

## You Said We Did: Parent feedback report

This report provides a summary of key SEND issues reported by families between the end of March 2020 and the end of March 2021. It provides the response from Sheffield City Council and/or Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The feedback was provided via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum.

Information about support for special educational needs is available on [Sheffield's Local Offer website](#). This report provides direct links to advice. Families are also encouraged to contact [Sheffield's SEN and Disability Information, Advice, and Support \(SSENDIAS\)](#) for impartial, confidential guidance and support on education and related health and social care matters.

### Admissions and placements

Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG
<p>Continuing issues with the process of allocating placements for some children and young people with EHC plans; reports that some decisions are taking too long, leaving insufficient time for transition planning</p>	<p>We know some families have had to wait too long for placement decisions. We are taking action to address this and improve our timescales.</p> <p>There is significant demand for specialist support in Sheffield. This can create challenges when we are allocating placements. We are increasing provision to help tackle this and are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing specialist support in mainstream schools by providing advice, support, and training to SENCOs and city-wide training initiatives to build the capacity of mainstream schools.</li> <li>• Increasing the number of places in Integrated Resources. 30 new places were created in 2020/21. 40 are being planned over the next 18 months.</li> <li>• An extra 100 special school places were created for September 2020. 122 are being created for September 2021.</li> <li>• Two new special schools are planned for 2022 and 2023. These will be for children with ASD and SEMH needs and will provide 160 places.</li> <li>• Over the next five years, further places will be needed to meet forecast demand. The developments outlined above are part of this plan to provide extra places.</li> </ul> <p>Statutory timescales: Over the next academic year we plan to increase our capacity in the SEND Statutory Assessment and Review Service (SENDSARS). This will allow us to do more to co-produce EHC Plans with</p>

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	<p>families, consider provision throughout the 20 week EHC needs assessment process, and work more closely with commissioners to forward plan places.</p>
<p>Some schools are discouraging parents from applying for a place, e.g. saying that they can't support children with continence issues</p>	<p>It is against the law for a school place to be denied because a school thinks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a child has special educational needs</li> <li>• or that the child should be assessed for an Education and Health Care Plan before they start school.</li> </ul> <p>Parents cannot be denied the right to apply for a school place because their child has special educational needs.</p> <p>Parents can ask to speak to the headteacher or school SEND governor if they have any concerns that the school is not being supportive.</p> <p>Parents can also contact Sheffield's SEN and Disability Information, Advice, and Support (SENDIAS). SENDIAS will give impartial, confidential guidance and support if schools are discouraging parents applying for places. Any data from this may be shared with Learn Sheffield and Sheffield City Council, this will be anonymous. It will be used to inform improvement work with schools.</p> <p>Our admissions team and SPCF produced an article for the SPCF newsletter about school admissions. This confirmed that parents cannot be denied the right to apply for a school place because their child has special educational needs.</p> <p>We are currently reviewing our web information about special educational needs and school admissions to make it clearer for families. We are also in discussion with SPCF about how we collect feedback about schools and use it to further inform our school improvement work.</p>

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<p>Continuing reports of a lack of advice and support for families with finding a suitable school for their child and confusion about admissions processes</p>	<p>We are producing information to help parents and young people with choosing a school. We will share this on Sheffield’s Local Offer website, with parents and carers, and with childminders, nurseries, pre-schools, schools, and colleges.</p> <p>Information about school admissions is on the <a href="#">Sheffield City Council website</a>. This includes guides for parents. Sheffield Parent Carer Forum and the local authority also produced an article about school admissions. This responded to questions raised. It was shared in <a href="#">SPCF’s Autumn 2020 newsletter</a>. We will continue to review and improve our online admission information where needed.</p> <p>If children are already at school, parents can talk to their school SENCO about their next school.</p> <p>Over the next academic year, as we increase our capacity in the SEND Statutory Assessment and Review Service (SENDSARS), we aim to do more co-production with families. This will allow more conversations about the best placement to meet the needs of their child(ren).</p>

**Childcare**

Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG
<p>Some parents told by nurseries that they do not have enough funding to provide additional support, including where a child has an EHC Plan</p>	<p>Mainstream nurseries and early year settings must take steps to include and support children with special educational needs and any medical conditions. They should not refuse to take a child because they are disabled or have special educational needs.</p> <p>Sheffield has a SEN Inclusion Fund to help mainstream nurseries and early years settings meet the needs of individual children. It is for children with more complex needs. Settings apply for this through the specialist teacher supporting the child (from the 0-5 SEND, HI, VI, or Autism team). More information about childcare funding for children with special educational needs and disabilities is on <a href="#">Sheffield’s local offer website</a>.</p>

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	<p>If parents are told by nurseries that they do not have enough funding to provide additional support for their child, they should contact the specialist teacher supporting their child (from the 0-5 SEND, HI, VI, or Autism team).</p> <p>When children have an EHC Plan, the funding for the plan is agreed when it is issued. The nursery/setting will be funded appropriately from the date of the finalised plan to make sure children can be appropriately supported.</p>

