



Bolton Parent Carers & Bolton Information Advisory Service

Working together for Bolton's SEND families

Joint Bulletin 11 - 5th June 2020

What has happened this week?

Whether you've been sunning yourself and turning crispy like us the first half of the week whilst working from home/garden, or been drenched to the skin the second half of the week, we hope you are all keeping well. For some of us, we are enjoying the second week of 'half term,' others are concluding the end of the first week back to school, and some will still be wondering whether its Thursday or Friday (much like us!). There has been a development from the government this week that we will break down for you, as well as our usual instalments from the Educational Psychology Service and Bolton Startwell, plus some other little nuggets to reiterate some of our previous messages. See you next week!



Back to school..... or not!

We have covered the schools reopening guidance on several occasions leading up to 1st June. What we know now, is that all of us will have very different experiences of this, and we wanted to just highlight some of the points below;

- Some schools may have chosen **not** to have children return from June 1st. Each school were informed to make their own decision based on what is best for that particular school. This could be based on a limited uptake from parents wanting their children to attend, how many staff they have able to attend, and whether they feel they can manage safety in school. If you child's school chose not to open, they must still be working towards reopening.
- Special schools were not expected to follow the same pattern. The guidance about the specific year groups returning to schools, was not extended to special schools. Their guidance about who to have in, is based around risk assessments. They still need to start integrating more children back in to school, but it is based on individual children's cases, as opposed to all of year 6, for example.
- Schools that have reopened look very different indeed. For those schools that have reopened, they've had to adopt lots of new measures to ensure children and staff can be kept as safe as possible. These vary between the different schools, but common things include staggered start and finish times, being outside for learning as much as possible, remaining in small 'bubbles' (small group of the same children and staff), and putting some play equipment out of bounds for now.
- Keyworker children, and those who are considered vulnerable who have been attending school since the lockdown started, should continue to be offered their place.

Bolton Council

How Bolton are supporting children and young people who have EHC plans

We told you last time that the LA were writing to **all** parents, carers and young people who have an EHC plan, about how EHC plans are affected by the 'reasonable endeavours' duty, to secure educational and health based provision within them.

The letter invited you to discuss the provision being made (or not being made), for your children at this current time, especially if the lack of provision is having a significant impact on them. The SEND assessment team will work with you to address these issues.

This applies whether your child is in school, or not.

By now, you should have received your letter. It is very important that if you are worried about your child's education because things from the plan can't be delivered due to the COVID outbreak, that you contact the SEND assessment team to discuss this.

You might not be feeling you need to make a call right now, if you are managing ok at the moment, but, the reality is, we have no idea when things will be completely up and running. It would be worth keeping your letter safe, and, if you find later down the line that you do need to discuss the plan and provision, you can always call the team then to discuss.

If you haven't had this letter, please let us know by texting 0771 5462690, and we will arrange for

SEN Support

Is your child starting primary school in September?

Do they have special educational needs, but you don't have an EHC plan?

We are setting dates to hold two **virtual workshops** on the legal framework SEN support, for children starting school without an EHC plan. This could be because your child doesn't require a Plan, but may need extra help, or maybe a plan is still being assessed. There will be a daytime and evening session. As always, they are free to all, and delivered by Cheryl from IAS and Nan from BPC. We will be holding these on **Tuesday 16th June at 7.30pm** and **Wednesday 18th June at 11:30am**.



To book your place visit www.boltonparents.org.uk/sen-support-webinar/

When you join us for a virtual workshop you can watch on a PC, tablet or smartphone. You can see us, hear us and see our presentation—but we can't see or hear you! So you can relax and not worry about being on screen or the kids making noise! You can ask us questions as we go along through a chat function on the webinar.



The Tizard Centre at the University of Kent have produced a great booklet to use with children, young people and adults with learning disabilities and/or autism to give tips on how to manage and adapt during these different times.

[Click this link to see their booklet](#)



Our service updates...

Bolton IAS and Bolton Parent Carers work together regularly, which is why it was a quick and easy decision back in March to joint together to bring you this bulletin. Both organisations are also still operating through this period, so we thought we'd update you on what we are doing...



Bolton Information Advisory Service (IAS) are back in our office!

To reflect the fact that some of your children are accessing school, as of 1st June, IAS are **partially** back in the office...

Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, you can contact us, at our office, on 01204 848722 as usual. There will be an officer on hand to speak to you.

Mondays and Tuesdays, parents needing support from IAS should still use the contact methods we have been using throughout lockdown:

Text 0771 5462690 to book an appointment for a call back

Email iasoutofhours@outlook.com for a full response within 24 hours

Check our website www.iasbolton.com

If you already have an allocated officer, you can contact them directly by email if you have their details



Bolton Parent Carers

Our role is to make sure that parents and carers voices are heard at a local and national level. We are very much still doing this.

We have continued to be included by SEND leads in their response to Covid locally. We continue to attend (online) strategic meetings and we make sure your experiences are heard. We are also still working on projects that aren't covid related! We are part of a task group that is developing a SEN Support guide for schools in Bolton, it's going to be a fabulous tool for schools and parents alike to be able to really understand the SEN Support framework and expectations locally. We are also working on the revamp of the online local offer!

We also meet (online) weekly as a North West region of parent carer forums and escalate any local issues to our regional representative. Kath Bromfield. Kath reports these in nationally and they are fed into the Department for Education and NHS England. Several of the changes that happened to guidance over the past couple of months came about due to this. We are currently focusing on making sure the Department for Education is kept up to date with parent carer experiences of the school response and how parents are being involved in return to school decisions; and also feeding back on the NHS recovery stage as we are hoping to see more departments start to work out how to restore their service.



Bolton Council

Bolton Council Educational Psychology Service Helpline

The Educational Psychology service helpline continues to operate. You can call them to discuss, for example, any concerns or questions you may have about your child and their education, or any matters regarding supporting them, meeting need, helping with emotional health in children..

The numbers for the helpline for the next 2 weeks, starting on Monday 8th June, are as follows:

Monday 9.00am-12.30pm - 07768 353621

Wednesday 1.00pm-5.00pm - 07919 564919

Friday 9.00am—12.30pm – 07768 352728

We also have this week's newsletter from Bolton's educational psychology team for you at the end of the bulletin. This week's they have teamed up with Ladywood Outreach and the topic is supporting children with literacy difficulties.



The Start Well EY SEND team have worked with a range of partners and collated some resources which might help parents and carers at home during the COVID- 19 pandemic with young children who have SEND. We hope that they can be used to support and offer ideas at this very challenging time. Special thanks to the team at Green Fold Special School (Part of the Orchards Federation) for their contribution to this project.

This week - Physical Development, click on the title links to be directed to the resource,

[Trampolines and Rebound Therapy](#) - Using the trampoline is an enjoyable and fun way for children to develop a variety of skills. Sam Ball, a Teaching Assistant from Green Fold Special School (Part of the Orchards Federation) has created this user friendly guide to offer ideas on how to help your child learn through movement. Includes symbols to help you get started.

[Move](#) – Catherine Brooks who is a Teaching Assistant at Green Fold Special School (part of The Orchards Federation) has designed this activity for young children with limited movement. If your child is seen by a physio therapist and you have been shown passive movements and stretches to perform with your child then this could be for you!

[Hands Programme](#) – Adele Holland is a Teaching Assistant at Green Fold Special School (part of The Orchards Federation) – she has adapted this simple version of the Hands Programme to enable parents of young children with Physical Disabilities to support their child in warming up before carrying out activities or practicing daily independence skills. (Please use resources with caution and always under adult supervision)

[For more parent support resources including FAQ's, Home Learning, Internet Safety, Physical, Exploring the Senses and Strategies, visit the Start Well website.](#)



Do you use public transport to do the school run/ get to work?

The government announced on Thursday 5th June that as of Monday 15th June, it will be mandatory to wear a face covering when using public transport. You may well be refused access to the vehicle without one, and can be fined too by the police. This is not extended to taxis, however, you may be asked to follow the instructions from your driver, as to where to sit in the car.

The guidance also says that for people with a disability, people with breathing difficulties and very small children, they can choose not to wear a covering if this is better suited to their needs.

A face covering isn't just a mask. It can be a scarf, or any type of material to cover your face and nose. The government announcement can be read by clicking here www.gov.uk



Guidance for the public on the phased return of outdoor sport and recreation, and gatherings

From this week, you can now exercise alone, with members of your household, or with up to, but no more than 5 other people from outside your household while keeping 2 metres apart at all times. Gatherings of more than 6 people are not permitted (unless an exemption applies, for example, if you are from one household or if it's essential for work purposes). Social distancing of 2 metres applies to people outside of your household. If you are playing sport or exercising with people from your own household, the 2 metre rule does not apply.

