

During the course of the last week, orders placed within the Edenred system were higher than anticipated. This had an impact on the performance and experience.

Our teams have been working day and night through the Easter weekend to process orders and develop the system capability and performance for the weeks ahead. Improvements are being applied every day.

Paid orders - All existing orders with status 'paid' continued to be processed over the course of the Bank Holiday weekend. These will all have been completed, with emails sent direct to families or as stock eCodes issued to schools by 8pm this evening.

ACTION: we respectfully request that schools who have already placed an order (which has been processed and sent) and who do not have an immediate requirement for eCodes this week, to not access the service.

Working closely with the Department for Education and in partnership with you, if we can balance the load on the system, we can provide a consistent and constant flow of essential support through to families.

Here are a few simple steps on the best way to engage with the platform over the next few weeks.

Processing pending orders

A number of schools were unable to complete their order through the checkout process – these orders are now in the system with status 'pending'.

From Tuesday morning, the system can now be accessed to complete the order process, but we ask this is done in a controlled and phased structure to maximise the speed and experience for everyone. Therefore, we respectfully request that you consider accessing the platform to confirm pending orders in the following way:

1. If the order is for a future release, after w/c 20th April, please do not submit this order until 4 calendar days before the due date
2. If the order is for release on or before Friday 17th April, please access the platform to confirm the order. These orders will then be processed and the associated eCodes distributed.

Addressing duplicate pending orders

We have identified orders which we believe to be duplicate. Please could you check your orders, particularly if there are the same orders with the same delivery date. If you believe any are a duplicate, please do not approve the duplicate orders.

For the valid order, please follow the instructions as explained above (processing pending orders).

Simplifying future order process

Ordering a single eCode to cover a longer time period

The Department for Education has agreed to allow schools to place an order for a family to cover a period of up to four weeks in one order (£60 instead of £15 on a four weekly cycle or £30 for a two weekly cycle), thereby reducing the administration burden on schools and further reducing the volume of visitors in the ordering platform at any one time. This will make a significant difference to your experience. When deciding the length of the eCode period, schools should consider what is appropriate for the family.

Ordering a single eCode to cover more than one eligible child

Please also order a combined eCode for eligible children in the same household, for example a family with three eligible children could receive an eCode for £180 to cover a four-week period, or £90 to cover a two-week period, instead of 3 individual £15 eCodes per child, per week. This would significantly reduce the number of orders and eCodes being processed, whilst also reducing school administration, so improving the speed at which the system can process all orders.

To start the process, and again to balance the load on the system, for this week, we request that only orders required for release this week and next week are placed on the system initially, adhering to the guidance. Orders required for release w/c 27th can be placed on the system from w/c 20th April.

We'll be continuing to carefully manage the service and capacity over the coming week and therefore can confirm that the site will be open between the hours of 8am and 10pm.

We thank you for your continued patience. We appreciate it has been challenging to have a new process implemented very quickly. We'd also like to thank you in advance for your support in adhering to the guidance and the new instructions outlined in this communication. We are confident working in this way will enable support to get to families in a faster and more timely manner.