

SEND *An update*

Your views, our news; working together to strengthen SEND services

Issue 2 • Spring 2022

Learning Together

Our vision in South Tyneside is that every child and young person is celebrated for their individuality.

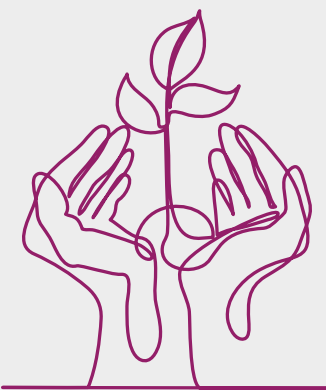
We believe our differences are what make us unique, and every child and young person should feel respected and valued as a member of their school/setting and wider community.

We want every child to have equal access to high quality:

- Education, Training & Employment
- Health & Social Care
- Leisure Services & Activities
- Information & Advice

We are committed to making sure the right support is in place, at the right time, for children and young people to fulfil their hopes and dreams.

We are all continuously learning from one another, and this newsletter celebrates achievements in the local area. We hope they inspire you to join us on our journey of always striving to do more.



Beverley Scanlon Head of Learning and Early Help



Andy Ritchie Service Manager for Access & Inclusion

Welcome to SEND An Update

Welcome to the second edition of SEND An Update! We are Beverley and Andy and we work at South Tyneside Council.

Along with schools and our colleagues in health and social care, we work hard to ensure children, young people and families receive the best SEND services.

We want to make our SEND processes as accessible as possible for you and look forward to working together on our plans to make South Tyneside an outstanding place to live and learn.

We believe that every child should receive the best education and support from their early years through to adulthood, making sure that our range of provision can meet the

needs of your child to support them to learn and grow into their best self. We work closely with our schools to achieve this.

We are always striving to do better and feedback from our children and families is always at the heart of this. In this newsletter, there are a range of opportunities for you to get involved in and we would absolutely love to hear from you!

Beverley & Andy

INSIDE

2

Let's Celebrate Achievements of South Tyneside's children and young people.

5

Little Mouse Mental Health support for children & young people.

6

Getting out & about Look after your health and wellbeing.

8

Get involved Find out about how your voice can shape SEND services.



South Tyneside Council



Spread the word!

THIS IS SOUTH TYNESIDE

Let's Celebrate

Meet Chrissy Cameron!

Winner of the Best Newcomer category at the 2021 Student Radio Awards (SRAs) and nominee for Best Specialist Music Programming, for work on his show 'Homegrown Hip Hop'.

Chrissy, 20, is a vision impaired student from Hebburn, who currently studies Media Production (BA Hons) at Sunderland University. Since starting university, Chrissy has volunteered at the University's community station Spark FM, where he hosts a weekly hip hop programme showcasing artists from the North East.

Chrissy has been sight impaired since birth with reduced vision in both eyes. From diagnosis, he has been supported by the Visually Impaired Service at South Tyneside. In school, Chrissy needed a range of support including relevant technology and a specialist support assistant (SSA). Throughout his education, Chrissy was encouraged to be independent and by the time he commenced his A-levels he was working without 1-2-1 support. Chrissy explained,

"The VI Service have been very supportive throughout my journey in primary and secondary school, providing access to the curriculum and helping me achieve the exam results I have got so that I can follow my dreams."

Visually Impaired Service

The Visually Impaired Service supports children and young people who are vision impaired from birth to age 25 years and their families.

Following the assessment of needs the following services may be provided:

- specialist support and teaching
- loan or advice about equipment adaptations
- mobility training
- independent living skills training
- advice on a range of specialist services for visually impaired people



Chrissy gained 8 GCSEs at Hebburn Comprehensive school and went on to achieve 3 A Levels at St Joseph's Catholic Academy sixth form. These fantastic exam results secured his place at Sunderland University where he is thriving. Chrissy has also had training from the Habilitation Specialist at South Tyneside Visually Impaired Service to develop his mobility skills and is now a confident cane user helping Chrissy develop his independence.

