

January 2021 Issue 5

A newsletter for Croydon parents and carers who support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

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National Lockdown: School Provision for Children with SEND

Mainstream schools including enhanced learning provisions (ELPs)

All mainstream primary and secondary schools will offer a place to your child if they have an EHC plan. You are able to choose whether you want to take up this place or not.

If you have chosen to keep your child at home or, he/she has to stay at home because they are self-isolating or clinically extremely vulnerable, your school will provide home learning, which as far as possible will match the provision that was in place in school.

The school will contact you regularly to check that you still want to keep your child at home and to see how home learning is going. You can also let the school know about any concerns that you may have.

Special schools

Each special school will have completed a whole school risk assessment to determine the number of school places that they are able to offer, taking into account staff availability and the safety measures that need to be in place to minimise COVID 19 transmission and infection. These risk assessments will be updated regularly.

The places that the schools are able to offer will be prioritised for critical workers and for children and families who would benefit most from school attendance during these challenging times. Parents still have the option to keep children at home.

As for mainstream schools, for any child choosing or having to stay at home, your school will organise home learning that is tailored to his/her needs and keep in regular contact with you.

Remote (home) learning offer for all children with SEND

Each school will seek to make sure that the home learning planned for each child is sufficiently tailored and adapted to engage their interest and support their learning.

Based on parental feedback and the learning from earlier lock downs, schools have worked hard to improve home learning for all pupils and put in place better interventions and approaches for children with SEND. This includes making sure that children and families have digital devices such as laptops and I-pads, and WIFI connections so that children can easily take part in online lessons and other virtual activities.

As well as digital learning schools are also offering alternative work packs and practical activities to use at home. Services such as speech and language therapy are delivering virtual group and one to one interventions. Some schools are providing less formal virtual activities to ensure children and young people can stay connected with their friends and school community and avoid social isolation.

If you have any concerns about the home learning that your child is receiving it is important that you get in touch with your school as soon as possible so that these issues can be sorted out.

Likewise, if you are really pleased with the home learning and other support your child is having let your child's school know too. It is always good to hear about things that are going well alongside feedback on any improvements.

Please ask your school for copies of the information sheets **Parent Guide for Remote Learning for Special Educational Needs Pupils** and **SEND Weblinks for Home Learning**. These have suggestions on how to support with online learning and activities to do at home, which you may find helpful.

Transport Update

Thank you to parents and carers once again for working with the team to support children and young people to get to school/college in the safest way possible. We ask that you continue to report to us if your child or someone in your household has tested positive for COVID19 and that your child remains at home if this is the case or if symptoms are present. Please also contact us, (details below) if you have any concerns about the transport being provided for your child.

This week, SEND Transport staff have been offered the COVID vaccination for all routes to try and prevent service disruption in these difficult times.

In line with government advice the transport team continue to work remotely and we want to remind you of our new contact details:

For cancellations please contact: passenger.transport@croydon.gov.uk

For urgent day to day transport issues please call, Sheela, Melanie, Dave or Celia on:

Tel: 07874600885, 07874600913, 07874 600887 or 07874600907

If you have any concerns about the standard of transport for your child, our Monitoring Officer Marianna can be contacted on **Tel: 07592 117658**

For eligibility, applications and personal transport budgets please contact Samer Adbis on: samer.adbis@croydon.gov.uk **Tel: 07922 582011.**

Deputy Head of Service; Jackie Wright can be contacted on **Tel: 07742 405439.**

Finally if your child travels to school on a bus provided by our in-house service they can be contacted on **Tel: 0208 604 7081.**

Educational Psychology Service

The Croydon Educational Psychology Service continues to work with school staff to deliver a comprehensive service. We have issued our updated remote working guidance to all schools, to ensure that the staff are aware of our offer. Whilst we are only able to visit schools in exceptional circumstances, we are continuing to meet with parents and school staff virtually, and to deliver training and other interventions remotely.

