

# **ENGAGE PROGRAMME**

## **GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS**

**23 SEPTEMBER 2020**

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## Executive Summary

### Programme Aim

1. *To limit any long-term adverse impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on educational standards by supporting pupils' learning and engagement on their return to school through provision of high quality one to one, small group or team teaching support in every school in Northern Ireland.*

### Overall Budget

2. The overall budget for Engage in the 2020/21 financial year is c. £11.2m (i.e. up to the end of March 2021). Further funding, estimated to be in the region of £4.8m, will be required to allow the programme to continue for the remaining 3 months of the 2020/21 academic year (April-June 2021).
3. **Therefore, whilst it is anticipated at this stage that the Engage programme will run throughout the full duration of the upcoming academic year, and schools should plan on that basis, it should be noted that the additional funding needed to facilitate this is subject to Executive agreement.**

### Schools with FSME of 28% or higher

4. **Almost 400 schools with approximately average levels of Free School Meal Entitlement or higher (a minimum of 28% of pupils) will be provided with funding to support additional teaching resource during the 2020/21 academic year.**
5. The entitlement for each individual school falling into this category will be calculated according to the number of pupils enrolled (based on data from latest available School Census in October 2019).
6. The table below provides a breakdown of the enrolment bands which these schools have been grouped into, along with associated funding entitlements.

**Table 1 – Schools with free school meal entitlement of 28% or higher**

| Enrolment Band | Funding Allocation<br>(2020/21 financial year) | Number of<br>Primary<br>Schools | Number of Post-<br>Primary Schools |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 0-85           | £5,090                                         | 47                              | 1                                  |
| 86-200         | £12,724                                        | 94                              | 4                                  |
| 201-1000       | £25,448                                        | 159                             | 80                                 |
| >1000          | £50,896                                        | 0                               | 12                                 |
| <b>Total</b>   |                                                | <b>300</b>                      | <b>97</b>                          |

### Schools with FSME below 28%

7. All other primary and post-primary schools with Free School Meal Entitlement below 28% will also receive funding to provide **substitute teacher** days during the 2020/21 school year in order to deliver a programme to support pupils to engage with learning.
8. Again, the allocation available to each school will be dependent on pupil enrolment levels (drawn from the School Census in 2019).
9. The remaining 492 primary schools and 96 post-primary schools, with below average free school meal entitlement, will be grouped into three bands according to enrolment size and allocated funding equivalent to either 20, 30 or 45 substitute cover days to support delivery of the programme in the 2020/21 financial year. Note that this has been calculated as 30, 45, or 60 substitute cover days across the full 2020/21 academic year –subject to funding for the final 3 months April-June 2021.

**Table 2 – Schools with free school meal entitlement below 28%**

| <b>Enrolment Band</b> | <b>Funding Allocation (2020/21 financial year)</b> | <b>Number of days equivalent sub cover days (2020/21 financial year)</b> | <b>Number of Primary Schools</b> | <b>Number of Post-Primary Schools</b> |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 0-200                 | £3,600                                             | 20                                                                       | 300                              | 3                                     |
| 201-500               | £5,400                                             | 30                                                                       | 160                              | 9                                     |
| >501                  | £8,100                                             | 45                                                                       | 32                               | 84                                    |
| <b>Total</b>          |                                                    |                                                                          | <b>492</b>                       | <b>96</b>                             |

10. In this way, the Engage programme is both targeted at those schools with the highest concentrations of disadvantage but also provides universal support across all primary and post-primary schools in recognition of the wider impact of Covid-19.
11. Details of individual allocations due to each primary and post primary school have been published alongside this guidance. To find out what additional resource your school is entitled to for the 2020/21 financial year, refer to the following link on the DE website [www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/engage-programme](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/engage-programme).

### Evaluation

12. Schools will be required to use a distinct electronic accountability tool entitled *Engage Planner* which will capture a range of key information in respect of where the focus of programme lies, how the resources are being used and an evaluation of impact.

