

Arrangements for the Easter Holiday Period

Will schools be open during the Easter holidays?

The Government wants schools to open during the Easter holiday for a small number of children of key workers. The Government has not yet made any announcement about its wishes for the Easter weekend including Bank Holidays.

Should staff be consulted on Easter holiday opening arrangements?

All arrangements must be reasonable and should be subject to consultation and agreement between school leaders and staff. Following consultation and agreement, schools should set out clearly to all staff what the arrangements for Easter will be including rota working arrangements.

Am I entitled to my usual holiday if my school remains open or I am asked to work from home during the Easter holidays?

The NEU believes that staff leave should be operated on a rota basis, so that staff get two weeks off before, during or after the period when the school would normally be closed for Easter. Operating rotas based on weeks rather than days off would significantly reduce the number of colleagues with whom there is contact.

Schools must ensure that staff get their expected leave from work. It should not be assumed that staff can change their plans for the Easter period as family members' work arrangements may well be different.

I am a school leader - am I entitled to time off during Easter if my school continues to operate?

School leaders are also entitled to time off and should not have unreasonable expectations imposed on them simply because, for example, their contract does not include a maximum of 195 working days' working time.

Can TTO members of support staff who work during the Easter holidays receive an additional payment or TOIL?

In normal circumstances, Term-Time Only (TTO) paid support staff are not employed to work during school holiday periods, and the current crisis does not alter that fact. If schools want TTO staff to work during the holidays eg to look after the children of designated "key workers", then those staff who volunteer should be appropriately additionally recompensed on an agreed basis, either by the payment of the correct rate for overtime or the granting of time off in lieu (TOIL) at the same enhanced rate to be taken at some future point.

Can teachers who work during the Easter holidays receive an additional payment or TOIL?

There has been no government statement on extra pay or time off in lieu (TOIL) arrangements for teachers; and the School Teachers' Pay & Conditions Document (STPCD) includes no provisions for overtime pay or TOIL. Where local arrangements for keeping schools open during this year's Easter holidays envisage teachers volunteering to work additional days on top of their scheduled 195 days, they should receive additional pay or TOIL as agreed for those additional working days. Any such arrangements should, however, ensure that teachers do take an appropriate break and that all additional working is voluntary.

Can we ask the school to employ supply teachers (who might appreciate the opportunity to work over Easter) instead of regular staff?

Yes. If you believe that will help with managing staff attendance during Easter, you should suggest it to your Head. They will of course need to have all necessary clearance of work and there will need to be some regular staff present.

Will schools be open on Good Friday & Easter Monday or for the whole Bank Holiday weekend?

NEU NAHT & ASCL have jointly advised that we do not expect schools to have to open on Good Friday and Easter Monday. However, we are aware that there is increasing concern about the pressure on the NHS over this period and we know that many schools are now considering how best they can play their part over the Easter bank holidays.

Schools and colleges considering opening on these days should first determine whether or not demand exists for provision from key worker parents, many of whom will have alternative arrangements already in place, and depending upon response engage their own staff to determine availability. Our expectation is that take-up is likely to be low, and so in many cases we still expect that schools will be closed. Any staff working on these days should do so on the basis that they have volunteered to help in these extraordinary circumstances.

We would emphasise that this is a matter for local judgement and local agreement.

Should we be paid additionally for the two Bank Holidays if school plans to open?

Please see our advice on extra pay or time off in lieu for teachers and support staff who work additional days during this year's Easter holidays. Where staff wish to receive additional pay or TOIL for work on Bank Holidays, this should form part of the agreement reached locally on opening arrangements.

Rotas

Should there be rota working?

While any school remains partially open for children of key workers, we will expect arrangements such as a rota system to be implemented where necessary for those staff who are in school, which complies with the Government direction that staff and students who can be at home should be at home. For further information, please see our [Joint Advice](#) agreed with ASCL and NAHT.

Who should be at school?

Only staff working directly with students or key to opening, and cleaning, should be on the school site. Teachers should not be asked to be on site if they are not looking after pupils. They should not be asked to attend full staff meetings, or to clean cupboards, or take down displays for example because this increases their exposure to the virus and endangers the NHS. For further information, please see our [Joint Advice](#) agreed with ASCL and NAHT.

Will a rota system be in place for the holidays?

Staff holidays should be operated on a rota basis so that staff get two weeks off, either before, during or after the period when the school would normally be closed for Easter. Having weeks rather than days off will offer significant benefits in protecting staff health through minimising the extent of contact with different colleagues. It should not be assumed, however, that staff can change their plans, even during the current situation.

Should the school consult us when drawing up protocols and rotas?

All safety protocols, rotas and changes to normal duties should be negotiated with you rather than imposed on you. [Click here](#) for models you may follow. For further information, please see our [Joint Advice](#) agreed with ASCL and NAHT.

I work in a Special School; I am concerned that operating a rota system will mean staff are over stretched and/or pupils will be left unattended?

We recognise that the use of rotas may pose some particular challenges in special schools where higher staff ratios are required, but leaders should still try to take a similar overall approach to the use of rotas where possible. For further information, please see our [Joint Advice](#) agreed with ASCL and NAHT.