

Bringing the local offer in Leicestershire to life

SEND NEWS

FREE

Tom's work
placement
story is first
step toward
improving
SEND
careers
education

see page 9



Produced by

A warm welcome to the seventh edition of SEND News

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▶ Another school year has come to an end and as we head into the summer break, I wanted to take this opportunity to reflect on some of the great work that has taken place this year. We launched our **SEND Support Handbook** which contains local information and guidance for schools/education providers, parents/carers and other interested parties about the support that is available to Leicestershire children and young people who have SEN or a disability. The handbook has been downloaded a total of 469 times.

We have also opened new provisions across the county, both new schools and units within mainstream, to meet the needs of more of our young people. Most recently we have made changes to our SENA (Special Educational Needs Assessment) team to be more accessible across the county and have launched a 'parent' surgeries service, where twice a week (Tuesday afternoon 1-5pm and Thursday morning 9am-1pm) the team will be available to answer enquiries from parents.

You'll also read in this edition that the Local Offer website has again been ranked number one for accessibility and had an amazing 4,465 website visits in May. On page 10 you can read about our quality assurance framework and the work the team are doing around auditing current practice. Colleagues from health have also created a new guide for children, young people and families around mental health and wellbeing. ■

Local Offer Website

▶ Top downloads from the website included the Personal Transport Budget Guidance and Direct payment information, along with the SEN Handbook and Local Offer Strategy.

Did you know?

The Local Offer website had
4,465
visits during May!

We are also really proud of Leicestershire's Local Offer Website continuing to be ranked top in the UK for accessibility. Silktide - a leading provider of website testing and governance software - test the first 125 pages of a website against 200 criteria, ranging from screen reader compatibility, to text and image legibility. (Image of LO landing page?)

Need more information? You can email us at LeicestershireLocalOffer@leics.gov.uk or visit our [website](#). ■



New mental health and wellbeing guide for children, young people and families

A new guide targeting children, young people and families with emotional, mental health and wellbeing needs is now available online.

▶ The directory provides information on a range of general and specialist NHS mental health services for young people, including online and telephone support, together with top tips for children and families and details of youth groups as well as support available from local councils.

Produced by Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Groups (LLR CCGs), the directory is intended to encourage and support young people to get the help they need.

The directory complements the existing award-winning local NHS health promotion websites for children and young people, which host a range of information and advice around physical and mental health, including details of local services and organisations for support. You can find these on www.healthforkids.co.uk and www.healthforteens.co.uk

The directory is available online at <http://bit.ly/mentalhealthLLR> ■

SEND News Sign up

▶ Never want to miss an edition of the SEND News? Please complete our **new online E-form (leicestershire.gov.uk/news/local-offer-newsletters)** to receive editions straight into your Inbox.

Already signed up? We will be contacting you soon to check you still wish to receive them and to move you onto our new sign up system under GDPR regulations. ■



Leicestershire SEND Hub

We are the Leicestershire SEND Hub, the new Parent Carer Forum in Leicestershire. We are a parent carer organisation made up of parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). We are a strategic partner, working with local authorities, education settings and health and social care providers to make sure that the planning and provision of services for families takes full account of parent carer views and experiences, so that those services can be effective, timely and ensure the best use of resources.

Our aims are to:

▶ Connect:

It has been a busy time for the Leicestershire SEND Hub Team since we set up. One of our first moves was to set up a Facebook group and page. These have proved popular and at present we have 675 members who have joined the group. Many members are using this group for peer support which has been wonderful to see. Via the Page we share information about services on offer, including courses, conferences and training for parent carers as well as information about clubs and activities for children and young people with SEND.

▶ Empower:

We have been establishing a core Team to run the SEND Hub, and ensuring we have accessed key training such as safeguarding, GDPR and IPSEA SEND training. We will be recruiting more Team members soon. We are signposting our members to training and opportunities that others have organised and we have gained funding for a project to organise a Big SEND event later in the year.

▶ Influence:

We have made links with Education, Health and Social Care and are attending many strategic meetings within the county in particular representing Parents and Carers on the Leicestershire SEND and Inclusion Board as well the Learning Disability/ Autism key worker project which looks very exciting indeed. We know that this area of work will become much busier as we become more established.

To join please go to:

Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/leicestershiresendhub>

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/LeicestershireSENDHub>

Email: team@leicestershiresendhub.org.uk ■

What is a Designated Clinical Officer (DCO)?

Who are your DCO team for SEND?



