



## St James CofE Primary School

# Addendum to SEN Information Report in Light of Covid-19

27 January 2021

Other policies linked to this policy :

1 : [SEND Information Report](#)

2 : [SEND Policy](#)

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## **Update to SEN Information Report in the light of COVID-19**

This is an update to the SEND Information Report, setting out the arrangements in place to support our children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities during COVID-19 related partial school closure.

**Since the situation in which we find ourselves is fast-moving; this report is based on current information available and is subject to change.**

While children are in school during a lockdown:

- Children's special educational needs will continue to be met in the classroom. Children may access the live learning timetable or follow the remote learning timetable depending upon circumstance. These lessons will be supported in school or remotely.
- Pre-teaching will be provided by an identified member of staff.
- Because of increasing numbers of coronavirus cases in the community, members of staff may be required to self-isolate and therefore may be absent from school more often than is usual. This means that there may be occasions when SEND pupils are supported by another member of the school's support staff team.
  - Where there are staff shortages related to COVID-19 absence, schools will use best endeavours to prioritise support for pupils with SEND and to ensure those with EHC plans & other high needs recommendations are implemented, in consultation with parents and external agencies.
- Reviews and meetings with parents are now via Microsoft Teams unless there is a particular reason to invite them onto site.
- Meetings with external professionals are via Microsoft Teams unless they need to work directly with the child.
- Visors and/or medical grade masks are available for support staff to wear if they choose to wear one.
- SEND learning plans will be reviewed, updated and shared with parents as usual.
- Risk assessments have been completed for individual SEND pupils with EHC plans and will be reviewed, as appropriate.

While children are learning from home, self-isolating as a group or individually (including shielding children):

- The live teaching timetable and/or the remote learning timetable will be implemented on Microsoft Teams wherever possible
- Staff will check in with pupils with SEND regularly using Class Dojo, Teams or by phone or email to monitor their wellbeing and check that they are able to engage in their learning activities.
  - Teachers will set work which is accessible and achievable; they may provide accompanying notes and guidance, explain their expectations, or amend tasks in certain circumstances.
  - Recommended websites and resources, which may be of support, will be shared with parents/carers.
- Staff will regularly check in with the children who have an EHC plan via Microsoft Teams / phone/email.

- All reasonable endeavours will be made within the constraints imposed by COVID-19 risk mitigation procedures to provide pupils with SEND with equipment/resources appropriate to their learning needs.
- Learning plans will be adapted in accordance with the requirements of remote learning. If any parents with a child who has SEND would like to contact the SENCo, they may request this via the school office.

Links with other policies

This document links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Risk assessment
- Special needs and disabilities policy
- Equality Policy
- Remote Learning Policy

### ***Further information***

#### **What are the entitlements of children and young people with SEND when schools are closed to Coronavirus?**

During lockdowns, all schools were ordered to effectively close, retaining a skeleton staff to provide education for the children of key workers and 'vulnerable children'.

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those with an **Education, Health and Care plan (EHC)**. The majority of children with SEND, who receive SEND Support at school but do not have an EHC plan, are expected to stay home unless they are the children of key workers and/or 'vulnerable children'

#### **Do schools have to allow all children with EHC plans to attend?**

Yes, although consideration can be made on whether they would be as safe or safer attending school rather staying home. For children with complex needs, Local Authorities and schools have been advised to carry out a risk assessment.

#### **All children with an EHCP at St James have had a risk assessment undertaken.**

These risk assessments take into account:

- the potential health risks to the individual from COVID-19, bearing in mind any underlying health conditions. This will be on an individual basis and with advice from an appropriate health professional where required
- the risk to the individual if some or all elements of their EHC plan cannot be delivered at all, and the risk if they cannot be delivered in the normal manner or in the usual setting
- the ability of the individual's parents or home to ensure their health and care needs can be met safely
- the potential impact to the individual's wellbeing of changes to routine or the way in which provision is delivered
- the availability of appropriately trained staff (school will liaise with the local authority if a place is needed for an eligible child, but the school is unable to provide the specialist staffing for it)
- the views of parents and children will be considered in determining whether children with EHC plans take up an eligible place in school

**In addition to these risk assessments, all families with children who attend school and have an EHC plan receive weekly or more frequent contact** to check that families can access appropriate help and advice during the COVID-19 situation. This is also to ensure that any risks to a child or young person's health, well-being or safety, if they do not receive a particular provision or intervention, are addressed.