You can also now meet with others **in their gardens** so long as the group doesn't have more than six people, and social distancing is maintained. You are allowed to go inside someone's home to use the toilet for example, or to pass through their home to access the garden, but you are not allowed to stay inside someone else's house except for these instances.



Reminder on support available to

Both the IAS and BPC websites have a wide range of resources and information to keep you up to date and busy throughout this time. You can find us at

www.iasbolton.com and www.boltonparents.org.uk

IAS and BPC are holding coffee mornings by Zoom. Each one is hosted by Frankie from Bolton Parent Carers. These are every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from 11.30am until 12.30pm. For more information visit www.boltonparents.org.uk/join-in

Our IAS 'natter and listen' service is still here for anyone who needs it- whether you just need some adult conversation, need to let off some steam, want some advice or reassurance, or just someone to call a friend to talk about your day, we are here. Simply text 07467943495 and we will arrange a call back for you whenever you want to talk. Cheryl, Nan, Mike and Karen are happy to help wherever we can.



Feeling the pinch due to Covid-19?

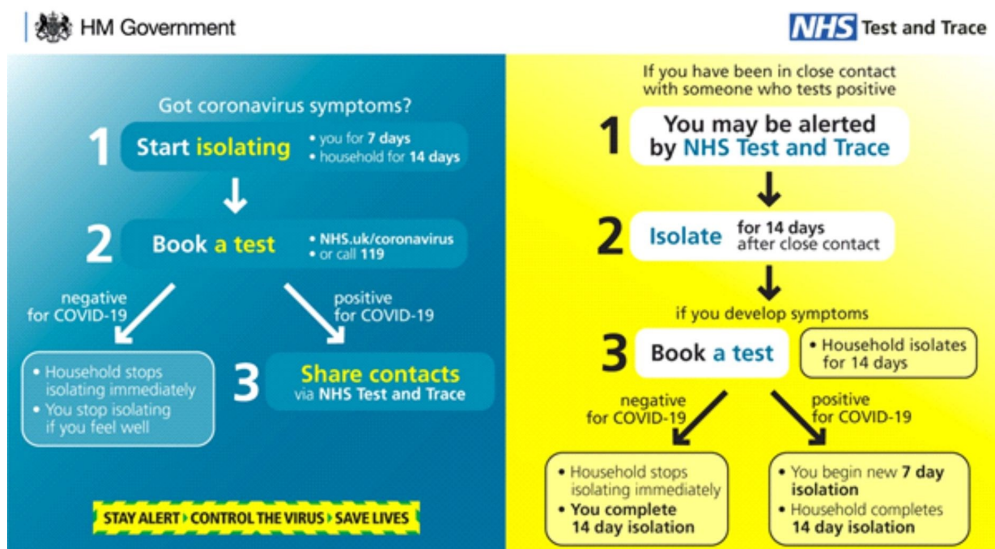
If you are struggling financially at this difficult time, [Bolton's Money Skills Service](#) offers free, confidential and impartial services to people who live, work or study in the borough, including Bolton Council employees. The service can help with:

- homelessness prevention advice and assistance for mortgage and rent arrears
- dealing with Council Tax and fuel arrears
- affordable and realistic payment arrangements negotiated
- advice and assistance with court forms including Debt Relief Orders (DRO), Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVA), Bankruptcy

Test and trace scheme- what is it?

You may have heard a lot this week about the NHS test and trace scheme. The scheme is intended to identify those who have tested positive for Coronavirus, and to trace everyone who they have been in contact with, to alert them to the fact they could have been infected.

The picture below demonstrates how this system works. The blue side is what **you** should do if you think you may have contracted coronavirus. The yellow side is what will happen if the NHS believe you have been with someone who has tested positive.



We will be back next week. In the meantime, please do make use of the joint IAS/BPC support package mentioned. All past copies of these bulletins can be found [online](#)

Stay well and look after each other, Cheryl and the IAS team, and Nan and BPC



Bolton Educational Psychology Service and Ladywood Outreach

Newsletter - 5th June 2020

Parents supporting children with literacy difficulties

This newsletter aims to provide ideas about how parents can support children and young people with literacy difficulties at home, helping them to learn and produce answers in different ways.

