**Adapting remote provision for vulnerable pupils**

Strategies for schools and educational settings to support the effective adaptation of remote provision for pupils with SEND and other vulnerable learners.

# Introduction

## This publication, produced by the SEND and Inclusion Teams, is a collection of helpful strategies to support schools and educational settings adapt remote provision effectively for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and other vulnerable learners.

**Contents**

Top tips when planning for EAL pupils remote learning Page 2

How can EAL parents support home learning Page 5

Top guidance and resources for supporting EAL learners, Page 7

learning at home

Lessons learned from lockdown for Traveller families and pupils Page 8

Remote teaching and learners with a sensory impairment Page 9

Supporting pupils with specific learning difficulties remotely Page 11

Ten Top Tips for SENCOs during Lockdown Page 13

NASEN Remote Learning Reflection Questions Page 14

Useful Information and Links Page 15

Contacts – Who can help Page 16

**Top tips when planning for EAL Learners remote learning**



**Following on from our experiences in the last lockdown, EMTAS has compiled a list of twelve key points to consider when planning for EAL learners learning remotely:**

1. Maintain **regular communication** with parents/carers and child or young person using appropriate and accessible formats, for example simple English accompanied by visuals.

Chat RTL2. Consider whether an **interpreter/online translation tool** is needed to ensure that Emailperson understands what they need to do.

TelephoneEmail3. Establish how parents/carers and the pupils wish to receive communications. Is **text** or **email**  best? Or would a **telephone call** be more effective?

4. Do you need to provide **paper copies** of home learning tasks with simple clear instructions for parent/carer and pupil?

5. Plan **opportunities to listen** to rich and varied models of English so that EAL pupils can benefit from listening to academic English at home. For example, record a video or audio file of yourself reading a story/text to your pupils or a video giving instructions for a task.

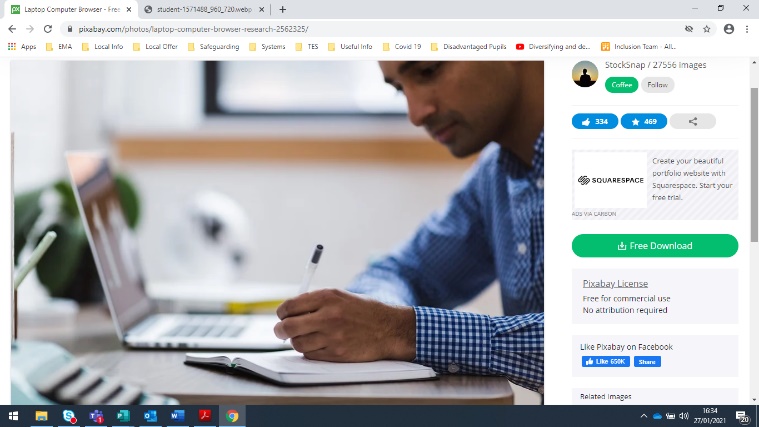
6. **Grade your language.** Avoid complex grammar, idioms or fixed phrases. Keep language simple, especially when giving instructions.

7. Provide **clear, accessible written instructions**. Chunk them, use imperatives and numbered bullet points. Consider providing an audio or video version.

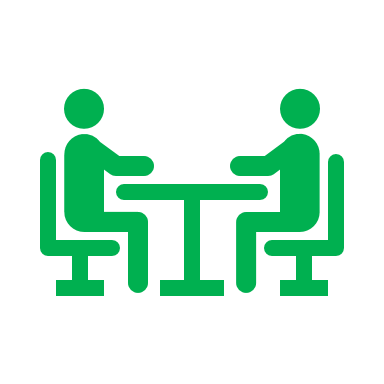
8. **Use pupils’ other languages** to support learning. Encourage the blending of languages and use of mother tongue to research and discuss curriculum concepts, to map or label graphs, to create mind-maps about what they know about a topic, to problem solve or to work on projects with peers.

9. **Differentiate** teaching materials. For example, use visuals extensively to make the curriculum/ conceptual context clear and to support the introduction and consolidation of key vocabulary. Use graphic organisers to present curriculum content and for recording pupil responses.

10. Use **DARTs** (Directed Activities Related to Texts) to record responses to reading tasks.

11. **Scaffold** speaking and writing tasks using sentence starters, sentence frames, matching activities, gap filling, substitution frames and writing frames that incorporate key vocabulary lists and relevant sentence starters.

12. Provide timely **feedback** that is accessible. For example, consider recording with the comments facility in MS Word or screencast feedback to discuss content, either as a group or individually. Alternatively provide audio/video feedback or feedback via a phone call.



**How can EAL parents support home learning?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Primary Pupils** | **Secondary Pupils** |
| **Speaking** – use everyday activities as opportunities for discussion, ask open-ended questions, narrate, ask for explanations or arrange for opportunities to use social English.  **Listening** – provide opportunities for active listening to instructions (e.g. building Lego), audiobooks, podcasts, songs, films, cartoons or YouTube by asking comprehension questions.  **Reading** – encourage children to read books, magazines, captions, flyers, instructions, emails or recipes. Ask questions that practise skills of retrieval, drawing conclusions, inferring or summarising.  **Writing** – provide context by writing diaries, recipes, instructions, posters, emails, text~~s~~ messages, stories or comic books. Use creative ways to practise handwriting (chalk, paint etc.). | · Check if children are aware of expectations and stress the purpose of their work.  · Value their effort and discuss accessing work.  · Use mother tongue to find, process and reflect on ideas and concepts.  · Discuss school feedback and focus on the meaning of instructions.  · Encourage pupils to contact teachers to ask questions and to seek guidance.  · Promote using English for social purposes.  · Encourage pupils to stay positive and motivated. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Communication with families**  **Issues:** Some parents have felt that schools have not communicated enough with them to check that they knew what they need do with their children. This may have been due to perceived language barriers. However, it has meant that they have often not fully engaged with home learning.  **Examples of good practice:** Some schools have postedvideos of teachers explaining tasks and concepts on their website. Others have made phone calls to their pupils on a regular basis, sent personalised emails and spoken to parents weekly. This has been very much valued by parents. EMTAS Liaison Officers have helped some parents by communicating with schools on their behalf, requesting online login details, devices or hard copies of home learning packs. |
| **Home learning**  **Issues:** Some parents who do not speak English felt helpless and unable to support their children. Some parents have found the volume of work a challenge and those who were working from home struggled at times to get their work done as their children were often not able to work independently. Many parents struggled with motivating their children and the lack of routine. Some children missed their friends and the social contact at school, as well as the structure and routine of the school day.  **Examples of good practice:** Many parents are keen on virtual lessons that some schools have offered and children are sometimes happier as they get to see teachers and friends. Some schools are using bilingual staff/translation apps to translate key messages/vocabulary. |
| **Online work**  **Issues:** Some parents have struggled to work with online resources eg. setting up apps, using Zoom and Skype. Whilst many parents valued video calls, some parents who have more than one child felt uncomfortable and that this was an invasion of their privacy.  **Examples of good practice:** A number of schools have found ways to get hard copies of tasks to parents - posting them out or arranging for them to be collected from school. Parents have also been very grateful to those schools who have been able to offer school places for their children. |
| **Returning to school**  **Issues to be mindful of:** Schools will need to consider how they communicate return arrangements to parents whose English is not strong or who have low levels of literacy. In addition, schools need to consider how they will inform, reassure and gain the trust of parents of children from BAME backgrounds who may be particularly worried about the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on ethnic minority groups. For these parents, it may be particularly important to explain the measures being taken to keep their children safe as they return to school. |

**Top guidance and resources for supporting EAL learners,**

**learning at home**

[**Bell Foundation - Home learning guidance & resources**](https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/eal-programme/guidance/covid-19-guidance-and-resources/)Advice for teachers, learners and parents *(see page 6 for more information)*

[**West Sussex EMTAS webinar**](https://westsussex.local-offer.org/information_pages/612-emtas-online-training-offer) Guidance for teachers supporting EAL learners remotely

[**West Sussex EMTAS videos for parents**](https://westsussex.local-offer.org/information_pages/614-ethnic-minority-and-traveller-achievement-service-online-support-offer) Advice videos for parents on how to support EAL learners at home. Versions for primary and secondary phases, recorded in multiple languages.

[**British Council Learn English Kids**](https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/) Advice for parents, videos, games, stories, flash cards & worksheets. *(We suggest schools signpost specific activities for individual children)*

[**British Council Learn English Teens**](https://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/) Advice for learning at home, tips for exams, grammar and vocabulary exercises, listening and literacy activities, games and videos. Students can also interact with other teenagers from all around the world.

