

SEND FAMILY BRIEFING

FEBRUARY 2020 / ISSUE 1



Parent Link Service

This term, we introduced our new Parent Link Officers. They are members of the local authority who are there to help build better communication links between parents, schools, settings, specialists and agencies. They will support parents through a central contact line, family forums and drop-in events.

We recognise we really need to build trust and establish much easier ways for families to get advice and to be able to access some of our specialist professionals as early as possible. [For advice or more information about parent link officers and the events coming up click here.](#)

We are holding two events to share information about the Parent Link Service. The events will take place on:

- Wednesday 12 February Calthorpe Special School, Highgate from 9.30am to 1pm at the Pathways and outcomes event
- Wednesday 26 February at St John's C of E Primary School, Sparkhill from 8.45am to 10am.

LOCALITY FAMILY FORUM

Parents have often told us that they want to speak to professionals to talk about their child's needs but find it difficult to do this without a long referral process. To address this, we will be starting to host family forum events throughout the year which will include an opportunity to attend drop-in appointments with a range of different professionals.

[For further information on dates and venues for these events click here.](#)

Please share these dates with other parents, so as many as possible can attend.



INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL MEETINGS

In January we have been piloting individual school meetings with the Handsworth cluster of schools and the local SEND team. This means that the educational psychologist, advisory teacher, an occupational therapist and speech and language therapist have all been meeting together with individual schools to talk about children and young people with SEND.

Where children require additional help, we now hold four weekly panels instead of one to cover the East West, North and South of the city. The panels consider requests made by schools and settings for additional funding or resources; changes of placement; specialist placements and Education, Health and Care statutory assessments. The panels meet on a Tuesday morning and have representatives from education psychology, the advisory services for communication, cognition and learning, looked after children, Early Years, Post 16, health, social care, as well as members of the SEN administration and home to school transport team.

Each referral is assigned to a lead professional – usually an educational psychologist or a specialist teacher. The lead professional will work with the school and family and the different professionals involved, to ensure that the children and young people's needs are met.



HUZAIFAH'S STORY

Huzaifah's story is a great example of how working in innovative and different ways really can help to make a difference to the lives of children and young people and their families.

Thank you to St John's Primary School and to Huzaifah and his family for sharing their story.

[Click on the link to view Huzaifah's story.](#)



LOCAL WEBSITE

We have been working with the Parent Carer Forum to update our Local Offer website to make it easier for parents and carers to find information on the support available for children, young people and families. We will be launching the new Local Offer Website in March 2020.



YOUNG PEOPLE'S FORUM

The application process for the SEND Youth Forum has now been completed. On the 13 January 2020 interviews for the forum took place at the Council House. For many of the young people this was their first experience of an interview process. They rose to the occasion and the interview panel were blown away by their enthusiasm and determination to be part of Birmingham's SEND Youth Forum. The newly established SEND Youth Forum will now meet regularly throughout the year to support and advise Birmingham City Council on a range of themes and issues related to special educational needs and disabilities. For further information email youthforum@birmingham.gov.uk or Sarah.j.scarr@birmingham.gov.uk

