

Message

**From:** [NR] [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=4D38D1B5A9E74622B8F0D43E90B86907; [NR]  
**Sent:** 13/03/2020 17:31:18  
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**Subject:** For SoS decision: draft guidance for schools - contingency planning for closures  
**Attachments:** Rapid response guidance.docx

Dear [NR]

**Other ministerial offices CC'd in here to note.**

For the Secretary of State's decision, please find attached proposed guidance aimed at schools to help them consider contingency planning in the event that their school is forced to close as a result of coronavirus. Ideally, we would like to issue this guidance to schools early next week to respond to two factors; the first to provide schools with as much opportunity as possible to start proactively considering remote working arrangements should they be forced to close. The second to respond to intelligence from the sector that suggests many schools are behind in contingency planning, or ill prepared for closure spanning beyond a fortnight and would welcome very swift advice to support contingency planning.

The attached guidance forms part of a wider strategy to support schools work remotely should they need to close. At this stage, we want to ensure that all schools are able to provide an educational offer to pupils with minimal disruption. Equally we want to recognise that tech, whilst offering many solutions, may not be the silver bullet for all schools. The digital divide that exists across the country, with some schools and pupils having easy access to broadband and digital devices, and others unable to enjoy the same benefits, makes it unlikely that a tech-centred solution will work for all.

As such, the guidance aims to ensure that schools capitalise on the resources available; considering the benefits reaped through technology alongside other practical measures (for example, printed workbooks). This, however, is the first stage in the process. An options paper will be presented to Ministers next week which sets out additional support structures that could be explored. Based on conversations with industry, these could include:

- ways that we might work with technology platforms to ensure that schools are able to more freely share lesson planning, resources and materials with pupils and parents at home (supported by the likes of Google and Microsoft)
- extend the reach of existing textbook publishers to give access to curriculum-linked texts at home

- promote interactive digital teaching and learning tools, linked to the curriculum, that students can use independently (for example learning apps such as Century Tech and Hegarty Maths)
- and, the provision of national level broadcast lessons and videos (for example through BBC or YouTube channels).

These options have significant commercial implications and so further work is required to understand how best we can harness existing, and well respected, organisations offering free support throughout this period.

In addition, we are also working with schools to gather case studies that show where technology and low-tech approaches are already working well to support pupils access the curriculum outside of the classroom and support teachers to work flexible. This could include domestic and international examples, drawing on the practice already underway for those areas hit by the coronavirus e.g. Italy, and provide behavioural nudges towards the type of technology that we know works well. We have a meeting with the EdTech Leadership Group on Monday, at which we will discuss the role of industry and education representative organisation in helping schools continue to provide learning during the event of school closures

**In the immediate-term, I would be grateful if the attached could be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval.**

We understand that the attached may also need to be submitted to Number 10 and would be grateful for support from colleagues on 7<sup>th</sup> floor to help navigate this.

Kind regards,

NR

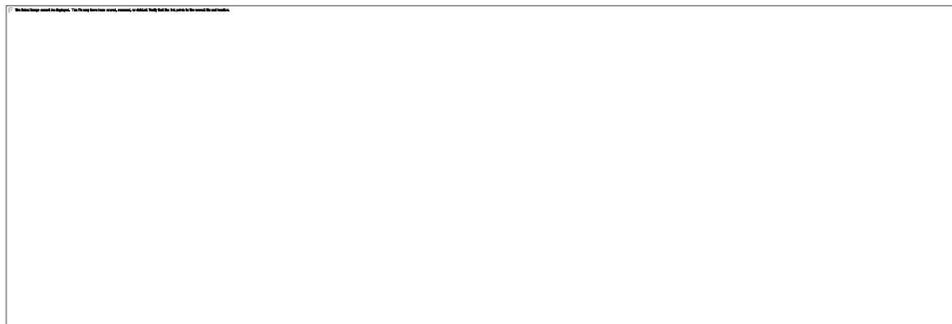
NR

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For education related queries: anyone working in early years through to universities, plus parents.