

Guidance for children who are clinically extremely vulnerable in settings

The guidance for those who are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) who are required to remain at home was published on Wednesday afternoon (4th November). The link is available below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

It details information about education settings as follows:

'More evidence has emerged that shows there is a very low risk of children becoming very unwell from COVID-19, even for children with existing health conditions. Most children originally identified as clinically extremely vulnerable no longer need to follow this advice. Speak to your GP or specialist clinician, if you have not already done so, to understand whether your child should still be classed as clinically extremely vulnerable.'

Those children whose doctors have confirmed they are still clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend school while this advice is in place. Your school will make appropriate arrangements for you to be able to continue your education at home. Children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are not clinically extremely vulnerable themselves, should still attend school.'

There will understandably be parents who are concerned about their child's health and well-being at this time. The guidance clearly states that those who are advised by their doctor that they are CEV should not attend school/college and that settings should arrange remote education for them. This should include a discussion with the family as to how education will be delivered, including any provision identified within an EHC Plan. If as a setting you would like any support or need to escalate any concerns about provision of a child/ren during this time please contact Tim.Armstrong@sheffield.gov.uk or our DCO Michelle.Racey@NHS.net.

Where children and young people are not classed CEV they should continue to attend education. Many children who were advised to shield during the first lockdown are not now classed as CEV. This is because there is significantly greater understanding of the impact of covid on children and young people. The guidance gives a summary of those who now meet the criteria for CEV.

Key change: Downs Syndrome:

Post-16 providers will note that there are specific descriptors of CEV as adults. This includes adults with Downs Syndrome. We are urgently seeking clarity from the Department for Education as to when this should lead to a young person not attending education. When we receive further clarity around this we will circulate it.

An adult is defined as 18 and over, however there may be young people with Downs Syndrome who are not quite 18 but have additional non CEV significant factors such as cardiac issues or renal dysfunction. **We would advise that you speak to parents of any post-16 children with Downs Syndrome and additional factors to ensure that they have discussed what they should do with their GP or specialist.** You should act accordingly with the guidance from their GP or specialist.

The following links may be helpful around adults with Downs Syndrome:

<https://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/QA-Easy-Read.pdf>

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What we need you to do next:

It is our understanding from the government guidance released that all individuals who are CEV will be written to, including children. When families make you aware that their child is recorded as CEV according to the updated guidance we would like you to inform us of who they are.

We would like this information because:

1. We would like to ensure that all children who fall into this category who have an EHC Plan can continue to have their needs met across Education, Health and Care
2. There may be further vulnerabilities that some children face, including those known to social care, that we would want to be able to support

We have attached a spreadsheet to complete. Please return the form to the local authority via anycomms selecting the option 'EHCP data return'. If you don't have anycomms, please return by secure email to senddata@sheffield.gov.uk

Thank you for your support in this. If you have specific questions please contact Tim Armstrong, Head of SEN on tim.armstrong@sheffield.gov.uk