



City of Westminster

Family and Children's Services

Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, LONDON, W8 7NX

Executive Director of Children's Services

Sarah Newman

Director for Education

Ian Heggs



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

12 January 2021

Dear parents and carers

Update from SEN

We know that keeping your family safe will be of utmost importance and that when things change quickly it can cause additional worry. This letter is to help us keep in touch with you following the [national lockdown from 4 January 2021](#) and to explain that we are encouraging schools to keep you informed about the help for your child.

Although schools are closed and most children are at home, accessing remote learning, the Government has recognised that children and young people with an Education Health and Care Plan should continue to attend school unless they are shielding, self-isolating or in quarantine. We are working with SENCOs and headteachers from our schools, Early years settings and Colleges to support them in meeting the government's expectations.

This is different to the first national lockdown in March 2019 when children with Education Health and Care Plans who were not in school had a risk assessment and the government relaxed the SEN regulations.

The support outlined in your child's Education Health and Care Plans should be continuing. If an annual review is due, it should also go ahead as planned although it may be an online meeting rather than in person. Some visiting specialists who support your child, e.g. therapists and specialist teachers, are likely to be providing their support remotely because of the current restrictions and we are asking all of them to have clear conversations with families about any changes during this time.

At the present time most Children's Health staff have not been re-deployed within the NHS to help with the Covid response. Health colleagues have committed to keeping us informed if the plans change so we can let you know.

The Government is allowing headteachers of special schools to agree a 'leave of absence' with families of the most medically complex children. We would like to encourage you to talk to your child's school if you are very concerned about the risk of infection and the implications of Covid. They are also allowing headteachers of primary and secondary schools to consider whether any other pupil on their SEN register (at 'SEN Support' level) should also be attending school in person because they are particularly vulnerable.

Short breaks services are continuing to operate, with a reduced number of children to maintain social distancing. Plans are also in place for sessions to take place next month during what would usually be the half term holiday.

Please remember that you can contact your Social Worker or Short breaks Practitioner if you need out of school help, or information about the afterschool and Saturday sessions which are continuing to run.

Our SEND Local Offer website has a dedicated page to get the latest information about services during lockdown ([RBKC COVID-19](#) / [WCC COVID-19](#)), and we'd like to remind you that there is always a page with information about local services and groups to support parents and carers of children with SEND ([Support for Parents in RBKC](#) / [Support for Parents in WCC](#)).

With kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Ely', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Julie Ely, Assistant Director, SEN and Educational Psychology

Also on behalf of

Tracy Beard (Head of Short breaks)

Joe Dunton (Therapies Commissioning)

Steve Comber (Head of SEND Local Offer and SEN Outreach)

Jen Griffin (Designated Clinical Officer for Health)