

Solihull SEND Newsletter

June 2024

#SENDSpotlight

The Connected Care Network in North Solihull has supported 427 children and young people in its first six months – meaning these families have received practical support to improve their lives without having to wait for statutory services. Any parent carers who feel they may be able to benefit from this should approach the professionals working with them.

Additional Needs Board Meeting

The Joint Additional Needs Board met on 17th May. The key messages were:-

- The Board were pleased to hear about all of the engagement plans for children, young people and parent carers. Members noted that all events were promoted on the Your Voice Solihull SEND Hub website ([Summer Term 2024 - Solihull SEND & Additional Needs Engagement Planner](#)) but were interested in the SPCV coffee mornings and Our Voices Heard events and that a separate event was planned for parents and children who were home educated with SEND. Members were most excited about the 10th June Let's Talk SEND Events and heard all about the competition for young people, the attendance of police at the event and the opportunity for children to have their say with the parks department to feed in what equipment they would like to see to make them more inclusive.
- The Board heard about the Children and Young People's Mental Health Transformation programme and notes they will be looking for parent and children's views at coffee morning and events shortly. This will inform the improvement of the mental health services which are being re-tendered next year.
- The Board talked about more Family Hubs opening [Family Hubs \(solihull.gov.uk\)](https://solihull.gov.uk). Elmwood is now open and has a great community space for people to meet, with access to a sensory room and play space for children; along with access to health services.

Members also heard about the app which can be downloaded to book rooms in the hubs and at events. [Solihull Family Hubs on the App Store \(apple.com\)](https://www.apple.com/uk/ios/app/solihull-family-hubs/)

Let's Talk SEND

On Monday 10 June our 0-25 SEND team hosted a day of engagement events for children and young people from around Solihull. *Let's Talk SEND* was run in association with Our Voices Heard and Solihull Parent Carer Voice and gave primary, secondary, and special school pupils the opportunity to speak for themselves about their needs and wants. They took part in three sessions, covering things inside and out of school and their wider feelings about the communities they live in:



'If I were Mayor for the day'

'Times of change'

'Including us more in Solihull'

They had the opportunity to give feedback to senior staff who were present, creating a direct line between those who make the decisions and those most affected by them.



Bridget Morris, Operations Manager SEND 0-25 said –

"I was delighted with how the day went. The children and young people were so engaged in the sessions and gave us really detailed ideas about what they'd like to see from the services they receive. They raised some really important issues around safety in the community and mental health that we will absolutely take on board. We also got

some valuable feedback about the sessions themselves that we'll be implementing for the next event later this year.

"It's difficult to overstate the value of a day like this, where we hear directly from children with SEND as ensure that our offer for them is the best it can be. The ice cream and pizza were the cherry on top of a great event and I'd like to thank everyone involved in making it happen"

A pioneering model of care for supporting children and integration of services in Solihull

The **Connected Care Network** is an integrated model of care for children and young people that started off as a pilot funded by NHSE but now due to the overwhelming success of the pilot demonstrated by the positive impact we are having on children, young people, their families and the system we are looking to expand and grow.

Working across the NHS, Education, Social, and Voluntary and Community sectors, the emphasis is having place based and children's/young people's priorities right alongside system priorities.

The model is based around a premise that in order to make sure that the needs of children and young people are met in a local area that there needs to be less fragmentation of services, less silo working, and ease of access across professional and other boundaries; put succinctly combining horizontal and vertical integration (joined up care). The integrated model of care is the interface through which we are co-ordinating, driving and enabling integration through planning and delivery across local VCSE, health, social care and education, making the right care at the right time in the right place easier to deliver; regardless of care being delivered by different providers and different settings, through use of integration there is less delay, confusion, repetition and duplication of services.

You can find more information here - [Connected Care Network](#)

The Graduated Approach to SEND in Solihull

As mentioned in previous editions, we have been working hard to revise our graduated approach so it is more accessible and can be implemented more consistently across schools in the borough. The graduated approach can now be found on the local offer ([Solihull Graduated Approach](#)) along with a presentation on what this means for parent carers ([Parent Carers Version](#)). There is the same version on the extranet for schools.

Over time we will adapt the information on the local offer for parent carers and young people, including printable documents and videos. In the meantime we hope this helps everyone to know what support should look like in Solihull.

We have welcomed the input from schools, parent carers and other colleagues in developing this resource but also welcome more feedback to help us improve further – so please share your thoughts with us using the [Feedback Survey](#)

New Youth Group Opening

Solihull Action through Advocacy have just started a new Children in Need funded project with young people with additional needs, aged 14-18. We would like to develop a youth group and currently seeking new members.

Our group will take place weekly on Wednesday's 4.45-6pm at Bosworth Community Centre in Chelmsley Wood. It is free for all to attend. Along with meeting with their peers, young people can also get involved in various workshops; aimed to help them better navigate the difficult world of being a teen! Additionally, there will also be an advocate at the group who can support with advocacy issues that may arise.

We understand that, especially initially, parents and carers may feel more comfortable staying close by. As such, we have a separate room at the centre where they can stop and have a drink and chat to other parents/carers too.

