

## **Summer term briefing 2021**

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# Covid-19

## Key information

### Actions for schools during the Corona Virus outbreak

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

On 10<sup>th</sup> May the DfE updated guidance in line with Step 3 of the roadmap, including information on face coverings (p11), attendance (p30), pupils travelling to the UK from abroad (p33), educational visits (p47), wraparound provision and extra-curricular activity (p50), music, dance and drama (p54), pupil wellbeing (p59), and state-funded school inspection (p63). They have also added further guidance on domestic residential educational visits (p67) and a section on transitional, taster and open days (p49).

### Risk assessment

Educational providers have a legal duty to protect people from harm. This includes taking reasonable steps to protect staff, pupils and others from coronavirus (COVID-19) within your school.

You must implement sensible and proportionate control measures which follow the health and safety hierarchy of controls to reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level. This hierarchy of controls is set out in [annex A](#).

You must regularly review and update your risk assessments - treating them as 'living documents' - as the circumstances at your school and the public health advice changes. You must notify your staff and their health and safety representatives of review outcomes.

### Free School Meals funding claims

The free school meals (FSM) additional costs claim window is now open. You can claim back additional costs incurred through providing FSM for the period of:

- 4 January up to the start of the Easter holidays for weekly lunch parcels for pupils at home in term time (£3.50 per eligible pupil, per week)
- 4 January 2021 to 5 March 2021 for locally arranged vouchers for pupils at home in term time (£15 per eligible pupil, per week)

You can also claim for locally arranged vouchers where parents received an inadequate lunch parcel between 4 January and 16 January (but if you do, you can't also claim for the lunch parcel top-up funding for this period)

Claims shouldn't include the half term or Easter holidays as support is covered through the [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) winter grant scheme](#)

Read the guidance to check eligibility, and submit your claim [here](#) via DfE Sign-in by end of 4 May 2021

### COVID19 Testing

Updated asymptomatic testing guidance for [Primary schools and maintained nursery schools](#)

There's now a list of staff who your school should offer testing to, which includes non-teaching staff like contractors, caterers and volunteers.

Staff are advised to carry out the tests preferably in the morning at home (still twice a week as before).

Staff returning to work after a period of leave should take a lateral flow test at the beginning of their shift.

Part-time workers should still broadly space their 2 tests throughout the week.

### [Secondary schools](#)

Should distribute home testing kits to staff and to pupils who have completed their initial on-site asymptomatic testing site (ATS) tests upon school reopening fully from 8 March, so they can carry out testing at home now.

Home testing distributed through independent learning providers (ILPs) will also apply from 31 March.

There's clarification that symptomatic individuals must isolate and take a PCR test .

### [Early years settings](#)

The asymptomatic testing programme in education expanded to all staff in private, voluntary and independent (PVI) nurseries from 22 March.

Childminders and staff in wraparound childcare providers can now (since 22 March) access asymptomatic twice-weekly testing by going to a test site, collecting test kits from a test site, or ordering a home test kit online.

### Reporting positive cases

Positive cases should still be recorded via Wonde. Please remember these notifications can automatically be sent to the contact tracing team and the LA by doing the following:

You need to add the following email addresses to the list of individuals notified of a positive case within your school.

- [Schoolscommunication@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Schoolscommunication@essex.gov.uk) – anonymised notification

- [provide.escontacttracing@nhs.net](mailto:provide.escontacttracing@nhs.net) – detailed notification

Once you add these email addresses the system will automatically notify the Local Authority and public health of a positive case, which means you no longer need to email the Essex Contact Tracing Team or School Comms. You can of course still contact either for advice or guidance, should you need it.

### **Catch up Premium**

You can decide how the catch-up premium provided by the government is spent in your school. To help schools make the best use of this funding, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has published a [support guide for schools](#) with evidence-based approaches to catch up and a further [school planning guide: 2020 to 2021](#). The [National Tutoring Programme](#) will continue to offer tuition as normal and schools should continue to sign up and engage with the programme.

*Nuffield early language intervention programme (NELI)*

Funding will be available for NELI in the 2021 to 2022 academic year – [register your interest](#).

The Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) is a **20-week programme** for children in their first year of primary school who show weakness in their oral language skills and who are therefore at risk of experiencing difficulty with reading. Developed by a team of academic experts and underpinned by evidence demonstrating a positive impact on children.

There is also a [list of schools who registered for NELI \(Nuffield early language intervention programme\)](#).

When routine inspections restart, Ofsted will make judgements about the quality of education being provided and how school leaders are using their funding and catch-up funding to ensure the curriculum has a positive impact on all pupils.

### **Educational Visits**

*Educational day visits*

In line with the government roadmap, schools can resume educational day visits from 12 April.

Any educational day visits must be conducted in line with relevant coronavirus (COVID-19) secure guidelines and regulations in place at that time. This includes system of controls, such as keeping children within their consistent groups and the COVID-secure measures in place at the destination.

Schools should undertake full and thorough risk assessments in relation to all educational visits to ensure they can be undertaken safely. As part of this risk assessment, schools will need to consider what control measures need to be used and follow wider advice on visiting indoor and outdoor venues. Schools should consult the [health and safety guidance on educational visits](#) when considering visits.

*Domestic residential educational visits*

In line with the roadmap, we advise against domestic residential educational visits until at least step 3, no earlier than 17 May.

The roadmap is driven by data not dates. The approach to domestic residential visits is dependent on the roadmap and is subject to change.

*Existing bookings*

Should step 3 commence as planned, you may undertake domestic residential education visits that are already booked, no earlier than 17 May.

Any domestic residential educational visits must be conducted in line with relevant coronavirus (COVID-19) secure guidance and regulations in place at that time.

*New bookings*

Schools may begin planning for new domestic residential educational visits to take place. Should step 3 commence as planned, new visits will be possible from no earlier than 17 May.

Schools are advised not to enter into any new financial or contractual commitments at this stage. This advice will remain under review and updated at the earliest opportunity.

Any new domestic residential educational visits must be conducted in line with relevant coronavirus (COVID-19) secure guidance and regulations in place at that time.

### **Wraparound provision and extra-curricular activity**

The guidance can be found at [Protective measures for holiday and after-school clubs, and other out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) and states:

*Indoor provision*

From 17 May, in line with the commencement of Step 3 of the roadmap, where wraparound and other extra-curricular activities for children are taking place indoors, they will be able to take place in groups of any number. However, it remain important to continue to minimise mixing between children, where possible. This can be achieved by continuing to keep children in consistent groups every time they attend the setting. Smaller groups should be considered when it is not possible to do this. When considering appropriate group sizes it will be important to take into account factors such as the recommended occupancy levels of the

premises you are operating from and levels of ventilation.

#### *Outdoor provision*

All children can use outdoor provision regardless of circumstances or need. Additionally, if the activity is taking place outdoors, groups can be of any number. This is because the transmission risk is lower outside. However, it remains important to minimise mixing between children. This can be achieved by taking steps to keep children in separate groups or 'bubbles'. For example, keeping children from the same school day bubble or school together, or working with parents and carers to keep siblings from the same household together.

Keeping children in smaller groups will also help to further minimise the risk of transmission. Where you are operating larger groups (for example, larger than 15) it will be even more important to implement these measures and try to keep children in consistent groups.

