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There are so many ways you can get in touch with Family Voice Norfolk...

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

- Or message us via:

 www.familyvoice.org.uk

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

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

- Or write to us at Family Voice Norfolk, c/o Ayton House, 11 Ayton Rd, Wymondham NR18 0QQ

- Or join our **Family Voice Members Chat Room** on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/674209366743395/about/>

together we are stronger





family voice **check in and chat**

together improving services

is anyone
doing anything
about this?

am I the only
parent worried
about this?

why can't
this work
better?

how can
I get people to
listen?

If you have more questions than answers about services for your child with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND), come and talk to us.

We are all parents like you. We understand.

Find out how we can make sure your voice is heard and what we are working on right now.

Monday 14 March 2022, 10–11am

No need to book – just drop in on <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83006703755>

Family Voice events for parent carers

During lockdowns, our online sessions gave parents a chance to get together and talk about what life was like for them and their children with SEND. Now we are in a strange period where restrictions have eased but for many of us life is still very far from 'normal'.

During the whole of the past two years, Family Voice representatives have been working harder than ever to raise the concerns of parent carers and make sure your experiences are heard where it matters. As we move into a new stage of post-pandemic life, we'd like to continue the conversations of the past months. At our **Check in and chat** online sessions, you will have direct access to representatives who have been voicing your views and can tell them what is important for **you**. They're relaxed and friendly, but the issues we all have are serious. We look forward to working with and for you. See our March date above.

We're also very happy to announce a brand new event – or rather ten events – designed to take the place of our annual Conference in a year when confidently making plans to hold one has not been possible.

On the following pages are details of our new way for you to have your questions answered about what is available to support you and your child with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We are calling these sessions – for obvious reasons:



family voice **question time**



We can't offer our Conference this year, but here's a new way you can hear directly from professionals and ask your own questions.

family voice question time

Come along and listen, or ask a question yourself – whichever you like. The sessions are online and taking part is easy. We will send you full details and joining instructions.

Each session will take place on two separate dates. Simply book the time that works for *you*. Find more information about panels and topics on the pages that follow.

Carers and caring

Monday 7 March, 10.00–11.30, click [here](#) to book your place **or**
Thursday 17 March, 13.00–14.30, click [here](#) to book your place

Short Breaks

Tuesday 8 March, 10.00–11.30, click [here](#) to book your place **or**
Wednesday 16 March, 13.00–14.30, click [here](#) to book your place

Michael Bateman & the SEND Strategic Improvement Team

Wednesday 9 March, 10.00–11.30, click [here](#) to book your place **or**
Tuesday 15 March, 13.00–14.30, click [here](#) to book your place

Norfolk SENDIASS

Thursday 10 March, 10.00–11.30, click [here](#) to book your place **or**
Monday 14 March, 13.00–14.30, click [here](#) to book your place

SEND transport and TITAN travel training

Friday 11 March, 10.00–11.30, click [here](#) to book your place **or**
Friday 18 March, 13.00–14.30, click [here](#) to book your place





family voice question time

Carers and caring

Your panel:

Andy McGowan

Head of Engagement at Caring Together

Rob Cole

Head of Communities and Partnership (West and Breckland)
and Short Breaks, Norfolk County Council

Victoria Jones

Programme Director, Norfolk Carers Partnership, Bridges Outcomes Partnership

Sharon Brooks

Chief Officer, Carers Voice Norfolk and Waveney

Lisa McLean

Commissioning Service Development Manager for Early Help and Prevention
(Adolescents)

Maria Plumb

Head of Support Services, Carers Matter Norfolk

Will answer your questions on:

- support for parent carers
- support for adult carers (18+)
- support for young carers
- the All Age Carers Strategy
- locality and partnership meetings (Carers Voice)
- carers' passports
- how services are commissioned
- the voice of carers in the design and delivery of the carers' service

Monday 7 March, 10.00–11.30

Click [here](#) to book your place

or

Thursday 17 March, 13.00–14.30

Click [here](#) to book your place





family voice question time

Short Breaks

Your panel:

Sue Connor

Team Manager, the Short Breaks Team

Rebecca Doody

Strategic Commissioner – Specialist and Complex Commissioning

Colleen Hubbard

Commissioning and Service Development Manager – Specialist and Complex Commissioning

Amanda Peart

Commissioning Officer, Health & Disability Integrated Commissioning Team
Children's Services

Will answer your questions on:

- everything to do with Short Breaks!
- who is eligible?
- how to apply
- how the process works
- how funding works
- finding Short Breaks
- how parent carers can help improve the system

Tuesday 8 March, 10.00–11.30

Click [here](#) to book your place

or

Wednesday 16 March, 13.00–14.30

Click [here](#) to book your place





family voice question time

Michael Bateman and the SEND Strategic Improvement Team

Your panel:

