

# PVI SENCO Newsletter

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

Dear Managers, SENCo's and Practitioners.

Welcome to the Summer Term PVI SENCo Newsletter 😊

The team have been reading with interest some of the amazing things you've done during these challenging/ interesting times..... we think it's important to recognise that some settings have managed to stay open to support key worker children and those children considered vulnerable, thank you for your hard work during this difficult period.

Also, thank you also to settings who have had to close but have continued to reach out to families via phone, email, setting websites etc.

And, to those who have liaised with our team during this period regarding children who have SEND. We really appreciated this and know from our weekly telephone conversations with families that they have too. Many of you have had several telephone calls/ emails over the last two months with the Early Years Inclusion Team regarding individual children and updates regarding next steps.

With many parents getting news of reception school places in April, we've been thinking about those children who will transition to school in September and how we might best support them, I know we will all continue to think outside the box this year to ensure smooth transitions for all. For your children with more complex SEND these may even include some 'virtual' transition meetings- we'll be in touch with settings about planning for individual children over the coming weeks.

We have included within this newsletter an attachment which is the new form currently being used by the Royal Borough of Greenwich for Early Years Annual Review of EHC Plans- this has been amended because of COVID 19. We hope this will make things a bit more manageable and help meet our/ your statutory duties.

Following Government guidance, we are aware that some settings who were closed are now looking at opening again and settings who stayed open are looking to welcoming back more children.

Please do contact us if you have any questions or queries connected to SEND or in relation to children attending your setting that have SEND, we are here to support you.

Our contact details are:

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# SEND Assessment & Review Covid 19 Update

## Annual Reviews



Firstly, we would like to thank you for your support during these very challenging times.

We recently sent you a document summarizing our response to the changes to SEND legislation and the guidance that we have received (please see enclosed).

We are aware that several schools have raised concerns about the practicalities of carrying out annual reviews during this period.

### A summary of the guidance from the DfE states:

- Annual review requirements remain in place.
- A review meeting, even if by necessity briefer than usual, can be reassuring for parents, children and young people, through ensuring that their EHC plan is up-to-date.
- Where it is impractical for a LA to complete an annual review of a plan within the prescribed timescales for a reason relating to coronavirus, then the LA must complete it as soon as reasonably practicable.
- Annual review meetings may need to take a different form.
- It is important that they continue to ensure that the child or young person is at the centre of the process and can engage with the process in a meaningful way.

### We have again reviewed the guidance and advise the following in relation to annual review:

- Where possible annual reviews should go ahead.
- Where it is impractical for a school to complete an annual review of a plan within the prescribed timescales for a reason relating to coronavirus the SENCo/Head should notify the SEND Assessment & Review Officer as soon as possible.
- The school should write to the parents, copying in the Assessment & Review Service advising them that the annual review has:

- o Been delayed
- o The reasons for this delay
- o When the annual review is likely to take place



The SEND Assessment & Review Service are keeping a record of this information.

### We have identified the following priority groups

- All children with an EHC Plan in year 5
- Children and young people with significant changes of need or circumstance
- Children in our care
- Children and young people in residential, independent and non-maintained provision

Note: Year 9 annuals reviews will not be preparation for adulthood annual reviews and these will be deferred to the Year 10 annual review.

To support and facilitate this all annual review paperwork has been reviewed and modifications have been made considering the changes to legislation. This paperwork has been enclosed and should only be used while these changes are in place.