13. The emphasis in evaluation will be the impact on pupils' attitudes to and dispositions for learning and pupils' progress in learning. Evidenced-based judgements of the programme by schools will then inform further development of interventions.
14. The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) has been commissioned to provide an overall evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme and its impact on the children/young people in primary and post-primary schools.
15. The ETI evaluation is not an inspection programme.
16. Plans submitted by schools, within the Engage Planner, will be vital to enable each school to evaluate for itself the effectiveness and benefit of the interventions which they choose.

## Section 1 - Engage Programme – Background and Rationale

1. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, schools were closed to pupils for normal teaching as of 20 March 2020. This disruption has been felt by all families and pupils.
2. Whilst schools responded by maintaining distance learning through a combination of online support and hard copy learning packs, supported by parents in the home, it is recognised that this is no substitute for quality professional teaching in a school based environment. Put simply, pupils learn more when they are at school.
3. It is also acknowledged that there have been disparities in motivation and engagement throughout the lockdown period - many children have not had the opportunity for home learning to the same extent as others. Lack of routine, parental support or access to appropriate ICT for some will all have been contributory factors to any 'lost learning'. This period may also have added to feelings of isolation and anxiety thereby negatively affecting children's emotional and mental health.
4. If left unchallenged, this period of prolonged school closures has the potential to have a long lasting and profound impact on our children and young people in a variety of ways, not least on their learning and achievement. This is likely to be exacerbated for those pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds or those who, prior to the health emergency, were already experiencing barriers to education due a range of different factors. Bespoke interventions such as the Digital Devices Scheme and the Wellbeing in Schools initiative have already sought to tackle some of the above mentioned issues arising from Covid-19.
5. Crucial gains have been made over recent years in terms of 'narrowing the gap' in attainment<sup>1</sup>. Research indicates that there is a risk those gains could be significantly impacted upon by the period of lockdown which has the potential to increase the attainment divide even further<sup>2</sup>. In order to minimise this risk and protect system wide improvements as far as possible, on 30 June 2020 the Executive agreed to make £12m available from the Covid-19 response fund in support of a suite of interventions over the Summer 2020 period and beyond.
6. The funding secured included support for:

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<sup>1</sup> [Qualifications and Destinations of Northern Ireland School Leavers 2018/19](#) (statistical bulletin published by the Department of Education 12 August 2020)

<sup>2</sup> [Home Schooling in Northern Ireland During the Covid-19 Crisis](#) (Centre for Research in Educational Underachievement report published May 2020)

- a) primary schools to purchase online software designed to support incoming year 7 pupils with literacy and numeracy during 2020/21 (c. £0.25m);
  - b) interested primary schools to run Summer Schools on a voluntary basis during July/August 2020 targeted at year 5, 6 and 7 pupils (c. £0.5m); and crucially
  - c) primary and post primary schools to provide appropriate support for those children and young people who need it most and create the conditions to allow them to re-engage with education purposefully and sustainably throughout the 2020/21 academic year, namely the 'Engage' programme (c. £11.2m).
7. As schools reopen to all pupils, it is appreciated that schools will need time to take stock; to assess the needs of pupils, to plot a way forward in terms of adapting and implementing the school's curriculum and timetable of activities, and to help pupils settle back into school life so they are ready and able to learn.
  8. Some pupils will have coped and engaged well with remote learning activities, whereas others may return to school demotivated and require support to engage and move on with learning.
  9. It is evident that schools will need additional resource to ensure that their pupils can receive the support they need. The Engage programme seeks to provide all primary and post primary schools with access to extra teaching resource. The level of funding will be determined and allocated to schools based on set criteria.
  10. The Engage programme has been designed with a range of key stakeholders and reflects the outcome of consultation and engagement with sectoral bodies, experienced school practitioners and Trade Union Side. Further detail on the thinking behind the programme as well as how it may be delivered and managed in a practical sense is set out in subsequent sections.

