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Guidance

Get technology support for children and schools during coronavirus (COVID-19)

Guidance for local authorities, academy trusts and schools on how to get internet access, digital devices and support to provide remote education during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Local authorities can also get support for care leavers, and children and young people with a social worker.

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From:

Department for Education (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>)

Applies to:

England

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Read the latest information about nursery, school and college closures (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures>) following the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19).

The Department for Education will provide the following for some disadvantaged children and young people who do not currently have access to them from other sources, such as their school:

- digital devices (laptops and tablets)

- internet access

Who can receive digital devices and internet access

Laptops and tablets will be provided for disadvantaged families, children and young people who do not currently have access to them through another source, such as their school. Digital devices can be requested for:

- care leavers
- children and young people aged 0 to 19 with a social worker
- disadvantaged year 10 pupils

Internet access will be provided through 4G hotspot devices for any of the following people who do not currently have it:

- care leavers
- young people aged 11 to 19 with a social worker
- disadvantaged year 10 pupils

People aged 16 to 19 without a suitable device for education may be eligible for support through the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2019-to-2020-academic-year#coronavirus-covid-19-specific-update>).

Local authority and academy trust responsibilities

Local authorities are responsible for ordering and distributing laptops and tablets to:

- care leavers and children with a social worker
- year 10 pupils in maintained schools, including voluntary aided schools, who do not have a social worker

Local authorities should work with schools to assess which pupils require a laptop or tablet.

Academy trusts are responsible for ordering and distributing laptops and tablets to year 10 pupils who:

- do not have a social worker
- are not a care leaver
- do not have access to a laptop or tablet through another source

Local authorities and academy trusts will own the laptops and tablets they receive, and loan them to children and young people.

How to apply for this support

Local authorities, academy trusts and other relevant organisations overseeing schools and social care can apply. These organisations have been sent information on how to order a device.

Schools, parents and pupils do not need to apply for internet access or digital devices themselves.

What happens during the application and ordering process

All local authorities and academy trusts should follow the same steps to apply for and receive devices. The timelines will be different for each organisation, because we're prioritising delivery in this order:

- care leavers and children with a social worker
- disadvantaged year 10 children

The application and ordering steps are:

1. Organisations are asked to complete an online form from the Department for Education's delivery partner. The form asks the organisation to forecast the number of laptops and tablets they need, and choose between a Google or Microsoft operating system.
2. Organisations will be contacted by the Department for Education to confirm the number of laptops and tablets they have been allocated.
3. Organisations will be asked to register with the delivery partner's online system ready to place their order when stock is available. It may take a few weeks for devices to be prepared and loaded onto the ordering system.
4. The delivery partner will notify each organisation when laptops and tablets are available to be ordered.
5. Laptops and tablets will be delivered within 5 working days of placing the order.

When laptops and tablets will be delivered

Orders will be delivered in May and June.

Getting laptops and tablets to children and young people

Laptops and tablets will be delivered directly to the schools or local authorities named in the application.

Organisations can:

- arrange for them to be collected by families from school (with a social worker present where relevant)
- organise for them to be delivered to children's and care leavers' homes

This should be done in accordance with social distancing guidelines

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others>).

Get help using online education platforms

Schools can apply for government-funded support through The Key for School Leaders

(<https://covid19.thekeysupport.com/remote-learning/>) and access one of two free-to-use digital education platforms: G Suite for Education or Office 365 Education. The Key also provides feature comparison and case studies on how schools are making the most of these platforms.

Organisations can use the EdTech Demonstrator Programme (<https://edtech-demonstrator.lgfl.net/>) to contact a network of schools and colleges who are already using remote education technology resources for help and support.

Read the other guidance on remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19)

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19#guidance-on-remote-education-during-coronavirus>).

Read other guidance on social care during coronavirus (COVID-19)

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-local-government#social-care>).

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1. 4 May 2020

Updated to reflect policy and process development.

2. 24 April 2020

New details of the offer have been added, including a section on getting help using online education platforms.

3. 21 April 2020

Clarification on who digital devices and internet access will be provided to.

4. 20 April 2020

We have clarified the role of responsible bodies in ordering digital devices for eligible children and young people.

5. 19 April 2020

We added a sentence to clarify that the offer also helps local authorities supporting care leavers and children with social workers.

6. 19 April 2020

First published.

Related content

- Supporting your children's education during coronavirus (COVID-19)
(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/supporting-your-childrens-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>)
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): SEND risk assessment guidance
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance>)
- Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19)
(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>)
- Education Secretary's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 19 April 2020
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/gavin-williamson-speech-on-covid-19-response>)
- Help children with SEND continue their education during coronavirus (COVID-19)
(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-children-with-send-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>)

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- School procurement (<https://www.gov.uk/education/school-procurement>)