Chrissy is a hardworking, determined and enthusiastic young man who hopes to inspire other students who have a disability to follow their dreams. Chrissy explained,

"Just because you have a disability doesn't mean you don't have talent."

As part of the Student Radio Award (SRA), Chrissy will be producing a 3 hour show for Union Jack Radio which will be aired nationally sometime later this year 2022. The Visually Impaired Service are extremely proud of Chrissy's achievements and success.

Hearing Impaired Service

Working with families and schools/settings to provide individualised holistic advice, guidance and support to children and young people with a hearing impairment.

Examples of support include:

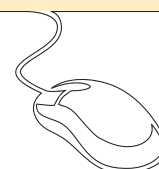
- Home visits for pre-school children
- Teaching and monitoring visits for nurseries/school/ Post 16 settings
- Information advice and support
- Deaf awareness training
- Assistive technology



Contact

Find out more on the SEND Local Offer or by e-mailing Hayley Bayfield directly using the e-mail

✉ | Hayley.Bayfield@southtyneside.gov.uk





Rachel Smith (Teacher of the Deaf) and a Mortimer Primary Student reading Freddie and the Fairy using inclusive technology.

Inclusive Technology

The Hearing Impaired Service works alongside school staff to support one of our children with their communication and interaction and help facilitate her independent learning.

We trialled the use of a microphone that is linked directly to her hearing aids to make the classroom and working in small groups/pairs fully inclusive. Being able to pass a microphone around the class and training peers to use it effectively means that she can hear them wherever they are in the room and she is able to be fully involved in whole class discussions too. It's very easy to use and has really enhanced humanities and science question and answer sessions, as well as PSHE. The teacher has seen great benefits, "I can highly recommend using the microphone, it's really enriched lessons for all of the children and made them all more aware of their speaking and listening skills".

To raise awareness in class regarding hearing impairment, and to understand the best ways to communication with her, we invited Rachel Smith to help develop a lesson led

by the child. Earlier last term Rachel and the child worked together to plan and deliver the informative session. They explained hearing loss, the impact this can have within school and how the other children can help. A lovely Julia Donaldson story, 'Freddie and the Fairy' was used to introduce the topic.

The class were encouraged to ask questions to create an atmosphere of honesty, openness and inclusivity. The whole process was child centred and feedback from parents and those involved was very positive. The child was at the heart of the session and her confidence breaking down barriers around hearing impairment was heart-warming to see. This is what she told us after delivering her session, "I liked it when we told my class about my hearing aids and told them how to talk to me using the microphone and the radio aid. I felt happy."

“
“This was a really positive deaf awareness session with the class, and I was very impressed with the high quality of questions from the children and their engagement in the activities. They particularly enjoyed the lip-reading challenge and being able to have a close up look at some hearing aids and learn more about how the technology works.”
 Rachel Smith
 ”

Useful Vision supports visually impaired children and their families to access positive opportunities and activities.

As a registered charity, we offer free, accessible, and exciting events regularly across the North East region enabling visually impaired children to learn new skills and make new friends. Parents and Carers can also access informative and social events regularly as part of our support network. Our activities are advertised via our website and social media, and in 2021, we delivered over 100 activities including drama workshops, swimming, horse riding sports sessions, and family days out!



Contact



0191 447 2600



www.usefulvision.org.uk



@usefulvision

Adult Sensory Offer

Are you aged 18 or over and require help with your sensory needs?

The Autism Hub on Gordon Street is now offering therapeutic support for adults to understand how they process and perceive the world. Help will be tailored to the individual but may include an assessment, observations, and activities to develop a sensory profile. Individuals can be supported in a way that suits them, time can be spent planning and goal setting around topics like, self-care, travel, community access and emotional regulation.

The hub is located at 10 Gordon Street, South Shields, NE33 4JP and can be accessed on Thursday's and Friday's.



contact

📞 | 0191 567 2514

✉ | info@autisminmind.com



Rainbow Flag Award

Has your child's school signed up to the Rainbow Flag Award?

The Rainbow Flag Award is a quality assurance framework with a focus on positive LGBT+ inclusion for all schools and colleges. The award allows schools to effectively implement their legal, statutory, moral and Ofsted requirements to be LGBT+ inclusive by:

- Thinking about different families and the possibility that children could have same sex parents or LGBT+ people in their family.
- Discussing how to bust stereotypes and celebrate children's hobbies, interests and achievements regardless of gender.
- Thinking about the gendered spaces in schools.
- Planning to effectively deliver LGBT+ support to children who are questioning/exploring their gender identity, including signposting to external organisations.
- Showcasing a range of LGBT+ inclusive resources and discussing the need to deliver LGBT+ inclusive as well as LGBT+ specific work in school.

The Clinical Commissioning Group has funded all schools and colleges to sign up to the Rainbow Flag Award, this includes a Rainbow Flag Award Welcome Pack, as well as two places on the one full-day training course and ongoing telephone/email support. Once the award is achieved, your school will be accredited for 2 years.



contact

🔍 | www.rainbowflagaward.co.uk

RIX WIKI

Wikis are for young people, adults and their families and carers.




South Tyneside has commenced a 5 year project to deliver 50 Rix Wikis.

They allow young people, adults and their families and carers to tell their story in their own words using a digital platform.

They can be used to share information for Education Health & Care Plans, progress reviews, medical appointments and sharing successes.

You can share your wiki with the people who work with you and your family, who you know and trust, so that they can learn more about you and better understand how they can support you to reach your goals.

 You can watch a video to find out what a wiki is and how it can support you Here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUdodGt8CCY

* Please note there is a limited number of licences available and an eligibility criteria. To find out more contact Rix@southtyneside.gov.uk

Little Mouse

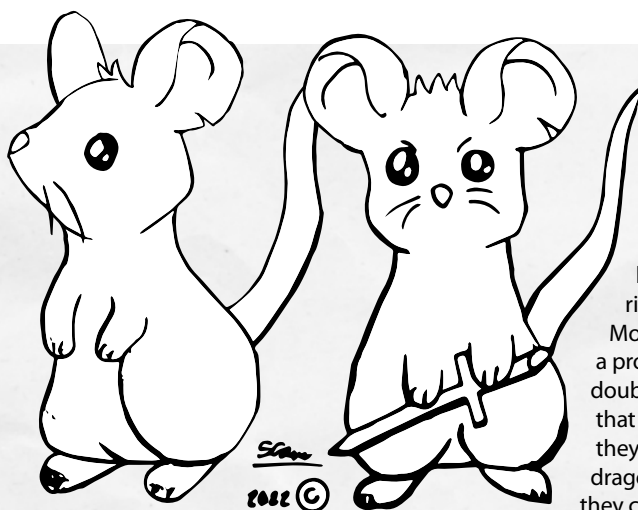
Sophie Carr, a Year 10 student from Harton Academy has written a short story to try to help others make sense of the thoughts that those who suffer from Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and other mental health issues face every day. This powerful story about Little Mouse will resonate with a wide audience - well done Sophie!

If enough people believe a liar, what they say will become the truth. Sometimes, Little Mouse believed the liar. For the liar was a dragon who was big and scary with scales and wings, and horns and a mouth that breathed fire. Little Mouse felt like she had to believe and do what the dragon said. And although Little Mouse occasionally tried to stand up to the dragon, it was too hard. Little Mouse felt weak and, well, little. She thought she was just too small to stand up to such a big monster.

When the dragon told its lies, Little Mouse did what it said to make the lies go away. The dragon would open its wings wide and breathe red, ferocious flames. The dragon ordered Little Mouse to go up the mountain three times a day, if she wanted the lies to go away.

She wasn't afraid of the dragon, but of what it told her, and it was often easier to give into it. But as Little Mouse did what the dragon said, the dragon got stronger, and Little Mouse got weaker. The dragon told all sorts of lies to Little Mouse and made her do more and more and more. Within a few weeks, Little Mouse had to go up the mountain 9 times a day which exhausted her.

