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Call for evidence on SEND funding – here's how you can help

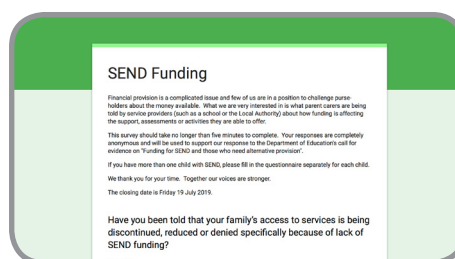
In our last newsletter, we told you about the Department for Education's call for evidence on funding arrangements for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who require alternative provision.

The government's own online survey can be accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/send-and-ap-provision-call-for-evidence> and will be open from now until **31 July 2019**. The survey is long and detailed, but we hoped that you could **urge your school or college to fill it in**, especially if they feel that existing funding arrangements are inadequate or difficult to administer.

Family Voice Norfolk will be sending its own response via the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF). In order to help us

respond to the questions the NNPCF have asked us, we have developed a **very quick survey for parent carers**. It will take only about **5 minutes** to complete.

You can find the survey [here](http://www.familyvoice.org.uk) or via a link on our website at www.familyvoice.org.uk under 'Participation opportunities'. Please do this if you can as our deadline for returning our responses to NNPCF is fast approaching. The deadline for our survey is **19 July 2019**.



Book now for September!

We know that next term seems a long way off, but our **Family Voice, Family Chat** sessions about **SEN Support** and **Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)** will be just around the corner when you've drawn breath after the holidays.

Book now to be sure of your place at one of our five sessions around the county.



Are you the parent of a child or young person with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)?

Join us for coffee at an information and feedback session about

SEN Support
and **Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)**

We've invited Norfolk SEND Partnership Information, Advice and Support Service (**SENDIASS**) and a representative of the Local Offer to join us so you can:

- Find out more about SEN Support and EHCP assessments
- Tell us about your own experiences of support for your child with SEND
- Ask questions in a relaxed setting
- Share ideas with other parent carers



Tuesday 17 September 10.00am – 1.00pm
Community Room, South Lynn Community Centre, 10 St. Michael's Road, **King's Lynn**, PE30 5HE

Monday 23 September 10.00am – 1.00pm
The Suite, Dereham Football Club, Aldiss Park, Norwich Road, **Dereham**, NR20 3PX

Tuesday 24 September 10.00am – 1.00pm
The Noble Hall, The Priory Centre, Priory Plain, **Great Yarmouth**, NR30 1NW

Monday 30 September 10.00am – 1.00pm
The Colman Room, South Norfolk House, Cygnet Court, **Long Stratton**, NR15 2XE

Wednesday 2 October 10.00am – 1.00pm
Main Hall, Aylsham Care Trust, St. Michael's Avenue, **Aylsham**, NR11 6YA

If you can come, please email us at events@familyvoice.org.uk or call/text on 07535 895748.



It's never too early to save the date!

Family Voice Norfolk Tenth Annual Conference

Saturday, 14 March 2020

John Innes Centre, Norwich NR4 7UH



Have you responded to our Family Voice Five-Minute Focus survey on Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) services?



If you are receiving or trying to access Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) services, we need to hear about your experiences via our **very short survey**. We are **always** keen to hear your views and experiences, but the deadline for this particular survey is **19 July 2019**.

You can find the survey [here](#) or via a link on the Family Voice website at <https://www.familyvoice.org.uk/posts/participation-opportunities/>

Over the last year, SALT services have been the focus of the Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) and Family Voice has been presenting the views and experiences of parent carers to this meeting.

We will be providing a report to the HOSC meeting in October 2019, ensuring that all responses are completely anonymised and unidentifiable.



We are all parent carers of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), so our summers are probably as busy as yours. We've set the the 19 July deadline so that we have time to compile a comprehensive report that really reflects what families are experiencing.

Together our voices are stronger.

Family Voice Norfolk newsletter deadlines

The next newsletter will be a July/August edition appearing during August. 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 12 August 2019.



SEND e-Newsletter

If you don't already subscribe to Norfolk's SEND e-Newsletter, or your subscription has lapsed because you've changed your email address, 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 other interested bodies. If you have comments or would like to submit an article, you can contact the newsletter editors on send@norfolk.gov.uk



SEND e-Learning Course

In the last newsletter we told you about a new SEND e-Learning course, accessible on the Local Offer at www.norfolk.gov.uk/send via the Training Events and Things to Do tab on the home page or directly from [here](#).