Michael Bateman

Assistant Director, SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness

Steph Askew

Senior Advisor for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Early Effectiveness

Nicki Rider

Assistant Director, High Needs SEND

Maxine Blocksidge

Senior SEND Advisor, Strategic Improvement

Will answer your questions on:

- the work going on to improve how special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported in Norfolk
- Norfolk Area SEND Strategy ● SENDfest 2023 ● EHCPs
- specialist provision – special schools, mainstream, SRBs
- the Local Offer ● Community of Practice pilot
- Making Sense of SEND parent carer engagement events
- preparing for the expected revisit of Ofsted/CQC in 2022 following the Area SEND Inspection in 2020
- Norfolk's response to the National SEND Review (when published)

Wednesday 9 March, 10.00–11.30

Click [here](#) to book your place

or

Tuesday 15 March, 13.00–14.30

Click [here](#) to book your place





family voice norfolk question time

Norfolk SENDIASS

Your panel:

Niamh Keane
Norfolk SENDIASS Manager

Bridget Robinson
Children and Young People SENDIASS Supporter

Will answer your questions on:

- Norfolk special educational needs and/or disabilities information, advice and support service (SENDIASS)
- SEN Support – what it is and how you should be involved
- Exclusions – the rights of families and educational settings
- EHCPs – the process, timescales and those involved
- ensuring the voices of children and young people (CYP) with SEND are heard
- ways to challenge processes and decisions
- sources of information for parent carers
- the legal basis for SEND services

Thursday 10 March, 10.00–11.30

Click [here](#) to book your place

or

Monday 14 March, 13.00–14.30

Click [here](#) to book your place





family voice question time

SEND transport and TITAN travel training

Your panel:

Karl Chapman
TITAN Lead Locality Manager

Jacky Batchelor
Travel and Transport Office (Friday 11 March only)

Wendy Matsell
Safe Travel Officer (Friday 18 March only)

Will answer your questions on:

- travel for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to and from school
- post-16 transport and travel
- Travel Independence Training across Norfolk (TITAN) for young people with SEND aged 10–25

Friday 11 March, 10.00–11.30

Click [here](#) to book your place

or

Friday 18 March, 13.00–14.30

Click [here](#) to book your place



How to find out about Family Voice events and news

Our [Facebook page](#) not only has our own events and information but lots of other news about what is happening in Norfolk for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and their parent carers. Also on Facebook, our [Family Voice Members Chat Room](#) is a closed group where you can give your views on whatever is concerning you and discuss issues with us and other parent carers.

Our [website](#) tells you more about how we work and our own events. You can find reports, news and our past newsletters there.

Our [Membership Secretary Kate](#) may email you about special events and surveys.

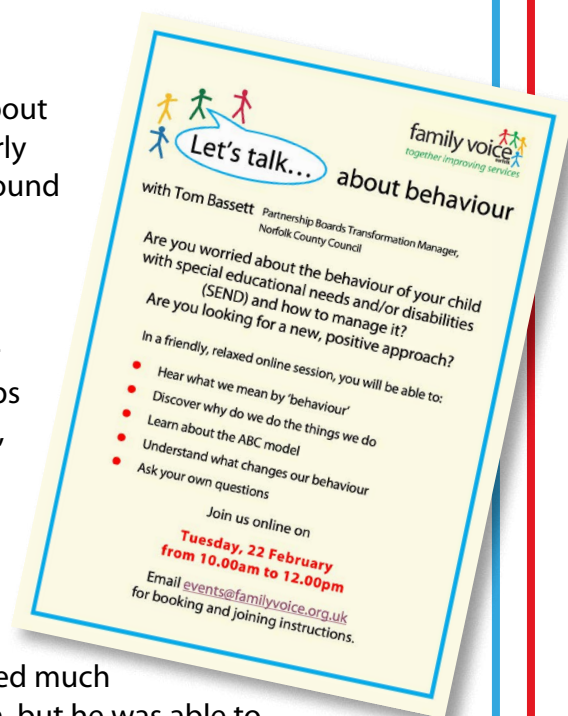
If you have been handed this newsletter by a friend or know someone else who is not yet a member, it is easy to join on our website at www.familyvoice.org.uk. Membership is **free**. **Full membership** is open to parents, carers and close family members of children and young people (0–25) with SEND. **Associate membership** is for others wishing to support our work, such as practitioners and extended family. **Affiliate membership** is for groups and organisations.

Let's talk... about behaviour

More parent carers signed up for our **Let's talk...** session about behaviour than for any other we have held. This shows clearly how great the need is for more information and support around this subject.

