

SEND NEWSLETTER

April 2019

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Quote from Paul Tinsley: *"I trust that these regular updates are helping to keep colleagues apprised on developments in relation to our SEND improvement journey. As always, we welcome your feedback. If there is anything you would like to receive further clarification on, or updates that you feel have not been covered to date, please do let us know."*



Our Aims and Outcomes

- ✚ Improving academic outcomes of CYP with SEND in all Key Stages and in Further Education
- ✚ Improving the life outcomes of CYP to enable them to:
 - Be Healthy
 - Be independent
 - Be connected to their community
 - Be engaged in work/meaningful activity

Local Offer Website

As you may already be aware the Local Offer Website is being reviewed and updated. Part of this process has been participating in a peer review with neighbouring regions. This has helped to highlight what works well and make recommendations for changes with the site. The Local Offer website was reviewed by Derbyshire who shared some positive feedback as well as some minor changes that could be made.

Changes have been made to make it more accessible, including using some symbols and clearer simpler language. The Local Offer website was recently reviewed By Charlie Palmer from the DfE who said the accessibility aspects were the best in the country.

Additional information has been added from Health and new independent services registering their information. At the same time current service information and provision is being reviewed and updated.

The website retains a vast amount of information and hence this process can take time. If your service information is advertised on this website, please do check that you are happy with it, or if there are any changes to be made please forward them using the email address below or the link on "You said we did" to ensure the Local Offer Website is kept up to date and current.

A few new areas have been introduced and renamed to help with navigation. One of which is consultations and announcements and another Local Offer event. If you are aware of events that are happening locally please let us know so we can put it on the local offer website.

The Local Offer is work in progress and feedback on ideas to improve it, or if you are aware of services or information that are missing, are welcomed. Please email localoffer@leicester.gov.uk

The screenshot shows the 'SEND Local Offer' website. At the top, there is a dark green header with the Leicester City Council logo on the left, the text 'SEND Local Offer' in the center, and a search bar on the right. Below the header, there is a navigation menu on the left side with categories like 'Children's Centres', 'SEND Local Offer', 'Disabled Children's Service', and 'Childcare Professionals'. The main content area is titled 'SEND Local Offer' and includes a sub-header 'Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)'. Below this, there is a grid of 12 icons representing different services: 'About SEND', 'Search for a service', 'Schools and learning', 'Early Years', 'Care and Support', 'Health and wellbeing', 'Preparing for adulthood', 'Money matters', 'You said, we did', 'Your voice', 'Consultations and announcements', and 'Support services'. The bottom of the page has a red background.

EHC Professional Portal

Some of you will be aware that LCC has invested in a new portal that will make the Statutory Assessment and plan writing process easier for all those involved. The current process requires advice givers, schools, educational psychologist, health, social care, to send written reports to staff in Special Education Service who then upload advice onto the ONE system. Often these are typed up from hand written notes taken when meeting with the child and their family

The new system will allow professionals to input their advice directly into the system using an online form. It can be accessed via computer, tablet and mobile phone allowing advice givers to type their notes directly into the system wherever they are. They can be finalised later and then submitted for upload to the plan. Once they have been submitted to the SES team they will be collated (in sections where there are more than one advice giver) and uploaded to the plan.



The new system should bring several benefits including:

- Advice givers can see all advice on a child that they are working with enabling effective multi agency working
- Process will be quicker, and timescales will be visible
- System provides prompts when information required, or new plans uploaded
- Documents can be uploaded and shared
- Draft plan can be seen at any time
- Increased Data security; access to the plan is via the portal using a twostep verification process
- Can specify who can see shared information
- Can give varying levels of access to information that can be viewed
- Parents, Carers and children are engaged in the process and able to participate through a Citizen portal

We are currently working our way through internal training and testing which will be completed by the end of April. We will then pilot the system in the NE of the city commencing in May and expect to roll it out across the whole city in September. Look out for further updates in future newsletters.

Quality Assuring EHC plans

As you may recall one of the areas of criticism in the Local Area Review was the quality of our EHC plans and the lack of process for quality assuring them. As a result, and with the help of our performance team we have developed a new toolkit like that used by children's social care. The toolkit uses questions developed by Mott Mac Donald, approved by the DfE for quality assuring EHC plans. The toolkit is an interactive tick box questionnaire with embedded guidance that is sent each month to our 35 auditors along with an anonymised plan for them to audit. It also allows free text for auditors to commend best practice or highlight concerns.

Once returned all plans that fall below the expected pass rate are moderated by a separate group of managers. In addition, a sample of 10% of those plans that pass are also moderated. Any plans that do not have social care or health needs and provision automatically fail and will be escalated back to the service in question through a senior manager. Failure in other areas will also be escalated as required. Any trends either good or bad will be fed back to advice givers to ensure continuing improvement.

Over the next 12 months we need to quality assure as many of the 2400 plans that we currently have as possible. For that reason, we would like to ask SENCO's to make quality Assurance part of the annual review process and will be discussing this we hope at the SENCO meeting in June.

The process will run alongside the annual review and use the toolkit already developed. We would hope to roll it out in September but would be very keen to hear from any SENCO that would like to start looking at the quality process now. If that's you please get in touch with Vicki.Urch@Leicester.gov.uk



Preparing for Adulthood and SEND Strategy

The transition from secondary school to college can be a daunting experience for young people with SEND needs. Young people may be highly anxious of moving to another setting with new staff teaching them as well as having to make some new friends and adapt to a new setting and rules and routines. Just actually getting to the placement can be a huge step for them as well. And then there is the actual learning.

A pilot project is currently being set up to look at the transition process and how to ensure that the young people are supported through the process and information is shared in a timely manner to ensure a smooth transition.

This pilot project is bringing together mainstream, special schools and colleges, to look at the transition process, time line and tools needed to ensure a smooth transition for young people with SEND.

If you have done any work within your schools that has been really successful and improved the experience or developed any tools that you would like to share please email Nayna.Amlani@leicester.gov.uk

A SEND Strategy created by LCC along with Health, Social Care and Parent input is currently out for public consultation. The closing date for the consultation on the SEND strategy is fast approaching – 17th April 2019. The strategy will be used to develop the future direction of SEND services in the city of Leicester. Please make sure you have your say. Use the link below to complete the survey and download a copy of the draft strategy.

<https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/communications/send/>



Update on Designated Specialist Provision

Colleagues will be aware of our plans to develop a number of additional places in Designated Specialist Provision (DSP) in mainstream schools across the city. The current position is that the paper outlining those schools who will be supported to open a DSP in the school's year 2019/20 is in the Council's decision making process and a decision is expected very shortly.

It is hoped to have a number of DSPs open in autumn term, but it is recognised that recruitment and building issues may mean this date is moved to later in the term or academic year. Heads of those schools put forward to be in the first wave will receive a letter outlining the proposed action plan shortly. Please be assured to the commitment to deliver the additional places we require for our children in Leicester City. We will be in touch with colleagues as soon as we can.