One of our members pointed out that it didn't work on her mobile device, so the course is being transcribed to a Powerpoint presentation that will be available very soon.



Website upgrade

It's been over a year now since we launched our new website, which has certainly been much easier to use, update and navigate than the old one.

We don't want to be complacent though. This summer we plan to see how we can improve the various ways we present information. If anything on or about our website (www.familyvoice.org.uk) annoys or delights you, please let us know at comms@familyvoice.org.uk or by any of the means shown on page 6 of this newsletter.

Conference planning

We are already making plans for next year's Conference. We had a hugely positive response this year, but we want to understand how we could do even better. If you booked to come this year but in the end didn't, we may contact you to find out if anything we could have done would have made it easier for you to attend. We always have a waiting list and it's disappointing when booked places are not used. This isn't a witch hunt – we know that family life can be unpredictable – we just want everyone's experience to be as positive as possible.

Remember – pop-up Changing Places family weekend 10–11 August 2019

For this weekend in the summer Pensthorpe Natural Park near Fakenham is trialling a Mobiloo (pop-up Changing Places facility) between 9am and 6pm. For further information, go to www.pensthorpe.com or telephone 01328 851465 (ex 2).



You may also be interested in the government's consultation about making **Changing Places toilets mandatory** in all new, large public buildings in England. Give your views on <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ChangingPlacesToilets>. The survey closes on **21 July 2019**.

Top tips from parent carers

At our Conference, we sometimes have a board where parent carers can tell each other about discoveries or techniques that have made life a little easier for families with children or young people with SEND. Here are a few that have been mentioned to us recently.

- "Whatever you do, keep a copy of any form you fill in about your child. Years later, you may receive an update form for, say, a PIP or ESA application, and they don't tell you what you said before. Even if you think that nothing has changed, don't just say that. Spell it all out again. It's often painful, but it's necessary to get the support your child needs."
- "My daughter is using washable period pants now instead of pads. It's much easier for her and, she says, more comfortable, too. There are lots of different kinds on the market."
- "Slimming World has now produced its main booklets and food diaries in an Easy Read format. There's a poster, too, to remind about healthy swaps. Really helpful."
- "Do be careful when filling in forms at the dentist or you may be charged when you shouldn't be. I try to encourage my

(now adult) son to be independent so don't go into the actual room with him. He happily signed a form and ticked the 'wrong kind' of ESA, which resulted in months of claims for money that I knew he shouldn't have to pay. It was all sorted out in the end, but when a medical professional knows they are treating a person with a learning disability, why can't they check about something as complicated as that?"

- "Supermarket 'meal deals' are brilliant for giving a young person with LD some choice but no worries about having to work out if they have enough money."
- "In a meeting, assume the best of people. It can be really hard to keep your temper or your tears in check but the 'other side' are only human. Losing it will rarely help and may have the opposite effect. Take someone with you who makes notes throughout – it will make everyone much more careful about what they say *and* you'll have a record of what went on."
- "Join a parent support group – they're a good source of information as well as support. Find one that feels right for you."

Ed: Family Voice Norfolk is not a support group but we do speak up for the needs of families like yours. If you haven't yet, join us too. You will always receive this newsletter!

Family Voice Norfolk steering group

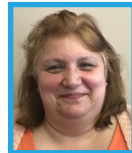
Each year, following our AGM, our steering group undergoes a reshuffle. The steering group meets monthly to discuss current issues, ensure that progress is being made on our key objectives, and plan how we can best gather and use our members' views and experiences to improve services for families.

You can find out more about how Family Voice Norfolk is organised on our website at <https://www.familyvoice.org.uk/about-us/how-we-work>

Each member of the steering group undertakes a significant responsibility in the running of the organisation. After the latest reshuffle, the steering group looks like this:



Tracey Sismey
Chair
chair@familyvoice.org.uk



Lorraine DeVere
Vice-Chair



Alison Furniss
Treasurer



Rachel Clarke
Representatives Lead



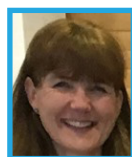
Lisa Lonergan
Ambassadors Lead



Nicola Baxter
Communications Lead
comms@familyvoice.org.uk



Natasha Oakley-White
Conference Lead



Julia Fromings Hill
Safeguarding Lead



Pamela Durham-Green
Administration Lead

Our administration staff are:



Kate Draycott
Membership Secretary
membership@familyvoice.org.uk



Bernadette Pallister
Administration Manager
office@familyvoice.org.uk



Emma Parncutt
Administration Assistant
admin@familyvoice.org.uk

Remember...

