



## Astrea Academy Trust

### Covid 19 Additional Information for SEND Information Report

Date	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2020
Written by	R Veal
Adopted by Trust Board	
Review Date	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2021



## Appendix: COVID-19 Additional Information for SEND Information Report

School Name: Hexthorpe Primary

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> July 2020

### 1. Context, Legislation and Guidance

The SEND Information Report is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice and the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEN and disabilities; and
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the SEND Information Report

The Coronavirus Act 2020 Modification of Section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014 (England) Notice 2020 provides the following modification in relation to the duty to secure educational and health care provision in accordance with the requirements of the Education, Health and Care Plan:

- The absolute duty to make the provision in an EHC plan (section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014) can be temporarily amended to a 'reasonable endeavours' duty. This means that during the specified period the Local Authority (LA) needs to do whatever it reasonably can to put provision in place, but if they cannot do so they would not necessarily be breaching the law.

From 1 May to 25 September 2020 inclusive, the Regulations which provide statutory timescales for the EHC needs assessments and plans processes were modified, such that timings will be 'as soon as is reasonably practicable'.

Guidance was released on 2 July 2020 to support schools with full opening from September 2020 (found [here](#)). Decisions regarding the wider/full opening of individual Astrea settings are informed through a whole school risk assessment process.

This appendix of the school's SEN Information Report should be read alongside the school's Annex 5 of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Behaviour Policy (and any relevant Annex).

This appendix contains further details of our arrangements for pupils with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities in line with revised procedures from the government, in the following areas:

1. Context, legislation, guidance and key contacts
2. Vulnerable children
3. Risk assessments of pupils with SEND
4. Supporting children's mental health
5. Supporting vulnerable children in school and/or at home
6. Statutory assessments, annual reviews and reviews for pupils at SEN Support
7. Personal budgets
8. Transport for children with existing arrangements
9. Transition
10. Support from Astrea Academy Trust
11. Annex: Suggested SEND Risk Assessment Template

## Key Contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
SENCO	Ruth Veal	01302852245	Ruth.veal@astreahexthorpe.org
Interim Principal	Jeni Harrison		admin@astreahexthorpe.org
SEND Officer	Caroline Embery	07387108846	caroline.embery@astreaacademytrust.org
Specialist Leader of Behaviour and SEND	Naomi Reed	07552995410	naomi.reed@astreaacademytrust.org
National Leader of Inclusion	Jenni Machin	07900401418	jenni.machin@astreaacademytrust.org
Executive Director of Inclusion	Nicola Crossley	07393237674	nicola.crossley@astreaacademytrust.org

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it may not always be possible to have the SENCO on site, however, the SENCO will be available to be contacted via phone (contact school office to arrange a call) or email. A senior leader will also always be available on site.

## 2. Vulnerable children

From September 2020, pupils must return to school to minimise (as far as possible) the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development (see guidance [here](#)). However, the school notes that there may be a small minority of pupils that may still be unable to attend. For example, this could be related to public health or clinical advice. In these cases, access to remote education will be offered (see section 5) and the pupil may be supported through the risk assessment process if applicable (see section 3).

Where parents/ carers are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, the school will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carers, providing reassurance of the measures in place to reduce the risk in school. However, the expectation is that all pupils will be attending school unless a statutory reason applies.

During a COVID-19 'lockdown' (national, local or setting specific), following Public Health England advice, schools may close for some pupils but remain open only for vulnerable children (e.g. those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with an EHCP) and the children of critical workers, providing remote education for all other pupils. During such a scenario, it may be necessary for children and young people with an EHCP (or those at SEN Support where it is deemed appropriate) to be supported through the risk assessment process in consultation with the Local Authority and parents/carers (see section 3). This could include, if necessary, external agencies and professionals already involved and will take account of any shielding advice received by individuals from the government or their health care provider.

## 3. Risk Assessments of Pupils with SEND

The school is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

From September 2020, all pupils, including those with SEND, are expected to attend school unless they are following specific clinical or public health advice.

In the case of a pupil with an EHCP, if there is a statutory reason why the pupil is accessing remote education from home (e.g. advised shielding, national or local / setting lockdown, advised self-isolating) then the individual needs of each child or young person will be considered through the risk assessment process. This may also put into place for some pupils at SEN Support where it is deemed beneficial e.g. for those with more complex needs.

Government guidance found [here](#) states that local authorities and education settings should decide together who is best placed to undertake and review risk assessments (where schools complete these, please see section 12 for an example template).