## **Budget**

11. The overall budget for Engage in the 2020/21 financial year is c. £11.2m (i.e. up to the end of March 2021). Further funding, estimated to be in the region of £4.8m, will be required to allow the programme to continue for the remaining 3 months of the 2020/21 academic year (April-June 2021).
12. **Therefore, whilst it is anticipated at this stage that the Engage programme will run throughout the full duration of the upcoming academic year, and**

**schools should plan on that basis, it should be noted that the additional funding needed to facilitate this is subject to Executive agreement.**

## **Section 2- Outline of Engage Programme**

### **Programme Aim**

13. *To limit any long-term adverse impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on educational standards by supporting pupils' learning and engagement on their return to school through provision of high quality one to one, small group or team teaching support in every school in Northern Ireland.*

### **What is 'Engage'?**

14. Given the unique circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic, **all** primary and post primary schools in Northern Ireland will receive funding (to varying levels) through the Engage programme to provide additional teaching resources. More detail on the funding methodology is provided later in this section.

15. Through the Engage programme qualified teachers will provide child centred one to one, small group or team teaching support within school to those pupils identified by schools as most benefiting from additional support following the Covid-19 period of lockdown.

16. There is extensive evidence<sup>3</sup> of the positive impact of high quality one to one and small group teaching as a support strategy for learning, *particularly* after a period of missed schooling. Support delivered by qualified teachers is likely to have the highest impact.

17. **The Engage programme will focus on supporting pupils to be motivated and engaged to learn.** It will be linked to the cross curricular skills, thinking skills and personal capabilities at the core of our curriculum and focussed on those areas where pupils would most benefit from additional teaching, practice and feedback.

18. The programme will complement and enhance the existing work of schools (such as extended schools, special education needs and/or nurture provision particularly the Nurture Approach in Education Programme) to provide support for pupils to engage with learning following the Covid-19 period of lockdown.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition/>

19. In some schools, the one-to-one, small group and team teaching could provide opportunities to further embed a whole school approach to nurture and provide pupils with a learning experience to develop social, emotional and behavioural skills and encourage success at school and with peers.
20. It will also help develop pupils' resilience and capacity to respond more confidently to challenges and support the positive promotion of the health and well-being of pupils.

### **What will 'Engage' look like?**

21. The programme is aimed at pupils of **all** abilities identified by school as those who would benefit most from additional support to engage with learning following the Covid-19 lockdown period. This will include consideration of any EOTAS pupils for which schools retain responsibility.
22. There is no prescriptive or suggested ideal model for what the programme delivery should look like or specific parameters for schools to follow, such as an exclusive focus on particular groups of pupils, year groups, or particular subjects.
23. Schools are encouraged to explore creative and innovative approaches in deciding how to utilise the additional teaching resource to address pupil needs. There are extensive opportunities present in the curriculum to allow for this, for example, to develop and strengthen the capacity of children and young people to be more independent, more self-regulating and more resilient learners.
24. Schools know their pupils best and will have autonomy and flexibility to use their professional judgement to decide upon relevant priorities and which pupils and year groups will participate in the programme. So too, the content and structure of programme delivery will be based on each school's unique circumstances and assessment of particular needs.
25. Normal formative assessment approaches within the classroom setting will be the most useful way of identifying individual pupil learning needs and those pupils who will benefit from programme support. That approach will retain an emphasis on making pupils feel confident and secure in what they already know while supporting engagement with learning.
26. It is widely recognised that Covid-19 and its response may have impacted on the social and emotional health and well-being of children, schools may feel that an element of the Engage programme should focus on supporting the pastoral or holistic needs of children to enable them to engage in learning.

27. **Fundamentally, it is for schools to decide how to best utilise Engage programme funding within the aim and objectives of the programme in order to maximise positive outcomes for those children and young people with the greatest need, and to tailor associated provision accordingly.**
28. **It is important to remember that the Engage programme is designed to motivate, support and enable children to engage with learning through the provision of additional teaching resource – the funding allocated is therefore not to be used to facilitate any Covid-19 related social distancing requirements or to cover sick or other leave absence of normal classroom teachers.**
29. Nor is it permitted to use the funding to purchase other resources such as computer equipment and software, transport for field trips, or visiting speakers etc –**it is for qualified teachers only**. See also Section 3 '*Financial Arrangements*'.

