

SEND Newsletter

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Newsletter

November 2023

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Introduction from Kenton Mee

CEO - North Somerset Parents and Carers Working Together (NSPCWT)

I am thrilled to connect with you through our latest newsletter, highlighting the great work taking place locally to support families and improve outcomes for children and young people.



Firstly a huge THANK YOU to everyone who contributed to the resounding success of the 'Day of SEND'. From the exceptional efforts of our NSPCWT team in organising our largest-ever event to the dedication of exhibitors, presenters, trainers, leaders and of course our parent carers, children and young people that visited on the day. This event exemplified the power of collaboration, showcasing stakeholders united in supporting families and the broader SEND community, sharing best practices, and expanding everyone's awareness of all the local resources available.

One participant aptly captured the essence of the day: "This whole day was exactly what we needed as parents at what feels like the start of a long and overwhelming journey. From support for us as parents to processes explained from start to finish, it opened our eyes to resources we didn't know existed and allowed us to drill down on some of the processes we have already started. A big thank you."

It is great to read all the positive updates in this newsletter on our growing "SEND Student Council" and their proactive planning for the year ahead, SENDCAS's impactful summer fun, supporting 180 places for children and young people. The work on "Early Help", with many of us actively involved, to ensure a family-centred approach in identifying needs and offering timely support.

Thank you for your commitment to the SEND community. I would urge you to share your updates on the positive initiatives happening locally for inclusion in future newsletters.



“A Day of SEND”

Priory Community School Academy 18th October 2023

North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together (NSPCWT) facilitated the largest Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) event in the local area on 18th October 2023 at Priory Community School Academy.

Parent carers of children and young people with additional needs and disabilities accessed face-to-face support through direct contact with charities, support providers, local advice services, health services, and education and social care teams from North Somerset Council.

There were more than sixty popular training workshops on a diverse range of topics:

- eighty exhibitors
- eight hands-on activities
- six informal drop in clinics
- seven presentations from key note speakers including famous author Peter Wharmby

More than seven hundred parents, carers, family members, and professionals attended the event at Priory Community School.

“Thanks so much for organising it all! I was so happy to be able to access the workshops and talks! For me that was invaluable. I learnt a lot and have more to look into. All the efforts are appreciated. This is the sort of support we need so much.”

NSPCWT provide continuous support to parents and carers with children between the ages of 0-25 years that have an emerging need, additional need, and/or disability. Support is given through signposting to relevant organisations, hosting regular coffee mornings, facilitating comprehensive training sessions, providing wellbeing opportunities, and organising large events.



Follow the NSPCWT on social media @NSPCWT for more information



News from SENDCAS

Jennie Little, SENDCAS Team Leader
Laurina Brewer, SENDCAS Team Leader

The SEND Clubs and Activities Service would like to share how much they enjoyed spending time with children and young people throughout the summer period. The weather was kind to us and we managed to dodge the rain when it attempted to wash us away.

We managed 70 families' indications of interests in SENDCAS summer activity days.



Overall, we offered 180 places to children and young people over a four-week period.

Every picture tells a story. Please see what some of our children and young people experienced during their time with us during outings to workshops.



We currently have 150 families accessing our Family Time passes and we issued 275 passes to a variety of venues and theme parks.

The SENDCAS team enjoyed attending A Day of SEND presented by North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together. It was great to be able to greet many families and professionals at our stall and share our information, spreading the word about our offer of SEND Clubs, Activities and Family Time Passes. If you wish to find out more please contact SENDCAS@n-somerset.gov.uk.

The termly SENDCAS clubs are now back up and running at The Firs Resource Centre, Weston-super-Mare.

We offer Saturday Club, 9:30am to 12:30pm with sessions booked depending on age and ability. We also offer Wicked Wednesdays 6:30pm to 8:30pm, which offers a youth club to young people aged between eleven and eighteen years (school Year 7 to Year 13) who need a little support to access social opportunities and learn or develop their independence skills.

SENDCAS@n-somerset.gov.uk



SEND and You (SaY)

Victoria Allan, Head of Service

SAY



SEND AND YOU
SENDIAS

We continue to provide information, advice, and support around all things SEND. We are open from 9:30am to 4.30pm, all year round. [Visit the SEND And You website to learn more.](#)

Contacting SEND and You

September was a busy month for our service, and we have been looking at ways we can reach our children, young people, and families as quickly and efficiently as possible as demand continues to grow. We aim to respond to all enquiries within two working days.

