

Local Area - SEND newsletter



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 look forward to welcoming Helen Ellis, our permanent Director of SEND and Inclusion, who will join us on 2nd November from Dudley Council. This is positive news and the beginning of our move to a new permanent SENAR structure over the next few months.

We are going to extend the deadline for our Art Competition (which you can read about further down) until Friday 23rd December. 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.

The SEND Local Offer website is being refreshed and updated so that it is easier to find what you want on the site. It will also include a directory of local and national providers of SEND support, information and resources. If you know of any organisations which should be in this directory please fill in the feedback form on the home page of the website - www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk

We are also forging ahead with our SEND strategy and Inclusion strategy which we look forward to sharing widely in the New Year.

With best wishes

Sue Harrison

Director, Children and Families, Birmingham City Council

Newsletter Highlights

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NOVEMBER 2022

Short Breaks - new Policy

Birmingham Children's Trust is writing to parents/carers whose children are currently in receipt of short breaks from the Trust to explain about the review process and contact that will be made directly with families over the next few months. The reviews will ensure equity and parity as well as looking at how well the short break is meeting the assessed needs of children.

Needs change over time which may mean children require less or more service provision. By holding regular review meetings, we can focus on children's needs and their short break provision and how well this meets the need at the current time. Parents / carers can contact their allocated worker or family support duty officer if they have any queries once they have received their letter.

The new short breaks policy can be accessed here - [www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/homepage/48/disabled_childrens_social_care – including short breaks and the local offer](http://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/homepage/48/disabled_childrens_social_care_-_including_short_breaks_and_the_local_offer)


BIRMINGHAM
CHILDREN'S TRUST

Name Change in Birmingham Children's Trust

The Trust's Disabled Childrens social care service (DCSC) has changed its name to Children With Disabilities (CWD), to better reflect our focus on children.

A place to talk about feelings.....

We support anyone under 25 years old with a Birmingham GP, we:

- provide brief, therapeutic support for emotional wellbeing
- give practical support and suggestions in 1:1 sessions,
- take time to listen to ensure our you feel heard
- let you choose – come to see us when you want to and talk about whatever you like – it's up to you if you come back and when.



You can:

- Register with us online - <https://forwardthinkingbirmingham.nhs.uk/pause>
- Drop-in to talk - check out our webpages for times and locations each week


<https://forwardthinkingbirmingham.nhs.uk/pause>
Pause.

 ForwardThinking
 Birmingham

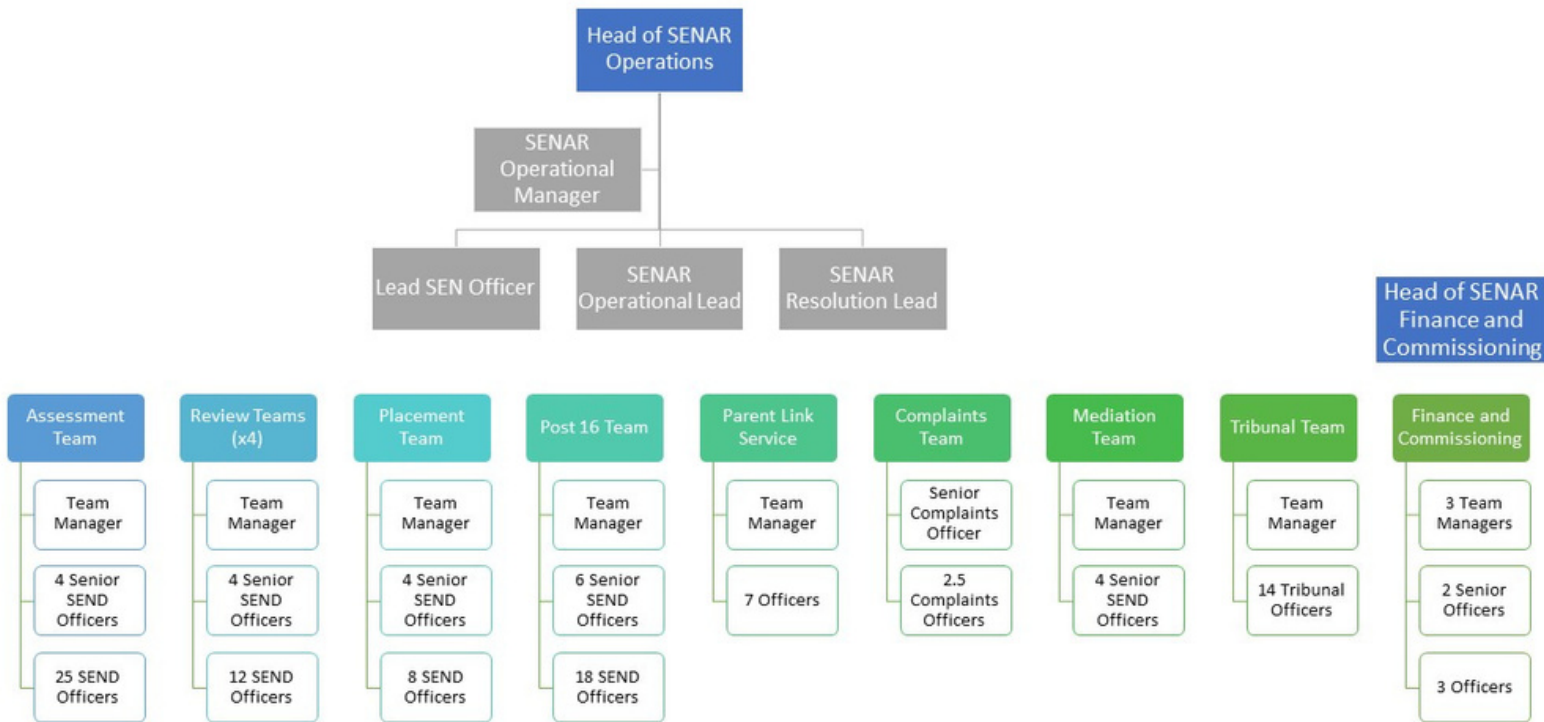
 The
 Children's
 Society

NOVEMBER 2022

The New SENAR structure and Update

You Said – We want to see how SENAR is structured - We Did – Provided an organisation chart of the whole team

You can download this image [here](#)



SENAR is continuing on its improvement journey and the interim SENAR structure is nearly at a full complement of staff.

The assessment team are currently **issuing 66% of new EHCPs within the 20 week timeframe**, which is above the National average. We are continuing to drive improvements in this area. A new assessment process, including a new EHCP format, will be implemented in stages over the next half term and be fully operational by January.

The phased transfer process (pupils/students moving from stage of education to the next) is underway and is currently in line with planned timescales.

The backlog of annual reviews has reduced significantly. In September 2021, there were a backlog of 5,732 annual reviews awaiting processing. Annual reviews have continued to be submitted to SENAR on a weekly basis. A total of 9,321 were received between May 2021 and October 2022. The current number of reviews awaiting processing stands at 778.

A training programme has been developed and is being delivered on a weekly basis to all SENAR case officers, ensuring all staff are aware of the statutory processes and timeframes.

Standard Operating Procedures for the service have been developed, along with an internal website. This will ensure all staff are working to consistent processes, and new staff are inducted efficiently and effectively.