Where parents are using external childcare providers or out of school extra-curricular activities for their children, you should also:

- advise them to limit their use of multiple out-of-school settings providers, and to only use one out-of-school setting in addition to school as far as possible.
- encourage them to check providers have put in place their own protective measures
- send them the link to the guidance for parents and carers

[Guidance for parents and carers of children attending out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-of-children-attending-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak)

If you hire out your premises for use by external wraparound childcare providers, such as after-school or holiday clubs, make sure these organisations have: considered the relevant government guidance for their sector and put in place protective measures.

#### **Transitional, taster and open days**

You should complete thorough risk assessments before running transitional, taster and open days to ensure that they are run in line with your system of controls and align with the advice contained within the guidance and the roadmap out of lockdown.

#### **Summer schools programme for secondary schools**

The DfE has published [guidance](#) on how to deliver a blend of academic education and enriching activities during the school summer holidays, to help pupils make up for missed education during the pandemic.

There'll be funding available for:

- State-funded secondary and special schools
- Non-maintained special schools
- Pupil referral units
- Alternative provision for any pupils whose education was funded by the local authority outside of state place funded schools, including independent schools, non-maintained special schools, and other providers

Eligible settings can sign up via their existing DfE sign-in by the end of April.

Although the responsibility and funding rests with secondary schools, the key focus group is current Year 6 pupils transitioning to Year 7, so secondary schools should/will be liaising with feeder primary schools to identify pupils who should be invited to attend.

#### **Paediatric First Aid**

If your paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate expired on or after 1 October 2020, the DfE previously advised that this would be valid until 31 March 2021. The extended deadline for requalification has now passed and providers must have a valid PFA certificate in place.

#### **Webcasts with Mike Gogarty and Clare Kershaw**

11th September <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8mumCXeexd8>

6th November [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-lu5oa\\_XYU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-lu5oa_XYU)

8th December <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PtOo52jclq>

11th February <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7l3bBJx-eeE>

1st March [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8lfbHAI\\_wk&t=9s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8lfbHAI_wk&t=9s)

11<sup>th</sup> May <https://youtu.be/N4pBW7Pbl5E>

Another webcast with Clare Kershaw and Mike Gogarty has been set up for Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June at 2.00 pm.

The Zoom link is as follows:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84358200585?pwd=azBBdEdrTmtadjZWb1VzM3YvaDRndz09>

Meeting ID: 843 5820 0585

Passcode: 198640

### **Let's Talk Recovery and Returning to Educational Settings**

All school/setting staff have access to 6 webinars relating to Essex's 'Let's Talk Recovery and Returning to Educational Settings (Part 2)' webinars, plus a further PowerPoint available on the theme of accessing local and national support. All available here: <https://schools.essex.gov.uk/admin/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx> in the 'Mental Health and Wellbeing' section.

The 6 webinars combine the 'DfE Wellbeing and Return to Education Training' content with the existing content from the Essex 'Let's Talk Recovery and Returning to Educational Settings (Part 1)' webinars. Once you have watched the webinars, we encourage you to attend these Q&A session related to the SEMH themes, being held once a month until July 2021, to discuss the SEMH needs of your pupils further with a panel of experts.

[SEMh Q&A Sessions - Essex County Council - Citizen Space](#)

### **Sir Kevan Collins resigns as Education Recovery Commissioner**

Sir Kevan was unveiled by Boris Johnson as the government's catch-up tsar just five months ago, tasked with overseeing the creation of a plan that would ensure pupils could recover after two periods of school closures during the coronavirus pandemic.

It was revealed this week that he had asked the government to fund a £15 billion catch-up package, but today the Department for Education came up with just £1.4 billion. He resigned from the (voluntary) role on 2nd June, stating:

"A half-hearted approach risks failing hundreds of thousands of pupils. The support announced by government so far does not come close to meeting the scale of the challenge and is why I have no option but to resign from my post." He added that the package of support "falls far short of what is needed" as he warned that it is "too narrow, too small and will be delivered too slowly."

"The average primary school will directly receive just £6,000 per year, equivalent to £22 per child. Not enough is being done to help vulnerable pupils, children in the early years or 16- to 19-year-olds," Sir Kevan said.

Essex Education Task Force

The first meeting of the new Essex Education Task Force took place recently, marking the start of ambitious plans to address the impact of COVID19 on children and young people's education and emotional wellbeing. To read more about the Task Force aims and ambitions and keep up to date on progress, please see the [ECC website article](#) and [Cllr Ball's blog](#).

**Data collection** – see DfE section below

### **Relevant Documents and Guidance**

#### **DfE website**

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>

#### **Essex Schools Infolink**

<https://schools.essex.gov.uk/admin/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>

#### **NHS website**

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

### **Your "do-list"**

- Update your risk assessment with any changes, such as the reintroduction of extra-curricular clubs, educational visits, addition of groups to LFT.
- Consider extending the availability of Lateral Flow Tests to other groups, such as volunteers.
- Discuss the summer schools programme with your local secondary school(s).
- Make sure that Paediatric First Aid certificates are up to date.
- Attend the webcast on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June to hear from Clare Kershaw and Mike Gogarty.
- Send any questions and comments to EPHA – to Pam Langmead [pam@langmead.me.uk](mailto:pam@langmead.me.uk) and/or to the School Communications team [Schools.Communication@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Schools.Communication@essex.gov.uk)
- Stay safe and well!

# Safeguarding and Attendance

## Key information

### **Everyone's Invited - A movement committed to eradicating rape culture**

At the end of March the website 'Everyone's Invited' drew much publicity for the shocking testimonials from over 10,000 people describing sexual abuse by other young people. As a result, on 31<sup>st</sup> March the government announced that they were launching a review into sexual abuse in schools.

Jo Barclay has produced guidance, a checklist and a model policy that Essex schools can use.

### **Ofsted review into sexual abuse in schools: terms of reference - GOV.UK**

Following the launch of the government's investigation into peer-on-peer sexual abuse, Ofsted has published its terms of reference.

The review will look at whether schools and colleges have appropriate processes in place to allow pupils to report sexual abuse concerns freely, knowing these will be taken seriously and dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

Ofsted will visit a sample of schools and colleges where cases have been highlighted, with ISI where appropriate, to look at how well safeguarding is working and to discuss the wider issues raised by the evidence. The review will not report on individual schools or cases, but present a picture of good and poor practice across the country.

The review will consider a number of areas, including:

- Whether the safeguarding guidance to schools is strong enough to safeguard children;
- How schools can be further supported to teach the new RSHE curriculum;
- Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements; and
- How well schools and colleges listen to the voices of children when reporting sexual abuse

The review is to conclude by the end of May 2021.

Read the document here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-review-of-sexual-abuse/ofsted-review-into-sexual-abuse-in-schools-terms-of-reference>

### **Dedicated NSPCC helpline 0800 136 663**

The new helpline will provide both children and adults who are potential victims of sexual abuse in schools with the appropriate support and advice. This includes how to contact the police and report crimes if they wish. The helpline will also provide support to parents and professionals too.

### **DBS Barred List Checks - Important Changes from 1st April 2021**

From the 1st April 2021, standalone checks of the children's barred list will be administered by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) on behalf of the DfE. This means that standalone barred list checks can no longer be obtained from TP Online or from the various umbrella bodies and supply agencies who currently sell these checks. Schools need to ensure that they see the original (paper) DBS certificate for all new appointments in regulated activity with children. A digital certificate or letter of clearance is not acceptable.

If the appointee is transferring directly from another school in England without a break in service of 3 months or more, the appointing school can undertake a stand-alone barred list check using the TRA website.