Rather than advertise our parent advice line, we have asked the Special Educational Needs Coordinators, who we work closely with, to identify any local parents who might benefit from a one-off consultation. We also have advice leaflets available for staff, parents and pupils via the following link:

<https://www.octavopartnership.org/resources/>

Children's Speech and Language Therapy (SLT)

The Children's SLT team are keen to work closely with children and young people, their families and education staff across all settings in order to ensure that children and young people have continued access to support from our service during this period of lockdown.

Children of all ages and their families

Assessment and therapy appointments for children in Early Years and those who are school-aged are continuing as planned. In most cases, this appointment is being provided via our secure video platform. If a video appointment is not possible or clinically appropriate for the child, a face to face appointment will be provided, either in clinic or in school. In order to keep everyone as safe as we can, we are adhering to both our and schools' risk assessments. We are also liaising with parents of children we see in school as much as we can.

For all age groups, if a child/young person is seen for a face to face appointment in their education setting or in a clinic setting, the therapist will follow PPE guidance, including wearing clinical face masks, aprons and gloves, as well as trying to maintain social distancing as much as possible.

School-Aged children and their families

Where children are in school

We are following government guidance and prioritising vulnerable children, including children who have direct speech and language therapy input as part of their EHCPs. We are using video platforms to observe children and to liaise with SENCOs and Teaching Assistants, where possible. (Please be assured that we will never record a video session without specific consent to do so.)

Where children are not in school

We are continuing to liaise with school staff but are placing a greater emphasis on contact with parents, to support you through this time as much as we can. We are prioritising our planned appointments for children with EHCPs who need them.

Secondary aged children and their families

The SLT team and schools have worked collaboratively in order to ensure that SLT video sessions fit in around students' existing timetables where possible.

For all families of school-aged children

We are available to talk through any concerns you have or support you would like. You should have heard from your SENCO with details of whom to contact, depending on where your child attends school; if you have not, and you would like to contact us, please contact us on:

Tel: 020 8714 2594 or email: ch-tr.sltcroydonchildren@nhs.net

Annual Reviews

Every year a child with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) will have an annual review. Annual reviews are coordinated by the educational establishment (school or college) and if required your child's EHCP coordinator will attend these meetings, although this is not always possible.

Following the annual review meeting, the school or colleges record of the annual review, including any reports are sent to the SEN team in the local authority with the recommendations.

After the annual review the Local Authority decides whether any action is required. This may mean amending the EHCP (if there has been a significant change in the child's special needs or provision). The SEN Code of Practice indicates that there is not an expectation for EHCPs to be frequently amended, so following the annual review you may receive a letter acknowledging your child's progress (which is recorded in the review documentation), and confirmation that the EHCP will remain unchanged until the next review.

If your child changes their educational placement, they will receive an amended EHCP which will name the new placement in Part I of the EHCP with other sections updated where required.

Planning for transitions

Children and young people with EHCPs are required to have their next educational placement secured by 15th February if it is a transfer from infant to junior school, or from primary to secondary school. Or 31st March in the year they transition from school to further education.

Discussions about further education will start from Year 9. This is to enable good planning so that everyone can focus on what outcomes the young person needs to achieve, to ensure they achieve as much independence as possible in adulthood. Planning transition from Year 9 ensures appropriate provision is in place prior to the start of any placement change and is focused on the young person's long term aspirations and the steps which can help them be achieved. You will be included in the review meeting so that you can put forward your views.

Locality SEND Support during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Locality SEND Support aims to provide earlier and better targeted help and support to SEND youngsters in 33 early adopter schools in Croydon.

The project is working with four groups of schools who are all local to each other and better placed to understand the needs of their children. Each group has been given



funding to directly support pupils in their local area and have been given the flexibility to spend this in the way that best helps children with emerging challenges to their learning and progress.

Two Area SEND Leads, who are SEND specialists are directly supporting these schools, both to use their existing SEND resources in the best interest of the young people and to help distribute additional funding where schools may have insufficient resources to meet an emergent need.

The Area SEND Leads work very closely with school SENDCOs, parents, professionals, such as Educational Psychologists and with the pupils themselves.

This local approach has enabled us to better understand the needs of the children in our care and get help to them quickly in order for them to catch up with their learning and overcome their challenges. In the first term since the project started 136 youngsters have been supported through the scheme.

