



# ST. EDWARD'S CATHOLIC ACADEMY SCHOOL

## SEND INFORMATION REPORT COVID-19

### PURPOSE

This is an addition to the SEND Information Report, setting out the arrangements in place to support our children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities during the COVID-19 related partial school closure starting from 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

Date Written	21st April 2020
Written By	A. Cashmore
Next Review	As required
Summary of changes	New addition published for COVID-19 crisis

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### 1. Context

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to continue to provide care for a limited number of children – those who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response – who absolutely need to attend and who cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addition to the St. Edwards Catholic Academy School SEND Information Report contains details of our individual arrangements and changes to our usual mode of working in the following areas:

- Vulnerable children and eligibility
- Safeguarding, attendance and monitoring of wellbeing
- Arrangements for consulting parents of, and young people with, SEND
- Arrangements for assessing and reviewing children's progress
- Arrangements for supporting children in moving between phases of education
- Transition periods within school
- The approach to teaching children with SEND
- Support for emotional and social development
- Working alongside other professionals

## 2. Key Contacts

Role	Name	Email
Head Teacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs. J. McQuillan	j.mcquillan@stedwardscatholicacademy.co.uk
Deputy Headteacher/DSL	Mrs. K Methven	k.methven@stedwardscatholicacademy.co.uk
Teacher/SENDCo/DSL	Mrs. A. Cashmore	a.cashmore@stedwardscatholicacademy.co.uk
SEND Governor	Mrs. L. Mayes	Contact via school

## 3. Vulnerable children and eligibility

During the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, vulnerable children and young people are defined as those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan whose needs cannot be met safely in the home environment
- have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who are therefore in need of continued education provision

This might include children on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, adopted children, or those who are young carers, and others at the provider and local authority discretion.

Department for Education are asking local authorities to consider the needs of all children and young people with an education, health and care (EHC) plan, and make a risk assessment, consulting educational settings and parents or carers, to determine whether children and young people with SEND will be able to have their needs met at home, and be safer there than attending an educational setting. This assessment should incorporate the views of the child or young person. Local authorities and education settings should decide together who is best placed to undertake the risk assessment, noting that the duty to secure provision remains with the local authority.

Where the risk assessment determines a child or young person with an EHC plan will be safer at home, the Department for Education (DfE) recommends they stay at home. Where the risk assessment determines a child or young person with an EHC plan will be as safe or safer at an education setting, DfE recommends they attend the education setting.

DfE recognises that some local authorities and educational settings will have already undertaken risk assessments for many vulnerable children and young people and taken decisions on appropriate provision. There is no need to re-do these because this guidance has been issued. Some local authorities and educational settings will have done provisional risk assessments and will want to revisit those to check whether the decisions made initially will remain suitable over time.

We trust local authorities, having consulted with educational settings, the parents or carers and the child or young person, to make these decisions, recognising that school and college leaders and staff will have a sound understanding of an individual child or young person's needs.

Any risk assessments for children with SEND will consider a number of different risks to each individual, including:

- 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 Coronavirus Act 2020 allows the Secretary of State, where appropriate, to temporarily lift the statutory duty on local authorities to maintain the precise provision in EHC plans, with local authorities needing instead to apply 'reasonable endeavours' to support these children and their families.

#### 4. Safeguarding, attendance and monitoring of wellbeing

St. Edward's Catholic Academy School continues in its commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of its children during this period of general school closure.

Where children with EHC plans take up an eligible place in school, St Edward's Catholic Academy School will continue to ensure a safe space for children to attend. The Headteacher/ Assistant Head will work alongside the SENCo to ensure that appropriate staff, facilities and provision are available to secure a safe, appropriate and positive placement for those children. The support appropriate to each child in this circumstance will be recorded and reviewed on an individual basis. Any updates to a child's situation will be updated on their risk assessments which are then shared with the Local Authority and the Senior Management Team.

St Edward's Catholic Academy School will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. Having worked with parents and other professionals to decide whether children with EHC plans will be attending school, St. Edward's Catholic Academy School will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not attend.

Where children with EHC plans do not take up a place in school and are cared for at home, an individual risk assessment will be completed and a communication plan will be put in place for the child. This will be recorded on risk assessments for each pupil which are shared with the Senior Leadership Team and the Local Authority.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

St Edward's Catholic Academy School, its Head Teacher (DSL) and SENCo will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan for children with EHC plans.

This plan must be reviewed weekly and where concerns arise, the Head Teacher/DSL and SENCo will consider any referrals as appropriate.

For children with SEND, but without an EHC plan, who have not been offered a place in school, contact details for key staff will always be available on the school website. This will ensure that parents of children with SEND will always have a way of contacting and communicating with school staff where needed.

## 5. Arrangements for consulting parents of, and children with, SEND

Working in partnership with children with SEND and their parents continues to be central to St Edward's Catholic Academy School's policies and practice.

The views of parents and children will be considered in determining whether children with EHC plans take up an eligible place in school.

