



Department  
for Education

# Summer schools guidance

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## Why summer schools?

Department for Education (DfE) research<sup>1</sup> estimates that in the first half-term of autumn 2020, pupils in Year 3-9 were on average around 1.6-2 months behind on their reading and those in Year 3-7 were around 3.2 months behind on their maths. Pupils in high-FSM (free school meals) schools were on average further behind those in low-FSM schools.

Anecdotal evidence also points to children and young people's mental health having suffered from lockdown and from periods of individual or class isolation even after schools reopened fully in the autumn term.

Summer school provision with an academic focus has the potential to support attending pupils to make up for some of their missed education. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) finds that, on average, pupils attending a summer school can make up to 2 months' additional progress (compared with pupils who do not attend), and up to 4 months if the summer school offers small group tuition led by highly-trained and experienced teaching staff.<sup>2</sup>

Evidence suggests a broader benefit for families and communities, support for vulnerable children and young people, pupil mental health and wellbeing, improved education engagement and transitions, and reduced youth violence.

## Aim of the programme

The aim of the programme, drawing on the evidence of good practice, is to deliver a short summer school offering a blend of academic education and enrichment activities.

## Who the programme is for

It is for schools to determine which pupils would most benefit from a summer school. We expect, however, that most will want to focus this provision primarily on pupils making the transition into year 7. This transition is known to be a challenging one for some pupils, and the impacts of the pandemic have increased this challenge. Pupils leaving primary school this year may have missed a significant proportion of key stage 2 (KS2) face-to-face teaching and therefore missed valuable preparation for secondary education. They are likely to need additional support with English and maths, for example, to make it easier for them to access the secondary curriculum. A summer school gives an opportunity to offer that face-to-face support before they start a new school.

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<sup>1</sup> [Research report template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

<sup>2</sup> <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/summer-schools/>

Summer school also offers an important opportunity to support pupils' wellbeing. Schools should include enrichment activities, such as team games, music, drama or sports activities. The cultural capital pupils have lost out on is important too. Pupils may not have heard as many words as they do on a normal day or read the books or been to the different places they might have otherwise. Some pupils won't have had access to a garden or other safe outdoor space during lockdown, so schools might want to offer those opportunities as part of the summer school.

Where a school runs a summer school for its incoming year 7, those pupils will have an opportunity to build a community with their fellow pupils, forge relationships with new teachers and familiarise themselves with their new school environment. Teachers with experience of running a transition summer school for incoming year 7 pupils report that take-up can be high, with parents keen to engage and giving positive feedback, and pupils saying they felt more a part of the school.

This funding must be used for provision delivered during the school summer holidays. Although schools are able – and encouraged – to carry out transition activities before the end of summer term, schools can and should use existing funding and their usual term-time staffing and other arrangements for those activities. These term-time transition activities may be useful to schools in identifying pupils who would benefit from more intensive support in the summer.

Schools are free to run a one- or two-week summer school and may choose to involve different pupils over that time, according to their needs. This could mean that more pupils benefit from a shorter summer school.

## Funding

### Eligible settings

Funding will be made available to state-funded secondary and special schools, non-maintained special schools and pupil referral units. It will also be made available to alternative provision for any pupils whose education was funded by the local authority outside of state place funded schools, including independent schools, non-maintained special schools, and other providers.

Eligible settings will be able to sign up to the programme completing a short [online form](#) by the end of April. The form will be made available via schools' existing DfE sign-in after the Easter holiday.

### How funding is calculated

Funding is calculated on the basis of a school's existing year 7 cohort. Schools with a very small number of year 7 pupils will receive no less than £1000 should they choose to participate. If it is impractical for those schools to run a summer school for their small

cohort, this funding allows them to work collaboratively with other local schools should they so wish.

Summer schools form one part of the educational recovery programme of funding available to schools. We are able to provide funding to each school based on up to 50% of their year 7 cohort being offered a place on a two-week programme, or 100% of the cohort being offered a week-long programme. This funding equates to £597 per two-week place (£1791 per place for pupils in special schools, special units within mainstream schools and alternative provision). Each school's own allocation will be published after the Easter holiday.

Subject to overall take-up, schools may be able to claim funding to cover additional pupils. Take-up will be reviewed in June and schools notified accordingly.

