they want to know how many children of critical workers do not have a place and ask schools to 'provide a reason for those children of critical workers not provided a place'.
- The time for submitting the form is now **2:00pm**.
- Schools that are fully closed still need to submit the form everyday to let the DfE know

## Zero rating for some education sites

- On Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January, telecoms companies said they could not 'zero rate' education websites.
- It was hoped that mobile telecoms providers – EE, O2, Vodafone and Three would allow access to educational sites to be free in terms of data.
- This is not possible for many sites because of technical issues relating to when content is hosted from external sources such as YouTube, which is often the case.
- However, the Oak National Academy **will be zero rated** as its content is now in one single domain.

## Zero rating for some education sites

- Families accessing resources and lessons from Oak National academy on mobile phones will now not use any of their data allowance.
- BBC Bitesize content will be free for EE, BT Mobile, and Plusnet Mobile [users](#), allowing them to watch content **from the end of January** without using up their data allowance.
- EE, O2, Vodafone and Three have also signed up to the [get help with technology](#) scheme which could increase data allowances on mobile phones for parents of disadvantaged children.

# Face coverings

- On the 8<sup>th</sup> January, the DfE updated its [guidance](#) on Face coverings in education.
- During national lockdown, in education settings where **year 7 and above are educated**, face coverings should be worn by adults (staff and visitors) and pupils when moving around indoors, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain.
- As in the general approach, it will not usually be necessary to wear face coverings in the classroom, where protective measures already mean the risks are lower, and they may inhibit teaching and learning.

## Face coverings

- In primary schools where social distancing is not possible in indoor areas outside of classrooms between members of staff or visitors (for example, in staffrooms), **head teachers will have the discretion** to decide whether to ask staff or visitors to wear, or agree to them wearing face coverings in these circumstances.
- Children in primary school do not need to wear a face covering.

## Holiday or after schools clubs

- On the 8<sup>th</sup> January, the DfE updated their [guidance](#) for protective measures for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings.
- This guidance is not for schools but you may need to refer outside providers to it.
- It is mostly in line with what schools are asked to do, with the exception of [group sizes](#):
  - In the event that children are not in the same bubbles as they are in school, providers should seek to keep children in small, consistent groups of **no more than 15 children** with the same children each time, as far as this is possible (do not mix groups unless absolutely necessary).

# Critical workers

- On Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January at around 5pm, the DfE updated its [guidance](#) on the children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings.
- This now states clearly that:
  - Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school or college if required, **but parents and carers should keep their children at home if they can.**
- This is more of a general request to parents as the [guidance](#) on restricting attendance during the national lockdown also stated this but goes on to say:
  - there is no limit to numbers of these pupils who may attend and schools should not limit attendance of these groups.

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## Ofsted monitoring visits

- Ofsted's [guidance](#) called Ofsted: coronavirus (COVID-19) rolling update has already been updated twice this week. It **currently** states:
- **Remote** (*not face to face*) **inspections** of schools will begin from 25<sup>th</sup> January (*was 18<sup>th</sup>*), with a **particular focus** on how well children and learners are being educated remotely.
- They will inspect schools rated 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' as planned, but they **will also** follow up on complaints raised by parents across all grades of school in order to resolve issues.
- The **details** of the inspection process will be published 'shortly'.

## Ofsted monitoring visits

- Ofsted will continue to undertake on-site inspections if there are immediate concerns about safeguarding, the leadership of a school or a failure to provide education to children
- Remote inspections will continue until February half term.
- Routine graded inspections will resume in the **summer term** of 2021.
- Joint interim visits, with the Care Quality Commission, for special educational needs and disabilities resume in January. These will not result in a published grade.

## Pregnant employees

- On the 11<sup>th</sup> January, HM Government, HSE, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the Royal college of Midwives updated their [joint advice](#).
- Women less than 28 weeks pregnant with no underlying health conditions should only continue working if the risk assessment advises that it is safe to do so.
- For pregnant women who are **28 weeks pregnant and beyond** or with underlying health conditions, all employers should consider both how to redeploy these staff and how to maximise the potential for homeworking, wherever possible.
- Where adjustments to the work environment and role are not possible (e.g. manufacturing/retail industries) and alternative work cannot be found, these staff should be suspended on paid leave.

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# Attendance

- On the 12<sup>th</sup> January, the government site ‘explore education statistics’ [published](#) the attendance for up to **4<sup>th</sup> January**. (Excluding out of term dates) On that day:
  - 98.5% of state-funded schools were open; ↓
  - **61% of secondary schools** and 20% of primary schools had one or more pupils self-isolating;
  - DfE estimate **19-21%** of schools had more than 30 pupils self-isolating;
  - **79.2%** of pupils on roll in state-funded schools were in attendance; (Primary 86%, Secondary 72%); ↓
  - Approximately 75% of all pupils with an EHCP on roll in all state-funded schools were in attendance; ↓
  - The number of pupils now self-isolating is between 9-11%, this approximately 872,000 pupils. ↑

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# Attendance statistics by type of school

- Attendance on 4<sup>th</sup> January (final column):

Setting type	% response rate	% open [12]	% attendance [13]
State-funded primary	78%	98.7%	86%
State-funded secondary	76%	97.9%	72%
State-funded special	77%	97%	73%
State-funded alternative provision	66%	97%	50%
<i>All state-funded schools</i>	77%	98.5%	79%
Independent schools	29%	91%	64%

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# Attendance

- There is no attendance data for the 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> of January.
- The DfE have restarted the data collection this week (w/c 11<sup>th</sup> January.)
- The next published attendance data will be on 19<sup>th</sup> January.

# Governor and Trustee briefings



The dates for this term's governor briefings and briefings for the summer term are now on our [website](#).

These ensure that governors and trustees hear the latest about:

- DfE announcements and advice;
- EFSA updates;
- funding;
- leadership;
- inspection updates.

Spring term: Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March or Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> March - ZOOM Webinar

Summer term: Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> July or Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> July - ZOOM Webinar

Briefings start at 5:00pm and cost £70 (+VAT)

- Contact [Tracy](#) to reserve a place.

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# Briefings 2021



- The dates for this term's briefings and briefings for the summer term are now on our [website](#).
- If you sign up for this term's briefing you will receive:
  - a weekly update containing the most immediate or actionable information;
  - bespoke support via email or telephone within 24hrs;
  - email updates on resources or specific single issues;
  - a place on the full briefing for this term.
- **New this year**, on the 8<sup>th</sup> March, a briefing specifically for secondary schools without the primary sector information.
- Contact [Tracy](#) to book your place.

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