Hello! I'm Jane Young, the DCO for special educational needs and disability (SEND) for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. I work for the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG)s. They are responsible for ensuring that evidence-based health services are available to meet the population's needs. My background is as a speech

and language therapist (SLT) and SLT Service Manager. I have worked with children and families, and colleagues in health, education and the third sector for over 30 years.



Hello! I'm Natalie Chambers, the CCG SEND Officer for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. I work with Jane to fulfil the DCO role. My background is School Nursing in Special Schools and as a Specialist Public Health Practitioner. I have worked with children and families for over 11 years.

We;

- Provide oversight of children's health needs and how these are supported by Health services.
- Support the co-ordination of the health services for children and young people with SEND.
- Help all agencies to work together to support children with SEND.

Concerns and complaints about health services

- If you have a formal complaint about a health service your child has received, please contact the local health providers via their formal complaints process. This will usually be described on their website. Or you could try their patient advice and liaison service (PALS) team.
- If you have a formal complaint about the way health services have been commissioned to meet the needs of children with SEND, please email ELR CCG enquiries on enquiries@EastLeicestershireandRutlandccg.nhs.uk

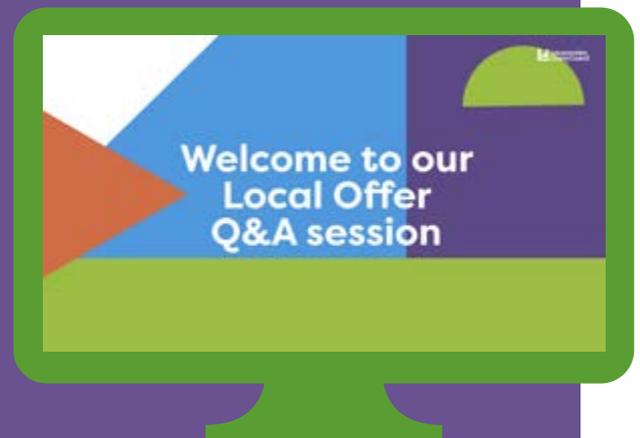
Contact us

We attend Parent Carer meetings and events as much as we can to talk with parents about their experiences.

Virtual Roadshow Q & A edition

▶ Did you manage to catch our last Q & A session with our SENA Service? The second edition is also now available where you can hear from our Early Years, Inclusion Service and Childcare Service. We received lots of interesting questions around after school care for children with SEND and things to consider when looking for early years provision such as nursery or a childminder.

You can view the **latest video here** (leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs-and-disability/information-and-support/local-offer-roadshows) and don't forget to keep an eye out for future editions! ■



Triple P Stepping Stones: support for parents of disabled children

The Children and Family Wellbeing Service has been setting up some new provision for parents in the county. Training the workforce began back in 2019, partnering with an organisation called Triple P.

▶ They are one of a very small number of organisations who have a global reputation for developing effective support for parents who may be finding their child's behaviour a bit more challenging to manage. Alongside programmes and workshops for parents of primary school age children and secondary school age youngsters, there is now also a programme for parents of disabled children aged 0-12.

There are two elements to Stepping Stones :

Firstly, a series of seminars. Each seminar is topic based with a 60 minute presentation followed by a 30 minute session for questions. These are suitable for any parent or carer who has a child with a disability up to 12 years and who is interested in general information about promoting their child's development, as well as assisting with specific concerns about their child's behaviour. The seminars are probably less suitable for families experience significant behaviour problems or stress, but they might serve as a good introduction to some of the strategies that would be covered in the more comprehensive group work programme.

Seminar 1:

Positive Parenting for Children with a Disability

Introduces parents to the seven core principles of positive parenting. These principles are:

- Ensuring a safe engaging environment.
- Creating a positive learning environment.
- Using assertive discipline.
- Having reasonable expectations.
- Looking after yourself as a parent.
- Adapting to having a child with a disability.
- Being part of the community.

Seminar 2:

Helping Your Child Reach Their Potential

In this seminar, practitioners build on the foundation seminar and show parents how they can use the positive parenting principles to promote their child's development by teaching them new skills and behaviours. The six key steps to teach a new skill are:

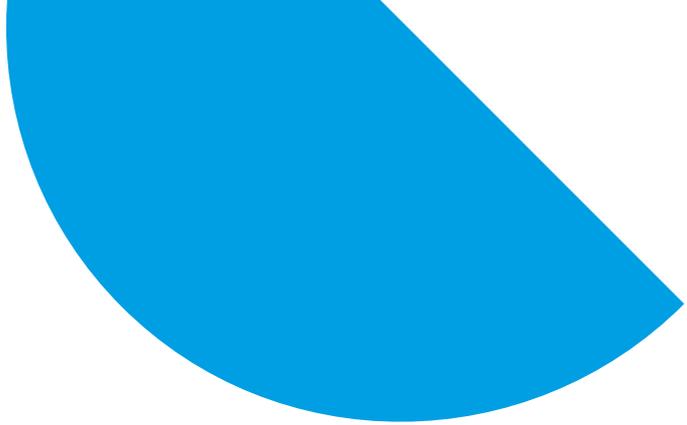
- Choosing a skill to teach.
- Breaking the skill into steps.
- Choosing rewards.
- Deciding on when and where to teach.
- Using effective teaching strategies.
- Keeping track and review.