#### Covid-19

Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG
<p><b>Inconsistent support from schools during lockdown.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some schools were very proactive, others barely made contact.</li> <li>• Some vulnerable children were refused school places during lockdown based on risk assessment and nothing else offered.</li> <li>• Some schools said that they did not have to contact families of children with MyPlans.</li> <li>• Very little work sent home by some schools</li> <li>• Lack of communication</li> </ul>	<p>Covid has led to many extra challenges, and schools have been supporting children and families in different ways. Our Inclusion Team, alongside MAST and Early Help Services, have worked with schools throughout the pandemic to help make sure children and families are supported. This has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services working with schools to support risk assessments and the identification of vulnerable children. We have tried to prioritise the attendance at school for our most vulnerable children and where this hasn't been possible, because it would pose a risk, we have talked to schools about what else could be offered. Support across Early Help has been offered into all schools and across Localities.</li> <li>• Our Director of Education and skills has ensured there has been frequent communication with schools, academies, nurseries, family centres, and childminders. Emails (daily initially, then twice weekly, and now weekly) have been sent with updates, advice, and guidance. Information for schools and education settings has also been provided on the <a href="#">Learn Sheffield website</a>.</li> </ul>

<b>Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum</b>	<b>Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing to encourage schools to stay in touch with families and for families to contact their school with any concerns. We also ran a parent SEND survey with Sheffield Parent Carer Forum (SPCF) which highlighted the need for this. We shared the survey report with schools, academies, nurseries, family centres, and childminders.</li> <li>• Where schools struggled with contact with families, the Inclusion Team provided additional resource, alongside MAST linked workers who completed home visits (doorstep and distanced) when there were additional concerns or no contact.</li> <li>• All schools were required to have online learning or learning resources available to families. Additional online platforms were created by the government, including Oak Tree, and the BBC expanded their Bite Size offer. These were all signposted through our Director’s emails and for the schools to signpost families to.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Remote learning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some children would not engage</li> <li>• Some parents felt pressured by school and worried about getting fined for non-attendance at virtual lessons</li> <li>• Many reported not being able to access schoolwork due to lack of equipment or data</li> </ul>	<p>We understand remote learning has been difficult for some children and young people. Schools and services have tried to support families. This has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vouchers for families who struggled to afford data/Wifi.</li> <li>• A laptop for children scheme was in place from the government, to try and help vulnerable children access online learning.</li> <li>• We provided advice and support to schools about differentiating work for children with SEND. Our advisory and support services also provided direct support to families.</li> <li>• We worked with SPCF and SENDIAS to produce information for families to respond to concerns. This encouraged parents to contact their child’s SENCO if they were worried about remote learning. It also confirmed families would not be fined for not attending virtual lessons. The information was shared via SPCF, SENDIAS, schools, and other education settings, and on <a href="#">Sheffield’s Local Offer website</a>.</li> </ul>

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	<p>Schools and services asked families about their access to IT. Laptops were provided to children and young people who needed them. (<a href="#">More details here</a>). Children without IT access or who had other barriers (such as no quiet space to work in) were prioritised to attend school in the lockdowns.</p>
<p><b>Shielding:</b> Lack of clarity about accessing GP services, children returning to school if family member is shielding</p>	<p>We have continued to share Government guidance throughout the pandemic. This has included through our Director of Education and Skills’ email bulletin to schools and education settings. This has included information about children returning to school if a family member is shielding and other public health information.</p> <p>A back to school safely campaign was launched last August/September with information available to parents and carers on how to access education safely for their children. We continue to encourage parents and schools to stay in good contact so any questions or concerns can be raised.</p> <p>Information relating to GP access has also been shared. GP services have always remained open to shielding patients/family members by remaining Covid secure. This has enabled face to face appointments to be offered where necessary, however many appointments have the option to be delivered differently, for example over the telephone or virtually, if deemed appropriate by the GP. Further information has been shared on the Sheffield CCG website throughout the pandemic: <a href="http://sheffieldccg.nhs.uk">The NHS is open (sheffieldccg.nhs.uk)</a></p>
<p>Transition back to school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of clarity about the reopening of schools, e.g. expectations for pupils with EHCPs, special schools, priority year groups</li> <li>• Worries how transition to next phase of education will be affected</li> </ul>	<p>We know the transition back into school has been an anxious time for some children, young people, and families. Schools and education settings have had to respond to the latest guidance. This has been fast-changing at times, meaning they have not always been able to give clarity in advance.</p> <p>Covid has also affected how support has been given. Many children and young people have received their usual support differently. Schools, other education settings, therapists, and services have prioritised the most vulnerable children for in-person support.</p> <p>Advice has been widely shared about supporting children back into school. This included:</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns that child could become a school refuser due to anxiety about germs, social distancing</li> <li>Support reduced after lockdown, e.g. no 1:1 when this had previously been provided</li> <li>Lack of clarity about phased returns – some schools not sure if allowed, some agreed then changed their minds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance to schools and settings about <a href="#">supporting children and young people who are avoiding school for emotional reasons</a>.</li> <li>A guide for parents and carers about <a href="#">supporting children with SEND back into school</a>.</li> <li>Social stories about going back to school for <a href="#">younger children</a> and <a href="#">older children</a>.</li> <li>Information shared through our Director of Education’s email bulletin and <a href="#">SEND newsletter</a>.</li> <li>Guidance about supporting children with health needs where aerosol generating procedures are carried out.</li> </ul> <p>Our Inclusion and Attendance team supports vulnerable children with transitions. This has continued throughout Covid. They have also helped vulnerable children to return to school after a lockdown, including supporting with anxiety.</p> <p>The team has provided more ongoing support than in previous years. This is due to the amount of change children and young people have faced. The team knows if children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans have returned to school, and makes sure support is provided where needed.</p> <p>We also ran online parent seminars to encourage families to send their children back to school in March when they re-opened. 332 people registered. 330 (99%) said the session was helpful for managing anxieties and ensuring their child returned to school.</p> <p>Parents and carers can speak to someone in our Inclusion and Attendance service if they are worried about their child’s transition. Please email <a href="mailto:Sheffieldinclusion&amp;attendance@sheffield.gov.uk">Sheffieldinclusion&amp;attendance@sheffield.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Vaccinations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of awareness among some healthcare staff that only Pfizer vaccine approved for under 18s. Can book appointment but no</li> </ul>	<p>All information and updates about Covid-19 vaccinations have been shared with GPs across Sheffield using the Sheffield CCG/Primary Care Sheffield GP Covid bulletin. This has included information on updates relating to vaccine age appropriateness. The bulletin has shared information on the introduction of age warnings to be implemented on the Covid vaccination template for patients under 16, 18 and 40 from</p>