Secondary schools should work closely with their feeder primary schools to identify the pupils most in need. Schools should also consider making a strong enrichment offer alongside academic content to create a more attractive offer to pupils.

## Further sources of funding

Schools are free to top up and use additional sources of funding to support their summer school programmes if they so wish. For example, this might include using schools' [Catch up premium](#), recovery premium or [pupil premium](#).

Where schools are using alternative sources of funding, they should also ensure they follow any conditions and reporting arrangements associated with them.

## Notification of intent to take part

Schools should confirm their participation in the programme by the end of April, via an on-line registration form. At this stage, we will need confirmation only that schools intend to run a summer school, whether individually or jointly with other schools. Schools should begin their planning as soon after Easter as possible, working with feeder primary schools to determine which pupils to invite and liaising with parents. All participating schools will require a [DfE sign-in](#) account. Any school without an account should [register for one](#).

We suggest all schools inform parents of their offer before half term and by mid-June, schools will need to confirm:

- the number of places they intend to offer, and for which parental agreement is in place, over how many days
- that the school will offer a mix of academic and enrichment activities according to the needs of their pupils

## Making a funding claim

In September, schools will be required to complete a claim form. This is to:

- confirm that the summer school took place
- set out the total number of 'pupil days' offered
- confirm the total number of 'pupil days' attended.

Academies will receive their funding directly in the October funding round. Maintained schools will receive their funding via the local authority.

If a school cancels the summer school for any reason other than Coronavirus (COVID-19), or fails to complete the final claim form, DfE will not release funding.

The daily rate for a pupil place is £59.70. Schools will receive the full per-pupil daily rate for any pupil for whom a place was delivered in line with this guidance.

- a. If summer schools have to be reduced in scale because of a direct local or national order from DfE or Government, schools would be eligible to claim a portion of the funding available to them in line with the scale of the summer school and the number of pupils for whom confirmed places were made available
- b. If summer schools have to be cancelled because of a direct local or national order from DfE or Government, schools would be eligible to claim any reasonable accrued and unrecoverable costs
- c. Where schools choose to reduce the scale of their summer school provision (in whole or in part), they would be eligible to claim only a portion of the funding available to them in line with the scale of the summer school and the number of pupils for whom confirmed places were made available
- d. In all cases, schools will be able to use their funding to meet any reasonable accrued and unrecoverable costs.

Schools must seek to maximise attendance at summer school for those pupils that are due to attend, in order to achieve best value for money. Where a school has information that enables it to know that pupils who were due to attend will not do so, the school should take all reasonable steps to reduce the costs of their summer school provision accordingly.

If a pupil does not attend the summer school at very short notice, the full day rate will not be automatically payable for that pupil but schools should claim their unrecoverable, receipted costs up to a maximum of the day rate.

If schools come to a local arrangement that means that places are delivered more cheaply than the unit rate, then they should only reclaim actual costs up to the maximum of their allocation.

## **Accountability**

### **Required record-keeping**

Schools are expected to keep a daily attendance record of pupils attending the summer school. Spot checks on compliance with requirements, including number of places catered for, will be carried out.

Schools are required to keep receipted records of summer school costs. These must be kept available for inspection either as part of a spot check on summer school expenditure or as part of an audit.

Schools and local authorities shall provide information as may be required by the Secretary of State to determine whether they have complied with these conditions.

### **School compliance**

Schools are accountable for their use of the summer school funding allocated to them. They are expected to spend the grant for the purpose it was provided – to run a summer school with a mix of academic and enrichment activity. Food and water must be available to pupils in line with the relevant sections of this guidance.

### **Online reporting**

Schools should publish brief details of their summer school on their website by the end of October 2021. This should include the amount of funding received and a breakdown of how it was spent.

### **Review of online reports**

Schools' online reporting will be monitored through a sample of schools. We will review the published information on selected schools' websites to ensure it meets the conditions and requirements of summer school funding.

## **Setting up a summer school**

### **Premises**

The summer school offer focuses largely on pupils making the transition into year 7 and therefore largely into a school that is new to them.

Holding the summer schools in the secondary schools pupils are moving to will help them to feel comfortable in their new surroundings and with their new teachers. We therefore anticipate that most schools will want to run the summer school at their own premises to support familiarisation.