Update

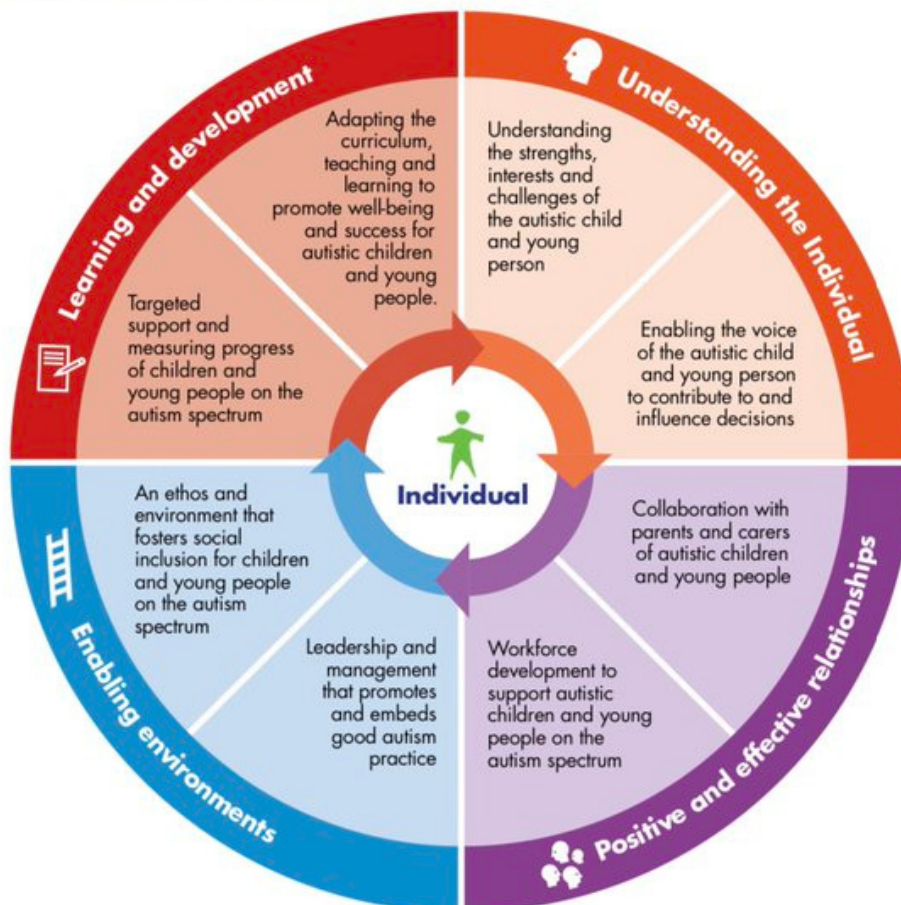
The Communication and Autism Team (CAT) have delivered 156 training sessions to 2442 delegates in settings since January 2022, using Autism Education Trust (AET) training packages.

The Autism Education Trust is a not-for-profit organisation helping to develop good autism practice since 2007 and is supported by the Department for Education. Their support programme offers education professionals training, practical tools, and a wealth of free resources to better support autistic children and young people aged 0 to 25.

The Autism Education Trust materials are based on current research into Autism and Education conducted by the Autism Centre for Education and Research (ACER) at the University of Birmingham and are fully coproduced with autistic young people, families, education professionals and the main autism charities in England.

The ACER Good Autism Practice report can be found on this link: [Good Autism Practice Guidance | Autism Education Trust](#)

The report focuses on the 8 Principles of Good Autism Practice:





Communication and Autism

Access to
Education

CAT uses the AET 8 Principles and the relevant Autism Standards and Competency Frameworks to improve the provision for autistic children and young people which, in turn, leads to improved outcomes for autistic individuals.

Feedback from sessions 87% of delegates rated the statement “What I have learned will impact on my practice as good or excellent (with 62% of delegates rating this as “excellent”)

Delegate comments:

“The session was clear and informative and gave me a good insight into how children feel and what they experience. I will be using the strategies shared during the session to support the behaviour and learning of the children.”

Following training sessions, CAT professionals follow up with staff in settings via their day to day work to ensure embedding of good autism practice.

The Autism Education Trust website is now fully accessible and all resources and information can be translated into a range of languages as well as there being a facility for the information to be read out to the user.

www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk

Children and Young People's Survey Results

This summer, two online surveys were undertaken of young people identifying with additional needs aged 12 to 29 in Birmingham. One survey was for young people aged 12 to 18 still at school or college, and the other was for young adults aged 18 to 29.