This can be through contact with members of staff via TEAMS, ClassDojo, email and phone call. Contact is regularly assessed and collated.

### **My child has an EHC plan - does the Local Authority still have a legal duty to deliver provision?**

Yes - however, given the possible disruption to staffing, it may be challenging for schools or Local Authorities to deliver the precise provision in the EHC plan. Reasonable endeavours are made.

The [Coronavirus Act 2020](#) has temporarily amended the absolute duty to make the provision in an EHC plan (section 42 of the [Children and Families Act 2014](#)) to a '**reasonable endeavours**' duty. This means that Local Authorities need to do whatever they reasonably can to put provision in place, but if they cannot do so they would not necessarily be breaching the law.

The [guidance on EHC needs assessments and plans during the COVID-19 crisis](#) explains that LAs and health commissioning bodies "*must consider for each child and young person with an EHC plan what they can reasonably provide in the circumstances*". This includes considering the individual child/young person's needs, as well as their and their parents' views, and keeping arrangements for provision under review.

As a school we will continue to keep in touch with you. In the meantime, as parents/carers please contact us if you have any enquiries about the provision for your child including how we can help with any provision.

**If there could be a risk to your child's health, well-being or safety if they do not receive a particular provision or intervention, please raise this with us without delay.**

### **My child has an EHCP plan and was due to have an Annual Review. What will happen now?**

We will continue to hold Annual Reviews. This will, of course, need to be carried out remotely and when the time comes we will speak to you first about how this will be managed to ensure that the contribution of parents and children continue to be at the heart of the process.

### **A request for statutory assessment for my child has been sent to the Local Authority - will they still carry out an assessment?**

The Local Authority will continue to carry out EHC assessments. The Authority's ability to comply with deadlines may be hampered by staff absence, and the way EHC assessments are usually conducted may be affected by the availability of staff and restrictions on face to face contact and working from home. The Local Authority will endeavour to continue to fulfil statutory duties within a reasonable time frame.

### **My child has an EHCP plan and is still attending school - how will my child's learning be supported at school?**

It is important to note that school will endeavour to provide as a full a curriculum as possible. The emphasis will be upon children's well-being and learning in maths and English. The range of activities on offer may not be fully in line with a child's EHC provision. Due to possible staffing issues there may need to be alterations to the frequency and timing of the delivery of provision in school, e.g. moving to a part-time timetable

### **How can I support my child's learning at home?**

Home learning is accessible via the school website where learning is provided weekly. In addition, parents and children can comment on their work/contact their teacher via TEAMS and ClassDojo.

The school website also has a number of resources available to help support your Special Needs child at home during this period.

If your child is staying at home and it is not possible for direct therapy to be delivered in the home setting, it may be possible for:

- A speech and language therapist to deliver sessions via video link or phone call
- An occupational therapist or a physiotherapist video linking to a child's home and modelling exercises that the parents could do with their child
- Advisory teachers from Inclusion support to hold a consultation with you via phone call

Please contact us if you have any enquiries about accessing any additional provision for your child or if you have any general queries about delivering home learning to your child.

**Please ring the school on 0121 552 5491 or email the SENCo, J Bullock at [contact.us@stjamespri.uk](mailto:contact.us@stjamespri.uk)**

### **How can I help my child cope with the changes?**

We understand that this is a significant change for many families. Please try to establish a home routine and give yourself and your children time to adjust to this new routine. Do not place too much pressure on yourself or your child to complete school work. Maintaining positive mental health and emotional well-being is very important.

For children due to move between phases of education at the end of this academic year, we will continue to make contact with the new settings to share necessary information to make children's transitions as smooth as possible.

### **Review**

This addendum to the SEN information report will be reviewed in light of new government guidance, and significant changes, as and when published.