



Welcome from Nina Broderick - Inclusion Service Leader

Welcome to the final edition of your SEND Update newsletter this academic year.

As the academic year 22/23 draws to a close we would like to thank you for the great work and important role that each of you have supporting Children and Young People (CYP) with SEND and in continuously developing effective SEND practices within your schools.

This year we saw many improvements and developments to the way in which we work together including; the introduction of our reformatted SEND Inclusion Forum, the introduction of our SEND Update newsletter, improved feedback processes, increased coproduction such as establishing a new youth participation group to name but a few.

As we look ahead to next year, we are looking forward to further developing and strengthening our SEND offer within the context of the new [SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan](#) as set out by the DfE in March. We will be continuing to work collaboratively with you, our CYP, families and our colleagues in health and social care, to understand more about the changes we want as a local area and setting these priorities out within our refreshed SEND strategy action groups, ensuring that the best possible outcomes for CYP are at the heart of all we do.

We hope you have a wonderful summer break and we look forward to welcoming you back upon our return in September.

We have been receiving positive feedback regarding the content of the half termly SEND Updates newsletter as well as some great ideas for further information to share. If you would like to let us know any suggestions you have for content, please do let us know via [email](#).

SEND: Now and Moving Forwards Together Event

On Tuesday 4 July, the local area for SEND organised an event with a variety of stakeholders including our children, young people, parents, carers, and professionals in education, health and social care to find out what the local area are doing well and where we can improve our offer. We also looked at the commitments in the SEND Strategy and discussed if they were still relevant for our children and young people.

This information will feed into the local area's self-evaluation and will be crucial in our action planning as we move forward.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our children and young people, parents, carers and professionals who attended the event and shared their experience and views. We would like to particularly thank our SENCo Quadrant chairs for joining the event!

We will now be looking at the information we gathered from the event and will provide feedback to all our partners in the local area.

[Download more info about the SEND event \(PDF\)](#)



SENCo Quadrant Meetings Updates

(Following feedback, we are sharing a short update for each quadrant)

North: Discussion - Questions were raised regarding LA departments/units and how Ofsted inspects these. SEND Team to consider offering further

information/training regarding how tribunals work and school's role within these, including if called to be a witness.

East: Transition Activity – It was discussed that a shared template to complete for Secondary school transition would be helpful. SEND Team to locate a copy of what had been worked on in previous times

South: Transition activity - Questions were raised regarding ideas for improving transition processes including the transition of pupils starting special school and mainstream secondary school. Further links between secondary schools and primary schools to be established.

West: Transition Offer - The quadrant agreed that the EYs to primary transition was strong and well supported by the specialist teaching team and felt that further work could be done to strengthen the primary to secondary and the Year 11 to post 16 transitions. It was also discussed about clarification of processes and expectations regarding annual reviews.

Thank you to our fantastic SENCo co-chairs who will continue in their role into the first half of the autumn role where agreed.

A special education SEND update newsletter will be shared at the beginning of term to highlight the agenda items for discussion and consideration during the autumn term 2023.



Assessment Team Updates

The EHC needs assessment process is a 20 week legal process which continues throughout all holiday periods. Due to this we would like to highlight that the Assessment Team will be continuing to make decisions to assess and issue during the summer holidays. In person forums will not take place but will instead be paper based exercises, therefore please consider any requests that you may be making as a SENCO prior to the holiday period and ensure that paperwork offers a full picture of the child or young person. Please also remember should you refer to an EP consultation or Specialist Teacher report within your paperwork then please include it. As a team we may hold these documents on file however if it isn't included in the paperwork we cannot share it with professionals as part of the request.

As an Assessment Team we are able to apply a 4 week exception to some cases where the assessment period falls within the holiday period. This will be applied as required and information shared with families and school as appropriate.

As a team over the summer holiday period we will still share decisions made with schools and there may be planning meetings held, however we do not expect schools to attend these. As a school you can feed in to the draft 2 plan, the assessment officers have a sound understanding of the provisions within their schools and use this knowledge along with the SEN support plan and evidence gathered as part of the assessment process to formulate the draft 2 plan.

If parents or other professionals make a request for an EHC needs assessment we will need to make a decision to ensure we are within legal timeframes. We understand that we may not have information from school but will make our decision based on the information received.

As an LA team we have reviewed the feedback received from schools with regards to the forum process and will be setting ourselves some actions to improve the forum process for all involved.

One of the points raised was that schools like the forum being held in other schools, as this provides an opportunity to visit other settings and an insight in to how they operate, always useful in terms of CPD! As an LA we are looking for schools to host forum. If you have a space to offer for a term, we would love to hear from you.

We would require; a room that can host up to 20 adults, WiFi connection, access to refreshments (hot water and cups, we bring our own tea-bags etc), toilets.

If you have the space to offer us then please get in touch via EHCP@milton-keynes.gov.uk

EHC Audits

EHC audit meetings take place monthly at Civic Offices, with representatives from schools, Children's Social Care, Health as well as the EHC Specialist Teaching Team, Review and Assessment Team. Recent meetings have focussed on auditing new EHCPs and have identified the following strengths and areas for improvement:

Strengths

- Smart short-term outcomes
- References to reports from professionals are numbered clearly
- Voice of parent and child is clearly heard throughout the EHCP

Areas for Improvement

- Background and summary – should summarise the needs and history. This doesn't need to be lengthy
- Preparation for Adulthood can be a weak area – it needs to be completed from Year 9 onwards
- Long term and short-term outcomes need to link
- Outcomes and Provision: there needs to be a clear distinction between outcomes and provision. Provision needs to be concise. Quality First Teaching strategies don't need to be included in provision

Future advice and training will link to these areas for improvement. The next review cycle will focus on recently reviewed EHCPs.

