



Dear Parents and Carers

What we know

Government have now published guidance for both schools and colleges on maintaining education provision and guidance for parents and carers:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

1. Arrangements for next week

All schools and settings have been asked to be open for the normal school day where possible, some may not be able to open due to staffing implications which will not allow for safety and care of children. If possible, the Local Authority will look to broker additional staff to support the school to remain open or offer a place at an alternative school, where it is safe to do so, and the need of children can be met, and there is capacity to do so.

Schools are, therefore, being asked to continue to **provide care** for children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'cared for children' children, young carers, disabled children **and those with education, health and care (EHC) plans.**

2. Transport

We expect public and school transport to continue as normal. However, we cannot guarantee the same driver as usual as they could be isolating or unwell, but we will look at retain consistency where possible. Transport will be reviewed, and may change, once we are aware of the number of children actually attending schools.

3. Vulnerable pupils

For vulnerable children who have a social worker our assumption is that these children should be attending. If any parents or carers request to keep children at home as they believe they can keep them safe social workers will assess the best option for the child.

4. EHCP Pupils

Schools and colleges are advised to make case by case basis assessments of the health and safeguarding considerations of pupils and students on an education, health and care (EHC) plan. For some, they will be safer in an education provision. For others, they will be safer at home.

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We have requested schools undertake this assessment and provide the local authority with details of the outcome of their assessment and confirmation of whether a place is being provided for each child.

It is important to note the school will not be providing a full curriculum, they will be providing care for the children and incorporating education provision and a range of activities, but this will NOT be fully in line with their EHC provision.

Children being supported by tutors

Where children are being supported by tutors organised the Local Authority, we will provide more information about arrangements, as soon as possible. We will not continue to offer face to face tuition but will look to provide work possibly on line and where possible support by a telephone call.

5. Local Authority ongoing SEND service

To support us during these unprecedented times we are requesting that:

You do **NOT submit new needs assessment** requests for EHC plans until we return to business as usual at which point guidance will be issued.

Any SEN queries should be emailed to **SENTeamEast@cheshireeast.gov.uk**. Please **do not ring or contact individual workers** and keep enquires to urgent matters. Calls will be forwarded to an appropriate member of the service for response and we will **aim** to respond within 3- 5 working days. Please do not send follow up emails.

In return we will

Continue to progress current needs assessment requests where we can obtain appropriate information to support the EHC Plan. However, these will be emailed to you using Egress for comment and return. We will not be undertaking any face to face meetings with children, school staff or parents.

We will **continue to consult on schools places for September** where these have not been agreed, but we may need to provide interim school places and consider change of school requests at a later date if we cannot get responses from schools.

We will be **asking schools to continue to undertake annual reviews** for SEN children but do these differently, especially for children not attending school during this period. Advice/guidance will be issued hopefully next week.

Finally

We hope this provides some more practical guidance to support the current arrangement about provision that will be available from Monday. If you have any queries, in the first instance, please discuss arrangements with the school.

In terms of complying with GDPR legislation any communications with parents are likely to be by email and if these are about individual children the Local Authority will send these through Egress.