

Executive Summary of the DfE and Ofsted Publications

Existing Publications

Updated	Changes made	Useful Links/Document
9:30am, 22 March 2021	Added data for weeks beginning 22 February and 1 March 2021.	Reported coronavirus (COVID-19) notifications by registered early years and childcare settings - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
12:00pm, 23 March 2021	Added 'Attendance in education and early years settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak: 23 March 2020 to 18 March 2021'.	Attendance in education and early years settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
12:55pm, 23 March 2021	Update to guidance on asymptomatic testing expansion for foster carers and staff of open residential children's homes.	Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for children's social care services - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
1.00pm, 24 March 2021	Consultation outcomes added and previous versions of relevant documents clearly labelled as DRAFT	Regulatory arrangements for the awarding of vocational and technical and other general qualifications in 2020-2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
1:00pm, 24 March 2021	The ERF and EERF are now no longer in force except under some specific circumstances: so that learners who last year received calculated results (or who have deferred calculated results) will still be able to carry them forward into their qualification results in summer 2021; so that any appeal against a result issued under the ERF can continue; and to require awarding organisations to keep records of their decision making for 3 years.	Extraordinary regulatory framework: VTQ, Covid-19 Conditions and Requirements - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
1:00pm, 24 March 2021	Added the Vocational and technical qualifications contingency regulatory framework and Consultation on autumn assessment opportunities for VTQs.	Vocational, technical and other general qualifications in 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
1:00pm, 24 March 2021	Consultation outcomes added and previous versions of relevant documents clearly labelled as DRAFT.	Consultation on the general qualifications alternative awarding framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
5:58pm, 24 March 2021	We have revised the guidance to provide information on home testing and symptomatic testing of staff, students and pupils.	Asymptomatic testing: secondary schools and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
5:59pm, 24 March 2021	Updated the guidance to include information on who should be offered testing, how the testing works, testing	Asymptomatic testing: primary and maintained nursery school staff - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

	pupils and what staff with symptoms or a positive test result need to do.	
6:06pm, 24 March 2021	Added guidance on 'Asymptomatic testing: early years staff in different settings' to the collection.	Early years and childcare: coronavirus (COVID-19) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
11:12am, 25 March 2021	Added a link to the updated guidance 'Induction for early career teachers England'.	Induction for newly qualified teachers during the coronavirus outbreak - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
11:58am, 26 March 2021	We have updated the information in the operational guidance on Test and Trace support payments, the expectations for clinically extremely vulnerable pupils and staff, educational visits, wraparound provision and extra-curricular activity, physical activity in schools and inspections. We have also added guidance on year 11 to 13 exam cohort attendance and provision for the 2021 summer term.	Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
11:58am, 26 March 2021	Changes made to the sections 'Considering group sizes', 'Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing', 'Educational visits and trips', and 'Staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable'.	Protective measures for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings for children during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
12:00pm, 26 March 2021	Added 'Education Act 1996: school registration modification notice April 2021'.	Modification notice: school registration legislation changes - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
12:00pm, 26 March 2021	Added 'Education Act 2005: school inspection disapplication notice April 2021'.	Disapplication notice: school inspections legislation changes - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
11:58am, 26 March 2021	Changes made to the sections 'Bubbles and group sizes' and 'Children with health concerns'.	Guidance for parents and carers of children attending out-of-school settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
4:44pm, 26 March 2021	Added additional information about how close contacts may be identified on transport and about the availability of twice weekly testing for drivers and passenger assistants on home to school transport.	Transport to school and other places of education: 2020 to 2021 academic year - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
5:09pm, 26 March 2021	Guidance updated on advice for those who are clinically extremely vulnerable,	Special schools and other specialist settings: coronavirus

	LFD testing in post-16 settings, Test and Trace support payments.	(<u>COVID-19</u>) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
5:15pm, 26 March 2021	Guidance updated.	Coronavirus (COVID-19): assessment processes for selective school admissions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
7:08pm, 26 March 2021	Clarified related occupations who should get tested twice weekly.	Households and bubbles of pupils, students and staff of schools, nurseries and colleges: get rapid lateral flow tests - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
12:15am, 29 March 2021	Updated to reflect new rules on what you can and cannot do from 29 March.	Making a childcare bubble with another household - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

