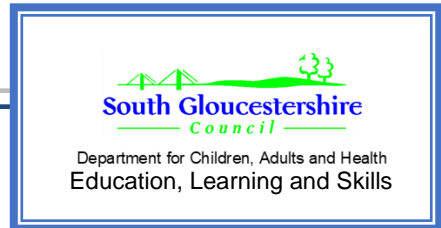


COVID-19 Education Continuity Newsletter



Issue 15: 28th May 2020

Public Health England now has updated the guidance on COVID-19 for educational settings [here](#) Keep checking daily.

Preparing for Vulnerable Children Returning to School

School leaders have worked tirelessly to plan for more children coming back into schools. Headteachers and school leaders have done a fantastic job to keep children and education at the centre of all you do. We have highlighted a number of resources below that you may find useful in supporting children back into school, as featured in the SENCO newsletter.

Supporting post-lockdown education using the 6 principles of Nurture

Now that schools are planning for the return of children this is just a reminder about using the 6 principles of Nurture to support a child's transition back to school from Dr Chris More's blog EP Insight. He highlights some key aspects to consider. One aspect related to the classroom offering a secure base. Schools are setting up classrooms for children's return.

- He suggests use of a social story,
- Creating structure and predictability through visual timetable and scheduling,
- Creating a sense of belonging through decorating a wall with photographs of child and key staff in each classroom,
- Creating areas of the classroom or "nooks" which can be used for relaxation and calming sensory input.

He suggests considering nurture for wellbeing and self-esteem through:

- Asking parents to share photos and videos of what children have been doing at home
- Finding ways to provide choice and control in a task
- Scheduling time in the new school day for special interests and preferred activities to help children feel competent and successful.

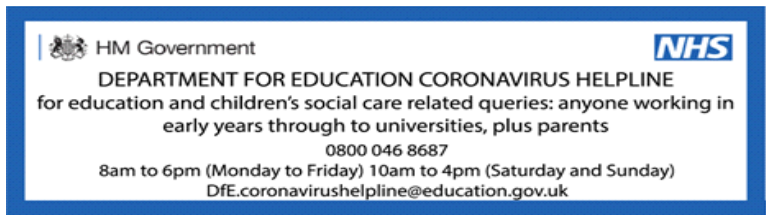
Social distancing visuals

Support children's understanding of what they can and can't do under the social distancing rules

<https://twitter.com/SchoolsNlc>

COVID-19 Risk Assessments (Maintained Schools)

We appreciate the time that school/setting leaders have given to the development of their risk assessments to support the reopening phase for schools and settings. We want to reaffirm the importance of reviewing these on a regular basis, in particular in light of any changes that are made to the offer, including the graduated addition of year groups. In the review process, please ensure advice is sought from your health and safety advisors, alongside on-going dialogue with your staff team. Governors should also be kept informed and be cited on any changes that are made. The date and time of updates to the risk assessments must be recorded. We would expect risk assessments to be reviewed at least weekly. Attached to this newsletter are some templates that you may find useful.



Reporting COVID Related and other Critical Incidents to the LA

Education Learning and Skills (ELS) team must be contacted in any single case of COVID-19 and in the event of any other critical incident, or incident related to a school/setting closure. In the case of a single case of COVID-19 only, we ask that the school/setting do not put out any communication to parents/carers until the central team of ELS have been consulted, in addition the school/setting should not be closed without a consultation with the ELS Department. ELS will inform the Strategic Communications Department of the Council and Public Health England colleagues who will also be able to provide support as appropriate. In non-COVID related incidents, unless they are critical, the school/setting does not need to consult ELS before informing parents/carers. In terms of critical incidents we would see these as matter pertaining to safeguarding or lockdown. Non-critical incidents include closure due to flooding, snow, heating failure etc. **The attached flowcharts provides further detail of what to do if your school has suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 and who to contact.**

Public Health England (PHE) ask that schools and other settings inform their local PHE Health Protection Team (HPT) and Education, Learning and Skills if they notice **2 or more people (pupils or staff)** with possible COVID-19 symptoms occurring within 14 days which may be linked in time or place, as they may have an outbreak. All suspected outbreaks of COVID-19 or any other infection should be notified to the PHE South West Health Protection Team.