If you are interested in being part of the audit process, please contact [Sally Cass](#).



SEND Support Line

The SEND Support Line has continued to be used consistently by our settings/schools, professionals and parents/carers this academic year. To date, we have received over 4,500 enquiries, with an average of over 440 enquiries responded to every month. 40% of enquiries received are from parents and carers and the main area of need that we receive enquiries about is communication and

interaction. Although we allow 5 days to respond, 97% of enquires are responded to within 2 working days.

Feedback

'Fantastic! thank you so much for your help, you answered all my questions patiently'

'I am a practitioner and I contacted the helpline for information for a family I am working with. The support and advice I received was really helpful and I must say I received a reply back really quickly.'

'Super helpful information, I know what questions to ask at nursery about my child's needs and where to look on the website, thank you'

Opportunity for schools to provide places for children with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) from 2024

The expression of interest for schools who want to provide additional places for pupils with ASC from 2024 as part of a department/unit within a school closes on 14 July and we want to thank our schools for submitting their interest.

We will be providing further updates in the autumn term.

Centralised Training Update

This year nearly 700 setting and school staff in more than half of MK primary schools and nearly 75% of secondary schools have accessed our centralised training offer. More than 400 feedback responses were received, with 85% of attendees reporting that attending the sessions had led to improved knowledge and 96% feeling that they were able to improve their practice. This indicates the significant positive impact the sessions have had for our settings and schools to effectively support and include CYP with SEND.

Our new centralised training booklet will be available by the 1st September, a link to the document when released will be available on the [Local Offer](#).

[Nasen](#) have a series of [online SEND CPD units](#) designed to support those who work with children and young people in schools and further education settings to deliver an inclusive experience for every learner.

Please note, you must be [logged into your free nasen or Whole School SEND account](#) to access these online units.

The CPD units are:

- Free to access at any time

- Short 20 minute online sessions
- Live online networking sessions
- Themes include language and communication, social, emotional and mental health, safety and belonging

[Milton Keynes College](#) are offering free CPD that may be supportive staff working with children and young people in school:

[Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Autism](#)

[Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Distressed Behaviour in Children](#)



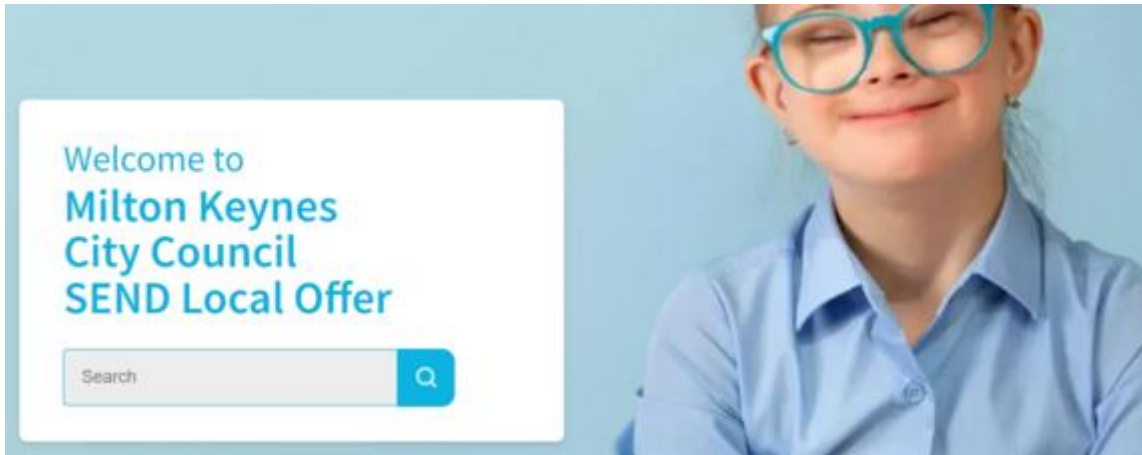
SEND Local Offer

Please can we ask that you are sharing and signposting your families to our SEND Local Offer, we have leaflets to share with your families for our:

- [New SEND Local Offer website](#)
- [SEND Local Offer Facebook Page](#)
- [SEND Newsletter for parents and carers](#)

Following the launch of the new SEND Local Offer website we are looking to gather some [feedback](#) so we can continue to improve our offer to young people, parents, carers and professionals, please can we ask that you complete a [short survey](#) and also share this with colleagues and families.

We have created a [video](#) and [document](#) to support how to navigate the SEND Local Offer, which we hope our parents, carers and professionals find helpful.



Summer break

Have a wonderful summer break and we look forward to seeing you in the autumn term.

Our SEND Support Line will be open over the summer period for any questions or queries please don't hesitate to contact us.

[Download a copy of our SEND Support Summer Opening Hours!](#)



Sign up!

We produce this newsletter monthly. If you are not receiving this directly and would like to, [please follow this link to sign up.](#)

We welcome your views on the newsletter and would love to hear any ideas you have for future editions. Please share your views via [email](#).



Note: Please do not respond directly to this email.

For SEND queries email: [SEND support line](#)