New Publications:

Publication date	Content	Useful Links/Document
10:01am, 22 March 2021	Simon Lebus delivered a speech, to the National Association of Head Teachers, on the topic of assessment in 2021.	NAHT School Leaders' Summit, Ofqual Chief Regulator Simon Lebus - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
1:00pm, 24 March 2021	Information for heads of centre, heads of department and teachers on the submission of teacher assessed grades: summer 2021.	Submission of teacher assessed grades, summer 2021: info for teachers - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
1.00pm, 24 March 2021	Guidance for centres on making judgements that will support awarding in 2021	Information for centres about making objective judgements - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
1:00pm, 24 March 2021	The vocational and Technical qualifications Contingency Regulatory Framework: Consultation on proposed Condition VCR8 Assessment opportunity in 2021.	Consultation on autumn assessment opportunities for VTQ and other general qualifications - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
1:00pm, 24 March 2021	Ofqual publishes regulatory frameworks and guidance for awarding general, vocational and technical qualifications this academic year.	Frameworks for awarding qualifications in 2021: consultation outcomes - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
1:00pm, 24 March 2021	Regulatory requirements for awarding organisations offering specific general qualifications in 2021 in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.	General Qualifications Alternative Awarding Framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

1:00pm, 24 March 2021	A list of links to coronavirus (COVID-19) information provided by Ofqual-recognised awarding organisations.	Awarding organisation coronavirus (COVID-19) information pages - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
4:17pm, 25 March 2021	New version uploaded due to a technical issue in the previous document.	Vocational and technical qualifications contingency regulatory framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

DfE Information

Changes to the Test and Trace support payment for parents

- Parents and carers of children who have been advised to self-isolate by their education setting or by NHS Test and Trace are now able to apply for a [Test and Trace Support Payment](#) or discretionary payment of £500, if they meet the eligibility criteria.
- The extension of the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme, which is administered by district and unitary local authorities in England, ensures that parents receive the financial support they need if they are unable to attend work due to childcare responsibilities.
- Parents and carers should apply to their local authority to receive a payment. Applications for the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme are made via the local authority in which the parent or carer resides, not the local authority where the setting is situated, if these are different.

To be eligible applicants must meet all of the criteria that:

- they are the parent or guardian of a child or young person in the same household and need to take time off work to care for them while they self-isolate. This is limited to one parent or guardian per household for the child or young person's self-isolation period
- they are employed or self-employed
- they cannot work from home while undertaking caring responsibilities and will lose income as a result
- they meet all the other means-tested eligibility criteria for a Test and Trace Support Payment or locally determined criteria for a discretionary payment

That their child or young person:

- is aged 15 or under (or 25 or under with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC)) and normally attends an education or childcare setting
- has been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace or by their education or childcare setting because they have been identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Nurseries, schools, colleges and further education providers are required to provide a letter to all parents or carers of the children advised to self-isolate, to support their application to the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme.

- A template letter is available for early years and primary schools on the [primary schools document sharing platform](#) titled with the code RP81. A template letter is available for secondary schools and further education providers on the [secondary schools and colleges document sharing platform](#) titled with the code RP83.
- The letter must detail the child's name and date of self-isolation. Parents or carers will then be able to provide this letter to their local authority as evidence that their child is required to self-isolate.

Once an application for a payment has been received, the local authority will be in touch with your setting to verify the details of the child provided on the application. This will include a check of the child's name, age, address and days of self-isolation. This check is to minimise the event of fraudulent claims. It may be conducted before or after a payment is made, depending on the arrangements the individual local authority has chosen to put in place. ***The letter you give to parents and carers should explain to them that their local authority will conduct a check with their child's setting if they apply for a payment.***

National Tutoring Programme – subsidised tutoring available for state-maintained schools

- All state-maintained schools can access tutoring subsidised by 75% through the [National Tutoring Programme \(NTP\)](#), to support pupils aged 5-16 who need extra help. The NTP aims to ensure that high quality tutoring is available in all parts of the country to disadvantaged pupils who need the most support.
- Schools can [search for approved NTP tuition partners](#) and enquire directly with providers. This includes specialist provision for supporting students with SEND: 26 out of the 33 providers can support students with SEND, and 17 providers are able to support students in special school settings.

