

# Local Area - SEND newsletter for parents & carers

## Newsletter Highlights

**Bring it on Brum holiday provision**

**What the new NHS integrated care system will mean for you**

**Summer Art Competition**

**Inclusion strategy gets underway**

**Birmingham PCF update**

**News and information from the Specialist SEND support services**



Dear Parent or Carer

Welcome to our partnership newsletter from the teams working together to deliver SEND services in Birmingham City Council, the NHS and Birmingham Children's Trust. I hope that you will find it useful and informative.

We were delighted to welcome Birmingham Headteachers to our inclusion 'mini' conferences in late June. We are working toward creating an Inclusion Strategy so that we are 'the right help at the right time for every child or young person'. We will bring you more information on that as work progresses.

As the summer holidays approach, I'd like to *draw* your attention to our Art Competition which you can read about further down. We'd love children and young people with additional needs to enter their creations which we hope will make our SEND Local Offer website look a whole lot brighter and reflect the lives and experiences of Birmingham's young people.

'Bring it on Brum' are providing summer holiday club opportunities for children and young people with additional needs. More information can be found [here](#).



Please don't forget that there is still time to comment on the [Green Paper on the SEND](#) which is currently out for [consultation](#). The deadline for comments is 22nd July.

Wishing you a very happy summer break, and if you are lucky enough to be attending the Commonwealth Games, I hope you have a wonderful time.

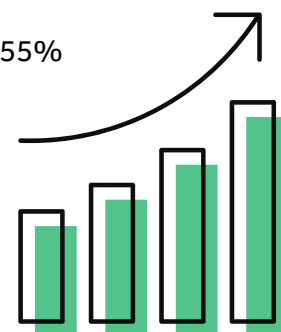
**Sue Harrison**  
Director, Children and Families  
Birmingham City Council

JULY 2022

## Improvements in SEND Services

Whilst we know that change is taking time in Birmingham, we wanted to share some of the improvements already taking place in the service. For a more detailed review of change please read our June SEND Improvement Update [here](#).

- June 2022 - 76% of EHCPs are finalised within 20 weeks compared to 4% in November 2020.
- May 2022 - 25% of Annual Reviews were actioned within 4 weeks compared to less than 1% in September 2021.
- The Quality of EHCPs is also being addressed through the new Quality Assurance Framework
- Speech and Language - reduction in the average wait times (Clinic & Outreach) by 55%
- Occupational Therapy - reduction in average wait times for initial assessments (New Appointments) by 36%



For more information on the SEND Improvement Programme go to the [SEND Local Offer website](#)

## New Situational Mutism Information Pack

We are pleased to share with you the Situational Mutism (SM) Information Pack co-produced by Solihull Parent Carer Voice, North Solihull Additional Needs Group, Birmingham Parent Carer Forum, Solihull Inclusion Support Service, Birmingham SEND Therapy Team, Birmingham and Solihull Educational Psychology Services and NHS Birmingham and Solihull.

The creation of this pack took place following feedback from Birmingham and Solihull Parent Carers that there was little information about how to get support for children, young people and young adults with Situational Mutism in Birmingham and Solihull in the hopes of collating good quality advice and information for parent carers, professionals and young people.

This pack includes:

- Information about Situational Mutism and how it presents
- Feedback from young people on their experience of SM
- Advice and guidance for professionals and parent/carers
- Signposting to resources for young people, professionals, parent & carers

We would value your feedback on the contents of the pack which you can provide here in a three question survey

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GTVV69X>, the feedback will be reviewed by the team behind this pack in Autumn Term 2022.



You can find these resources and other wellbeing help on the SEND Local Offer website [here](#). Scroll down for the Situational Mutism pack.

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SURVEY OF SEND SERVICES – HAVE YOUR SAY

As part of our work to improve the SEND service offering in Birmingham, we are asking children and young people with additional needs about their experiences of SEND services.

We appreciate that it is a very busy time of year, but would be very grateful if you would you share this survey link with parents and carers of young people and young people themselves aged 12-29 who access additional/SEND services? We would be very grateful if parents and carers could help children and young people to fill in the survey where needed. There are shopping voucher prizes on offer.

No personal data for under 18s will be sought, although parents and carers may share their details for the purpose of entering the prize draw or for more information.

