

14 September 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers

Over the past months of the Coronavirus pandemic, Bexley Children and Young People's Speech and Language Therapy service has continued to support children, young people and their families in a range of ways. This has included liaison with schools, telephone contacts with families, video-based assessment and intervention sessions and attendance at virtual meetings. Urgent cases have also been seen face-to-face in clinics, homes and schools if required.

We welcome the guidance from the Government on the wider re-opening of schools and have been working on ways in which we can safely and effectively deliver our Speech and Language Therapy services in line with the new guidance available for both schools and the NHS.

As a result of current NHS guidance, our therapy staff will:

- Continue to provide virtual services to children, young people, families and schools where this is clinically appropriate
- Carry out face-to-face assessment and intervention in schools when clinically and practically indicated

When working in schools, our staff will make a range of modifications in line with the current guidance in order to limit transmission of COVID-19 by protecting themselves as well as those around them. These modifications will include:

- All staff to minimise cross-contamination by limiting movement between different bubbles, groups and schools as much as possible. Staff to work in an identified room within the school or outside (if appropriate)
- All staff to maintain social distancing as far as possible throughout the duration of the school visit.
- All face-to-face contacts to be limited to necessary child-based activity only. Additional activity (e.g. liaising with members of school staff) to be carried out via phone/video link.
- All staff to wear PPE for all face-to-face contacts where a distance of 2m cannot be maintained (disposable gloves, disposable plastic apron and a fluid-resistant (Type IIR) surgical mask). Our staff will be responsible for the disposal of their PPE.

We are looking forward to resuming our services in schools, albeit with these new ways of working.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding your child being seen by our therapists, please do not hesitate to contact the Speech and Language Therapists at your child's school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light yellow background. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'C. Dixon'.

Corinna Dixon

Team Lead - Special Schools
Children's Speech and Language Therapy Bexley
Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust