Coronavirus (COVID-19)
Information Sheet 3 - Governance
21 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 (GST) have drawn together some information for governors to consider during this period.

Headteacher Reporting

In previous documents, GST have highlighted areas of feedback that governing boards may expect to receive from leaders in their school during the pandemic.

Taking our previous information into consideration, as well as a number of other models that we have seen (including those from The Key), we have developed a template which headteachers and governors may find useful. This document can be adapted to the needs of individual schools.

Managing school premises during the coronavirus outbreak

The DfE have produced guidance for schools and other educational settings, on managing premises which are partially open during the Coronavirus outbreak, to ensure that children and staff are in safe buildings during reduced occupancy arrangements:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-school-premises-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/managing-school-premises-which-are-partially-open-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak.

This document was updated on 18th May 2020. Further updates may follow.

In addition, guidance around the strategy for infection prevention and control, including the specific circumstances when PPE should be used, has been published:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings-including-the-use-of-personal-protective-equipment-ppe.

Actions for educational and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1st June 2020

It is anticipated, that from the week commencing 1st June 2020 at the earliest, primary schools will be asked to welcome back children in Nursery, Reception, year 1 and year 6, alongside priority groups. Secondary schools, sixth form and further education colleges will be asked to offer some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of year 10 and year 12 students who are due to take key exams next year, alongside the full time provision they are offering to priority groups.

The DfE have provided further information regarding this:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/actions-for-education-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/opening-schools-for-more-children-and-young-people-initial-planning-framework-for-schools-in-england.

It has been stipulated that further guidance will be issued before 1st June 2020.

Cumbria County Council risk assessment audit tool and risk assessment

The Cumbria Education Tactical Co-ordination Group have produced a risk assessment audit tool: Preparing for Risk Assessment. The purpose of this document is to bring together elements of the DFE guidance to support head teachers in identifying the areas of potential risk in opening your school, and support you in working towards a potential date for opening, should June 1 not be feasible.

As the employer in maintained schools, Cumbria County Council, in consultation with our Trade Union colleagues and internal partners have developed the following Risk Assessment and Recovery Guidance together with two model risk assessments:

School Premises
School Operations.

These should be used as a basis to enable schools to develop, tailor and consider the key issues and recommended control measures to plan for settings and activities to operate safely, as far as is reasonably practicable, in line with current guidance.

Data protection and coronavirus

The information commissioner's office recognises the unprecedented challenges being faced during the Covid-19 pandemic and have put together some useful guidance for consideration:

https://ico.org.uk/global/data-protection-and-coronavirus-information-hub/data-protection-and-coronavirus/.

Communications

The Local Authority continue to circulate communications via email, to leaders in schools. These updates contain up-to-date information for schools. All Covid-19 Schools Updates can be viewed on the Cumbria County Council website:

https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/coronavirus/education.asp.

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.