Tell us what you think about SEND services in Birmingham to be in with a chance of winning one of 4 £20 shopping vouchers

Have your say on improving SEND services and support

Are you aged 12 to 29?

- Do you have any type of Additional Need or Disability?
- What are your experiences of support for this in Birmingham?
- What support has worked well for you?
- What support hasn't worked well for you?
- What else could have helped?



Please fill in the 5 minute survey.

This is for Young People with Additional Needs aged 12 to 29 in Birmingham. Parents and Carers are welcome to help the young person complete it.

If you need help, please contact Rowan and SENDImpComm@birmingham.gov.uk.

The survey will close on Friday 9 September. The links are

<https://forms.office.com/r/X1mxxNNPdB> (Ages 12-18)

<https://forms.office.com/r/F5E0pKzE80> (Ages 18+)

Link for sharing this information - [www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/latest-news/](http://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/latest-news/)

**Children and Young People  
Have Your Say on SEND**

## Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group becomes the Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board (ICB) & what it means for SEND in Birmingham

On 1st July 2022, Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group became the Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board (ICB). This legal change means that the ICB will work as a key partner within the wider Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care System (ICS).

The move to Integrated Care System (ICS) will not change the way that you or your child are able to access your local health services but will **improve sharing of good practice/common solutions across Birmingham and Solihull**, by having more joined up work and shared responsibility for outcomes for children, young people and families. SEND is a priority within the ICB in Birmingham and Solihull as recognised in the following ways.

- ICBs must consider how they will meet the needs of children and young people aged 0-25 and set this out in their Forward Plans.
- ICBs must consider how to ensure a diverse skill mix of leadership, which should include a consideration of whether there is knowledge and expertise related to children and to SEND
- Each ICB must have an Executive Lead responsible for SEND and accountable for how well SEND support by partners is delivered.
- ICBs have to work with children's system leaders, children and young people and families when forming their strategies and have to show how they have met their statutory responsibilities relating to SEND in their annual report.

Below is a detailed summary of what the ICS means for children and families with SEND click [here](#)

If you would like further information please visit Caring about healthier lives : Birmingham and Solihull ICS ([birminghamsolihullics.org.uk](http://birminghamsolihullics.org.uk))



## Parent Link Service Update

The Parent Link Line continues to be accessed having had 2,228 calls since April 2022 to date. The response rate currently stands at 99%

The Parent Link and the School Link mailboxes are also utilised, by Parent/Carers and professionals.

You can access parent/carer webinars on a range of topics here: [www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/webinars/](http://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/webinars/)

Parentlink contact details – Tel: 0121 303 8461  
Email: [parentlinkservice@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:parentlinkservice@birmingham.gov.uk)

# SEND PARENT LINK SERVICE





JULY 2022

## SEND Art Competition – What are you like?

We are running an art competition over the summer holiday to get children and young people with additional needs in the creative mood and showcasing their lives. A website link for sharing is [here](#).

We are looking for images created by children and young people of themselves, their families, their friends and their interests. We want to include a selection on the SEND Local Offer over the next year, so that the website shows the creative talents of our children and young people in Birmingham, and also a reflection of what they get up to.

The competition will run from now until **16th September** and will be organised in the following age categories:

Age 0-7, Age 8-13, Age 14+

We are looking for images (drawings, paintings, collage, computer generated etc. however they wish to create) on the following subjects:

- Me and my favourite games
- Me and my schoolwork
- Me and my family
- Me and my friends
- My journey to school
- Me and my additional need
- Me living my best life



There will be voucher prizes in each category. A child or young person may enter as many categories as they wish. Please email entries to: [info@localofferbirmingham.co.uk](mailto:info@localofferbirmingham.co.uk), or post to PO Box 16289, Birmingham, B2 2XN - please mark the envelope SEND Art Competition

Please label each drawing with the child or young person's name and age and please include contact details if you wish the artwork to be entered into the competition. We will not be able to return artwork and will label any submissions we use on the website and social media using only the child or young person's first name and age.

## OHMI – Free music lessons for a year

**OHMI** Music making for people with physical disabilities

The OHMI Music Makers teaching programme has been awarded funding which has enabled them to offer children in Birmingham the opportunity to enjoy music lessons free for a year.

