SEN Appendix COVID-19 October 2020

Government Guidance Recommends:

Full educational and care support should be provided for pupils with SEND. Teaching assistants and specialists can work across different classes. Some pupils with SEND may need help to prepare for the new routines. Although schools may wish to redeploy teaching assistants to catch-up provision, it shouldn’t be at the expense of SEND pupils. Schools must conduct risk assessments for children who struggle with good respiratory hygiene or social distancing, but it is not a reason to deny education. Control measures could include limiting the number of children in a group to allow more space and being in similar groups with consistent staffing where possible.

Temporary changes to SEND legislation allow LAs and schools to use ‘reasonable endeavours’ to meet the requirements of EHC plans. The DfE aims to remove these flexibilities as soon as possible but this could be affected by local outbreaks of COVID-19. Risk assessments for children with an EHC plan may need to be updated to identify support needed, either for returning to full-time education or during self-isolation. There is a statutory duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and lockdown may have been a difficult period. Schools may need to provide extra support and phased returns if children face emotional challenges or display challenging behaviours. If a child attends a mainstream school and alternative provision, they should jointly address any risks for delivering the curriculum.

Annual reviews and meetings with parents will take place, but these will be via zoom, teams or face to face with adequate COVID-19 procedures. Parents and carers will be made aware that timescales may vary due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.