0300 303 8162 Option 1 Option 1 swhpt@phe.gov.uk

Year 6 Transition Mini-Survey

As part of the South Gloucestershire transition package -Every Child's Right to a Safe Passage - the Local Authority have commissioned Foster & Brown Research Ltd., who operate the very successful Online Pupil Survey (OPS), to develop a short pupil focused questionnaire **specifically for Year 6 pupils**. This will focus on transition to secondary school and provide the opportunity for year 6 pupils to say how they are feeling about this time in their life. The aim is that secondary schools will have a clear sense of the different wellbeing needs of their new year 7 pupils, in order to better support the transition process. This is an exciting piece of work that we are developing in these unprecedented times, and if successful, we will make this an annual commitment for any child in year 6 to be able to take part in. This is not intended to replace the larger scale OPS-Home Edition2020 that you may have signed up to take part in, but rather to complement it. It's much shorter and can still be done at home, or in class if your year 6 are returning on or after 1 June. All Primary schools will be sent an individual email with logging in details for their year 6 pupils to use. We hope you can see the benefit of this in supporting the transition process.

To have a look at this short survey please use the test details below – please do not use this with the children – your details will be sent in a separate email by Sarah Godsell with the subject: Year 6 Transition Mini-Survey.

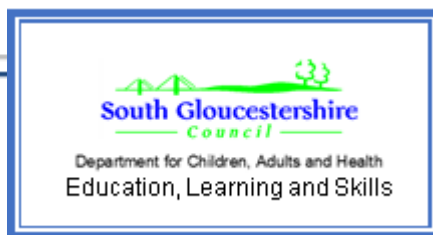
<https://sgl2020move.fabsurveys.co.uk/Account/Login>

User ID: testprimary

Password: r4c2?sy7p

School Reports for Pupils

The government have published guidance for Headteachers on writing status reports for parents/carers. The full guidance can be read [here](#).



The guidance provides information on what schools must report and changes to reporting due to COVID-19. Pupil attendance data for 2019-20 will not be reported. Following the cancellation of national curriculum tests at KS1 and KS2, it will not be possible to include pupil outcomes of tests or teacher assessments in this year's reports.

Following the cancellation of GCSE and A Level exams, students will be awarded a calculated grade which reflects their work. The grade will be based on the best available evidence, including any non-exam assessment that students have already undertaken.

Schools will have their own approach to reporting to parents/carers annually. Leaders will take a proportionate approach on what information they will include this year. It is likely that schools will also consider reporting on home learning, and providing additional detail for example, when children have continued to attend school during the pandemic.

Reports must contain detail of how parents/carers can arrange a discussion about their child's report with their child's class teacher, however leaders will want to consider the most appropriate way to do this (possibly virtually/via telephone) based on staffing levels and reopening demands. Leaders may wish to delay these discussions and commit to providing details of how parents/carers can discuss the report at a future date.

Testing for Under Fives

Why could Under 5s not be tested up until now?

It was necessary to review and validate the existing supply of testing swabs in order to ensure that they could be clinically approved for the testing over Under-5s. This has now been complete and the extension of eligibility is now appropriate.

Aren't the testing swabs used for adults unsafe for Under-5s? We have followed updated clinical guidance throughout on the suitability of testing swabs for use on children under the age of 5. This is being supplemented by updated instructions for parents and guardians of those under 5.

Why are Scotland and Wales not able to test Under5s: Testing eligibility is the responsibility of each individual Devolved Administration.

Will it hurt/cause them harm?

It is possible that children may experience some mild discomfort, but it should not hurt.

Who carries out the test? Children under 5 must have the test performed by a parent or guardian.

