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If there are issues you would like to see in future newsletters, contact comms@familyvoice.org.uk or leave a message on 07535 895748.

Adult social care charging policy consultation

Are you the carer for a young person who receives adult social care or is likely to do so in the future? In the past month, current social care service users have received a consultation letter and document asking for their views on how Norfolk County Council can save money when calculating the contribution they may need to make to paying for their care. The consultation includes some important proposals:

- young people should have a lower guaranteed income than older people
- those on enhanced rate for daily living PIP payments should use this to help pay for their care.

The documents may be supplied in an easy-read format, but the ideas they contain are complicated and the consultation document is 26 pages long. If your young person is not able to understand the full implications of the proposals and express their own views, do respond yourself as a carer on their behalf. **It is very important that young people who cannot speak for themselves still have a voice in something that affects them.** You can find out more and respond to the proposals yourself at <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/consultation/chargingpolicy/>

The consultation deadline is 23 December 2018.



Don't miss out... Booking for our 2019 Conference opens on **14 January 2019**. Sara Tough, Director of Children's Services, will be giving the keynote speech about her vision for Norfolk, a topic of vital interest to all parent carers of children and young people with SEND in our county.



FREE conference for all parents and carers
of children (0–25 years) with Special
Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

Our Keynote
Speaker is
Sara Tough
Director of
Children's Services

Saturday 16th March 2019
10.00–15.30
John Innes Conference
Centre, Norwich NR4 7UH

For more
information
and to book a
place

Bookings open from
14 January 2019

Via:

- www.familyvoice.org.uk
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Email events@familyvoice.org.uk
- Call/text 07535 895748 and leave a message with your contact details

Please book early
Places will be allocated in
order of booking

Come and participate
in informative workshops and
individual sessions with service
providers, charities and others

More than 40
information stands

Open to members and non-members
Free to attend
Free buffet lunch
Activities for children with SEND at The Clare School
BOOKING ESSENTIAL



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FamilyVoiceNorfolk



Family Voice Family Chat – transport sessions

The Family Voice Family Chat sessions on transport and travel that took place in November were well received and gave many parents the opportunity to talk directly with NCC staff about issues that were concerning them, as well as finding out about NCC travel and transport policies, Independent Travel Training, Personalised Travel Scheme (PTS) and TITAN.

In order to ensure that transport contracts are awarded effectively, Niki Park, the Head of Passenger Transport, is always keen to know your experiences of when transport arrangements are working well and when there are difficulties. Email her and her team on educationtransport@norfolk.gov.uk

We are currently writing up the final report. When it is finished, you will be able to read it on our website at <https://www.familyvoice.org.uk/articles-reports/parent-carer-participation-events/>

In the meantime, if you would like to refresh your memory about the Family Voice Family Chat presentation, which was given at each session, or were not able to attend, you can find that at the same place on our website.



Just One Norfolk

A new website was launched in November – a 'go to' online health resource for Norfolk families. This is still – and perhaps should always be – a work in progress, with lots of interactive tools and more pages to be added, and your ideas for additions would be very welcome. Just go to www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk, explore and you will be invited to give any feedback you have.

There are sections that cover physical and emotional health for all children from babies to 19-year-olds. Just One Norfolk was created with the help of families. It follows on from last year's launch of Just One Number (0300 300 0123) as a single point of access for help and advice for families.

There is a section on additional needs and a leaflet from the Healthy Child Team to download at <https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/media/1521/0439-children-with-additional-needs.pdf>



SEND e-Newsletter

If you don't already subscribe to Norfolk's SEND e-Newsletter, or you did once but don't seem to any more, you can easily make sure you receive it at www.norfolk.gov.uk/send – the Local Offer website. The newsletter is full of information about events and services in Norfolk that may be of interest to you and your family. It is produced as part of the Local Offer in co-production with Family Voice and others. If you have comments or would like to submit an article, you can contact the newsletter editors on send@norfolk.gov.uk

Remember...

At Family Voice we are always keen to hear from you with news or views about the services you are receiving or would like to receive.

We never share personal or identifying information but anonymise what you tell us and use it to affect decisions made by the education, social care and health authorities.

You may want to praise excellent services or tell us about more negative experiences. It is all useful information that means our representatives, who attend meetings and boards, can speak authoritatively about the experiences of families like yours.

It's easy to tell us how things are for you:

- You can contact our Membership Secretary Kate on 07950 302937 or email her at membership@familyvoice.org.uk

- Or you can contact us via:



www.familyvoice.org.uk



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



[@familyvoicenfk](https://twitter.com/familyvoicenfk)

Reasonable adjustments for people with a learning disability

Public Health England has produced a guide to the reasonable adjustments that health services should make for people, including children, with a learning disability.