[**World Stories**](https://worldstories.org.uk/) A range of stories translated into 31 languages, including English.

[**The International Children’s Digital Library**](http://en.childrenslibrary.org/)- 4000 books in over 50 languages:

**Advice and guidance from the Bell Foundation on involving the parents of children and young people learning through EAL in their child’s learning**

**Guidance for schools**

*‘*[***Working with parents to support the learning of pupils who use EAL’***](https://mk0bellfoundatiw1chu.kinstacdn.com/app/uploads/2020/09/Working-with-parents-to-support-learning-of-pupils-who-use-EAL.pdf) for primary and secondary schools. This document reviews how best to work with parents. It highlights how to encourage a positive dialogue with parents and decide whether more intensive support is needed.

**The Blog**

[***‘Working with parents to support the learning of EAL pupils’***](https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/news/blog-working-with-parents-to-support-the-learning-of-eal-pupils/)Highlights some of the challenges of working with parents, as well as suggestions on how to help.

**Webinar**

A webinar recording for staff (1 hour) entitled *‘*[***How parents can use home languages to support the home learning and school work of EAL pupils’***](https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/eal-programme/guidance/parental-involvement/)

**Guidance for parents**

There are two documents. There are English versions of each document and other versions that have been translated into the 17 most commonly used first languages in UK schools (Arabic, Bengali, Bulgarian, Chinese, Gujarati, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Slovak, Somali, Spanish, Turkish, Urdu)

***Helping children learn* -** Guidance for parents of EAL pupils. The guide covers how to get involved in school life as well as how to support your child’s learning.

***About the English education system* -** Guidance for parents of primary and secondary EAL pupils. The guide covers how to find a school place, the age at which children go to school, finding out about term dates as well as what to expect from school and what school might expect from parents.

**Both guides can be downloaded from** [**here**](https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/eal-programme/guidance/parental-involvement/)**:**

**Lessons learned from lockdown for Traveller families and pupils**

Lockdown has been a tough time and a steep learning curve for everyone. However, this is an opportunity for all in the school community to evaluate and learn lessons from what has worked and what has not.

During lockdown, many Traveller families have experienced practical barriers ranging from lack of IT equipment to poor connectivity and in some instances limited IT skills and experience. Schools have found a mixture of approaches can be beneficial, offering paper copies of learning materials and online learning. Where families have been able to obtain access to devices and suitable internet connections, it has often been be really beneficial for schools to then offer help or assistance in using this technology. Easy access to telephone advice and explanations of the set learning activities can also be helpful, particularly for parents with lower literacy levels.

**Reaching hard to reach families**

Lockdown has meant that most schools have increased connection with their families, through regular telephone conversations. Some schools have been making weekly ‘check-in’ phone calls to see how pupils are engaging with schoolwork and how families are coping, in some cases talking to families with whom they have had little direct contact in the past. The provision of FSM vouchers and food parcels have made families feel cared for and included as part of the school community. Many GRT families speak with great warmth and appreciation about the care schools have shown towards their family during this crisis. The closer bonds with GRT families and ease of communication will be hugely beneficial as schools open more fully and all pupils return once again.

**Time to celebrate GRT culture**

During the time at home, GRT pupils have had time to immerse themselves in their home culture and may have had more chance to develop a wide range of skills and experiences over the months away from school. Some children will have been working alongside their family and learning about business, riding and caring for horses. Others may have been learning carpentry to build bird boxes or other traditional crafts. They will also have helped their parents at home. Increased connectivity between school and home may provide good opportunities to celebrate the skills they have learnt. On returning to school, there could also be occasions to share the rich experiences children have had at home and celebrate their achievements beyond academic success.

**The lockdown has proved that a rich curriculum can be provided at a distance. Can this now continue for the families who travel?**

Under normal circumstances some of our families would travel during the school year. In the case of Showman families this can be for prolonged periods of time. In the past, many schools have struggled to provide remote learning for these pupils. Recent events have proved that Traveller children can access remote learning, which now gives us the opportunity to consider what we can do in the future for those families who must travel for economic purposes.