### **Programme Objectives**

30. In designing and implementing the Engage programme, schools should take into account the objectives of the intervention as follows:
- *To provide an appropriately differentiated programme of child centred one to one, small group and/or team teaching support to pupils of all abilities who schools identify as those who would benefit from additional support to engage with learning following the Covid-19 period of lockdown.*
  - *To support pupils to increase their confidence, engagement, motivation to learn and to develop the tools and skills they require to become independent learners.*
  - *To develop and enhance pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in the key cross-curricular skills of Using Mathematics, Communication and Using ICT.*
  - *To support and enhance pupils' development of the whole curriculum thinking skills and personal capabilities.*
  - *To develop pupils' understanding of how they learn (meta-cognition) and their self-knowledge about explicit strategies and behaviours for learning to help build positive mind-sets, coping skills and resilience.*

- *To complement and enhance the existing work of schools (such as extended schools, special education needs and/or nurture provision) to provide support for pupils to engage with learning following the COVID-19 period of lockdown.*

31. Schools are encouraged to personalise or 'contextualise' the above objectives in order to reflect the particular needs and circumstances of the school and its pupils.

## **Outcomes**

32. In line with the programme aim to limit any long term adverse impact of the Covid-19 lockdown on educational standards, there are no specific targets for the Engage programme in terms of system wide improvement of Key Stage or examination outcomes.

33. It will be for individual schools to identify intended outcomes and the particular success criteria for the Engage programme in line with their own specific objectives, as well as the associated measures (formal/informal, qualitative/quantitative as appropriate) to evaluate the effectiveness of their approach and the impact of the resource.

34. Whilst it is anticipated that this may reveal improvements in such things as building pupil confidence, increasing levels of motivation and engagement, enhancing pupil attitudes to learning, encouraging school creativity and innovation as well as assessing individual pupil progress in learning, this will be determined at school level.

35. Also see Section 5 *Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation*.

## **Contingency Planning**

36. Whilst delivery of the Engage programme would ideally take place within a school environment, we must remain cognisant of the potential for further school closures at a future stage.

37. Any such decisions affecting schools will be guided by science and the latest public health advice. If however we are faced with that eventuality during the 2020/21 academic year, schools will need to consider contingency planning for how Engage may be delivered on a remote basis or through a blended learning approach according to the particular context at any given time.

38. At the outset of the pandemic, a commitment was given by the Department that all staff would continue to receive normal pay and all NISTR bookings

honoured. We anticipate that the same would apply in the event of a second wave and therefore schools will be committed to continuing to pay any Engage teachers (recruited or NISTR) even if it is not possible for them to deliver the programme in a school setting.

39. Further guidance which will assist schools in planning for such a scenario is available within the following DE circulars and ETI guidance:-
- a. [2020/05: Guidance for Schools on Supporting Remote Learning](#) (published 5 June)
  - b. [2020/06: Curriculum Planning 2020/21](#) (published 23 June)
  - c. [ETI Continuity of Learning Guidance for Schools](#) (published 26 June)

### **What allocation will my school receive?**

40. School closures and Covid-19 have affected the whole community. For example, key workers may not have had the time or opportunity to provide as much learning support for their children as they would have wished.
41. The consequences of the pandemic will be far reaching—for all children—therefore **every** primary and post-primary school in Northern Ireland will be provided with funding to provide additional teaching resource.
42. We know however that the impact of time out of school and potential for lost learning may be particularly acute for those pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. For that reason, the Engage programme will provide the greatest level of support and funding to schools with higher concentrations of disadvantage, measured by levels of pupils with a Free School Meal Entitlement (FSME).
43. The distribution of funding methodology for the Engage programme has been designed in recognition of this context.

### **Schools with FSME of 28% or higher**

44. **Almost 400 schools with approximately average levels of Free School Meal Entitlement or higher (a minimum of 28% of pupils) will be provided with funding to support additional teaching resource during the 2020/21 academic year.**
45. The entitlement for each individual school falling into this category will be calculated according to the number of pupils enrolled (based on data from latest available School Census in October 2019).

46. The table below provides a breakdown of the enrolment bands which these schools have been grouped into, along with associated funding entitlements.

