# Guidance for returning to school in September – what this means for children and young people with SEND

Schools are being asked to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum for children with SEND, including full educational and care support. There is a recognition that some children may not be able to access home learning without adult support. Schools are being asked to work with families on this curriculum recognising that some of this may be delivered at home.

1. **Support staff and specialists**

Children with SEND may need tailored help and preparation for returning to school. Teachers and special educational needs coordinators are being asked to plan to meet these needs. [UNICEF](https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/supporting-your-childs-mental-health-during-covid-19-school-return) has provided some general advice on supporting children going back to school.

Schools are being advised they ensure appropriate support is made available, for example using teaching assistants. The guidance is also recommending that schools enable specialist staff from both in and outside the school to work with children in different classes or year groups.

There is a recognition that in the event of any redeployment of teaching assistants, this should not be at the expense of supporting children with SEND. Headteachers should be satisfied that those working with children with SEND have appropriate skills, expertise, and experience.

Safe staffing ratios need to be met, and/or specific training undertaken for any interventions or care for children with complex needs.

Specialists, therapists, clinicians, and other support staff should provide interventions as usual and adhere to the health and safety guidance of each school.

If a child attends more than one setting, for example at a mainstream school and special school; schools are being advised to work collaboratively. This approach would enable them to address any risks identified and allow them to jointly deliver a broad and balanced curriculum for the child.

The government have produced a useful guide which covers [what parents need to know](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak) about returning to school.

If you have concerns about EHCP and need advice you can contact [IPSEA](https://www.ipsea.org.uk/Pages/Category/get-support).

If, for any reason you need to complain to your local authority about the support your child is receiving you can get [more information here.](https://www.ipsea.org.uk/making-a-complaint-about-a-local-authority)

**Travel**

Children with SEND use a variety of transport methods to get to and from school. The approach taken to ensure the safety of children using transport will need to reflect measures that are deemed reasonable in each circumstance. If you need support about transport

issues you can find [further guidance here](https://www.ipsea.org.uk/Pages/Category/transport-to-school-or-college).

**School trips**

Schools can resume non-overnight domestic educational visits from the autumn. These will include any trips for children with SEND connected with their preparation for adulthood (for example, workplace visits, travel training etc.). This should be done in line with protective measures, and risk assessments. [Gov.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance) has more information on this.

**Mental health and well-being**

The government is advising that schools will need to work with local services (such as health and the local authority) to ensure that services and support are in place for a smooth return to schools for children.

It is recognised that children may have increased anxiety and could be experiencing trauma and bereavement. Additionally, the partial closure of schools may have impacted their behaviour.

Children may need additional support and access to services such as educational psychologists, social workers, and counsellors. [The charity Childline](https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/feelings-emotions/when-someone-dies/) provides advice for children dealing with loss and bereavement.

**Additional Education Support**

[Oak National Academy](https://classroom.thenational.academy/specialist) provide specialist content for children with SEND. This covers communication and language, numeracy, creative arts, independent living, occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech and language therapy. Its provision for next academic year will include an extended range of content for the specialist sector.

**Further support**

If you require any support or guidance on this or any matter relating to be a parent of a vision impaired child please contact: cypf@pocklington-trust.org.uk.