



Welcome from Victoria Courtis - SEND Lead

Welcome to the first newsletter of this academic year. I hope you have all had a great start to the term and that the children and young people have settled well into their new classes/schools. It's certainly been a busy start to the term across SEND with lots of positive things happening. We have had the first SENDCo quadrant meeting, it would be great to see more of you at these meetings as it's a great opportunity to network and be part of decision making with all things SEND. Please find the dates and times on the [SEND Local Offer](#).



You will be aware that the SEND Local Area have been working on the long awaited Ordinarily Available Provision document. This will be available for all to start embedding after half term and will be on the Local Offer. We will be planning a number of training sessions on how to use the document and embed the provision into your everyday teaching so it will be great to see you all there.

As we head into the half term break I hope you all have a well deserved rest and we look forward to working with you next half term.

SEND Support

The SEND Team have been reviewing how schools, settings, parents and carers reach out for support from the service. Following this review, we have made some changes to how you can reach us to ensure you receive appropriate and timely

communication. We are moving to an improved email only service. Responses from the SEND Team will include both email and telephone call backs.

Please find supportive advice and information on the [SEND Local Offer](#).

To contact the SEND Team for enquiries, please email sendsupport@milton-keynes.gov.uk. This will then be processed by the team. Please allow 5 working days for a response.

We are currently in the process of updating our information regarding our processes for accessing SEND Team involvement. This will be shared with you in the coming weeks. However, it continues to be expected that contact is first made with the SEND Support Line on: sendsupport@milton-keynes.gov.uk prior to a consultation or direct involvement being considered. This is to ensure that all of the available support and resource settings and schools are able to offer has been in place in the first instance, typically with at least 2 APDR cycles.

There may be occasions where initial advice via the SSL would be most appropriate. A request for involvement form will be sent to you if a consultation or direct involvement is agreed to be taken forward for triage. We kindly request that old forms are not sent in as these will not be processed. This process applies to **all** children/young people with SEND, whether they are at SEND Support or have an EHCP.

Statutory documents:

For any paperwork relating to requests for an EHCP, placement enquiries or annual reviews, this process has not changed.

Please send the relevant documents to EHCP@milton-keynes.gov.uk, writing in the title what the request is. Details around this process can be found on our [Local Offer](#). Remember to send any documents as PDFs to ensure they reach us with our new security settings.

Please allow 5 working days for a response from either the send support or EHCP mailboxes, however if the query is deemed urgent, the team will respond ahead of this time.

Parent/Carer support:

If a parent/carers reaches out to you for support with their child/young person with regards to placement, process around applications for an EHCP/ annual reviews or tribunals, please direct them to SENDIAS as they can offer free impartial advice and support. This way, we can again ensure consistent advice and messages are shared. Contact information for SENDIAS can be found [here](#), they can also be contacted by email contact@mksendias.org.uk



Annual Reviews

Please remember, if you have a CYP with an EHCP, as part of their Annual Review SENCOs should write to all professionals involved ahead of the review for updated information and information should be circulated at least **2** weeks ahead of the review.

Schools and Settings should lead on this as part of the invites. Please also remember to share **all** dates for Annual Reviews to EHCP@Milton-Keynes.gov.uk, the SEND Team can then track when paperwork is expected.

Thank you.

Important Notice for Schools

If a child/young person with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is leaving your school, please notify us by emailing EHCP@milton-keynes.gov.uk. Please include the child/young person's new address and the name of the new school, if known.

Headline data

Milton Keynes has:

3087 children and young people with EHCPs– 5.84% of school population
6292 SEND Support children and young people – 11.9% of school population.

This number is ever changing highlighting the demand and pressures.

Specialist places:

We have 1582 specialist places in MK meaning just over 50% of CYP with an EHCP in MK are educated in specialist provision.

To support in meeting demand we opened four Specialist Units in sept 2024. (Romans Field Secondary Unit, Bradwell Village, Germander Park, Southwood) Building work was also completed in the new high complex needs provision with the opening of the Galley Hill site as part of the Woodlands School and St Pauls Emmanuel Centre.

Assessments:

Last academic year we received 805 requests for an EHC Needs Assessment, which is a 16% increase on the previous year. Even with national shortage of EPs, 43% of plans were issued within the 20 weeks.

SEND Youth Council

The SEND Youth Council are looking for two year 6 pupils to join our SEND Youth Council. This would involve attending the SYC once every half term 1pm - 2:30pm at a special school that has agreed to host. We would ask for a supporting adult to attend alongside the young person.

This is a fantastic opportunity to:

- Impact the positive change within MK SEND systems
- Empowers young people
- Considered as preparation for adulthood skills
- Debating skills

If you have a child or young person that would be interested in joining the SYC, please email SENDYouthCouncil@milton-keynes.gov.uk for further information and relevant paperwork.

Local Offer Working Group

We are excited to invite a primary and secondary SENCO representative to join our Local Offer Working Group. This is a fantastic opportunity to collaborate, share insights, and contribute to the development of our local offer for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

We meet via MS Teams once every half term for a one hour meeting.

Your participation will be invaluable in ensuring that our local offer meets the needs of our community. We look forward to your contributions and ideas.

How to Join: Please email alicia.mills@milton-keynes.gov.uk to express your interest and receive further details.

Thank you for your dedication and support!

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. Meeting information can be found **here** and there is no need to book to attend. Whilst we hope to see you attend your local quadrant group meeting, you are welcome to attend any that may fit with your working pattern.

North: (Chair Sarah Ray, Co-chair Sophie Parish)

It was pleasing to see SENCO attending who for whatever reason cannot attend their local quadrant. You are welcome at any of the meetings. Senco's took the opportunity to share some of their frustrations around systems and processes within the world of SEND, where related to MKCC processes we will address these through our send newsletters and also through updates to the LO to ensure there is clarity in our processes. As we now have Samantha Upchurch joining us as an EP, we will be looking to hold a solution circle as part of our next meeting

East: (Chair: Jenna Austin, Co-chair Lucy Rogers)

The majority of the Quadrant was spent discussing the OAP document and covering questions that came up in the moment. SENCos were aware their heads had received the document but having not been part of the consultation process or their heads sharing it with them, it was very new to them. They welcome the clarity of strategies for specific needs and look forward to hearing about the training that is going to be made available. There were concerns around this being a shopping list for parents but also welcomed the idea of webinars and training also being made available to parents and carers. Data was shared and the increase in needs and assessments noted. The group decided they were happy with an email group for communications as opposed to a Whatsapp group and the previous list of email contacts is going to be shared to restart this group.

South: (Chair Amy Segui, Co-chair Michelle Lasky)

We had a great turn out for our first SENCo Quadrant meeting in the South. The Ordinarily Available Provision document was shared and we had some very helpful

discussions surrounding its use and implementation moving forward. SENCo's welcome further training in this area and could recognise how this tool will be valuable in schools when ensuring a consistent approach for all SEND children and young people in Milton Keynes.

South SENCos have taken full advantage of partnership working and remain in touch through a whats app group; positive working relationships have been developed and SENCos feel they can contact schools in their local area for advice.

West: (Chair: Allie Tranter, Co-chair: Sarah Cowper)

We are pleased to share some positive updates from our recent meeting. The discussion around the OAP was encouraging, there are still some questions and feedback to address. We also acknowledged some frustrations with current processes, which we are committed to improving. Key discussions also included funding, including for health reasons, time scales, support and special placements.

Additionally, we received updates from EP, including the exciting news of welcoming Vicky Bird to our quadrant. As always, it was a positive and productive meeting.

Early Years:

It was lovely to see so many providers join us online for our first Early Years Senco Meeting of the year.

We were joined by Lynne Jaffer (Early Years Speech and Language Therapy Lead) who provided an update on SALT support, and we also spent some time considering our draft Ordinarily Available Provision document. It was really helpful to hear from colleagues who have worked on the document, and feedback was positive. We look forward to rolling this document out in due course!

Some data updates were provided - and we also shared how we are working slightly differently within our Early Years team to ensure we are supporting the children and providers who need our help the most.

We look forward to seeing everyone again next time.

Milton Keynes SEND Local Offer

Have you heard of the SEND Local Offer?

The Local Offer provides information, support and signposting for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families.

What can I find on the Local Offer?

A calendar with information on clubs, activities and events in the local area for children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and their families.



A mental health and wellbeing hub, coproduced with our health colleagues

Information about the Short Breaks scheme and how to apply

SEND Support advice and information for parents, carers, schools and settings

Information on EHCPs, including information on processes and how to make an application

A directory of services in and around Milton Keynes

AND MUCH MORE!!!!

For more information, please visit our [Local Offer website](#).

Our SEND Youth Council, continue to design posters to signpost young people to the Local Offer, we are delighted to share an example below:

Your Path Your Way

Discover MK's SEND Support

www.mksendlocaloffer.co.uk



SEND Local Offer

A guide for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). It helps you and your family find out about all the support and services available in your area.

"From how to get a better night's sleep to learning budgeting skills, there's advice, support or services that can help you live life to the full!"

live your dream.



Including:

- What's going on in your community
- How to stay active
- Advice on moving from school to college or work
- Support for your mental health
- Information on puberty and relationships

Produced by MK SEND Youth Council

Centralised Training Update

The centralised training booklet has been updated and is available on the SEND Local Offer!

Please find upcoming training below:

- Understanding and effectively supporting Autism in Secondary schools
7.11.24, 28.11.24
 - Understanding and effectively supporting Autism in the Early Years 11.11.24,
18.11.24, 25.11.24
 - Emotional Regulation Using Zones and Positive Behaviour Support
Approaches 14.10.24
 - Role of the Early Years SENCo – a course for Early Years SENCO's
12.11.24, 19.11.24, 26.11.24
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Nasen

Nasen, the National Association for Special Educational Needs, offers a variety of free training resources for schools. They provide high-quality Continuing Professional Development and Learning (CPDL) opportunities tailored to support educators working with children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Here are some highlights of their free training offerings:

1. **Whole School SEND:** [This initiative provides free access to high-quality information, resources, and CPD to support a whole school approach to inclusion](#)
2. **Online CPD Units:** [These units are designed to help educators deliver an inclusive experience for every learner](#)
3. **Webinars and On-Demand Training:** [Nasen offers a range of webinars and pre-recorded sessions that can be accessed at any time, covering various topics related to SEND](#)

For more detailed information and to access these resources, you can visit [nasen's official website](#).



We are working hard to ensure that we focus our support on the children/early years providers who need it most. This means that we are prioritising support to:

- Children with the most complex needs (as identified by our health colleagues)
- Children attending non-maintained providers

We are carefully considering each new health notification to determine the best course of action - this means that:

- For children with the most complex needs, we will arrange a visit to you
- For other children contact will be made from the team with recommendations for advice/next steps regarding individual children - and in many cases we will arrange a check in contact with you in the coming months.
- For children who are not yet attending a provider, we will arrange a home visit to find out more about the child

For those children attending a maintained nursery class, typically we will be asking that schools use the advice provided independently - and that further support can be sought by school via the SEND Support Service should it be needed.

We continue to welcome requests for involvement from early years providers - this can be achieved by contacting the SEND Support Service - in most cases we will need to understand what is already in place (via the use of a SEND Support Plan) before we make a visit. This means we can be clear as to the purpose of our support to you.

Other news!

The DfE has recently launched its new SEND assessment guide for early years providers - this includes an assessment tool and other information about how we might assess progress in our youngest learners with SEND. We recommend you take a look at this helpful resource.

[Help for early years providers : SEND assessment guidance and resources \(education.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/send-assessment-guidance-and-resources)

We have some training sessions coming up this term - make sure you book on using the centralised training information [here](#). As well as those offered by our team, Speech and Language Therapy are also offering free training, so take a look.



The SEND Team would like to wish all SENCo's and colleagues a restful half term break!

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](#)