



LA Briefing for PCF – 13th July 2020

As we come to the end of a very challenging school term I would like to say thank you to all the parents and carers in Leicestershire for your understanding and support during this very difficult time. I know that for many, having your children at home when they would normally be at school has placed enormous pressure on families this has been coupled with the anxieties around Covid-19, the necessary shielding of our vulnerable family members. We're all aware of the impact this has had on wider society, the economy, jobs, treatment delays, with new rules and constantly changing guidance also having to be followed, it's been very stressful for many people.

It's been nearly 4 months that we have been delivering our services through the pandemic. Colleagues across the council and partner organisations have all had to work in such a different way. Teachers, support workers, medical professionals and indeed all who have kept the wheels turning have worked with each other, our children and families with compassion, innovation and tenacity and in a way that has retained a core focus on children and keeping children safe. Countless colleagues have worked tirelessly to support schools and children in schools across Leicestershire and this has enabled many children to continue their learning, both at home and in schools and settings. I'm sure that, like me, you greatly appreciate all the adjustments and efforts that staff have made to continue to deliver support and services and far as possible, whilst juggling working from home with caring for their own families.

This week the Lead Member for Children and Family Services, Ivan Ould retired from the post and Deborah Taylor was confirmed as our Lead Member. Deborah has sent the following communication to staff and I know that she would want parents and carers to hear the same message:

"I have worked closely with Ivan over the last two years and I have learnt from the best! I have a big task to follow in his footsteps and it may take me a while to find my feet, but I just wanted you all to know, you have my full support and I am always interested to hear from you and I will always try my best to support you and the children we care for."

Co-production week

Last week was co-production week and the theme for this year has been **"Co-production in a Changing World"**. A key piece of work we are beginning is the development of a Written Statement of Action in response to the key issues that the Ofsted/CQC inspection highlighted in their recently published report following their visit to Leicestershire in February.

Leicestershire has a recently established young people's autism forum and to start to engage with stakeholders we have written to members of this group asking them to complete a questionnaire so that we can include this feedback in the action plan that we submit to Ofsted

by the early October 2020 deadline. We would also welcome input from other parents, carers, children and young people to this important piece of work and details of how you can get involved are on the inspection pages of the Local Offer website:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs-and-disability/send-inspection-by-ofsted-and-care-quality-commission>

Emotional Health and Wellbeing – Tips for Parents and Carers

The Leicestershire Educational Psychology Service has prepared the following information.

Returning to school or college after the ‘lockdown’ is likely to be an exciting but also worrying time for children and young people. As a parent or carer, you might be a little anxious too. This is perfectly understandable. But there are some simple things you can do to help them to prepare for their ‘new normal’. We hope that the following tips will help you support your child’s successful return to school/college.

Time to talk – your child is likely to experience a mix of emotions about returning to school or college, from excited and eager, to concern, worry and anxiety. Be available to listen to your child’s thoughts and concerns, and help them to explore and find ways of managing more difficult feelings.

Offer reassurance – explain that these feelings are normal. Like all feelings, they will change and come and go.

Be a positive role model – model coping strategies that you use to help you feel calm and positive e.g. being active and using breathing and calming techniques. If appropriate, talk about your thoughts about returning to ‘normal’ life and/or work and the ways that you are managing and coping with difficult feelings.

Talk about school or college – talk about the routines, rules and practices that they were familiar with. Some of these will have changed (e.g. social distancing and hygiene measures, staying in teaching ‘bubbles’) but many will have stayed the same (e.g. the building, grounds, adults and students). Focus on the positives, for example, seeing their friends again.

Routines – in most families, routines around work, play, sleep and time spent on digital technology have become flexible. This is perfectly normal and something all young people are familiar with, particularly during summer holidays. Prepare for school/college going back the same way that you would approach the end of the summer holidays.

Sleep routines – during term time, a minimum of 9 to 11 hours of good sleep is recommended for 11-13 year olds, with 8 to 9 hours for 14-17 year olds. Encourage your child to start returning to a normal term-time sleep routine at least two weeks before a return to school/college. Avoid long lie-ins (especially at weekends) and push sleep forward by 15 minutes each day to help them adjust to earlier bedtimes and wake-ups.

