

SEND *An update*

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

Issue 3 • Summer 2022

Our Shared Journey!

As the school year comes to an end, we have been looking back at all the amazing achievements of our children and young people with SEND, their families and the people/services that support them.

As a Local Area, we continue on our journey to grow and develop our offer for children, young people & families in South Tyneside. We are determined to make sure the support and provision we offer is right for you and your family, but know there is more for us to do.

In this newsletter, we'd like to share some of our recent highlights as well as plans for future development based on your feedback.

We are always looking for innovative ways to further improve our services, and the voice of families is always at the heart of what we do.

To get involved contact us at sendlocaloffer@southtyneside.gov.uk



Welcome to SEND An Update

Welcome to the third edition of SEND an update! We are Aileen and Anne and work for South Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group/Local Authority and South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust. We work across health providers to ensure SEND is on everyone's radar. Anne also provides direct clinical care for families.



Aileen Fitzgerald, Designated Clinical Officer



Anne Fearon, Clinical Lead for Children & Young People with Additional Needs

We both work closely with partners in education and care as part of the SEND Leadership Team. It is really important that the health needs of our children are supported with joined up working between health services, the Local Authority and education settings.

We both know how important it is to identify any health needs and conditions. This is especially important when there are concerns that a child or young person may have a disability or is following a different developmental journey to other children their age.

We know that early identification and good health management involving families and appropriate health care professionals makes a real difference to help children and young people take part in everyday activities and enjoy the best quality of life. We also know that this makes an enormous difference to the whole family - parents, carers, siblings and extended family members.

Aileen & Anne

INSIDE

2

Congratulations to some of our fantastic Education settings.

5

Information, Advice & Support: for your child & family.

6

A big thank you: for attending the SEND Local Offer launch events.

8

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



South Tyneside Council



Spread the word!

THIS IS SOUTH TYNESIDE

SSFC Takeover Work Experience



A unique collaboration between Epinay School and South Shields Football club has enabled students from year 10, 11 and sixth form to access work experience opportunities at the football club.

The "takeover project" opened opportunities for students to engage in work experience in a number of sectors within the football club; catering, horticulture, coaching and insights into the role of a physio and the leadership team within the club. Catering involved the students serving breakfast to the first team, horticulture group made window boxes for the patio area at Harton welfare, the sport group led a first team coaching session alongside first team manager Kevin Phillips and the leadership team were grilled on the running of the club through a Q&A session.

The "takeover project" culminated in a matchday takeover with Epinay students representing the school as mascots and flag bearers but also over 100 students and parents/carers attending the game. The matchday was also a continuation of work experience with students working in roles in hospitality, stewarding, programme selling and play park coaching. The experience also raised £1550 for school funds through a raffle organised by sixth form students.

Epinay headteacher Chris Rue said: "We can't thank South Shields FC enough for the amazing opportunities they have given our students this week. We place a heavy emphasis on preparing our young people for adulthood and trying to find creative ways for them to experience 'real life' work. It has been amazing to see our young people involved in the experience, and I have no doubt that it will serve them well for when they leave school. A massive thanks to everyone involved."



SSFC Foundation manager Steve Camm said:

"We are delighted to have worked on this project with our friends at Epinay School. It's always a pleasure to visit the school and this new venture was exciting, and we hope to benefit the students"

Our role within the community is so much more than what happens on the pitch on a Saturday. The social impact we create is equally important to us. Part of that is creating volunteering and employment opportunities for local people who in turn deliver activities that support the health and well-being of our community."

Harton Academy has been the first school in the country to apply for the Deaf-Friendly Standard and Bronze Level Award through the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS). This application has led the Society to look in more detail at an award that is tailored specifically for schools. Due to Harton's commitment to inclusion, the National Deaf Children's Society has invited the school to become an Educational Member and affiliate of the NDCS.



Westoe Crown Primary receiving their Good Diabetes Care in School Award

Westoe Crown Primary



Have been nominated by a parent for the Good Diabetes Care in School Award and have been successful in their application.

This award demonstrates a whole school approach to good practice type 1 diabetes care and management, ensuring children with diabetes are safe and fully included in all aspects of school life.

Parents are keen to share with others that staff at Westoe Crown primary have shown tremendous support and care throughout their child's time at school.



SENCOs celebrating at the Early Years SENCO Awards Event

Early Years SENCO Awards

We know how important it is to get things right from the very start for children with SEND and their families, so when there was an opportunity last year to bid for DfE funding for Early Years SENCOs to complete an accredited award we were very keen to be involved.

Following our successful bid, we were allocated 19 spaces for early years staff and Rachael Hood, our Local Area SENCO, delivered the course with all 19 SENCOs passing with flying colours- a fantastic achievement!

We intend to deliver the course to another cohort this year with the hope that we will eventually have a qualified Early Years SENCO in every setting in the Borough who has completed this fantastic training which equips them with skills in early identification of SEND, facilitating inclusion in settings and working in partnership with parents and carers to achieve the best possible outcomes for their children.

Top Tips for Transitions

Transition between school settings (and internal transitions between year groups) can be a time of uncertainty and anxiety for a lot of children and their parents/carers- especially for those with SEND.

South Tyneside Council has worked with parents and schools around how we can best support children through this period.

Speak to the SENCO:

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO) in your child's current setting has a key role at transition points around sharing knowledge of your child's needs and how they are best supported. They are also central to the handover of information to the next setting so that they are able to ensure continuity of provision and support.

In South Tyneside, settings handover information to the next school to ensure that they are aware of needs, the additional support/reasonable adjustments currently provided and information about any other professionals who have involvement. This ensures that transition is as smooth as possible.

SENCOs may also arrange transition reviews during which a plan can be made and agreed about additional support needed around transition, e.g. Emotional Resilience Team support, additional visits, access to a quiet space if they are feeling overwhelmed, etc

Start conversations with your child's new setting early:

You can contact the SENCO from your child's new setting to discuss their needs and explore and discuss a plan of support. Doing this early will mean that any questions can be answered and plans put in place, for example, a photobook of keys areas/staff in school

could be created to help your child become familiar with their new setting, relationships with adult/peer mentors could be established ahead of the move or there could be discussions about reasonable adjustments to uniform/homework expectations, etc.

If your child is due to have a key transition in the future, look out for open evenings and opportunities to meet staff to discuss your child and the things school could put in place to support them. Having this information in advance and making a clear plan is key.

Explore your child's feelings about transition:

If there are any aspects of transition that your child is worried about it is useful to explore and make a note of them so that they can be discussed with the current/next setting and plans can be put in place to address them. These conversations are key to smoothing the process.



The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) is the statutory service in South Tyneside providing support to families of children and young people with additional learning needs, as well as young people themselves.



The service provides free, confidential, and impartial information, advice and support in matters relating to education, health and social care. Support is tailored to the needs of service users, and a diagnosis is not required to access any of the information, advice and support provided.

The service can also provide support to young people (under the age of 25) directly, which can include:

- Support to explore your views and wishes for the future
- Support with annual reviews
- Support and encourage you to participate in meetings with school or college
- Help you to access agencies that might best support you
- Support you to engage with wider partners (including the Local Authority) to share your experiences
- Provide information and advice over the phone through our Advice Line

The service also runs a termly Young People's Forum, which provides an opportunity for young people with SEND, to meet others, have their voice heard, improve their skills and inform the service so it can better meet their needs.

- ☎ 0191 424 6345
- ✉ SENDIASS@southtyneside.gov.uk
- 🔍 www.southtynesidesendiass.co.uk
- 📘 www.facebook.com/STsendiass
- 📷 @STsendiass



Foxden's newly refurbished facilities

Foxden

Foxden is part of South Tyneside's short breaks offer for young people in the area who have a diagnosed additional need. Young people are referred into the service via the Childrens Disability Social Work team.

Stays for young people vary in duration and start at one stay per month, up to a maximum of 75 stays per year. The home has capacity for up to four young people to stay at one time, and we make every effort to ensure that young people staying together are a good match.

Foxden has recently undergone a full refurbishment to provide a bright, spacious one level home with specialist facilities including a state-of-the-art sensory room, specialist bathing equipment and a safe enclosed play area. The home is decorated to a high standard and has a range of toys, games communication aids and IPADs to help young people enjoy their visit and expand their knowledge.

The home has wheelchair accessible transport and young people enjoy activities and outings away from the home enabling them to have new experiences and fun in the surrounding area.

The team at Foxden are trained to a high standard and constantly strive to provide the best care possible for our young people.



We're a local charity that helps people with learning disabilities, autistic people and people experiencing mental health or other challenges who live in South Tyneside.



We provide advocacy services which means we can help in situations where people over 18 need support to speak up for what they want and need. This includes statutory advocacy in circumstances where important decisions need to be made about a person's life, but we can also provide general advocacy services for people with learning disabilities who just need some support to resolve a particular issue.

We also offer social activities for people with learning disabilities and autistic people so they can connect with others while developing skills and confidence.

Our weekly timetable includes drop-in sessions in Jarrow and Boldon which provide practical help with tasks like making appointments or paying bills as well as our Cooking with Confidence group that meets in South Shields to learn new skills in a friendly environment.

There's lots available online too, from our creative crew craft club to our mental health and quiet chat groups.

Discover more

- ☎ 0191 478 6472
- ✉ mail@yvc.org.uk
- 🔍 www.yvc.org.uk



The Healthy Minds Team are mental health professionals who provide a range of emotional, behavioural and psychological support services to children and young people. They also help parents and teachers in South Tyneside to promote positive wellbeing.



The Healthy Minds Team delivers evidence-based preventative, short term, early interventions for mild to moderate mental health difficulties, which may include common issues such as; low mood, worry and anxiety, emotional regulation difficulties (including controlling anger and emotions), relationship and family difficulties, self-esteem and confidence.

The team works with all schools and colleges across South Tyneside to promote a Whole School Approach by offering consultation, advice and training to staff to help them to feel confident in talking about mental health and to reduce stigma in schools. Support is available for parents and carers too. We have a systemic family worker who will work with parents and carers in addition to a link worker for each school.

Whole class workshops are also offered around building emotional resilience, raising awareness of mental health and developing coping skills. Some of our workshops include: Everyone Worries, Friends Programme, We Eat Elephants, Living Life to the Full and The Incredible Years.

Discover more

If you would like more information, please see our website, Our Healthy Minds Team or speak to the senior mental health lead in your child's school.

🔍 | www.southtynesidelifecyclementalhealth.nhs.uk/our-healthy-minds-team/



That 3 of our special schools have a specially trained Optometrists and Dispensing Optician Team working the schools?

This is to help autistic children/children with learning disabilities to access services more easily. The teams have clinics in schools to provide eyesight tests. They also dispense any prescribed spectacles within the school clinics and can do some repairs too. The clinics are available in Keelman's Way, Park View and Epinau Schools. Please speak to school staff to book your child in to the clinic.



THANK YOU

for attending our Local Offer Launch Events



You can visit the SEND Local Offer website at www.southtyneside.gov.uk/sendlocaloffer

Your comments, shared experiences, feedback and what we do in response to them, demonstrates the impact that you have on the development of the SEND Local Offer.

At the events, you told us you would like us to...

Host more engagement events

We are producing a 12-month engagement plan that will focus on themes that you have raised, these events will:

- Have more time allocated for discussion
- Be held at different times to make sure parents/carers can attend
- Have professionals from key services available to provide updates and answer questions

Improve our communication

We are going to work with you on improving our communication methods. In the meantime we are:

- Working with specific groups to promote the SEND Local Offer
- Rolling out SEND A Message, a communication pledge, to education settings and beyond
- Developing a parent/carers register which will contact you in your preferred methods

Further develop our information & advice

We are going to review the accessibility and availability of information and advice.

This will include:

- Further development of our SEND Local Offer website
- Develop a printed annual SEND Local Offer booklet
- Continued development of guidance documents for parents, carers and young people on key topics

Increase support for parents and carers

We are reviewing our Short Breaks offer and will develop parent/carers support groups. We will do this by:

- Carrying out a short breaks consultation in the coming months
- Develop parent/carers support groups across the Local Area
- Continue to develop our training offer for parent/carers

Improve our planning/governance

We will plan further engagement with parents/carers to further develop our improvement plan. We will also:

- Share your experiences and stories with SEND Leadership Board
- Explore how we can develop professionals knowledge and expertise in SEND
- Work with key health professionals to ensure waiting times are clearly explained to parents/carers, and the right support is in place for your child and family whilst you wait.

"I am new to all this and some information was very useful, some not but it was good to see what is out there"

"I felt this was especially useful for families"

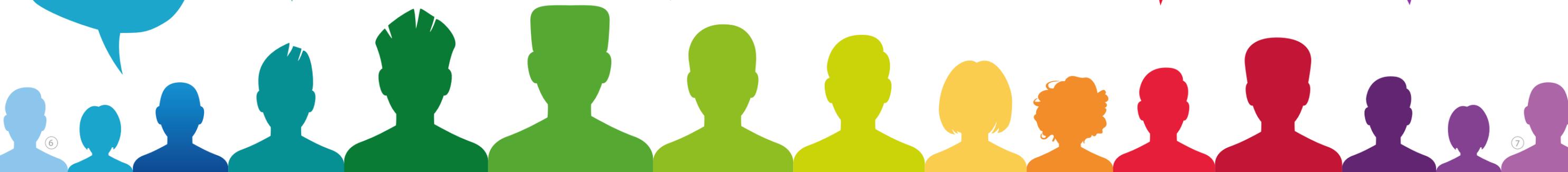
"An excellent event, thank you! A little more time for discussion and networking would be helpful"

"Continue with more events like this!"

"If this event is held every 3 months it'll be more helpful. Also, if there is a Bengali interpreter, it'll be helpful as there is a big Bengali community"

"I'd like further events like this - to discuss, networking & gain knowledge"

"Maybe some kind of fruit, as those cakes were delicious but no good for my waist line"



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 7th July

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

Exclusive swim sessions

We are piloting exclusive swim sessions for families. These will take place at Jarrow Pool and we would like families that would like to take part and provide feedback on their experience. Contact us to find out more



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

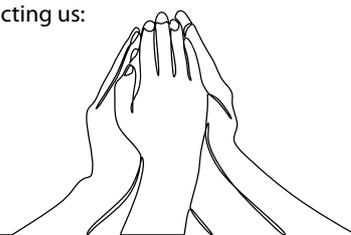
Find out more about how you can get involved by contacting us:

📞 0191 424 7778

✉ SENDlocaloffer@southtyneside.gov.uk

🔍 www.southtyneside.gov.uk/SENDLocalOffer

📱 @localoffersouthtyneside



Local Offer Launch

We launched our SEND Local Offer in March 2022 and in response to your feedback, will be developing a 12-month engagement plan, keep your eyes peeled!

SEND Green Paper

We want your views on the SEND Green Paper. There will be a survey launching soon where you can be in with a chance of winning a voucher of up to £50 for taking part.



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