

Friday 17th April 2020 – Briefing 13

Admissions Appeals – The DfE has now issued guidance for Admissions Authorities around the process for school admission appeals during Covid-19. It has been decided that parents will continue to have the right to appeal against any refusal to admit and that this process must not be delayed until the autumn term. Certain provision has been made which will relax some of the requirements around the appeals process. These changes come into effect from 24th April 2020 and will remain until 31st January 2021 unless revoked or extended.

The changes:

- Appeals no longer have to be held in person and it is permissible for them to be heard via conference arrangements or in writing.
- If one of the minimum 3 panel members were to withdraw (for example through illness) then it is possible for the appeal to continue to its conclusion with the remaining two panel members.
- It will be possible to amend the deadlines that apply to appeals (although the new deadline must still be reasonable and within 28 days of the decision not to admit) and parents must be given appropriate notice.

Further guidance will be issued in due course once these changes have received Parliamentary approval. In the meantime details of this announcement can be viewed on the following link.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/admission-appeals-for-school-places/coronavirus-covid-19-school-admission-appeals>

Additional RE Resources for Home Learning – FAO RE Lead in School

New resources have been made available in the weekly updates which includes pieces of learning for KS1 – KS4. Some resources also include interfaith learning for primary schools and some free units from the Holocaust Educational Trust for KS3 and 4. The folders are held in Pennine Learning's public Dropbox account and you can access them through this link: <https://bit.ly/33GUbhr>

If you have any questions/ queries or requests for support you can contact Ian on ian@penninelearning.com

Financial Guidance for self-employed childminders, directors of small limited companies and providers who have furloughed staff – see attached document in email.

Self-Employed Income Support Scheme - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-coronavirus-covid-19-self-employment-income-support-scheme> to check if you are eligible to apply

Providers who have furloughed staff - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme#what-youll-need-to-make-a-claim>

Safeguarding Message from Steve Barnes

Undertaking regular contacts with families of vulnerable children

We have now completed 4 full weeks of schools operating under emergency measures and we have found it necessary to look at a few tweaks to improve the present system of managing vulnerable pupil contact. Due to the considerable efforts of you and your colleagues it has become quite apparent that the vast majority of pupils we all consider vulnerable, are being contacted on a twice weekly basis. This is exactly what is called for right now so please keep up this essential work as you have been doing.

Back on 23rd March we circulated a request for daily pupil attendance records to be emailed to MASTAdmin@calderdale.gov.uk on a daily basis. What we are finding far more useful is that rather than tell us of which vulnerable pupils are being seen in school, we would much rather know where the difficulties lie in the vulnerable pupils that are **not** attending school **and** whom despite your best efforts you find it incredibly difficult to maintain decent parent/carer contact.

So with this in mind we would simply like you to tell us about situations where the undertaking of pupil welfare checks via parental/carer contact is not happening due to their non-engagement with school.

How we will do this

Bev Goodacre of MAST bev.goodacre@calderdale.gov.uk will be making a Friday morning contact with the primary Designated Safeguarding Lead at each school via their professional email address.

Bev will simply be asking for you to reply to her email with details of any vulnerable child cases where non-engagement has become a real concern for you and the situation need escalating. In doing so, we hope to undertake additional checks to establish if, on a partner agency basis we can secure the required parental contact and reduce such instances of non-engagement.

Many of you may have nothing to report so would you please simply reply to the email with the response "nothing to report" in the subject field.

If you require this request handling by another DSL on your school team, simply forward the request onto that DSL and Bev will update her contact list accordingly when the response arrives.

If, during the course of the week, you become aware of any safeguarding concerns during your regular family contact or non-engagement issues that would require a more urgent response as you believe there may be safeguarding concerns evident, then simply make a referral in the normal manner, without delay through MASTAdmin@calderdale.gov.uk

We believe by focussing on the vulnerable families who are not engaging with schools and our partners, we will be in a far better position to provide more comprehensive support to those potentially invisible children whom we all worry about.

What schools are being asked to do moving forwards:

Schools will no longer need to send the DfE spreadsheet pupil list to MAST by email.

Schools will now simply need to:

- 1) On a daily basis (No change to previous practice):
 - a. update the DfE on the summary figures about attendance at school per guidance: www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings
 - b. submit the same summary figures given to the DfE to the LA (as you have been for the past 4 weeks) using the following link: <https://forms.gle/y4LC82DqbjqeUACN9>

- 2) Respond to the email from Bev Goodacre on a Friday morning either with 'Nothing to report' in the subject line or with the details of any of the cases where non-engagement has become a real concern per the notes above.
- 3) Make a referral in the normal manner through MASTAdmin@calderdale.gov.uk if non-engagement issues would require a more urgent response as significant safeguarding concerns may be evident.