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<p>guarantee that the Pfizer vaccine will be available on the day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No clear definition of learning disability, for inclusion on GP Learning Disability Register, with some GPs refusing to put young people on Learning Disability Register.</li> <li>Lack of clarity about carer status. Many parents had approached their GP surgery and asked to be coded as "carers", but were told this couldn't be done as they were caring for a child. Some carers asked for photo ID and proof of carer status at vaccination site, but not advised that this would be needed beforehand. Problems with national booking system – why were some carers able to book through it, and others were not?</li> </ul>	<p>23/05/21. These warnings will display dependant on the patient's date of birth and/or the vaccine type selected.</p> <p>Only a limited number of under 18s are currently eligible for vaccination; individuals who have underlying health conditions or are front line health and social care workers. Original supplies of Pfizer were difficult to access due to their three day storage limit which caused problems with availability. The Pfizer vaccine can now be stored for 28 days so is much easier to stock and access. Sheffield has worked on being more transparent about which vaccination is available.</p> <p>The Department of Health in the UK defines a learning disability as 'a significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information, to learn new skills (impaired intelligence), with a reduced ability to cope independently (impaired social functioning), which started before adulthood'. The guidance for Covid vaccinations being extended to include individuals on the GP Learning Disability Register in priority group 6 came out on 24th February 2021 and was circulated to GPs via the GP bulletin. (<a href="#">Click here to view</a>). GPs will use their clinical judgement to determine who goes on the register.</p> <p>Carer status - From 8th March 2021, new definitions were published about carer status (<a href="#">available here</a>). These were circulated via the GP bulletin. The criteria are clearly defined and people should be added as carers if they meet these criteria. It should be noted that Sheffield does not run the National Booking System.</p>
<p><b>Face coverings</b></p>	<p>We understand some children and young people are not able to wear face masks or tolerate them on their parents.</p>