**Table 1 – Schools with free school meal entitlement of 28% or higher**

| Enrolment Band | Funding Allocation (2020/21 financial year) | Number of Primary Schools | Number of Post-Primary Schools |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 0-85           | £5,090                                      | 47                        | 1                              |
| 86-200         | £12,724                                     | 94                        | 4                              |
| 201-1000       | £25,448                                     | 159                       | 80                             |
| >1000          | £50,896                                     | 0                         | 12                             |
| <b>Total</b>   |                                             | <b>300</b>                | <b>97</b>                      |

47. In total, this element of Engage is expected to support the provision of circa 300 additional teachers (FTE) across the system.

#### Schools with FSME below 28%

48. All other primary and post-primary schools with Free School Meal Entitlement below 28% will also receive funding to provide substitute teacher days during the 2020/21 school year in order to deliver a programme to support pupils to engage with learning.

49. Again, the allocation available to each school will be dependent on pupil enrolment levels (drawn from the School Census in 2019).

50. The remaining 492 primary schools and 96 post-primary schools, with below average free school meal entitlement, will be grouped into three bands according to enrolment size and allocated funding equivalent to either 20, 30 or 45 substitute cover days to support delivery of the programme in the 2020/21 financial year. Note that this has been calculated as 30, 45, or 60 substitute cover days across the full 2020/21 academic year –subject to funding for the final 3 months April-June 2021.

**Table 2 – Schools with free school meal entitlement below 28%**

| Enrolment Band | Funding Allocation (2020/21 financial year) | Number of days equivalent sub cover days (2020/21 financial year) | Number of Primary Schools | Number of Post-Primary Schools |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 0-200          | £3,600                                      | 20                                                                | 300                       | 3                              |
| 201-500        | £5,400                                      | 30                                                                | 160                       | 9                              |
| >501           | £8,100                                      | 45                                                                | 32                        | 84                             |
| <b>Total</b>   |                                             |                                                                   | <b>492</b>                | <b>96</b>                      |

51. In this way, the Engage programme is both targeted at those schools with the highest concentrations of disadvantage but also provides universal support across all primary and post-primary schools in recognition of the wider impact of Covid-19.

52. Details of individual allocations due to each primary and post primary school have been published alongside this guidance. To find out what additional resource your school is entitled to for the 2020/21 financial year, refer to the following link on the DE website [www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/engage-programme](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/engage-programme).

### **How should additional teachers be sourced?**

53. In line with the desire for schools to retain autonomy with decisions relating to the Engage programme, schools will manage the recruitment process for teachers. This will involve either employing/hiring teachers on a “fixed-term” basis or drawing down the resource from the Northern Ireland Substitute Teacher Register (NISTR). More detail is provided at Section 4 ‘*Management Arrangements*’.

54. Schools should manage NISTR engagements and/or recruitment processes in line with existing policy and guidance, for example [‘EA’s Teaching Appointments Scheme for Controlled Schools’](#) and [TNC Circular 2016/01 on the ‘Appropriate Use of NISTR’](#).

55. Before engaging a teacher, the school needs to ensure they are clear on the duration and end date for the post and the reason for the post. This will facilitate the process of bringing the post to an end when funding ceases.

### **Irish Medium sector**

56. We are aware of the particular needs of the Irish Medium sector including the availability of teaching supply with the necessary Irish language skills. There may be the potential to apply flexibility to programme arrangements for IM schools should it be required including consideration of the use of newly trained teachers and potential for the use of student teachers however safeguarding issues must be part of any school’s considerations. This will be kept under review

## Section 3 - Financial Arrangements

57. There is **no application process** for schools to follow in accessing relevant funding for the Engage programme.
58. The level of funding for schools has been determined by the Department using criteria based on FSME levels and enrolment banding (explained in Section 2 '*Outline of Engage Programme*').
59. Information about the amount of funding due to each individual school in the 2020/21 financial year is available here [www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/engage-programme](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/engage-programme). The funding will be allocated directly to school LMS accounts via the Education Authority. Schools should manage the recruitment process on the basis that the resources being made available now (i.e. September 2020) should be spent in full by the end of March 2021.
60. **Before that funding can be released, schools should be aware that there are certain conditions attached to Engage programme monies. Please refer to Section 5 '*Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation*' which explains the associated accountability requirements.**
61. Further funding to support the Engage programme is anticipated to be made available for the subsequent 3 months up to end of June 2021—however, as already noted in Section 1, this is subject to the outcome of the budget process including Executive agreement.
62. Schools will be advised of any additional allocation in respect of the 2021/22 financial year in due course. Schools should note that the programme is not expected to extend beyond 30 June 2021 and so any further funding subsequently made available should be spent within the specified time period.
63. **For the avoidance of doubt, Engage funding cannot be used on anything else other than teaching resource. As already highlighted, Engage funding is being made available to provide additional teaching resource to support pupils to engage with learning – the funding allocated is therefore not to be used to facilitate any Covid-19 related social distancing requirements or to cover sick or other leave absence of normal classroom teachers.**