For first time enquirers, or those who have not contacted us in over six months, we will signpost you to the contact form on our website. If you have issues accessing this, you can still call and leave a message to let us know. [Use the SEND and You Contact form to get in touch.](#)

We also arrange bookable thirty minute callbacks for those already accessing the service. The aim is to make it easier to speak to a trained advisor at a time that suits you. We thank you for your patience while we continue to get this up and running.

Send and You events November and December

From experience, we have found that people are likely to be affected by common issues over the coming months. We have arranged an ongoing series of advice sessions that can be booked for free and attended online. We hope to support as many of you as possible to you know your rights and work out your next steps on the following subjects:

- SEND Support in Schools
- applying for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- annual Review of an EHCP
- school exclusions

[Please visit the SEND and You Events Page to book if you would like information and advice to support you in these topics.](#)



SEND Council



Shelly Smith, SEND Engagement and Participation Officer

The North Somerset Send Student Council met for the first date of the 2023/24 school year. We have Student Council members joining us from eleven schools across North Somerset.

The meeting started with a catch up of the members' summers and introductions from new attendees from North Somerset Council and students who were joining the meeting for the first time. The Council members set the agenda for this year's meetings, and all the Council members had brilliant ideas about things to discuss together.

The Student Council were asked about a termly newsletter for students with SEND and whether they thought it would be useful. They said that they liked the idea. We also asked for their thoughts and opinions about the information they thought should be included. The Student Council members had inspiring ideas about what they thought the newsletter should look like, what it should include, and they suggested how students who were not part of the SEND Student Council could ask for information and contribute their voices.

The newsletter will connect SEND students across North Somerset. The student members agreed each member will be given an opportunity to write the introduction for an edition of the newsletter.

The first newsletter is planned for December. It will be distributed to all schools for their SEND students.



If you know a young person who would like to get involved with the SEND Council, please contact: shelly.smith@n-somerset.gov.uk



Education Psychology updates

Guy Clayton, Principal Educational Psychologist

Early Years CPD

The Educational Psychology Service is developing a new series of online presentations focused on social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) topics relevant to Early Years settings.

The presentations will cover strategies to address common SEMH challenges, including:

- reducing throwing behaviours
- helping children relinquish control
- curbing biting
- managing separation anxiety

There will be ten videos in total, which will be released over the next month. The presentations aim to provide Early Years staff with practical methods to incorporate into their practice when working with young children exhibiting difficulties with SEMH.

We believe this video series will be a useful resource for Early Years colleagues. Please look out for the launch of the presentations this month. More details on accessing the videos will be shared shortly.

Quality Assurance

The Educational Psychology Service is launching a new quality assurance process to continually improve services based on user feedback. Key aspects include:

- When making referrals, schools/settings will identify one focus area: learning, development, belonging, or staff confidence.
- Referred staff will complete questionnaires before and three months after EP input.
- The EPS will provide impact reports indicating if/how much progress was made in the selected area.

This process will enable the EPS to regularly evaluate and enhance support to maximise positive outcomes for children and young people.



Education Strategy

Riccardo Enoch, Strategy and Policy Development Officer

In North Somerset, we are committed to providing a nurturing, transformative, and inclusive education experience that provides the best start in life and a positive transition into adulthood for every child and young person in our community.

Our Education Strategy is in the final stages of development and outlines the ongoing work in North Somerset Council over 2022-2023 as part of a five-year action plan to achieve our vision for children and young people locally. These actions are based on six pillars, each with specific objectives, so that we adopt a targeted approach to supporting students.

We will work with settings to promote child-centred learning environments that support students to achieve their full potential and

foster a deep sense of belonging where every child feels understood and accepted.

This will be achieved via active collaboration with schools, governors, multi-academy trusts, and professionals across health and social care in a sector-wide approach. We will embed widespread understanding amongst school staff that this work will never be finished, because we will always need to adapt to new information and contexts that impact children and young people's lives.

The Education Strategy will be published this November.