Encourage healthy routines – healthy habits around exercise and diet will help to improve sleep, learning and wellbeing. Encourage at least 1 hour of exercise a day.

Manage screen time – if possible, don't have screens (e.g. TV, mobile phone, tablet) in the bedroom at night. Encourage your child to have at least 1 hour of 'screen free' time before bed. Use a blue light filter or app if possible to stop the light from screens interfering with sleep.



Helpful tools and resources

Helping to manage worries:

- Dana and the Doom Merchant is a story about change, loss and transition; what helps and what doesn't. A narrated version can be found here: [Dana and the Doom Merchant](#)
- [Reading Well](#) recommends expert endorsed books about mental health in general, including advice and information about issues like anxiety, stress, confidence and self-esteem.
- NHS Grampian have produced resource packs for different age groups and areas of need, focusing on coping with anxiety and worry around COVID-19: [COVID Resources](#)

When things are feeling tough:

- Approaches such as CBT and Mindfulness can be used to help young people to begin to explore and manage these feelings and promote resilience.
- [CAMHS Resources](#) offers a range of suggested downloads, apps and book recommendations. They also provide website links to support for young people and families including **Young Minds**, **Child Bereavement UK**, and **MindMate**.
- [Kooth](#) is an online mental health service for children and young people (11-18 years) providing free access to a community of peers and experienced counsellors.

Be a positive role model:

- The Leicestershire NHS '[5 Ways to Wellbeing](#)' provides 5 helpful steps (including links to local resources) to help improve mental health and wellbeing during these challenging times.

Healthy Routines and Sleep:

- The NHS provides guidance on:
 - [Sleep for Teenagers](#)
 - [Exercise for children and young people](#)
 - [Healthy Eating for Teens](#)
 - [Health for Teens](#) is a website designed for teenagers and covers everything they need to know about keeping healthy and well including facts about COVID-19.

Leicestershire Educational Psychology Service Helpline – available daily during the coronavirus pandemic to offer telephone advice and support to Leicestershire parents and carers.

- Tel: **0116 305 5100**; **Monday to Friday, between 9am and 11.30am** including school holidays.

We have also developed a parent and carer guide on [Supporting children and young people with additional needs at home during COVID 19](#)

Leicestershire Partnership Trust (Health Provider Services)

We, the Leicestershire Partnership Trust and our health, education and social care colleagues are continuing to develop recovery plans to support the children and young people of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to return to school safely and access healthcare support. Whilst there's still some uncertainty about what education access and healthcare delivery will look like at the start of the new school year, it provides an opportunity for us all to reflect on what we have achieved during the pandemic.

During the initial “lockdown” phase, government guidance specified that many clinical services should be scaled back or closed completely in order to reduce social contact. In light of most recent reports highlighting a rise in cases around the Leicester area, we will continue to only deliver essential care face-to-face, with staff wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment. Many of our services have modified how they deliver care, using telephone consultations or video conferencing for assessments. Many of our staff received additional training to support the delivery of care for patients requiring hospital admission for coronavirus. These individuals are ready to respond to the surge if required.

From the beginning of lockdown, Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) services have been reviewing and monitoring clinical risks. Specific attention has been given to children and young people with Education Health and Care plans (EHCPs). The Trust is currently working closely with local authority partners to review and report on the delivery of clinical support outlined in EHCPs.

Each local authority has requested assurance in relation to provision for children and young people with EHCPs from key vulnerable groups. We are continuing to register and review provision delivered to date, as we receive these requests from each authority.

We have also taken time to refresh our annual review templates to reflect both the provision delivered and progress achieved towards agreed outcomes.

We plan to launch the updated reports for the start of the new school year as part of our Covid-19 recovery plan. Schools tell us that they are often unsure about the services involved in a child or young person's care, and a single point of contact will eliminate the need to send individual invitations to each community health service. A dedicated email account has been set up to support schools to request annual review advice from LPT services. For the process to work, requests will need to be submitted six weeks prior to a planned meeting, requests will be registered, and advice requests forwarded to the professionals involved in the care of your child or young person. Once secure email links are confirmed, advice can then be returned directly to school two weeks prior to the meeting date to support compliance with the SEND code of practice.

