

**KEY ISSUES**

**UPDATE FOR COVID-19 CRISIS  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

26/3/2020



# KEY ISSUES

- Pay
- School meals
- Vulnerable children
- Distance Learning
- Exams
- Provision of supervised learning for children of key workers



# PAY

- Education sector staff will continue to be paid normal pay during the Covid-19 crisis.
- The same arrangements will also apply to substitute teachers and non-teaching staff providing emergency cover for any periods they have been engaged to work.
- Such absences will not count towards the normal triggers for absence management or contractual sick pay, and will not constitute a break in service for pensions, or other purposes.
- Investigating the possibility of a hardship fund for staff who are likely to no longer have access to secure work.
- Contingency arrangements are being put in place to ensure that the payrolls will be processed and payments made.



# SCHOOL MEALS

- Currently exploring ways to take forward a form of direct payment to parents in lieu of a free school meal.
- Payments will be kept under review and will cease should schools return before the end of the academic year. There will be no break in payments over the Easter Holidays.
- Recognise that this action alone will not be enough to stop vulnerable children and families falling through the net.
- Department for Communities working with Departments and other stakeholders on overall community food provision to ensure those in need/vulnerable groups receive food. Details will be announced shortly.



# VULNERABLE CHILDREN

- Prioritising support for vulnerable children and their parents/carers.
- School is a protective factor for vulnerable children, for some offering the only stability in their lives.
- Some instances where continued access to education settings provides a safer and more stable option.
- Engaging with Department of Health to ensure there is a continuum of support for these groups, including those children on (or on the cusp of) the Child Protection Register.



# DISTANCE LEARNING

- Officials are engaged in a programme of work focussed on ensuring that appropriate action is being taken to secure, as far as possible, the learning, progression and wellbeing of our children and young people during the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic.
- Schools are well equipped to cope with curriculum delivery until at least Easter.
- Substantial capacity and provision exists via the Education Network Service to facilitate teaching and learning outside the classroom.
- The Department is utilising the expertise in EA, CCEA and ETI to support schools and to ensure curriculum resources are available where and when needed.
- Working with schools to identify what more can be done to support these efforts and ensure that best practice is widely disseminated and applied.



# EXAMS

- Not proceeding with GCSEs, AS and A2 level exams this summer.
- Safeguarding the health of students, their teachers and the staff of the examination awarding bodies, is of paramount importance.
- CCEA will continue to work with other awarding organisations to develop a robust process for awarding grades, using a combination of prior achievements, internal teacher-assessed tracking information, predicted grades and analysis and modelling of existing data trends.
- Priority is to ensure that students receive fair and equitable results that reflect their hard work and enable judgements to be made about progression to study or employment or other avenues.
- CCEA will provide clear guidance to schools and colleges on the data they will be required to submit to inform the process of producing calculated grades.



## KEY WORKERS

- Parents should keep their children at home, wherever possible; schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend.
- Key workers are those whose work is critical to the coronavirus response, based on consultation across government.
- includes those who work in the health and social care sectors; and those critical to continuing to provide essential services, in industries including education and childcare, transport, food and delivery, utilities, communications, public safety, and the government.
- Department liaising with schools and the wider education sector on a daily basis to ensure we get information quickly about how many schools open, how many staff are available, and how many pupils turn up.
- So far, uptake of the scheme has been low. This is consistent with the position in Great Britain and is encouraging in that parents appear to be keeping their children at home if possible.

