

Remote education

Due to the dedication of teachers and school leaders, the vast majority of schools have already been delivering remote education where it has been needed, continually improving their provision in line with expectations and emerging best practice.

The temporary continuity direction makes it clear that schools have a duty to provide remote education for state-funded, school-age children whose attendance would be contrary to government guidance or law around coronavirus (COVID-19). Where vulnerable children and young people and children of critical workers do not attend school or college, we expect schools and colleges to provide them with remote education. The Direction also requires schools to have regard to this guidance. Ofsted inspection will consider the quality of schools' remote education in accordance with the expectations set out in this guidance.

Independent Schools (not including academies) are not all covered by the temporary continuity direction. However, they are still expected to meet the Independent School Standards in full at all times. This includes the requirement to meet all of the education requirements set out in Part 1 of the Independent School Standards. Schools should be able to show how they are meeting these standards in relation to both the vulnerable children and young people and children of critical workers in attendance. The remote education provided should be equivalent in length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school and will include both recorded or live direct teaching time, and time for pupils to complete tasks and assignments independently. The amount of remote education provided should be, as a minimum:

- Key Stage 1: 3 hours a day on average across the cohort, with less for younger children
- Key Stage 2: 4 hours a day
- Key Stages 3 and 4: 5 hours a day

If parents feel their children's school is not providing remote education of a suitable quantity and quality, they are encouraged in the first instance to raise their concerns with the teacher or headteacher and, if the concerns are not resolved, to report the matter to Ofsted. Ofsted will consider the complaint and take action where appropriate. This could involve inspectors discussing the concerns with the school or if appropriate inspecting.

In addition, as announced in December, while Ofsted's routine graded inspections remain suspended, inspectors will, during the spring term, conduct monitoring inspections of schools most in need of challenge and support – those previously judged to be providing an inadequate education and some previously judged to require improvement. Those

inspections will provide assurance that pupils in those schools are receiving the best possible education – whether through classroom teaching or remote education.

In the context of schools limiting attendance to all but vulnerable children and children of critical workers, schools are expected to build on their existing remote education provision, ensuring a strong offer is in place for all pupils. Our [Get Help With Remote Education](#) page on gov.uk provides a one-stop-shop for teachers and leaders, signposting the support package available. Senior leadership teams and governors will want to assure themselves that their remote education offer meets the expectations in this guidance by reviewing and self-assessing their current practice. We have published a "[review your remote education provision](#)" tool, to support school leaders in doing this.

To stop pupils and students falling behind, our £1bn catch up package remains in place, including the £650 million catch-up premium and in-school support through the National Tutoring Programme (NTP).

Note that the expectations set out in this guidance are for schools rather than for individual teachers.

In developing their remote education, we expect schools to:

- teach a planned and well-sequenced curriculum so that knowledge and skills are built incrementally, with a good level of clarity about what is intended to be taught and practised in each subject so that pupils can progress through the school's curriculum
- select a digital platform for remote education provision that will be used consistently across the school in order to allow interaction, assessment and feedback and make sure staff are trained and confident in its use. If schools do not have an education platform in place, they can access free support at [Get help with technology - GOV.UK \(education.gov.uk\)](#). Independent Schools (not including academies) that are not subject to the temporary continuity direction do not have to provide a digital platform. However, they do need to meet the Independent School Standards in relation to all of their pupils – including those working remotely through digital and/or non-digital means.
- overcome barriers to digital access for pupils by:
 - distributing school-owned laptops accompanied by a user agreement or contract
 - providing printed resources, such as textbooks and workbooks, to structure learning, supplemented with other forms of communication to keep pupils on track or answer questions about work