We are aware, though, that some schools may not be able to use their own premises for summer schools because of building works or other issues. In those cases, schools are encouraged to work with other providers to deliver a summer school for their pupils. Solutions might include working with a neighbouring secondary school, primary school or FE college to pool resources/funding to run a summer school, hiring outside premises for the purposes of the school, or working with the local authority to access facilities.

## Transport

Where pupils require transport to and from summer schools, schools may use a proportion of the funding to provide this. If schools are arranging transport for summer schools, they may find it useful to refer to the System of Controls within the [guidance on transport to schools and colleges](#). The guidance is kept under review and updated as necessary.

## Food

Meals should be provided for pupils attending summer schools. Meals must be free of charge for any pupil who is eligible for free school meals and schools can use a proportion of the funding to ensure that is the case. Parents of all other pupils may be asked to cover the cost of food, although schools may exercise discretion on using funding to offer a meal to any pupil whose family circumstances mean that they would not otherwise be able to attend summer school. Schools could speak to their school catering team or provider about the best arrangements for providing school meals for those pupils in school. Alternatively, schools may wish to use a proportion of the funding to source ingredients locally and make packed lunches on site. Meals provided should comply with the [school food standards](#).

## Water

Drinking water must be provided free of charge at all times to pupils on the school premises. Schools should consider the most appropriate way to do this if, for public health reasons, pupils do not have access to water fountains. Schools should take steps to limit the use of single-use plastic water bottles.

## COVID-secure summer school

Schools will need to follow the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) guidance for schools](#) in place at the time that the summer school takes place.

Please also refer to guidance on [protective measures for holiday and after-school clubs, and other out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#). Special schools and other specialist settings should refer to the [additional operational guidance](#).

## What works well?

### **Case study example: Measuring progress in literacy**

The school adopted a structured literacy programme and was very optimistic that the pupils would demonstrate sustainable progress during the autumn term. Staff tested individual pupils and set a baseline for sentence structure, punctuation, vocabulary, purpose, audience and form, with progress measured on a daily basis during the summer school. There were measurable gains even in two weeks. Teachers were satisfied that the pupils were aware of their assessment criteria and had refreshed their literacy skills.

We know that many schools already have successful transitional support in place but, for those that would like more information, this section sets out what has been found to work well on educational recovery, enrichment and familiarisation with a new school in out-of-term activities.

Engagement with school, physical and mental health and wellbeing all affect effective academic progress. A broad summer school of academic and enrichment activities would be attractive to and beneficial for pupils.

Evidence from the UK and abroad suggests that effective summer schools have (some of) the following features:

### **General**

- Clear aims and objectives, so that there is a shared understanding about what the school wants to achieve
- A dual focus on supporting pupils' academic progress and their social and emotional needs enables pupils to enjoy new experiences, build confidence, reinforce learning and develop positive patterns of behaviour
- The scheme ends on a high note, such as a celebration event involving parents and carers
- Interactive forms of instruction, such as immersion and experiential learning, can help to keep pupils engaged
- Involving pupils and their parents/carers in the design of the activities and in the recruitment and awareness-raising process, so that they can take ownership of the programme
- Partner organisations can play a key role, ranging from providing arts, media and sports expertise to managing summer schools. This can be invaluable in securing an attractive 'enrichment' element to the programme and providing activities that might normally be beyond the pupils' experiences. A close working relationship between schools and partners is essential to provide a cohesive programme.

## Logistics

- For those pupils transitioning to Year 7, building good relationships and having early contact with feeder primaries ensures timely access to complete data about pupils eligible for the programme. This can also help to identify disadvantaged pupils and ensure the programme meets their needs
- There are differing arguments on the best timing for a summer school. Running a summer school at the beginning of the summer holidays can maximise pupil and teacher availability. Alternatively, running it at the end of the holidays can be beneficial for those starting Year 7, as they familiarise themselves with the school and its routines immediately before term starts. (See Annex A for schools' previous experience of pros and cons for timing of summer school)
- Engaging pupils and their families is important in securing take up and maintaining attendance. A written invitation to parents/carers, follow up phone calls and/or face-to-face meetings with parents/carers to build a relationship and shared commitment to providing a beneficial experience for their child could be helpful. Give a deadline for parents/carers to confirm their child's attendance and investigate the reasons why disadvantaged pupils do not take up the offer
- Some schools have found more targeted measures, such as using multi-lingual teachers or volunteers to engage parents/carers for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) to be effective
- A celebration event is a positive means of recognising pupils' success and engaging parents/carers. Other ways of engaging with parents/carers include family activities, such as cookery workshops
- Consideration of what barriers pupils may face in relation to food or travel which prevent them from attending summer school and clear communication on what assistance is available
- Careful consideration of the summer school's location. Hosting the summer school in the school itself can decrease costs, provide easy access and, for those pupils transitioning to Year 7, can support familiarisation with the building
- A clear structure for each day of the programme with built in breaks of organised activities (rather than 'dead time'), perhaps using the school's sports or arts facilities
- Starting each day with some kind of assembly to bring everyone together and build a shared purpose and identity (as well as making sure everyone knows what is happening that day)