We anticipate that this new approach will support communication and clarity in relation to how services are provided and how they contribute to the meeting the needs of children and young people with EHCPs

The Covid-19 imposed restrictions have created an opportunity for us to review some of our SEND related activity and to consider how we can improve processes for the future as we establish our new ways of working.

In doing this, we are continuing to seek your feedback on our processes and consider how we can improve your experience with our services.

Lived Experience Matters is a consultancy who specialise in supporting individuals to share their lived experience to inform and influence positive change. Lived Experience Matters is delivering an online Patient Leadership Programme and we are looking to recruit people to take part.

- **Who's it for?** Service users/patients who access services at LPT
- **Aims:** The programme supports service users/patients to develop their strategic influencing, leadership and decision making skills. It focuses on strengthening your abilities, knowledge and confidence to drive, design, deliver, improve, review and support change across LPT services.



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Overview of Online
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Introduction to the
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Expressions of
Interest.pdf



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Deadline for applications is **Monday 10th August 2020.**

Neurodevelopmental pathway update

The Neurodevelopment (ND) Transformation Programme was initiated and agreed in February 2020 across health and local authority services in Leicester, Leicestershire and

Rutland to improve the outcomes of children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

The aims are:

- to identify what needs to be in place to support their diagnosis and care, and how this can be better integrated and monitored
- to agree opportunities for improvement and clear quality standards
- to implement new, and sustainable delivery, finance and workforce models that will help us to make the most effective use of resources available
- To ensure the voice of the child or young person remains paramount

Initial planning was undertaken to scope the work that needed to be done to improve the pathway, including parent / carer engagement. Unfortunately, the impact of Covid-19 has caused some delay. However, this does not demonstrate a lack of commitment to transformation of the Neurodevelopmental pathway, and we are keen to understand parent/ carer and service users' views on how they would like to be involved.

We sincerely hope you and your family are keeping well. If you have any concerns or questions relating to your child's care, please call the appropriate service's administrative team.

Their contact details can be found on our website here:

<https://www.leicspart.nhs.uk/services/> or via your 'Local Offer'.

Some further useful resources are available on our Health for Kids

<https://www.healthforkids.co.uk> and Health for Teens <https://www.healthforteens.co.uk> websites.

<p>Download our 'Looking After Yourself' kit</p>  <p>bit.ly/lookafteryourselfkit</p>	<p> ChatHealth</p> <p>Text a public health nurse (school nurse) for confidential advice and support</p> <p>Leicester city: 07520 615 381</p> <p>Leicestershire and Rutland: 07520 615 382</p>	<p>Download our 'Heading Back to School' kit</p>  <p>bit.ly/Backtoschoolpack</p>
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Urgent mental health support can be accessed via the Central Access Point (CAP) on 0116 295 3060

Transport Update

We fully appreciate the concerns that parents and carers are having about transport arrangements for their child(ren) returning to school after the summer break, whether it will be available and what the offer will be. Transport colleagues have been working very hard over recent weeks to try to managing the ever changing requirements where children and young people have been returning to school in some instances, often part-time. This was then made even more challenging when the city and parts of Leicestershire 're-locked' under the government directive following a surge in Covid-19 cases in some parts of our local area.

Risk assessments are being carried out where local authority transport is provided to and from school and the transport team will be working over the next few weeks to determine the level of risk for each eligible child and young person. This will be done in conjunction with schools with parents and carers will be made aware of proposed arrangements in advance of the new school term starting at the end of August. Here is a link to some Frequently Asked Questions and responses so your queries may be answered here.

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/school-transport/home-to-school-transport-coronavirus-update-for-autumn-2020>

As soon as the council is provided with the promised detailed advice from the government we will have a fuller update direct from the transport team in the next briefing. Here is the link to the most recent information published on the 2nd July. Transport information is included in Section 2. You will note that it is clearly stated, ***'DfE will shortly publish new guidance to local authorities on providing dedicated school transport, based on the framework outlined here.'***

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

Kind Regards,
Paula Sumner



During this time of social distancing and isolation, please remember, you are not alone.

The right support for you or your loved ones is just a click or a phone call away.

For further support on where to turn if you're struggling, feeling lonely or worried about drug or alcohol use, go to

www.startaconversation.co.uk

Remember to follow Government guidelines on social distancing at all times.