The lies made her sad, so she made them go away by doing what the dragon said. But doing what the dragon said also made her sad. It took up lots of her time and the lies didn't really leave her. As soon as she made one go away, the dragon thought of a new one. Soon, the dragon forced Little Mouse to travel the



mountain 81 times in one day. To this, Little Mouse tried to fight back and argue with the dragon, but rarely seemed to win. She was tired with trying to beat the dragon and it drained lots of her energy. She was a smart Little Mouse, and her brain power was being wasted on the dragon and its lies.

It got worse for Little Mouse. She felt surrounded by all the lies and they were on her mind every day. She needed help. She couldn't fight the dragon all by herself and she needed someone to help her find her strength. Little Mouse knew of people she could get help from. There were 5 knights who were perfectly willing to fight the dragon with her. But Little Mouse was made so upset by the dragons lies, and she didn't want the knights to be made upset too.

But the knights knew something was wrong with Little Mouse. They could see she was hurting. The knights spoke to her, and she spoke to them. She told them

one of the scariest lies the dragon had told her which was hard for Little Mouse. It made the knights sad and Little Mouse was worried. But the knights reassured her that she had done the right thing by sharing. Little Mouse sometimes thought that a problem shared was a problem doubled. But the knights explained that it was just halved, and that they would help her fight the dragon. They were sad because they cared so much about Little Mouse and wanted her to be happy.

The Knights gave Little Mouse a helmet and sword and trained her, so that when she encountered the dragon again, she would know what to do and have the strength to stand up to the dragon. They helped her understand that the lies were just that: lies. They weren't true, and so she didn't have to listen to the dragon or do what it said. She could ignore it as the dragon had no real power over Little Mouse. And once she started to ignore the dragon, it grew smaller and smaller and Little Mouse grew bigger and bigger in strength. The knights supported her, and she slayed the dragon.

If enough people believe a liar, what they say will seem like the truth. But sometimes, things are not what they seem. Sometimes, little mice slay dragons.

Sophie Carr

We Eat Elephants

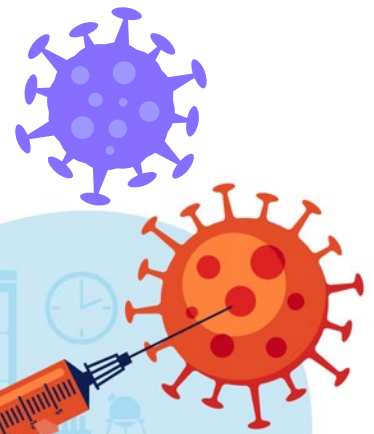
How do you eat an elephant – one bite at a time! Often children feel overwhelmed and find it difficult to talk about their feelings.

We Eat Elephants provides an opportunity for primary age children to understand their feelings bit by bit using engaging resources. It helps them to deal with the effects; to build their resilience and is a great tool for helping them to communicate and express their feelings. The Healthy Minds Team can support children through this course.

To access, please speak to the Senior Mental Health lead in your child's school or contact the Single Point of Access on **0191 2832937**.



COVID-19



COVID-19 is a very infectious respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Most children who get COVID-19 have no symptoms.

Those that do, have mild symptoms like a bad cold. Very few children and young people with COVID-19 infection go on to have severe symptoms.

The vaccines are most important for the small number of children and young people who are likely to get poorly with COVID-19.

Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Most of these are mild and short term, and not everyone gets them. With the vaccine (Pfizer) used in under-18s, side effects are more common with the second dose.