For children with EHC plans who are being cared for at home, their individual risk assessments will include communication plans to ensure that regular contact is maintained with key school staff. These communications may include: individual expectations for home learning, discussions around appropriate learning activities, adaptations to learning resources/activities and discussions of strategies for supporting children at home. There are appropriate websites to access at the end of this additional report.

For children with SEND, but without an EHC plan, School staff will be mindful of the availability of support and resources when setting accessible home learning for children with SEND.

The school website will include contact details so that, should parents of children with SEND need to contact a member of school staff for additional support or guidance for home learning, they can do so.

Where statutory processes relating to SEND are in action, the school will continue to maintain communication with parents of, and children with, SEND so that their views are actively sought, considered and promoted.

## 6. Arrangements for assessing and reviewing children's progress

St Edward's Catholic Academy School recognises that assessments and reviews of children's progress will continue to be necessary for some purposes during this period of school closure, mainly for the purpose of statutory assessment and review for new or existing EHC plans and for other assessments being completed by external professionals, for example community paediatricians.

Where this is needed, key school staff will maintain communication with parents and relevant professionals to share, with necessary consents, the most current assessment information and professional observations that the school holds.

Where children's EHC plans/GRIP reviews are due for review within the period of school closure, the school will discuss arrangements with parents, children, the Local Authority and professionals involved in the plan to decide whether arrangements for a 'remote review' should be made, or whether reviews should be postponed until it is possible to meet with all parties involved in the plan. The SENCo will make the necessary arrangements following this decision.

## 7. Arrangements for supporting children in moving between phases of education

For children due to move between phases of education at the end of this academic year, St. Edward's Catholic Academy School will continue to make contact with the new settings to share necessary information to make children's transitions as smooth as possible. The SENCo will make contact with SENCos in the new settings to share information on SEND needs. Where children with SEND would benefit from additional transition visits, every effort will be made to facilitate these where possible within DfE guidance.

For Year 6 children, key information with secondary school staff will request and complete conversations with named transition staff in secondary schools to discuss vulnerable children. In this way, St Edward's Catholic Academy School will seek to maintain a good flow of important information to support children's transfer from primary to secondary.

St Edward's Catholic Academy School recognises that transition may be a particular concern for parents of children of SEND, and communication remains open for parents to contact key school staff to discuss this.

## 8. Transitions within school

For children transferring between classes the Class teacher/SENCo will continue to inform the new class teacher of pupil's needs using meetings where appropriate.

## 9. The approach to teaching children with SEND

St. Edward's Catholic Academy School recognises that children with SEND need access to home learning resources and activities which take account of their strengths and needs.

For children with SEND, but without an EHC plan, suggestions will be made within each year group home learning to support them in accessing appropriate learning activities. School staff will also be mindful of the availability of support and resources when setting accessible home learning for children with SEND.

Communication plans will be in place for any children with EHC plans being cared for at home to ensure that regular contact is maintained for discussion and setting of individual, appropriate learning activities, strategies and resources.

The school website will include contact details so that, should parents of children with SEND need to contact a member of school staff for additional support or guidance for home learning, they can do so.

## 10. Support for social and emotional development

St Edward's Catholic Academy School understands that children's social and emotional development may be at risk within the current national climate and period of school closure.

For all parents, key contact details are available on the school's website so that they are always able to reach school staff for support if needed.

St Edward's Catholic Academy School will suggest to parents other professionals who may be able to support them and their children at this time, particularly the Educational Psychology Service. The school will also share parent and child-friendly leaflets with links to mental health and wellbeing support strategies and agencies via the school website. A dedicated page has been established on the website.

## 11. Working alongside other professionals

St Edward`s Catholic Academy School will continue to maintain contact with other professionals during this period of school closure. This will include liaison with the Educational Psychology Service and Behaviour Support Service.

Contact details for the SENCo and key school staff are available via the school website should professionals need to make contact.

St. Edward`s Catholic Academy School will signpost parents to appropriate external professionals as required.

### **Review**

This addition to the information report will be reviewed in light of new government guidance as and when it is published.

## Websites available to support education for children with SEND

### Brain Parade

**Website:** <http://www.brainparade.com/products/see-touch-learn-free/> **Description:** a visual instruction app, including flash cards and picture-choosing games, for children with autism and special needs.

### HelpKidzLearn

**Website:** <https://www.helpkidzlearn.com/>

**Description:** a collection of games and resources designed for a range of educational needs and stages. It includes provision for school closure.

### Sensory App House Ltd

**Website:** <https://www.sensoryapphouse.com/>

**Description:** a range of apps are available for pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) or Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD). All are interactive and many do not require significant coordination abilities.

### Visuals2Go

**Website:** <https://www.visuals2go.com/>

**Description:** an all-in-one app created to support people with communication and learning difficulties. For verbal and non-verbal learners.

### References:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-online-education-resources-for-home-education#special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send>