

Topic of Importance Response

Deadline for response:	January 2021
Topic of Importance	Lockdown and access to education for SEND children
Areas for Consideration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LA to work with settings to and help them to see the importance of communication with parent 2. Parental choice to 'vulnerable' will be supported where possible. 3. LA to communicate openly with parent and provide as much guidance as possible
Who is this response from? (i.e., service, panel, person?) Please consider all relevant areas suggested above, and state where areas are not applicable.	Antonio Munoz Bailey – Assistant Director SEND & Inclusion
Response from local authority / services	<p>LA's communication with Settings promoting the importance of parent communication / Parent choice to be supported where possible.</p> <p>The LA has considered all national education and health guidance, together with local health guidance, and has taken the view that 'a community response' is required to enable our 'vulnerable' children and young people to remain the priority given the operational challenges schools have faced during this lockdown. Its messaging reflects this position. It has a statutory duty to issue guidance which it has fulfilled. The LA appreciates that Family Voice, on behalf of parent carers, may not share the same view or advocate the same approach.</p> <p>The LA has repeatedly asked that schools prioritise continued and meaningful communication with the parent-carers of 'vulnerable' children in regard to the allocation of provision, whether this be remote learning, on site provision or a blended offer.</p> <p>Schools and settings have been provided with a proforma to ensure that they have an accurate record of parent carer, and where appropriate young people's views. The script in the document asks the parent-carers / young people to comment on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If they require a place at school 2. If they are able to access remote learning, and what support they may need to facilitate this access 3. Any other circumstances that might need to be considered within the household <p>The LA has been monitoring this suggested approach, which appears to be helping facilitate effective discussions, and will continue to keep this under review.</p> <p>There are regular meetings with Headteachers and SENCo's and these have provided the opportunity to ensure the message is reinforced.</p>

	<p>In our guidance to schools, we have been clear that schools and settings should regularly review the individual circumstances for every 'vulnerable' child and we have asked that is done as often as possible and at least every 2 weeks. We understand that circumstances can change quickly for parent-carers / young people and we are supporting schools / settings to review and consider how best to support individual circumstances.</p> <p>In the small number of cases that the LA has been made aware of, we have facilitated a discussion with schools and settings to establish if communication has been undertaken and recorded. We are responding to individual cases as they come to our attention when required.</p> <p>At the time of writing, attendance in school settings has been broadly in line with, or just above, the national average for school attendance.</p> <p>LA communication with parents</p> <p>The LA has continued to work with Family Voice, and other multi agency representatives, to co-produce communications with parent carers, to enable a single message to be shared and limit any misunderstandings. The LA has worked with schools share these messages in an accessible format as well as posting them on the Local Offer pages. In addition, the LA has posted updates from Jon Lewis – Service Director for Education - as well as a range of letters specifically aimed at SEND parent carers to address specific issues.</p> <p>The LA have taken on board feedback about the manner and how this might be improved to reach more families directly. We are looking to diversify our approach and utilise more social media and / or video messages to improve the reach of communications, as well as working with youth groups, such as 'Champion Partners' from the local regional colleges, to ensure we can communicate with young people more directly.</p>
<p>Actions / Impact of considerations (please use bullet points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain informal monitoring function to continue to reinforce importance of on-going communication with parent carers and young people by schools and settings to identify and address emerging concerns. ● To investigate diversification of messaging across social media and the use of video