## Staffing

- Staff skills are aligned to the summer school's particular aims. For example, curriculum sessions are effective where subject specialists lead on the planning and delivery of the content supported by non-specialists or non-teaching staff. To support vulnerable pupils pastorally, having staff from the pastoral and SEND teams is important

- Staff can be recruited from a combination of participating and non-participating schools as well as non-school staff, such as HE lecturers, youth workers and staff from local businesses, to form an effective team with a broad range of skills and expertise
- For those pupils transitioning to Year 7, including members of staff from the Year 7 team is a good way to provide continuity for pupils ahead of the start of term. (The funding can be used to pay teachers and other staff for taking part in the summer school)
- Clear designation of roles and responsibilities which could include overall lead, curriculum design, safeguarding, teaching, family liaison, first aid, catering, logistics and cleaning
- Peer mentors are involved, serving as good role models for students and providing excellent support for the work of main staff
- Small programmes with high adult:pupil ratios work well
- Experienced teachers deliver the academic element

## **Education recovery and other lessons/activities**

- Successful educational programmes include educational activities that complement the curriculum pupils are (or will be) following during the school year. Academic content is aligned with the relevant curricular standards
- Schools have plans in place to assess impact on learning, comparing pupils' starting point with post-summer school
- Group teaching is complemented with individual support such as target-setting, mentoring, tutoring and homework assistance
- Academic instruction is supplemented with enrichment activities that are engaging to pupils. They also include time for sports and recreational activities to offer pupils a chance to participate in activities they enjoy
- Other enrichment activities which have proved popular in summer schools include scavenger hunts, map reading and team building.
- For pupils transitioning to Year 7, providing the opportunity to get to know the school building, routines and systems, pastoral and teaching staff, and some of their classmates prior to the start of term works well
- Lessons and concepts are linked to a 'real-world' context. For example, pupils may learn how to write fiction by participating in storytelling events in the community

- Hands-on activities are integrated into lessons. Interactive forms of instruction help to keep students engaged in the material. Engaging students in games, group projects, field trips to historic sites, nature expeditions and science experiments are all ways to make learning more interesting and applied

### **Case study example from one of the Department's 'Opportunity Areas': Saturday School**

This school delivered a creative, enriching literacy and numeracy focussed Saturday School for Year 6-8 students, improving their attendance, attitudes and abilities. The objective was to raise achievement in the core academic subjects through accessing high quality, creative and practical additional learning hours; provide assistance for pupils leaving primary and transitioning to secondary school; improve the emotional well-being of young people through community engagement, and personal, social and health education; raise aspirations; and increase culture capital by the creation of meaningful enrichment opportunities and innovative curriculum design.

### **Supporting confidence and well-being**

- Prioritise specific activities and support to help pupils overcome pupils' fear of bullying, including details of strategies the school has in place to counteract bullying and what pupils should do if it happens to them
- Learning the routine of the school and how to behave in the classroom also provides confidence ahead of the start of term
- Activities focused on team building help to build stronger relationships. This could include morning assemblies or activities based on the values/ethos of the school
- Allocation of time for pupils to get to know one another and their teachers, particularly if there is a transition focus. This could involve creating smaller groups to facilitate relationship building or the use of games/competition. Making use of drama as a vehicle can encourage pupils to overcome any shyness
- Strategies put in place to support individual disadvantaged pupils once they start in Year 7, informed by the needs identified during the summer school, will support a smooth transition

### **Maximising attendance**

Secondary schools should work closely with their feeder primary schools to identify the pupils most in need, including vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils, including those who are just above the threshold for FSM as well as those who are eligible for pupil premium. Pastoral teams and SENCOs will be able to give valuable qualitative insight into which pupils might benefit.