You can keep up to date about COVID 19, including information about the vaccine, how it works and what to expect after it by going to <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>



Getting Vaccinated

All children over the age of 12 are now eligible for a first and second dose of the Pfizer vaccine, at least 12 weeks apart. The vaccinations will be delivered by the school immunisation team. Your child's school will contact you to inform you when this will happen. They will also provide you with a consent form and the answers to some frequently asked questions. Some community clinics will be provided for any children who miss the school vaccination clinic, your child's school will provide details on how to access these clinics. Alternatively you can book an appointment via the national booking system by calling 119 or visiting www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/



Kids And Young Adults Klub Special Needs Support Group
www.thekayaks.co.uk

14 years of collective knowledge, life and lived experience has made The Kayaks a "Go to" organisation in the world of SEND in both South Tyneside and the North East of England.

You don't know, what you don't know. Parents/carers tell us they are overwhelmed, and that the world of SEND can be daunting.

Kayaks recognised that as well as an opportunity for children and families to come together every Saturday at Mortimer Community college, there was a real need to actively support, advocate for, represent and speak on behalf of some parents who struggle. We launched our Outreach project KOPE (Kayaks Outreach Project Initiative) in 2018 to offer drop-in sessions, meetings by appointment, and various other support.

K.O.P.E. is based at **Trinity House social centre, Kayaks offices, First floor, 134 Laygate, South Shields. NE33 4JD.**

New Hope North East

At New Hope North East (NHNE) we have a range of fun and interactive inclusive activities for children and young people with additional



We currently run weekly after school Zoom sessions including Arts and Crafts Club, Writing Workshops, and our Youth Connected Cooking Club. We also run a Friday Fun Club and Arts and Crafts Club suitable for younger children, based at our NHNE Activities Room at Trinity House, Laygate, South Shields, where our office is also based.

We also run a Garden Club at our allotment space at Laygate, South Shields. At various times throughout the year, we have Family Trips, Fun Day Events and Seasonal Projects and Activities including Fitness Bootcamps.

We also run a weekly Parents/Carers Forum, a support group for Parents/Carers, which provides support, information, advice and guidance, with regular Professional Guest Speakers and we provide Training and Volunteer Opportunities for Parents/Carers.

Our activities are free to NHNE members.

Our Staff and Sessional Workers are experienced, qualified and have a full DBS.

For more information and/or to sign-up to become a member, please contact Amy at: amy.newhopenortheast@gmail.com or text or call 07517550615 and visit our website at: www.newhopenortheast.co.uk



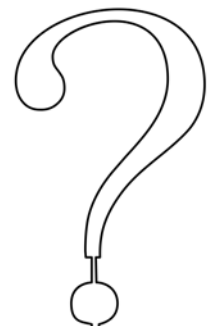
Short Breaks Grant

We are excited to pilot a short breaks grant in South Tyneside. The grant is designed to provide eligible children and young people with access to a small grant that can be used to participate in activities that they enjoy.

South Tyneside Council & South Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group recognise that some families struggle to spend time together doing everyday activities because they need additional support when caring for a child/young person with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

We anticipate the grant to be beneficial to a large number of families and applications will be approved in order of receipt. The Short Breaks Grant is a limited fund and South Tyneside Council reserves the right to close the scheme if the available budget is exhausted.

To find out more about eligibility or to request an application form please contact us: sendlocaloffer@southtyneside.gov.uk



What is a short break?

Looking after a child who has complex Special Educational Needs and Disabilities can bring challenges and difficulties that other families do not have.

It may be harder for these children to participate in activities, develop their independence and make friends like other children do. Family members can become overwhelmed and tired from their caring duties.

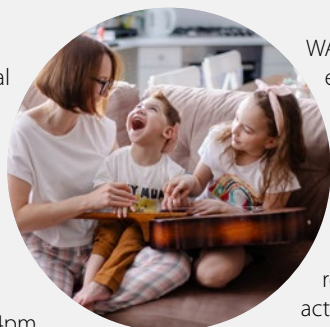
A short break is an opportunity for the child or young person to spend time away from their primary carers and engaging in activities that are enjoyable, they promote social inclusion as well as developing personal and social skills. Short breaks also provide primary care givers with a valuable and necessary break from their caring responsibilities. Examples include having someone support your child whilst you are out on a family trip, going to an after school or holiday club, staying in an overnight care facility and more.