More information on the youth group can be found on this link [Youth Group Flyer](#) and more information on Solihull Action through Advocacy can be found on their website

<https://solihulladvocacy.org.uk/>

Additional Needs Strategy

The current [Additional Needs Strategy](#) is due to end in December 2024 but following feedback at the SEND Community Event in March, we are proposing to extend the strategy for a further year (until December 2025). This is because parent carers told us at that event that they wanted services to focus their time on making improvements which can quickly be felt by them and their children; rather than re-writing documents. Parent carers also told us that the priority outcomes were still right and they were happy for these to continue for another year as long as the feedback from the event informed action plans for the whole SEND system in Solihull and individual services.

We were pleased with the turnout from parent carers at this event, but would now like to hear from more parent carers and children and young people directly so we can see how you feel about this proposal. Please can you take 5 minutes to complete the online survey to let us know your thoughts - [Additional Needs Strategy - Consultation with Parents, Carers and young people](#). Please could we also ask schools and other colleagues to promote this survey to families. Many thanks

Update from Integrated Care Board (ICB)

The Chairs of Solihull Parent Carer Voice and Birmingham Parent Carer Forum met with David Melbourne, the Chief Executive of Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Helen Kelly, the Interim Chief Nursing Officer of the ICB recently to discuss the waiting lists for children and young people for Autism and ADHD assessments and across Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Speech and Language Therapy.

This is a priority at the highest levels of the ICB and is being worked on with senior leaders within University Hospital Birmingham (UHB) and Birmingham Community Healthcare. Together, providers and commissioners are currently working on an Improvement Plan and in the meantime will be working to ensure that parents carers, children and young people have clear expectations and understanding in relation to pathways and to waiting times. In reality there are longer term pieces of work being done to look at redesigning services, so they best meet the needs of children and young people and ensure that all children and young people have equal chances.

Joint commissioning between the ICB and SMBC which has recently been re-implemented into Solihull, will be key to identifying and implementing the improvement plan work, and progress around this will continue to be reported on JAND. There is also a commitment from providers and commissioners to work with PCV to review/ redesign pathways and improvement plans.

EHCP Team

We are hosting a co-production event with families of Electively Home Educated children and young people on the 28th June 2024 12.30pm-2.30pm at The Loft, invitations are being sent to families.

The next EHCP Service parent drop in session is on the 26th June 9.30am – 12pm at The Loft.

Staff update: Karen Tunnicliffe has left the team and wish her all the best in her retirement. We have welcomed three new EHCP Officers to the team. Benisha Johal who has joined Review Team A, Hannah Murray who has joined Review Team B and Dorinda Olympio who has joined the Assessment Team.

Next round of Supported Internships to commence in September

Supported Internships are 1-year structured study programmes designed for young people aged 16-24 with Education, Health and Care plans (EHCP) to gain essential skills for work through

workplace experience and training. Placement opportunities are available with various Solihull Council teams and employers from the private sector. On site job coaching will be offered to the intern. The next cohort will start in September. Find out more from [this webpage](#) and register your interest.

Information on post-16 options

Solihull Careers Hub has an information page for post-16 options for young people with SEND in the borough including apprenticeships and career events. Find out more from [this link](#).

Employment and skills support after exams

Skills for Success team is going to run a series of workshops to help young people to make their best next steps. They will cover areas including CV writing, skills for interviews, apprenticeships, application, pathways and transition support. Find out more from this [flyer](#) and sign up through [this link](#).

Family Hubs open their doors

Two brand new Council-led Family Hubs have opened their doors to families Smiths Wood (Elmwood Family Hub) and Chelmsley Wood (Riverside Family Hub). These sites join the hub in Kingshurst, Evergreen Family Hub, which is led by The Colebridge Trust, a local VCFSE organisation. A further hub, Hatchford Brook Family Hub, will open in August 2024, following a complex re-modelling project.

Department for Education and UKSPF funding has been utilised in the re-modelling of all four buildings to ensure they are fit-for-purpose to enable delivery across 24 required service areas for a nationally recognised Family Hub offer. The services include health appointments, stay and play sessions, youth sessions, peer support groups and community outreach from a range of service providers from before pregnancy to 19 years (and up to 25 years with additional needs). The re-modelling work has included the fitting of kitchen space for family and small group cooking sessions, the inclusion of clinical space for maternity and other healthcare services to deliver on site and a sensory room for all families, but particularly to support children and young people with additional needs. In addition, the hubs have IT equipment to directly address digital exclusion and enable families to safely access online support and sessions, as well as a range of training, activity and meeting spaces for group sessions, one-to-one working and adult education.

To find out more about the Family Hub offer please visit the new [web pages](#) or download the app (approved for work phones) from [Google Play](#) or the [Apple App Store](#).

Photos from the Council-led Family Hubs are below:

Elmwood Place (Smiths Wood)



Riverside Family Hub - Chelmsley Wood



If you think other people you know would be interested in this newsletter please encourage them to [sign up on the Council website here.](#)

If you have any feedback on the newsletter, or suggestions for future items please email and let us know:jand@solihull.gov.uk

Charlotte Jones
Head of Strategy - SEND & Additional Needs



StayConnected



SEND