Below: The pillars of the Education Strategy

Open, Fairer, Greener

1

Build trusted relationships with every child and their parents/carers

Trusted relationships between staff, children and young people, families, and professionals are the foundation on which everything is built and schools and settings place relationships at the heart of everything they do

2

Adopt a whole-school approach to trauma-informed practice

Create a culture in schools among senior leaders and staff that upholds trauma-informed practice as a fundamental tenet of education where all staff have the confidence to embed it in their classroom

3

Prioritise the achievement of all children and support vulnerable learners

Ensure children's needs are heard, understood, and prioritised in every school or setting. Adapt teaching to diverse individual needs to reduce gaps in attainment for North Somerset's most vulnerable children and young people

4

Promote active, visible partnerships

Relationships between professionals is what makes a difference to the well-being of, and outcomes for, children and young people. We will work across services and promote a shared responsibility to provide the right support at the right time via an active multi-agency response to need in our community

5

Ensure every pupil is accepted, understood, and celebrated for who they are

Recognise the diverse needs of our children and young people and promote a culture of mutual value and respect. Ensure that we are all aware of the complex pressures and challenges that surround young people every day and help them to navigate this through to adulthood in a safe and supported way

6

Local schools are the first choice for parents, carers, children, and young people

In North Somerset, we will invest in our local education and early years providers to support the diverse needs of children and young people between them. This creates a resilient, confident, and flexible learning environment and promotes the inclusion of all children and young people as learners within their own communities

Early Help in North Somerset

Riccardo Enoch, Strategy and Policy Development Officer

Early Help means using the network of support around the family to provide timely and effective care in our community. It involves a family-centred approach to identifying needs and intervening at the earliest opportunity to prevent concerns from escalating. This means having open conversations with children, young people, and their parents or carers and coordinating between local community services to deliver the right support, at the right time, from the right people.

Over the past months, we have worked with a multi-agency project group to shape Early Help in North Somerset. This includes developing a new strategy for Early Help and a series of tools which standardise Early Help support across North Somerset.

Our guide to Early Help* produced for parents and carers is a helpful way of understanding what Early Help looks like (see below and on the next page for the leaflet).

*Below: Guide to Early Help

North Somerset Early Help

I need Early Help because...

- I have some worries about my family or myself, but I don't know what to do about them
- I'm worried about my child's education
- There are so many things worrying me, and I want to talk to someone to get help
- I'm worried about my child's health
- I'm worried about money, housing, benefits, or bills
- I am a carer, or my child is a young carer, and I need help
- I have problems in my family which are making life harder
- I'm worried about my child's (or my own) mental health
- My child has an additional need or disability and I need support

You can ask about Early Help if you have any concerns about your child, family, or yourself

Where can I get Early Help?

If you feel like you or your family need support, you can ask someone you trust about getting Early Help. This could be a teacher or safeguarding officer at school, a healthcare professional, a community or voluntary organisation, or any professional who helps children and young people in North Somerset.

One of these people may approach you to ask if you would like to talk about Early Help if they are concerned about you or your child. It is your choice whether or not to have Early Help support.

Early Help can come from any of the support services in your community which support you with things like:

- parenting
- family relationships
- childcare
- mental and physical health
- special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) support
- housing
- money
- employment
- social care
- education





Below: page two of the Guide to Early Help

What does Early Help look like?

The support you get should be based around your specific needs. This is why Early Help in North Somerset is linked to the Continuum of Need.

The Continuum of Need helps professionals match support services in the local area to the child's level of need. Using the Continuum of Need is about working together to figure out how much support you need with whatever might be happening in your life at that moment.

- *Universal Support** - support that every child and family should get to thrive
- Additional Support** - extra help with issues you may be facing
- Targeted Support** - intervention support from more than one service
- Specialist Support** - help from statutory agencies in a coordinated, multi-agency approach

*Effective Support for Children, Young People, and Families - NSSCP

What happens when I ask for Early Help?

You will have a conversation with your trusted person about the problems you are having and what help and support you need, as well as what you think is working well for you. You can involve your child in this conversation so that they can share anything they want help with too

Using your responses to their questions, you can work with your trusted person to understand where you might be on the Continuum of Need so that you can plan the right support for your specific needs

What happens next will be different for each family

You may create a plan for support with the person you have worked with to set goals and check in later on to see if you need more support

You may need a higher level of support, and you will be supported to get the help you need

How can I find out more?