- Some pupils who have difficulty engaging in remote education may be considered to be vulnerable children and therefore eligible to attend provision. It is up to the child's education provider or local authority to make this decision based on the needs of the child and their family, and a range of other factors, as set out in the guidance
- have systems for checking, daily, whether pupils are engaging with their work, and work with families to rapidly identify effective solutions where engagement is a concern
- identify a named senior leader with overarching responsibility for the quality and delivery of remote education, including that provision meets expectations for remote education
- publish information for pupils, parents and carers about their remote education provision on their website by 25 January 2021 – an optional template is available to support schools with this expectation

When teaching pupils remotely, we expect schools to:

- set meaningful and ambitious work each day in an appropriate range of subjects
- provide teaching that is equivalent in length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school. This will include both recorded or live direct teaching time and time for pupils to complete tasks and assignments independently, and will be as a minimum:
 - Key Stage 1: 3 hours a day on average across the cohort, with less for younger children
 - Key Stage 2: 4 hours a day
 - Key Stages 3 and 4: 5 hours a day

Online video lessons do not necessarily need to be recorded by teaching staff at the school: Oak National Academy lessons, for example, can be provided in lieu of school-led video content.

- consider how to transfer into remote education what we already know about effective teaching in the live classroom by, for example:
 - providing frequent, clear explanations of new content, delivered by a teacher or through high-quality curriculum resources

- providing opportunities for interactivity, including questioning, eliciting and reflective discussion
- providing scaffolded practice and opportunities to apply new knowledge
- enabling pupils to receive timely and frequent feedback on how to progress, using digitally-facilitated or whole-class feedback where appropriate
- using assessment to ensure teaching is responsive to pupils' needs and addresses any critical gaps in pupils' knowledge
- avoiding an over-reliance on long-term projects or internet research activities

We expect schools to consider these expectations in relation to the pupils' age, stage of development or special educational needs, for example where this would place significant demands on parents' help or support.

Younger children in Key Stage 1 or Reception often require high levels of parental involvement to support their engagement with remote education, which makes digital provision a particular challenge for this age group. We therefore do not expect that solely digital means will be used to teach these pupils remotely.

We also recognise that some pupils with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may not be able to access remote education without adult support and so expect schools to work with families to deliver an ambitious curriculum appropriate for their level of need.

Special educational needs

For pupils with SEND, their teachers are best-placed to know how the pupil's needs can be most effectively met to ensure they continue to make progress even if they are not able to be in school due to self-isolating. The requirement for schools to use their best endeavours to secure the special educational provision called for by the pupils' special educational needs remains in place.

Schools should work collaboratively with families, putting in place reasonable adjustments as necessary, so that pupils with SEND can successfully access remote education alongside their peers.

Where a pupil has provision specified within their EHC plan, it remains the duty of the local authority and any health bodies to secure or arrange the delivery of this in the setting that the plan names. However, there may be times when it becomes very difficult to do so, for example, if they are self-isolating. In this situation, decisions on how provision can be delivered should be informed by relevant considerations including, for

example, the types of services that the pupil can access remotely, for example, online teaching and remote sessions with different types of therapists. These decisions should be considered on a case by case basis, avoiding a one size fits all approach.

Vulnerable children

Where individuals who are self-isolating are within our definition of vulnerable, it is important that schools put systems in place to keep in contact with them.

When a vulnerable child is asked to self-isolate, schools should notify their social worker (if they have one). School leaders should then agree with the social worker the best way to maintain contact and offer support to the vulnerable child or young person.

Schools should also have in place procedures to check if a vulnerable child is able to access remote education support, to support them to access it (as far as possible) and to regularly check if they are doing so.

Delivering remote education safely

Keeping children safe online is essential. The statutory guidance [keeping children safe in education](#) provides schools and colleges with information on what they should be doing to protect their pupils online.

Support on delivering online remote education safely is available from:

- [safe remote learning](#), published by SWGfL
- [online safety and safeguarding](#), published by LGfL, which covers safe remote learning
- the National Cyber Security Centre, which includes which [video conference service](#) is right for you and using video conferencing services securely
- [safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- annex C of [keeping children safe in education](#)