

Suggested Discussion Points for School Leaders and Governors Related to Covid19 2021

Dear All,

I hope this note finds you well in the current circumstances. The ongoing school response to the Coronavirus will be one of the key area's that governors are understandably keen to discuss with leaders. To help facilitate those discussions and ensure that the school can inform governors of their efforts, I have put together some key points you may wish to consider. They could be shared with the school leaders to enable them to prepare in advance of the meeting if necessary. Please be aware that the current expectation for schools is to deliver on site learning for specific groups of children, and also provide home learning for key stage one at three hours per day, key stage two at four hours and key stages three and four at five hours per day. Safeguarding is a continual priority.

What is the school interpretation of vulnerable learners? Has the pandemic had an impact on the number of disadvantaged children? *(purpose of question is to understand the difference between vulnerable and disadvantaged learners, there may be an overlap but it is important to continue to monitor the progress, wellbeing and outcomes for disadvantaged learners and not necessarily group the two together)*

How are free school meals being provided to families? *(Governors to query what support families are receiving and how the tasks are being managed to ensure it is a smooth a process as possible)*

Do families have links readily available for extended services and support options, such as family support and therapeutic services? For those without internet, is there a newsletter/list made available for them on paper? *(ensuring that the same access to extended support is in place even when school is closed)*

What has happened to children who were in alternative provision, or those with specific support needs identified in a EHCP (educational health care plan) have adjustments been made to their provision? How are they and their families being supported at home? *(to understand how education is being provided to every child particularly the most vulnerable. Those children with displayed behaviours in times of uncertainty will need more support, as will their parents and carers)*

What links are being made in the community to enhance the support offered by school, such as third sector services, local authority support, charities and social care? *(supporting families and children using a wide range of selected services can help improve delivery of packages of support and improve options for staff when capacity can be limited)*

Are home learning opportunities giving differential supportive, learning for pupils with SEND? Have parents been advised of their school and classroom routines, such as visual timetables, to help maintain their day if appropriate and possible? How are you supporting children with specific support staff should they need to self-isolate? *(purpose of the question is to ensure as much support is given to families as possible where SEND pupils have routines and stability through the school day. The information out there is very much aimed at non-SEND pupils which can be overwhelming for parents of children with SEND)*

What changes are recommended to the E-Safety policy in regard to ensuring safety of pupils, staff and families when engaging in home learning? *(has guidance been given to families regarding the use of online learning, including how to keep safe online, expectations regarding behaviour and engagement?)*

How are you continuing to challenge more able pupils (both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged) in their attainment and progress? *(governors to understand differentiated education and resources for more able pupils)*

What physical education is being provided for those pupils learning from home? *(what engagement opportunities are being shared with parents to support physical activity whilst at home?)*

What barriers to learning are present at this time and what is being done to address them, do staff need any further support? *(the purpose of this question is for governors to understand the schools efforts in recognising them and putting in place actions to address them)*

How is the school supporting parents in all aspects of home learning? *(including access to laptops/tablets, internet access, advice and technical guidance, keeping children safe online, paper copies where necessary?)*

What challenges are there in regard to parental engagement? What strategies have been successful and how do you monitor parental response? *(parental engagement, particularly in regard to home learning is crucial, governors to understand if there are gaps and what actions are being taken to address them)*

Our last survey of parents highlighted that sleep and routines were a challenge for many families, what has been put in place to support parents during this lockdown to minimise this challenge? *(the purpose of this question is for governors to ensure that previous parental survey responses have been listened to and acted upon to improve support in the longer term)*

What changes are recommended to the E-Safety policy in regard to ensuring safety of pupils, staff and families when engaging in home learning? *(has guidance been given to families regarding the use of online learning, including how to keep safe online, expectations regarding behaviour and engagement?)*

How are you managing safeguarding and child protection, what changes have needed to be made and are there any outstanding challenges to providing support that you are struggling to overcome? *(governors to understand the efforts of school to maintain consistent support for safeguarding of all children and if there are areas that are proving difficult to navigate and what actions can be taken to resolve them)*

Are there any staffing matters that have been delayed that now need to progress? *(governors to discuss the strategy regarding progress of attendance management, significant performance concerns and staffing structure while maintaining consideration of Covid19 impacts on staff)*

What can governors do to best support the staff and in particular the leaders? *(while there is much discussion around wellbeing for staff, governors to ensure that leaders are included in that and are taking care of their wellbeing. Are leaders seeking and receiving support from other local leaders, school improvement advisors, local authority partners etc)*

What is standing in your way of delivering the best possible quality of learning for all children and what support do you need to overcome any barriers? *(governors to understand the challenges of the current situation such as funding, staffing levels, staff wellbeing, parental engagement, pupil attitude to learning and behaviour, changing government direction etc)*

Are you receiving good support from the local authority services where needed? *(from finance re school budget, HR re staffing issues, safeguarding team providing support)*

What impact has there been to the school budget due to the response to Covid19? *(has there been any savings due to reduction in services, what costs have increased?)*

What are the plans for the catch-up funding and how are you planning to monitor the impact of that? *(alongside monitoring the funding grants such as sports premium and pupil premium, governors should make themselves aware of the schools plans for the per pupil catch-up funding)*

What changes have needed to be made to the building/learning environment to support the implementation of the risk assessment and have the required checks and surveys been completed? *(has there needed to be any physical changes to the school to enable the new ways of managing staff, pupils and visitors – where necessary? Have school completed regular and statutory checks and tests?)*

