

Wednesday 12 August 2020

**For the attention of all Headteachers/Principals and Senior Leaders
All Schools, Academies, Independent Schools and Colleges**

Update from Sue Welford, Principal Education Officer

Dear colleagues

As we all continue to prepare for the autumn term, I want to thank you for the efforts you are making to planning for and promoting the return to education. To support this promotion, the following communication will take place this week:

13 August 2020

- A letter from Cllr Cutkelvin to parents and carers
The letter from Cllr Cutkelvin will be circulated separately and we ask that you share this out to your families.
- The launch of a webpage to help parents and carers to consider and plan the return in autumn and to answer questions they may have. We shared this widely with schools, unions, parent carer forums and children's representatives to help shape the FAQs

14 August 2020

- An interview with Martin Samuels will be aired on Radio Leicester's breakfast show. He will be answering questions about the return to school

Shielding

We are expecting an update tomorrow (13 August) on whether shielding will be paused in Leicester city from 17 August as was planned. Depending on the outcome and the guidelines, this may have an impact on your plans for staff support.

Transport

[New guidance](#) has been issued clarifying that children and young people aged 11 and over need to wear a face covering when using dedicated transport. Dedicated transport is described as that used to exclusively carry children and young people travelling to their place of education, including mainstream and special schools, colleges and alternative provision settings. This would include schools who use contract buses.

For schools who have contract buses, please check the guidelines and consider whether the students using those buses are considered in your plans for maintaining student bubbles in school.

Reminder – Pupils returning for the autumn term

Thank you again for the tremendous response to our request - the majority of schools have now sent us updates about their planned opening dates for children.

We will now start to contact those schools who have not yet advised us of their opening dates. If you haven't yet completed the form - [please confirm your opening date](#).

Results day

I'm sure the arrangements you have made for results day will help support students to find out their results quickly – we wish them the best of luck!

Schools should continue to make clear to the students, and any accompanying parent, they must not gather at entrance gates or doors, or enter the site unless they have a pre-arranged appointment.

Schools are also reminded that this year, it has been agreed that results cannot be released to students until 8am. A change to 6am as in previous years.

The weekly updates from the DfE can be found below.

Best wishes

Sue Welford
Principal Education Officer

DfE Updates

The Department for Education have provided further updates on the following:

- **Resources for students receiving their GCSE, AS and A level qualifications this summer**
- **The exam results helpline available from 12 to 28 August**
- **Register your school's interest in the National Tutoring Programme**
- **Additional laptops and tablets available to support schools and disadvantaged families in the event face-to-face education is disrupted**
- **Guidance on recording non-attendance due to coronavirus (COVID-19)**
- **Ofqual announces changes to exams and assessments in 2021**
- **Ofqual consultation on the assessment and awarding of Vocational, Technical, and other General Qualification in 2020 to 2021**
- **Buying for schools during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak**
- **Data collections due to continue**

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Resources for students receiving their GCSE, AS and A level qualifications this summer

Ofqual has published [resources for students receiving their qualifications this summer](#). These resources include a [student guide to post-16 qualification results](#) that provides students with additional information to help them understand how their results have been awarded, what to expect on results day, and the options available to them if they are unhappy with their result.

Ofqual has also published a [student guide to appeals and malpractice or maladministration complaints in summer 2020](#). This information will help students understand if they have a reason to make an appeal or a complaint about malpractice or maladministration, including concerns about bias or discrimination.

The exam results helpline available from 12 to 28 August

The exam results helpline, delivered by the National Careers Service, will be available from 12 to 28 August to provide additional support to students and their parents as they receive their exam results. Callers to the helpline will have direct access to experienced careers advisers who can advise on the different options available to them including T levels, A levels, GCSEs, BTECs, apprenticeships and other vocational options. Support will also be available on topics such as clearing, university, gap years and the autumn 2020 exam series.

Phone: 0800 100 900

Opening hours: Monday to Sunday from 8am to 10pm

Register your school's interest in the National Tutoring Programme

From autumn 2020, schools will be able to access support for children and young people who have been most affected by school closures during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak through the National Tutoring Programme. Tutoring will begin from the second half of the autumn term and increase through the spring term 2021. To register your interest in joining this programme, visit the [National Tutoring Programme website](#).

Guidance for school sixth forms, colleges and all other 16 to 19 providers on delivering small group tutoring activity for disadvantaged 16 to 19 students whose studies have been disrupted as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) will be issued shortly.

Additional laptops and tablets available to support schools and disadvantaged families in the event face-to-face education is disrupted

All children will return to school from September, however we recognise that there will be an ongoing role for remote education in the event a school is required to close temporarily as a result of local coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreaks.

We are providing laptops and tablets to help children and families access remote education during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. This offer is in addition to 200,000 devices and 4G wireless routers already distributed between May and July 2020 to local authorities and trusts for disadvantaged pupils in year 10, care leavers and young people with a social worker.

Full details on how schools can access digital devices and how they will be allocated is available in our [guidance on getting laptops and tablets for children who cannot attend schools due to coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

We have also published [guidance for local authorities, academy trusts and schools on how to manage devices provided during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#).

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Guidance on recording non-attendance due to coronavirus (COVID-19)

We have published guidance explaining [how schools should record non-attendance due to coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in the attendance register](#) in the 2020 to 2021 academic year. Although school attendance is mandatory from the start of the autumn term, there may be circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19), such as if they are required to self-isolate. To ensure schools record this accurately and consistently, we have made changes to the regulations governing school attendance registers to add a new category of non-attendance – ‘not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)’.

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Ofqual announces changes to exams and assessments in 2021

On Monday 3 August, [Ofqual confirmed the changes exam boards will be required to make to exams and assessments in 2021](#), which includes changes to 15 A level and 25 GCSE subjects. Full details of the changes that will be made can be found in Ofqual’s [consultation decisions on the proposed changes to the assessment of GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2021](#).

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Ofqual consultation on the assessment and awarding of Vocational, Technical, and other General Qualification in 2020 to 2021

Ofqual has published its [consultation proposals](#) and launched an open consultation on the arrangements and awarding of Vocational, Technical and other General Qualifications in 2020 to 2021. The deadline for responses to the consultation is 14 August.

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Buying for schools during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

We have published [guidance on buying for schools during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#). This guidance is for buyers in schools and those who manage supplier contracts including procurement policy notes, free school meals and personal protective equipment.

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Data collections due to continue

To help [reduce the burden on educational and care settings](#), the Department for Education and its agencies cancelled or paused all but the most essential data collections, services and requests in April.

We can confirm that the following collections, in addition to those already in place, will now continue:

- Financial Management Governance Self-Assessment (FMGS)
- Academy Trust Account Submission cover sheet
- Annual Technical and Vocational Qualification Review Process

We can confirm that the following collection has been cancelled:

- Parental responsibility measures attendance (PRMA) census
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All updates can be viewed at: <https://schools.leicester.gov.uk/coronavirus> or <https://schools.leicester.gov.uk/openingyourschool>