Tom's presentation emphasised the importance of viewing behaviour that we or others find challenging as **communication**. He showed, too, how the ways we react or try to manage such behaviour need careful thought. Perhaps the most difficult aspect for parent carers is to find the time, space and distance to really think about the reason for the behaviour – what led to it and what it achieves or attempts to achieve for the child or young person – and decide what to do. That is not easy in our lives.

Tom explained that it was impossible for him to give easy answers to parent carers' specific problems, as he would need much more time and information than was possible in the session, but he was able to give some pointers. Tom's slides will be available to view shortly on our website at <https://www.familyvoice.org.uk/articles-reports/parent-carer-participation-events/>. If parent carers tell us that they would like more sessions on this topic, we will certainly try to arrange them.



Newsletter deadlines

The next newsletter will appear around the end of March 2022. Tell us about issues you'd like to see covered by emailing comms@familyvoice.org.uk by **25 March 2022**.



Moving on and moving over

There has been some toing and froing in Family Voice recently. We would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have stepped down for all their work and support and congratulate them on their new positions.

Before Christmas, we said goodbye to Sally Craythorne, our Administration Officer, who joined us in 2020. We wish Sally well in her new job and really appreciate that she continues to support Family Voice events.



Sally Craythorne



Emma Parncutt

This month Emma Parncutt, Family Voice Co-ordinator, moved on to another opportunity. Last year she organised over 1,000 meetings for Family Voice representatives, as

well as handling hundreds of cancellations, postponements and missing links. She also had to deal with a variety of online platforms and the tendency of Family Voice reps to fall prey to Covid, school closures and intermittent internet. Without her, navigating the last two years of increasing work under Covid would have been so much harder.

Fortunately, our new Co-ordinator is already dealing with all of the above. Rachel Clarke, our joint Ambassador Lead and busy rep and Board member, is leaving some of this work to take on the role. She is very familiar with all our existing systems and keen to make the most of the opportunities that some new IT arrangements offer us.



Rachel Clarke



Anita Evans

Board member and joint Ambassador Lead Anita Evans has taken on an exciting new role that takes her well beyond the borders of Norfolk. It has been a pleasure to work with her and we wish her well in her new adventures.

A few weeks ago we held interviews for an Administration Manager (as advertised in this newsletter in December). This was a challenge in itself with various self-isolations to contend with. But we are happy to say that our new Administration Manager will be with us at the very end of this month and we will introduce her properly in the next newsletter in March.

Speaking our truth

In recent weeks, as well as the usual meetings that take place on a range of workstreams in Norfolk County Council, the health service and voluntary services, we have been able to speak directly about what is nearest to our hearts, as we are all parent carers of children or young people with SEND. Rachel has continued to give her very moving talks about her experience of becoming a parent carer to both education and health professionals. Family Voice reps have spoken to student teachers at the UEA, opening their eyes to the needs of families like ours, and we took part in a national webinar about co-creation with local authorities, parent carers and learners with SEND. We will never stop sharing what we know.





Tell us what you think of SEND in Norfolk

Dear parent carer

Please can you give 15 minutes of your time to fill in a really important **survey** about special education and /or disability (SEND) services and support in Norfolk.

This is a real opportunity for you to tell the organisations responsible for SEND in the county what you think of the services and support you and your child or young person receive and what the issues are that matter most to you.

The survey asks what's working well for you and what needs improvement. There are lots of quick multiple-choice questions, but there are also boxes where you can say more if you want to. You do not have to give your name.

The questions have been put together by a partnership of professionals and parent carer representatives, including some of us from Family Voice Norfolk. Our aim (as in all our work) has been to give parent carers a real chance to say what they think.

The survey is split into three versions: one for children and young people with SEND aged 11–25, one for parent carers, and one for professionals. You can fill it in more than once if you have more than one child with SEND. If your child is aged 11–25 and also able to fill it in, please do encourage them to do so. We'd like all your voices to be heard!

The survey can be found at <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/SENDsurvey2022/> or by [clicking here](#). There is an Easy Read version for children and young people who prefer it.

The survey will be open for four weeks from **Monday 7 February to 5pm on Monday 7 March.**



MAKING SENSE OF SEND

Free online events exclusively for parents and carers who have a child with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Hear from speakers on a specific topic, share your views, meet the parent/carers organisations and have your questions answered by experts.

Follow 'Norfolk County Council – SEND Local Offer Team' on Eventbrite to be notified of new dates.