How do I book a test for my under 5 child? You can ask for a test online at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

We'll ask you:

how you want to get the test – you may be able to choose between driving to a regional testing site or getting a home test kit

for details such as your name, mobile phone number and address

The Coronavirus Testing Call Centre is available to assist eligible individuals through the process of booking and taking a test for Coronavirus. The Call Centre handles all enquiries about the testing process, from how someone books an appointment, to what they do upon receipt of their result.

The Coronavirus Testing Call Centre can be contacted on 119 (in England and Wales) and 0300 303 2713 (in Scotland and Northern Ireland) between the hours of 7am – 11pm.

The service can be accessed by people with hearing or speech difficulties by calling 18001 119 (in England and Wales) or 18001 0300 303 2713 (in Scotland and Northern Ireland).

How will their results be shared?

When a child takes a test, their parent/guardian will be told how results will be passed to them. This may be by email or by text or both. We are aiming to return results within 48 hours of tests taken at regional test sites and 72 hours for home tests.

FUTURE BRIGHT – COVID-19 UPDATE – Additional Support available

Future Bright is a completely FREE career support service for residents of South Gloucestershire, Bristol and Bath & Northeast Somerset. In these uncertain times where the Covid-19 virus is causing so much anxiety to people's lives, especially in relation to jobs and training, Future Bright can offer the support of career progression coaches, advice and signposting, plus some financial support towards training or other work related costs.

Future Bright is open to local residents who are:-

- Aged 19 or over and living in the West of England - Bristol, South Gloucestershire or Bath and North East Somerset
- Currently in paid work (part-time, full-time, temp, self-employed or zero hours)
- Receiving an in-work benefit or tax credits

COVID 19 support - During the current COVID 19 crisis Future Bright can also support local residents and help:

- Those who've been made redundant, laid off or at risk of redundancy as a result of the coronavirus crisis.
- Those whose hours have been significantly reduced due to the coronavirus crisis and have a reduced income.
- Those who are self-employed, whose incomes or ability to earn has been severely impacted by coronavirus.
- Furloughed employees, if their reduced income means they are eligible for Universal Credit.

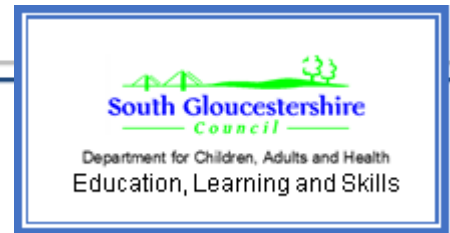
Contact us today for an informal chat on 01454 866008 or email us at future.bright@southglos.gov.uk. Alternatively complete the online referral form at www.futurebright.org.uk.

The programme is managed by the West of England Combined Authority and delivered locally by Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire councils.

Care Parcels for refugees and Asylum Seekers

There is a small amount of funding from Quartet Community Foundation, for care parcels for refugees and asylum seekers in South Gloucestershire. If you have a family in need who may benefit from this support, please contact Asma Ahmad, Community Cohesion Manager on T: 01454 868570 M: 07971671076 (Working days - Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays) or email asmaahmad@southernbrooks.org.uk

- England and Wales) and 0300 303 2713 (in Scotland and Northern Ireland) between the hours of 7am – 11pm.
- The service can be accessed by people with hearing or speech difficulties by calling 18001 119 (in England and Wales) or 18001 0300 303 2713 (in Scotland and Northern Ireland).



DfE Government Guidance Updates

Please see attached the latest COVID guidance log for educational settings, with the following updates (sign-posted in red):

- Preparing for the wider opening of schools from 1 June - added 'Guidance for secondary school provision from 15 June 2020'
- Guidance on cancellation of GCSEs, AS and A Levels updated to reflect Ofqual consultation documents
- New guidance: responsibility for autumn GCSE, AS and A level exam series- expectations for centres on who should be responsible for entering candidates for autumn exams
- Online educational resources updated - updated list of online resources with additional resources organised by key stage
- Remote education during coronavirus guidance - added information about Oak National Academy's school packs, which are now available to be downloaded and used by schools
- Guidance added: Assessment only route to QTS: criteria and supporting advice. We have updated the 'candidate assessment' advice to explain what should happen when candidates' progress on the Assessment Only (AO) route to QTS is interrupted as a consequence of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

Emergency Family Fund for parents/carers

On 19th May, the government announced £37 million for children with special educational needs and disabilities in England.