**Remote Teaching and Learners with a Sensory Impairment**

**General Advice**

* Choose a suitable background that doesn’t have a light source behind it. This will ensure the speaker can be seen.
* Set virtual classroom rules at the start of the session.
* Make sure others on the call are muted.
* Consider the use of the chat feature and how distracting this can be if used all the time.
* When presenting/teaching, consider the background noise in the environment you are working in. This might be other people talking, environmental noises such as doors slamming or simply the sound of the demonstration you are showing the class. In Microsoft Teams you can change the noise suppression settings to get rid of this. This You Tube clip demonstrates how to do this. [You Tube Clip Noise Suppression in MS Teams](https://youtu.be/DMtWR-SQd68)
* Ask students to use the ‘Hand up’ mechanism to make a comment. If you are presenting, you may need a student to tell you when hands go up (depending on the online platform being used).
* Consider the pace of the lesson. Give students time to process what they are seeing and hearing.
* Think about fatigue and whether lessons need to be shorter than they would be in school.
* Check in with students on a regular basis to get feedback about how online learning is going.

**Advice for Learners with a Visual Impairment**

Online Platform

* Encourage students to explore the settings within the online platform to see if the contrast can be changed and/or the text can be made bigger.
* Be aware that looking between a PowerPoint and the chat is likely to be challenging for a learner with a visual impairment.
* Consider controlling the use of the chat function by giving students a set time to make comments in the chat and then read them out. This will help students with a visual impairment.
* A virtual whiteboard can be a different way of enabling students to make comments.
* Think about what you wear as a presenter – a plain top will help reduce visual clutter and provide better contrast against your hands or other objects you might hold in front of you.
* Students may benefit from rest breaks to help minimise visual fatigue.

PowerPoint Presentations

* Consider sending the PowerPoint in advance.
* Ensure slides are good contrast and not too cluttered.
* Consider the use of sound effects to indicate that the slide has changed.
* Choose a clear font such as Arial or Verdana.
* When showing a slide, make sure you are in ‘slide show’ mode so that the slide fills the screen.
* Some learners might find a PowerPoint too complex so consider copying and pasting the text from a PowerPoint into a Word document, making sure that the text is labelled slide 1, slide 2 etc.

**Advice for Learners with a Hearing Impairment**

Online Platform

* The chat function is a good way of providing visual support for new vocabulary and concepts.
* Consider the sound quality of any recorded lessons – wireless headphones and microphones will give a clearer signal than the laptop microphone especially over a distance.
* Wherever possible, use the ‘speaker view’ as this will enable the student to have better access to facial expressions and lip pattern.
* Encourage older students to turn on the ‘live caption’ function – make sure only one person talks at a time otherwise it becomes very difficult to follow a conversation.
* When reading out chapters from a book, consider sending the student a copy of the book/chapter in advance so they can read through once and then use the copy to follow during the online session.

PowerPoint Presentations

* Send copies of PowerPoints in advance (and any notes about the lesson, key vocabulary and concepts).
* Make sure all videos/clips have subtitles running.
* Be aware that with PowerPoints, students haven’t got access to facial expressions and this will make it far more difficult to accurately decode and follow speech.
* Consider the quality of videos and if needed, share a copy of the video directly with the student.

**LBAT Getting Started Guide to supporting**

**pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties**

**when working remotely**



**Key Points**

* Learning remotely provides additional challenges for young people with specific learning difficulties, particularly in literacy.
* Young people who struggle with attention, concentration and organisation are also likely to find remote learning difficult.
* Research indicates that online learning is better delivered when the teaching is tailored to an online format. Attempting to replicate the physical classroom environment and lesson structure is not the most effective strategy.
* A blended approach is most effective, including lesson timings decided by the content, a mixture of interactive live teaching/discussion time and some pre-recorded content which the pupil can keep to form a library/revision bank.

**Planning and Preparation**

* Before starting to teach remotely, make sure the pupil has an appropriate learning environment: consider using 1:1 conversations (possibly with a parent/carer present) and a checklist to check the appropriateness of: the workstation, the noise level, the light level.
* Support each pupil in setting up an organisation system for lesson notes and resources, e.g. a whiteboard or a planner.
* Plan the lesson length around the content – an online lesson will only cover half of what would normally be covered in the classroom.
* Ensure that presentation slides are clear, ideally with a coloured background, and are not “cluttered” with unnecessary clipart, etc.
* Research shows that for pupils with SpLD, reading from paper is easier than reading from a screen. Ensure that the pupil has access to a printer and paper, or provide paper copies of relevant resources.