Making Sense of SEND events are organised by the Norfolk SEND Local Offer team in partnership with Family Voice Norfolk and give you the chance to:

- Listen to a presentation on a specialist subject
- Give your views about something the Local Offer team wants to improve or develop
- Ask a panel of experts questions

These free online events are exclusively for parents and carers who have a child with SEND. They are supported by:

- Family Voice Norfolk ● Norfolk SENDIASS ● Norfolk SEN Network ● SENSational Families

These events have been held on Microsoft Teams during the pandemic. If you're using a computer you don't need to have Microsoft Teams installed to take part – you can use your web browser. If you are using a mobile or tablet you will need to [download the Microsoft Teams app](#). There is a plan to make a return to face-to-face events in the summer, as you will see below.

Tuesday 8 March 2022, 10.00–11.30am (Teams) Book on Eventbrite [here](#). The topic for this event will be **EHCPs**. We will be joined by Nicki Rider and Melanie White from Norfolk County Council, who will be updating us on how the EHCP service and quality has improved in Norfolk.

Thursday 12 May 2022, 10.00–12.00am (Knights Hill Hotel, King's Lynn) Book on Eventbrite [here](#). The topic will be **health**.

Tuesday 28 June 2022, 10.00–12.00am (The King's Centre, Great Yarmouth) Book on Eventbrite [here](#). The topic will be **health**.



Norfolk **SENDIASS** Information, Advice & Support Service

E-LEARNING



Online Tribunal Training

Dates available for
parent/carers,
professionals and young people

This tribunal training is being run virtually to help parent/carers and young people understand the process of appealing the contents of a final EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan).

This training coincides with EHCP Phase Transfer.

Professionals are able to attend on the 9th March to understand what their role may be and how they can support parent/carers and young people with the process.

During the training we will not be able to answer any personal questions, you can however contact our helpdesk to book a slot with an advisor to discuss individual cases.

Camera's and microphones are switched off during the training.

MORE DETAILS



DATES AND TIMES

10th February 9.30-12.30 - Parents/carers and young people

9th March 15:30 - 18:30- Parents/carers, young people and professionals

14th April 10:00 -13:00 - Parents/carers and young people



BOOKING

Book your place on Eventbrite via our web-site



OUR SUPPORT

Contact us on 01603 704070 or email norfolksendiass@norfolk.gov.uk for further information

www.norfolksendiass.org.uk

Norfolk SEND Youth Forum

Norfolk SEND Youth Forum is a new opportunity for young people to share their experiences and work together to improve services for young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

You can join the Youth Forum and take part in regular online meetings and share thoughts and feelings on an online pinboard.

The SEND Youth Forum invites all YP with SEND, in Norfolk, to register and join. If you are aged 11–25, and have something to say, we would like to hear from you to meet, discuss and create change! Go to the [Norfolk SENDIASS website](http://www.norfolksendiass.org.uk) above to sign up.



Cost of living crisis – 6 things all families with disabled children can do now

contact For families with disabled children

If you haven't visited the Contact website (www.contact.org.uk) it is well worth doing. You will find lots of useful information, courses to take (see pages 21–22 of this newsletter), and ways to connect with advisers and other parent carers.

Recently Contact published the following tips to help with the money worries that the rising cost of living has brought for many families. Though the government has proposed [a package of measures aimed at offsetting some of the rise in energy costs](#) and soaring inflation from April, for many families this will not go far enough.

1. Use the [Benefits Calculator](#) on the Contact website to check if you're claiming everything you're eligible for. It takes just 10 minutes.
2. Try Contact's online [Grants Search](#) to see if you're eligible for charitable financial support to fund vital equipment, white goods, home adaptations and other essentials. You may also find that you're entitled to [local welfare assistance schemes](#), budgeting loans and council tax discounts (contact your local district council).
3. Get help with your [fuel and water bills](#). There are a number of schemes and grants across the UK to help you limit your water payments and stay warm in cold months.
4. Take a look at Contact's [tips to save on energy bills](#). While many suppliers offer schemes to help with fuel costs, reduced tariffs are increasingly hard to find amid this year's energy price crisis. Changing small everyday habits could significantly help cut back on your family's usage.
5. Check what help you could get for [education, health, transport, housing and leisure costs](#). This covers a variety of expenses: school meals and uniforms, transport to school or hospital, prescription charges, NHS treatments, bus and rail travel, parking, driving lessons, home adaptations and much more.
6. Keep Contact's Money Matters guide saved somewhere, such as in your browser's bookmarks. This way, you can easily refer back to it when you need advice on benefits, grants, loans, discounts and other sources of financial support.

For more helpful advice, join [Contact's Facebook group for parent carers](#) or get in touch with their [free helpline](#) for support.

