



To All Headteachers

Children, Young People and Education

County Hall
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Date: 7th January 2021

Dear Colleague

Attendance data collection

Thank-you for completing the data collection request sent out late yesterday evening. I apologise for the need to request this at such late notice. We received 490 responses which demonstrates the importance of this issue to you. The data collected is summarised below.

	Sum of Vulnerable	Sum of Keyworker	Sum of Total Attending	% of Roll Attending
Alternative Provision / PRU	22	2	24	14%
Primary	3,608	15,132	18,740	18%
Secondary	580	1,000	1,580	2%
Special	952	206	1,158	33%
Grand Total	5,162	16,340	21,502	12%

To add context to this, in May 2019 the average daily attendance of vulnerable and key worker children was around 5,000.

We are aware that these are likely to reflect your minimal attendance figures and we expect these to rise. You are also facing the addition challenges presented by industrial action, the need to deliver a high quality remote learning offer and the latest announcement by Gavin Williamson that pupils without access to IT or the ability to work from home are considered vulnerable and need to be catered for in school.

As explained last night, we are feeding into a national discussion, which we were told this morning is now at 8.30am tomorrow. A copy of the representation we have sent is attached. While we hope changes will be agreed, in the meantime we ask that you continue to adhere to the available guidance.



2021.01.07 Ltr
PHE.pdf

Updated lockdown guidance

Full updated lockdown guidance has been published today at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=08720782-d5c2-423a-90bf-6450e8ad7640&utm_content=immediate

Maintained nursery classes

I wanted to make sure that everyone had received this updated guidance from the department as I know it was causing a bit of confusion:

Q: Should school-based nurseries remain closed or reopen? And what about maintained nursery schools?

A: All early years settings can open for all children. The guidance provides flexibility where for logistical or operational reasons a school-based nursery in a primary school setting needs to follow the primary school arrangements, but we would encourage them to open like other EY providers. If any restrictions are deemed necessary, these should be for a limited period of time with nurseries reopening for all children as soon as possible.

Maintained nursery schools should follow the early years guidance and remain open for all children. We understand a number of maintained nursery schools will have been open throughout December and EY provision should continue as normal in January.

We understand that the department is developing some FAQs which should be out in a couple of days.

Covid-19 Related Closures and Early Education Entitlement Funding

The document below addresses the funding of early years and childcare provision in Kent for any period of time where a setting may need to close for COVID-19 related reasons but has been unable to secure evidenced advice or instruction from the Department for Education (DfE) and/or Public Health England (PHE). This guidance continues to be valid in the absence of updated guidance.



COVID-19-Related-Closures-and-Early-Education

In-Year Admissions

The In-Year Fair Access team has sent a reminder to admission contacts within schools of the updated In-Year admissions process that should be used while lockdown is in place. This remains unchanged from the process that was in place at the end of the last lockdown, but if you have any queries, please contact inyearadmissions@kent.gov.uk. A copy is attached below.



In Year Admissions guidance for schools

Compliance visits

We appreciate the challenges facing schools during these times however, it is essential that our contractors are able to continue to carry out compliance work to ensure your schools remain safe places of work and education. If you have specific issues with enabling contractors to access, please contact your AEO in the first instance.

Free School Meals

Following from my previous letter, the information below has been provided by Wonde.

If you are an existing Wonde customer, click here <https://edu.wonde.com/login>

If you are a new Wonde customer, click here <https://www.wonde.com/free-school-meals>

Attendance reporting

The DfE have informed schools that they do not need to complete the DfE attendance form (Educational Setting Status Form) at present, and they will be notified when to resume.

“From 5 January 2021, please note that educational settings do not need to complete the Educational setting status form. We are in the process of updating the form to reflect the changes as per the Prime Minister’s announcement on 4 January 2021. We will provide further instruction shortly on when educational settings should resume completing this form.”

As mentioned yesterday, this may mean that we need to ask for information from schools on a regular basis. We will briefly wait to see what the DfE’s plan is before moving forward with any data collection of our own.

Take care.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Adams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

David Adams
Interim Director of Education