- The purpose of the surveys was to ask young people aged 12-29 about their experiences with having additional needs
- What makes them feel included at school
- How we can improve the services they may receive
- Their priorities for youth participation in the future and to inform a youth participation strategy and action plan for 2022/23

The results of the survey have now been published and can be viewed on the SEND Local Offer website: Co-production & Engagement | Local Offer Birmingham



NOVEMBER 2022

SEND Art Competition – What are you like?

We are extending our art competition until the end of term (23rd December) 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 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, 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.

Developing Local Provision is a two-year project which aims to develop and improve provision, progress and outcomes for children and young people with additional needs or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in mainstream schools across Birmingham. The project is producing encouraging results.

We have produced a Developing Local Provision newsletter which you can read here – www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/latest-news/



Birmingham Careers Service for All

Birmingham Careers Service (BCS) is located within the Skills & Employability Division of Birmingham City Council's Children & Families Directorate. We deliver impartial Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) and support to progress into education, employment and training for young people aged 13 – 19 (up to 25 for those with additional needs).

The service is delivered by 28 Careers Advisers who are professionally qualified to a minimum QCF Level 6 in careers development/guidance. The Advisers deliver the service in the Birmingham community and local schools/colleges. Many of the young people we work with have a wide range of SEND and other complex additional needs. This includes young people with an EHCP and those without an EHCP who are receiving specialist support for their SEND.

Community Delivery

This is a free service for Birmingham resident young people who are aged 16 – 19 (up to 25 for those with additional needs). The service is delivered across the city and all young people are allocated a named Adviser. The service can be accessed from a range of local community venues, including three hubs located in the Library of Birmingham, The Factory and The Lighthouse

- Young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- Young parents/expectant parents
- Year 11 leavers identified as at risk of NEET
- Elective Home Educated Year 11 students and their parents/carers

School, Academy & College Delivery

Schools and settings can purchase the service to ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities to provide independent CIAG for students from Year 7 upwards, as well as helping to evidence implementation of the Gatsby Benchmarks.

BCS is currently delivering in some 30+ partner schools across the city, Solihull and Sandwell. This includes a wide range of special schools and specialist independent colleges.

Continuous Professional Development

All our staff benefit from continuous professional development (CPD) and, as part of this, are offered the opportunity to attend termly CPD sessions on the **SEND agenda**. This has included: an introduction to SENDIASS; DWP introduction to SEND benefits; presentation by the Access to Education Teams with a focus on physical disabilities, hearing and physical impairments. Staff have also undertaken an Access to Education (AET) Post-16 Making Sense of Autism course, which was delivered by BCC's Communication and Autism Team.

Two of our Advisers are currently undertaking a Professional Certificate in Supporting Clients with Additional Needs delivered by the Careers and Development Institute (CDI). This programme is aimed at Advisers who hold a minimum of QCF Level 6 in Careers Development.

Further Information

Visit our website www.birminghamcareersservice.co.uk for further information and to access a range of local resources for young people. This includes short local information leaflets produced by our Advisers – with some aimed at young people with an EHCP.

Follow us:



<https://www.facebook.com/birminghamcareersservice/>
<https://twitter.com/bhamcareers>
<https://www.instagram.com/birminghamcareersservice/>



We met the Lord Mayor!

The RISE (Respect, Inclusion, Support and Equity) Youth Forum and The YES (Youth Empowerment Squad) joined together to meet the Lord Mayor of Birmingham Cllr Maureen Cornish JP.

The day started with a surprise visit from Cllr Bridgid Jones Deputy leader of Birmingham City Council. Cllr Jones was pleased to see the forums in the Council House and appreciated hearing about the work of the forums over the past few months.

The RISE Youth Forum promotes the student voice, ensuring a platform is provided for young people to voice their views, participate in discussions and decisions about policies and practices, which are affecting their life through delivery, locally and nationally at a strategic and operational level.