Offering strong enrichment activities alongside academic content would create a more attractive event to pupils. Promoting the summer school positively, with fun activities and

down time, will help to encourage a range of pupils to attend and reduce any perceived stigma.

Some schools have found it effective to offer incentives to pupils to attend the summer school. These can range from very low-cost activity, such as holding a celebration event on the last day of summer school for pupils and parents, to 'rewards' for attendance and engagement, such as the opportunity to attend a sporting event or a trip to the cinema. Schools are free to use a reasonable amount of the funding to incentivise pupils to attend.

To reduce the longer-term impact of the pandemic, it is important to re-engage children with school who have disengaged, were (or were at risk of becoming) persistently absent before the pandemic, or who have missed large amounts of school. It is especially important to re-engage the most vulnerable pupils who can be severely affected by time out of school.

Many vulnerable children find transitions to the next phase of education difficult and will require additional support to make this transition. Summer schools can play a role in supporting this transition and promoting stable relationships e.g. by helping pupils to get to know their new school and teachers. Schools should consider this as part of their summer school planning involving key partners, as appropriate.

Some of the [vulnerable children](#) that schools should consider encouraging to attend include those with a social worker, those with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP), or those whom schools have identified as '[otherwise vulnerable](#)'.

Schools may wish to consider the following actions to support attendance by vulnerable children and those at risk of disengagement:

- Strong communication with families on what the activities are and what the benefits are
- Creating a programme that includes a strong element of fun activity, potentially offering experiences that pupils' parents might not be able to offer, such as a trip or group activity
- Tailoring summer schools might be helpful, because what works for some pupils might not work for others. Pupils could be offered options from a menu of different activities. This could improve buy-in, by giving pupils ownership and autonomy
- Summer schools which produce a meaningful output can be successful in engaging some disengaged pupils, such as a project that pupils can work on – creating a community garden, for example
- Videos can work well as communication tools (where written communications can be lost). Videos of the people who will be running the programmes, or examples, can help to engage pupils and parents, particularly those with English as an additional language

- Involving key partners in promoting the summer school and supporting vulnerable children to attend. These key partners include local authorities, social workers, virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children, teaching assistants and other specialist SEND support, such as a Speech and Language Therapist
- Discussing strategies for engaging and supporting vulnerable children with relevant school leads including the Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENCO and the Designated Teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Working with Designated Teachers, who in turn should work with Virtual School Heads, to understand how summer school can best support the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children and support the objectives in individual personal education plans
- Building in flexibility to reflect individual needs
- Ensuring that pupils have access to the equipment that they need, such as pens, pencils and rulers. If there are day trips, ensuring that they are accessible for all – for example, making sure that spare waterproofs are available for pupils who might not have one
- Promoting stability of relationships by involving key people in the summer school so that children are prepared for year 7 e.g. Year 7 pastoral leads
- Extending the summer school offer to siblings of vulnerable pupils, where appropriate.

### **Case Study example from one of the Department’s ‘Opportunity Areas’: Outdoor Learning**

The school targeted a group of 118 Year 8 pupils based on pupil premium and SEND pupils. The aim was to provide an opportunity for those pupils who are, due to their socio-economic backgrounds, less likely to encounter opportunities to build their self-belief, resilience and character and that will impact positively of their physical and mental health and well-being. The activities therefore focussed on the need to broaden horizons and self-awareness, increase determination and resilience, increase self-confidence and raise expectations and aspirations, and improve teamwork and social skills.

“The trip was an amazing experience because I did things that I had never done. The thing I especially liked was the caves because we had skills to learn like we had to work as a team.” (Anonymous pupil)

“The students really enjoyed the trip. It was lovely to see the students working as a team, supporting one another and cheering each other on. Every student climbed the climbing wall and descended with pride and a sense of accomplishment at what they had achieved.” (Year 8 form tutor)



## Staffing for summer schools

Summer schools are optional for staff and school leaders are best placed to determine the staffing that best suits their needs. As well as working with any of their own teachers who are available and willing to take part in the summer school, school leaders may wish to consider the following additional staffing options.