Risk assessments, and reviews of existing risk assessments, will take into account:

- Potential physical/emotional health risks to the individual/family from COVID-19, bearing in mind any underlying health conditions. This will be on an individual basis with advice from an appropriate health professional where required;
- the risk to the child / young person if some or all elements of their EHCP 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 parent/carers to ensure health and care needs can be met safely;
- Potential impact to wellbeing of changes to routine or the way in which provision is delivered;
- Potential risks in travelling to/from school, including the safety of other children, young people and adults;
- Risks to the setting, including the safety of other children, young people and adults.

Where a child routinely attends more than one setting (e.g. dual registered), schools will work collaboratively to identify and address any risks. In some cases, risk assessments may also be kept open and under review after a child or young person has resumed school-based education.

#### **4. Supporting Children's Mental Health**

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. We are aware that there may be children with additional or worsened social emotional and mental health needs as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19). The government has issued guidance and advice for parents/carers on looking after the mental health and wellbeing of children or young people during the COVID-19 outbreak. When considering mental health and wellbeing, the school will also refer to this as a starting point - [guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus outbreak](#). Further information for parents and carers in relation to supporting mental health and wellbeing can be found in the Astrea Home Learning brochures which can be found [here](#).

In addition to this, government guidance released on 2 July 2020 (found [here](#)), provides specific school information and signposting to free webinars / training sessions for educational professionals on how to support pupil wellbeing from September 2020 when schools fully open. It states:

*'Pupils may be experiencing a variety of emotions in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, such as anxiety, stress or low mood. This may particularly be the case for vulnerable children, including those with a social worker and young carers. It is important to contextualise these feelings as normal responses to an abnormal situation. Some may need support to re-adjust to school; others may have enjoyed being at home and be reluctant to return; a few may be showing signs of more severe anxiety or depression. Others will not be experiencing any challenges and will be keen and ready to return to school.'*

The Department for Education has also published relationship, sex and health education training modules (found [here](#)) for teachers to support them in delivering the required content on mental health and wellbeing (found [here](#)). Similarly, teachers and adults can also access the free MindEd learning platform (found [here](#)) for useful materials.

The school will continue to communicate with school nurses and other professionals where needed, as we are aware that some pupils may require more focused pastoral support, drawing on external specialists. Where practicably possible (and in line with [guidance](#)), we will also strive to provide pastoral and extra-curricular activities to pupils that are designed to:

- support the rebuilding of friendships and social engagement
- address and equip pupils to respond to issues linked to coronavirus (COVID-19)
- support pupils with approaches to improving their physical and mental wellbeing

If parents/carers have any specific concerns about the mental health and wellbeing of children which they would like to discuss further, they can also contact the school SENCO Ruth Veal or Designated Safeguarding Lead Kelly Garbett via telephoning the school directly or by emailing [safeguarding@astreahexthorpe.org](mailto:safeguarding@astreahexthorpe.org)

## 5. Supporting Vulnerable Children in School and/or at Home

**From September 2020, all pupils, including those with SEND, are expected to attend school unless they are following specific clinical and/or public health advice not to attend.** For the majority of pupils previously shielding (due to being classed as clinically extremely vulnerable to the coronavirus), they will be able to return to school and access education within the setting as their shielding is paused / ends. However, the school notes that there may be a small minority of pupils that may still be unable to attend – there may also be a statutory reason why the pupil needs to access immediate remote education from home (e.g. advised shielding, national or local / setting lockdown, advised self-isolating).

From September 2020, the school will follow government guidance in relation to **curriculum expectations, behaviour and pastoral support** (found [here](#)). The key principals that underpin this are:

- education is not optional: all pupils will receive a high-quality education that promotes their development and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life;
- the curriculum remains broad and ambitious: all pupils will continue to be taught a wide range of subjects, maintaining their choices for further study and employment. For children up to KS3, where the prioritisation of key components for their phase of education (such as reading) is required to address any gaps in learning, such modifications to the curriculum should return to normal by the summer term 2021;
- remote education, where needed, is high quality and aligns as closely as possible with in-school provision: we will continue to build our capability to educate pupils remotely, where this is needed.

During the academic year 2020-2021, the school curriculum will also be enhanced through **Relationships and Health education** for primary pupils.

In the Autumn term 2020, pupils with SEND will be able to access learning through **educational visits** in line with protective measures. Any planned educational visits will be subject to a risk assessment in line with guidance found [here](#). The use of **outdoor learning** will also be explored.

For vulnerable pupils (including those with more complex needs), the school will also explore the use of government packages (such as 'catch-up support' funding and the National Tutoring Programme) to assist in addressing any individual gaps in learning.

