



This is the second of 2 emails today to keep you updated on the government's response to coronavirus (COVID-19).

### **Free school meal provision in schools**

During the period of national lockdown, schools should provide meal options for all pupils who are in school, including vulnerable children and the children of [critical workers](#). Meals should be available free of charge to:

- all infant pupils
- pupils who meet the benefits-related free school meals eligibility criteria

During the national lockdown, we expect schools to continue supporting children eligible for benefits-related free school meals who are at home during term time. Schools will continue to receive funding to cover benefits-related free school meals and they can claim additional funding to help support eligible pupils at home.

We strongly encourage schools to work with their school catering team or food provider to provide food parcels to eligible free school meal pupils who are at home. Where school kitchens are open this should be the approach taken by schools. Schools can claim for additional funding of £3.50 per week for each eligible pupil receiving food parcel provision at home.

If the school has confirmed with the school catering team or food provider that they cannot provide food parcels for pupils eligible for benefits-related free school meals who are at home, you can consider other local arrangements, which might include vouchers for local shops and supermarkets. Schools can claim to be reimbursed up to £15 per pupil eligible for benefits-related free school meals per week.

We will open a national scheme to provide supermarket vouchers via an online portal as soon as possible. Further details will be published shortly.

Further details on how and when additional costs can be reclaimed will also be provided shortly.

Information on options for provision of free school meals to pupils who are at home, and the funding available, can be found in our updated [guidance on providing free school meals during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#).

### **Free meal provision for further education students**

Further education institutions should continue to provide support for students who are eligible for free meals, whether they are attending or studying remotely due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Institutions should continue to provide support in the most appropriate way based on their local circumstances.

Further information is available in the [16 to 19 free meals in further education guidance](#).

### **Vulnerable children and children of critical workers who can attend school**

Schools should remain open to vulnerable children and children of critical workers. Children with at least one parent or carer who is a [critical workers](#) can go to school if required. This includes parents who may be working from home. The guidance sets out that parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can.

Schools should speak to parents and carers to identify who needs to go to school. If it proves necessary, schools can ask for simple evidence that the parent in question is a critical worker, such as their work ID badge or pay slip.

We know that every school will have a different number of children of critical workers who need to attend. It is important that on-site provision is provided for these pupils, and there is no limit to numbers of these pupils who may attend and schools should not limit attendance of these groups. This is because we are reducing overall social contact across the country rather than individually by each institution.

### **Rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing in secondary schools and colleges**

Secondary schools have now received lateral flow device test kits and many schools have now started testing. Rapid testing helps identify those asymptomatic cases that might otherwise not be detected, causing the virus to spread further.

Secondary schools should now offer:

- initial testing of vulnerable children and children of critical workers who are on school and college sites (two tests, three to five days apart)
- weekly testing of staff who are on school and college sites
- daily testing of close contacts of positive cases in schools and college as an alternative to self-isolation, reducing disruption in schools and colleges.

Staff, pupils and students who are on site can take daily lateral flow device tests for seven days. As long as their results are negative, they will be able to continue to access school as usual.

The military can offer support on setting up the provision and give advice both virtually and on the ground. To request support, please contact the Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline on 0800 046 8687.

### **Registering test site team leaders and recording lateral flow test results**

Thank you to all who have registered your team leaders for the digital system used for recording lateral flow test results.

If you are a secondary school or college and have not yet registered your test site team leaders, please complete the [online registration form](#) by Wednesday 13 January.

You can only register one team leader at a time using the registration form. To register multiple team leaders, please complete the form as many times as needed. The registration process takes around 5 minutes per team leader.

Once a team leader has been registered, they will receive an e-mail containing details on how to record lateral flow test results on your site using the [log test site COVID-19 results service](#). Further information on how to register a test site team leader and registering lateral flow test results can be found in the NHS Test and Trace guidance on the [digital services you will use](#).

If you have any questions, or require support registering your team leaders, please contact the Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline on 0800 046 8687.

## **Missed deliveries of lateral flow test kits**

All schools with secondary-age pupils, including independent schools, special schools, alternative provision, sixth-form and further education colleges, should now have received an initial delivery of lateral flow device test kits to support asymptomatic testing from the start of the spring term.

If you have not received your initial delivery or have missing or damaged items, please complete the [contact us form](#). You will need the URN for your school or college to complete this form.

## **Rapid testing in secondary schools and colleges**

Last week, we held a series of webinars for secondary schools and colleges that provided information on the rapid testing programme. Recordings of these webinars have now been uploaded onto the Department for Education YouTube page and can be accessed using the links below:

- [Webinar 1](#) – site set up, equipment, supplies, logistics and waste management
- [Webinar 2](#) – workforce and training, consent, and engagement
- [Webinar 3](#) – clinical compliance, incidents, outbreaks and recording results and digital journey

Further information, guidance and resources to support rapid testing can be found on the [schools and colleges document sharing platform](#).

To help you find the information that you need, we have created a [read first index](#). This document provides the details of guidance and materials available to schools and colleges to support them to deliver coronavirus (COVID-19) rapid testing in their settings and will be updated when new information is available.

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The information below has not changed since our last update

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## **Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline**

The Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline and the PHE Advice Service (option 1) is available to answer any questions you have about coronavirus (COVID-19) relating to education settings and children's social care.

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm

Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 6pm

Please listen carefully to all of the available options before selecting the most appropriate option for your nursery, school, college or university.

### **Look up your unique organisation number (UON)**

If you have not received your unique organisation number (UON) for ordering new coronavirus (COVID-19) test kits you can [look it up using your unique reference number \(URN\) or your UK provider reference number \(UKPRN\)](#) or by calling the Test and Trace helpdesk on 119.

### **Department for Education guidance**

Our guidance to support education providers, local authorities and parents during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak can be accessed using the links below:

- [Guidance for early years and childcare providers](#)
- [Guidance for schools](#)
- [Guidance for further and higher education providers](#)
- [Guidance for local authority children's services](#)