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some children won't tolerate masks on themselves or their parents. Confusion about policy on face masks and how to prove exemption in hospitals and on public transport</li> </ul>	<p>The Council does not run public transport. But we worked with SYPTTE and provided information about travel to school making clear that children and young people did not have to wear masks who were exempt.</p> <p>Any patient and accompanying adult is asked to wear a face covering when entering the hospital, however there are some exceptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children under the age of 3</li> <li>- Visitors/patients who have respiratory problems, sensory needs or may find it difficult to manage them properly.</li> </ul> <p>Staff have been advised to ensure masks are worn, so have been asking people about them. You need to explain if you are exempt. You can also print off an exemption card online: <a href="http://sheffieldccg.nhs.uk">Difficult to wear a face mask (sheffieldccg.nhs.uk)</a></p>
<p><b>Hospitals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worries that Clinical Frailty Scale could be used to class children and young people with autism, LD, CP as "frail" and therefore not a priority for treatment</li> </ul>	<p>The Clinical Frailty Scale should not be used for children and young people as per NICE guidelines.</p> <p>These are available at <a href="https://www.nice.org.uk">COVID-19 rapid guideline: managing COVID-19 (nice.org.uk)</a></p>
<p><b>Specific impact of the pandemic on parent carers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employers putting pressure on parents to come into work, despite caring for children</li> </ul>	<p>We have tried to support vulnerable people as much as possible during Covid. Our support has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Setting up a community support helpline. This supports people with shopping, getting medicine, providing some company, and financial help. This received its 20,000th call in January 2021.</li> <li>Working with schools and other education settings to understand who the most vulnerable children and young people are, encouraging them to attend school including during the lockdown periods.</li> <li>Contact with families from services working with them, with more contact and support provided to those most vulnerable. This included from MAST, SNIPS, and Children with Disabilities Team.</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents unable to provide evidence of carers status, e.g. for priority in supermarkets</li> <li>• Families struggled with being confined to the house or only being allowed to go on a local walk once a day</li> <li>• Parents struggled to juggle the competing needs of siblings</li> <li>• Covid made using public transport more difficult, but criteria for high rate mobility component of DLA did not change.</li> <li>• Lack of resources for parents of pre-school children to encourage social and language development.</li> </ul>	<p>Examples of the support included increased direct payments for some families so they could get extra PA support, flexible use of direct payments so families could buy items to help entertain children (such as a swing or TV package), craft activity packs delivered, and short breaks grant extended and rules relaxed to allow families to buy tablets/iPads/toys as activities/holidays were not open.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support from services was offered virtually and in different ways. The most vulnerable children were supported in person where needed.</li> <li>• Information was provided to families. This included through schools and education settings, social media, and parent representative groups.</li> </ul> <p>The Speech and Language Therapy Service developed short videos to help parents with their child's language development. The <a href="#">Weekend Words videos</a> were promoted on social media, to schools and education settings, and through our SEND newsletter. 31 videos were made with almost 5,900 views (as of 29.06.21)</p>
<p><b>Impact of lockdown on mental health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some children experienced a significant deterioration in their mental health, others thrived because school was a major stressor for them. Many became very isolated during lockdown.</li> </ul>	<p>Healthy Minds COVID-19 surveys were sent to five secondary and four primary schools to understand how children and young people were feeling during Covid. Work was carried out with children and young people, parents and carers, schools and education settings, and citywide to respond to the issues raised. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of widely-shared Sheffield guidance for supporting emotional health and well-being in education during COVID-19 measures - including a <a href="#">full resource pack</a>.</li> <li>• Resources for children and young people including a <a href="#">BeatTheBoredom planner</a> and a guide for <a href="#">school staff</a> and <a href="#">parents/carers</a>.</li> <li>• Information in the Sheffield Star's home learning supplement to reach those with limited internet access.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A <a href="#">guide for parents and carers to prepare their child to return to school after lockdown</a>, alongside a summary <a href="#">guide specifically for parents and carers of children with SEND</a></li> <li>• Guidance about supporting children and young people with bereavement and loss including for <a href="#">parents</a> and <a href="#">schools and other education settings</a>.</li> </ul> <p>CAMHS has experienced increased demand for support since Covid. It provided significantly more clinical activity in 2020 compared to 2019 and has restructured workforce plans to meet the demand of additional initial assessments and respond to a significant increase in referrals relating to eating disorders.</p>

## Education

Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG
<p>Transition to secondary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of transition support from some secondary schools.</li> <li>• Some parents said that the secondary school was refusing to continue arrangements that had worked in primary.</li> </ul>	<p>Transitions are most effective when a child's existing and new school/setting work together to plan and share information. We have provided information and guidance to schools, nurseries, childminders, and colleges to support this. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Things to consider for transitions for children and young people of any age.</li> <li>• Which services provide support.</li> <li>• A document for Early Years settings to complete about their children to share with their new primary schools.</li> <li>• Information about helping pre-school children become school-ready.</li> <li>• A 'What's Next' information booklet for Year 11s.</li> <li>• Virtual tours being made available on line for children moving schools.</li> </ul>