The Teaching Regulation Agency website is here: <https://teacherservices.education.gov.uk/>

For further information, see: <https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk/employers/tp-online-page.aspx>

If you have any questions about these changes, you can contact the DfE at [tponline.replacement@education.gov.uk](mailto:tponline.replacement@education.gov.uk); or if you have any questions about access to the replacement service contact: [Employer.Access@education.gov.uk](mailto:Employer.Access@education.gov.uk)

### **Child Protection Policy update**

The most recent ECC Child Protection model policy is March 2021. Make sure that the most up to date version is approved by governors and published on your website.

### **Safeguarding forums for schools**

The dates for the online safeguarding forums are Tuesday 29 June 2021, 9.30am - 11.30am and Thursday 1 July 2021 2pm - 4pm. To secure a place for your DSL or Deputy DSL, please complete the booking form.

Booking form: [click here](#)

### **Safeguarding audit tool**

A reminder that you are NOT required to submit the school's safeguarding audit this year, but can use the spreadsheet as a self-evaluation tool. You can access this on the EPHA website or the safeguarding page on the Essex Schools Infolink

<https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/info-and-documents/safeguarding/>

<https://schools.essex.gov.uk/pupils/Safeguarding/Pages/Safeguarding.aspx>

### **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021**

A consultation on proposed changes to KCSiE for September 2021 closed on 4<sup>th</sup> March

The draft guidance document (i.e. the new version of KCSiE) was published for the consultation. There are no new statutory requirements proposed - most of the proposals clarify and expand on existing guidance.

The DfE guidance on *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges* is also being reviewed, but I believe is likely to be significantly altered as a result of the current review into peer on peer abuse.

### **Domestic Abuse Bill**

Children to be legally defined as victims - Although in the past children have been seen as 'witnesses' to domestic abuse. The new Domestic Abuse Bill, currently in its Third Reading, will define children as 'victims' for the very first time. The Bill says that a victim of domestic abuse includes a reference to a child who sees or hears, or experiences the effects of the abuse the adult is their parent or someone who has parental responsibility for the child, or are related to them. (See Domestic Abuse Bill Part 1, Section 3 <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2709> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets>

ECC is working on a strategy to address the changes in the DA bill, including new statutory responsibilities for the local authority. I have asked for relevant training and effective information sharing to be included within the strategy.

### **Attendance**

School attendance became mandatory again for all pupils from 8 March.

The usual rules on school attendance apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure their child's regular attendance at school (where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age)
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

As usual, you are responsible for recording attendance, following up absence and reporting children missing education to the local authority.

The LA has produced guidance on the new sub-codes applicable from 8th March.

[https://schools.essex.gov.uk/pupils/attendance\\_specialist\\_teams/Documents/COVID-19%20Attendance%20coding%20-%20From%208th%20March%202021%20-%20including%20new%20DFE%20sub%20codes%204.3.2021.pdf](https://schools.essex.gov.uk/pupils/attendance_specialist_teams/Documents/COVID-19%20Attendance%20coding%20-%20From%208th%20March%202021%20-%20including%20new%20DFE%20sub%20codes%204.3.2021.pdf)

### **Relevant Documents and Guidance**

- Child Protection Policy – Covid-19 update  
<https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/info-and-documents/safeguarding/>
- CYP Response Plan
- Essex Safeguarding briefings and guidance  
<https://schools.essex.gov.uk/admin/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>
- Attendance information and link <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>
- Advice for parents – seeking medical help for children – poster  
<https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/files/covid19-advice-for-parents-poster.pdf>

### **Your “do-list”**

- Use the checklist and model policy provided by Jo Barclay in relation to peer on peer abuse.
- Look out for future guidance, training and policies in relation to domestic abuse, peer on peer abuse and the 2021 KCSiE guidance.
- Sign up to one of the summer term safeguarding forum meetings.
- Use the safeguarding audit as an internal assessment tool.
- Ensure that you are signed up to Andrew Hall's brilliant weekly safeguarding briefing  
<http://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/>

## DfE updates and publications

### Key information

#### Assessment

GCSEs, AS and A levels [won't go ahead](#) this summer. The government has [confirmed](#) that pupils taking GCSEs, AS and A levels this summer will be awarded grades based on teacher judgements - these should only be based on what pupils have been taught (read our [summary](#) for more)

Statutory KS1 and KS2 assessments planned for summer 2021 won't go ahead (as explained in the operational guidance [here](#)). But if you want, you can administer the optional [multiplication tables check](#) within the 3-week period from 7 June 2021

The DfE has added [temporary disapplications](#) to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) - as such, it won't be mandatory to complete the EYFS profile assessment in 2021 (the disapplications also mean that paediatric first aid certificates that expired on or after 1 October 2020 remained valid until 31 March if coronavirus prevented staff doing requalification training)

The [new guidance](#) on summer 2021 assessment arrangements from the JCQ states that:

Heads of centres will be required to confirm that pupils have been taught enough to provide a basis for the grade

Between 12 and 30 April, schools will need to fill in and submit a centre policy (there's a template in the link above to help you). We've recently updated our article on [awarding exam grades in summer 2021](#) to reflect these changes

Due to the changes in assessment arrangements this year, independent study leave for year 11 to 13 exam cohorts might not be applicable. The DfE has added [guidance](#) on valuable activities pupils should take part in for the last half of the summer term

#### Optional Multiplication Tables Check in June 2021

Schools can choose to administer the optional multiplication tables check (MTC) to year 4 pupils, between Monday 7 June 2021 and Friday 25 June 2021. This is an opportunity for schools to familiarise themselves with the check before its planned introduction as a statutory assessment in the 2021-2022 academic year. Further information will be available in the MTC administration guidance which will be published at the start of the summer term.

STA have published a Multiplication Tables Check [information video](#), and a [leaflet](#) for schools to share with parents.

#### Additional funding

The government has [announced](#) further elements of its education recovery package, with additional funding for the new Recovery Premium for state-funded primary and secondary schools. The average primary will receive around £6,000 extra, and the average secondary around £22,000 extra

All the funding announced today is across the next three academic years, DfE confirmed. Here's the key points:

#### Tutoring: NTP provider confirmed, £579m straight to schools

1 [Randstad has finally been announced](#) as the provider for year two of the National Tutoring Programme (NTP). The HR firm will have support from Teach First to "ensure the programme is successfully set up for the effective delivery and continuous improvement" next year. Teach First currently runs the [academic mentors](#) arm of the NTP

£218 million for NTP, on top of the £215 million already planned for 2021-22 academic year

£579 million for schools to develop "local tutoring provision" using new or existing staff. DfE say this will "complement" the NTP offer with tutors directly employed by schools, and schools will be funded in "accordance with their pupil premium allocations".

Funding expected to cover about 75 per cent of costs of "local tutoring provision" in 2021-22, with schools contributing the remaining costs. But schools will be expected to "increase their financial contribution" over time so they are meeting "the majority of costs" in three years' time, as [Schools Week](#) revealed.

£222 million to extend the existing 16 to 19 tutoring programme, expected to deliver around 700,000 courses each year

NTP will be given a target of 65 per cent for getting tuition to pupils eligible for pupil premium, as Schools Week [revealed this year](#), with a "focus towards areas with the lowest proportions of Good and Outstanding schools"

#### Longer school day: Review to report later this year, and funding year 13s to repeat

Government to review time spent in school and college. Findings will be set out "later in the year to inform the

spending review”

Schools and colleges to be funded by the DfE to give some year 13 students the option to repeat their final year. No further details have been announced.