Email: [rachel@ohmu.org.uk](mailto:rachel@ohmu.org.uk)



## Birmingham Parent Carer Forum Update

We have had a busy month since our last update. The team has held and attended many events to make sure the reach of the Parent Carer Forum is as large as possible.

On Monday 16th May we held a free Makaton taster session for our families. Families were invited to learn 30 basic and 20 bespoke signs.

After a successful Q&A event with Department for Education appointed Commissioner John Coughlan in February John asked that we host another session to discuss his newly published report with parents and carers. The session took place on Wednesday 25th May and we wanted to thank everyone who attended for their contributions and for making it another fantastic Question and Answer session. We look forward to hosting more events like this one in the future.

On Monday 6th June members of the forum attended the Carers Event at Symphony Hall as part of Carers Week 2022, it was so nice to see so many of you there and to catch up with some familiar faces as well as speak to parents and carers that were new to us.

Sabiha (Chair of Birmingham Parent Carer Forum) spoke at a Resource Base practitioner meeting on Thursday 16th June to share the work the forum does for the families of Birmingham and how resource base leads can get involved too.

We hosted another ECHP Workshop with Victoria Federico, Special Educational Needs Solicitor from Penningtons Manches Cooper on 7th July with 25 people attending. There was a lot of very useful information shared with Victoria covering topics ranging from how to get the content of your child's EHCP right to appeals to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. Next steps - we will be holding a Tribunal event which was widely requested.

### 13th July - All Age Autism Support Service Event

BPCF and Solihull Parent Carer Voice hosted an event to promote All Age Autism Support. The event included colleagues from [Landau](#), BCC, Solihull Council and health. Information was shared about how groups/services can apply for grants, what the criteria is and how to use the grant. The event was attended by approximately 15 people which the majority was an experts by experience, adults and young people with autism or identifies as having autism. This will hopefully be one of many meetings and we look forward to sharing their forthcoming directory with you.

Please keep an eye on our social media pages for updates regarding these events, you can find us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/BirminghamPCF](http://www.facebook.com/BirminghamPCF) and Twitter [twitter.com/BirminghamPCF](https://twitter.com/BirminghamPCF).

We also continue to make sure we flag concerns raised to us to the relevant parties in Health, Education and Social Care. If you would be interested in becoming a member of Birmingham Parent Carer Forum please follow this link <http://eepurl.com/ggdNTj> and fill in the form.

As always, we thank you for your continued support.



The PCF has written an open letter to the Local Authority on SEND services which you can read [here](#)

We would like to thank everyone who signed it and we will publish the response in due course.

## Are we inclusive in Birmingham schools and settings?

Early Years' settings, Primary, Secondary and Special School Headteachers came together for the first time since COVID to discuss inclusion in 4 Mini-Conferences (at the end of June). The group, brought together by Sue Harrison, the Director of Children and Families for Birmingham City Council, is working to develop a shared understanding of inclusion, looking at challenges and how to overcome them.

This will contribute towards the development of a shared definition of inclusion and an Inclusion Strategy which looks at 'right help right time'.

Inclusion will be discussed further across the SEND partnership, with young people and at the Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP) conference in October; producing a final draft version of an Inclusion Strategy in the late Autumn.



Sally Leese Head Teacher of Castle Vale Nursery School said, 'It was really good to bring Nursery, Primary and Secondary head teacher colleagues together to talk about the important issue of Inclusion for all children and young people in Birmingham. There was so much good practice shared alongside the difficult conversations we need to have. It finally feels like we are on this journey together with the local authority and look forward to working on an Inclusion strategy for the city and all its children, young people and families.'

## Developing Local Provision - A progress report

The Developing Local Provision projects (Improving SEND provision) in mainstream schools have now been running for at least one year and the projects are increasingly showing some real impact on outcomes for children and young people. Schools are sharing resources and expertise through locality partnership working, training and upskilling staff members, purchasing additional resources including toolkits and making data informed decisions.

Many primary school projects are focussing on speech language and communication and work with speech and language therapy teams is enabling teachers and support staff to become more skilled in this area. In secondary schools' pupils are being supported to improve literacy in many areas and through targeted and structured interventions, some projects are demonstrating that children and young people are swiftly closing progress and attainment gaps in key areas of weakness.