BSL for public meetings

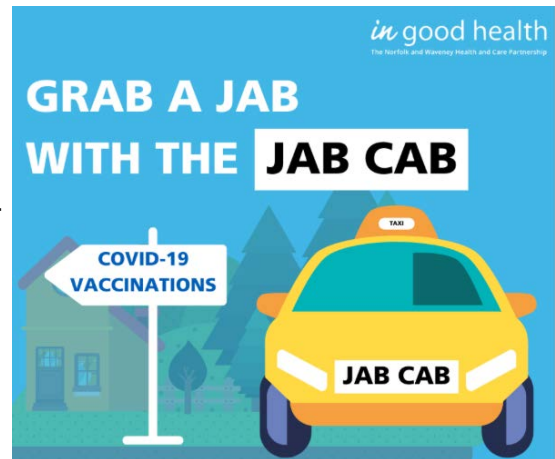
Virtual meetings are not always accessible to everyone, particularly those who are deaf or hard of hearing. Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are now able to offer British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation for their virtual public meetings, such as Governing Body, Primary Care Commissioning Committee and ICS Partnership Board. After the meeting, the recording will be interpreted in BSL by local supplier Deaf Connexions, which will be shared on their Youtube channel, website and social media channels.



Have you heard about the Jab Cab?

The Jab Cab service (until 31 March 2022) offers anyone living in Norfolk and Waveney a free return taxicab journey to get their COVID-19 vaccination. The service is available for anyone needing any dose (first, second, third, or booster jab), and can be taken from any postcode, enabling everyone to access their vaccination quickly and conveniently from home, work, or school.

In order to claim your free journey, simply [book your COVID-19 jab online](#) or check which [walk-in centre](#) you'd like to visit. Then, call a participating local taxi company and book your journey. [Click here to see a list of participating taxi companies.](#)



Just One Norfolk – supporting children to feel safe and loved

Just One Norfolk have launched a new campaign for families.

There are lots of reasons why caring for a child can be tough. Unexpected things happen, or sometimes things just feel like they're too much. But it's important to remember that children want to feel safe, loved and cared for by their parents, even if times are tough. If a child's needs are not met this can impact their development.

Find out what support is available to families to support children to feel safe at

<https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/supporting-children-to-feel-safe>



Financial pressures facing parent carers – media opportunity

Are you interested in a potential media opportunity to raise awareness of the financial pressures facing parent carers?

A TV journalist has been in touch with Andy McGowan of Caring Together wanting to do a piece around how cost of living increases will affect parent carers (who can't just easily tell their child to put a jumper on, or buy different brands of food to save money, and who may well face extra costs compared to other parents/families). It would probably involve her coming to meet with parent carers at home. There is no set timescale, but she is keen to know if there are any parent carers who would be interested. If you might like to be involved, please email membership@familyvoice.org.uk and we will (with your permission) pass on your details.



Concessionary travel in Norfolk

Rosemary Henderson, Development Worker (Information) in NCC, has sent us a quick reminder about the eligibility criteria for a disability concessionary bus pass. There are many other reasons included apart from impaired mobility.



You are entitled to a disabled concessionary travel pass from Norfolk County Council if you are a Norfolk resident of bus fare paying age (five years old+) and have a permanent disability or one lasting at least 12 months.

Your eligibility for a disability-related travel pass is considered 'automatic' if you have been issued with a Blue Badge or are in receipt of the following benefits:

- Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance
- War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP) with an award of eight points or more for the 'Moving around' activity

You are also eligible if your disability falls into one of the following seven categories:

- People who are blind or partially sighted are eligible for a disabled pass with an enhancement allowing you to travel at all times
- People who are profoundly or severely deaf
- People who cannot speak
- People who have a disability, or have suffered an injury, which has a long-term effect on their ability to walk
- People who are without use of both arms
- People who have a learning disability, that is, a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind that includes significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning. These disabilities must have started before adulthood and have a lasting effect on development. Note that conditions such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and ADHD are not covered by this definition.
- People who, if they applied for a driving licence under Part III of the Road Traffic Act 1988, have this application refused under section 92 of the Act for a reason other than on the grounds of persistent misuse of drugs or alcohol

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/public-transport/buses/concessionary-travel-pass/disabled-travel-pass>

Disabled travel enhancements

Norfolk County Council offers blind or partially sighted enhancement and the companion enhancement for disabled travel pass holders.

Continued on page 17



You may be entitled to one of these enhancements, both or neither, depending on your circumstances.

Blind or partially sighted enhancement

The blind or partially sighted enhancement entitles you to free travel with your pass at any time of the day in Norfolk, without the usual off-peak restrictions of a standard disabled pass. Your pass will have a clock face at the top, indicating you can travel at any time.

If you have blind or partially sighted enhancement and the companion enhancement, your companion may travel for free at all times as well. Your pass will have a C in the top right hand corner.

This enhancement is available to you if you are registered blind or partially sighted.

Companion enhancement

The companion enhancement entitles the disabled pass holder to have one companion with them who can travel for free. Your pass will have a C in the top right hand corner if you have this enhancement.

A companion can be anyone (a carer, friend, relative etc.) of bus fare paying age, who can assist a disabled pass holder when using public transport. It doesn't have to be the same person for each journey. Please note the companion enhancement is only available to applicants of **12 years of age and over**. The enhancement is not available to children under 12 as it is expected that a child of this age would be accompanied by an adult whether disabled or not.

If you are eligible for a disabled pass, and are unable to walk to a bus stop, or get on or off a bus without assistance, you may be eligible for the companion enhancement.

Companions can travel with the disabled pass holder on off-peak services (9.30am to 11pm) Monday to Friday and at all times during weekends and bank holidays.

If you also have the blind or partially sighted enhancement, then a companion can travel with you at any time.

Although the disabled pass allows free travel throughout England, the companion enhancement is only available when you start your journey in Norfolk and the companion and the pass holder must get on and off the bus at the same point.

The companion will need to pay for their travel on any journeys outside of Norfolk.

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/public-transport/buses/concessionary-travel-pass/disabled-travel-enhancements>



Household Support funding – Norfolk Library and Information Service

The new Household Support funding for County Councils in England helps those households most in need over winter with food, energy, and water bills. Funds also enable libraries in Norfolk to provide Grab & Go bags containing essential items to help people over the winter months.

All Norfolk Libraries and Mobile Libraries already provide Tricky Period To Go bags, a free bag of sanitary products available for anyone in need. The new Grab & Go bags will include:



- Toiletries to Go (deodorant, bodywash, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrush, soap and hand gel).
- Keep Warm and Go (gloves, thermal top, socks, scarf, blanket and hat).

The new Grab & Go bags will be available **until the end of March 2022**. Tricky Period To Go will continue beyond March.

Find your local library [here](#).



Young Carers Action Day Taking action on isolation

15 March 2022 4.30pm-5.30pm on Zoom

Join us on the eve of Young Carers Action Day for the launch of the Young Carers Alliance – a brand new network designed to promote the voices of young carers and those who support them.

- Hear about some of the latest issues facing young carers and young adult carers, both in practice and in research.
- Hear from young carers themselves about what they have been doing to help young and young adult carers stay connected, access the services they need and reduce their isolation.
- Find out more about the Young Carers Alliance and how you can get involved.

Confirmed speakers include Professor Saul Becker and members of the Young Carers National Voice Network.

This event is aimed at anyone who has an interest in improving the identification, assessment and support of young carers and young adult carers.

Book at <https://youngcarersalliance.eventbrite.co.uk>

#YoungCarersActionDay





A partnership for SEND support

Two Norfolk based charities, the Norfolk and Norwich SEND Association (Nansa) and SENSational Families, have been working collaboratively throughout the pandemic to ensure ongoing support for families of children and adults with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

SENSational Families provides help and advice to families in Norfolk with children and young people affected by special educational needs or disabilities.

The service supports parents from pregnancy through to birth, childhood and then young people up to 25 years old. Parents can self-refer to a family advisor support system for face-to-face and virtual support groups.

Alongside Nansa, the charity's support groups have provided opportunities for parents and carers to further educate themselves in areas that will help them understand and care for their child more effectively, while increasing public awareness of special educational needs and disabilities.

The collaboration began in 2020 when Nansa approached SENSational Families to appear in their documentary *Navigating the New Normal*. The film, which is available on YouTube, documented how each service adapted during the initial lockdown period and throughout 2020. After the film's release, funding was secured for SENSational Families to deliver weekly support and advice groups out of the Nansa Family Centre on Woodcock Road in Norwich.

Leon Smith, CEO at Nansa, said: "Hosting the family support groups has been a real success. The Family Support advisors from SENSational Families have an incredible wealth of knowledge and experience supporting families with SEND. Their advice service wonderfully complements the specialist provision Nansa already provides."

The collaboration between Nansa and SENSational Families has proven so successful the



Trustees of both charities formed a joint planning committee to discuss whether a merger could ensure increased support for families and better long-term sustainability for both organisations. This resulted in SENsational Families formally joining Nansa.

Margaret Smith, Nansa trustee and chair of the joint planning committee, said: "We were thrilled at the possibility of formally uniting with SENsational

Families. Our collaborative work throughout 2021 has shown how symbiotic and mutually beneficial working together could be. We are very excited about how our programme for families can now evolve and develop."

SENsational Families are the second SEND offering to formally join Nansa. In June 2021, the Disability Real Action Group of Norfolk (DRAGONS) joined the charity after many years of collaborative work.



