

Ealing COVID-19 Governance Update (Spring 3)

Monday 1 March 2021

Following the Government announcements on 22 February regarding the full return of all schools on the 8 March, this Ealing COVID-19 governance update, provides you with a summary of the most recent COVID information, in addition to Ealing governance information and support. This is a constantly changing landscape so for the most up to date information please see EGfL's [COVID 19](#) section, [Ealing borough COVID information](#) and [Ealing Covid-19 cases dashboard](#) .

Operational guidance on the full opening of schools

DfE revised guidance documents: [Early years and childcare providers; Schools Covid-19 operational guidance; Additional operational guidance for special schools, special post-16 institutions and alternative provision; Contingency framework: education and childcare settings](#)

A summary overview of the main provisions:

- All schools and colleges will reopen to all pupils from 8 March 2021
- Attendance will be mandatory for all pupils (except those who are clinically extremely vulnerable or need to self-isolate)
- Schools are required to provide remote education for pupils who are unable to attend school because they are following Government guidance
- Essential control measures must be in place to minimise COVID-19 transmission
- Schools will need to review risk assessments (and update as appropriate) in advance
- Secondary schools can phase the return of pupils during the first week to facilitate testing.

Asymptomatic COVID-19 testing in schools

- School staff in all phases will be given kits for twice weekly testing at home
- There will be no testing of primary pupils
- Returning secondary pupils (with consent) will be tested three times at school (three to five days apart) and will be provided kits for at-home testing thereafter
- Pupils who consent to testing should return to face-to-face education following their first negative test result
- Schools have the flexibility to consider how best to deliver testing on a phased basis, depending on their circumstances. Priority should be given to children of critical workers, vulnerable pupils in year groups 10 – 13
- Schools should not start home testing pupils before the week beginning Monday 15 March.
- Staff and pupils with a positive result will need to follow self-isolation guidance and obtain a PCR test to confirm the result. Close contacts of anyone who tests positive must not attend school for ten days
- All testing is voluntary, though strongly encouraged.

The DfE confirmed in an email to schools (24 February) that they may start testing pupils before Monday 8 March. The notice contained some related points:

- This is voluntary and at the discretion of each school
- If a school chooses to start testing before Monday 8 March, they must still follow the [schools operational guidance](#) and also consider transport implications before Monday 8 March
- Pupils must maintain social distance and go straight home after their test result if the test is before Monday 8 March (other than children of key workers/ vulnerable in school).

Use of face coverings

The DfE has strengthened existing protective measures in schools. Adults and pupils in year 7 and above must wear face coverings in all indoor environments in secondary schools (including classrooms) when social distancing cannot be maintained. Exemptions (such as pupils who rely on visual signals for communication) apply.

Clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) adults and children

The [definition of clinically extremely vulnerable \(CEV\)](#) has been expanded to include a new group of adults who have been identified through the [COVID-19 population risk assessment](#) as potentially being at high risk of serious illness if they catch the virus. Individuals identified as CEV through this risk assessment are advised to follow [guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable people](#), which has now been extended until 31st March. Schools HR will update guidance to reflect changes on EGfL.

Adjusting start and finish times

Whilst overall teaching time should not be reduced, schools can stagger start and finish times to keep groups apart as they arrive and leave. Schools should think about how best to communicate changes to parents and remind them not to gather outside the school entrance.

Wraparound care and extra-curricular activities to resume

From 8 March, schools are encouraged to resume before and after school activities that help parents to attend work and support pupils' wider education.

Holiday activities and food programme 2021

In November 2020, the government announced that the holiday activities and food programme will be expanded in 2021 to cover the Easter, summer, and Christmas holidays in 2021. The focus for this programme is on healthy food, wellbeing, and activities for disadvantaged children. In Ealing approx. 10,300 children are eligible. For Easter, Ealing will build on existing provision with more face to face provision in the summer. More details will be on EGfL in the near future.

Assessment and awarding of qualifications in 2021

The DfE/Ofqual have published outcomes from the consultation re [Decisions on how GCSE, AS and A Level grades will be determined in summer 2021](#). The final deadline for submission of grades will be 18 June 2021. Results days will be on 10 August for AS and A level, and 12 August for GCSE results. Key features of the approach will be:

Assessment and evidence

- To determine grades, teachers must assess their pupils' performance, only on what content has been delivered to them.
- Teachers can use evidence of a pupil's performance from throughout the course to inform their judgement.
- Teachers should determine the grades as late in the academic year as is practicable
- Exam boards will provide a package of support materials based on past questions and will include a proportion of previously unpublished questions for every subject. Use of these materials is not compulsory; they will be part of the range of evidence teachers could use to determine the grade.

Quality assurance (QA)

- Exam boards will put in place arrangements for external QA to check each centre's internal QA process and, in a sample of centres, to review the evidence for one or more subjects. Sampling should be both random, and risk based.

