



Leading SEND: Lockdown 3

COVID 19 – January 2021

Aims



- This guide aims to support schools / colleges in the planning for SEND learners during Lockdown 3.
- It seeks to provide advice and guidance.
- It is based on available Department for Education (DfE) Guidance and seeks to extract the **key messages and advice**. It is not a recommended substitute to reading the advice in full.

Please note that some of this is based on guidance issued before national lock-down was announced, as further information is released this toolkit will be updated.

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Department for Education (DfE) Guidance and related links

- [Guidance for full opening of schools](#) (Updated 07/01/2021)
- [Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools guidance for all schools in England](#) (Issued 07/01/21)
- [Guidance for full opening of special schools and other specialist settings](#) (Updated 31/12/2020)
- [Guidance for further education and skills providers](#) (updated 08/01/2021)
- [Early Years and Childcare Settings](#) (updated 07/01/2021)
- [Safe working in education](#) (updated 14/12/2020)
- [Remote education good practice](#) (updated 27/10/2020)
- [Supporting pupils and students with special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\) - Get Help with Remote Education - GOV.UK](#) (updated 06/01/2021)

Which Guidance?



Government guidance for full opening of special schools and other specialist settings:

- Special schools
- Specialist post-16 providers
- Specialist education settings including Hospital schools

Government guidance for full opening schools:

- Mainstream schools (all ages, including school-based nurseries and boarding schools)
- Alternative provisions
- Independent schools

The following advice is aimed at supporting the mainstream and AP settings to consider the main aspects of advice as part of their whole school planning for Lockdown 3.

Opening schools guidance 1



Department for Education (DfE) guidance issued for September 2020 full opening of schools was presented in 5 key areas.

- 1. Public Health England (PHE) advice to minimise COVID 19**
- 2. School operations**
- 3. Curriculum, behaviour and pastoral support**
- 4. Assessment and accountability**
- 5. Contingency planning to provide continuity of education in the case of a local outbreak**

Opening schools guidance 2



Please use the [Leading SEND; What settings need to consider September 2020](#) for guidance on the key messages and implications within these 5 areas. The DfE update in December focussed on the areas below:

- staff who are pregnant
- use of face coverings
- clinically extremely vulnerable pupils
- clinically extremely vulnerable staff
- wraparound provision and extra-curricular activity
- physical activity in schools

This guidance will highlight new or additional key messages that have a **particular relevancy or implication for learners with SEND. It will also look at the need to risk assess and plan for the effective delivery of SEND provision.**

The rest of the DfE Guidance remains relevant and should be read and followed for all learners.

Key Messages: What's new?



- Schools need to revisit their whole school risk assessment and make any adjustments required to minimise the risk from Covid-19
- Schools should remain open to vulnerable learners and those of critical workers
- EY settings including maintained nurseries remain open to ALL children
- Special schools (including independent special schools) remain open
- The definition of vulnerable learners has changed and can be found here
- Individual risk assessments for learners with EHCP's and those with significant SEN should be reviewed and updated
- Risk assessments should only be used to manage on-site learning – not to make a judgement about a school place
- Accessible and appropriate remote learning should be in place for all learners, including those with SEND who are not attending school

There is no relaxation in legislation for EHCP's

Key Messages: What's new?



- Adults and learners in Y7 and above should wear face coverings when moving around inside, such as in corridors and communal areas
- Some learners will be exempt, full guidance can be found [here](#)
- Exemptions include learners who;
 - *have a disability that means they cannot wear or remove a face covering*
 - *would find wearing a face covering severely distressing*
 - *are with someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate*

Key Messages: What's the same?



- Schools should use their **existing resources** to make arrangements to welcome learners back
- Additional SEND funding for individual learners with EHCP's will continue
- Minimise the **number of contacts** that a learner has during the school day

Individual Risk Assessments



- Please also refer to the Leading SEND; What settings need to consider Summer 2020 (SEND Toolkit) for further advice on individual risk assessments
- Settings will need to review learners individual risk assessments in light of their updated whole school Risk Assessment and in light of the new variant Covid-19
- Please remember that DfE expectation is that all learners with EHCP's must attend school, those learners who are vulnerable and may have difficulty engaging in remote learning should also be attending school
- The updated Individual Risk Assessment tool can be found here

Delivery of EHCP Provision



- Unlike the initial lock-down there is no relaxation in legislation relating to EHCP's
- This means that the provision outlined in the EHCP needs to be delivered
- It is possible that settings will need to adjust the way in which provision is delivered
- Settings should always engage parents and families in discussion over any adjustments being made
- It is highly recommended that a 'record of conversation' is maintained for future reference

Record of Conversation



- For those learners who have an EHCP, or significant SEND, discussion with families will need to be held about their provision
- Schools/colleges will find it helpful to refer to the SENCO Guide 3: Support staff & families to understand SEND
- Devon have produced a helpful framework to support schools/colleges in having conversations with parents on how the provision within the EHCP is currently being delivered. This could also be used to capture the conversation and provide the school with a helpful record of the discussion and agreement. Schools/colleges may choose to share a copy of this record with CYP/families
- **There is no expectation that this needs to be returned to the LA**
- We would strongly advise all schools/colleges to ensure they have some form of recording for these discussions in place

