



Iain Peel
Service Director Schools and Learning
County Hall
Matlock
Derbyshire
DE4 3AG

To: Headteachers, Principals, Chairs of Governing Boards, FE Colleges and Multi-Academy Chief Executives

Telephone 01629 532750

Ask for Iain Peel/Alison Noble

Email iain.peel@derbyshire.gov.uk
Alison.noble@derbyshire.gov.uk

Our ref IP/VB

Your ref

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Dear colleague

COVID-19 – Further Guidance

Thank you for everything which you are doing to support your pupils and students during these rapidly changing times. We are continually amazed and delighted to hear of the efforts and creativity that you and your staff are investing to make an offer to the county's young people. In some cases, this is by pupils and students continuing to be educated on site, whereas in other cases it is by video and learning platforms.

The guidance and expectations from the Government becomes clearer on a daily basis. We already know about the Government's expectations that a young person can attend your school if they have at least one parent who is a key worker, if there are no other safe alternatives for them to be cared for and following your own risk assessment to ensure that you have staff available and the young person is free from coronavirus symptoms. We also know that many schools are collaborating to allow pupils to be educated on other school sites if they are closed and this directly follows Government advice.

More recently, the Government has been clearer about the education of children in care or those with a named social worker. This is highlighted in section 13 of the guidance which can be accessed by clicking on the link below and is dated 25 March 2020.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

The Government's guidance is clear about the responsibilities of both schools, colleges and local authorities to safeguard all young people and this is outlined in sections 15 and 20 of the guidance above. This also builds on the guidance from 22 March 2020 and the link to this is below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing>

As a local authority we are committed to working with you to ensure that your pupils and students are safe and well.

So, what does this mean for your provision?

We know you are already risk assessing your young people in line with the Government's guidance and Paula Williams (Assistant Director, Learning, Access and Inclusion) recently sent a risk assessment to you for young people with education and health care plans (EHCP). We would strongly encourage you to use this for each young person with an EHCP and for those children with a named social worker the social workers will be encouraging school attendance as per the Government guidance. The social workers are undertaking a risk assessment and developing risk mitigation plans to provide multi-agency oversight of those children who need a particularly high level of worker contact to ensure they are safe. Social workers will be making contact with multi-agency professionals in this process. Esteem MAT will work with the county's special schools and support centres too on their risk assessments.

We also recognise that some schools are closed due to staff illness, self-isolation or young people staying away. In these cases, parents and carers of key workers or of the identified vulnerable young children should know of your mechanism to allow them to contact you should they decide they wish their child to attend your school or another that you are collaborating with. If this is the case, you should follow the Government's guidance about risk assessing the young person and the template provided by Paula Williams should also help.

It may also be that social workers need to visit individual children and young people on your school site to ensure that they are safe and well. If this is the case, they will have already completed a risk assessment in respect of face to face contact with the family and this will be shared with you on a case by case basis, if it's possible a written copy will be provided to the school, but given home working arrangements, this may not always be the case. Social workers will attend the school with their appropriate professional Derbyshire County Council identification.

These are difficult times for all of us and you are making a difference to your young people's lives more than ever.

Thank you for all of your help and support.

Yours sincerely

Iain Peel

Iain Peel
Service Director Schools and Learning
Children's Services

Alison Noble

Alison Noble
Service Director Early Help and Safeguarding
Children's Services