### Support staff

Schools may wish to ask some of their support staff to lead groups or cover lessons in summer school. You should be satisfied that staff have the appropriate skills, expertise and experience to carry out the work.

You should ensure that you continue to have appropriate support in place for pupils with SEND and consider this when planning your staffing requirements.

### Supply staff

When seeking additional external capacity, schools could consider sourcing staff through temporary direct hire, their local authority or trust, or recruitment and employment agencies.

Schools should exercise financial prudence when taking on additional staff. To help identify best value, we recommend that, where schools are using recruitment and employment agencies, they consider using the DfE and [Crown Commercial Service agency supply deal](#) when hiring agency workers. This offers a list of preferred suppliers that must be transparent about the rates they charge. The deal allows schools to look for the best rate in their area. To learn more about the deal, schools can contact the Supply Desk at Crown Commercial Services by emailing: [supplyteachers@crowncommercial.gov.uk](mailto:supplyteachers@crowncommercial.gov.uk).

### Initial Teacher Training (ITT) trainees

Schools may want to consider using ITT trainees to support summer schools. In discussion with relevant ITT providers, schools could use ITT trainees flexibly and innovatively to help meet both school and trainee needs. Schools will need to take account of the skills and capacity of the trainees.

With the usual mentor oversight, trainees could, for example, take responsibility for groups of pupils, develop education materials, deliver catch-up lessons and/or offer pastoral support. They could also be engaged in wider professional activity, for instance by supporting vulnerable children and young people.

ITT partnerships will need to ensure they have identified and comply with all [legislation](#) and [guidance](#) relevant to ITT.



## Volunteers

Volunteers may be used to support schools' delivery of summer schools. It is important that volunteers are properly supported and given appropriate roles, and schools continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process set out in Part three of statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). Under no circumstances should a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Schools may also want to consider volunteers from amongst their older pupils. Pandemic restrictions will have meant limited opportunities for older pupils to undertake work experience or volunteering roles that would usually support their personal statements or job applications. Those students may be able to recoup some of that lost opportunity by leading or supporting some of the planned enrichment activities.

Similarly, schools may wish to consider volunteers who have recently left the school, or former pupils who have recently graduated, all of whom may be seeking employment and may benefit from work experience to boost CVs.

## Feeder primary schools

School leaders may wish to discuss summer school staffing with their counterparts at feeder primary schools, with a view to seeking input from their year 6 teachers in particular. Year 6 teachers' knowledge of the pupils would be valuable in both planning and delivering the summer school, should they wish to undertake the work.

## Other organisations

Schools can work with other organisations and institutions to run their summer school, including those in the private and voluntary sectors. The school should ensure that its staff members are involved in the summer school design and that clear mechanisms are in place to ensure that knowledge gained about the pupils who attend is relayed back to the school.

## Paying teachers who you already employ

No teacher in a maintained school is required to work at weekends or out of normal school term dates unless their contract provides for this. Any teacher working in a summer school should therefore be doing so voluntarily. The Additional Allowance paragraph 26.1 c in the STPCD provides flexibility for teachers to be paid for out of school hours learning activity agreed with the headteacher and would be appropriate for remuneration for summer school work. Payment for teachers who agree to participate in the summer schools should be made at a daily or hourly rate calculated by reference to the teacher's actual salary on their respective pay range. With the exception of headteachers, all teachers who volunteer to work in summer schools would be eligible for payment under the Additional Allowance paragraphs.

Academies are not bound by the national terms and conditions and so have the freedom and flexibility to remunerate their teachers for any additional work that they do.

## **Paying other staff for summer school**

With regard to support staff, and other non-teaching roles, responsibility for determining pay and conditions lies at a local level with headteachers and school employers and terms for their participation in summer school should be agreed between employer and employee.

## **Safeguarding**

Schools should follow their usual safeguarding practices for pupils attending a summer school. Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the governing board should seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

Where the governing board provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection will apply and the school should continue to have regard to the statutory guidance on [keeping children safe in education](#). The guidance provides safeguarding information for all staff and sets out actions that schools need to follow with volunteers, agency and third-party staff.

### **Case study example: delivering a broad curriculum summer school**

This maintained school had previously offered sports activities to the local community during the summer holidays and delivered a programme of transition support to the new intake, but these activities had been planned and delivered separately.

