

# Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information Sheet 2 - Governance 11 May 2020



The majority of schools are now closed following guidance from government. Some schools remain open as Hub provision, to offer childcare for vulnerable pupils and children of key workers. Governance in some format must continue for all schools, regardless whether open or closed. The Governor Support Team have drawn together some information for governors to consider during this period.

## **Laptops for vulnerable pupils**

[Guidance relating to laptops](#) has been published. LAs and Academy Trusts will be organising the distribution of laptops.

## **Safeguarding in schools**

The Department for Education has published interim safeguarding guidance for the COVID-19 period. The guidance is relevant to all schools. The interim guidance is clear that Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) remains the overarching statutory safeguarding guidance that schools follow. The purpose of the interim guidance is to support governing boards, proprietors, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads (DSL) so they can continue to have appropriate regard to KCSIE and keep their children safe during the period that schools and colleges are operating in a way that is fundamentally different to business as usual.

The National Governance Associations (NGA) legal partner Browne and Jacobson, has published an [annex](#) to schools Child Protection Policy, that can be adopted to reflect any new arrangements put in place in response to the pandemic.

## **Protocol for application to Hub schools**

Key workers who still require childcare can make a request for support via a Hub school via Cumbria County Council's website, by completing the following online form: <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/coronavirus/schools.asp>

The council is asking all parents and carers to check government guidelines on who is an essential key worker before submitting an application.

### **Governor terms of appointment**

Schools being closed to almost all pupils, means that governing boards are not currently able to hold or complete the process of parent or staff governor elections. Where schools would plan to hold elections as a result of an elected governor reaching the end of their term of office, the NGA have advised that it would be sensible for governing boards to allow those governors to remain in office until it is possible for elections to be held (ie once schools are open). This decision should be recorded in minutes as good practice.

Appointed governor positions can continue to be made as they normally would be, but at meetings held virtually. These appointments should follow reference to the required procedures and protocol.

### **Testing for key workers**

Governors should be aware that following recent announcements, teachers are amongst those now eligible to be tested for Covid-19 should they display any symptoms. Further information and detail on how to get tested can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested#who-can-be-tested>,

Headteachers will also need to familiarise themselves with the process and encourage those staff with symptoms to be tested.

### **Headteacher Reports**

Headteacher reports will need to be adapted this term with a focus on the key things governors need to know to understand how your school has responded to coronavirus.

### **Bereavement**

The NGA have produced a new [COVID-19 information briefing](#) which aims to support schools in considering the approach that they take when dealing with bereavement, as a consequence of the Covid-19 outbreak. Governors should encourage leaders to give some thought to this issue if they haven't already done so.

The NGA have also produced and [Appendix](#) of additional resources to support this briefing.

This is an unprecedented and extremely difficult situation. Coronavirus (Covid-19) will lead to an increasing number of questions over the coming days, weeks and months. The information and guidance contained within this document has been collated for governing boards to use. There are also regular updates released by [Department for Education](#) and [National Governance Association](#).