To see NTP in action, please see our [latest school story](#).

The NTP is running information webinars for all state-maintained schools, where you can hear directly from tuition partner organisations and learn about the subsidy.

National survey from the Children's Commissioner

- The new Children's Commissioner for England, Dame Rachel de Souza, has begun a major review of the future of childhood, which will address the barriers holding children back in the 21st century. This review begins with '[The Big Ask](#)': the largest ever survey of children in England, to gather children's views on what the government should prioritise in planning the recovery from the pandemic.

- The Big Ask will be launched on Monday 19 April in the form of a short online questionnaire. You will receive a link to the questionnaire shortly after it has launched. We encourage you to share it with as many students as possible.

Further targeted ransomware attacks on the education sector

- The Department for Education and the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has been made aware of an increasing number of cyber-attacks involving ransomware infection affecting the education sector recently.
- It is important that senior leaders in education settings understand the nature of the threat and the potential for ransomware to cause considerable damage to their institutions in terms of lost data and access to critical services.

The information below will support your ongoing cyber security preparedness and mitigation work.

What should I do if I am affected?

1. Enact your incident management plan
 2. Contact the [NCSC](#)
 3. Contact your local law enforcement and [Action Fraud](#)
 4. Inform the Department for Education by emailing: sector.securityenquiries@education.gov.uk
- The Department for Education supports the National Crime Agency's recommendations not to encourage, endorse, or condone the payment of ransom demands.
 - Payment of ransoms has no guarantee of restoring access or services and will likely result in repeat incidents to educational settings.

It is vital that you urgently review your existing defences and take the necessary steps to protect your networks from cyber-attacks.

Along with your defences, having the ability to restore the systems and recover data from backups is vital. You should ask your IT team or provider to confirm that:

- they are backing up the right data
- the backups are held offline
- they have tested that they can restore services and recover data from the backups

Further information and supporting material includes:

1. [NCSC Alert on the current cases of ransomware](#)
2. [Ransomware advice and guidance for your IT teams to implement](#)

3. [Offline backups in an online world](#)
4. [Backing up your data](#)
5. [Practical resources to help improve your cyber security](#)

Test kits for pupils, students and staff should be accessed via the education testing programme

- Further deliveries of self-test kits for secondary schools and further education (FE) colleges will arrive this week, which should include enough kits to last over the Easter holiday.
- Some schools and FE colleges have been registering on the National Workplace Testing website to order test kits or have been directing staff or students to local testing sites to collect test kits.
- Schools, nurseries and FE colleges are covered under the education testing programme and will continue to be provided with test kits through this programme. Any registrations by schools, nurseries or FE colleges to National Workplace Testing will be deleted and you will not receive kits via this route.

If you need a replenishment of lateral flow device (LFD) test kits or want to report any issues with a delivery, you can do this by using the dedicated routes detailed below:

- primary schools, attached nurseries and maintained nursery schools should use this [contact us form](#)
- private, voluntary and independent nurseries (PVI) should use this [contact us form](#). Please note that you will receive further test kit deliveries between 24 to 26 March, which will accommodate testing until early May
- secondary schools and FE colleges should use this [contact us form](#) to re-order asymptomatic test site (ATS) test kits. Further deliveries of self-test kits are being made this week. You can view the [delivery schedule here](#). This should give you enough supplies to last over the Easter holiday
- further details on future replenishment arrangements for self-test kits will be provided in due course

All orders are processed on a weekly basis. Unless specified otherwise, you need to submit your request by 5pm on Wednesday for a delivery during the following week.

