



Appendix: COVID-19 Additional Information for SEND Information Report

School Name: Atlas Primary Academy

Date: 8th March 2021

1. Context, Legislation and Guidance

[Guidance](#) was released in February 2021, to support schools with full opening from 8 March 2021. To support this, all schools are required to review and update their risk assessment (if necessary), make sure they have a system of controls to minimise risk of infection and to have a contingency plan in place for outbreaks or changes to restrictions. It is also important for schools to communicate such relevant information to schools.

The SEND Information Report is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice and the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEN and disabilities; and
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the SEND Information Report

In 2020, the Coronavirus Act Modification of Section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014 (England) Notice 2020 provided the following modification in relation to the duty to secure educational and health care provision in accordance with the requirements of the Education, Health and Care Plan:

- The absolute duty to make the provision in an EHC plan (section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014) can be temporarily amended to a 'reasonable endeavours' duty. This means that during the specified period the Local Authority (LA) needs to do whatever it reasonably can to put provision in place, but if they cannot do so they would not necessarily be breaching the law.

This modification was in place from 1 May to 25 September 2020 inclusive, and adjusted the statutory timescales for the EHC needs assessments and plans. Following this date range, the modifications ceased and **there are currently no modifications in place.**

This appendix of the school's SEN Information Report should be read alongside the school's Annex 5 of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Behaviour Policy (and any relevant Annex). This appendix contains further details of our arrangements for pupils with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities in line with revised procedures from the government, in the following areas:

1. Context, legislation, guidance and key contacts
2. Vulnerable children
3. Risk assessments of pupils with SEND
4. Supporting children and young people's mental health
5. Supporting vulnerable pupils in school and/or at home
6. Statutory assessments, annual reviews and reviews for pupils at SEN Support
7. Dedicated School Transport for pupils with existing arrangements
8. Transition
9. Support from Astrea Academy Trust
10. Annex: Suggested SEND Risk Assessment Template



Key Contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
SENCO	Michaela Ludford	01302 363612	michaela.ludford@astreaatlas.org
Principal	Bekki Harvey		bekki.harvey@astreaatlas.org
SEND Officer	Caroline Embery	07387108846	caroline.embery@astreaacademytrust.org
Specialist Leader of Behaviour and SEND	Naomi Reed	07552995410	naomi.reed@astreaacademytrust.org
National Leader of Inclusion	Jenni Machin	07900401418	jenni.machin@astreaacademytrust.org
Director of Inclusion	Nicola Crossley	07393237674	nicola.crossley@astreaacademytrust.org
General Enquiries		01302 363612	admin@astreaatlas.org info@astreaacademytrust.org

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it may not always be possible to have the SENCO on site, however, the SENCO, or a senior leader, will be available to be contacted via phone (contact school office to arrange a call) or email.

2. Vulnerable children

From 8 March 2021, pupils are to return to school to minimise (as far as possible) the longer-term impact of the pandemic on their education, wellbeing and wider development. However, the school notes that there may be a small minority of pupils that may still be unable to attend. This could be related to public health or clinical advice (for example, for pupils identified as extremely clinically vulnerable). In these cases, access to remote education will be offered (see section 5) and the pupil may be supported through the risk assessment process if applicable (see section 3).

Where parents/ carers are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, the school will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer, providing reassurance of the measures in place to reduce the risk in school. However, the expectation is that all pupils will be attending school unless a statutory reason applies.

During any COVID-19 'lockdown' (national, local or setting specific), following Public Health England advice, schools may close for some pupils but remain open only for vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers, providing remote education for all other pupils.

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a **child in need plan**, a **child protection plan** or who are a **looked-after child**;
- have an **education, health and care plan (EHCP)**;



- have been identified as **otherwise vulnerable** by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
 - **children and young people on the edge of receiving support** from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
 - **adopted children or children on a special guardianship order**
 - those **at risk of becoming NEET** ('not in employment, education or training')
 - those **living in temporary accommodation**
 - those who are **young carers**
 - those who may **have difficulty engaging with remote education at home** (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
 - **care leavers**
 - others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend **to receive support or manage risks to their mental health**.

3. Risk Assessments of Pupils with SEND

The school is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people. The operational risk assessment of the setting, in line with government guidance, will drive decisions on provision as health and safety considerations are paramount in all decision making.

The school may re-visit pupil level risk assessments previously used in lockdowns to re-assess and identify what additional support children and young people with SEND may need to access education safely. Pupil level risk assessments may be used to support pupils and the staff working with them and are not a reason to deny pupils face-to-face education. Where schools complete these, please see section 12 for an example template.