PREVENT information

Can you please communicate the following two messages to parents/carers and where possible place on your school websites:

- The government have released an online reporting tool for any person who wishes to report illegal or harmful information, pictures or videos that they have found on the internet.
A report can be made anonymously using the following link: www.gov.uk/report-terrorism
- Earlier this week the Home Office published [guidance for parents and carers to keep children safe online](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online). This covers a range of online harms including radicalisation. Here is the link: www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-parents-and-carers-to-keep-children-safe-online

Suggested Safeguarding Questions for Governors:

- How effectively is the school making sure vulnerable pupils are kept safe (including those who are at home, rather than in school), and whether these plans are working well?
- To what extent is the school working with the Local Authority to safeguard vulnerable pupils?
- How effectively is the school checking in on all pupils who are staying at home?
- How well are pupils, especially vulnerable pupils, who are still coming in to school coping with the current situation?
- What actions are the school taking to safeguard any pupils who aren't technically categorised as 'vulnerable' by the DfE?
- How effectively is the school supporting pupils who are eligible for free school meals?
- What safeguarding arrangements are in place to keep pupils safe online?

Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Businesses and Employers' Bulletin

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) are producing a regular bulletin which provides information for employers and businesses on Coronavirus (COVID-19). All the guidance, information and announcements can be found on GOV.UK but the bulletins pull this in to one useful document. Anybody can sign up to receive the bulletin - to sign up [click on this link](#) and enter an email address. The Business Support website now hosts an [archive of all Bulletins from 11 March 2020](#)

In the days preceding the implementation of the new arrangements the Government had announced a range of measures to protect businesses and workers from the economic effects of Coronavirus.

By using the link below, you can find a webpage that helps businesses to access the support that has been made available, who is eligible, when the schemes open and how to apply.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/financial-support-for-businesses-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Updated guidance for Early Years and Childcare Providers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures>

Acetates – We have heard about the fantastic work of many of our school and settings in supporting different activities to help in the current crisis. Many of our secondary schools have been making visor masks which are in use with front line professionals and really making a difference. We have had a request from Cluster Officer, David Kirk, who is seeking any acetate sheets for a NHS volunteer who is also making approved visors that are being used in local hospitals and care homes. David is happy to collect from school at an agreed time so they can be left outside the door. Please let David know at davidkirk.schoolsolutions@gmail.com or text 07801 067997.

Bereavement Support – Please find attached a number of documents that may be useful in the event of needing to support pupils, staff and families if someone they know contracts COVID-19 or in the very sad circumstances that they be bereaved. Many thanks to Fiona Pether at Dean Field Community Primary School for sending information we have included in the Calderdale bereavement guidance which has been updated for COVID 19 and to Dani Worthington at Moorside Community Primary School for the additional documents. They have been attached as Word documents to enable you to edit them.

Data Protection and email security – We are aware that people are being very helpful and forwarding emails and information that others may find useful. Could you please ensure though that appropriate care is taken with regard to potential security risks and also to protect personal data being shared, for example by using blind copies to prevent email addresses being displayed.

Please remind families that the **Healthy Futures Calderdale School Nursing Team** continues to be available to provide health and wellbeing advice and support for school-aged children and their families. Contact the team on 030 3330 9974 or search “Healthy Futures Calderdale” on social media

Healthy Start Free food vouchers and vitamin coupons - please promote with families

Families on certain benefits can get free milk, fruit and vegetables with Healthy Start vouchers and free vitamins. You qualify for Healthy Start if you're at least 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under four years old and you or your family get certain benefits. You also qualify if you are aged under 18 and pregnant, even if you don't get any of the certain benefits. Find out how to apply for the Healthy Start vouchers and vitamin coupons by visiting www.healthystart.nhs.uk or call the Healthy Start helpline on 0345 607 6823 and request an application form by post.

Since the 6th April, you no longer need a health professional to sign the application form, so part B can be left blank.

Resources for children – 50 humanitarian organisations, including the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have produced a children's storybook to help children aged 6-11 cope with coronavirus. The book is available to download free (or for a donation) online and as an audio book and is currently available in 14 languages, with over 20 more planned.

<https://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2020/4/5e8ecdba4/childrens-storybook-released-help-children-young-people-cope-covid-19.html>

The children's commissioner has also provided information for children: [A children's guide to coronavirus](#)

Childline has information at: <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/>