### **Teacher training: £150m for early years staff**

£153 million to train early years staff, including new programmes focusing on speech and language  
£69 million to extend the roll-out of the early career framework reforms. Teachers in their first year after qualifying already have funded time off timetable to access training, which will be extended to second year teachers from this September – a year earlier than previously planned. The further £32 million cost of this will be met through existing DfE schools budgets.

£184 million for middle and late-career national professional qualifications (NPQs)

- If you're a primary school, you [need to spend](#) any PE and sport premium funding carried forward from 2019/20 that you couldn't use due to coronavirus, by the end of the 2020/21 academic year (previously you had until the end of March to spend it).
- Through the private candidate support grant for exam centres, secondary schools could get £200 per entry for GCSEs, AS levels and A levels, and for VTQs and other general qualifications which are subject to alternative arrangements to exams - this is to cover the additional costs due to the different assessment approach in summer 2021. Schools are expected to only charge private candidates the same fee that they would charge in previous years where exams have taken place.

### **Pupil premium funding**

Schools will have to show their pupil premium spending is “backed by evidence” under new requirements announced by the Department for Education. The DfE confirmed schools face new conditions attached to the £2.5bn expected in funding to support disadvantaged pupils for the next academic year.

Grants now depend on pupil premium spending strategies being published annually, and the DfE will carry out “monitoring checks” on a sample of school reports.

Schools have been told their activities “should include” investing in teaching quality, targeted academic support and tackling non-academic barriers such as attendance, behaviour and emotional support.

Professional development is highlighted as an example of supporting teaching quality, while tutoring is suggested as an example of targeted support.

**Schools have also been ordered to make reference to the Education Endowment Foundation’s [pupil premium guide](#) and to use DfE templates to write their strategies, due by the end of the calendar year.**

“From academic year 2021 to 2022, schools must demonstrate how their spending decisions are informed by research evidence,” the [latest conditions of grant documents state](#).

The template is available at the following link

[Pupil premium: strategy statements - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Previously schools were asked to submit annual strategies and read the EEF guide produced in 2019, but did not have to follow it and writing a strategy was not a condition of funding.

Past guidance had stated such documents were “not used by the DfE to monitor how effectively you’re using the pupil premium” or to allocate future funding, instead highlighting their importance for parents and governors.

A new section of the conditions of grant for schools reads: “Given their role in ensuring schools spend funding appropriately and in holding schools to account for educational performance, governors and trustees should scrutinise schools’ plans, including their plans for and use of their pupil premium funding.

### **Early Career Framework**

The [Early Career Framework \(ECF\)](#) builds on initial teaching training and sets out what early career teachers should learn about and learn how to do. It's designed to support development in 5 core areas:

- Behaviour management
- Pedagogy
- Curriculum
- Assessment
- Professional behaviours

The framework is presented in 8 sections, to align with the Teachers’ Standards.

### **Early Career Teachers**

The DfE has published [new statutory guidance](#) on induction for early career teachers (ECTs). ECT is a new term that will replace 'newly qualified teacher' (NQT).

The guidance applies to settings which:

- Are required to offer statutory induction to their ECTs, or
- Choose to offer statutory induction to their ECTs

It comes into force on 1 September, updating and replacing the [existing guidance on NQT induction](#). And, while many of the statutory components are the same, there are some important changes you need to be aware of.

#### *Key changes from 1 September 2021*

- You'll need to deliver a 2-year induction programme, underpinned by the Early Career Framework (ECF)
- A new role – induction mentor – has been created, fulfilling a separate and distinct role to the induction tutor
- ECTs will be formally assessed twice – once midway through the 2-year period and once at the end – with a progress review each term where a formal assessment does not take place
- ECTs will get a 5% timetable reduction in their second year of induction (they'll still get a 10% reduction in the first year, as they do now)

The guidance also increases the number of ad-hoc absences permitted, in line with the increase in length of the induction period (paragraph 3.6).

Note – if you're a state-funded school, you'll get additional funding to help cover the costs of the ECT's 5% timetable reduction and time spent with their mentor in the second year - see the DfE's [paper on the ECF reforms](#) for more detail (under 'Funding for national roll-out').

#### *Transition arrangements*

Early career teachers who have started - but not completed - their induction before 1 September 2021 have until 1 September 2023 to complete induction within 3 terms. They will be known as the 'pre-September 2021 cohort', and should continue to refer to the existing NQT guidance.

Where possible, ECTs beginning their induction before 1 September 2021 should have an ECF-based induction, complete with a mentor, for their 1-year induction.

After 1 September 2023, when the transition period ends, all ECTs will be required to complete a 2-year induction period.

*Juniper HR has confirmed that they will update the NQT Induction Policy in line with the new arrangements – scheduled to be available by half term.*

#### **Timescales for expulsions between 25 September 2020 and 24 September 2021**

Expulsions between 25 September 2020 and 24 September 2021 (inclusive) should follow the deadlines in the [suspensions and expulsions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England statutory guidance](#), other than the deadline for the application of an independent review.

If it is not reasonably practicable to meet by the usual deadline either in person because of coronavirus (COVID-19), or by remote access because of the conditions for a remote access meeting, the meeting must not be delayed any longer than is reasonably necessary because of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Main guidance continues to be September 2017, but refer to the guidance setting out changes during the pandemic. Make sure that parents are aware of any alterations to the process that might be required (timescales, remote meetings etc).

[Changes to the school suspension and expulsion process during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

#### **Data collection arrangements**

Updated Guidance on cancelling or pausing data collections at this time has come out -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-reducing-burdens-on-educational-and-care-settings/reducing-burdens-on-educational-and-care-settings>. To help reduce the burden on educational and care settings at this time, the Department for Education (DfE) and its agencies have cancelled or paused all but the most essential data collections, services and requests from educational and care settings for the 2020/21 academic year.

Not all data collections will be paused or cancelled, so note those still taking place. One additional requirement continues to be the daily educational settings status form.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-complete-the-educational-setting-status-form>

#### **Annual Written Reports to Parents**

The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) have not yet published advice on the formal reporting requirements to parents this year; you will remember that last summer the statutory requirement was suspended. The LA is lobbying the DfE to publish advice about this term's arrangements.

#### **Early years foundation stage statutory framework (EYFS)**

The EYFS profile assessment for 2021 is no longer mandatory, but you must prioritise trying to undertake it this term.

The EYFS framework is changing slightly from September 2021. This [new EYFS framework](#) will be valid from 1 September 2021. The Key has produced a useful summary of reforms. These include:

- There are still 17 ELGs, but the DfE has changed what they cover.
- The DfE is getting rid of local authority (LA) moderation for the EYFS profile. Instead of LA moderation, your school will:
  - Use the updated ELGs to achieve more consistent assessment judgements
  - Continue to moderate internally
  - Continue to partner with other local schools for moderation
  - Submit EYFSP data to the LA
- The DfE has also removed the 'exceeding' judgement. Instead of being judged as 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding' against each ELG, children will only be judged as 'emerging' or 'expected'.
- The DfE will include promotion of good oral health as part of the overall requirement to promote good health. This is because research from Public Health England shows that 1 in 5 5-year-olds have experienced tooth decay.

It'll be up to you to decide how you'll meet this requirement - you won't have to assess it or supervise tooth brushing. It could mean things like talking to children about the effects of eating too many sweet things, or the importance of brushing your teeth.

If you want to introduce supervised tooth brushing, read [this guidance](#).

#### *What's not changing*

The DfE isn't changing:

- The characteristics of effective teaching and learning
- The terms 'prime' and 'specific' areas of learning, or the names of each of these
- The 'good level of development' measure
- The progress check at age 2 (this remains statutory)

#### **Reception Baseline Assessment**

In response to the 2017 primary assessment consultation, the government announced plans to introduce a statutory reception baseline assessment (RBA) in autumn 2020. Due to the challenges faced by schools because of COVID-19, statutory introduction of the RBA has been postponed to autumn 2021. Instead, all schools had the opportunity to sign up to the RBA early adopter year in autumn 2020.

The RBA will be an activity-based assessment of pupils' starting point in:

- language, communication, and literacy
- mathematics

The assessment will be age-appropriate, last approximately 20 minutes and teachers will record the results on a laptop, computer or tablet. It will not be used to label or track individual pupils. No numerical score will be shared and the data will only be used at the end of year 6 to form the school-level progress measure. However, teachers will receive a series of short, narrative statements that tell them how their pupils performed in the assessment at that time. These can be used to inform teaching within the first term. When statutory from September 2021, schools will carry out the assessment within the first 6 weeks of children starting school.

#### **SEND Engagement Model**

The statutory teacher assessments due to take place in summer 2021, including the transition year for the engagement model and the final year of P scales 1 to 4, have been cancelled. The DfE expects the engagement model to become statutory from September 2021, replacing P scales 1 to 4.

Schools can use the engagement model in their own assessments in summer 2021 if they wish, while those schools that need more time to implement the engagement model before September 2021, could consider assessing pupils against P scales during the summer term in 2021. Arrangements for 2021/22 will be published in due course.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-engagement-model>

#### **DfE School to School Support directory**

This is the updated list of teaching school hubs, teaching schools, National Leaders of Education and National Leaders of Governance, that schools can access for support.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-school-to-school-support-from-system-leaders>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-to-school-support-directory>

#### **Teachers' Pension Scheme consultation**

The consultation concerns proposed changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme regulations to ensure that the policy aims are achieved. There are two main proposals to amend the above scheme regulations for the following purposes:

- to provide female members in an opposite-sex marriage or civil partnership with the same survivor pension rights as female members in a same-sex marriage or civil partnership; and
- to amend participation rules relating to accepted schools to allow for the phased withdrawal of independent schools that might otherwise leave the TPS outright with immediate effect.

There are other minor amendments.

The consultation closes on 1st June

[Teachers' Pension Scheme - proposed changes to regulations - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#)

### Relevant Documents and Guidance

- Specific Covid-19 guidance for education and childcare at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>
- DFE latest documents <https://www.gov.uk/government/latest?departments%5B%5D=department-for-education>
- Schools statutory guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statutory-guidance-schools#history>
- School to School Support Directory  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-to-school-support-directory>

### Your “do-list”

- You **must** now refer to the EEF Pupil Premium guide and use the DfE template to report on your pupil premium strategy and expenditure.
- Spend any PE and sport premium funding carried forward from 2019/20 that you couldn't use due to coronavirus, by the end of the 2020/21 academic year
- Consider using the optional Multiplication Table Checks in June.
- Plan for the introduction of the Reception Baseline Assessment, due to be statutory from September 2021.
- Ensure that your staff are aware of the engagement model that is likely to become statutory in September.
- Contribute to the Teachers' Pension Scheme consultation – and check your own pension!

# Ofsted

## Key information

Ofsted [has confirmed](#) it will continue with non-graded monitoring inspections (Section 8) in the summer term, and they'll be carried out in person from 4 May.

Ofsted has also confirmed that the full programme of graded school inspections will resume in autumn 2021.

From 4 May, some inspections under the EIF will restart and will take place on site. These include section 8 monitoring inspections of schools graded 'inadequate', and those graded 'requires improvement' at their last 2 consecutive full inspections.

In line with their usual policy, where inspectors find evidence that an inadequate school has improved and is no longer inadequate, they will be able to convert this to a [section 5 \('full'\) inspection](#), which will be graded.

Where inspectors find evidence that a 'requires improvement' school has improved, they will recommend that a full inspection is carried out before the end of the summer term.

## Inspection of "good" schools

Ofsted will also inspect 'good' schools that, due to the pandemic, have not had an inspection within the statutory 5-year window. These will be section 8 inspections and follow the usual approach to inspecting good schools, as outlined in the [section 8 school inspection handbook](#).

'Outstanding' schools will also be able to request an inspection. When considering requests, we will prioritise those schools that have gone the longest without an inspection. School leaders can request an inspection by writing to the relevant Ofsted regional director.

**NB Lorna Fitzjohn has recently taken over from Paul Brooker as the Regional Director for East of England.**

Ofsted will continue to prioritise inspections of all schools where significant concerns are raised, when necessary.

Unless significant concerns are raised, Ofsted will not inspect secondary schools in the first half of the summer term. This will allow leaders and staff to focus on assigning and submitting teacher-assessed grades. Secondary schools will be included in inspection schedules from 21 June.

Under these plans, most schools will not receive an inspection until the programme of routine inspections restarts in September.

COVID-19 safety precautions before the inspection will include:

- Inspectors taking a lateral flow test, and
- A chance to discuss and agree safety measures with the inspectors

In early years settings, Ofsted will:

- Begin graded inspections of some registered early years providers from 4 May
- Continue with urgent inspections where there are significant concerns

On 19<sup>th</sup> April Ofsted published the revised versions of:

Section 5 handbook, plus a summary of changes:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif>

Section 8 handbook, plus a summary of changes

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/section-8-school-inspection-handbook-eif>

## Safeguarding reference documents in the section 5 handbook

Paragraph 295 in the revised Section 5 handbook refers to the safeguarding documents that Ofsted inspectors must take into account, including keeping Children Safe in Education, and Working Together to Safeguard Children. It also refers to another document, dated March 2018, which I had never heard of! This is *Positive environments where children can flourish – a guide for inspectors about physical intervention and restrictions of liberty*.

Who knew?!

## Ofsted to publish new series of subject reviews and reports

From April, Ofsted will publish a series of subject reviews and reports, taking a 'state of the nation' look at curriculum quality across primary and secondary schools.

The documents will be published in two phases, beginning with the research reviews in the summer term.

The reviews will set out the literature that informs the way they think about high-quality education in each

subject.

The subject reports will follow in the autumn, and will be based on evidence from subject 'deep dives' in EIF (education inspection framework) inspections as well as additional research visits. The reports will draw on evidence from across the country, including schools from a range of contexts with different pupil intakes and inspection judgements.

Schools are facing difficult curriculum choices as they work hard to help pupils catch up. Ofsted hopes that the guiding principles set out in their curriculum work over the coming months will support and inform those leading the thinking on subject planning in our schools.

