

## REASONABLE ENDEAVOURS (RE)

### **How to join the SENCO helpline chats:**

Please send an email to [SENStrategy@essex.gov.uk](mailto:SENStrategy@essex.gov.uk)

This will provide you with an automated reply that gives you the link to join a Microsoft Teams meeting. This link enables you to join the morning chat which is held from 8am-9am each day – you can join for one day or several days, you can join for ten minutes or stay for the hour. You can type a question, or ask a question, or just listen in the questions/answers if you feel that may be useful. It is entirely up to you.

**Next dates: Tuesday 2 June and Friday 5 June 8am-9am; Tuesday 9 June and Thursday 11 June 8am-9am**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (week beginning 18th May)

### **Is the RE work statutory?**

Yes, the work that Essex County Council are doing – and asking schools, colleges and settings to do – is the Essex way of addressing a national and statutory responsibility.

### **Why are we asking Essex schools to hold the RE conversations?**

The success of the RE conversations depends on understanding both the family's individual circumstances and the educational setting's individual circumstances. The conversation is an exploration of what can reasonably be provided to support the child or young person – taking all the specific circumstances into account. If a third party, for example, an Educational Psychologist were to have the conversation with a young person or family directly, they would also then have to have a conversation with the school to know what is reasonable and possible for the school, college or setting to deliver.

### **What is the 12 June date for?**

In the training provided on the Infolink for all educational settings, we refer to 12 June as a deadline. To clarify, we are hoping that SENCOs will have made contact with all families of children with an EHCP by the 12 June and will have set a date to hold a Reasonable Endeavours conversation. It is not expected that all conversations will have taken place by the 12 June – particularly for schools, colleges and settings with a large number of EHCPs.

### **How quickly does this have to be done?**

Quickly - although the quality is important too. Each RE conversation should be arranged with a young person or family at a date and time, and in a way, that is convenient for them. The information about RE should be shared in advance so that young people and families can take some time to think about and discuss what they think might be reasonable and possible before the conversation. It is the support and communication that matters most – the paperwork and completion of the Excel sheet is only the overview and confirmation of the conversation.

### **Do we need to have conversations with children with EHCPs in Year 6/Year 11/ Year 13/those who are leaving us?**

Yes, RE is a statutory requirement for all children and young people who have an EHCP. Many schools and clusters are working together very creatively around transition and are including the next setting in their conversations. Where a student is leaving an educational setting, the RE conversation is still about highlighting the provision that is reasonable and possible until the pupil leaves (last Friday in June for year 11s & 13s and end of term for others). The conversation may also be helpful to explore their wellbeing and support the next steps for their transition.

### **Can we prioritise some year groups and/or families?**

Schools and colleges are already making very good decisions about which children and young people need the most support, and we agree that this should continue with the Reasonable Endeavours work. We would ask that you try to agree dates for conversations with families so that they know when to expect their conversation, but the order is for SENCOs to determine what works best for them and their families. All children and young people with an EHCP will require this work to be completed.

### **Do these RE Plans replace the termly One Plan for now?**

Yes it can do, a Reasonable Endeavours conversation is a type of One Planning that addresses the 'here and now'. It looks at what can and can't be delivered (from what would usually be delivered) and also looks at what else might be offered if the child or young person has new or emerging needs due to the impact of social distancing, lockdown, home learning etc. Some schools are describing a RE plan as a 'bridging plan' – it sets out what can be offered while the situation is so different and until the time that 'normal' support can resume.

### **I am already holding Annual Reviews. Can I do the RE conversation at the same time?**

Annual reviews should continue – albeit in a different way. The two conversations have quite different purposes. They might – or might not – be held at the same time, depending on both your preference and the family's preference. An annual review looks at the child or young person's EHCP and collates evidence that demonstrates progress towards the outcomes in the plan over the last year and then plans for the following year. A conversation at an annual review explores what is working and what isn't working, what needs to change and what should continue – based on the provision set out in the EHCP in 'usual times.' The RE conversation is looking at the best way to support the child or young person in the given circumstances and would look at temporary provision where it is needed, reasonable and possible.