Sarah Harrison, Head of Advocacy and Participation at Nansa (and DRAGONS Lead) said:

"Nansa is such an inclusive and welcoming home for SEND support programmes such as the DRAGONS project and SENsational Families. Formally joining forces will enrich the programmes and allow for growth and development with greater levels of support."

The team at Nansa was also delighted to learn that it is one of a number of local charities chosen by new creative agency Unbound for support with their brand messaging and public communication in 2022. The brainchild of Nikki Lamb and Michelle Williams, Unbound's mission is to educate and empower charities. The duo will assist Nansa throughout 2022 by looking at ways the charity can better emphasise and showcase support for those with SEND.

To learn more about SENsational Families visit their independent website by clicking [here](#).

During the pandemic, Family Voice Norfolk and SENsational Families have worked together at several meetings within NCC to speak up for families and improve services for children and young people with SEND. We entirely agree that it is better when groups concerned with SEND work together. As we so often say:

together we are stronger

Up-to-date vaccination information

Up to date information about the vaccine programme in Norfolk and Waveney is available at <https://www.norfolkandwaveneyccg.nhs.uk/vaccinations/covid-19-vaccines/covid-vaccinations>.

Keep checking back on the page to see the latest news, as it is regularly updated.



Free workshops for parent carers

Contact, the charity for families with disabled children, is running further virtual workshops for parent carers. All are accessible online via Zoom. These are stand-alone events – alternative dates are just that, not continuations of a course. Full instructions for using Zoom and accessing the workshops, together with booking forms and further information, is available if you click on the links below.

Brighter Beginnings – Early Years Entitlements for children with SEND

This workshop will give you advice and support on the following topics:

- Childcare – your options and how to find suitable childcare
- Help with childcare costs – what is available
- Early years education – what can you expect from an early years provider, how children with special educational needs are supported in early years settings and what you can do if you are worried about your child's learning and development
- What help is available – we will discuss how you can be supported if you are struggling to find suitable childcare or if a setting is not providing suitable support for your child
- Benefits and grants – DLA for under 5s and a brief overview about benefits/grants



Thursday, 17 March 2022, 10.00–12.00

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brighter-beginnings-early-years-entitlements-for-children-with-send-tickets-209214465097>

Speech, language and communication workshop (Secondary)

Virtual workshops on Speech, Language and Communication for parents of children with communication difficulties associated with hearing impairment, language impairment and autism. These workshops are delivered in partnership with ICAN.



Join these virtual workshops and meet other parent carers experiencing similar issues, with the benefit of an expert Speech and language Therapist.

The workshops currently cover:

- Understanding the communication chain and which part is not working for your child
- How you can support your child
- Key strategies
- How to work with others supporting your child so you all have a common approach to supporting communication development
- Resources and where to get more support

See page 22 for booking details



Tuesday, 8 March 2022, 19.00–21.00

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/speech-language-and-communication-workshop-secondary-tickets-256872461447>

Thursday, 24 March 2022, 19.00–21.00

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/speech-language-and-communication-workshop-secondary-tickets-260062091717>

Thursday, 28 April 2022, 09.30–11.30

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/speech-language-and-communication-workshop-secondary-tickets-263582060037>

Speech, language and communication for primary school children

Virtual workshops on Speech, Language and Communication for parents of children with communication difficulties associated with hearing impairment, language impairment and autism.



These workshops are delivered in partnership with ICAN.

Join these virtual workshops and meet other parent carers experiencing similar issues, with the benefit of an expert Speech and language Therapist.

The workshops currently cover:

- Understanding the communication chain and which part is not working for your child
- How you can support your child
- Your role
- Key strategies
- How to work with others supporting your child so you all have a common approach to supporting communication development
- Resources and where to get more support

Our workshops are all run with additional support from a Contact Family Support Adviser so that you can benefit from additional information and support about caring for a child with an additional need

Thursday, 3 March 2022, 10.00–12.00

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/speech-language-and-communication-workshop-primary-tickets-256848289147>

Tuesday, 26 April 2022, 19.00am–21.00pm

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/speech-language-and-communication-workshop-primary-tickets-262588628657>



FREE Family Learning courses

Are you aware of the many free Family Learning courses available from Norfolk County Council? To find out more about any of the courses below, go to <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/adult-learning/courses/family-learning-courses>

