

New major package to support online learning

Disadvantaged children across England are set to receive laptops and tablets as part of a push to make remote education accessible for pupils staying at home during the coronavirus outbreak.

Devices will be ordered for children in the most vital stages of their education, those who receive support from a social worker and care leavers.

The government will also provide 4G routers to make sure disadvantaged secondary school pupils and care leavers can access the internet – where those families do not already have mobile or broadband internet in the household.

The country's major telecommunications providers will make it easier for families to access selected educational resources by temporarily exempting these sites from data charges.

In addition, to support the hard work of schools in delivering remote education, the Oak National Academy is due to launch on Monday 20 April. This brand-new enterprise has been created by 40 teachers from some of the leading schools across England, backed by government grant funding. It will provide 180 video lessons each week, across a broad range of subjects from maths to art to languages, for every year group from Reception through to Year 10.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

I want to thank all the teachers and staff who are working so hard to ensure vulnerable children and those of critical workers are supported at this time.

Schools will remain closed until the scientific advice changes, which is why we need to support the incredible work teachers are already doing to ensure children continue to receive the education they deserve and need.

By providing young people with these laptops and tablets and enabling schools to access high quality support, we will enable all children to continue learning now and in the years to come. We hope this support will take some of the pressure off both parents and schools by providing more materials for them to use.

Schools and colleges will be able to keep their laptops and tablets once they have reopened. This means that they will play a crucial role in enabling children to learn while schools and colleges are closed, and will also continue helping children learn in the future.

Oak Academy joins a broad range of support and resources available for schools and parents. This includes a list of [high quality resources](#) recently published by the Government, as well as the existing tools and resources schools use to provide remote education. Many suppliers are making resources, both online and hard-copy, available to schools for free.

This week (Monday 20 April) the BBC is launching its own education package across TV and online, featuring celebrities and some of the best teachers – helping to keep children learning and supporting parents.

This is alongside new guidance published today (Sunday 19 April) for parents on how best to support their child's education and development.

While families stay at home to reduce the spread of the coronavirus, some children and young people may face increased risk of abuse or neglect at home – or from strangers online.

The Government will make funding worth £1.6 million available immediately for the NSPCC to expand and promote its national helpline for adults.

While schools and social workers remain at the forefront of work to protect vulnerable children, including by supporting them to attend school, expanding the NSPCC Helpline will mean many more adults know how and where to raise concerns and seek advice or support about the safety and wellbeing of any children they are worried about.