



**MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL**

**Children and Families
Education**

Date: 1st May 2020

Manchester City Council
P.O. Box 532
Manchester
M60 2LA

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you and your family are managing to keep well and safe in these uncertain times.

We are writing to parents and carers of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) to let them know what the local authority, health services and education settings are doing to support you and your children during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government's coronavirus guidance is clear that for most children and young people, including those people with special educational needs and/or disabilities, it is safer to stay at home with their families during the current period.

For some children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), parents/carers and schools/colleges will decide that the needs of the child or young person can be best met if they continue to attend their education setting. The local authority is asking educational settings to work with parents/carers, health and care staff to assess whether your child should now attend school/college or whether it is still safest having their needs met at home. If you are not happy with the outcome of the assessment please speak to your child's school (and/or social worker) in the first instance. If you need any further support contact: Information, Advice and Support for advice on: 0161 209 8356 or by email: parents@manchester.gov.uk

Schools and colleges are providing learning and fun resources for children and young people to complete at home. If you do not have access to technology at home, please contact your school or college to ask if they can provide paper-based resources.

There have been some queries from parents about where the money for EHCPs is going. The funding that schools and colleges receive is remaining the same. This includes the funding for EHCPs; this allows education settings to pay their staff and continue to provide resources and support for all their students. As your son or daughter has an EHCP, the school, local authority and health service may not be able to deliver the exact provision described in the EHCP during this time, but we are required to use 'reasonable endeavours' to support children and young people with EHCPs. If you feel your child needs more support, please contact the school, college or therapist to discuss. You can also discuss your concerns with the Information, Advice and Support Service.

We have asked schools, colleges and settings to make arrangements with families to hold annual reviews of EHCPs by telephone or online, and to ensure that the views of children, young people and their parents or carers are central to these reviews.

The Statutory Assessment Team is continuing to deal with new requests for assessment and amendments of EHCPs. If your child is due to move from nursery to school, from primary to secondary, from school to college, or is making any other kind of transition, be assured that the Statutory Assessment Team is still carrying out consultations with education settings. It also continues to work with heads and SENCOs to make sure settings receive the information they need to be able to provide the right support for your child when they join them. If you have concerns, please contact the team on: sen@manchester.gov.uk

The Manchester Local Offer website www.manchester.gov.uk/sendlocaloffer has a wealth of information for young people with SEND and their parents or carers, including on short breaks, emotional wellbeing, benefits and money, as well as activities for children and young people to do at home. The team, working with Manchester Parent Carer Forum, Parent Champions and other partners, is continuing to run Local Offer drop-ins, but online and by phone rather than face to face.

We have attached a leaflet with more information on how you can get help and advice from Manchester City Council teams, as well as information, advice and support and other services.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Isobel Booler', written in a cursive style.

Isobel Booler
Head of School Quality Assurance and Strategic SEND
For Manchester City Council