When pupils who have been identified as extremely clinically vulnerable have been advised to shield, parents / carers are strongly advised to follow guidance. However, guidance for [special schools](#), [special post-16 institutions and alternative provision](#) states that in some exceptional circumstances it may be that the health risks need to be balanced with the wider impact of the child or young person not attending education and accessing the support that would normally be delivered. This might be due to the level of support that they need or their ability to access remote education and additional services such as therapies, as well as the impact on wellbeing for the wider family. With this in mind, in these circumstances we may use a risk assessment process to work with parents and the other organisations to agree the best arrangement for the child or young person and their family to ensure that they continue to receive the support they need.

Where a pupil routinely attends more than one setting on a part time basis, for example because they are dual registered at a mainstream school and a special setting, the school will work with other settings to work through the system of controls collaboratively, enabling them to address any risks identified and allowing them to jointly deliver a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupil. Pupils should be able to continue attending both settings. While some adjustment to arrangements may be required, pupils in this situation should not be isolated as a solution to the risk of greater contact except when required by specific public health advice.



4. Supporting Children and Young People's Mental Health

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. We are aware that there may be pupils with additional or worsened social emotional and mental health needs as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19). Additionally, provision for pupils who have SEND may have been disrupted during the period of restrictions on attendance and there may be an impact on their behaviour and emotional wellbeing. Teachers should be mindful of this, in setting expectations of pupils' work. These pupils may need additional support and access to services such as educational psychologists, social workers, the Astrea Therapeutic Team, specialist staff or external support services.

Government guidance (found [here](#)), states:

'Pupils may be experiencing a variety of emotions in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, such as anxiety, stress or low mood. This may particularly be the case for vulnerable children, including those with a social worker and young carers. It is important to contextualise these feelings as normal responses to an abnormal situation.'

The school will consider using pastoral and extra-curricular activities to:

- support the rebuilding of friendships and social engagement
- address and equip pupils to respond to issues linked to coronavirus (COVID-19)
- support pupils with approaches to improving their physical and mental wellbeing
- provide focused pastoral support for pupils' individual issues.

Additionally, for pupils accessing remote education (because they are shielding, self-isolating or vulnerable), the school will still endeavour to offer pastoral support.

The school will also work with school nurses as appropriate to:

- support the delivery of the [healthy child programme](#)
- identify any health and wellbeing needs
- provide support for resilience, mental health and wellbeing including anxiety, bereavement and sleep issues
- support pupils with additional and complex health needs.

The government has issued guidance and advice for parents/carers on looking after the mental health and wellbeing of children or young people during the COVID-19 outbreak. When considering mental health and wellbeing, the school will also refer to this as a starting point - [guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus outbreak](#). Further information for parents and carers in relation to supporting mental health and wellbeing can be found in the Astrea Home Learning brochures which can be found [here](#). Parents/carers can also contact their GP or refer to NHS 111 online if they have concerns about their child's mental health. NHS trusts have also established 24-hour urgent mental health helplines in most parts of England for people of all ages as it is important to discuss such mental health issues with a professional.

In response, [government guidance](#) provides specific school information and signposting to:

- an ['Every interaction matters'](#) webinar can help with offering pastoral support for wellbeing
- a [webinar](#) recording from the DfE, Public Health England and NHS England for educational professionals on how to support pupil wellbeing;



- The Whole School SEND consortium – who have produced a variety of resources to support educational staff as well as families. This includes 2 leaflets, funded by DfE, to support young people with SEND and their families to have conversations with schools about [successful returns following a period of absence](#) and about [transition planning for post-year 11 destinations](#). They have also produced a [handbook](#) to support teachers to take a whole school approach to supporting pupils following a traumatic event.
- the [MindEd learning platform](#) and [staff resilience hub](#) for useful materials for teachers and front line staff

The Department for Education has also published [relationship, sex and health education training modules](#) for teachers to support them in delivering the required content on mental health and wellbeing (found [here](#)). The school's Relationship, Sex and Health education content can be prioritised this academic year to support emerging pupil needs.

If parents/carers have any specific concerns about the mental health and wellbeing of children which they would like to discuss further, they can also contact the school SENCO (Michaela Ludford) or Designated Safeguarding Lead (Corrina Nicholson) via telephoning the school directly or by emailing safeguarding@astreatlas.org

5. Supporting Vulnerable Pupil in School and/or at Home

From 8 March 2021, all pupils, including those with SEND, are expected to attend school unless they are following specific clinical and/or public health advice not to attend. There may also be a statutory reason why pupils need to access immediate remote education from home (e.g. advised shielding, national or local / setting lockdown, advised self-isolating). The school will try to offer pastoral support remotely to pupils that are required to access remote education.

