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Correspondence

# ESFA Update academies: 22 April 2020

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## **1. Latest information on coronavirus (COVID-19)**

The Department for Education (DfE) has published guidance about COVID-19 in educational settings for staff, parents and carers, pupils and students

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>) on GOV.UK.

Please check GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>) regularly for updates.

## **2. Information: letter to academy trust accounting officers**

ESFA chief executive, Eileen Milner, has written a letter to accounting officers at academy trusts (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letter-to-academy-trust-accounting-officers-april-2020>). The letter includes important information about arrangements for academy trust financial management and reporting during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

## **3. Information: reducing burdens on educational and care settings from the Department for Education and its agencies**

It is vital, at this time, that all educational and care settings are able to focus on the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19), providing for the children and young people in their care and looking after the wellbeing of their staff.

To help reduce the burden on educational and care settings at this time, the Department for Education (DfE) and its agencies have cancelled or paused all but the most essential data collections, services and requests from educational and care settings until the end of June 2020. Data collections which are paused will be reviewed and the pause period extended if necessary. A decision on data collections or services which are not due to go live until later in the year will be made in due course.

Further information and a full list of data collection changes

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-reducing-burdens-on-educational-and-care-settings>) for the remainder of the academic year can be found on GOV.UK. If you have any problems with completing returns that are still open please email [managing.burdens@education.gov.uk](mailto:managing.burdens@education.gov.uk).

## **4. Information: increased fraud risk during coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic**

Periods of instability, such as during the coronavirus pandemic, bring an increased risk of fraud.

Fraudsters will actively exploit these difficult times and will target vulnerable areas for financial gain.

We have been informed some learners and parents have received a letter from ESFA asking for personal learner bank details in relation to the 16-19 Bursary Fund. We never ask for personal bank account details. This is a fraudulent letter – please do not respond.

Where possible, it would be helpful for institutions to share this message with parents and students through your communication channels.