### Tracking Expenditure

64. Specific finance codes have been established which will enable school spend on the Engage programme to be tracked accordingly. These are set out below. Any queries on the use of these codes should be directed to EA Finance.

## Engage Programme

|                                                |                   |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| NISTR Code                                     | EI (I for Indigo) |
| DE Function Code for Teacher Hours             | 7840              |
| The above codes are mapped to EA Function Code | 80184             |

## Other Funding Streams

65. It will be possible for schools to use other funding streams to supplement delivery of the Engage programme. For example, core LMS funding allocated via the Common Funding Formula (includes *Targeting Social Need* allocation specifically to support disadvantaged pupils or those at greatest risk of underachievement).
66. Additional earmarked funding made available through the Extended Schools (ES) programme can also assist with meeting pupil needs arising from Covid-19. Whilst, in line with existing policy, ES funding cannot be used to employ or maintain teachers to deliver curriculum based provision during the normal school day, it can however be used for a wide variety of other purposes e.g. health and well-being activities; language support, homework clubs and other learning activities outside of timetabled school hours; enhancing the learning environment; programmes for parents and wider community etc.
67. If schools need further advice or clarification in respect of the Extended Schools programme and use of related funding in 2020/21, you should speak to ES personnel in the EA's Community & Schools Team. Contact details are included at Section 6 '*Help and Support*'. Guidance is also available on the [Northern Ireland Extended Schools Information System](#).

## Section 4 - Management Arrangements

68. The recruitment of teachers, either on a fixed-term basis or sourced from NISTR, is a decision for schools in line with assessed school and pupil needs and the availability of sufficient budget coverage.
69. Schools will have flexibility to manage the recruitment process as they see fit and how, in turn, that additional resource will be used within the school. For instance, it will be possible to backfill a post to allow a current teacher to be released to deliver Engage programme support.
70. **Schools may wish to engage teachers directly or, where part-time hours are involved, they may wish to engage a teacher in tandem with another local school.**
71. **It is important to note however that it will not be possible to recruit Classroom Assistants with Engage resources – the programme is designed to support the provision of qualified teachers only.**
72. Schools should also be aware that the funding levels for the Engage programme have been calculated on the basis of costs associated with the M3 spine point on the teacher pay-scales. Whilst this has been used to calculate the amount that a school will receive to fund additional teaching resource, **this is indicative only. It is up to schools to decide which teachers to employ, at what rate, their working pattern and for what period of time - i.e. should schools employ a teacher/s who is/are above this pay point, then any shortfall will have to be met by the school from existing budgets.** Fair employment procedures require schools to determine objective and justifiable job criteria and to consistently apply those and appoint the best applicant on merit. To do otherwise may result in an equality challenge.
73. For those schools in a position to employ a teacher/s with the aid of Engage resources, there are a range of practical issues to be considered (e.g. statutory/legal requirements, contracts, terms and conditions, advertising of posts; interviewing, salary scales, timescales etc).
74. Further detailed advice has been developed by the Education Authority in the form of Frequently Asked Questions which controlled schools may find helpful. These FAQs can be found here [www.eani.org.uk/ea-staff-hub/hr-online/hiring-managers-recruitment-information](http://www.eani.org.uk/ea-staff-hub/hr-online/hiring-managers-recruitment-information). This link also includes information on the substitute teacher process, sample job descriptions and person specifications for both primary and post primary schools, as well as useful contact details in the event of any recruitment based queries.

