



To all Headteachers

**Children, Young People and
Education Directorate**

Sessions House
County Hall
MAIDSTONE
Kent ME14 1XQ

Phone: 03000 414989
Ask for: Matt Dunkley
Email: Matt.Dunkley@kent.gov.uk

Date: 9th October 2020

Dear Colleague

As we approach the end of this first term, we continue to be made aware of the increasing incidence of COVID 19. Whilst we, in the South East, are not in the mist of the local restrictions that are prevalent in the more northern parts of the UK, I am aware of the increased anxiety and uncertainty that this is causing. I would like to offer my thanks again for what has been a relatively smooth transition into getting all our young people back into school, a feat that would not have been possible without the continued hard work and commitment of you and your staff.

Remote and Blended Learning

Part of this transition to the new normal has been to address how education is provided to those pupils who are unable to attend your school site. The focus has been on blended and remote learning, such that for the pupil there is continuity of curriculum delivery.

On 1st October 2020, the DfE published a direction which requires schools to have their processes for remote learning fully in place by Thursday 22nd October. Link below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/923539/Remote_Education_Temporary_Continuity_Direction_-_Explanatory_Note.pdf

In the light of this, the DfE has updated its 'guidance for full opening of schools' to include the expectations regarding curriculum and remote learning. Link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools#section-3-curriculum-behaviour-and-pastoral-support>

The DfE have also published good practice guidance for remote learning. Link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/remote-education-good-practice/remote-education-good-practice>

To support you with this, The Education People have developed a free webinar for Headteachers and Senior Leaders in charge of Teaching and Learning. This webinar will cover:

- the requirements around remote and blended learning
- some of the practical issues around remote and blended learning (safeguarding, SEN)
- the importance of curriculum and pedagogy in relation to remote learning

The webinar will be live on **15th October at 4.15 – 5.00** and a recording will be available immediately afterwards. If you would like to attend please email:

Stuart.Thomson@theeducationpeople.org

Ofsted Visits

We are aware of Ofsted visiting schools in Kent. These visits are referred to as Section 8. Ofsted are using inspection paperwork and processes because they are not changing their internal systems for this short period of time, however these visits will not result in an inspection outcome. Early feedback is that these visits are looking at schools ability to provide continuity of education for those educated off site, looking at its appropriateness and how work set aligns with and delivers the same learning as to those young people on site. TEP's school improvement team will be providing further updates as they receive feedback from schools.

Providing test kits to staff

The Government has updated the guidance relating to school testing kits with additional wording about providing test kits to staff:

As with students, you may consider offering kits to members of staff who become symptomatic on site if you do not think that they will be able to access testing by the usual routes. In addition, if a symptomatic staff member, who is currently self-isolating, cannot access testing quickly, you may wish to consider offering them a test kit in order to allow them to return to work as quickly as possible if they test negative and have not been in close contact with a confirmed case. This approach should not be used for students, only for symptomatic staff members who are vital to the running of your educational setting. Staff who develop symptoms should not enter the premises of their place of work under any circumstances, even to collect a test kit. Nor should they come into close physical contact (within 2 metres) with anyone outside their household.

Schools and FE providers have discretion over how they deliver kits to symptomatic staff members, as long as this is done safely with due regard for the transmission risk. The symptomatic staff member, and all members of their household, must stay at least 2 metres away from other individuals at all times. For example, schools and FE providers could:

- *post the kit to the symptomatic staff member*
- *ask another member of staff to drop the kit through the letterbox of the symptomatic staff member's home address*
- *(for symptomatic staff with vehicle access) ask another member of staff to leave the test kit a safe distance from the symptomatic colleague's vehicle at an agreed time and location. That staff member should then withdraw to a safe distance (at least 2 metres away) whilst the symptomatic staff member exits their vehicle and retrieves the test kit.*

Full guidance can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-home-test-kits-for-schools-and-fe-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-home-test-kits-for-schools-and-fe-providers>

SEN Inclusion Discussion

Despite the challenges you are facing in your schools, I am delighted with your response to the ongoing discussions about supporting inclusive practices in our schools. I would like to thank you for making the time to engage in these discussions. Your feedback is invaluable in informing how we shape the inclusion landscape moving forward. The closing date for feedback is 31st October. If you have not already done so, please feel free to complete the online feedback form available at:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=DaJTMjXH_kuotz5qs39fkPDv4-hste1HsSI_XW3Q1a9UMEZIOVVUDI4WkYzRUo4TjlxMDdIRy4u

Full details of the discussion can be found at:

<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/news-and-events/news/primary/sen-inclusion-discussion-paper>

Governor guidance

Yesterday the DfE updated their guidance for Governors to include the rule of 6 applying to governance meetings:

DfE Governance Update (October 2020):

*3. Governing and trust boards' role and meetings during coronavirus (COVID-19)
It is important that governing and trust boards continue to support and collaborate with executive leaders and ensure that they are still fulfilling their duties regarding the 3 core functions of governance as set out in the Governance Handbook.*

*Governing and trust boards should continue to take a pragmatic approach to meetings. We would expect the chair to keep the conversation open with board members on how they wish to meet and make arrangements, as necessary. **If any board members do decide to meet in person, then they would need to comply with the rule of 6, social distancing, any local health and safety measures and the school and trust's risk assessment.***

We have shared this guidance on GovernorHub and continue to advocate virtual meetings for governors where possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt Dunkley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Matt Dunkley CBE
Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education