

March 2023



## Welcome from Helen Ellis, Director of SEND and Inclusion

We are really pleased to see some great improvements in the SEND service in Birmingham. In particular, I am delighted that you can now call your SENAR case officer directly. [The SEND Local Offer website](#) has been updated and we are keen to tell as many people as possible about this so that they can find help and support there, as quickly and easily as possible. We also have SEND Partnership [Facebook page](#) where you can find more information about SEND Support and events in Birmingham.

As ever, please let us have your feedback via the SEND Local Offer website homepage or contact us directly.

With all good wishes

Helen

## Contacting SENAR

Parents and carers are now able to telephone their child or young person's Birmingham City Council SENAR case worker directly.

It is also possible to leave a voicemail outside of the available hours and officers will endeavour to return calls within one working day. **Please note; if you would like us to return your call, please leave your phone number clearly in your voice message or send an email, including your phone number to the officer you are trying to speak to, as we cannot see the number you are dialling from on our system.**

Additional resource has been allocated to our Parent Link service and officers can be reached between 9am and 5pm on 0121 303 8461. We have reviewed the options you hear when calling Parent Link, so you can speak to an officer without delay.

Contact details for the whole SENAR team are [here](#) on the SEND Local Offer website.

[www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/send-support-and-information/advice-and-support/](http://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/send-support-and-information/advice-and-support/)

## Service Improvement and Feedback

We are delighted to be receiving more positive feedback on our service. Some examples below:

- Local Offer website - 'It's brilliant to have something really good to share with our families'



- Parent feedback – ‘We don't have enough words to express how grateful are but let me tell you that in our (me and my wife) experience dealing with various personnels over last few years for R, you are easily at the top. Please accept our best wishes and gratitude’.
- Professional feedback – ‘The SENCO was really grateful for the support from H for school and parents of a child who transferred from another local authority. H was responsive and efficient and ensured the plan was updated onto the Birmingham format quickly’.

---

## Forward Thinking Birmingham – Carenotes Update

Our carenotes system is now back up and running and we can now respond to most patient queries. However, some information in the system may take longer to retrieve than normal. Everyone is working incredibly hard to minimise the impact. Please do bear this in mind when contacting us. Thank you for your ongoing patience and understanding.

Contact details for Forward Thinking Birmingham can be found here [Contact | Forward Thinking Birmingham](#)

---

## Mental Health workshops in schools

Teams from Forward Thinking Birmingham (FTB) 0-25s Mental Health Service have been delivering workshops to improve the mental wellbeing of secondary school and primary school children in Birmingham.

FTB's Youth Mental Health Team are running workshops in schools for parents and young people, offering early help and support to prevent students from developing mental health issues.

Further information about the workshops can be found on the Forward Thinking Birmingham website: <https://forwardthinkingbirmingham.nhs.uk/latest-news/new-mental-health-workshops-supporting-students-in-birmingham-schools-6930>



---

## New Speech and Language Videos

A suite of short videos has been produced by the children's Speech and Language Therapy service which demonstrate commonly used communication strategies. These incredibly useful 'shorts' demonstrate 8 different strategies particularly useful in the early stages of communication development. [SALT strategy videos: Birmingham Community Healthcare \(bhamcommunity.nhs.uk\)](https://bhamcommunity.nhs.uk)

# Speech and Language Therapy Strategy Videos

**NHS**  
Birmingham  
Community Healthcare  
NHS Foundation Trust

8 videos with strategies to support your child's communication development:



## Play, Interact and Communicate (PIC)

Devised by specialist teachers in the Early Support Service (ESS) PIC helps to identify how a child is playing, interacting and communicating. PIC supports development through the implementation of appropriate activities, working towards clearly identified targets through a 'can do' approach with small progressive targets broken down within the areas of communication and interaction. This is supported by a bank of practical resources and strategies. The Area SENCo Team (AST) are rolling out training across Birmingham.

Following training, or implementation at home, parent/carers and settings have reported the impact of PIC as:

*I understand the child's needs more and have knowledge on different strategies to play with them in the setting and identify what stage they are at*

*An immense difference to my approach to how I support children*

If you would like further information, and your child is in a setting, please speak to your child's setting based SENCo. If your child is not in a setting and is supported at home by ESS, your ESS worker will be able to give you further information.



## SEND Art Competition – Winners

The SEND art competition produced some wonderful creations from our children and young people in Birmingham.

Thank you very much to everyone who sent in their work which will be published on various SEND Local Offer website pages to show the creativity alive in the city.

Mal Park and Lyana Bi were our under 7 winners. Jeremiah from Calthorpe Academy and Molly from Dame Ellen Pinsent School our 8-13 winners, with Oscar Russell as well as Abdur from Calthorpe Academy as runners up. Jonathan and Sam our joint 14+ winners and Henna and Zahra our runners up – all from Calthorpe Academy.