The Forum then received a full detailed tour of the historic building and the chambers. The young people had the honour of visiting the room where many heads of states have previously been, whilst hearing interesting stories about their visits.

To finish off the visit the Young People were given access to the council chambers where many full council meetings take place. The Lord Mayor joined them in the chambers and spoke passionately about her career and journey to get her to where she is today. Cllr Cornish gave the young people some great advice about “persevering” and “never giving up.” The Young People listened intently and shared their own lived experiences about having knock backs but what they did to overcome this.

The Young People felt privileged to meet with the Lord Mayor and hear about her career to date. Members of the forum described this session as “incredible, memorable, informative, and perfect.”

If you are 11-18 years old and would like to join the RISE Forum, please contact keshia.hamilton@birmingham.gov.uk
If you are 18-30 years old and would like to join YES! please contact sarah.kumar@birmingham.gov.uk



News from the Birmingham Parent Carer Forum

We hope that you all had a wonderful summer break and have settled back into the school term well. Since our last update we have been busy working with local partners to ensure the parent carer voice is heard across Birmingham.

We held another ECHP Workshop with Victoria Federico, Special Educational Needs Solicitor from Penningtons Manches Cooper in which we spoke about topics ranging from how to get the content of your child's EHCP right to appeals to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. This was another successful event, and we look forward to working with Victoria again in the future!

More recently we have worked with solicitors and authors of 'A Practical Guide to the Law in Relation to School Exclusions', Charlotte Hadfield and Alice de Coverley to put on a free Exclusion & Attendance Webinar. Charlotte and Alice spoke to families about; exclusions including early years and post 16, school attendance difficulties, part time timetables and much more. We have agreed to do more work with both Charlotte and Alice to put on more events like this and we will share more information soon.

We are working hard putting together more events like these in the near future. Please keep an eye on our social media pages for all of our updates, you can find us on



Facebook www.facebook.com/BirminghamPCF



Twitter 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.

Glody learns to walk and becomes a Commonwealth Baton Bearer

Glody who is a student at [Wilson Stuart School](#) was nominated by teachers and teaching assistants to become a Commonwealth Games Baton Bearer. Glody has shown great determination in his physical skills over his years at Wilson Stuart School which welcomes pupils who have additional difficulties including sensory impairment, learning difficulties, communication difficulties or complex medical conditions. From being a full time wheelchair user to harnessing his skills to now walk independently, he has overcome some great challenges along the way including frustrations and difficulty expressing his emotions to now being a super mature, independent young man. Here are the staff comments which took ultimately Glody to the Commonwealth Games:

For his grit, determination and sheer will to walk, Glody has gone from always travelling in a wheelchair to walking around school.

Absolutely amazing and inspirational. For learning to walk over recent years and becoming a well loved member of Inspire 1.

Go Glody!!! He's arrived at our school in a wheelchair and is now able to walk around school all day. He's done fantastic walking and it would be great for him to walk somewhere different and with a great purpose.





The Music of Life Choir includes talented pupils from some of our Special Schools in Birmingham (Selly Oak and Bridge special schools and Calthorpe Academy).

Music of Life, is a charity that supports children with physical and learning disabilities through regular engagement in high-quality musical activities

Their concert, held in the summer, is a celebration of the students' amazing achievements in a fun-packed programme where they work together with Birmingham-based youth groups and ensembles.

Their uplifting and joyful concert can be viewed here. Please share widely, you could well make someone's day. With a Smile and a Song - Music of Life Celebration concert 2022 - YouTube <http://musicoflife.org.uk/>



If you run a SEND group of any kind and would like it to be advertised on the SEND Local Offer website, please go to the feedback form on the home page of the website and fill in the form there, using the Any Other Comments box - <https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/feedback-form/>

The publication date and copy deadline for all newsletters for this academic year can be found here: <https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/latest-news/>

You can also read our newsletter on SEND Improvement on the same web page.