If you feel you have missed a delivery of test kits, before contacting us to report a missed delivery using the relevant contact us forms (above), please do the following:

- check with your facilities team and catering department in case they have received the delivery
- if a delivery has not arrived, please wait until the day after the scheduled delivery date before reporting it as a missed delivery
- PVI nurseries are advised to check for a “Sorry we missed you” card, which provides further information on how to arrange a re-delivery or pick up

When and how to report testing related incidents

- All schools, colleges, and nurseries should continue to escalate specific self-testing related incidents to the DfE helpline, for example, reports from staff or students of multiple voids (all voids in one pack or sudden overall increase in void reports), breakages, and other issues with testing kits.
- Schools, nurseries and FE colleges should remind staff and students who are testing at home to call 119 to report issues such as damaged, missing or difficult to use items in the kit, or where they are unable to log their results.
- If an incident led to, or has potential for, harm (for example, swab breaks in the mouth, bleeding, allergic reaction on using the kit), as well as seeking support from the helplines above, the individual testing at home should report this on the [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) yellow card reporting site](#).

Free school meals claims process for schools

- All children should be able to access a nutritious meal at school and these meals are free to those that are eligible. Where pupils eligible for benefits-related free school meals are required to stay at home, you should work with your catering team or food provider to offer good quality lunch parcels.
- You can claim for lunch parcels provided during the period in which schools were closed to most pupils up until the start of the Easter holidays. The claims window for these costs will open in early April and will remain open for at least three weeks. Schools will be able to claim directly, or local authorities and academy trusts can claim on their schools' behalf. Further details will be shared via the weekly Wednesday newsletter from ESFA.
- Claims need to be based on eligible pupils, with support provided over the specified timeframe and to the values specified in the guidance. There are no other criteria that claims will be subject to. All claims made will also be cross-referenced with orders made using the national voucher scheme. **Claims should not be made in relation to support provided via the Edenred national voucher scheme, as all those costs have already been met centrally.**
- **Schools do not need to provide lunch parcels or vouchers during the Easter holidays.** The government provides support with food and other essentials through the COVID Winter Grant Scheme. This scheme, run by local authorities, has operated successfully since November including over the Christmas and February half term holidays. The scheme ensures that individuals, families and children who require it, including those eligible for free school meals, can receive the support they need.

Further information on the provision of free school meals and the COVID Winter Grant Scheme can be found in our guidance on [providing school meals during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#).

Updated guidance for children's social care services

- We have updated our [guidance for children's social care services](#) to reflect the extension of the asymptomatic testing programme to foster carers and staff of open residential children's homes.

Primary school pupils and rapid asymptomatic testing

- On advice from Public Health England (PHE), pupils in primary schools and children in nursery settings are not included in the rapid asymptomatic testing programme. PHE has advised that there are currently limited public health benefits to testing primary-aged pupils with lateral flow devices (LFD). In addition, primary-aged pupils, particularly younger children, may find the LFD testing process unpleasant and are unable to self-swab.
- We are advising that primary-aged pupils should only be tested if they are symptomatic, in which case their families should follow the [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#) and [book a PCR test](#) for the child.
- ***You may also offer a PCR test kit to the parent or guardian of any primary school child who becomes symptomatic onsite, if they believe that the child faces significant barriers to testing through the usual routes.*** All schools were sent an initial supply of 10 PCR test kits before the start of the autumn term in 2020. You can replenish these kits when they run out by making an order through the [online portal](#). Rapid LFD tests should not be offered to individuals who develop coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, regardless of their age.

Updated guidance on remote education good practice

- We have updated our [guidance on remote education good practice](#) to include sections on physical education, remote teaching for very young pupils and supporting pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. We have also added a new section on safeguarding and online safety.

Letter to children and young people from the Secretary of State for Education

- The Secretary of State for Education has today written to children and young people to recognise the impact of the disruption they have faced over the past year and to thank them for their resilience. He outlines his continued commitment to supporting children and young people to recover from the disruption now that they have returned to school and college. The letter also highlights the importance of coronavirus (COVID-19) testing and the vital role this plays in helping to prevent the virus spreading.

The letter is published on the [DfE media blog](#) and on DfE's [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Please do share this letter directly with children and young people in your school or college.

Updated guidance for schools

- We have updated our [guidance for schools](#) to include information on Test and Trace support payments, the expectations for clinically extremely vulnerable pupils and staff, educational visits, wraparound provision and extra-curricular activity, physical activity

in schools and inspections. We have also added guidance on year 11 to 13 exam cohort attendance and provision for the 2021 summer term.