The fund will be available for individual families to apply for funding with support from professionals.

Here is all you need to know to apply for a grant:

- The fund is being administered by the Family Fund who can be accessed [here](#). The website is www.familyfund.org.uk
- There is a really helpful film explaining eligibility available [here](#)
- If you have not applied through the family fund before then you will need to download and submit an application. If you have used family fund before you can apply online.
- There are a whole range of things grants can be applied for but typically the fund is looking for applications for disabled or critically ill children who are staying at home more than usual due to the pandemic. Funding for equipment, goods, services such as household items, education equipment or specialist equipment.
- Grants are usually worth £400-£500 per family but can vary on need.
- The press release is available [here](#).

Evidence of family income (being in receipt of tax credits, universal credits or other welfare benefits) is required with the application which should demonstrate evidence that additional needs impact on the family and that conditions are long term (likely to last more than 12 months) or life limiting. The full criteria is available [here](#). Anyone can apply, parents/carers themselves or professionals on behalf of the family.

Test and Trace Guidance

The government have produced some guidance and a Q and A in relation to Test and Trace that you will see as attachments alongside this newsletter.

Integra School lunches (For subscribing schools)

Integra staff at all levels have asked us to thank all the schools where they provide catering, for all your help and support, not just over the lockdown period but also with the understanding and planning for the extension of pupil numbers over the coming weeks. We know that this has been challenging for schools, this is also a challenging time for all service providers also. We have like other suppliers sought to ensure that key workers children and vulnerable children have been fed in recent weeks by buying in DfE compliant lunch bags of which we have now supplied in excess of 15,000. These have been well received overall, and we have listened to feedback around a lack of variety which, we have now addressed, as well as now being able to provide a vegan and vegetarian option which we know is important.

We do of course appreciate that items produced on site are always preferential and clearly are long term plan is to re-establish this. At the current time and with the challenges we all face this is not the best approach, there are a number of reasons for this some of which we have detailed below to support you as school leaders in understanding some of the limitations we have:

- Sandwiches made on site cannot be controlled for consistency etc – this is to become law in respect of being able to provide full details of all volumes and items in packed sandwiches
- Being able to produce appropriate vegetarian and vegan options is easier to deliver more centrally.
- Many suppliers still have staff on furlough so the delivery of ingredients for the quantities required when schools will have limited pupil numbers will be difficult and we know other catering providers are in the same position, in addition if ingredients are not purchased as part of a recognised menu (and from a specific source) then there may be an issue with the provision of allergen information which we are bound by.
- Production of a limited volume of other items e.g. cake or flapjack does pose challenges in terms of a viable short-term offer.

Integra will of course keep this under review with all schools and welcome discussion with Head teachers and Business Managers. We will continue to engage with both the Local Authority and comply with government guidelines seeking to ensure the best outcomes for the children and schools.

Behaviour Policy COVID-19 Addendum

As more pupils return to school, it will be important for schools to consider their behaviour policy and any amendments that will need to be made in light of pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs and new COVID-19 routines and expectations. Attached to this newsletter is a sample Behaviour Policy addendum that schools can use and adapt. It has been written in partnership with Darren Brown, Headteacher of Longwell Green Primary School and our Educational Psychology service, with a key focus on support and early intervention, as the effects of the lockdown and non-school attendance will impact on children and young people in different ways. We hope school leaders find this useful.