Appeals and results

- Pupils will be able to appeal their grade. A pupil who is unhappy with their grade will first ask their centre to check whether an administrative or procedural error had been made
- Where a centre does identify an error in the grade submitted to the exam board, it can submit a revised grade and a rationale for the board to consider. If the exam board is satisfied with the rationale, it will issue a revised grade
- Where a centre does not believe an error had been made, a pupil can ask the centre to appeal to the exam board on their behalf.

School performance measures

Updated DfE [guidance](#) has clarified the position on performance measures in 2020/21. Key changes:

- DfE will not publish school level data based on 2021 key stage 1 and 2 assessments, tests, GCSEs, AS levels, A levels, other regulated general or vocational/ technical qualifications
- 2020 and 2021 results data will not be available to Ofsted and Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs)
- Schools should not use the 2020 or 2021 results data as part of their teacher performance management process
- Qualifications achieved in 2020 and 2021 will not count towards performance measures in future years
- DfE will not publish attendance based on autumn term 2020 and spring term 2021 for key stage 1 to key stage 4 in performance tables.

However, DfE, there intends to share other information with parents. This will include:

- A list of the subjects and qualifications pupils took at key stage 4 and 16 to 18, including, at KS4, the proportion entered for the EBacc combination of subjects
- Data on how well schools support their key stage 4 and 16 to 18 pupils to their next destination.

Ofsted

Inspections will pause inspection for the beginning 8 March but for the rest of the term, will continue to carry out monitoring inspections remotely by default. On-site inspections will only be if they have any immediate concerns.

The role of the governing board

Governing boards should seek assurance from school leaders that risk assessments are being revised in preparation for reopening and that relevant policies are brought up to date as needed. As always, safeguarding and the wellbeing of pupils and staff should be a priority.

Governing board meetings in schools

Whilst the Government has produced a roadmap for the return of schools, Ealing advice is that whilst restrictions are in place re meeting in groups indoors, board meetings should continue to be held virtually. Once all restrictions are lifted, and in line with the school's risk assessment, then boards can agree how best to proceed with meetings and visits.

Parent governor elections

As above, we recommend that these only take place once the relevant restrictions re meeting in groups indoors have been lifted and in line with the school's risk assessment.

The Mayor of London and London Assembly elections

As part of the Government announcements on 22 February, it was confirmed that elections will go

ahead as planned on the 6 May 2021. Where schools are used as polling stations this will continue. There is no expectation of a home learning offer during the days closure, any offer is at the school's discretion. Should there be any key worker parents who are struggling to find childcare they can contact the Family Information Service children@ealing.gov.uk for advice and support.

Ealing governor / trustee recruitment event - Thursday 11 March, 6.15 - 7.30pm

Together with [Governors for Schools](#) we will be holding our [annual governor recruitment event](#) Due to current COVID-19 restrictions we will be hosting the event on-line. Please contact governors@ealing.gov.uk if you wish to attend.

Supply teachers – ELP support for schools

Ealing Learning Partnership (ELP) are delighted to announce REED Education have been [successfully appointed as the Managed Service Provider](#) via the Crown Commercial Service Supply Teachers and Temporary Staff framework. The contract is for the provision of supply teachers and temporary staff in ELP member schools who sign up to the service. The managed service which will go live in September, will run for two years and will be overseen by the ELP Business Sustainability.

ELP discounted rates for governance membership services

Ealing governor services has once again negotiated discounted membership rates for all ELP schools for the following services:

- [The Key for school leaders/ school governors and their safeguarding training suite](#)
- [National governance Association](#)
- [GovernorHub](#)

Each of these will run from 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022. For more information including costs please click on the above EGfL links for each.

In addition, the [Services for schools 2021/22 brochure](#) and order form is now open. Headteachers and nominated buyers will have five weeks to complete and submit their orders by the deadline date 31 March 2021. This will include any bespoke [governance development support](#) and /or [workforce development support](#) required.

The future of Ealing's central training programme and Ealing Education Centre (EEC) - consultation

We need to determine the demand for a return to face-to-face events once it is safe for us to resume. The future of EEC is integrated with a capital project on the Mansell Road site and scheduled for closure in 2022. We are now looking to re-locate the centre to a new permanent site, ideally from September 2021. Your input is critical to inform our decision-making around future needs. To help us assess future needs, we would be most grateful if you could [complete this survey](#) by Wednesday 3 March.

ELP spring term 2021 newsletter: [Latest edition of the termly newsletter](#)

Ealing governance training and support 2020/21

- For all 2020/21 training see [Ealing CPD online](#) and [ELP governance development programme](#)
- Next Chairs' / lead governors' briefing – Thursday 25 March, 6.00-7.15pm
- Next learning conversation session – Tuesday 27 April, 6.00-7.30pm – topic TBC. Ideas welcome.

Best wishes and stay safe

Therese and Michelle

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