Remote Education



- The requirement to ensure pupils and students with SEND can access remote education is exactly the same as it is for all other pupils and students in all types of school
- DfE guidance acknowledges that for many learners with SEND advice given in 'remote education good practice' will need to be adapted. For some learners the suggestions will be suitable and so should be considered on an individual basis
- more individualised planning may need to happen in many cases, and that the support of adults in the home will be a significant advantage where that is possible
- Full DfE guidance available from [here](#)

Remote Education



DfE expectation:

- Set assignments: different subjects, every day
- Work of equivalent length as in school
 - *3 hours primary (average)*
 - *4 hours secondary (more if working towards formal qualifications)*
- Frequent and clear explanations of content delivered by teachers (or through resources/videos)
- Systems to check engagement (at least weekly) and inform parents at once if an issue
- Monitor progression, feedback at least weekly
- Differentiate: adjust pace or difficulty in response to feedback, revise material

Getting help with Remote Education



Training in Assistive Technology from the STAR SEND Support Hub:

The SEND support hub will hold;

- A live chat forum enabling Ed Tech Demonstrator school representatives to access advice and guidance in the use and deployment of assistive technology
- Specialist online training programmes and recorded training courses for school leaders, teachers, and SEN Coordinators
- A series of webinar shorts on different aspects of assistive technology to support learners with SEND
- Recorded training for assessors on how to conduct online assistive technology assessments
- Information on how to book online assessments for specific learners

Coming Shortly:

[Babcock LDP website for useful SEND specific tips on making remote education meaningful, plus resources that can be used to support remote education.](#)

School Operations - Attendance



- Primary, secondary, alternative provision and special schools to remain open to **vulnerable learners** and the learners of **critical workers only**
- All other learners should receive remote education
- learners who are self-isolating should not attend school
- Clinically extremely vulnerable learners are advised not to attend school
- Schools should continue to record attendance in the register
- Schools should follow up on absences of the learners who are expected to be in school but where a parent wishes for their child to be absent, schools should authorise the absence during this lockdown period
- Schools and colleges to grant such applications for 'leave of absence'
- Any agreed absence from school for vulnerable learners must be recorded using the Code 'C'
- Absence will not be penalised
- Further guidance on attendance can be found [here](#)

School Operations

– Safeguarding



- Schools should consider revising their child protection policy (led by their Designated Safeguarding Lead) to reflect the lock-down
- Schools must have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, keeping children safe in education and should refer to the coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers guidance
- Designated safeguarding leads (& deputies) should be provided with more time, especially in the first few weeks of term. This is to help them provide support, to staff and learners regarding any new safeguarding and welfare concerns and the handling of referrals to children's social care and other agencies where these are appropriate. Agencies and services should prepare to work together to actively look for signs of harm

School Operations – Safeguarding



- **Communication with school nurses** is important for safeguarding and supporting wellbeing, as they have continued virtual support to learners who have not been in school
- Schools/colleges will want to ensure that systems for learners to talk with adults e.g. through worry boxes/bubble time are available and made known to learners
- A *new* Safeguarding Policy Appendix has been sent out to schools in January 2021 and can be accessed [here](#)

Learner Well-being and Support



- Learners may experience a variety of emotions in response to the coronavirus outbreak, i.e. anxiety, stress or low mood. This may particularly be the case for vulnerable learners, 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

Learner Well-being and Support



Schools should consider the provision of pastoral and additional activities to all learners designed to:

- Support the rebuilding of friendships and social engagement
- Address and equip learners to respond to issues linked to coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Support learners with approaches to improving their physical and mental wellbeing
- Schools should consider how they are working with school nursing services to support the health and wellbeing of their learners; school nursing services have continued to offer support as learners return to school. School nurses as leaders of the healthy child programme can offer a range of support including:
 - Support for resilience, mental health and wellbeing including anxiety, bereavement and sleep issues
 - Support for learners with additional and complex health needs
 - Supporting vulnerable children and keeping children safe

Pupil Well-being and Support: Resources, advice, training



- <https://www.babcockldp.co.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-support-for-schools-parents-and-pupils/mental-health-and-wellbeing/school-staff>
- SEND Helpline **01392 287248** (12-4pm Tuesday)
- <https://www.sendgateway.org.uk/>
- DfE, PHE & NHS England webinar for school and college staff (July 2020) to set out how to support returning learners. [Supporting pupil and student mental wellbeing](#)
- DfE training module on [teaching about mental wellbeing](#), this will improve teacher confidence in talking and teaching about mental health and wellbeing in the classroom

Key Messages from Health



- Health practitioners are aware of the importance of supporting safe return to school, and are already actively reviewing learners' health needs and collaborating in multi-agency discussions about learners return to school
- Schools should actively seek support from Public Health colleagues using local and regional networks

Key Messages from Social Care



- Access to social care assessment has not been changed by Covid-19
- Referral routes remain the same (MASH for safeguarding concerns and the Single Point of Access for Disabled Children's Services)
- Children with allocated social care workers will continue to have regular contact from those workers
- Should the social care provision within an EHCP be unable to be carried out, the family or school should contact the child's allocated worker or team

Remember.... we are here to support you



DCC SEND & Coronavirus pages

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/document/send/>

Devon's Local Offer

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send-local-offer>

Babcock LDP support

<https://www.babcockldp.co.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-support-for-schools-parents-and-learners>

Health and Social Care

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/care-and-health/>

Questions



If you have any questions please contact:

SEND Helpline **01392 287248** (12-4pm daily)

SEN 0-25 specialeducation0-25-mailbox@devon.gov.uk or your SEN Caseworker

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