Not all children with literacy difficulties will need to use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) but we have provided links and suggestions here

Some Apps are free (please see our link below), but some require subscription. It may be useful to contact your school's SENCo in the first instance to ask what is available via school.

Suggestion for the week

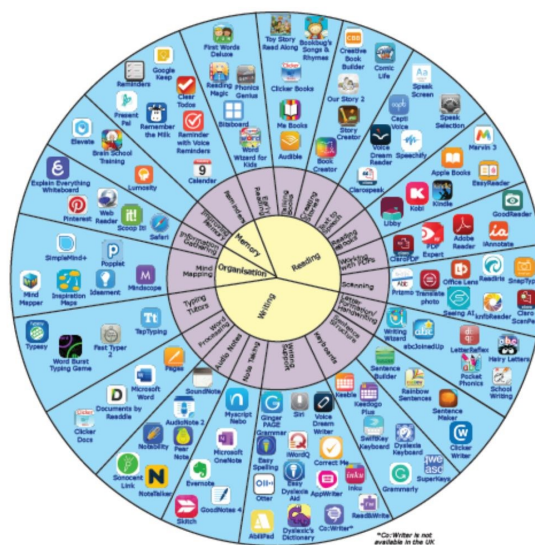
Try teaching/learning a topic in a multi sensory way:

- Make a mind map
- Draw it
- Act it
- Dance it
- Make a song
- Make a model
- make an audio or video recording
- Make a spoken quiz
- Make a documentary
- Make a boardgame
- Throw bean bags onto correct answers

Apps for literacy difficulties

There is a wide range of apps available to help support and engage learners with literacy difficulties, many focusing on multi-sensory teaching principles. The use of ICT to support literacy difficulties can be a fun and engaging way to boost key skills. Below is a comprehensive list of suggested apps that may be of use, many apps work on particular skills such as reading or spelling so try to ensure the most appropriate apps are chosen for the particular area of weakness. Please **click the image** below to download a larger and interactive copy of the image

iPad Apps for Learners with Dyslexia/
Reading and Writing Difficulties



Assistive technology for literacy difficulties

Assistive technology has increasingly become a crucial aid in helping remove barriers to learning and encourage independence. Assistive technology can be hardware or software based and aims to accommodate difficulties with literacy and allow the user to show their true understanding and ability. Some examples of popular assistive technologies are outlined below: (further suggestions are available at www.callscotland.org.uk)

Reading pens are pocket sized devices that allow the user to scan individual words or whole sentences. The pen then reads the text out loud.



Speech activated software allows the user to translate text to speech or dictate their own speech into text. Lots of examples are available to suit all technology platforms



Touch typing software teaches the user fast and fluent typing skills, which is ideal for those with persistent writing difficulties.



Mind mapping tools allow the user to generate lots of ideas and visually structure information in their preferred learning style. They can be useful for presenting information, organising ideas and note taking



Helping early readers with reading and spelling

Keep activities short. Focus on what the learner did well

- i-spy games
- Card games matching words
- Card games matching beginning or end sounds in words
- Spot the difference— present similar words on cards with simple differences to spot
- Rhyme games- “*what rhymes with ...?*”
- Spoonerisms—take two words and swap the initial sounds e.g. red top; ted rop try with more complicated initial sounds e.g. green stick steen grick; and perhaps with ending sounds too

To improve spelling

www.spellingframe.co.uk

www.bbc.co.uk/education

www.education.com/

To help develop understanding of letter sounds

www.ateachableteacher.com

Echo reading

www.pedellreadingstrategies.weebly.com/

Also try shared reading with an adult, each day, discussing what is happening in the story, or audiobooks from an online library, taking the emphasis off their reading.

Educational Psychology Service
Schools ICT
Smithhills Dean Road
Bolton
BL1 6JT
Telephone: 01204 338612

Ladywood Outreach Service
Masefield Road
Little Lever
Bolton
BL3 1NG
Telephone: 01204 333400

Many people with literacy difficulties (and, indeed, most of us) benefit from strategies to improve our working memory. Please see our future newsletter

Thanks to Richard Skelton and other Educational Psychology colleagues for their help in collating ideas.