

# SEND Family Newsletter

[www.croydon.gov.uk](http://www.croydon.gov.uk)

November 2020 Issue 4

A newsletter for Croydon parents and carers who support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

## **Council for Disabled Children**

Council for Disabled Children (CDC) have created a **Family Support page** on its website, which includes information about the new government restrictions. Parents or carers of disabled children may continue to access respite care to support them in caring for their disabled child. Where activities are being provided solely for this purpose, they are able to continue.

### **What does it mean for families?**

For families the guidance sets out that:

- Parents are able to form a childcare bubble with another household for the purposes of informal childcare, where the child is 13 or under
- Out of school activities and wraparound care can continue for registered childcare and to provide respite care, including for vulnerable children
- Parents or carers of disabled children may continue to access respite care to support them in caring for their disabled child
- Early years settings and childminders remain open, and parents of under-5s can continue to use these settings as normal
- Parents will be able to access other childcare activities (including wraparound care) where reasonably necessary to enable parents to work, seek work, attend education or training, or for the purposes of respite care for carers
- Youth support services, including 1-1 youth work and support groups, may also continue to operate
- Early years, schools and other education settings continue to operate as before
- Home tutoring and elective home education can continue to operate.

The link to the Council for Disabled Website for further information is:

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/help-resources/resources/family-support>

## Online safety for your child: tips and useful website links

By Anna Ljumovic, School Improvement Adviser and safeguarding trainer

I hope these tips will help you in supporting your child online and help you in supporting them to develop confident use of the internet and to do so safely. Most of my tips are from the NSPCC site but I have added a couple of points in case they are of use. Below the tips are links to useful websites. I can recommend the ThinkUKnow site which is funded by the National Crime Agency to develop online safety for children.

- Think about the language of the internet – what does it mean? Help your child understand what the key terms mean. Are the key messages in language that is too complex to understand and could they be made more straightforward? (Such as *'Don't share personal information on line – what does that mean and how could it be made clearer and easier to understand?*)
  - Reassure your child that you're interested in their life, offline and online. Recognise that they may be using the internet to research homework as well talking to their friends
  - Ask your child to show you what they enjoy doing online or apps they're using so you can understand them
  - Be positive but also open about anything you are worried about. You could say "I think this site's really good" or "I'm a little worried about things I've seen here"
  - Ask them if they're worried about anything, and let them know they can come to you
  - Ask them about their friends online and how they know they are who they say they are.
  - Listen for the reasons why your child wants to use apps or sites you don't think are suitable, so you can talk about these together
  - Ask your child what they think is okay for children of different ages so they feel involved in the decision making
  - In addition of course, keep your parental controls up to date
  - Have conversations about “what is a friend” and “who is a friend” to help your child distinguish between them. You know your child best so try to find a comparison that may help them understand that someone who they don't know is not an instant friend. It could be compared, for example, to someone trying to sell you something. What is the cost? etc
  - By being open about wanting to help, encourage a ‘Here to help’ ‘Let's try together’ and “Better check first”. approach
  - Familiarise yourself with how your child can report something – it is very easy! You will see the logo on the Child Exploitation and Online Safety (CEOP) site - <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/> Look for the logo!
- In addition, all the following websites have very helpful pages for parents:
- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>
  - <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk>
  - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>
  - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/>
  - <https://www.childnet.com/>

## Children's Occupational Therapy

The role of the children's occupational therapist is to maximise each child's individual potential at home, school and at play, working in partnership with the child, their family and other professionals.

In Croydon, the Children's Occupational Therapy Service is based at the Crystal Children's Development Centre, however the occupational therapists work in a variety of settings including mainstream and special schools, nurseries, playgroups, the child's home and Croydon University Hospital. Our team of children's occupational therapists have specialist skills and training to enable them to provide an assessment and intervention service aimed at meeting each child's individual needs.

We are continuing to see children face to face including virtual workshops throughout these challenging times.

We have an open referral process, any professional, agency or parent/carers are able to refer to our service. Please contact 020 8274 6854 or email [ch-tr.croydonchildrensot@nhs.net](mailto:ch-tr.croydonchildrensot@nhs.net) to request a referral form and referral criteria.

The general occupational therapy service will work with children who have special needs in the following areas:

- Co-ordination difficulties (particularly fine motor coordination), including developmental coordination disorder
- Complex handwriting difficulties
- Sensory processing
- Self care, such as feeding and dressing
- Seating and specialist equipment
- Splinting for chronic conditions
- Following an assessment, a variety of therapeutic interventions may be recommended, depending on the capacity of the service and the needs of the child. This may include:
  - Programmes for home / school to implement
  - Advice and strategies to address the identified areas of difficulty
  - Advice on suitable equipment for home or school to purchase to address child's needs.
  - Treatment sessions at home or clinic – these are predominantly offered to children under 5 years and those with a physical disability, for a short period of time. Ongoing direct treatment sessions are not offered.

Involvement of parents / carers and school / nursery (where applicable) is an integral part of the intervention and commitment to this by the parent / carer is essential. Use of advice and strategies will need to be carried out by others who work with the child e.g. parent / carer and school, so please bear this in mind when you refer a child.

## Bereavement support

Children's Grief Awareness Week runs from 19 to 25 November 2020. You can find information and support for bereaved children at

<https://curriculumblog.lgfl.net/2020/11/child-grief-awareness-week-2020/>

This includes links to support and information specifically for children with SEND.

## Get in touch

**Croydon SEN Enquiries:** [senenquiries@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:senenquiries@croydon.gov.uk)

### SEND Local Offer

Services, advice, information and what's on in and around Croydon