Read more about the [principles behind our curriculum work](#) over the next year and beyond.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofsted-to-publish-new-series-of-subject-reviews-and-reports>

### Relevant Documents and Guidance

- School Inspection Handbook –section 5 including evaluation descriptors *November 2019*
- School Inspection handbook - section 8 *November 2019*
- April 2021 Section 5 handbook, plus a summary of changes:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif>
- April 2021 Section 8 handbook, plus a summary of changes  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/section-8-school-inspection-handbook-eif>
- Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills setting – *October 2019*
- EPHA audit of Ofsted safeguarding requirements – January 2020
- Positive environments where children can flourish – a guide for inspectors about physical intervention and restrictions of liberty.
- Ofsted online presentations <https://www.slideshare.net/Ofstednews>
- The Education Inspection Framework – education, skills and early years *November 2019*
- Ofsted inspection website <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>

All guidance can be found on GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ofsted-inspections-of-maintained-schools>

or on the EPHA website [www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk](http://www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk)

Information about Ofsted inspections at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/being-inspected-as-a-maintained-school-or-academy>

### Your “do-list”

- Download the new handbooks for Section 8, Section 5 and Early Years inspections.
- If you are a school judged “inadequate” or “requires improvement”, or are a “good” school over 5 years from your last inspection, brush up on the revised Section 8 handbook.
- Consider tasking someone to focus on your school website, making sure that it is kept up to date, as far as possible. One day Ofsted will return, and it may be this term!

## School policies and the website

### Key information

#### This term you need to review and adopt (if not already done):

- Relationship and Sex Education Policy
- Early Career Framework Policy

HR has confirmed that they will change and update the NQT induction policy to reflect the new Early Career Framework being introduced in September – the model policy will be available by the end of the summer half term.

*You may remember that in May 2018 HR updated a raft of policies to reflect GDPR changes. If you are on a three-year review schedule for these policies it will be time to review the following:*

- Equality and Diversity
- Sickness Absence
- Cover and PPA Policy
- Flexible Working

These policies have been reviewed and re-formatted by HR, but with no changes in text.

#### Child Protection Policy - latest version reflecting the wider school opening – March 2021.

<https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/info-and-documents/safeguarding/>

#### Current Juniper HR policy list for schools, academies and free schools

| Policy or procedure                                     | Statutory or recommended         | Current edition |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Agency workers regulations                              |                                  | June 2013       |
| Capability procedure for all staff                      | Statutory                        | September 2020  |
| Code of conduct   | Required by KCSiE                | June 2019       |
| Cover and PPA   | Recommended                      | December 2020   |
| Dealing with safeguarding allegations against adults    | Statutory                        | December 2020   |
| Discipline and Dismissal                                | Statutory                        | September 2020  |
| Equality and Diversity in Employment                    | Recommended                      | January 2021    |
| Flexible Working  | Recommended                      | December 2020   |
| Grievance   | Statutory                        | December 2020   |
| Inducting NQTs  | Statutory                        | February 2020   |
| Leave of Absence (and guidance)                         | Recommended                      | April 2020      |
| Mental health and wellbeing                             | Recommended                      | January 2020    |
| Pay Policy  | Statutory (M)<br>Recommended (A) | September 2020  |
| Performance Management (all staff)                      | Statutory (M)<br>Recommended (A) | December 2020   |
| Probation procedure                                     | Recommended                      | November 2020   |
| Recruitment   | Statutory                        | April 2020      |
| Redundancy and restructuring -academies                 | Recommended                      | December 2020   |
| Redundancy and restructuring – Essex maintained schools | Statutory                        | December 2020   |
| Sickness Absence management                             | Recommended                      | January 2019    |
| Sabbatical  | Recommended                      | October 2020    |
| Whistleblowing  | Statutory                        | December 2020   |

**EPHA has developed lists of statutory and mandatory policies for schools and academies, based on DfE and other guidance.** The current checklist is January 2021

The checklists include information about review frequency, the level of approval and additional notes.

<https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/info-and-documents/model-policies/>

### **Updated version (April 2021) of the website checklists**

I have updated the website checklists for both maintained schools and academies – available on the EPHA website. Since last term, there has just been a minor change to the remote education section (no longer called “remote learning contingency arrangements”).

In addition, the checklist now notes that schools MUST use the DfE template when reporting on their pupil premium strategy.

<https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/info-and-documents/model-policies/>

### **Data protection and GDPR**

There is a useful article on the GDPR for schools website about data protection during the Covid 19 pandemic.

<https://www.gdpr.school/covid-19-and-schools/>

### **Relevant Documents and Guidance**

- EPHA website requirements checklists <https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/info-and-documents/model-policies/>
- EPHA statutory/mandatory policy checklists <https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/info-and-documents/model-policies/>
- HR list of policies for schools, academies and free schools available on the secure log in of Juniper website <https://junipereducation.org/>
- DfE website requirements  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online>  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-academies-free-schools-and-colleges-should-publish-online#history>

### **Your “do-list”**

- Approve the Relationships and Sex Education Policy following a consultation with staff and parents. Publish on the school website.
- Check the HR policy checklist and ensure that you have the most up to date versions
- Download the EPHA statutory/mandatory policy checklist (January 2021) and ensure that you are compliant
- Update your website in line with most recent guidance, using the checklists provided by EPHA (April 2021). Make sure you use the DfE template when reporting on your pupil premium strategy.

## HR Information

### Key information

Ensure your **Single Central Record** is up to date with current staff, volunteers, governors and third-party workers. Ensure new starters are added and leavers have been removed. Remember the new requirements when recruiting overseas staff- paragraph 172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (January 2021). HR can undertake an **Audit** to check compliance – please contact [Educationhr@junipereducation.org](mailto:Educationhr@junipereducation.org)

HR has produced a series of **Quick Guides to Teachers' Pay** – Covering Leadership Pay, Qualified and Unqualified Teachers' Pay and Qualified Teacher Allowances. As the name suggests, these are brief overviews of the key provisions on pay which we hope you will find useful.

### National Professional Qualification update

The Government has published now further information on the new **National professional qualifications (NPQs)** for teachers and leaders who want to develop their knowledge and skills in school leadership and specialist areas of teaching practice. Scholarship funding to support participants to access the reformed suite of NPQs is planned from September 2021 and details will be confirmed in due course. The link above included detail of the lead training providers.

### Public Sector Pay

It was reported in January that public sector pay will be frozen for the next year. For teachers, there is a proposed exemption for those who earn less than £24k fte per annum, who it is proposed will receive a £250 increase. Local Government Pay is determined by Collective Agreement and therefore not covered by the pay freeze, although the employers' side is likely to have regard to it. The Unions have put in a claim for Green Book staff of a 10% increase on all pay points, a reduction in working hours and a further increase in holiday entitlement. In addition, they have called for a joint review of job roles, pay and career development, completion of the non-statutory guidance on term time working, a review of maternity etc. leave provisions and an agreement on a best practice national programme of mental health support. We wait to see what will be agreed, and when, but it is highly doubtful that the claim will be met as currently presented. The employer's side will not respond to the claim until after 6th May and it will be sometime after before the final agreement is made. Academies which do not follow the national pay increase, will need to decide whether to await the outcome of these negotiations before determining their own increases.

### Pension Pay Cap Rescinded

The Government has now rescinded the Pension Pay cap that was introduced on the 4th November last year. The policy had put a maximum cap of £95,000 on any severance packages, which included redundancy payments and employer pension strain costs arising when support staff age 55+ are made redundant. The regulations were dis-applied on 12th February 2021, although the disapplication is backdated to 4th November. However, the associated reforms of early release of pension in redundancy cases for support staff is likely to proceed, as this was proposed prior to the Pay Cap, and the Government is currently considering the consultation feedback.

**Juniper HR for Schools** continues to provide regular updates on the personnel issues cropping up for schools during the Covid pandemic. These are available to all schools and are being sent out in the regular communications and on the infolink.

### Relevant Documents and Guidance

- Covid-19 related documents and guidance  
DfE <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing>
- Juniper <https://junipereducation.org/>  
Direct dial number for HR 01245 698378
- Essex Schools Infolink <https://schools.essex.gov.uk/admin/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>

### Your "do-list"

- Refer to the DfE and HR guidance when making decisions about Covid-19 related issues.
- Make sure your Single Central Record is up to date and complete, including new information if recruiting overseas staff.
- Continue, as far as possible, with performance management processes (adapting them as you see fit) and recruitment for September.
- Take advice from your HR consultant when necessary. Make sure you have noted the direct dial number for HR 01245 698378

# School and Academy Governance

## Key information

### The future of governing body meetings

The vast majority of schools continue to hold their governing body meetings online this term, but you may be starting to consider the future of your meetings. A few governors are keen to get back to in-school meetings, but I suggest that you include a formal discussion and review of how successful (or otherwise) virtual meetings have been, as an agenda item in the summer term. This should link to your own workload and wellbeing, the impact on attendance at meetings, and efficiency and effectiveness. A future model could be, for example, that you continue committee meetings online but holding your termly governing body meeting in school.

This has been picked up in a DfE Governance update (published 21/04) which confirms that *Governing and trust boards should continue to take a pragmatic approach to their meetings. In line with national restrictions, and guidance on social distancing, boards should continue with their alternative meeting arrangements where possible but could consider whether a blended approach of face-to-face and virtual meetings would be appropriate if needed.*

*Chairs should respond flexibly to the personal circumstances of board members and their clerk/governance professionals, having open conversations about how they wish to join meetings.*

[School governance update: April 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/school-governance-update-april-2021)

### Complete the SFVS (maintained schools)

You must do this by 28 May 2021 (the deadline was [extended](#) due to coronavirus).

The 2019-20 SFVS template is still appropriate for 2020-21. The checklist sets out questions for the governing board to discuss with the headteacher and senior staff. It also includes a dashboard to show how your school compares to thresholds identified by the Department for Education (DfE).

You might delegate detailed scrutiny of the SFVS to a relevant committee but, if you do, they should provide a detailed report to the full board as the full board needs to agree it. The chair of governors must sign the completed form.

Academies should have completed the School Resource Management Self-assessment tool. The deadline for academy trusts to submit their checklist was 15 April 2021.

### Approve the annual budget

Maintained schools: check your LA's deadline – 1st May for Essex schools.

Academies: your budget (part of the budget forecast return three year – BFR3Y) must be [submitted to the Education and Skills Funding Agency](#) (ESFA) by July. But do check your funding agreement in case your deadline's different.

### Check arrangements for panel meetings

#### Admissions appeals

Appeal panels don't need to be held in person.

Temporary regulations that came into force in April 2020 will now remain in place until 30 September 2021 (the date [was extended](#) from 31 January 2021).

The [key changes](#) in place until 30 September include:

Flexibility with panel hearings - when it's not safe to meet face-to-face (in line with government guidance), hearings can take place remotely by telephone or video conference, or through a paper-based appeal where all parties can make representations in writing

Amendments to deadlines - appellants must now be:

- Given at least 28 calendar days' written notice of a deadline for lodging an appeal
- Given at least 14 calendar days' written notice of an appeal hearing (although appellants can waive their right to this in writing)
- Sent a decision letter within 7 calendar days of the hearing (or in the case of written submissions only, within 7 calendar days of the appeal panel making a decision), wherever possible

Relaxation of rules around panel member numbers - if 1 of the 3 panel members withdraws (temporarily or permanently), the panel can continue with and conclude the appeal as a panel of 2

See this [DfE guidance](#) for more detail.

#### Exclusions panels

For exclusions between 25 September 2020 and 24 September 2021 (inclusive), you need to follow the usual timescales. If you can't meet in person, you can hold meetings remotely.

If it's not possible to meet the deadline either in person or remotely, you must not delay the meeting any

longer than is reasonably necessary.  
This is explained in this [DfE guidance](#).

### **Consider staffing arrangements for 2021/22**

Reorganise your staffing structure if necessary. Even with the current challenges of dealing with coronavirus, there may be reasons why your leadership team wants to reorganise the school's staffing structure. This might be where:

- Your budget-setting process has shown that you need to make savings
- If coronavirus costs have impacted your budget, you can claim some finances back under a government scheme.
- Staff have resigned and you need to think about what this means for the staffing structure as a whole
- You're thinking about changing how your school delivers education and want to try something new in September
- Recruit a headteacher if yours has resigned

### **Less-urgent items**

Discuss these items in focus groups or if you've got time as a board after you've completed your urgent tasks. Set the strategy for 2021/22

It might be a good idea to set up a working party for strategy development.

Medium term: this'll likely focus on closing the learning gap between pupils and recovery. You might also look at wellbeing and staying healthy too.

Reflect on your board's skills and effectiveness

While you're reflecting, consider how your board has performed over the year. Discuss:

- How well you've worked together. This may cover:
- How your chair and board has responded to the coronavirus situation, and if there are any areas for improvement you can implement going forward
- How remote meetings have worked, including if they're effective and everyone can contribute
- Whether you have all the skills you need on your board, and what extra skills you would like
- Whether you need to make any changes to work more effectively over the next year

Carry out a skills audit to help with this and discuss the results in a meeting. Discuss your training needs, and what you can do about them as a board.

### **Governance Annual Statement – Maintained schools**

"Best practice" for maintained school governing bodies.

In January 2014 the Department for Education published departmental advice in relation to the the School Procedures regulations 2013. A number of additional recommendations, not mentioned in the Procedures regulations, were made in the advice document, **including reference to the publication of an annual governance statement.**

*It is also good practice for the board to publish an annual governance statement (as academy trusts are required to do through the Accounts Direction) to explain how it has fulfilled its responsibilities – particularly in relation to its core functions.*

Since September 2015, it was mandatory for all schools to publish information about their governors on the website. Whilst accepting that the publication of a governance statement **is not mandatory**, it is good practice and an effective way for governors to demonstrate that their accountability to parents, at least annually. We suggest that governors agree a statement and publish this on their website, perhaps at the end of the summer term each year. **This year governors may want to publish a report about the school's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.**

### **Get Information about Schools**

Please continue to update the Get Information about Schools website. There was a system update on 13 April and a reminder that schools should check and update their current contact details.

<https://www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>

### **Relevant Documents and Guidance**

- Covid-19 Governance Support Guidance – produced by Essex LA
- SFVS 2019 – 2020 checklist and dashboard <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-financial-value-standard-sfvs>
- "Get information about schools" <https://www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>
- National Governors Association <http://www.nga.org.uk/Home.aspx>

**Your “do-list”**

- Review how well governing body meetings have been conducted during the pandemic, to enable you to make decisions about the future.
- Complete the SFVS by 28<sup>th</sup> May (maintained schools) and approve the annual budget plan for 2021/22.
- (Possibly) ask governors to write a governance statement for approval and publication on the school website at the end of the term.
- Update your school’s information on the Get Information about Schools website

# The Local Authority

## Key information

### New Opportunities Grants

A £100,000 fund is available from April for new ideas or delivery concepts to enable individuals or groups (including schools) to kick-start support for vulnerable children, young people or adults physically, socially, or emotionally affected by the pandemic. Small grants of £100 to £5000 are available and must meet one or more of these outcomes:

- Managing/coping with change
- Separation and loss
- Managing/coping with anxiety
- Maintaining healthy relationships
- Staying active
- Education and learning

Contact [CandFCommissioning@essex.gov.uk](mailto:CandFCommissioning@essex.gov.uk) to register your interest.

