



CORONAVIRUS

**PROTECT
YOURSELF
& OTHERS**

Briefing for PCF – Friday 17th April 2020

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect our daily lives, I would like to extend my admiration to you as parents and carers for how you are all managing within the constraints and challenges that I am sure you are potentially facing daily.

The Local Authority, schools and partners are continuing to work within best endeavours to deliver provision and services and although this may be in different ways due to the restrictions of social distancing, the need for self-isolation and shielding, etc. please be assured that we are here to support children and families in Leicestershire.

Communications between colleagues and with families is now happening mostly in a 'virtual' world and we are continuing to develop our expertise and knowledge so that we can maximise the technologies and tools available.

An example of the challenges we are experiencing relates to assessments by Educational Psychologists. When the local authority agrees to undertake an assessment of a child or young person's needs during the coronavirus pandemic, the following wording will be included in the Educational Psychologists report:

"this report was written based on a telephone consultation and does not constitute a full advice due to current working arrangements during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the assessment in this report only offers a 'snapshot' of the child or young person's strengths and educational needs, and consequently is limited in terms of its focus and range. It is consequently, very important that the data presented in this report is read in conjunction with other professional reports and triangulated further with the child or young person, his/her family and the professionals working with them."

We also continue to work closely with settings, schools and other learning provisions, many of whom have been able to provide some support to the most vulnerable families and the children of key workers even over the Easter holiday period, including the Bank Holidays. For this too I'm sure you will share my appreciation for the dedication and commitment shown by so many during this time of adversity.

During this period Healthy Together teams are still available to provide advice and support to children and families. Please continue to refer as usual by either telephone or by emailing the service using the electronic referral form. Parents and young people can contact the teams directly using Chat Health, the text service, on 07520 615 382 (for Leicestershire and Rutland). Their websites also contain advice and support and are being updated regularly. They can be found at:

<https://healthforunder5s.co.uk/> <https://www.healthforkids.co.uk/> <https://www.healthforteens.co.uk/>

The following weblink may also be useful for parents and carers:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

The Children's Commissioner for England has also published a useful and accessible guide for children and young people and the link can be downloaded here:

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/cco-childrens-guide-to-coronavirus.pdf>

The Department for Education has published online educational resources for schools and parents to help children to learn at home. It provides a list of activities both educational and fun for parents and carers to use with children. I thought it would be useful to share with you for your families and also for those of you that are supporting your own children at home.

Our Director for Children's Services, Jane Moore, has also come across this book explaining the coronavirus to children, illustrated by Axel Scheffler and she has asked me to share this with you. It's a free book about the coronavirus and the measures taken to control it. The authors have worked with experts to answer key questions to help children understand the changing world around them in simple and age-appropriate language for children. It's really lovely.

https://nosycrowcoronavirus.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/Coronavirus_ABookForChildren.pdf

Please be assured that I will continue to send these regular briefings during the Covid-19 outbreak to inform you of any updates and information that you may find useful. Meanwhile, keep safe and take care.