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	<p>Parents are encouraged to talk to their child’s school about transition support. This includes any concerns. If concerns are not resolved, they should follow the school’s complaints procedure. Schools need to make this available to parents.</p> <p>Parents supported by a Transition Pathway Worker or Attendance and Inclusion Officer can talk to them about transition support. Parents of children with an EHC Plan can talk to an officer in the SEND Statutory Assessment and Review Service (SENDSARS).</p> <p>Parents and carers can also speak to someone in our Inclusion and Attendance service if they are worried about their child’s transition. Please email <a href="mailto:Sheffieldinclusion&amp;attendance@sheffield.gov.uk">Sheffieldinclusion&amp;attendance@sheffield.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Post-16:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many complaints from parents about significantly reduced face-to-face teaching at Sheaf and Sheffield College, despite government guidance that the majority of planned teaching hours should be provided on site.</li> <li>• Complaints about a lack of homework during lockdown, or that homework was set but not reviewed or marked by tutors. Problems with accessing remote learning, e.g. links that don’t work.</li> <li>• No access to supported internships at Sheaf.</li> </ul>	<p>Sheaf has followed the Government’s guidance and made sure the college remained as safe as possible during the pandemic. There have been no cases of Covid-19 amongst the students and no staff cases connected to transmission at Sheaf (as of 15.06.21). Sheaf opened fully as per the guidance. Only one programme was delivered digitally and this was the students' preference. The programme was English and mathematics functional skills. This has been particularly successful.</p> <p>The Sheffield College is much bigger and significantly more complex. The College has a large cohort with high numbers of vulnerable or potentially vulnerable students, therefore it faced unprecedented challenges to keep students and staff safe. At each phase of the pandemic, the college has carefully considered the safety of staff and students and how best to ensure vulnerable learners feel supported and able to engage in learning. The college is now open, with a blended delivery model. Priority was given to the most vulnerable students for more face-to-face delivery and safe learning spaces were provided on campus with internet and IT access.</p> <p>From September 2020 some onsite delivery has been offered to vulnerable learners. For Inclusion learners, where many of the vulnerable learners sit, a blended learning approach has been in place. All learners have been offered some face-to-face delivery alongside taught online sessions.</p> <p>LSA support has continued to be in place and, through Google Meet, learners have been given 1:1 and small group support where needed. Using Google Classroom work has been set, marked and returned.</p>

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	<p>IT equipment has been available to eligible learners and support offered to enable them to access the work and the lessons using a mobile phone, tablet or games console. Where learners could not access work remotely alternatives were put in place, including work packs.</p> <p>From the lockdown in January 2021 a blended learning approach continued for Inclusion learners with onsite delivery offered at the City Campus. Onsite testing was available and managed by a dedicated team. The college has had clear guidance to follow on 'bubble' numbers in classrooms and the timetable has been managed to ensure staggered start and end times. Taxis have continued to be provided for the most vulnerable learners and extra taxis funded to ensure the safety of some of other vulnerable learners within the college.</p> <p>Identified learners across the college have been offered some access to the LRC at City. Learners were able to access IT to complete work and also had access to the onsite testing. LRC staff have offered remote 1:1 tutorials to support learning and progress tutors have been used to offer extra support with English and maths for all learners studying these subjects at the college.</p> <p>Tutor Mentors, personal tutors, SEND support and the safeguarding team have offered extensive pastoral support to both learners and families of all vulnerable learners throughout the pandemic. This was also in place throughout the summer of 2020.</p> <p>As and when safe to do so, in line with College guidance, more onsite delivery has been offered to learners. Timetables across all campuses have been carefully planned to ensure the safety of all staff and students. Vulnerable learners have continued to have access to both onsite and online learning.</p> <p><b>Homework</b> - All Sheaf students received distance work via digital means or paper-based. Worked was marked and feedback was given. We have had no specific complaints regarding this. The Quality Management team will address each case individually if we can have further details.</p> <p>Face to face online learning was maintained when students could not access campus, where students could not access this, materials were provided for students. Nearly 3000 IT devices have been provided to</p>

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	<p>students since March 2020 by the Sheffield College and numerous packages to provide internet access too. Any reported issues about marking and remote learning links will have been addressed as they were brought our attention.</p> <p><b>Supported internships</b> - Sheaf deliver a Supported Work-skills Course. This replicates the Internship. It replaced experience of work, based at Sheaf, rather than work experience, which could not be conducted because of Covid. Sheaf will continue to deliver this course as it has proved highly successful.</p> <p>Two Supported Internship Courses are available across the city. These are provided by Project Choice and The Sheffield College. Our new Post-16 Send Officer is exploring extending and further developing this offer for 2021/22. They are working to the Head of Lifelong Learning, Employment and Skills.</p> <p>The Sheffield College worked with Supported Internship learners during the 2020 - 2021 academic year to complete the qualification aspect of the course. Simulated activities and employability skills have been delivered throughout the year. As per guidance by the DfE these learners are set to return in 2021 to complete the internship. Through discussion with SEND and the curriculum team an individualised programme will be in place.</p>
<p>Lack of expertise/support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several parents reported that school staff don't understand their child's needs and ignore advice from professionals, e.g. a parent was told to send child to school in pull-ups, undoing progress with toilet training.</li> </ul>	<p>Parents should talk to their child's SENCO or teacher about their child's needs and any concerns about their support. If needed, they can make a complaint to the school. Schools must share their complaint policy so parents know how to do this. This should be on their website.</p> <p>Where there are concerns about health needs being met in school, the school can work with health services. Where needed, a health plan can be agreed.</p> <p>Training for SENCOs is provided to help schools support children with different needs. This includes supporting mental health and speech and language development. We also have locality and citywide SENCOs in Sheffield, who give support and guidance to other SENCOs.</p>