Catholic maintained schools should seek advice on recruitment from the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS). See also Section 6 'Help and Support'

75. It is appreciated that the recruitment of staff can take time. Schools are reminded that Engage programme funding is not due to extend beyond June 2021. If there is any anticipated delay in recruiting, schools should plan/use resource accordingly in the relevant financial year to ensure full spend within the specified time period.

## Section 5 - Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

### Accountability

76. As already outlined in Section 2, there are no specific targets for the Engage programme in terms of system wide improvement of Key Stage or examination outcomes - the focus of the programme is to limit any long-term adverse impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on educational standards by supporting pupils' learning and engagement on their return to school.

77. It will be for schools to identify their own intended outcomes and associated success criteria and to monitor and evaluate the impact of the programme using internal assessment systems, including the use of teacher recording and observation to monitor the progress of pupils selected for support through the programme.

78. It will be necessary however for the Department to collate high level information about the use and impact of Engage resources for accountability purposes to enable determinations to be made around the effectiveness and value for money of the programme. It will also seek to provide assurances to the Minister of Education, Executive, Assembly, statutory bodies, families and wider community about the impact of significant investment of public funding.

### Engage Planner

79. **Schools will be required to use a distinct electronic accountability tool entitled *Engage Planner* which will capture a range of key information in respect of where the focus of programme lies, how the resources are being used and an evaluation of impact.** The system will be available for schools to log in and begin entering data from early October. In the meantime schools should assess needs and begin the process of establishing the most appropriate form of provision.

80. The emphasis in evaluation will be the impact on pupils' attitudes to and dispositions for learning and pupils' progress in learning. Evidenced-based judgements of the programme by schools will then inform further development of interventions.
81. The Engage Planner will be available on the Wholeschool School Development Planning platform which many schools already use and will be familiar with. The design and functionality of the Engage Planner is aligned to the [Targeting Social Need \(TSN\) Planner](#) also hosted on this system.
82. The *TSN Planner* introduced in 2018/19 enables schools to articulate how £77m of TSN resources made available each year are being used to support children from disadvantaged backgrounds or at greatest risk of underachievement.
83. Like the TSN Planner, the Engage Planner has been developed to assist schools in planning their teaching and learning and support offered to pupils for the year ahead, to monitor and record progress, as well as helping to promote and disseminate good practice. The Engage Planner has bespoke options included to reflect the specific aim, objectives, and characteristics of Engage programme funding. Schools can either choose from pre-populated drop down menus or can custom their own.
- 84. Above all, the Engage Planner has been designed with simplicity in mind and to avoid any unnecessary administrative burden on schools. It should therefore only take a few minutes to complete.**
85. Schools will complete the Engage Planner in 2 stages:
1. By end October 2020, completion of Sections 1 to 3 setting out the school's plans for the year ahead and showing how the school intends to use the additional teaching resource to meet the programme aim and the school's specific objectives.
  2. By end June 2021, completion of Sections 4 and 5 reporting the school's evaluation of the impact of the programme and next steps to sustain momentum after the Engage programme funding ends.
86. Further help and support on how to complete the Engage Planner, including an instructional video, is available on the application itself which schools can access via the icon on the My School dashboard on C2k.
- 87. Schools should note that completion of the Engage Planner is a mandatory i.e. relevant details must be entered on the Engage Planner by 31 October**

**2020. Resources will be allocated to school LMS accounts from the beginning of October. However, if the Engage planner is not completed by the agreed deadline, schools will be contacted and funding could be withdrawn if the Engage Planner is not updated.**

### **System Level Evaluation**

88. At system level, a Strategic Oversight Group will be established to monitor the outworking of the Engage programme and will include representation of senior staff from DE, EA, CCMS and other sectoral bodies. It is expected that the Strategic Oversight Group will also incorporate representation from schools to provide a practitioner viewpoint. Part of the Group's remit will be to ensure processes are in place to help identify where effective practice is observed through the Engage programme and disseminate more widely across schools.

### **The Role of the ETI**

89. The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) has been commissioned to provide an overall evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme and its impact on the children/young people in primary and post-primary schools.

90. The ETI evaluation is not an inspection programme.

91. Plans submitted by schools, within the Engage Planner, will be vital to enable each school to evaluate for itself the effectiveness and benefit of the interventions which they choose.