Under the Equality Act 2010, public sector organisations must make changes in their approach or provision to ensure that services are accessible to disabled people as well as everybody else.

This series of guidance shares information, ideas and good practice in making reasonable adjustments for people with learning disabilities in specific health service areas. It is aimed at health and social care professionals and family members who provide support for, or plan services used by, people with learning disabilities. There is also an easy-read summary for each service area. Go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/reasonable-adjustments-for-people-with-a-learning-disability> to find out more.

Family Voice Norfolk newsletter deadlines

The next newsletter will appear next year, at the end of January 2019.

If there are issues that you would like to see covered, please email comms@familyvoice.org.uk or leave a message on 07535 895748 before 24 January 2019.

If there are tips that you would like to share with other families, then please let us know. Many of us have found that the most useful information for our own children has come from other parents.



Helpful advice

Recently a member told us of a really good service she had received in her local area of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough. 'I've just had a lovely lady visit me at home to help with completing the PIP form for my son as he is now sixteen. This is a totally free service and they offer advice on all benefits.' The telephone number is 0800 731 2253 or go to https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20003/benefits/5/benefits_advice_and_review_team

If you have received an excellent service in your area, do let us know.

Healthwatch Norfolk report on autism services

Healthwatch Norfolk is the consumer champion for health and social care in the county. It is an independent organisation that has statutory powers. Healthwatch Norfolk use the things you tell it about local care to influence future services in Norfolk.

In October, Healthwatch published its findings about families' experiences of services for children and young people with ASD (autistic spectrum disorder). It is thought that around 1,700 children affected by the condition live in Norfolk.

You can read about their findings at <https://www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk/news/norfolk-families-experience-of-local-autism-services-highlighted-in-latest-healthwatch-report/>



Football for visually impaired children

Norwich City, working with Virtual School Sensory Support, are looking to develop football for VI children and young people aged eight to 15. This initiative is designed to get players with visual impairment of all footballing abilities involved.

Darren Hunter, Norwich City, and John Rous Milligan, Virtual School Sensory Support, have organised taster sessions to gauge interest and how to carry this forward.

The last of these is on **Friday, 7 December, from 4.30 to 5.30pm**. Siblings are welcome, as are parents/carers and free parking is available at the stadium at Carrow Road.

Please let Darren know if you intend to get involved (darren.hunter@canaries.co.uk) and if you can let John know too at VSSS (01603 704040) that would be great.

Making participation work

The Council for Disabled Children is developing a series of factsheets on issues related to participation. These are developed in co-production with children and young people with SEND and include: Methods and levels of participation; Work experience; Participation process; Barriers to participation; Involving children and young people in formal meetings; Developing a supportive environment; and Top Tips for developing child-centred EHC plans.

You can download them at https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/help-resources/resources/making-participation-work-factsheets?mc_cid=f61c591635&mc_eid=63d8cc44b4



Would you like to find out more about Family Voice?

Are you looking to do something new in the New Year?

We're looking for **representatives** and **ambassadors** to join our team.

Our representatives attend a variety of meetings, working with education, health and social care to help improve services together and ensure that SEND is always considered in strategic planning.

We're also looking for ambassadors in the North Norfolk area. Our ambassadors attend events to talk to parents about Family Voice and promote our own events, such as our Conference.

If you have a few hours to spare during school times and would like to find out more about joining our team, we are holding an **Open Day** in January.

For further information, please contact Bernadette at office@familyvoice.org.uk or call/text on 07535 895748.

At conferences and other events where you might come across our ambassadors, it is often too busy for a proper talk about how you could become more involved. The Open Day will be a chance to sit down with a coffee and find out in a relaxed way what it is really like being a Family Voice representative or ambassador and to ask questions.

31 January 2019

Pop in anytime from 10:30am to 1:30pm

at Ayton House, Ayton Road, Wymondham, NR18 0QQ

Representatives and ambassadors receive an hourly rate for attending meetings and travel costs are reimbursed. Full training and mentoring is given. We are all parent carers of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND), so we make sure that meetings are at family-friendly times and understand that you have other responsibilities.