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	<p>There are advisory services for schools to work with available within the Local Authority. This includes the Autism Team, Vision and Hearing Impaired, 0-5 SEND and Educational Psychology. All of the teams have been available to the schools to access support throughout lockdown. They have worked with schools to talk about children and young people's needs and how they are supported.</p> <p>Parents can contact Sheffield's SEN and Disability Information, Advice, and Support (SENDIAS) if their concerns about their child's support have not been resolved by the school. SENDIAS will provide impartial, confidential advice and support. Any data from this may be shared with Learn Sheffield and Sheffield City Council, this will be anonymous. It will be used to inform improvement work with schools. We are also in discussion with SPCF about how we collect parent feedback about schools and use it to further inform our school improvement work.</p>
Several complaints about schools not making provision set out in EHCP.	<p>Parents should talk to their child's school if they have any concerns that the provision set out in their child's EHC Plan is not being provided. Unfortunately, Covid restrictions meant support had to be given differently for some children and young people.</p> <p>It is the Local Authority's responsibility to ensure the provision in the EHC Plan is in place. If parents have raised their concerns with the school, they can request an early annual review or speak with an Inclusion Officer within the SEND Statutory Assessment and Review Service (SENDSARS) about the provision in their child's plan not being in place.</p>
Lack of dyslexia support	<p>Parents should talk to their child's SENCO or teacher if they are concerned their needs are not being met. There are adjustments that can be made, and support for children and young people with dyslexia. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate success.</li> <li>• Set small-step targets.</li> <li>• Provide extra time, for example in reading and writing activities and assessments.</li> <li>• Provide extra time to consider and respond.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and praise 'giving it a go' whilst not drawing undue attention to 'mistakes' (confidence and risk-taking are more important).</li> <li>• Take a targeted and selective approach to marking - praise and encourage effort and adventurous vocabulary over 'perfect' writing.</li> <li>• Teach organisational skills - visual timetable, picture list of equipment needed, labelling, homework diary, school map, etc.</li> <li>• Keep worksheets clear and uncluttered. Highlight key words.</li> <li>• Avoid black text on white background on the whiteboard. A pale yellow background with blue text is a more 'dyslexia-friendly' format for example, as it reduces the potential for visual stress.</li> <li>• Provide sound/word mats.</li> <li>• Provide alternatives to written recording on occasions, e.g. mind maps, bullet points, pictures/diagrams, peer scribing, word-processing, etc.</li> <li>• Provide writing frames.</li> <li>• Work on small numbers of key words, and use them in reading and writing, not just spelling tests.</li> </ul> <p>SEND training is provided to SENCOs to help them support children with special educational needs. Face to face training has been affected by Covid but moved to online, with extra guidance produced. This includes an <a href="#">Introduction to Dyslexia</a>. Schools are also able to access support from Learn Sheffield and Fusion SEND Hub.</p>
<p>IRs: Some parents had concerns about IR provision, e.g. child with IR place having to spend all their time in mainstream with little support, lack of understanding from teachers.</p>	<p>Covid and the need to keep children in bubbles meant some children were not able to swap between spending some time in the IR and some in the mainstream class. Schools had to make difficult decisions around this and other Covid measures.</p> <p>We have continued to encourage good communication between a child's school and family. Parents should talk to their child's SENCO or teacher if they have any concerns about their child's support. They can ask for an early review of their EHC Plan if they feel the support no longer meets their needs.</p>



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	Parents can also contact our SEND Statutory Assessment and Review Service (SENDSARS) if there are concerns that provision is not in line with their child's EHC Plan.
School refusal: Several parents had children who were refusing to go to school. Some said they would like an advocate as they feel their parenting is being blamed.	<p>Our Inclusion and Attendance Team offers support to young people (and their families) when they are finding it hard to engage in their education. Workers advocate in the best interests of the child or young person. Support is offered at key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Readiness</li> <li>• Around the move from primary to secondary</li> <li>• Around the move from secondary to post-16 education</li> <li>• Supporting children and young people with SEND</li> </ul> <p>Parents can ask for support from the Inclusion and Attendance Team. They can do this by discussion with their child's school or emailing the team directly at <a href="mailto:SheffieldInclusion&amp;Attendance@sheffield.gov.uk">SheffieldInclusion&amp;Attendance@sheffield.gov.uk</a>.</p>

### EHC Plans

Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG
<p>Placements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disputes about appropriate post-16 / post-19 placements.</li> <li>• Parents worried that their young person's EHCP will be ceased as no suitable post-19 provision in Sheffield.</li> </ul>	<p>Please contact the SEND Statutory Assessment and Review Service (SENDSARS) to discuss post-16/ post-19 placements if your child has an EHC Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0114 273 6394</li> <li>• <a href="mailto:SENDAssess&amp;Review@sheffield.gov.uk">SENDAssess&amp;Review@sheffield.gov.uk</a></li> </ul> <p>We aim to resolve disputes through discussion and will talk about your options. We also provide information about your rights of appeal in our letters about EHC Plans and reviews.</p>