### **How detailed should a RE plan be?**

A RE plan is the evidence and agreement of a quality conversation. It should not be 'War and Peace'. The ongoing communication and the support being offered are the most important elements. Yes, we do need schools, colleges and settings to record in writing what has been agreed, but the written record should not take SENCOs and/or teachers away from the more valuable job of delivering that support.

### **Are there any examples of a RE conversation proforma and plan?**

We have an example from the pilot of the RE materials. Please ask your LA key contact to for a copy. We will be collating more over the next few weeks.

### **Can I use my own paperwork?**

Yes, if this covers the aspects of the RE conversation and plan. It must show how the young person and parents/carers have been involved and agreed the plan. It must set out - *What* is different? *What* is happening? *Where* is it happening? *Who* is delivering it – and *how*? The paperwork must also include a review date. Your ECC key contact is available to support you to ensure the paperwork you use meets the requirements.

### **What is considered to be 'reasonable'?**

The Government included a list of examples in the guidance. However, the key message is that the agreement must feel reasonable to both parties - this is not an opportunity for a parent to make unreasonable demands; neither is it an opportunity for a school, setting or college to say it is not possible to deliver any support just because the child is at home. The context of the family and the school, LA and Health needs to be considered. Have you done what another competent person in the same position would do when faced with the same dilemmas?

### **How do we get support from Health for speech and language needs?**

Most speech and language therapists have been redeployed to help with the pandemic and are unavailable to provide direct support. It may be possible for a teaching assistant or teacher to

continue to deliver programmes or interventions remotely based on training and guidance they have received. If a child or young person has commissioned therapy in their plan we are working closely with Provide to see what can reasonably be offered – again, remotely or through technology. If you have a child or young person with commissioned hours in their EHCP, your key contact can have a conversation with Lisa Gridley (Strategic Lead for Language and Communication) to consider what can be made available.

### **How do we use the Outcomes Framework?**

Many families are feeling under considerable pressure by the current home learning situation. For some families, it can feel completely overwhelming to try to teach their children new learning, or to try to deliver 'educational' programmes. The Outcomes Framework for RE is one way of offering support to families, to look at the bigger picture and to focus on ways to develop life skills while their child is at home. This framework offers targets that can be worked towards during everyday situations in the home. Remember RE is not about asking the family to take on more responsibility around provision in the EHCP – it is the opportunity to think with families about what is reasonable and possible now and how the school and LA can support the child.

### **Do I have to record parental agreement?**

Yes. Many schools, colleges and settings are asking for parental verbal consent at the end of each conversation and then following up with written confirmation via email.

### **What do I do if a parent can't engage?**

We would ask SENCOs and teachers to employ all the normal strategies and solutions that are used to work those that can have difficulties engaging. However, if you still have difficulties please speak to your key contact as we may be able to support through our team of Engagement Facilitators. If the family have a social worker, the social worker could be included in the conversation and approach to families. If a parent will not engage, then the SENCO/teacher should still make a written record of the support that is being offered and share that with the family.

### **How often do I have to review RE plans?**

The Government is reviewing this on a monthly basis and this acts as our guide. However, in many situations, conversations will be held more frequently as the circumstances – individual, local and nationally – can change quite often. It is also important that families know how to ask for the conversation to be reviewed if their individual circumstances change.

### **How will my key contact support me?**

The RE conversation is initially between the educational setting and the young person and family. The LA key contact is available to help SENCOs think creatively and find solutions. The key contact is also the route for SENCOs to ask for support from the other ECC or SEND teams that are available – for example, the Physical and Sensory Impairment Specialist Teaching Team, the Young Carers Team or to link with PROVIDE if a child has commissioned therapy in their EHCP.

### **How often should we send the RE conversations and plans to our key contact?**

This can be agreed between yourselves. If your school, college or setting have a large number of plans, sending them in batches might be a good way forward.