School admissions for September 2019

If your child is due to start school or transfer to a new school in September 2019, admission deadlines are fast approaching. Norfolk SEND Partnership has useful information about these and how to find out about an educational setting that will suit your child. Go to https://www.norfolksendpartnershiass.org.uk/news/newsletters/autumn/#Will_your_child_be_starting_or_transferring_school_in_September_2019

The government at <https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions> also has advice, including that schools' websites must include:

- the amount of money they get from taking children who are eligible for the 'pupil premium', what they do with it and the effect it's had
- admission criteria
- behaviour policy
- special educational needs policy
- disability policy
- links to Ofsted reports
- links to performance data and the school's latest key stage 2 and 4 attainment



What is the Local Offer?

The SEND reforms of 2014 required local authorities to publish and make accessible a 'local offer of all services available to support children who are disabled or who have SEN and their families.' Our Norfolk Local Offer can be found at www.norfolk.gov.uk/send and is a one-stop shop for a wealth of information about all things to do with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND).

We live in a fast-moving world, though, so the Local Offer is constantly being revised, too. Family Voice Norfolk representatives are involved in ongoing review and revision of the Local Offer, suggesting ways in which it can be made more accessible for families.

The most recent reviews have been of sections about **SEN Support and the graduated approach – Assess, Plan, Do, Review** and there is also now a very clear and useful **Checklist of actions to take before making an EHC needs assessment request**.

We sometimes hear comments that it is difficult to find what you need on the Local Offer or that it is not easy to navigate. Efforts are made all the time to make all of this easier, but of course users approach topics

from different starting points and what is intuitive for one person is downright contrary to someone else.

A good tip, if you are finding it difficult to find something you feel sure must be there is to go to the **SEND Local Offer Site Map**. There is a button that will take you straight to this at the far right of the bar running along the bottom of the picture on the home page.

The Local Offer can also take you directly (this time via a button at the far left of the same bar) to the Norfolk Community Directory. If you run a group or use a facility that you find is not in the Directory, it is easy to alert the administrators.

Finally, it is incredibly helpful to those compiling and maintaining the Local Offer if you leave feedback about your experience. At the bottom of every page you will see these three buttons, with the question: Was this webpage helpful?



Click on one button and you will quickly and simply be able to say what you feel about the page, the website or services.

It's amazing what you find on the Local Offer. As well as written material, there is a section for young people themselves (<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer/local-offer-for-children-and-young-people>) and a wealth of videos and links to external sources. This bunch of Family Voice Norfolk representatives was captured at last year's Conference to take part in a film showing the many, many different kinds of organisations that can be discovered on the Local Offer.



Family Voice report on social, emotional and mental health support (SEMH) in schools



Family Voice Five-minute Focus is our latest way of learning from the experiences and views of parent carers and making sure that the local authority does, too. By focussing on one subject in a very short survey, we aim to gather your views on topics that are vitally important to the lives of our children and young people, without taking up too much of your time.

Our first Five-minute Focus was about **social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) support in schools and colleges**. Family Voice is working with the Virtual School SEND Advisory Group and was asked to present a snapshot of parent carers' views on SEMH support to a meeting in November. The Virtual School for SEND is a pupil- and family-facing service, working with all schools and academies in Norfolk to advise, support and challenge the delivery of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.

Each of our members was invited to complete a questionnaire online and add comments on their experiences of the support that their child or young person received within schools and colleges. The survey ran from 15 October to 2 November 2018. Our report from the survey, anonymising all comments from families, was ready for the Virtual School SEND Advisory Group meeting at the end of September, where it was well received.

The full Family Voice report is now available to read and/or download on our website at <https://www.familyvoice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FVN-Report-SEMH-Support-Nov-18.pdf> As well as detailing key findings from what respondents told us, we were able to make some recommendations to improve support in the future:

- It is important that parent carers are properly informed and aware of what is being done to support their child or young person in the area of SEMH and that they have the opportunity to contribute to understanding the needs of their child and the strategies used.
- Support needs to continue in high schools and higher education settings as this is a time when young people are more likely to experience social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- Support provided for children and young people needs to be reviewed so that it can be changed if it is not working and re-commenced if it worked and then was stopped.
- It is vital for there to be good communication between home and school if children/young people are to benefit fully from support/interventions.
- Early intervention to address SEMH difficulties with children and young people could mean less support at a later stage and keep children and young people in school.
- Better awareness/training among teachers and support staff could help to prevent SEMH difficulties from increasing to a crisis point where they are more difficult to address.
- Addressing the real needs of children and young people with SEMH can have a positive effect much more widely among family and friends and help to grow communities in which SEMH difficulties can be accepted and helped rather than feared.



***Season's Greetings
from all at Family Voice***