Waves

WAVES is an all-inclusive support group for families in the North East of England who have a children with disabilities and/or additional needs (0-25 years)

WAVES is run by a dedicated team – all who have personal experience of caring for a child with SEND.

We meet each Saturday afternoon at Bilton Hall Community Trust, which is located at Taunton Avenue, Jarrow, NE32 3RT, and runs between 12noon-4pm. WAVES have exclusive access to the building between these times and the area is completely secure to ensure the safety of the children.



WAVES have many activities running every week including, indoor/ outdoor sports, hair and beauty, cooking, bouncy castles, arts/ crafts, bingo, a holistic therapist who works with both the children and the adults and our newest addition an up-to-date sensory room. WAVES often have off-site activities running during the week/ evenings and school holidays including: Ice skating, visits to trampoline and inflatable centres, swimming, park/forest visits and many more. We also strive to have a weekend activity residential once a year

contact

Suzanne Jackson (Chair)

✉ suzanne.jackson@waves-support-group.com

Gaynor Tate (Vice chair/Secretary)

✉ gaynor.tate@waves-support-group.com

🔍 www.waves-support-group.com

📱 [waves@additionalneedssupport](https://www.facebook.com/waves@additionalneedssupport)

Get involved

For the SEND Local Offer to develop and grow, we need you to be involved. There are lots of ways that you can provide your views, share your experiences and get involved in the development of SEND services

SEND Improvement Forum

You can share your experiences and work alongside practitioners to find solutions for improving SEND services and the experience of children/young people and their parents/carers.

We meet every half term via ZOOM, upcoming dates

Thursday 03/03/2022 and Thursday 05/05/2022

You can book your space: <https://stlocaloffersendimpforum.eventbrite.co.uk>

Leisure Consultation

We are looking for 10 families to be involved in our mystery shopper consultation, to find out about inclusion and accessibility at leisure services in our local area for children/young people with SEND and their families.

Find out more about how you can get involved in this by contacting us via email: sendlocaloffer@southtyneside.gov.uk

Engagement Events

Get information and updates on developments, ask questions, and share experiences. These are always advertised on the SEND Local Offer website and Facebook page

Find out more about how you can get involved by contacting us:

📞 0191 424 7778

✉ SENDlocaloffer@southtyneside.gov.uk

🔍 www.southtyneside.gov.uk/SENDLocalOffer

📌 @localoffersouthtyneside



Local Offer Launch

The SEND Local Offer has been redesigned and refreshed and you are invited to attend one of the launch events. You'll be sent an invitation with information about how to book from your child's school/setting. Book your space to avoid disappointment.

Parent/Carer's Preparing for Adulthood

If you have a child aged 14-25yrs, you can get involved in developing our Preparing for Adulthood offer in South Tyneside. First session is: 15th March 2022



Parent Carers READ

(Read, Edit, Approve, Distribute)

We want all our communication to be effective. This means removing the jargon and making sure that it is easy to understand. The best way to do this is by having you read, edit, and approve our policies guides and more. Look for the Parent/Carer stamp of approval.



South Tyneside Parent Carer Forum

Uniting voices in the SEND Community

Who are we?

We are an independent group of parents and carers of children and young people with additional needs and disabilities in South Tyneside. We work in partnership with key organisations to ensure the needs of the child are at the heart of all services. We offer the benefit of lived experience and understand the challenges parents and carers often face.

What have we been up to?

We have been involved in a number of activities, including working alongside the Local Authority to develop clear information for parents/carers.

We have also been working hard to offer some exciting opportunities for SEND children and their families during this half-term; we have arranged a number of SEND events with Science Buddies, Williby Rocs CIC and Tides if Change CIC, and have gift cards to give away for Cineworld and Supertramp.

Please follow our social media pages to find out more about our half term events.

Becoming a member of our forum increases our collective voice and strength.

Come and join us, and sign up to be a member on our website



contact

🔍 www.stpcf.org/

📌 @stparentcarerforum

📍 st_parent_carer_forum