### **School based learning**

As children and young people return from September 2020, we will strive to:

- consider their pupils' mental health and wellbeing and identify any pupil who may need additional support so they are ready to learn (see Section 4);
- assess where pupils are in their learning, and agree what adjustments may be needed to the curriculum over the coming weeks;
- identify and plan how best to support the education of high needs groups, including disadvantaged pupils, SEND and vulnerable pupils; and
- support pupils approaching key transitions and examinations.

We know that particular care is needed to support pupils with SEND. Staffing needs will be considered as part of a collaborative, flexible approach - we will work with both internal staff members and external specialist staff to support pupils in school, ensuring that any relevant staff training required is in place. Measures will also be taken to minimise the potential risks posed from external specialist visitors to school such as social distancing.

We recognise that some children and young people with SEND (with an EHCP or at SEN Support with more complex needs) will need careful support during any return following a period of absence related to COVID-19, for example, social stories to help with the transition, or with other meaningful symbols to support children and young people to follow protective measures that have been put in place. Additionally, provision for children with SEND may have been disrupted and there may be an impact on behaviour so we will plan support, working with local services where appropriate, to support the return to school for pupils where needed (please see the school's Behaviour Policy for further information on the school's approach to behaviour).

The school will take swift action if we become aware that someone has tested positive for coronavirus. Following advice from the health protection team, all pupils (including the most vulnerable) may be sent home to self-isolate – in this instance, they would be given access to remote education.

### **Remote education**

Any **remote education and home learning** needed will be of high quality and will align as closely as possible with in-school provision and curriculum resources. To support this, the school may also refer to the nationally available resources to support SEND pupils, such as the [Oak National Academy specialist content for SEND](#), as well as utilise the digital and technological support (guidance can be found [here](#)). When designing home learning and support for children and young people with SEND, we may also involve external professionals to support the design or adapt interventions or learning materials.

In relation to remote learning, the following should also be noted:

- we aim to give access to high quality remote education resources (this could include interactive online resources or printed resources);

- we will try to gauge how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum and teach a planned and well-sequenced curriculum with frequent, clear explanations of new content and opportunities to practise;
- we will strive to ensure that pupils educated at home are given the support they need to master the curriculum so they make good progress;
- we recognise that some pupils with SEND may not be able to access remote education without adult support and we will try to work with families to ensure the delivery of a broad and ambitious curriculum;
- we will consider a pupils' age, stage of development and/or special educational needs when setting home working expectations and learning activities (considering whether the work set would place significant demands on parents/carers for help or support);
- we will try to set meaningful work in each subject but will also consider, that in exceptional circumstances, whether it is in the best interest of the pupil to make a decision to suspend some subjects – this will be discussed with parents / carers, and a coherent plan for returning to a normal curriculum (by the start of the summer term 2021 at the latest) will be established.

The government has also issued **guidance for parents/carers** in relation to supporting the education of pupils with SEND. This includes information about educational resources as well as other useful information to support home learning (found [here](#)).

For younger children, the government's [Hungry Little Minds](#) campaign features tips and practical activities that parents/carers can do at home with children to support their early learning. Additionally, the Astrea Home Learning brochures ([found here](#)) also contain useful links to support home learning for both primary and secondary aged pupils. For further guidance, the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) is also adding key information and resources to their COVID-19 Support and Guidance webpage, which can be found [here](#).

## 6. Statutory Assessments, Annual Reviews and Reviews for Pupils at SEN Support

Until 25<sup>th</sup> September 2020, as part of the graduated approach to support pupils with SEND, wherever possible, Support Plan reviews and annual reviews of EHCPs will take place, but with modified timescales. On the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020, the Secretary of State made such an order whereby the timeframes in which assessments and annual reviews are carried out has been temporarily modified (effective from 1<sup>st</sup> May – 25<sup>th</sup> September 2020). For example, LA's are encouraged to complete statutory assessments using '*reasonable endeavours*', however, this may not be within the 20-week time limits. Following the release of subsequent government guidance, this process will be aligned as required.

Applications for statutory assessments / needs assessments / high needs funding will continue to be submitted to the LA; however, timescales for response may be delayed. The school will continue to respond to consultation requests (in relation to the naming of settings in EHCP plans) with the 15-day timescale.

Where possible, the school SENCO will continue to liaise with pupils, parent/carers, appropriate key professionals and external agencies for children and young people with SEND – this will ensure effective co-production. However, these processes may take place remotely as the school adheres to government guidance on social distancing. If parents/carers feel there is an urgent need to amend the outlined pupil needs, provision or placement in an EHCP, they should speak to the SENCO to see what additional review mechanisms could be put in place.