Congratulations all!

## Supported Internship Programme for Birmingham City Council.

A Supported Internship (SI) is a series of structured work-based study programmes that aim to support young people aged 16 to 24 year-olds, with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), who have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP).

The aim of Birmingham City Councils (BCC's) pilot programme is to offer a substantial work placement, which aims to ensure that young people with additional needs can enter into Supported Internship Programmes that lead to paid employment.

Twenty four young people will start on BCC's Pilot Programme in September 2023, and we hope to increase the numbers year on year, each Programme will last for a period of 12 months. 14-19 Full Participation and Skills Team has been successful in obtaining funding for 3 consecutive years up to 2025. For more please email [14-19@Birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:14-19@Birmingham.gov.uk)

## Navigating the pathway to assessment and diagnosis for ADHD and Autism: refreshed resources

Masses of new resources to support whilst you are waiting and to help understand autism and ADHD further are now on the webpages below

ADHD <https://www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/patients-public/children-and-young-people/services-parent-portal/neurodevelopmental-pathway/adhd/>

Autism (ASD) <https://www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/patients-public/children-and-young-people/services-parent-portal/neurodevelopmental-pathway/asd/>







## Resources for Getting online

Digital exclusion affects millions of people in the UK. This link will take you to a list of resources which can help to get people online.

[Support for Getting Online | Local Offer Birmingham](#)

## Wilson Stuart School taking on a 'Global Project'

Wilson Stuart school is working in collaboration with 3 local primary schools (Hawthorn Primary School, Story Wood School and St Margaret Mary's Catholic Primary School) in the student named 'Global Project' that takes place once a month and is hosted at [Witton Lodge Association Eco Hub](#).

The school groups explore a range of group activities to help develop key core personal development values such as Communication, Independence, resilience etc. Wilson Stuart students act as leaders for the group and support the learning of the younger primary aged students.

The global project is aimed at students that lack confidence or struggle to access some aspects of the curriculum in mainstream primary and the project has been a valuable tool in focusing these students and providing them with a range of learning experiences.

Tom Elmes, Associate Head (Secondary) at Wilson Stuart School said, 'This is a fantastic opportunity for our students to gain work experience whilst also raising the awareness of SEND in local mainstream schools. There has been a real change in some students as a result of the project; they seem more confident in school.'





## The Art of the Possible in the Physical Disabilities Support Service

A pupil who is a wheelchair user wanted to remain in her mainstream primary school with her sister, where she was thriving, even though she was unable to access upstairs classrooms and facilities.

**THE PUPIL'S PARENT SAID** – 'I would like my child to remain at her mainstream school for the whole of her primary education.'

**WE DID** - The Physical Difficulties Support Service (PDSS), the school, the diocese and the local authority infrastructure team worked together to fund and install a lift to the next floor of the school enabling the pupil to remain at the school for all her primary years.

## Communication and Autism Team (CAT) Working with Parents

A group of parents attended a CAT PAC (a six week parent autism awareness course) at Stechford Primary in the Autumn term. Parents who attended recognised the value of the group and the benefits of continuing the group as a way of supporting each other. One parent stated: "It has been great knowing that other mums have similar issues, and I am not alone in experiencing it."

### CAT Working with Our Young People

Two young people from two different Birmingham mainstream Secondary schools, Hibbaa and Alex, will be sharing their thoughts and experiences at our February Team Development Day. Meeting with young people will become a regular of feature of our monthly meetings. We are also piloting a work experience programme within the Team, to support young peoples' pathways into employment.

For more information email [CATParentEnquiries@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:CATParentEnquiries@birmingham.gov.uk)



## The Opera goes to Fox Hollies School

Opera Tutti, part of the Welsh National Opera, opens up the world of opera and classical music to children and young people with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) in an immersive multi-sensory concert. Children at Fox Hollies School were treated to performances from the cast, which went down very well with children and staff alike.



## The 'SCERTS in Action' framework

This new framework is being used by staff in schools throughout Birmingham in collaboration with the Educational Psychology Service, with focussed projects in the Saltley, FAYS, Cole Heath and Aston Nechells Consortia. Find your consortia [here](#).

**SCERTS** stands for:

**Social Communication:** developing effective communication skills, understanding social norms

**Emotional Regulation:** learning to recognise and regulate emotions, make transitions, engage in learning

**Transactional Supports:** how we change our behaviour and the learning environment to support these pupils

The SCERT framework is used to help adults support children to develop priority skills in social communication and emotional regulation. Feedback from schools shows over 85% of staff report greater understanding of social communication differences and improved knowledge of supportive strategies.

For more information, please speak to the Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCo) in your school or setting.



**Birmingham**  
City Council



**BIRMINGHAM**  
**CHILDREN'S TRUST**