**Key strategies for supporting literacy difficulties**

* In 1:1 conversations (consider having a parent/carer present) show the pupils how to use assistive features, such as the “Read Aloud” and “Dictate” functions in Microsoft Word.
* Ensure any material to be read is in a format which can use the Read Aloud tool and preferably can be edited, e.g. Word, not a PDF.
* Ensure any material to be read is emailed in advance of the lesson, or shared via a platform such as Google Classroom, so it can be printed (even if using the Read Aloud tool).
* Accept that writing may only be completed using the Dictate tool for whole class activities. Pupils’ microphones will need to be off.
* Ensure students can submit work securely to the teacher in a private forum, to avoid embarrassment or reluctance to submit.
* Questioning is more difficult online – ensure pupils are given time to think and answer, and/or give them a way to send answers in writing, e.g. a chat box.

Useful links:

<https://www.marshall.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Accommodations-and-Modifications.pdf>

<https://www.callscotland.org.uk/downloads/quick-guides/>

**Lesson structure**

* Research shows that an adult with typical attention can focus on a recorded video for a maximum of 6 minutes. Consider the age of pupils and plan the length of any videos accordingly.
* Research has also found that, when showing information on a screen (e.g. slides), having an accompanying image of the person speaking is a distraction. A voiceover alone contributes best and a visual guide such as a highlighting function can be used to guide the viewer.
* Ensure the lesson is broken into sections, moving between live interactive sections, pre-recorded content and individual work.
* Plan movement into the lesson if possible, or movement breaks of at least a minute, at least every 15-20 minutes.
* Keep the webcam on when the pupils are working independently (e.g. on a paper-based task) so they can ask questions if needed.
* Ensure there is a messaging function open for questions too.

**Ten Top Tips for SENCOs during Lockdown**

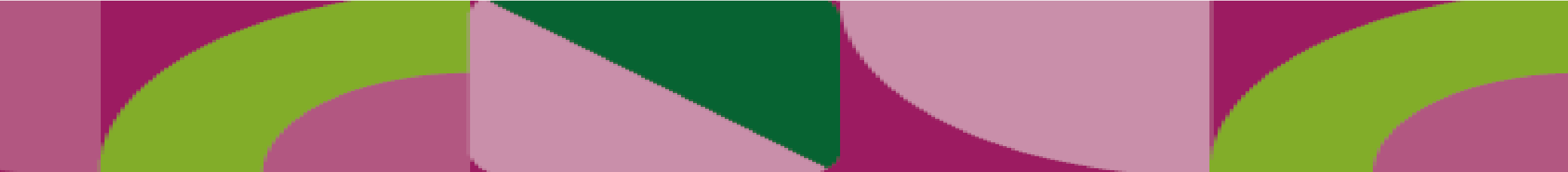
1. Avoid assuming that being at home and studying online is a negative for all pupils with SEN. There may be positives for some (for example, those pupils with high anxiety).

1. Reflect on what could be gained through integrating this online approach on return to school.

1. For 1:1 support, use the breakout rooms on live platforms to support pupils individually and to check learning so it is not in front of the whole class. Support staff could participate in lessons and offer support in breakout rooms.

1. Use and make pupils aware of built-in accessibility tools (for example. the view menu in Office 365 allows you to change the text colour and background:
   * [Accessibility overview of Microsoft Teams - Office Support](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/accessibility-overview-of-microsoft-teams-2d4009e7-1300-4766-87e8-7a217496c3d5)
   * [Google Meet accessibility - Google Meet Help](https://support.google.com/meet/answer/7313544?hl=en)
   * [Accessibility - Zoom](https://zoom.us/accessibility#:~:text=Happy%20Meetings%20for%20Everyone.%201%20Accessibility%20Settings.%20Customize,Automatic%20Transcripts.%205%20Third%20Party%20Captioning.%20More%20items)

1. Engagement is half the story…continue to build those personal relationships with parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. Find out what they actually need/want from education during lockdown.



[**www.nasen.org.u**](http://www.nasen.org.uk/)

[**k**](http://www.nasen.org.uk/)

1. Remember to be mindful of the variety of difficulties that might exist in a pupil’s home: parents working from home, the ICT capability of parents, other children learning at home, space for learning and so on.