Further information about the LA's approach towards statutory assessments for children with SEND as well as their guidance for processes during the COVID-19 outbreak can be found on the relevant Local Offer pages

- Doncaster Local Offer - [click here](#)
- Doncaster Additional COVID-19 Information – [click here](#)

## **7. Personal Budgets**

In law, parents/carers can request a personal budget and seek direct payments for special educational provision during the Education Health and Care needs statutory assessment process or during an annual review. However, using '*reasonable endeavours*' to secure the special educational provision in a plan using a personal budget may require creative thinking and should be discussed with the LA and in consideration of the examples provided above.

## **8. Transport for SEND Pupils with Existing Arrangements**

Local authorities should continue to provide transport for children and young people with EHCPs who are attending their usual educational setting. If children and young people with EHCPs are accessing an educational setting that is not their usual setting, the LA should review transport arrangements and endeavour to make appropriate provision for children to reach their educational setting safely. We will work closely with the local authority where they have statutory responsibility for 'home to school transport' for children (e.g. those with SEND).

## **9. Transition**

From September 2020, key school staff will continue to complete and plan for transition arrangements to support vulnerable pupils, liaising with the Trust, LA, pupils, any relevant external agencies and parents/carers to ensure that any planned transitions are supported as best as they can. LAs will complete EHCP transfer reviews within normal statutory timeframes (e.g. for pupils transferring between phases of education into/between schools such as a transfer from primary to secondary school).

## **10. Support from Astrea Academy Trust**

Astrea central team continues to be available to provide support and guidance to colleagues as appropriate. Members of the Astrea Education and Inclusion team continue to be available to all SENCOs and Principals in order to carry out their role effectively and can be contacted as per page 2.



## 11. Suggested SEND COVID-19 Risk Assessment Template (page 1 of 2)

From September 2020, all pupils will be expected to access education in school unless they are following specific clinical and/or public health advice. This may include during a national, local or setting-specific lockdown.

Please see Section 3 of the 'Appendix – COVID 19 Additional Information for SEND Information Report' for further information regarding when a risk assessment (or review of a risk assessment) may be completed.

<b>Academy / School:</b>	<b>Date of assessment / review:</b>
<b>Assessed by:</b>	<b>Job title:</b>
<b>Other people involved in assessment:</b>	
<b>Name of child / young person:</b>	
The potential health risks to the individual from COVID-19, bearing in mind any underlying health conditions. <i>This must be on an individual basis with advice from an appropriate health professional where required</i>	
The risk to the individual if some or all elements of their EHCP (and/or Support Plan) cannot be delivered at all, and the risk if they cannot be delivered in the normal manner/ in the usual setting.	
The ability of the individual's parents/carers 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 potential risks in travelling to/from school, including the safety of other children, young people and adults.	
The potential risks to the home setting, including the safety of other children, young people and adults if the individual <b>did not attend</b> school. <i>This can include any external risks. For example, a child or young person becoming involved in dangerous behaviour or situations or requiring support from a social worker. This applies to those whose needs are best met in educational settings, particularly in order to stop a care placement breakdown.</i>	
The potential risks to the school setting, including the safety of other children, young people and adults if the individual <b>did attend</b> school.	
What can be done by the school or setting to control any risks?	
What is the level of risk after all controls possible have been put in place? (HIGH/MED/LOW)	

What support is the setting or school providing to parents/carers if the child or young person is not able to attend?	
Is this a safeguarding risk – if so, please describe	
Who else /what other agencies need to be informed if child does not attend?	
<b>Further Considerations</b>	
Does the child need irreplaceable care or health provision?	YES NO
Can the services they most need be moved from their educational setting into their home?	YES NO
Are the parents/carers able to follow hygiene and social distancing practices at home?	YES NO
Due to their health vulnerabilities, is the child safer in the more stringent social distancing environment of their home?	YES NO
Parent/Carer Views:	
Child's View (if appropriate):	
<p><b><u>From September 2020, all pupils will be expected to access education in school unless they are following specific clinical or public health advice.</u></b></p> <p>This risk assessment has determined the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Please insert summary statement or bullet points.</i></li> <li>• <i>Please note: During a national, local or setting-specific lockdown, this could outline the setting deemed the most appropriate for the pupil as a result of this risk assessment.</i></li> </ul>	
<p>The person completing this risk assessment should ensure that if the Local Authority is not the assessor / joint assessor, then the Local Authority is informed of the outcome and any relevant risks. Document to be stored confidentially.</p>	