The school will follow government guidance in relation to **curriculum expectations, behaviour and pastoral support** (found [here](#)). The key principals that underpin this are:

- education is not optional: All pupils receive a high-quality education that promotes their development and equips them with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life;
- the curriculum remains broad and ambitious: All pupils continue to be taught a wide range of subjects, maintaining their choices for further study and employment.

Informed by these principles, we aim to teach an ambitious and broad curriculum in all subjects. Where appropriate, teaching time will be prioritised to address the most significant gaps in pupils' knowledge. Curriculum planning should be informed both by an assessment of pupils' starting points and gaps in their knowledge, and an understanding of what is the most critical content for progression. To achieve this, the school may need to make modifications to the curriculum to create time to cover the most important content in which pupils are not yet secure.

The school may consider suspending some subjects for some pupils in exceptional circumstances. Up to and including Key Stage 3, prioritisation within subjects of the most important components for progression is likely to be more effective than removing subjects, which may deprive pupils of the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. If a decision is made to suspend some subjects for some pupils (where the subject is not one that is statutorily mandated) this will be in the best interests of the pupil and should be subject to discussion with parents/carers.



The use of **outdoor learning** may be utilised to support the delivery of the curriculum and protective measures will be taken to facilitate this. From 8 March 2021, schools are also able to consider an extra-curricular offer in line with [guidance](#).

For vulnerable pupils (including those with more complex needs), the school will also explore the use of government packages (such as 'catch-up support' funding and the National Tutoring Programme) to assist in addressing any individual gaps in learning.

For pupils with medical conditions, we will work with appropriate professionals to ensure they are supported and wherever possible, in receipt of an education in line with their peers. In some cases, the pupil's medical needs will mean this is not possible, and educational support will require flexibility. Further information is available in the guidance on [supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#) and additional operational guidance for [special schools, special post-16 institutions and alternative provision](#).

School based learning and protective measures

We know that particular care is needed to support pupils with SEND. Some pupils with SEND (whether with EHCPs or on SEN support) will need specific help, reasonable adjustments and preparation for any changes to routine. Staff will plan to meet these needs, for example using social stories.

Staffing needs will be considered as part of a collaborative, flexible approach - we will work with internal staff members, any relevant volunteers and appropriate external specialist staff to support pupils in school, ensuring that any relevant staff training required is in place. Measures will be taken to minimise the potential risks posed from external specialist visitors to school such as social distancing to allow any planned support to continue. Specialists, therapists, clinicians and other support staff for pupils with SEND will be encouraged to provide interventions in school as usual.

We will ensure that appropriate support is made available for pupils with SEND, for example by deploying teaching assistants to work with pupils in different classes or year groups. Where capacity allows, support staff may also deliver catch-up provisions or targeted interventions. Pupils will be kept in their groups (or 'bubbles') for the majority of the time, however, pupils may also access additional mixed groups in order to access specialist provision and/or wraparound care.

When working within the classroom, preventive distancing measures will be in place for the majority of pupils in order to reduce any risk of transmission. We know 2 metre distancing is not always possible, but staff will do this when circumstances allow. Staff will try to minimise close face to face contact and close interactions. However, it will not be possible when working with many pupils who have complex needs or who need close contact care. These pupils' educational and care support will be provided as normal.

In line with guidance, for pupils old enough, they will also be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff and their peers where possible. Similarly, this will not be possible for the youngest children and some pupils with complex needs and if it is not feasible where space does not allow.



The use of face coverings will also be considered where relevant and in line with guidance (found [here](#)) as part of our system of controls to minimise risks. However, we acknowledge the need for some exemptions and considerations in relation to the use of face coverings in order to support pupils (and staff) with specific special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, this may include the use of clear face coverings.

Children and young people in school will be encouraged to regularly clean their hands thoroughly, including before and after using any specialist equipment. We acknowledge that some younger children or pupils with more complex needs may require help. Similarly, good respiratory hygiene will be encouraged. Again, some children and young people will be helped to get this right. Where pupils with specific needs struggle to maintain good respiratory hygiene (for example, through uncontrollable spitting or where saliva is a sensory stimulant), a risk assessment should be completed (see Section 3) in order to support both pupils and staff with face-to-face education provision. Government guidance states that this is not a reason to deny these pupils face-to-face education.