At Family Voice we are always keen to hear from you about the services you are receiving or would like to receive, so that we can inform decision-makers about what families really need.

- You can contact our Membership Secretary Kate on 07950 302937 or at membership@familyvoice.org.uk
- Or you can contact us via:



www.familyvoice.org.uk



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



[familyvoicenf](https://twitter.com/familyvoicenf)



Nursery and school places created as part of early childhood and family service transformation

At the end of June, the local authority gave an update on what is happening regarding changes to the use of children's centres and other services. The full statement can be found at <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/news/2019/06/dozens-of-nursery-and-school-places-created>

The new service is called the Early Childhood and Family Service and could, they say, result in 50 new early years places being created in Norfolk's schools.

The new service launches in October and will target families that need extra support for their children, with a move towards outreach in homes and community venues.

There will also be an improved self-service digital offer and support to develop more groups for children and families in local communities.

As part of the changes, delivery of services will move out of former children's centre buildings, freeing some of these up for other community uses. 15 district hubs will remain, as bases for outreach staff.

NCC reports that it has been working with local partners to develop alternative uses for its former children's centre buildings, 'that will continue to benefit children and their families'.

Plans for ten of the buildings can be seen opposite.

Litcham: transferring the building to Litcham School for a reception class, creating a foundation stage unit with the pre-school

Watton: transferring the building to Westfield Infant and Nursery School, creating 16 places for two-year-olds

Cromer: has already been transferred early to Suffield Park School to meet the urgent need for more childcare places in the area

Stalham: transfer to Stalham Infant School, to relocate its nursery to more modern facilities

Trinity: transfer to Martham Academy and Nursery School, to provide more modern early years facilities and possibly increase places

North City: transfer to Angel Road Infant School to allow them to expand their nursery offer

Sprowston: transfer to Sprowston Infant School to expand the specialist resource base for children with autistic spectrum disorder

Spixworth: transfer to a nursery provider to increase their local offer of places

Loddon, Gorleston and Harleston: these are all based in libraries and will be used by the libraries as part of their extended work with children in the early years

Detailed proposals for the remaining buildings are under development.

Sign up for updates...

You can sign up for updates like the one above via the NCC website. Go to www.norfolk.gov.uk and down at the bottom of the home page there is a 'Sign up for email updates' button. News will come directly into your inbox about all sorts of Norfolk developments and initiatives.

Local Offer Facebook page

SEND Local Offer has a new Facebook page, which will be used as part of its SEND communication strategy, alongside Twitter and the SEND e-Newsletter (see page 4 of *this* newsletter).

Please give the page a like and spread the word [@sendnorfolk](https://www.facebook.com/sendnorfolk)



Norfolk Area SEND Strategy 2019–2022

NCC has published a draft of the SEND Strategy that it has been working on for over a year. This has been co-produced between Norfolk County Council's Children's and Adult Services, Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Groups, Parent/Carer groups and education professionals within early years settings, schools and colleges.

Family Voice gave a detailed response to an earlier version of the strategy. Now the local authority would like to gather the views of as many people as possible on this draft.

You can find the whole document via the new **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policies and strategies** page of the NCC website or via the home page of the Local Offer at www.norfolk.gov.uk/send

The strategy is 38 pages long but it is not a dense, text-heavy document. The local authority is frank that there are challenges in the area of SEND, saying:

We are setting out our plans for the next three years to acknowledge achievements and successes to date but importantly to be honest about the many challenges that we face to improve SEND provision across the county.

The strategy picks out four main priorities, which you can see in the screen shot opposite.

NCC comments: *We are seeking more views on our strategy with feedback through an online survey and this will ensure that the strategy can develop further as we continue,*



listening to children, young people and their families...supporting inclusion, meeting needs and changing lives together.

There is a link to the survey on the same page as the strategy document or you can go to <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/sendstrategy/>

The survey deadline is **13 August 2019**.

The plan is that NCC will then make amendments to the strategy and publish a further version in September. Each year the strategy will be refreshed to give updates on progress and re-assess challenges and priorities.

Strategy & Action for SEND in NORFOLK

1. THE SEND JOURNEY

Simplifying the 'pathway', for families and professionals, through the SEND continuum of need.

