

20th March 2020 SEN Update

COVID 19 and EHCP Reviews: Advice for Schools and Parents

During the coming weeks, we know that some schools and Colleges are closing or partially closing. Annual reviews that are due during this time will obviously be affected.

Schools and the SEND 0-25 team will work together to ensure that children / young people and their families feel safe and supported. Reviews may need to take place virtually, perhaps over Skype, or could be postponed if everyone is happy to do that.

We know this is a difficult and unprecedented time for us all, and we fully appreciate how unsure schools and parents will be in managing the usual SEN practices.

We have been looking at how we manage Annual Reviews with you as we move through the next few months.

We know that some schools and Colleges are closing or partially closing. Our first priorities are that children and families are safe and supported through this. This may impact on the normal schedule of Annual reviews.

To help us help you on Annual Reviews:

If there is very little change to needs and no expected significant changes to the provision in the Plan – our advice is to postpone the meeting until a more appropriate and supportive meeting could take place, given that key people may be unavailable currently.

Please only postpone once a meeting has been offered to parents

If you believe that a review is essential and fundamental to the young person's education at this time, then the following needs to be considered:

Advice prior to meetings:

- This may be possible but be aware that health and care staff will be redirected to our most vulnerable in these times.
- EP availability is likely to be decreased due to self-isolation or illness, and this may affect any updates or assessments of children/young people.

Meetings:

- If your school or College has arranged meetings and these can go ahead in any way please do so, this may be virtual meetings. The SEN team are unlikely to be available to come into schools for these meetings.
- Please offer a virtual meeting before cancelling meetings
- If you cannot arrange for a way of keeping these meetings in the diary, please can this be discussed between school and parents, and then the school email the SEN team at specialeducation0-25-mailbox@devon.gov.uk
- If parents still require the local authority to hold a meeting then the SEN team can look into how we could arrange this.

Post review response:

- The report should be submitted as normal to the SEN team.
- The response will be determined by the information and evidence provided. If there is no evidence to suggest any changes then it is likely that the response will be to maintain the plan.

The SEN team will continue to operate; however this may be limited availability by phone.