Making education better for children with disabilities during and after Covid-19

Covid-19 is a new illness that many people in the world are getting. It is also called coronavirus.

Pivoting to Inclusion: leveraging lessons from the Covid-19 crisis for learners with disabilities
About this document

This document is about education for children with disabilities during Covid-19 and after it.

Covid-19 is a new illness that many people in the world are getting.

Children with disabilities already have many problems with education.

For example, many children with disabilities do not go to school.

Covid-19 has made things worse for many children with disabilities.

This document looks at:

- Problems with education for children with disabilities during Covid-19
- How to make education better for children with disabilities now and in the future
What education problems are children with disabilities having during Covid-19?

Many schools had to close because of Covid-19. This means many children have been learning at home. This is hard for many children with disabilities and their families.

For example, children with disabilities may not have:
- Computers
- The internet
- Enough electricity to learn at home.

Children with disabilities may find it hard to use computers and the internet. And lessons may not be easy for children with disabilities to understand.
Many teachers and parents may not know how to support children with disabilities to learn at home.

Some parents may have lost their jobs because of Covid-19.

And some parents have to stop working to support their children during Covid-19.

Many children with disabilities need school meals so they have healthy food to eat.

But school meals may stop during Covid-19. Or they may be hard for children with disabilities to get.

Children with disabilities may not have the things they need to keep clean and safe.

It may be hard for children with disabilities to go back to school when they open again. They may be left out.
What should happen to make education better for children with disabilities now and after Covid-19?

General things that governments and organizations should work on together

Make sure plans about education include children with disabilities.

Make some plans just for children with disabilities if needed.

Work with people with disabilities and their families to make the plans.
Get good information about children with disabilities and what they need.

Use this information to make plans and check how the plans are working.

Make sure information is easy for people with different disabilities to understand.

For example, some people may need information in pictures or sign language.

**Make sure plans about education are fair and work well for all children with disabilities**

This includes:

- Plans about how to make sure all children can learn at home.

- Making sure children with disabilities can come straight back to school safely when they open again.
This also includes:

- Support to make sure that children with disabilities can catch up with their education after being at home.

- Making lessons work well for children with disabilities in the future.

**Give teachers the right support to teach children with disabilities at home and school**

The main things that should happen:

- Give teachers training about how to teach children with disabilities and make sure they are not left out.

  Teachers might need to know how to use new computers and equipment for this.
Make sure teachers can share information with each other and parents about what works well.

Make sure teachers know if children with disabilities are not learning enough and what to do about it.

Make sure teachers get paid and get good support during Covid-19.

Make sure children with disabilities and their families have enough money and support

The main things that should happen:

Set up a phone number that families can call.

This is to give them information and support.

Local groups can also give families support.
Make sure children with disabilities and their families have enough money for education, health care and other things they need.

Make sure children and young people with disabilities still get support to keep clean and safe.

For example, girls with disabilities should get the things they need for their periods.

Make sure parents of children with disabilities can take time off work to look after their children.

They should still get paid for this.
Other support for families

The main things that should happen:

Help families know why education is important for children with disabilities.

And how to support children with disabilities at home.

Local people, teachers and support workers can support families during Covid-19.

For example, by phone or going to their homes in a safe way.

Help families to keep earning money.
Keeping clean and safe and having enough healthy food

The main things that should happen:

Make it easy for children with disabilities to get healthy food if their schools are closed.

Everyone must wash their hands a lot to stop Covid-19 spreading.

Make sure children with disabilities have the things they need to do this.

And make sure they have face masks to wear.

Change school buildings and wash rooms to make sure children with disabilities can use them.

Make sure new buildings work well for people with disabilities.

There should be rules about this.
Make sure there is enough money for education for children with disabilities

Money for education should be for all children. This includes children with disabilities.

Governments and organizations should think about this first when they spend money on education.