Updated guidance for after-school clubs and out-of-school settings

- We have updated our [guidance for providers of after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings](#) and our [guidance for parents of children attending out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#).
- These updates provide advice on group sizes for outdoor activities from Monday 29 March and an update on when educational visits can resume.
- We have also updated the section on asymptomatic testing to reflect that all wraparound care providers can now access asymptomatic testing. As critical workers, staff working in wraparound childcare, including those not operating on school sites, are being prioritised for asymptomatic testing through local community testing programmes.

Testing and contact tracing in schools and colleges over the Easter holidays

Following the success of the asymptomatic testing programme on the return to school and college, it is vital to keep testing at home throughout the Easter holidays and into the summer term. Staff and students should:

- continue to test twice a week at home (all those who are able to)
- report positive, negative or void results using the [report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result](#) portal
- test before returning to school or college for the summer term, either the night before, or morning of, the first day back to find and isolate any positive cases

We need to ask schools and further education providers to continue with contact tracing over the Easter holidays.

- For the purposes of contact tracing staff, students, parents and carers need only inform the education setting of a positive case if the symptoms develop within 2 days of being in their education setting or they have tested positive with a lateral flow device (LFD) test (and will subsequently need to book a confirmatory PCR test). You are asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in their education setting. If symptoms develop after 2 days, they do not need to inform the setting.
- Where pupils, students or staff test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) during the holidays using an LFD test more than 2 days since being in an education setting, they will only need to inform their education setting if they will still be self-isolating when settings return. Staff, students, parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.
- Staff do not need to be available for contact tracing duties beyond the first 6 days of the Easter holidays, at which point all positive cases should be dealt with through NHS Test and Trace. This means that where a school or further education provider ends

face-to-face education on Friday 26 March, there will be no need to remain on-call after Thursday 1 April.

- Staff responsible for contact tracing are not asked to be on-call at all times and may designate a limited period in the day to receive notification of positive cases and advise close contacts to self-isolate (this can be done by text or email).
- Where pupils or students need to self-isolate due to contact with a positive case during the holidays, settings do not need to be informed about this until the first day of the Summer term.

Test kit supplies for secondary schools and colleges after the Easter holiday

- Secondary schools and colleges will be receiving a further replenishment of self-test kits for staff and pupils after the Easter holiday. You do not need to place an order for them, these self-test kits will be sent automatically to your setting. You can expect to receive this delivery in the second half of April, once you return from the Easter holiday. We will be publishing a delivery schedule shortly so that you can see the exact date for your scheduled delivery.

If you need additional supplies of asymptomatic site testing kit, you should continue to place orders using the [online form](#).

Please continue to monitor the daily emails for further updates on the delivery of self-test kits.

Information on the private candidate support grant in schools, colleges, and other exam centres

- The Department for Education has previously published [guidance on the private candidate support grant](#) which provides information on eligibility for schools, colleges and other exam centres, to claim funding for assessing private candidates, including home educated students and adult learners, this summer.

Update for schools and colleges on alternative arrangements for qualifications in 2021

In our February announcement on the [alternative arrangements for awarding qualifications in 2021](#), we committed to providing teachers with the guidance and support they need to make assessments of their students.

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) has now [published guidance](#), including:

- advice on completing your centre policy
- a step-by-step guide on determining grades, including advice on the types of evidence that can be used
- information on internal and external quality assurance processes

We trust teachers in their decision making and want students and their parents or carers to be confident that they will receive grades that enable them to progress to the next stage of their lives. The guidance published this week will support teachers to do this to support consistency and fairness for students in schools and colleges.

Students should feel confident in their teacher assessed grades this year, however an appeals system will be there as a safety net in case errors are not picked up earlier in the process. JCQ has also provided details on the appeals process in their guidance published today. The government will provide funding to awarding organisations with respect to formal appeals of teacher assessed grades submitted to them by state-funded providers and any providers on behalf of private candidates. These centres will therefore not need to pay a fee to awarding bodies when submitting their appeal. Centres will be expected to absorb the cost of the initial review within their budgets.