The summer school initiative provided the impetus to integrate these activities into a single broad curriculum programme, linking the sports elements to the Year 7 curriculum for mathematics, English and science, and with a focus on showcasing the school to pupils: raising their self-esteem and removing fears and apprehension.

The programme took place over two weeks and workshops were delivered in two-hour blocks; planned collaboratively by the schools' pastoral care team and subject leads. Each workshop included a 'fun' element, with some kind of link to arts or sport, and making the best possible use of the sports centre facilities. The programme culminated in a two-day residential trip, hosted at an outdoor education centre, with a focus on team-building and conquering fears about starting school.

The seven pupils interviewed all rated the programme highly. One had been worried that the mathematics would be too difficult but was surprised to find that it involved origami and code-breaking. This was their 'best thing' about the summer school.

The broad curriculum theme brought the subject teachers together with the sports centre staff and external specialists. For most this was their first experience of working together and proved to be an inspiring experience. The main drawback was the reliance on so much different expertise, which made it logistically challenging to organise and run.

## **Planning a summer school**

Schools should follow [health and safety](#) guidelines.

Schools seeking support with planning may wish to check whether help is available from system leaders in their local area through the [school-to-school support directory](#).

[Opportunity Areas](#) (OA) may be able to link summer schools to other supporting initiatives within their areas and cover Blackpool, Stoke, Derby, Doncaster, Fenland & East Cambridgeshire, Oldham, Hastings, West Somerset, Bradford, North Yorkshire Coast, Norwich and Ipswich.

## Support for academic activities

### Maths

[Teaching mathematics in primary schools](#) sets out what pupils need to know in maths when they start secondary school, in order to progress in the curriculum. A [range of supporting materials](#) from video lessons through to PowerPoints is also available from the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics.

### Reading

Local libraries may offer ‘borrow bags’ made up of librarian-chosen books, activity ideas and other resources. [Find your local library](#) to explore what is available and to join up.

The DfE-funded Poetry by Heart initiative helps to develop and support inspiring poetry teaching in schools and to motivate pupils to explore our rich literary heritage. The curated collection of [poems and learning resources](#) is categorised by key stage.

Schools may also wish to encourage pupils to take up the [summer reading challenge](#), which this year has an environmental theme.

The [National Literacy Trust](#) is an independent charity dedicated to giving disadvantaged children the literacy skills they need to succeed. The trust’s secondary programmes help students develop their literacy skills to succeed at school and in their future lives.

### Science

The [Institute of Physics](#) provides free, bespoke support for teachers of physics. Resources include [Marvin and Milo](#) enrichment activities for pupils aged 5-11 and 11-14.

### Modern foreign languages

The [National Centre for Excellence for Language Pedagogy](#) (NCELP) provides support including professional development tools and teaching [resources](#) which can be sorted by language, pedagogical focus and age range.

### Computing

[TeachComputing](#) offers a toolkit for teachers and resources by key stage.

### Cross-curriculum

Schools may want to consider using Video and interactive lessons from [Oak National Academy](#). Oak is developing free, high-quality resources that will be available online throughout the summer holidays. In addition to Oak’s existing range of video lessons, the resources will include a holiday work plan, a menu of priority

lessons and assessments, and a package of detailed guidance to help teachers, parents and pupils make the best use of the resources. Schools may also want to make use of Oak's [Virtual School Library](#).

Primary and secondary resources are available from [BBC Bitesize](#) for teachers and pupils.

[The National Tutoring Programme \(NTP\)](#) provides high quality external tuition by approved tuition partners to support schools. Tuition takes place both face-to-face and online and will continue into the summer period to make up any tuition that has been missed, during lockdown. Although summer schools are targeted at pupils in the transition year 6 to year 7, schools may wish to take advantage of their premises being open over the holidays for summer schools as an opportunity for NTP pupils to come into school. This would enable pupils signed up to the National Tutoring Programme to complete their face-to-face or online tuition programme.

## **Support for mental health**

Schools should create an environment that supports pupils' mental health and wellbeing, ensuring the right circumstances to enable pupils to be able to learn and thrive. Schools should be particularly aware and supportive of the greater mental health and wellbeing needs of vulnerable children. Schools can access a range of mental health resource and support from the [mental health and behaviour in schools guidance](#).