School SENCOs meet with each other monthly to look at cases and support each other with advice, training and resources. Lockdown has necessitated that these meetings are held virtually, but nevertheless there has been almost a 100% turnout for all the meetings so far.

The New Year has brought no let-up to the pandemic, and no let-up to the determination of everyone involved in the project to do their best for children with special educational needs or disabilities in their care.

Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (EWMH) Support during COVID for Children, Young People and Families

The Local Offer provides information and advice about services that children, young people and their families can expect from a range of local agencies.

Tel: 020 8726 6400 –Mon-Fri 9am to 4pm

Email: localoffer@croydon.gov.uk

<https://localoffer.croydon.gov.uk/kb5/croydon/directory/home.page>

<https://localoffer.croydon.gov.uk/kb5/croydon/directory/advice.page?id=cicw7TqLjOY>

Croydon Drop In (CDI)

CDI is a charity that supports young people, aged 11-25 and families in Croydon. Some of their services include: advice, advocacy and family support, counselling and outreach.

Open Access Counselling:

Virtual and telephone counselling appointments and service offered during this time

Croydon Community CAMHS

CAMHS provides advice, support and treatment for young people and families

Croydon CAMHS **Tel: 020 3228 0000**

Email: croydoncamhsmail@slam.nhs.uk

CAMHS crisis line **Tel: 020 3 228 5980**

Monday –Friday 5pm -10pm; Saturday, Sunday & Bank Holidays 9am -9pm

For advice out of hours: SLAM Mental Health Crisis Line **Tel: 088 731 2864 or NHS 111**

[https://www.slam.nhs.uk/our-services/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-\(camhs\)](https://www.slam.nhs.uk/our-services/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-(camhs))

During COVID CAMHS is only available for new referrals for young people in crisis situations. Assessment and treatment can be provided by video-link or over the phone, but only following a referral. Crisis referrals currently only. All referrals are reviewed daily.

To make a referral please submit an online form via Croydon SPOC: www.croydon.gov.uk/ewmh

Kooth (Xenzone)

Online counselling and emotional well-being platform for children and young people, accessible through mobile, tablet and desktop.

Monday-Friday 12pm -10pm, Saturday & Sunday 6pm -10pm.

<https://www.kooth.com>

Off the Record (Otr)

Otr is a charity that offers support and counselling to children and young people in Croydon.

Services offered include: Refugee Service, Counselling, Young Carers and Outreach.

Online counselling –extended weekly online drop in service now available.

Open Access Counselling –Virtual and telephone counselling appointments and services offered during this time. Operates as usual with extended online counselling on Mondays from 4-6pm.

Tel: 020 8251 0251

Email: info@talkofftherecord.org or croydon@talkofftherecord.org

www.talkofftherecord.org

There are a number of online webinars for young people that can be accessed:

<https://talkofftherecordonline.org/what-is-on-workshops>

A range of new resources have been uploaded onto the 'Coping with Covid-19' section of the website. These are being updated and changed regularly.

<https://www.talkofftherecord.org/coping-with-Covid-19/>

A regular Saturday morning phone line for young people is now available between 10am and 1pm to speak directly to a counsellor.

Tel: 0208 175 6776

Some helpful online resources for young people and families

- <https://emergingminds.org.uk/> resources advice for parents on how to support children/adolescents through this difficult time.
- Anna Freud Centre advice for young people/parents & carers/schools & colleges
<https://www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/anna-freud-learning-network/coronavirus>

Secondary school age children:

- Young Minds advice for young people who are anxious about Coronavirus:
<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/>
- Headspace- Meditation for children: <https://www.headspace.com/meditation> for kids.

Primary aged Children:

- Social stories for Primary age children: <https://carolgraysocialstories.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Pandemics-and-the-Coronavirus.pdf>
- Educational book aimed at younger children <https://nursedottybooks.com/dave-the-dog-is-worried-about-coronavirus-2/>
- Covibook – an interactive resource designed to support and reassure children aged 7 and under, and to help children explain and draw the emotions that they might be experiencing during the pandemic: <https://www.mindheart.co/descargables>
- Mencap - Easy Read guide to Coronavirus: <https://www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/health/coronavirus>

Families of Early Years:

- Advice for families: <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3210-tips-for-families->

Parents in Partnership (PiP)

Referrals and support during Covid-19

During this time Parents in Partnership is still operating a family support service. We have currently stopped providing face to face services for parents and carers but are offering support via phone, email and video calls.



