



Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP

Secretary of State

Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT

tel: 0370 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus

Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP
Chair of the Education Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

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I would like to update you on the Department for Education's response to coronavirus (COVID-19) and other educational updates between 26 August and 7 September 2021.

Back to school and college campaign

On 26 August the Government launched its back to school and college campaign to set out the experience that students can 'get back to' from September, with restrictions such as bubbles eased to allow a full return to sport, music, drama, science experiments and being with their friends.

Schools and colleges are maintaining proportionate protective measures such as testing, ventilation and extra hygiene precautions that help keep children and staff safe and minimise disruption to face-to-face education. More information and practical guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/backtoschool>

National Tutoring Programme expanded to support up to six million pupils over the next three years

Schools will have greater flexibility to offer high-quality, 15-hour tutoring courses that meet the needs of their pupils, in a major expansion of the National Tutoring Programme backed by £1 billion.

The programme is expected to reach up to six million pupils across the country in total over the next three years to make sure students who need it receive quality catch up support.

Ventilation devices start arriving in schools

Following the announcement on ventilation, schools in England have started to receive their devices. Special schools, alternative provision and residential schools have been prioritised. Schools will be provided with updated guidance on how settings should use the monitors, respond to different readings as they rollout. The guidance will also include detail how settings can access our new marketplace tool to help settings buy approved devices at bulk purchase prices.

Update on the rollout of devices

The Government has provided over 1.3 million laptops and tablets to help schools, colleges and other FE institutions throughout the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The scale of deliveries was increased following the announcement on 5 January 2021 about a national lockdown and restricting attendance in schools and colleges but has since decreased following the return to schools on 8 March.

On 13 July we published the latest figure of 1,352,559 devices having been delivered since the start of the scheme. These are the last figures in the series for the academic year 2020/21.

The latest full data on laptops and tablets is available at <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/laptops-and-tablets-data>

Attendance

Due to the end of the summer term, the Department's analysis from week 30 data covered early years settings only. It indicated that 727,000 children attended early years settings, down from 875,000 the previous fortnight. 31,000 vulnerable children attended early years settings, down from 40,000 the previous fortnight. This release marks the final publication on absence and attendance in schools for the 2020/21 academic year. Data for attendance in early years settings during the COVID-19 outbreak for week 30 can be found at <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

The first publication of attendance data for this academic year will be on 21 September 2021.

Other key updates

In addition to the above, please see below recent key updates from the Department.

The Department has published guidance on the recovery premium. Recovery premium funding is additional funding in the 2021 to 2022 academic year to

support schools with education recovery following COVID-19. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/recovery-premium-funding>

The Department has published guidance on the school-led tutoring grant. The guidance looks at how schools and academy trusts should plan and deliver the National Tutoring Programme's school-led tutoring to help pupils catch up on missed learning. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-led-tutoring-grant>

The Department has updated its guidance on the national funding formula for schools and high needs. The tables show provisional allocations for the schools, high needs and central school services blocks from 2022 to 2023. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-funding-formula-tables-for-schools-and-high-needs-2022-to-2023>

The Department has updated its guidance on behaviour hubs. The behaviour hubs programme will enable schools with exemplary behaviour to work with other schools to improve their behaviour culture. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/behaviour-hubs>

The Department has updated its guidance on the latest common basic data set and version control log for use by software suppliers developing management information systems. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/common-basic-data-set-cbds-database>

The Department has updated its guidance on early-career payments for teachers. Mathematics, physics, chemistry and languages teachers can check whether they can apply for the early-career payments pilot. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-career-payments-guidance-for-teachers-and-schools>

The Department has updated its guidance for school leaders on using pupil premium. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-effective-use-and-accountability>

The Department has updated its guidance on pupil premium. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium>

The Department has updated its guidance on school-led webinars and remote education to help share good practice. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/remote-education-webinars>

The Department has updated its guidance on school food standards to help schools plan and provide healthy food in schools. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools>

The Department has updated its guidance for FE colleges and providers during the coronavirus outbreak. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-further-education-provision>

The Department has updated its guidance on protective measures for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings for children during the COVID-19 outbreak. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

The Department has updated its guidance for special schools and other specialist settings COVID-19 outbreak. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings>

The Department has updated its guidance for local authorities completing returns for the 2022 special educational needs survey. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/special-educational-needs-survey-2022-guide>

The Department has updated its guidance explaining the Coronavirus Act 2020 provision of remote education. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/remote-education-temporary-continuity-direction-explanatory-note>

The Department has updated its guidance on the standards for planning and providing food in schools. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standards-for-school-food-in-england>

The Department has updated its guidance on the special educational needs person level survey 2022. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/special-educational-needs-person-level-survey-2022-guide-and-technical-specification>

The Education and Skills Funding Agency has updated its guidance on the academies land and buildings collection tool. The guide aims to help academy trusts and diocesan users submit their land and buildings collection tool. The

guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-land-and-buildings-collection-tool>

The Education and Skills Funding Agency has updated its guidance on the conditions of grant attached to funding for school-led tutoring. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-led-tutoring-conditions-of-grant>

The Education and Skills Funding Agency has updated its guidance on apprenticeship funding bands. It sets out the funding bands that will apply for existing apprenticeship frameworks and apprenticeship standards. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding-bands>

Ofsted has updated its guidance on inspecting schools. The guide for maintained and academy schools gives a summary of what schools should expect and what they need to do as part of an Ofsted inspection. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/inspecting-schools-guide-for-maintained-and-academy-schools>

Ofsted has updated its guidance for parents and carers of children whose school is due for inspection. The guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspections-a-guide-for-parents>

Ofsted has updated its school inspection handbook. The handbook provides guidance on inspecting maintained schools and academies in England under the education inspection framework. The handbook can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif>

I hope you find this information useful.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Williamson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP
Secretary of State for Education