1. There are a lot of supportive programmes on the BBC and Oak National Academy have a comprehensive range of lessons available if accessing school online lessons are an issue:
   * [Oak National Academy](https://www.thenational.academy/)
   * [Lockdown learning with the BBC in 2021 - BBC Bitesize](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zvryp4j)

The [Family Fund](https://www.familyfund.org.uk/) has grants available for parents of disabled children to support their child at home; this is especially important during the pandemic as access to respite and other therapeutic services may be limited.

1. To aid communication at home, Widigt have created a [COVID-19 Support | Widgit](https://www.widgit.com/covid19.htm) set of resources to support parents and educators. They include specific Coronavirus symbols and social stories and some inclusive ‘Boredom Buster’ activity sheets in a variety of topics. They also offer a 21-day free trial of the software if parents need more.

1. Look after yourself! Self-care is not selfish but is essential; remember that you can’t pour from an empty cup. As SENCOs we know you are working above and beyond in normal times and this pandemic is making this more so. Take a break and take care of your wellbeing. The [Headspace for Educators](https://www.headspace.com/educators) and [Calm - Free for Schools](https://www.calm.com/schools?from=/schools) apps are free for educators and offer mindfulness and support.

**NASEN Guide - SEND and Remote Learning Reflection Questions**

Remote learning is here to stay for at least another few weeks and assessing the impact and sustainability is key for all pupils but especially so for pupils with SEND. Below are some prompt questions to use for yourself or with staff across departments or Key Stages to build up an understanding of the intent, implementation, and impact of provision for those pupils with SEND within your school. This information may be useful to keep your SEND governor informed.

* How are you ensuring that pupils with SEND are engaging in online learning?
* What feedback are you providing to them and how is this being done?
* How are you ensuring pre-SEND pupils continue to be assessed and supported through a graduated approach when providing online learning?
* How are you ensuring that work is pitched at the correct level for pupils with SEND?
* How are you ensuring the curriculum for pupils with SEND is accessible?
* What support are you providing for families of children with SEND to access remote learning? This may be online or other means.
* What is the role of the TA in supporting online learning or learning in a bubble and has any training or support been provided for this?
* How are you ensuring that pupils who require additional support from external agencies are still receiving this during lockdown?
* How are you recording the input from external agencies and tracking progress?
* What is in place to support the social, emotional and mental health of pupils with SEND?
* How are you supporting pupils with SEND who are identified as having safeguarding concerns?
* What support can you access through your Local Authority?
* For pupils with an EHC plan, to what extent has the provision been able to be met to ensure their outcomes are continuing to be addressed?
* For pupils at SEN support, to what extent has the provision been able to be met to ensure their outcomes are continuing to be addressed?

**Useful Information and Links**

**Dyslexia** - Supporting a child with dyslexia at home - British Dyslexia Association/BBC Bitesize <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z6mts4j>

**Speech and Language** – Oak National Academy provide specialist lessons with a focus on speech and language targets.

**National Association of Special Educational Needs** (NASEN) [www.nasen.org.uk](http://www.nasen.org.uk)

**Contacts – Who can help**

**Autism and Social Communication Team**

[Kathy.Lockyear@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Kathy.Lockyear@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Learning and Behaviour Advisory Team**

[Kathy.Lockyear@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Kathy.Lockyear@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Educational Psychology Service**

[Andrea.Morgan@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Andrea.Morgan@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service** [Olly.Davidson@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Olly.Davidson@westsussex.gov.uk)

**SEN Assessment Team**

[Jo.Hill@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Jo.Hill@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Sensory Support Team**

Pupils with a hearing Impairment [Karen.Cruicks@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.Cruicks@westsussex.gov.uk)

Pupils with a visual Impairment [Sandra.Greatorex@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Sandra.Greatorex@westsussex.gov.uk)

**SEND and Inclusion Advisers**

North [Claire.Prince@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Claire.Prince@westsussex.gov.uk)

South [Rachel.McDonald-Taylor@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Rachel.McDonald-Taylor@westsussex.gov.uk)

Mid [Gemma.Humphrey@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Gemma.Humphrey@westsussex.gov.uk)

West [Louise.Burgess@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Louise.Burgess@westsussex.gov.uk)