92. Through their relationships with their district schools, district inspectors (working in cooperation with EA and CCMS colleagues) will be responsive to guide and advise schools on drawing up their plans and associated success measures.

93. While drawing on school self-evaluations, the ETI will seek first-hand evidence, such as through sample interviews / meetings / workshops with principals, teachers and children/young people to obtain a richer picture of the effectiveness of the programme.

94. Evaluations should seek to identify the extent to which approaches adopted by schools are securing the programme's aims and objectives and the extent to which effective approaches are being shared, going forward.

## Help and Support

95. A range of help and advice is available to assist schools with regards to implementing the Engage programme.

96. In addition to the support offered by ETI as outlined in the previous section:-

- the Education Authority will work in collaboration with other education support bodies, to provide guidance and support for schools on implementation of the Engage programme. This will include Teacher Professional Learning webinars and advice from Link Officers;
- CCMS will also provide support to schools through the work of the Locality Teams -school leaders requiring support should contact their Education or HR Adviser or the Locality Leads (details below).

97. Should you be in any doubt about any of the information contained in this guidance, you can contact the relevant contact point, according to the nature of the query, as outlined below:

### Contact Points

#### Education Authority

- **EA – Link Officers**
- **EA Community & Schools Team (Extended Schools)** –see page 20 for contact details
  
- **EA Recruitment:**

**Email:** School Recruitment: [schoolsrecruitment@eani.org.uk](mailto:schoolsrecruitment@eani.org.uk); Online Recruitment System Administration Support: [onlinerecruitmentsystemadmin@eani.org.uk](mailto:onlinerecruitmentsystemadmin@eani.org.uk)

**Telephone: 028 9056 4301 then press:**

1. Headquarters/Corporate Recruitment
2. South West School Recruitment
3. North School Recruitment
4. East School Recruitment
5. Pre-employment Checks/Access NI
6. System helpdesk

- **EA Finance** –Telephone: 02825 661141

## CCMS

- **Locality Lead Officers**

- Locality 1 [geraldine.duffy@ccmsschools.com](mailto:geraldine.duffy@ccmsschools.com)
- Locality 2 [roisin.harbinson@ccmsschools.com](mailto:roisin.harbinson@ccmsschools.com)
- Locality 3 [mairead.harvey@ccmsschools.com](mailto:mairead.harvey@ccmsschools.com)

- **CCMS HR**

## DE

- Teachers Pay and Pensions Team
- Tackling Educational Disadvantage Team (monitoring and evaluation requirements) - email: [attendance@education-ni.gov.uk](mailto:attendance@education-ni.gov.uk)

## Wholeschool (Engage Planner- **technical queries only**)

- Email: [support@whole.school](mailto:support@whole.school)

## **Other Useful Guidance**

- [EA Teaching Appointments Scheme for Controlled Schools](#)
- [TNC Circular 2016/01 – Appropriate Use of NISTR](#)

## **Annex A – Engage Programme FAQs**

The Education Authority's Frequently Asked Questions can be found here:  
[www.eani.org.uk/ea-staff-hub/hr-online/hiring-managers-recruitment-information](http://www.eani.org.uk/ea-staff-hub/hr-online/hiring-managers-recruitment-information).

## EA Community and Schools Team - Contacts

Jim Dunbar (Lead Officer)

[jim.dunbar@eani.org.uk](mailto:jim.dunbar@eani.org.uk)

T: 02890566296

M: 07970406478

Locality North: Deirdre Hasson

[deirdre.hasson@eani.org.uk](mailto:deirdre.hasson@eani.org.uk)

T: 02837412438

M: 07855105715

Pauline Rock (Senior Admin Officer)

[Pauline.Rock@eani.org.uk](mailto:Pauline.Rock@eani.org.uk)

T: 028 3741 5405



South West: John Donnelly

[john.donnelly@eani.org.uk](mailto:john.donnelly@eani.org.uk)

T: 02890564282

M: 07855105707

East: Bernie Mooney

[bernie.mooney@eani.org.uk](mailto:bernie.mooney@eani.org.uk)

T: 02890564228

M: 07855105713