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	<p>EHC Plans can only end when a young person becomes 25 years old or if they no longer need the specialist support it provides. For example, if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is no longer necessary to provide special education support in line with an EHC Plan. Education needs can now be met within the resources normally available to mainstream settings.</li> <li>• The young person has left education to take up paid employment.</li> <li>• The young person has entered higher education. (EHC Plans do not apply to university students as there is a different system of support).</li> <li>• The young person has left education and will not be taking part in further learning. (EHC plans are only for when someone is in education).</li> </ul> <p>We are working to improve the quality of post 16 provision and support for young people into adulthood. We have identified key areas that need focused attention and partnership working to achieve long-term change. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase post 16 sufficiency.</li> <li>2. Development and improvement of the Post 16 Curriculum.</li> <li>3. Development of the employment, community, and post 16 education offer.</li> </ol> <p>Workstreams are being set up to lead work to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the capacity of post 16 provision.</li> <li>• Improve the quality of post 16 provision.</li> <li>• Support post 16 young people into adulthood.</li> </ul>
<p>Annual reviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents did not receive a decision letter after their annual review.</li> <li>• Some reported that reviews were not being done annually.</li> </ul>	<p>Each term we send schools a list of the annual reviews that are due in the next term. This is followed up with schools where reviews do not happen annually. Some review schedules may have changed and taken place later due to the wider impacts of Covid. But reviews should still be taking place.</p> <p>We aim to include changes suggested by parents where possible. But we often need information to be supported by a practitioner's report.</p>

Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several parents said that amendments they had requested were not made, no explanation given.</li> </ul>	<p>The annual review process (internally in the local authority) is being reviewed to make sure we are providing amendment notices in timescale. We are aiming to bring a quality assurance to all plans and amended plans over the next year and make sure they are with families within a 'reasonable timescale'.</p> <p>We are working with our schools to ensure they send us annual review paperwork in a timely way after each review.</p> <p>Annual review training has been made available to all schools, SENCOs, and services. This will be followed by preparation for adulthood training to link into post 16 planning.</p>

## Health

Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG
<p>Several enquiries about support for children with severely restricted diets</p>	<p>Parents and carers should ask a health professional about support available for children with severely restricted diets.</p> <p>They may refer you to the <a href="#">Sheffield Children's Hospital Dietetics</a> department, which sees children and young people aged 0-16 who have conditions that require dietary management to maintain growth and improve their overall quality of life.</p> <p>Health services worked with the SPCF to develop information to support families with questions. An article – When it's not just fussy eating – was published in the SPCF Spring 2020 newsletter and is also available online: <a href="https://sheffieldparentcarerforum.org.uk/information/health-wellbeing/when-its-not-just-fussy-eating/">https://sheffieldparentcarerforum.org.uk/information/health-wellbeing/when-its-not-just-fussy-eating/</a></p>
<p>Concerns that the two-year wait for an ADHD assessment will lead to delays in getting medication that some children urgently need</p>	<p>There is a large city-wide programme of work in place to review and improve all neurodevelopmental services, which will include ADHD. The Sheffield Parent Carer Forum are involved in this work.</p>

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<p>Speech and language therapy: Concerns about rationing of speech and language therapy service and focus on assessments and those with EHCP, not those on SEN Support. Therapists are not always aware that children have an EHCP or what SLT provision is specified in this. Problems with handovers between therapists.</p>	<p>Sheffield CCG and the Local Authority are working with Sheffield Children Hospital and partners to review speech and language therapy (SaLT) services across Sheffield.</p> <p>Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are sent over to therapy teams to embed on their electronic systems with consent from the young person/family. The child/young person who has the EHCP should also have access to this. Where a therapist has provided evidence and advice, and where there has been no further tribunal, it is the therapist's responsibility to log the provision within the case file.</p>
<p>Lack of clarity about access to sleep support.</p>	<p>We have continued to promote information about how to access sleep support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People can ask a health professional about sleep support in Sheffield.</li> <li>• Information is on Sheffield's <a href="#">Local Offer website</a> and <a href="#">Sheffield Children's Hospital website</a>.</li> <li>• Information is sent to families waiting for an Autism assessment.</li> </ul> <p>We will continue to raise the profile of local support. This includes through our Local Offer website, SEND newsletter, and work with SPCF and SSENDIAS.</p>

### SEN transport

Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG
<p>Some parents gave positive feedback about SEN transport, advising they had been accommodating and flexible, both before and during lockdown.</p>	<p>Thank you for the feedback. It has been shared with the SEN transport service.</p>
<p>Parents were concerned that Sheffield City Council had refused to accept DWP letters about extension of disability awards by 6 months as proof for Blue Badges. Parents therefore were</p>	<p>Unfortunately, there seems to be some confusion here. We issue Blue Badges to new expiry dates if we receive an extension award letter. If anyone has any problems associated with this, please contact us on 0114 273 4567 or online at <a href="http://www.sheffield.gov.uk">www.sheffield.gov.uk</a></p>

Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG
unable to renew Blue Badges that were about to expire.	It is not our policy to refuse to accept the DWP letters about an extension of disability awards.