 You can speak to a safeguarding lead, teacher, community organisation, healthcare professional, or family wellbeing link officer

 You can use the North Somerset Council website to learn more

Capturing voice to influence practice



Ella Bunting, Participation Officer

Shelly Smith, SEND Engagement and Participation Officer

We asked our SEND students in school Years 7 to 13 to complete an online survey: 'How safe do you feel at school?' We contacted parents and carers, advertised on our SEND 0-25 social media page, and asked schools in the local area to communicate the survey to their SEND students. The response was excellent.

The survey was anonymous but children and young people were asked which school they attend. Those schools which had a higher percentage of completion received an individual report of their student voices. All schools who took part received a full report of student replies. The report is being used by schools to action the details raised by their students.



A Summer of excitement for the expansion of Baytree Specialist School

Sam Byers, Major Projects Communications and Engagement Adviser

The new Baytree expansion in Clevedon continues to take shape. With brickwork complete and cladding infills nearing completion, there is a real sense of how the finished scheme will look. Pupils visited the site earlier this summer to see the new building, learn how it was built, and handled the bricks themselves.



Inside the building, rooms and corridors are making exciting progress. Preparation for new flooring and the fitting of mechanical and electric services are well underway. Plastering is also helping to outline the size and shape of future classrooms and the reception area, which are starting to bring the school interior to life.

Remaining sections of gas, water, and electricity supply are also being fitted as the construction works continue to the end of the year.

We hope the site photos give you a sense of all the exciting progress made this summer.



Springboard Outreach Service

Nikki Tams, Business Manager Springboard Opportunity Group

The Outreach service is a replacement for Springboard's Inclusion service, which is no longer running. Please contact info@springboardweb.org.uk to discuss how Springboard can still offer support to the SEND children in your care.



Springboard Outreach Service



Supporting early years children with additional needs and disabilities for over 35 years.



Springboard Outreach Service

Our Outreach Service can support your key person working with a child with SEND, providing tips, ideas and strategies to be used immediately. You will also receive a follow up report for your ongoing work.

Costs will be dependent on the support requested. A series or block of visits over time can also be arranged.



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 info@springboardweb.org.uk
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 Registered Charity Number: 1025787

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OPPORTUNITY GROUP 



Updates from Sirona Care and Health

Grainne Rogers, Lead for Therapies and SEND

National Child Measurement Programme

The 2022/2023 National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) has been successfully completed by the School Nurse Team with 92.4% Year 6 students and 95.6% reception students being screened. NCMP will recommence in September 2023, beginning with Year 6 pupils.



NSPCWT Day of SEND

Children's Community Health Partnership (CCHP), delivered by Sirona Care & Health, joined the North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together (NSPCWT) 'Day of SEND' in October, with workshops being delivered by children's services staff, and teams being available via the marketplace stalls for information and advice.



New CCHP website

The new CCHP website is due to launch at the end of September. Keep an eye out for it on www.cchp@nhs.uk

Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment video

We invite you to watch our short animation on how our health services support Educational, Health, and Care Needs Assessments, including the role of the Specialist Health Advisors for the SEND team: [What to expect with an Education Health and Care Needs Assessment video on YouTube](#)

SENDCO survey

Thank you to the school SEND Coordinators (SENDCOs) who took part in our Children's Therapies SENDCO survey in July 2023. Your comments and feedback will help us shape our services this academic year.

Sirona care & health



Trial the NHS learning disability screening tool for children and young people



Mark Hemmings, Senior Performance Manager NHS Bristol

Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucester are trialling the NHS learning disability screening tool. After the trial period, we will review the tool to understand the benefits of using it.

The learning disability screening tool is a short questionnaire that can help identify if a child or young person aged between 6 and 18 may have a learning disability. It is important to know:

- It does not diagnose the specific learning disability the child or young person may have.
- The tool can only give an indication that a child or young person may have a learning disability.

Remember that the tool can only give an indication of whether the child or young person has a learning disability or not. You must always get an assessment from a professional, such as your GP, to confirm what the tool tells you.

[Trial the NHS learning disability tool here.](#)

It can also be found by accessing [the North Somerset SEND hub](#) (Local Offer).



**Bristol, North Somerset
and South Gloucestershire**
Integrated Care Board



**Learning
Disability
Matters**
for Families



We are continually developing the SEND Partnership newsletter. If you have any feedback or would like to contribute, please email: tracy.humphris@north-somerset.gov.uk



**North
Somerset**
Council