<p>Online Course 01 March 2022 • 9.30am</p> <p>Learning Through Art - Maths KS2</p> <p>1 session • places available Are you looking for new ways to support your child's numeracy development?</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>Online Course 01 March 2022 • 10am</p> <p>Helping Your Child Manage Anxiety</p> <p>5 sessions • places available Discover how to help your child with anxiety.</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>Online Course 02 March 2022 • 10am</p> <p>Looking After Yourself, So That You Can Look After Your Child.</p> <p>5 sessions • places available This course explores a range of strategies to help you look after yourself so that you are better able to look after your child.</p> <p>Free</p>
<p>Online Course 03 March 2022 • 9.30am</p> <p>Helping Your Child Manage Anxiety</p> <p>5 sessions • places available Discover how to help your child with anxiety.</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>Great Yarmouth • Great Yarmouth Library 03 March 2022 • 1pm</p> <p>'Welcome to Family Learning'</p> <p>1 session • places available Who are we?</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>Norfolk • Stalham Library 07 March 2022 • 9.30am</p> <p>'Welcome to Family Learning'</p> <p>1 session • places available Who are we?</p> <p>Free</p>
<p>Online Course 14 March 2022 • 9.30am</p> <p>Helping With the 100 Square</p> <p>1 session • places available How confident do you feel supporting your children with maths?</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>Online Course 15 March 2022 • 9.30am</p> <p>Learning Through Art Science KS2</p> <p>1 session • places available Are you looking for new ways to support your child's science development?</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>Online Course 16 March 2022 • 9.30am</p> <p>Learning Through Art Science KS1</p> <p>1 session • places available Are you looking for new ways to support your child's science development?</p> <p>Free</p>
<p>Online 16 March 2022 • 6pm</p> <p>Bedtime Stories</p> <p>1 session • places available Get in your pj's and snuggle up with your favourite teddy and book!</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>Great Yarmouth • Gorleston Library 17 March 2022 • 10am</p> <p>'Welcome to Family Learning'</p> <p>1 session • places available Who are we?</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>Online Course 23 March 2022 • 1pm</p> <p>Welcome to Family Learning</p> <p>1 session • places available Who are we?</p> <p>Free</p>
<p>Online Course 23 March 2022 • 7pm</p> <p>Promoting Positive Behaviour</p> <p>2 sessions • places available This fantastic FREE online 2-week course will help you to gain confidence and skills to support your child/ren's behaviour with approaches based on current guidance and best practice.</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>Great Yarmouth • Gorleston Library 24 March 2022 • 10am</p> <p>Little Talkers</p> <p>1 session • places available Are you looking for fun activities to share with your child (0 to 4 years)?</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>Great Yarmouth • Great Yarmouth Library 26 March 2022 • 10am</p> <p>Make & Create for Dads & Young Ones</p> <p>1 session • places available Are you looking for activities to do with your children?</p> <p>Free</p>
<p>Online Course 30 March 2022 • 9.30am</p> <p>Paediatric First Aid ONLINE</p> <p>1 session • places available This could be the most valuable 2 hours of ONLINE learning you have ever spent.</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>Great Yarmouth • Great Yarmouth Library 23 April 2022 • 10am</p> <p>Make & Create for Dads & Young Ones</p> <p>1 session • places available Are you looking for activities to do with your children?</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>Great Yarmouth • Great Yarmouth Library 25 June 2022 • 10am</p> <p>Make & Create for Dads & Young Ones</p> <p>1 session • places available Are you looking for activities to do with your children?</p> <p>Free</p>



Government package to level up education and opportunities

On 1 February, the government announced a package to level up education and opportunities. Here is an outline of what this offer means for children and young people with SEND.

New funding for respite and Supported Internships will come alongside more than £45 million of continued targeted support for families and parents of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). These programmes will:

- target support to improve monitoring, support and intervention for local authorities and local health and care partners' delivery of statutory SEND services, with a focus on underperforming areas and sharing best practice
- improve participation and access for parents and young people for high quality advice and support; and
- directly support schools and colleges to effectively work with pupils with SEND, for example through training on specific needs like autism.

You can read the full press notice here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/package-to-transform-education-and-opportunities-for-most-disadvantaged>

Supported internships

The government is investing up to £18 million over the next three years to build capacity in the Supported Internships programme, aiming to double the number of Supported Internships to give more young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan the skills to secure and sustain paid employment. They will also worked with stakeholders across the sector to update their Supported Internship guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-internships-for-young-people-with-learning-difficulties>, to support education providers and employers to deliver quality internship placements for young people across the country. You can see how the Supported Internship programme has benefited Saul, who works at Stepping Hill Hospital, in this video:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/vpuuoit9hcvlsf8/SEND%20internship.mp4?dl=0>

Respite funding

Councils will be funded £30 million for the next three years to set up more than 10,000 additional respite placements, helping to provide positive opportunities for disabled children and young people and to give family carers a break so they can look after vulnerable children better in the long-term.

You can read more about both programmes via this blog from Children and Families Minister Will Quince:

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2022/02/01/if-we-give-children-a-quality-education-and-a-fair-shot-i-believe-they-can-and-will-do-incredible-things-children-and-families-minister-will-quince-on-new-send-support/>