Supporting children and young people with SEND as schools and colleges prepare for wider opening

The Government has updated the guidance on 'Supporting children and young people with SEND as schools and colleges prepare for wider opening'. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance>

As settings prepare for wider opening, they should continue to offer places to vulnerable children and young people and should look to bring back more children and young people with EHC plans.

Updating Risk assessments

There will be many children and young people with EHC plans who, following their original risk assessment, have not been attending their educational setting because it was determined that their needs could be more safely met at home. Risks change over time and therefore schools and setting should keep risk assessments up to date to reflect any changes in circumstances, including changes to coronavirus alert levels and the wider opening of education and care settings to more children and young people. With lower risk level it will be right for educational settings, working with families, to bring back more children and young people who have not been attending their educational setting. This will be based on individual risk assessments and within the limits of what the educational setting is capable of accommodating, given any staff absences and the need for protective measures.

It is also recommended that risk assessments continue to be maintained for children and young people with EHC plans who remain at home, so that they continue to guide your decisions on which children should be attending school and when they return to school.

When attendance is not appropriate, assessments can help make decisions about the support children and young people should receive at home, noting that circumstances may have changed.

What should be considered when updating risk assessments?

The risk assessment will need to balance a number of different risks, including:

- The ability of parents or carers to sustain the level of care and support that their children need
- Child or young person's views
- Any risk to siblings or family members including safeguarding risks. Where a child or young person with an EHC plan has a social worker, the social worker should also be involved in the risk assessment, along with the local authority virtual school head if the child is in care
- The potential impact to the child or young person's wellbeing
- The risk to the individual if some or all elements of their EHC plan temporarily cannot be delivered in the normal manner
- The potential health risks, bearing in mind any underlying health conditions/ clinical vulnerability
- Any other out-of-school/college risk or vulnerability

If a risk assessment determines that a child needs continue to be more safely met at home, please consider whether moving either equipment or services into home would enable them to be supported there. This may include physiotherapy equipment, sensory equipment, online sessions with different types of therapists, phone support for parents in delivering interventions, where necessary.

Phased Return

The aim is for pupils with EHCPs who have not been attending, and are in eligible year groups, to experience the same return to their settings as their peers, informed by their individual circumstances and risk assessments.

In special schools and post 16 specialist settings decisions should not be made using the child's year group as a primary deciding factor. In these settings, year groups may not be as indicative of key transition points or moments that are particularly important for life chances.

Particular care will be needed in planning for and supporting children and young people with EHC plans to return to their schools and colleges. Educational settings should contact parents and involve them in decisions about their child who has an EHC plan. Similarly, they should involve children young people who have EHC plans.

Where applicable local authorities will reinstate safe home to school transport arrangements.

Preparing and supporting children

Guidance has been published on how to [implement protective measures in education and childcare settings](#). This advice seeks to support settings to enable more children to return to school in the safest way possible, focusing on measures they can put in place to help limit risk of the virus spreading within education and childcare settings.

Children and young people with EHC plans will need careful preparation for their return, for example, social stories to help with the transition.

We encourage settings to provide additional support to pupils with EHC plans about to make a transition to another setting, or onto adult life.

What about the risk to staff working hands-on with pupils and students who cannot adhere to strict hygiene practices?

It is recognised that some children and young people with special educational needs present behaviours that are challenging to manage without close hands-on contact. In these circumstances, staff should minimise close contact wherever possible, increase hand-washing and other hygiene measures, and clean surfaces more regularly and maintain existing routine use of personal protective equipment. Educational settings should follow the Public Health England guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings and the guidance on safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings.

Does school or college provision have to be delivered as it usually is for children and young people with EHC plans?

Due to the unprecedented circumstances presented by coronavirus, the section 42 Children and Families Act 2014 duty to secure the provision within an EHC plan has been temporarily modified so that local authorities and health commissioning bodies must use their 'reasonable endeavours' to discharge this duty.

As per the actions for education and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020 guidance, no school will be penalised if it is unable to offer a broad and balanced curriculum to its pupils during this period.