



## SEND INFORMATION REPORT COVID-19 ANNEX

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Approval needed by:	Trust Board
Consultation required	n/a
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## **ANNEX**

### **COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

#### **PURPOSE**

This is an Annex 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 commencing 20 March 2020.

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#### **1. Context**

From 20 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. 'Vulnerable children' includes those supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs (including those on child in need and child protection plans), 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

This addendum of the Richard Wakefield Primary Academy 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 the academy
- The approach to teaching children with SEND

- Support for emotional and social development
- Working alongside other professionals

Please note: This annex should be read in tandem with the Richard Wakefield Primary Academy COVID-19 Safeguarding Policy Annex.

## **2. Key contacts**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Email</b>
Principal	Mr Simon Webster	swebster.richardwakefield@deferrerstrust.com
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Simon Webster	swebster.richardwakefield@deferrerstrust.com
SENDCo	Mrs Charlotte Larkin	clarkin.richardwakefield@deferrerstrust.com
SEND link governor	Mrs Kate Fox	kfox.richardwakefield@deferrerstrust.com
Trustee link	Claire Shaw	<a href="mailto:cshaw@deferrerstrust.com">cshaw@deferrerstrust.com</a>

## **3. Vulnerable children and eligibility**

Vulnerable children include those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

These risk assessments 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 (the academy will liaise with the local authority if a place is needed for an eligible child, but the academy 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**

Richard Wakefield Primary Academy 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 the academy, Richard Wakefield Primary Academy will continue to ensure a safe space for these children to attend and flourish. The Principal / Vice Principal will work alongside the SENDCo 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.

Richard Wakefield Primary Academy 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 the academy, Richard Wakefield Primary Academy will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not attend for any consecutive day.

Where children with EHC plans do not take up a place in school and are cared for at home, a basic 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. This regular communication will be recorded on our software system, Myconcern as a profile chronology addition for each pupil.

The communication plans can include remote contact, phone contact or email contact. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

At Richard Wakefield Primary Academy, the Principal, DSL and SENDCo 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 Principal /DSL and SENDCo will consider any referrals as appropriate.

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

The academy will continue to share safeguarding messages and initiatives on its website.

## **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 Richard Wakefield Primary Academy'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 the academy, as detailed in Section 2 of this addendum.

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 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. *(In addition adapted homework packs with several weeks' worth of work may be created with electronic learning resources to support the change of timetable and routine and key websites personalised to the needs of each child.)*

For children with SEND, but without an EHC plan, signposts will be included within year group home learning to support them in accessing appropriate learning activities. Academy staff will also be mindful of the availability of support and resources when setting accessible home learning for children with SEND. *(The SENDCo will liaise with subject leads and heads of departments to ensure the level of work set is appropriate)*

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

Where statutory processes relating to SEND are in action, the academy 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**

Richard Wakefield Primary Academy 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/ educational psychologists.

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

Where children's EHC plans are due for review within the period of school closure, the academy will discuss arrangements with parents, children, the local authority and professionals involved in the plan to decide how arrangements for a 'remote review' are to be made, or whether reviews should be held in cycle when it is possible to meet with all parties involved in the plan. The SENDCo 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 or for an ongoing in-year transfer, Richard Wakefield Primary Academy will continue to make contact with the new settings to share necessary information to make pupil's transitions as smooth as possible. The SENDCo and year group teacher will make contact with the SENDCo in the new settings to share information on SEND needs. Where pupils with SEND would benefit from additional transition visits, every effort will be made to facilitate these where possible within DfE, PHE and government guidance.

For transitioning pupils, each school proforma for transition will be used to share key information with the receiving schools and our staff will request and complete conversations with named transition staff in schools to discuss vulnerable children. In this way, Richard Wakefield Primary Academy will seek to maintain a good flow of important information to support children's transfer from both primary to secondary and other settings.

We recognise that transition may be a particular concern for parents of children of SEND, and communication remains open for parents to contact key academy staff to discuss this.

Our ongoing approach to supporting children with transition will continue to be reviewed in line with all available DfE and government guidance on school closure.

## **8. Transitions within the academy**

For children transferring between classes or year groups the SENDCo will continue to inform the new class teacher of pupil's needs using electronic folders and team meetings where appropriate. Additional transition work will be used where necessary

to relieve any worries and doubt. New class information can be sent home to support with the changes where possible. Additional support will be undertaken for children who find transition particularly difficult and this will be shared with home as soon as is reasonably possible.

Any consultations that the academy receives in during this time will be responded to within the designated timescales unless illness or shielding prevents this.

## **9. The approach to teaching children with SEND**

Richard Wakefield Primary Academy 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, signposts will be included within year group home learning to support them in accessing appropriate learning activities. Academy 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 academy website will include contact details so that, should parents of children with SEND needs to contact a member of staff for additional support or guidance for home learning, they can do so.

## **10. Support for social and emotional development**

We also understand that children's social and emotional development is particularly at risk within the current national climate and period of school closure.

Individual risk assessments for children with EHC plans will consider children's social and emotional development and will ensure that communication plans are in place and reviewed. Regular contact between academy staff and parents/pupils will be central to identifying when additional support may be needed. Where concerns are raised or are apparent within these communications, the child's risk assessment will be reviewed by key academy staff and appropriate action and onward referrals considered.

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

The academy will signpost parents to other professionals who may be able to support them and their children at this time, particularly the Educational Psychology Service. The academy will also share parent and child-friendly leaflets with links to mental health and wellbeing support strategies and agencies in general home communications.

## **11. Working alongside other professionals**

Richard Wakefield Primary Academy will continue to maintain contact with other professionals during this period of school closure. This will particularly include liaison with the Educational Psychology Service within the local authority. This service will be sharing resources which may be of use to parents and professionals during this time.

The SENDCo holds contact details for external professionals already working with children with SEND including health and social care staff and will maintain both planned contacts and referrals of arising need. Contact details for the SENDCo and key academy staff are available via the academy website should professionals need to make contact.

Richard Wakefield Primary Academy will signpost parents to appropriate external professionals as needed and will continue to fulfil authorised requests for information for assessment or review purposes.

### **REVIEW**

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