### Social Care

Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG
<p>Overnight respite: Gibson House, Mulberry Lodge and Rushey Meadows have all closed to accommodate individual children on emergency placements. Several parents have raised concerns about the strain that the lack of respite is putting on their families.</p>	<p>Covid-19 restrictions have meant that short break homes and Gibson House have been at reduced capacity. Alongside this there has been an increase in the number of looked after children and so capacity remains at reduced levels. This is reviewed weekly and is a priority.</p> <p>We understand this has put additional pressure on some families. We have worked with parents to find further mitigations for support where short breaks residential is not available. This has included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing direct payments so that young people have more time with PAs.</li> <li>• The Thornbridge project in May half term was dedicated to young people not receiving overnight respite. We hope to increase the number of young people attending per day in the summer.</li> <li>• A new universal club was set up, Enablement Ark. This plugged a gap as it offered animal care, gardening, and outdoor activities.</li> <li>• Extra sessions commissioned in six clubs. These were a range of afterschool, weekend, and holiday sessions.</li> <li>• Altogether 55 young people were offered a replacement service. Some received more than one type of service.</li> </ul> <p>Families should contact their social worker if they are struggling or the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub on 0114 273 4855.</p>
<p>SNIPS clubs: Some parents have reported long delays in being given a place at a SNIPS club</p>	<p>SNIPS clubs have been affected by Covid. The team has tried to keep parents up to date about this.</p>

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<p>following an assessment, in one case more than a year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We sent a letter to parents explaining the issues and asking them to contact SNIPs if they needed support.</li> <li>• This was also explained in the courtesy calls the team made to parents at the beginning of lockdown.</li> <li>• Some families opted to choose the grant as they were informed that the clubs weren't open due to Covid.</li> <li>• Throughout this time, we have been reliant on government and local guidance and have not always had clear timeframes for clubs to re-open.</li> </ul>

### Transition to adulthood

Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG
<p>Parents continue to highlight a lack of information, advice, and support, especially for young people leaving education. For example: no pathway into employment after finishing Project Choice; lack of careers advice, lack of support into employment for young people due to leave college.</p>	<p>We are taking action to increase employment opportunities for young people with SEND.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most schools and colleges in Sheffield are supported by the Careers and Enterprise Company Enterprise Adviser Network Team. (The Council employs the team). The schools and colleges have a dedicated Enterprise Adviser who is a business volunteer. They help settings make connections to the local labour market. They also help shape their curriculum to reflect the skills and behaviours needed in employment.</li> <li>• We have established a digital hub for career advice and guidance. This is available at <a href="#">Inspire SY</a>. This is supported with a further specific SEND resource for professionals to help young people on a pathway to employment. This latter resource is currently being developed as a user-friendly tool for young people and their parents/carers.</li> </ul>

Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are setting up 10 hubs across the city to support young people to access career advice and guidance. These will open in the late summer with the expertise to support young people with SEND.</li> <li>• We have started a project to open employment opportunities for young people with SEND, via employer encounters and work experience. The findings will inform a more permanent approach from September 2021.</li> <li>• Our new Post-16 SEND Officer will review our supported internship offer. They will link it to the above project to provide more employment opportunities from the supported internship route.</li> </ul>

#### Other

Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG
<p>Several enquiries from parents who were feeling overwhelmed with the challenges of parenting a young person with additional needs and would like some peer support.</p>	<p>There are local groups in Sheffield that can help families in supporting a child or young person with additional needs. Information is on <a href="#">Sheffield's Local Offer website</a>.</p> <p>The council's Parenting Team also runs a range of seminars, discussion groups, and parenting programmes that support parents of children with additional needs. (Over the last year these have continued to be delivered online via Zoom).</p> <p>These support parents to build on their existing strengths meeting other parents and carers to discuss experiences and ideas to find the best solutions for their family. The newest programme in the last year is Being a Parent to a child with ASD – the programme is unique as it is delivered by trained volunteer parent group leaders supported by parenting specialists. The programme explores ways of managing behaviour, raising self-esteem and confidence.</p> <p>More information about the programmes and how to access them is on the <a href="#">Sheffield City Council website</a>.</p>

Issues reported by families via Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Update and response from Sheffield City Council or CCG
<p>Lack of support / training for parents of children with ASD who want to do more to support their child – moving from merely “coping”, to actively teaching their child new skills.</p>	<p>Our parenting team continues to develop support and Parenting Programmes to respond to emerging needs. Their newest programme in the last year is Being a Parent to a child with ASD. Feedback from those attending so far has been positive.</p> <p>Parenting programmes support parents to build skills that will support their child’s development. Details about how each programme supports children’s development are on page 10 of the council Parenting Team’s <a href="#">What’s on Guide</a>. This guide is regularly updated and is on the <a href="#">Sheffield City Council website</a>.</p>