3. IMPROVE CONFIDENCE IN THE LOCAL OFFER

By ensuring it is communicated effectively and kept under review. The Local Offer will be responsive to the needs and aspirations of children and young people, their families and professionals who support them.

2. SEND PROVISION

Co-produce jointly commissioned, integrated, SEND services and provision and ensure sufficiency of specialist placements.

4. PREPARATION FOR ADULT LIFE

Ensure seamless transition for young people and their families into further education and employment, including support for housing, health and social inclusion.



CARING FOR A CHILD WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS AGED 0-8 YEARS?

COME ALONG TO OUR FREE WORKSHOPS!

Our welcoming and informative sessions cover a range of topics, including:

Managing sleep | Encouraging positive behaviour
How to get what you need for your child | Money matters

Venue: The Hamlet Children's Centre, Johnson Place, Norwich NR2 1SJ

Dates: Fridays 13, 20 and 27 September

Time: 9.45am (for tea, coffee and cake!) start 10am until 2pm

To book your places please email bookings@contact.org.uk. Additional childcare costs can be covered. Please discuss when booking.

contact *For families with disabled children*



Contact is a trading name of Contact a Family. Charity registered in England and Wales (284912) and Scotland (SC039169).

Friday 13 September

Welcome session

Workshop agenda and getting to know each other

Understanding sleep

- The importance of sleep and why sleep problems may occur
- How to introduce a sleep routine
- Top tips to help

Friday 20 September

Building parental confidence

- Develop better communication skills and recognise your strengths
- Feel more confident to make decisions about your child
- Prepare for meetings with professionals

Encouraging positive behaviour

- Understand the reasons for behaviour
- Working with others to encourage positive behaviour
- Top tips to help

Friday 27 September

Money matters

- Know how to improve your finances
- Understand what you're entitled to
- Know where to get support

Support for you

- Feel more confident in asking for support
- Relationship support and top tips
- Siblings support and top tips

Carers who can't attend all the sessions will be very welcome on the dates they are able to come. Lunch is provided.

Places can be booked via bookings@contact.org.uk or by ringing Helen Davies on 07966161753

These sessions are for adults only. There isn't a crèche but Contact can cover any additional childcare costs. Ask when booking.

Contact is a national charity supporting families of disabled children with guidance and information. <https://contact.org.uk/>



Focus on carers from Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)

During Carers Week, SCIE and Carers UK launched new guidance on how social care and health commissioners and providers can extend and improve regular breaks for carers and the family and friends they support.

The guidance includes almost 30 practice examples of how organisations are using a wide range of resources and services to

support carers to have a break: from hotels offering free stays to GP prescriptions for breaks.

Information for carers can be found at <https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/supporting-you-to-take-a-break> while guidance for commissioners and providers can be accessed at <https://www.scie.org.uk/carers/>

Free distance learning courses – SEND-related qualifications

Milton Keynes College is offering a number of distance-learning courses that are:

- Accredited to NCFE/CACHE Level 2
- Fully funded – free to access for students
- Learners must be aged 19+ and have lived in the EU for the past 3 years
- Fee payable of £90 if learners withdraw from the course

The courses on offer are:

Certificate in Children and Young People's Mental Health

Certificate in Understanding Behaviour that Challenges

Certificate in Understanding Specific Learning Difficulties

Certificate in Understanding Autism



Enrolment and further details can be obtained by contacting the Milton Keynes College website on: <https://www.mkcollege.ac.uk/study-with-us/adults-professionals/free-distance-learning-courses/>

Consultation about the use of restraint and restriction

The Department for Education recently published guidance on reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention in **special schools** (and health and social care settings). It aims to help settings adopt a preventative approach to supporting children and young people whose behaviour challenges as a result of learning disabilities, autistic spectrum conditions or mental health difficulties. Read the guidance at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reducing-the-need-for-restraint-and-restrictive-intervention>

The DfE wants to gather views on whether there is a need for guidance for **mainstream schools, mainstream post-16 settings and alternative provision** and whether guidance should apply to a wider cohort of children and young people with SEND. Respond to the survey at <https://consult.education.gov.uk/send-alternative-provision-and-attendance-unit-sapau-analysis/guidance-on-reducing-restraint-and-restrictive-int/consultation/subpage.2019-06-25.7384995829/> The deadline is **17 October 2019**.