Please contact us by email at office@pipcroydon.com or by phone

Tel: 020 8663 5626.

If you leave a message on that number one of the team will call you back within 48 hours.

We can also attend virtual meetings where possible - for example video meetings or phone meetings - to support parents and carers meeting with schools, nurseries, colleges, social care or health services.

You can make a referral by email, including relevant contact details or make a referral using the online form at www.pipcroydon.com. You'll find it under 'Contact Us'. Parents and carers can also refer themselves this way. A referral does not need to be made by a professional.

At this time Family Link Workers at PiP can offer emotional support, signposting to local information and services and help with identifying what kind of help parents and carers need most and what resources are available to support them. The team often receives calls from parents and carers who want someone to talk to when they are not sure where to turn. We recognise the enormous challenges experienced by families right now and we are still very much here to help if we can.

We welcome parents and carers from all backgrounds and lifestyles and no formal diagnosis of additional needs and/or disability is needed to access our service.

Parent Carer Needs Assessment

If you live in Croydon and are a parent carer of a child/young person with a disability and have parental responsibility, you have the right to request a parent carer needs assessment. PiP are now undertaking these assessments for parent carers of children and young people aged 0-18.

The assessment will consider:

- your individual needs as a parent carer
- things that could make looking after your child easier for you
- your well-being as a parent carer
- the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of your disabled child
- the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of any other children you care for

The assessment will consider your needs as a parent carer, but it will not lead to a direct service or budget for a service. It will help identify support available for you and your family, from Local Authority services or other local agencies. This will be written into a Parent Carer Support Plan.

For more information and to complete a referral form for an assessment please go to

<https://www.pipcroydon.com/what-we-can-do-for-you/parent-carers-assessments/parent-carer-needs-assessment-request-form>

Free EHCP Webinars for Croydon parents/carers

11am-1pm

Via zoom

How to apply for an EHCP: Thursday 11 February 2021

This Webinar explains how to apply for an EHCP. It is suitable for parents and carers who are applying for the first time.

How to amend a draft EHCP: Thursday 11 March 2021

Find out what the different sections of your child's EHCP really mean, what to look out for when reading your draft and how to amend your child's plan. This session is suitable for parents who are waiting for draft after applying for an EHCP for the first time OR after an EHCP annual review.

Booking is essential for all Webinars. To book, call **Tel: 020 8649 6283** or email astridmacabee@carersinfo.org.uk

Navigate: emotional support for parents

<https://www.scope.org.uk/family-services/navigate/>

Navigate is a national mentoring service, that provides online emotional support for parents and carers of disabled children who are finding out about their child's additional needs.

Eligibility

Navigate is open to any parent or carer who:

- lives in England or Wales
- has parental responsibility for a child under 18
- has a child on a pathway to diagnosis or has received one in the last year

About the service

Navigate is a programme of up to 6 sessions with a personal adviser, who will help you to talk about your feelings and concerns.

The service will help you with:

- organising your thoughts and feelings
- practical advice and suggestions
- coping strategies and insights
- taking positive actions and helping you with emotional wellbeing

Your personal adviser

You will have weekly catch ups with your adviser online and by phone. Your adviser will work with you on a one-to-one basis, helping you to:

- explore your needs and personal goals
- agree your action plan, and
- provide you with support, if you need it

Jubilee Chill 'n' Chat SP

A weekly group for parents and carers of children with special needs. Information, support and 'me-time' treats to keep you going.

Tuesday mornings: 9.30-10.15 to Chat and Catch up
10.15-10.25 Break
10.20-11.30 Programme as below

On Zoom until further notice.