If appropriate and in line with guidance, the school will participate with the rapid testing programme, following the [Mass asymptomatic testing: schools and colleges guidance](#). The school will take swift action if we become aware that someone has tested positive for coronavirus. Following advice, all pupils (including the most vulnerable) may be sent home to self-isolate – in this instance, they would be given access to remote education.

Remote education

Any **remote education and home learning** needed will be of high quality and will align with in-school provision and curriculum resources. The educational offer will include both recorded or live direct teaching time, and time for pupils to complete tasks and/or assignments independently. To support this, the school may refer to the nationally available resources to support SEND pupils, such as the [Oak National Academy specialist content for SEND](#), as well as utilise the digital and technological support. The school staff may also utilise the government's [Get Help With Remote Education](#) page which signposts support available.

In relation to remote learning, we acknowledge the importance of:

- teaching a planned and well-sequenced curriculum so that knowledge and skills are built incrementally, with a good level of clarity about what is intended to be taught and practised in each subject so that pupils can progress through the school's curriculum
- setting meaningful and ambitious work each day, considering a pupils' age, stage of development and/or special educational needs (considering whether the work set would place significant demands on parents/carers for help or support)
- effectively utilising digital platforms for remote education provision to allow interaction, assessment and feedback
- overcoming barriers to [digital access for pupils](#), including for vulnerable learners and those with SEND
- acknowledging that some pupils who have difficulty engaging in remote education may be considered to be vulnerable and therefore eligible to attend provision in person



- recognising that some pupils with SEND may not be able to access remote education without adult support (we will try to work with families to ensure the delivery of a broad and ambitious curriculum appropriate for their level of need)
- checking daily whether pupils are engaging with their work, and work with families to rapidly identify effective solutions where engagement is a concern
- monitoring the quality and delivery of remote education (at a senior leadership level), including that provision meets expectations for remote education
- publishing information for pupils, parents and carers about the remote education provision
- considering what we already know about effective teaching, for example:
 - providing frequent, clear explanations of new content, delivered by a teacher or through high-quality curriculum resources
 - providing opportunities for interactivity, including questioning, eliciting and reflective discussion
 - providing scaffolded practice and opportunities to apply new knowledge
 - enabling pupils to receive timely and frequent feedback on how to progress, using digitally-facilitated or whole-class feedback where appropriate
 - using assessment to ensure teaching is responsive to pupils' needs and addresses any critical gaps in pupils' knowledge
 - avoiding an over-reliance on long-term projects or internet research activities.

For pupils with SEND, their teachers are best-placed to know how pupil needs can be most effectively met to ensure they continue to make progress even if they are not able to be in school. The requirement for schools within the 2014 Children and Families Act to use their best endeavours to secure the special educational provision called for by the pupils' special educational needs, remains in place.

We will work collaboratively with families of pupils with SEND, putting in place reasonable adjustments as necessary, so that pupils at home can successfully access a remote ambitious curriculum appropriate for their level of need. When designing home learning and support for children and young people with SEND, we may also involve external professionals to support the design or adapt interventions or learning materials.

The online learning offer for the school is available on the school website.

6. Statutory Assessments, Annual Reviews and Reviews for Pupils at SEN Support

From the 25th September 2020, any previous temporary modifications to SEND policy and practice made by the Secretary of State **ceased**. Applications for statutory assessments / needs assessments / high needs funding will continue to be submitted to the local authority in line with normal practice. At all times it is important that these continue to ensure that the child or young person, and their parent and carer, is at the centre of the process and can engage with the process in a meaningful way.

Where possible, the school SENCO will liaise with pupils, parent/carers, appropriate key professionals and external agencies for children and young people with SEND – this will ensure effective co-production and arrangements for delivering all therapies and support that would normally be in place for pupils with an EHCP. The requirement for schools within the 2014 Children



and Families Act to use their best endeavours to secure the special educational provision called for by the pupils' special educational needs, remains in place. There may be times when it becomes more difficult to do so than usual, particularly if children and young people are isolating. In collaboration with local authorities and health partners (where applicable), we will endeavour to work with families to co-produce alternative arrangements for delivering provision. Decisions should be considered on a case-by-case basis which takes account of the needs of, and circumstances specific to, the child or young person, avoiding a 'one size fits all' approach. To minimise risks, meetings and reviews may also take place remotely.

