

30<sup>th</sup> April 2020

## New SEND Risk Assessment guidance - an update for parent carers

Dear parent carers,

Over the last few difficult weeks, our local authorities have been working hard to offer every child with a key worker parent, or who has an EHCP, or is identified as vulnerable, a place in a school, where they cannot stay safely at home. This has been a childcare offer, staffed by qualified and vetted people who know your child well. Many of you chose to keep your child at home, but those in school will, where needed, have had a risk assessment done to ensure that they have what is needed to keep them safe.

On April 19<sup>th</sup>, the Government revised its advice about how to decide which children should be offered a place at school/college during the pandemic. The new guidance asks school leaders, health and social care professionals, together with parent carers, to fully consider the risks for individual children currently at home. This could lead to some children being safer in school or colleges than at home. Safety is still paramount, and the priority to ensure that all children who can be at home should be at home remains.

The local authorities have devised a multi-agency risk assessment tool that will allow school leaders to work in partnership with social care and health colleagues to support that risk is measured accurately and ensure all children who are safer in school/college provision are allocated a place.

This new risk assessment process will not replace any existing plans. The process includes a review period, a record of the young person's view and the views of parent/ carers, so that access to places can be made available if issues and pressures build as the lockdown continues, **as long as** the placement is supported by the risk assessment tool.

***If you think your child might be safer in a school, then please do discuss this first with their school, social worker, or the Local Authority -***

(Peterborough 01733 747474, Cambridgeshire 0345 0455200)

There is other help available and that may be what you need now that we have reached week 4 in lockdown. You can find extra information on the Local Offer -

Peterborough: <https://fis.peterborough.gov.uk/kb5/peterborough/directory/localoffer.page?familychannel=8>

Cambridgeshire: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/local-offer> and through your Parent Carer Forums -

Family Voice Peterborough: [www.familyvoice.org](http://www.familyvoice.org) 01733 685510

Pinpoint Cambridgeshire: [www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk](http://www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk) 01480 877333

In the meantime, stay safe and remember we are all working to support you and your child at this difficult time.

Best wishes,

Lousie Ravenscroft, Sarah Conboy, Toni Bailey.

For those that would like to see the details of the risk assessment, you can find it on the Government's website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance>