



MK Milton Keynes
City Council

SEND update

Key information for
SENCOs in MK schools

Welcome from Sally Cass- Senior Specialist Teacher Transitions and Health

The summer term is always a very busy time for schools, with tests and exams, residential visits and transition.

Transition forms a large part of everyone's work during the summer term and this was a topic for discussion at the most recent quadrant meeting. It was really interesting to hear about the good practice in place across the city at all phases to support transition. Quadrant meetings take place termly and further information is given in the body of the newsletter about the meetings. Feedback from SENCOs who attend the meetings is very positive, especially about the opportunity to meet with colleagues and to discuss pressing issues. Being a SENCO can be a lonely role and it's always useful to meet with people who understand the pressures on the role, so if you haven't yet managed to attend one of the [meetings](#), please come along on either 11th June (East and West quadrants) or 12th June (North and South quadrants). If your quadrant date isn't convenient then please feel free to attend one of the other meetings.



The pressures on the SEND workforce are not letting up and so I hope that you are managing to find some time for yourself in the midst of all the activity of the summer term. Support services, both local and national are available to support you when needed. Of course, you can [email the SEND Support Line](#) in Milton Keynes for advice and support and to access our free centralised training offer to settings/schools. [Nasen](#) has a range of free resources to support the work of SENCOs in schools, including on demand CPD.

[Education Support](#) is a charity which supports mental health and wellbeing of teachers.

Ofsted and CQC Local Area SEND Inspection

Thank you to everyone who took the time to speak with inspectors or complete the surveys during our visit from Ofsted and the CQC in March. To read more about their findings, please visit our [website](#).

[Click here to read the full report](#)

SEND Support Line Update

The SEND Support Line callback service number has changed to 01908 252222, please leave a message including your name and contact number and a member of the team will get back to you within 5 working days. Our SEND Support email address remains the same SENDSupport@milton-keynes.gov.uk

The SEND Support Line remains settings and schools initial point of contact with the SEND Team to support with early identification of need, advice, and referrals for direct support via the Educational Psychology Consultation Service or Specialist Teaching Teams.



SEND Inclusion Forum

We would like to offer a huge THANK YOU, to Falconhurst School who have hosted the SEND Inclusion Forum this academic year. The support from school has been excellent, allowing the forum to run smoothly and for us to attend on a weekly basis.

As part of our locally agreed processes, the SEND Inclusion Forum is used as the vehicle for decision making in respects of decision to move forward with EHC needs assessment requests and issuing of EHCPs. You will be aware that as part of this process, we request feedback following each Forum session which is reviewed monthly and overwhelmingly positive feedback continues to be received.

Over the Summer term in preparation for September, we will be reviewing any changes needed in response to the feedback received, this includes for example the length of the forum sessions SENCOs attend. If you feel that as a school you are able to host the SEND Inclusion Forum on a weekly basis, have a room large enough to hold 20 people and are able to provide WiFi access then please let us know. We are looking for new venues for the up coming academic year.

Please see below word cloud summary of all the feedback received this academic year:



Transitions

As we are in the summer term, our attention turns to transition, the children we have joining us and those moving on to their next adventure, please remember we have transition support available on the [SEND Local Offer](#) as well as our transition training offer:

[Supporting the transition of children with complex needs into Foundation Stage-](#)
20.06.24 12.30 – 2pm

This session will consider how you can support the transition of children with complex needs entering your Foundation stage for the first time in September 2024. The training will look at the following:

- Adaptations to environment
- Strategies to support language and communication.
- Developing engagement and attention skills
- Consideration of how to interpret and positively support behaviour.

We advise that transition meetings take place early in the summer term and that the SEND Support Plans are reviewed and updated ready to be passed on to the next school or setting. You will be aware that some children, young people and parents can find transition a challenging time so it may be supportive to have a transition meeting with the child / young person (if appropriate) their current school or setting, parents and the new school/setting to share what strategies are successful and sharing the most up to date SEN Support Plan / EHCP.

Information on our [SEND Support Offer can be found on the Local Offer](#).

Please also sign post parent to our transition work shop PowerPoint's available on the [SEND Local Offer](#).

National Autistic Society

National Autistic Society have [advice for professionals on guiding young people through transition.](#)

NAS Transition Tips

Milton Keynes SEND strategy 2021-2025 -2024 Action Plans

Have you seen the SEND Strategy information we published last term? It outlines the plans for this academic year which have been developed through collaboration with stakeholders, including schools, families, and professionals in education, health and social care.

They highlight the five main priorities of the SEND strategy, provide examples of activities planned for this academic year, explains how success will be measured, and outline how the local partnership will oversee the plans.

Information can be found on the [Milton Keynes SEND Local Offer.](#)



SEND Youth Council

The SEND Youth Council met on 08 May and our focus was the SEND Local Offer and the changes the young people would like to make to the support for young people's section.

The SEND Youth Council looked at the conditions that they would like to be included in the support for young people section of the Local Offer – the group

came up with an extensive list and we will be looking at adding these to the Local Offer soon.

The Youth Council have started to create some posters to share with other young people highlighting the information available.

Please see below some of the designs from our SEND Youth Council. Please keep an eye on our social media and Local Offer website where we will continue to share the posters!

Have you thought about setting up your own youth Council? We would love to link up with you and our SEND Youth Council are keen to support you! If you would like further details or to share your ideas please email SENDYouthCouncil@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Quotes from members of the SYC

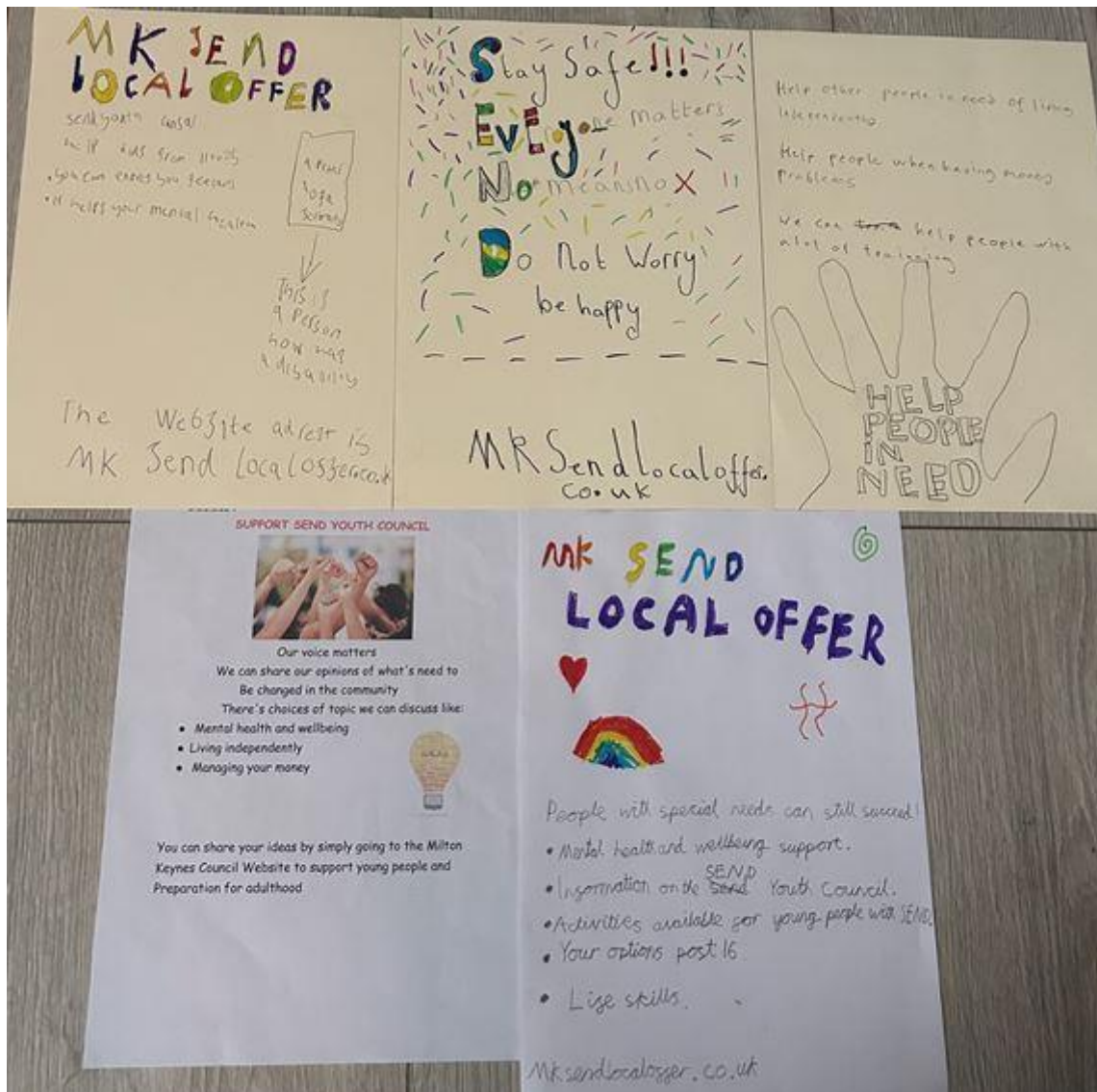
I think schools should have a SEND Youth council meeting because it would be good to come together as our community to discuss our diversity.

Another reason is we could express our wellbeing and mental health and how we feel about today's society.

The third reason is to contribute our ideas to the wellbeing team in school.

I think it would be helpful to help all students, neurodivergent, typical students or newer diverse students to achieve their best.

I have really enjoyed being a part of a youth council because I love motivating other people to succeed in life.



SENCo Quadrant Meetings Updates

Meetings for SENCo quadrants occur in the second week after each half term. The aim is to bring together SENCos and the SEND Team to address key themes and complete audits. Since the emphasis is on discussions, these sessions are not minuted, but essential actions and discussions are communicated through our [SEND Update newsletter](#).

Agendas are agreed in collaboration with SENCO co- chairs a week before the meetings take place.

Quadrant summary of most recent meeting

A consistent theme shared through all the quadrant meetings was how to support

the secondary SENCo representation in the meetings due to low secondary numbers. We will explore with SENCos if a secondary only meeting this academic year would be supportive.

North: Enjoyed discussing the Educational Psychology Team offer with the attending EP. Discussions focussed on review and assessment processes, funding and shared concerns.

East: Discussions focussed on EHC needs assessment requests and funding. Solution Circle activity led by the attending Educational Psychologist was enjoyed by all.

South: Discussions took place around placements of children with EHCPs including continuation of placements at current schools. Current challenges such as increase in EHC needs assessment requests and shared transition good practice were considered by all.

West: Great attendance with lots of interest in the LIPs resource. Lively debates ensued around assessments, communication received by schools and funding. Discussions led to considerations for a transition working party to consider processes/timeframes and transitions expectations between schools.

Early Years

At our recent EYs SenCo Meeting we heard about **Language Intervention Programme (LIPs)** which is a targeted group intervention based on simple enrichment activities designed to develop speech and language skills, and to build children's vocabulary by providing structured practice in speaking and listening. It is straight forward to run, fits into a busy timetable and is ideal for children starting school and also within early years settings. This was developed by our Educational Psychology Team- and has recently been rebranded. For more info on how to purchase the programme materials, contact education.psychology@milton-keynes.gov.uk

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our next SenCo Meeting on Thursday June 13 17.00- 18.00, invite to follow, and we look forward to seeing schools who have a maintained nursery there.

Information on SENCo Quadrant Meetings, including dates and venues can be found on the SEND Local Offer. Please check on a regular basis for changes and updates.



SEND Team Updates:

Specialist Teaching Team Updates

There is significant demand for support from the Specialist Teaching teams with over 700 open active cases to the Inclusion and EHCP Specialist Teaching Teams throughout the year. The teams allocate over 50 school aged children and young people for direct work each week.

We'd like to reiterate the processes involved for requesting support from the Specialist Teaching Teams to support this being a smooth process for all.

When requesting support for CYP with SEND, it is expected that this is first discussed via the SEND Support Line. Depending on the enquiry, initial advice and support may be offered through the SSL. Where an agreement is made for direct work from the Specialist Teaching Teams, the SEND Support line will send you a Request for Involvement Form. It is important you do not reuse old forms as the request can only be made in agreement with the SSL and using the form provided which is regularly updated.

Where a CYP is identified at the SEND Support stage, it is expected that at least 2 cycles of assess, plan, do, review have taken place using a SEND Support Plan.

The SEND Support Plan is a part of the expected referral documentation required to make a request for direct involvement. For referrals made for children in maintained nursery classes, we acknowledge that cycles of assess, plan, do, review can vary according to need.

For CYP with EHCPs, the form should detail what specifically from the CYP's EHCP is being requested involvement for, linked to the EHCP outcomes and provision.

On the referral form, it is essential that information requested on the form is provided, where this is not the case, the form will be returned to complete in full prior to allocation. We are regularly seeing that detail around what is expected to be achieved by the end of joint working with the Specialist Teaching Teams is missing which can lead to delays.

Requests for involvement received are allocated and schools contacted within a two week time frame. Should contact not have been received within 2 weeks, please contact the SEND Support Line.

Further information regarding the process for requesting support from the SEND Team and the range of support available will be updated on the Local Offer over the course of the Summer term and will be found [here](#).

Early Years Team

EYFS transition planning is underway, with teachers and practitioners reaching out to schools and settings where children have the most complex need. We strongly encourage schools and settings to make transition arrangements, and to ensure families are involved. Make sure you get in touch with us if you wish to seek advice around how to make transition as successful as possible.

Educational Psychology Service

Together with the Virtual School, the EPS has just launched the 'Making Connections' Pilot project, with 20 schools across MK signed up. This project aims to develop trauma and attachment informed knowledge and practice in local schools. Schools are also reminded to book on to the weekly Psychological Consultation Service slots. This is open access to all schools, (one slot per school per half term) to support and problem solve around any student-related concerns you may have (please see the [EPS page on the SEND Local Offer](#)). We have updated the Language Intervention Programme (LIPs) manual which is now available for schools to purchase. The aim of the LIPs is to enhance children's language development through a targeted intervention based on simple enrichment activities. It is designed to build children's vocabulary, providing structured practice in speaking and listening, ideal for children in the Early Years new English language learners (EAL). Finally, you can now follow the Milton Keynes EPS on X (formerly Twitter) in which we hope to keep you posted with any updates and exciting opportunities, including future Educational Psychology Assistant posts, so watch this space! Follow us at Milton Keynes Educational Psychology Service @PsychologyMKEPS.

To contact the EPS, please email education.psychology@Milton-keynes.gov.uk

Mental Health Awareness Week 2024 took place from 13 to 19 May, on the theme of “Movement: Moving more for our mental health”.

Movement is important for our mental health. But so many of us struggle to move enough. We know there are many different reasons for this, so this Mental Health Awareness Week we want to help people to find moments for movement in their daily routines. Going for a walk in your neighbourhood, putting on your favourite music and dancing around the living room, chair exercises when you're watching television – it all counts!

[Mental Health Awareness Week | Mental Health Foundation](#)

Find your moments for movement

One of the most important things you can do to help protect your mental health is regular movement. Moving more can increase your energy, reduce stress and anxiety, and boost your self-esteem. If you'd like to improve your mental health by moving more, read our tips to help you get started.

[Mental health Foundation have shared some top tips!](#)

Please find addition information on our [Mental health and wellbeing hub](#)

How you feel matters in Milton Keynes

A range of services and support is available for supporting children and young people in Milton Keynes with their emotional health and wellbeing.

A local working group has co-produced a document which sets out clearly how children and young people can access support in Milton Keynes.

[How you feel matters: Getting support in Milton Keynes.](#)



Centralised Training Update

We have shared our centralised training booklet on the SEND Local Offer and **continue to update the booklet so please keep checking for updates**. We also have our training calendar alongside our booklet.

Upcoming training:

- Autism in Girls: Understanding and supporting girls with Autism Spectrum Condition and Social Communication difficulties - 12.06.24 3:30-5:00pm
- Introduction to PDA: understanding and supporting demand avoidant students - 26.6.24 3:30-5:00 pm
- Creating positive opportunities to support children's sensory Needs - 13.06.24

- 1pm-3pm
- Supporting the transition of children with complex needs into Foundation Stage - 20.06.24 12.30 – 2pm

We are currently in the process of reviewing our centralised training offer for the next academic year and we welcome any feedback from our SENCo's. Please email sendnewsletter@milton-keynes.gov.uk.

Which may include:

- Particular sessions that had a positive impact in your setting/school this year
- Suggestions and ideas around how sessions are delivered
- Suggestions for training that you or your staff may benefit from

Summer centralised training booklet

Additional and free training from local and national organisations

National Autistic Society - A guide to the mental health experiences and needs of autistic teenagers

Free of charge - The aim of the module is to increase understanding of autistic experience, autistic mental health experiences and to explore supportive strategies to support young autistic people's mental health.

The module will be free to access throughout 2024.

Module outcomes

- Identify some of the autistic experiences relating to the autistic young person they are supporting
- Identify some of the mental health experiences relating to the autistic young person they are supporting
- Adjust their practice and make reasonable adjustments to better support their autistic young person.

[Access this free module now](#)

Updates from SENCo's

We're inviting SENCOs to share any updates or information they wish to contribute to the SEND Update newsletter. We aim to provide regular updates from SENCOs

to be shared among colleagues in different schools. Please feel free to reach out to us via [email](#).

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](#)

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