### Headline figures for a North West Consortium 6 week Placement

- 13.3% increase in attendance 1 Year 8 month increase in reading age and comprehension age (Accelerated Reader)
- 8.1 increase in standardised score for reading comprehension (Lucid Exact)
- An average of 1 band increase (Birmingham language and literacy SEN toolkit)
- 0.4 grade increase in wellbeing for pupils (SEMH 5 point emotion scale)
- 0.9 grade increase in parental satisfaction for SEND provision



**DLP**

DEVELOPING LOCAL  
PROVISION



## Early Years Inclusion Support (EYIS) - Early Support Service: Down Syndrome Support Group for Parents/Carers

The group is facilitated by two ESS staff and a member of staff from Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

The parents/carers invited all have children aged 0-5 years who have a diagnosis of Down Syndrome and who have been referred into EYIS for support. The monthly meetings are popular with parents/carers and we consistently have up to 10 parents/carers attend.

For more information about the group please contact: Joanne Bourne on 0782708278, Debbie Lane on 07827082761, Clare Hulbert-Moore on 07753316295




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## Training 100 more Early Years' Practitioners to Level 3 Qualification

The Area SENCo Team work within the Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) nursery sector to support the setting based SENCo to meet the needs of children that are 0-5 years with known or emerging additional needs/disabilities.

The Area SENCo Team has previously delivered two cohorts of CACHE Level 3 Special Educational Needs Co Ordinator (SENCo) in Early Years qualification (as referenced in the Education White Paper 2022 and the SEND Green Paper 2022). They have now partnered with Birmingham's Developing Local Provision (DLP) project to deliver the course to a further 100 Birmingham Early Years practitioners. The DLP project are funding the twelve sessions of accredited training from September 2022.

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## Want access to thousands of books and text books for your child?

RNIB Bookshare has over 807,563 titles with a huge range of fiction and non-fiction as well as GCSE and A Level textbooks and accessible images. This service is for all learners with a print disability such as dyslexia, Autism, ADHD and learners that are blind or partially sighted.

Books can be downloaded straight onto an ipad/phone and then modified to suit your child. They can be listened to, enlarged, words can be hovered over or highlighted as well as being able to be printed off or embossed into Braille. This service is free to educators in the UK who support print-disabled learners.

If you are not sure if your child is eligible, go to the RNIB Bookshare website to check if your child school can take advantage of this fantastic resource [www.rnibbookshare.org](http://www.rnibbookshare.org). Once you know if they are eligible, contact your child's school and check with the SENCO, librarian or TA and ask them if your child has an account, and if not, the school can set your child up as a member.

<https://yourdolphin.com/EasyReader>



You or your child or their school can also download the Dolphin Easy Reader app on a tablet or phone (Apple or Android) as another great way to access books on RNIB Bookshare.



**RNIB**  
Bookshare





## **SEND Socials Birmingham CIC have been shortlisted for the UK's Largest Diversity Awards**

SEND Socials Birmingham CIC, one of Birmingham's most successful SEND support groups, has been shortlisted for the the National Diversity Awards, the largest awards of this type in the UK; they are nominated in the Community Organisation Award for Disability category. The awards attracted 72,000 nomination and votes this year, with 126 nominees being recognised for their various achievements nationwide. The awards ceremony is in Liverpool in September.

S.E.N.D Socials Birmingham provides social opportunities for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. They also offer support to parents and carers through coffee mornings, workshops, signposting and an online forum

Lisa Wotton, Director and Co-founder of SEND Socials said, 'We are unbelievably proud to be in the finals of these prestigious awards. We were flattered just with the nomination, so this has come huge surprise to us. The email dropped into our inbox whilst we were sat in a cafe hosting one of our coffee mornings for parents and carers, so it was really lovely to share the news with some of our users as we received it.'

Natalie Smith, Director and Co-Founder added 'When we heard about the nomination we were incredibly proud and shared this with the families we support. They immediately then supported us by providing testimonies of the difference our service had made to them.

To get the email saying we had reached the final 8 in our category was a massive shock but we intend to use this platform as an opportunity to share more about the work we do and to improve opportunities for our families.'

Congratulations!

[www.facebook.com/sendsocialsbirmingham](https://www.facebook.com/sendsocialsbirmingham)



SEND Holiday Club Information can be found at the [Bring it on Brum website](#)



The Commonwealth Games is in Birmingham from the 28th July - don't forget there are [free events](#) that you can watch.