### New Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) Process

ECC is updating the Devolved Formula Capital Grant process, formally known as Formula Capital Grant (FCG). New Project Notification Forms have been created (DFC1) which schools need to complete to initiate the claim process. If applicable, this will be in conjunction with a new Landlord Consent Process, (LLC1) form. Further guidance is available on the usual Infolink page, under [schools.essex.gov.uk/admin/infrastructure-delivery/Pages/InfrastructureDelivery.aspx](https://schools.essex.gov.uk/admin/infrastructure-delivery/Pages/InfrastructureDelivery.aspx).

Alternatively schools can email [infrastructure.delivery@essex.gov.uk](mailto:infrastructure.delivery@essex.gov.uk) for further information.

The whole FGC process has changed and now takes much longer, they have warned it could take up to 2 months to obtain consent for some works. You now need landlord's consent for pretty much everything you want to do in school. There is now a School Property Handbook, a Landlords Consent Manual and a checklist for School Building Projects. The whole project's notification and landlord's consent process is explained on a link from the Infrastructure Delivery page.

### Essex Scheme for Financing Schools

Updated in March 2021. It's worth reminding your finance governors about this document. The Scheme sets out the financial relationship between the Authority and the maintained schools which it funds and contains requirements relating to financial management and associated issues which are binding on both the Authority and on schools.

<https://schools.essex.gov.uk/admin/Finance/Pages/Essex-Scheme.aspx>

### Inclusion conference

Inclusion and SEND is a key priority for the Local Authority, and a considerable amount of work has taken place to develop the SEND strategy. An online conference is planned for Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June. The Essex Inclusion Headteacher Round Table is continuing to work on a framework around what good SEND practice looks like in schools; this document will be launched at the conference. The minutes of the meetings are available on the EPHA website <https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/info-and-documents/send-strategy/>

### EWMHS EP telephone helpline – a reminder

The Emotional Wellbeing Mental Health service (EWMHS) is working with Educational Psychology Service (EPS) to provide any member of staff of Essex schools with the opportunity to discuss concerns they may have regarding the emotional wellbeing of pupils/students with an EP. The service is a confidential consultation, providing an opportunity to discuss areas of concern and develop an understanding of how to respond in these situations to better support pupils. Discussions can be around general themes. How emotional wellbeing (e.g. attachment, trauma, anxiety, bullying, autism, ADHD) may affect behaviours seen within a school environment. How to support a pupil/student via One Planning or other additional interventions. The helpline runs every Thursday morning during term time. Please use the email address below to book a telephone consultation (35 minutes). Let us know your name, school, role and contact number and we will get back to you offering a time slot: [EWMHSSchoolsAdvice@essex.gov.uk](mailto:EWMHSSchoolsAdvice@essex.gov.uk)

### Relevant Documents and Guidance

- Daily Schools Communications
- Essex Schools Infolink

### Your “do-list”

- Apply for a New Opportunities Grant to support recovery projects in your school.

- Attend the inclusion conference (online) on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June.
- Use the new forms to apply for the Devolved Formula Capital Grant.
- Use the EWHMS EP telephone helpline for advice and support.
- Make sure you are reading the regular communications and accessing guidance from the infolink.
- Contact your School Effectiveness Partner or other LA Officers for help and support.

## EPHA events and dates

### Key information

According to my information so far, just 5 primary schools in Essex have new headteachers this term (plus 2 who are now substantive headteachers)

#### North East

Sam Wilding St Andrew's CE Primary, Marks Tey

#### South

Julie Braithwaite Lincewood Primary (now substantive)

Anita Leonard St Margaret's Academy, Bowers Gifford – Head of School

Lisa Patient Noak Bridge Primary (now substantive)

#### West

Jen Pearce Magna Carta Primary Academy

#### Mid

Spencer Bragg Southminster CE Primary

Jennifer Penney Shalford Primary

*As usual if you are aware of any other new or acting headteachers this term, please let me know.*

### EPHA termly headteacher meetings 2020-21 and 2021-22

It continues to be difficult to know what the medium-term future of large gatherings and meetings will be, and unlikely that the headteacher meetings will go ahead as normal this term. However, we have become proficient using Zoom and will continue to hold meetings and webcasts for primary headteachers. The dates for the next year, once again in a spirit of optimism, are:

#### North East EPHA – Colchester United Football Stadium

Wednesday 16 June 2021 - online

Wednesday 10 November 2021

Wednesday 2 March 2022

Wednesday 15 June 2022

#### South EPHA – Holiday Inn, Basildon

Thursday 17 June 2021 - online

Thursday 18 November 2021

Thursday 3 March 2022

Thursday 23 June 2022

#### West EPHA – Stansted Business Centre, Takeley

Wednesday 23 June 2021 - online

Wednesday 17 November 2021

Wednesday 9 March 2022

Wednesday 22 June 2022

#### Mid EPHA – Lion Inn, Boreham

Thursday 24 June 2021 - online

Thursday 11 November 2021

Thursday 10 March 2022

Thursday 16 June 2022

The minutes of these and other meetings can be found on the EPHA website.

<https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/meetings/termly-area/>

<https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/meetings/executive/>

### County EPHA Annual General Meeting

Thursday 30 September 2021 Chelmsford City Football Club

### EPHA webcasts

We are keen to continue to offer online webcasts and presentations, whatever the future of face to

face meetings looks like. These have proved an excellent opportunity to a secure presenters and have offered headteachers and other colleagues a simple and efficient way to hear from key people in the Local Authority and from further afield.

**Clare Kershaw** (Director of Education) and **Mike Gogarty** (Essex Director for Public Health)

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June at 2.00 pm, scheduled for an hour. The Zoom link is as follows:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84358200585?pwd=azBBdEdrTmtadjZWb1VzM3YvaDRndz09>

Meeting ID: 843 5820 0585

Passcode: 198640

The meetings will, as always, be recorded and made available (on YouTube) soon after the event.

### **Conferences**

**Deputy Headteachers' conference** – Friday 8 October 2021 – Colchester Football Stadium

At the moment, the plan is to return to a face to face conference for Deputy and Assistant Headteachers in October. More information will be shared in the second half of the summer term.

**Headteachers' conference** – Friday 18 March 2022 – Stock Brook Country Club. The programme will be sent out in January 2022. Please note the change from the originally published date (25<sup>th</sup> March). If you plan want to attend, and still are in credit having paid for your place at the 2020 conference (cancelled at very short notice) I will let you know when you book next year.

### **EPHA Primary Headteachers' Support Directory**

The document can be found on the EPHA website at <https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/info-and-documents/welcome-pack/>

The **2021/22 EPHA funding contribution** will continue be paid directly from the DSG – therefore there will be no need to collect subscriptions from schools in the next financial year – please let your finance officer know.

### **Relevant Documents and Guidance**

- EPHA website [www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk](http://www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk)
- What headteachers get in return for their EPHA contribution 2020/21 <https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/about/constitution-and-finance/>
- EPHA Headteachers' Support Directory

### **Your “do-list”**

- Be kind to new colleagues (and existing ones!)
- If you are, or know of, a new or acting headteacher, please contact Pam to access the EPHA Colleague Supporter programme.
- Look out for further information about the headteacher meetings, webcasts and conferences.
- Find documents and information on the EPHA website, including the 7-minute staff meetings.
- Contact Pam Langmead, EPHA Professional Officer, at [pam@langmead.me.uk](mailto:pam@langmead.me.uk) for any support or information that you need.