Programme

2nd Feb	Topic to be confirmed
9th Feb	Created to Move –The Role of Movement in Learning run by Andrea Richards BA (Hons) PGDip, MSc, HCPC Occupational Therapist
	No meeting
23rd Feb	The Balancing Act –strategies to help balance everything you are juggling!

2nd March	Astrid Macabee –Astrid works for the Carers' Support Centre and part of her role is running workshops to help with all aspects of EHCPs. She has supported many families over many years in Croydon and has a wealth of knowledge
9th March	Mother's Day Treats
16th March	NAS –Linda Townsend will be joining us to answer any questions. Although her expertise is in Autism, her tips are very useful in very many different situations
23rd March	Ideas for the Holidays
	Easter Holidays
27th April	Looking forward to summer

Carers' Information Service Croydon

Informing carers in Croydon

The Carers' Information Service offers information, advice and support to carers in Croydon. Our service is part of [John Whitgift Foundation](#) and receives funding from [Croydon Council](#).

A carer looks after a friend, family member or neighbour who needs their help due to illness, disability or old age.

We run the [Carers' Support Centre](#), the one stop shop for carers in Croydon. Carers are welcome to drop in to our friendly centre Monday to Friday, 10am-4pm. Come and find us at 24 George Street, Croydon CR0 1PB.

What we offer carers in Croydon

Following the updated government guidance on coronavirus, the Carers Support Centre is currently closed to the public. However, we are still here to support Croydon's carers who can get in touch with us by phone or email:

- Information & Advice: **Tel: 020 8649 9339**, option 1 | enquiries@carersinfo.org.uk
- Parent Carer/EHCP Advice: astridmacabee@carersinfo.org.uk
- Health & Wellbeing Service: **Tel: 020 8663 5674** enquiries@carersinfo.org.uk
- Carers' Assessments Service: **Tel: 020 8663 5664** assessments@carersinfo.org.uk
- Advice Surgeries: 020 8663 5608 | appointments@carersinfo.org.uk
- Carers' Respite Service/Bereavement Support: **Tel: 020 8649 6280**
tanyafitzgerald@carersinfo.org.uk

- Room/Office Rental: bookings@carersinfo.org.uk
- Carers Support Centre Management: **Tel: 020 8649 6284** | helenthompson@carersinfo.org.uk

Carers' Support Centre Membership

If you are a carer living or looking after someone in Croydon, you can register as a member of the Carers Support Centre, at no cost to you.

As a member of the Carers' Support Centre, you'll receive:

- **Membership card and recognition of your caring role** – useful when talking to other organisations or services or accessing carer discounts. (Please note not all venues accept the card, so check before you buy)
- **Some great local discounts**, including massage therapies and hair and beauty - see our [membership flyer](#).
- **Carers' information pack** with all our [handy factsheets](#).
- **Optional subscription to our quarterly newsletter**, *Carers' News*.
- **Optional subscription to our monthly e-bulletin**, *What's New for Carers?*

Become a Carers' Support Centre member - for free!

See www.carersinfo.org.uk for further details about all of our services.

'Teach Me Too' Online Learning Programme for children with Down's Syndrome

Thanks to the support of a number of families, individual donors and Quality Compliance Systems (QCS), as our corporate supporter, we have successfully secured funding to roll-out our online learning programme, 'Teach Me Too' to every child with Down's Syndrome in both the UK and abroad.



Teach Me Too is an online library of 40 short educational videos and accompanying learning resources. It includes:

- 20 videos in each stage
 - 20 will be concentrating on early learning concepts and skills

- 20 will be covering key vocabulary and signing
- All videos are specifically tailored to focus on 'stage' development

'Teach Me Too' allows your child to continue learning at home during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Register below now to view the first 20 videos and then to receive a link to the full programme on 29th January.

https://www.teachmetoo.org.uk/teach-me-too-national-register?utm_source=teachmetoo&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=stage2&utm_content=1
[a](#)

Tel: 01622230720 teachmetoo.org.uk teachmetoo@21together.org.uk

Get in touch

Croydon SEN Enquiries: senenquiries@croydon.gov.uk

SEND Local Offer

Services, advice, information and what's on in and around Croydon
localoffer.croydon.gov.uk.