**NASS Update (22nd May 2020)**

Hello everyone,

We have been holding off on today’s briefing as we have been expecting further DfE guidance for special schools since yesterday. I am now going to use my usual trick of issuing a briefing to try to prompt DfE to send it out, shortly after this lands in your inbox! We will keep a watching brief over the weekend and are working next week so we will make sure the guidance gets to you, once it has been offered. I suspect that it will have little practical impact on your plans for 1st June but following (or exceeding) the most current guidance is the foundation for safe practice in an uncertain space.

It was interesting to hear the news today that 68% of 100 local authorities surveyed cannot guarantee that their primary schools will be open for the specified year groups on 1st June. It will be interesting to see if those same local authorities apply a similar approach to special schools or if they put pressure on you to take more students back! There’s no firm sign yet that DfE will back away from the planned 're-opening’ but I would not be surprised to see a more nuanced message emerge, placing greater decision making power back with local authorities and head teachers.

There was some updated guidance yesterday on safeguarding and remote learning: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19?utm_source=cc90fb4d-85d1-4c41-837a-dd29a3eccbc2&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate> with some small additions about security of live streaming.

In response to the safeguarding guidance update issued earlier this week, Carolyn Eyre has produced a helpful summary, which is attached with this email.

I wanted to use today’s message to share some opportunities to meet with and learn from others.

Our friends at Engage in their Future - the national organisation for schools working with SEMH needs - have kindly extended an invite to NASS members for 2 upcoming events:

We are hugely excited to announce that **Professor Barry Carpenter** will be joining us for the third **#engage\_and\_connect** session on **Wednesday 3rd June** at **1.30pm**.

The debate around schools re-opening to more students is becoming increasingly intense. Whenever and however this happens, it is clear that lessons cannot resume from where they left off, and students cannot be expected to pick up their learning at the same point.

Barry's focus has been on supporting schools to develop a Recovery Curriculum, a framework that acknowledges and accommodates the impact that the Coronavirus pandemic has had on children and young people.

His work identifies five key areas of loss that may cause "the emergence emotionally of anxiety, trauma and bereavement in any child" and explores five levers to recovery that are available to schools to help them deliver a holistic response to re-engage our students in learning.

Further information is available on [Barry's website](https://barrycarpentereducation.com/). Those intending to join **#engage\_and\_connect**on 3rd June may find it particularly useful to read through Barry's think piece on the [recovery curriculum](https://barrycarpentereducation.com/2020/04/23/the-recovery-curriculum/) ahead of the session.

The session will also include a follow-up from Sharon Gray on the work that she has been doing with the Embark Multi-Academy Trust, providing more detail behind the overview that she shared in the second session (for further details please visit [www.engageintheirfuture.org](https://engageintheirfuture.org/from-everyone/engage_and_connect/) to view the recording). Both Barry and Sharon will be sharing resources with participants for their schools to take away and apply to their own settings and circumstances.

We are delighted that **#engage\_and\_connect** will be delivered in partnership with [NASS](https://www.nasschools.org.uk/) and include the opportunity to pick up on some of the support and learnings that they have collated and published.

As before, the session will also address concerns and priorities whether they're immediate or anticipated so participants are encouraged to share questions or highlight particular challenges in advance of the meeting. These will be shared (anonymously if preferred) during the session and in these unprecedented times, no question is off limits. Please do get in touch by emailing us at contactus@engageintheirfuture.orgby Monday 1st June. This is also the email address to use if you would like to join us for the third **#engage\_and\_connect**. Please email us at contactus@engageintheirfuture.orgto register and we'll send you the invitation link and joining details. We'll be accepting registrations right up until the session starts but we recommend you get in touch sooner rather than later.

**2020 Covid Secure Risk Assessment For Schools**

In response to concerns raised around issues such as PPE and risk assessments, we will be running an extra**#engage\_and\_connect** session on **Monday 1st June**at **1.30pm**. This session will explore how schools and children's services can work together to balance risks so that we can safeguard children and staff while meeting their need.

The session will be led by Bernard Allen, a member of the *engage in their future*Advisory Committee, who also works as an expert witness. We will look at what guidance is available, how other services are adapting their ways of working and what is reasonably practicable for workers looking after vulnerable children. We will share issues that have already arisen and try to anticipate some looming on the horizon.

In legal cases, the test of what constitutes good practice is whether or not a particular course of action would be supported by a 'reasonable body of professional opinion'. In drawing together such an experienced group to face these challenges we become that reasonable body. There are no experts in a position to pass down infallible guidance to leaders on the practicalities of managing schools and children's homes in this new era. It is up to us to invent best practice by engaging creatively and sharing ideas that seem to work. The objective of the session is to create a simple framework for Covid-19 risk assessment and control.

If you would like to join this session, please email us at contactus@engageintheirfuture.orgto register and we'll send you the invitation link and joining details. We'll be accepting registrations right up until the session starts but we recommend you get in touch sooner rather than later.

Our friends at Innovation Broking work with a number of NASS members in managing their risk and insurance.  With many schools reviewing their risk they have kindly pulled together a webinar to chat through the key concerns they have seen in the sector.  These concerns will include returning to work, managing PPE, where an insurance claim might come from and how to defend yourselves.  In addition they will cover off specific challenges we have seen such as use of technology like Zoom and business interruption cover.

Please contact Jonathan Taylor directly to reserve your place: jonathan.taylor@innovationbroking.com

On a recent ’Tea and Sympathy’ call, Laura Rowe of Fairways Education discussed a risk assessment she had developed to help make decisions about risk and mitigation when offering placements to children displaying behaviours which challenge. She has kindly allowed us to share it here.

This week Joanne and James from Octavia House schools put together this really helpful list of FAQs to help answer questions their families might have about sending children back to school. Again, they have said they are happy to share this. I hope that seeing what other schools are doing will be useful to you.

We won’t have a ’Tea and sympathy’ call next week as we hope many of you will be on half-term. The next one will be on Friday 5th June from 10.30-11.30. If you have expressed an interest in joining us in the past, i will automatically add you to the invite for this next session. If you haven’t joined before and would like to, please email me at cdorer@nasschools.org.uk These are relaxed and informal get togethers where we have a chance to talk through some of the difficult issues schools are dealing with and give each other support.

We hope that you manage to get a bit of ‘down time’ over the next week. I am sure we will be back in touch with more guidance! In the meantime, we are working next week so please get in touch if you need us.

With all good wishes from Claire, Karen, Kate and Jenny