If parents/carers feel there is an urgent need to amend the outlined pupil needs, provision or placement in an EHCP, they should speak to the SENCO to see what additional review mechanisms could be put in place. In law, parents/carers can also request a personal budget and seek direct payments for special educational provision during the Education Health and Care needs statutory assessment process or during an annual review.

Further information about the LA's approach towards statutory assessments for children with SEND as well as their guidance for processes during the COVID-19 outbreak can be found on the relevant Local Offer pages:

- Doncaster Local Offer - [click here](#)
- Doncaster Additional COVID-19 Information – [click here](#)

7. Dedicated School Transport for SEND Pupils with Existing Arrangements

Local authorities should continue to provide dedicated transport for children and young people with EHCPs who are attending their usual educational setting. If children and young people with EHCPs are accessing an educational setting that is not their usual setting, the local authority should review transport arrangements and endeavour to make appropriate provision for pupils to reach their educational setting safely. We will work closely with the local authority where they have statutory responsibility for 'home to school transport' for pupils (e.g. those with SEND).

Local authorities are not required to uniformly apply the social distancing guidelines for public transport on dedicated school or college transport (found [here](#)). We will work with the local authority to, wherever it is possible, ensure that:

- ventilation of fresh air (from outside the vehicle) is maximised, particularly through opening windows and ceiling vents.
- social distancing is maximised within vehicles wherever it is possible, between individuals or 'bubbles'

In accordance with advice, children and young people aged 11 and over must wear a face covering when travelling on dedicated school transport. This does not apply to people who are exempt from wearing a face covering on public transport. More information on this can be found at the [safer travel guidance for passengers](#). Pupils must not board home to school transport if they, or a member of their household, has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19).



We recognise that transporting some children and young people with SEND may require close contact. Where this is the case, other measures in the system of controls should be put in place to reduce risk. For example, staff may wash or sanitise their hands more frequently.

8. Transition

Key school staff will continue to complete and plan for any relevant transition arrangements to support vulnerable pupils, liaising with the Trust, local authorities, pupils, any relevant external agencies and parents/carers to ensure that any planned transitions are supported as best as they can. The local authority should complete EHCP transfer reviews within normal statutory timeframes (e.g. for pupils transferring between phases of education into/between schools such as a transfer from primary to secondary school).

9. Support from Astrea Academy Trust

Astrea central team continues to be available to provide support and guidance to colleagues as appropriate. Members of the Astrea Education and Inclusion team continue to be available to all SENCOs and Principals in order to carry out their role effectively and can be contacted as per page 2.



10. Suggested SEND COVID-19 Risk Assessment Template (page 1 of 2)

Please see Section 3 of the 'Appendix – COVID 19 Additional Information for SEND Information Report' for further information regarding when a risk assessment (or review of a risk assessment) may be completed.

Academy / School:	Date of assessment / review:
Assessed by:	Job title:
Other people involved in assessment:	
Name of child / young person:	
The potential health risks to the individual from COVID-19, bearing in mind any underlying health conditions. <i>This must be on an individual basis with advice from an appropriate health professional where required</i>	
The risk to the individual if some or all elements of their EHCP (and/or Support Plan) cannot be delivered at all, and the risk if they cannot be delivered in the normal manner/ in the usual setting.	
The ability of the individual's parents/carers 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 potential risks in travelling to/from school, including the safety of other children, young people and adults.	
The potential risks to the home setting, including the safety of other children, young people and adults if the individual did not attend school. <i>This can include any external risks. For example, a child or young person becoming involved in dangerous behaviour or situations or requiring support from a social worker. This applies to those whose needs are best met in educational settings, particularly in order to stop a care placement breakdown.</i>	
The potential risks to the school setting, including the safety of other children, young people and adults if the individual is at school .	
What can be done by the school or setting to control any risks?	
What is the level of risk after all controls possible have been put in place? (HIGH/MED/LOW)	
What support and education is the setting or school providing to parents/carers if the child or young person is not able to attend?	
Is this a safeguarding risk – if so, please describe	
Who else /what other agencies need to be informed if child does not attend?	



Parent/Carer Views:	
Child's View (if appropriate):	

From 8th March, all pupils are expected to attend school unless a statutory reason applies.

Pupil level risk assessments may be used to support pupils and the staff working with them and should not be used as a reason to deny pupils face-to-face education.

This risk assessment has determined the following:

- *Please insert summary statement or bullet points*
- *Outline what additional support children and young people with SEND may need to access education*

The person completing this risk assessment should ensure that if the Local Authority is not the assessor / joint assessor, then the Local Authority is informed of the outcome and any relevant risks.

Document to be stored confidentially.