Seminar 3:

Changing Problem Behaviour into Positive Behaviour

Parents are introduced to the six key steps of how to help children learn alternatives to the problem behaviour. The steps covered include:

- Tracking the behaviour.
- Understanding why the behaviour is occurring.
- Changing events that occur before the problem.
- Encouraging alternative behaviour.
- Removing accidental rewards.
- Putting the plan into action



Secondly, Stepping Stones Group. This programme has been evaluated with families of children with a range of disabilities (including intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorders, cerebral palsy) and higher levels of behaviour that can be disruptive. The programme involves six x 2.5 hour group sessions and x3 individual telephone consultations and parents need to be able to commit to all sessions. The programme includes:

Session 1:
Positive parenting

This session provides parents with an introduction to positive parenting, causes of child behaviour problems, setting goals for change, and how to keep track of children's behaviour.

Session 2:
Promoting children's development

During this session, the practitioner discusses how to develop positive relationships with children and how to encourage desirable behaviour.

Session 3:
Teaching new skills and behaviours

This session shows parents a range of techniques to teach children with disabilities skills in a range of areas, such as communication, problem-solving, self-care, and self-regulation.

Session 4:
Managing misbehaviour and parenting routines

During this session, the practitioner offers strategies to assist parents with managing misbehaviour.

Session 5:
Planning ahead

This session covers family survival tips, identifying high-risk situations, and developing planning ahead routines to implement over the next few weeks.

Session 6-8:
Implementing parenting routines 1-3

These sessions are designed to assist parents in implementing behaviour change strategies in high-risk home and community situations (e.g. travelling on public transport, haircuts, therapy sessions).

Session 9:
Programme close

Parents return for a final group session to review progress, look at ways to maintain changes, problem solve

Both the seminars and the group work programme are run 'on-line' on Microsoft Teams, all they require for you to participate is a smart phone, table, laptop or PC. We run them through the day and early evening. If you would like to take part in one of these sessions please complete a '**request for service form**' [LINK](#) or if you have an allocated worker from CFWS please ask them to refer you.



Make your voice count

▶ The parent/carer survey to capture your opinions on how well the local area is doing has now been launched (<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs-and-disability>). The SEND and Inclusion Strategy was launched in October 2020 and the survey includes questions to find out how well we are doing against each of our priorities.

SEND services across Leicestershire have been working on improving the way in which we work with families. This survey provides the opportunity for you to have your say. If you would like to find out more about the work of the SEND and Inclusion Board, please visit the webpage (<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs-and-disability/where-to-start-with-send/send-strategic-developments>). ■

Co-production with parents and carers and children and young people will run as a thread throughout each priority.

Leicestershire local area SEND & Inclusion Strategy

2020 to 2023

Our vision in Leicestershire for children with special educational needs and disabilities is the same as for all children and young people – for them to achieve well in their education, to be cared for in safe and supportive families, participate and be involved in their communities and lead happy, safe and fulfilled lives.

Leicestershire local area SEND & Inclusion Priorities for 2020 to 2023

Priority
1

To identify and meet children's special educational needs as early as possible.

Priority
2

Responsive, inclusive and effective provision for all children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND).

Priority
3

Understanding and preparation for change (Transitions).

Priority
4

Strategic partnerships, joint working, joint commissioning and consultation.

Priority
5

Develop the workforce.



Tom's work placement story is first step toward improving SEND careers education

Careers provision for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is complex and unfortunately, lacking. According to the Office for National Statistics, just 17% of young people with specific learning disabilities find full-time employment after leaving education.

► The LLEP SEND Survey with Leicester and Leicestershire teachers, students, parents and employers, tells us that they feel more experiences of the workplace and employability skills are necessary to improve careers provision for young people with SEND.

Here is a story of what can be achieved in terms of work experience for young people with SEND, which we see as a yardstick for the future success of this group:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-A-Hhk9VYo>

This video highlights Tom's journey through a work placement with Geosynthetics and how the Careers Leaders at Dorothy Goodman School supported him and the employer to make the placement a meaningful experience.

Tom developed his confidence and gained practical skills and experience that can help him to gain an apprenticeship.

Gary McDermott of Geosynthetics and his team created a welcoming, flexible environment and adapted tasks that Tom could

do, building his responsibilities appropriately.

Careers Leaders supported Geosynthetics to understand what Tom needed and stayed with him until they were all happy that he was confident on his own.

If you would like further information or to take part in the Leicester and Leicestershire SEND community of Practice please email Saahera.mahomed@llep.org.uk ■

Could you be the foster carer they need?

Leicestershire's fostering team are looking for Specialist Foster Carers to support a child or young person in care with SEND or other complex behavioural or emotional needs.

▶ One2One Foster Carer, Nic, shares the rewards of turning her professional experience in alternative education, youth work and early help to fostering. She provides dedicated care, welcoming vulnerable young people into her home and helping to transform their life in a positive family setting: <https://youtu.be/ICzVMvxkwu4>

As part of Leicestershire's Fostering Family, Specialist Foster Carers are

fully supported by the Dedicated Placement Support Team, who work with both the foster carer and young person to achieve the best outcomes.

Specialist Foster Carers work as part of a professional team in full-time, well-paid roles with access to ongoing training. But most of all, they have the reward of being able to give a young person the holistic and



professional level of care they need and deserve, and make a real difference to their life.

Find out more about becoming a Specialist Foster Carer – **0116 305 05 05** – www.leicestershire.gov.uk/specialist-foster-care-roles ■

SEND Quality Assurance & Learning Framework

▶ A framework has been developed that enables the monitoring of quality of services across the SEND partnership for Leicestershire. This incorporates a range of measures that captures parental satisfaction, through surveys, discussions, compliments and complaints; national data indicators; service knowledge and audits.

EHC plan audit

One of the areas of significant weakness that was picked up by the SEND inspection in February 2020 was the quality of EHC plans. This was an area that the

local area had identified within the self-evaluation document and with a SEND Quality Assurance & Learning Framework (QALF) about to be launched at the time of the inspection. Within the QALF, an audit process has been developed to incorporate the learning from audits and the actions are monitored by the SEND and Inclusion Board.

The audit process consists of two-steps, with senior managers carrying out an audit of EHC plans and a set of moderators overseeing the quality of the audit. Auditors and moderators provide comments on the areas that

are working really well and any areas for improvement. Themes from each audit are collated and reported to the SEND and Inclusion Board.

There have been four completed cycles of audit. The first three audits were on the whole plan with the next set of three audits looking at the advice from education, health and social care contributions to assess the quality of the advice received and make recommendations to each service as to where improvements can be made. ■



Summer Reading Challenge 2021

Leicestershire Libraries call for children aged between four and 12 to join the Wild World Heroes by signing up for this year's Summer Reading Challenge.

▶ The relaxing of restrictions this summer means the annual challenge is back in your local library this year as well as online and runs until Saturday 4 September 2021.

Thousands of children take part across the UK and Leicestershire each year and the aim is to encourage children to read whatever makes them happy, have fun and, as this year's theme suggests, get wild!

Pack your bags, and head for Wilderville to discover how you can make a difference to the environment. Summer Reading Challenge have teamed up with WWF for a very special nature-themed challenge that will inspire children to stand up for the planet!

Children can collect six special stickers, including smelly ones, for

their colourful collector's poster, and other incentives, including a medal, as they read, listen to or share six library books, eBooks or eAudiobooks over the summer and make two visits to a library.'

All children taking part are entitled to free admission to Bosworth Battlefield and Donington-le-Heath Manor House by showing their Wild World Heroes poster on entry (one child per full-paying adult). Please check the relevant website for information on any requirement to pre-book a visit, which may be necessary under any ongoing restrictions relating to the Covid-19 pandemic.

To find out more and for updated information about events visit www.leicestershire.gov.uk/libraries ■

Sign up for free holiday clubs this summer

Free holiday clubs are available this summer for children and young people who are eligible for free school meals.

▶ Leicestershire families can sign up by visiting www.leicestershire.gov.uk/HAF

Leicestershire County Council is able to offer the places to both eligible primary and secondary school pupils as part of the government's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme.

Children and young people (aged five to 16) can access up to four sessions a week, for four weeks, throughout the summer holidays - free of charge.

The holiday clubs involve helping young people learn new things from sport to music, dance, drama, art, cooking and gardening. Free nutritious meals will also be provided. ■