

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE
CORONAVIRUS – COVID-19
SCHOOL GUIDANCE BRIEFING 07.04.2020

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1. FSM & Easter:

The DfE have updated their Free Schools Meals guidance regarding Easter provision:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance-for-schools>

An additional FAQ about Easter holidays makes it clear that schools should continue to provide FSM over this period for those children who are out of school. The National Voucher Scheme will now run over this time and schools will be compensated by central government for any other arrangements they have made to provide for these children; up to the value of £15 per eligible pupil.

2. School Funding:

New guidance from the DfE has been published setting out the financial support they will put in place for all schools. This will remain until the end of this academic year:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-schools/school-funding-exceptional-costs-associated-with-coronavirus-covid-19-for-the-period-march-to-july-2020>

Overall Funding

The DfE has been clear that in terms of usual school funding:

- Schools will continue to receive their core funding allocations; regardless of any periods of partial or complete closure (to ensure schools can continue to pay staff and meet other regular financial commitments);
- LAs will also continue to receive their high needs budgets and should continue to pay top-up and other high needs funding to schools (to ensure that the employment and payment of staff supporting pupils with SEND can continue);
- Where schools pay top-up or other funding for pupils attending alternative provision, or pay for other SEND or AP services, it is expected these payments continue (to ensure that teachers and other staff can be paid in accordance with their existing employment contracts)

Exceptional Funding

The DfE has recognised that there will be changes to what schools need to fund at this time. They are asking schools to continue to manage their budgets in the most effective way possible, and to redirect existing resources to best support all their pupils, particularly vulnerable children and children of critical workers. This includes using any additional funding which schools are anticipating adding to their reserves in the 2020/21 financial year.

However, where schools incur additional costs as a result of COVID-19, the DfE will make funding available where schools are not able to use their existing resources. The DfE has outlined the areas it would be expecting to support:

- Increased premises related costs - associated with keeping schools open during the Easter and/or summer half term holidays;
- Support for FSM for eligible children not attending school – associated with costs arising before the introduction of the national voucher scheme and costs of providing meals directly where schools are not using this scheme;
- additional cleaning – associated with requirements following confirmed or suspected coronavirus (COVID-19) cases, in line with [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings](#) guidance

Where schools face other extraordinary costs to deliver appropriate support to their pupils through this period outside this list and they cannot be met by existing budgets, they should contact DfE.CoronavirusHelpline@education.gov.uk.

The DfE have also set a limit on funding allowances for exceptional expenditure as follows (*please note pupil numbers will be taken from the October 2019 census*):

Mainstream schools	
250 pupils or fewer	£25,000
251 to 500 pupils	£30,000
501 to 1000 pupils	£50,000
Over 1000 pupils	£75,000

Special schools and alternative provision	
All schools	£50,000

Claiming financial support

The DfE will publish further guidance for schools on the process for informing them of any additional costs relating to COVID-19 in June 2020.

Until then, schools are asked to make the necessary payments from existing budgets and record these in line with local finance policies.

A suggested template for recording such expenditure is available on our schoolsnet page: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schoolsnet/school-provision-during-covid-19-crisis/templates-and-forms/> and attached to this briefing for ease of reference.

3. Educational Resources:

In addition to online resources schools already have in place and the information provided by the LA on home learning examples and resources: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schoolsnet/school-provision-during-covid-19-crisis/home-learning/> the DfE have now brought together an initial list of online educational resources to help children to learn at home; all currently being offered for free.

It is not intended that these individual resources replace a school's properly planned curriculum, but schools may also wish to explore these as they consider how they continue to support children's education. Resources are available online:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources>

4. 3D Printers and Laser Cutters:

You may be aware that a number of schools across the country have been putting their design skills, equipment and facilities to good use in terms of creating Face Shields and Visors for NHS staff and Key Workers.

The LA would like to establish what opportunities there are for supporting the production of essential safety wear and we would therefore be grateful if you could confirm whether you have appropriate equipment and materials that could be used - this might involve Laser Cutters and 3D Printers and trained/skilled staff able to use the equipment.

Please respond by email to clare.medland@gloucestershire.gov.uk if you have any availability of equipment, materials and staff willing to support this work.