It gives advice on:

- how to create a whole school culture, including promoting positive mental health
- understanding the link between mental health and behaviour
- how to identify children with possible mental health problems
- where and how to put in place support, including working with external agencies where required

It also provides links to sources of further support and guidance.

## **Support for enrichment activities**

Schools can work with their usual wraparound or holiday provider to ensure they can collaboratively create a broad and interesting programme for the pupils involved. Schools could consider working with any local cultural provision, for example working with their local library on reading events, or organising visits to local museums or galleries.

Schools may also wish to consider linking up with their local authority's [Holiday activities and food programme](#) (HAF) coordinator to provide enrichment or pastoral activities for summer school participants. The Department for Education has made up to £220m available in 2021 for HAF, which provides healthy food and enriching activities to disadvantaged children. Local authorities offer free, optional holiday club provision to

children eligible for benefits-related free school meals in their area. Clubs are run by schools, voluntary sector organisations and private providers. Local authorities are also encouraged to make the holiday clubs available to any children not eligible for free school meals, who can pay to attend.

HAF is a locally run programme and therefore the types of activities vary but tend to include sport, arts, drama, cooking and crafts.

[Arts Council England](#) is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport. Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences to enrich people's lives. It supports a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries - from theatre to digital art - reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections.

[Learning through Landscapes](#) is a UK-based charity dedicated to enhancing outdoor learning and play for children. It provides free [outdoor learning ideas](#) for schools.

## **Support for sports activities**

In order to support schools over summer holidays and for summer schools, Sport England and the Youth Sport Trust will shortly launch an online hub. This will offer free resource that schools and LAs can draw on in planning and resourcing any sports elements of summer schools.

The online hub will be made available through the [school games website](#) in the coming weeks.

Schools may also contact their local School Games Organiser for help and support in arranging sports activities for summer schools.

## **Evaluation of the 2021 summer schools programme**

The Department will conduct research into how schools are approaching recovery of lost time in education and will aim to assess the effectiveness of the different approaches. Schools may be contacted by representatives of the DfE to review their experience of delivering a summer school.

## Further reading

EEF Summer Schools case studies 2013: [EEF Summer Schools: Participant Stories](#)

EEF summer schools evidence summary and resources:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/summer-schools/>

Teach First – Running a summer school: a guide for teachers: [School Resources | Teach First](#)

[Summer School webinar](#)

[Redbridge Community School summer school video](#)

## Annex A: benefits and drawbacks of approaches to timing

Timing	Description	Benefits	Drawbacks
<b>Early summer school</b>	Several schools opted to run their programme immediately following the end of the summer term. The rationale was to maximise the availability of staff and parents and carers before the holiday period and to catch pupils while they were still ready to learn	It sometimes proved easier to engage the pupils because they were 'still in school mode'. It provided pupils with reassurance about starting at secondary school before going on their summer holiday with family or friends	Secondary school staff felt that the break in learning of 4 or 5 weeks after the end of summer school was not ideal
<b>Mid-summer learning boost</b>	Staff in one school opted to run their programme at the mid-point during the summer holidays. Their aim was to break the holiday period into two shorter blocks, to minimise the time spent away from learning	Initial gains were reported to have been made at the summer school, in terms of pupils' confidence and readiness to learn	Staff felt that pupils had not maintained their progress during the initial weeks of the new term
<b>Late summer school</b>	Some schools held their summer school at the end of the holidays. Two schools also opted to end their programme with a residential experience, so that pupils' confidence was at its highest immediately prior to starting the new term	There was '...more of a sense that they [the pupils] were starting something new... it was more like the 'start' of secondary school'. They 'enjoyed it [the learning experience] because it was fresh'	A teacher noted that: 'It took longer for pupils to pick up the pace'. The timing resulted in a longer first term for those involved
<b>'Stretched' summer school</b>	One school opted to stretch their activities across the six-week school summer holiday period. The aim was to provide continuity, and to enable pupils to take ownership of a longer project (involving crafts and film-making) that would give them a sense of achievement	The summer school provided valuable 'time out' for pupils with challenging home lives. The school received positive feedback from parents/carers who were grateful for additional support with their child during the summer	The extended format placed pressures on staff availability, and pupils' attendance was variable due to the summer school being disrupted by Summer Holidays, or other family commitments



## Contact us

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