

Akaal Primary School: SEND Policy

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (revised January 2021)

From 20th 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 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
- 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
- The approach to teaching children with SEND
- Working alongside other professionals

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

Akaal Primary School: SEND Policy

- 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 (school will liaise with the local authority if a place is needed for an eligible child, but the school 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.

Arrangements for consulting parents of, and children with, SEND

Working in partnership with children with SEND and their parents continues to be central to Akaal Primary School'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 school.

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 school 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, we have daily live lessons which allows children to access Quality First Teaching at their level and have face to face interaction between themselves and their teachers and their peers.

Where statutory processes relating to SEND are in action, the school will continue to maintain communication with parents of, and children with, SEND so that their views are actively sought, considered and promoted.

Arrangements for assessing and reviewing children's progress

Akaal Primary School 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.

Where this is needed, key school staff will maintain communication with parents and relevant professionals to share, with necessary consents, the most current assessment information and professional observations that the school holds. Where possible, termly review meetings will be held via Zoom to allow targets to be reviewed and new ones set, where this is not

Akaal Primary School: SEND Policy

possible new and reviewed plans will be shared with parents via the post and parents will be encouraged to share written views.

Where children's EHC plans are due for review within the period of school closure, the school will discuss arrangements with parents, children, the Local Authority and professionals involved in the plan to decide whether arrangements for a 'remote review' should be made and if everyone is in agreement the SENDCo will make the necessary arrangements following this decision.

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, Akaal Primary School will continue to make contact with the new settings to share necessary information to make children's transitions as smooth as possible. The SENDCo will make contact with SENDCos in the new settings to share information on SEND needs. Where children 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 Year 6 children, the Derby School Transition Portal will be used to share key information with secondary schools and school staff will request and complete conversations with named transition staff in secondary schools to discuss vulnerable children. In this way, Akaal Primary School will seek to maintain a good flow of important information to support children's transfer from primary to secondary.

Akaal Primary School recognises that transition may be a particular concern for parents of children of SEND, and communication remains open for parents to contact key school staff to discuss this.

Akaal Primary School's approach to supporting children with transition will continue to be reviewed in line with all available DfE and government guidance on school closure.

The approach to teaching children with SEND

All children who are on the SEND register at Akaal Primary School have been offered a place in school and they come under our umbrella of vulnerable learners.

Akaal Primary School recognises that children with SEND need access to home learning resources and activities which take account of their strengths and needs.

For those children with SEND, but without an EHC plan who are not in school, reasonable adjustments will be made to online lessons to support them in accessing appropriate learning activities, this includes the use of live Zoom lessons, pre-recorded lessons and shared learning resources placed on to our communication platform MySchoolapp.

Akaal Primary School: SEND Policy

Working alongside other professionals

Akaal Primary School will continue to maintain contact with other professionals during this period of school closure.

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 school staff are available via the school website should professionals need to make contact.

Where direct contact is needed professionals will be allowed to come into school to work with children following all COVID 19 risk assess procedures.