

Solihull SEND Newsletter

November 2024

#SENDSpotlight

It was amazing to receive 96 nominations for our children and young people and 93 nominations for school staff for our 2024 SEND awards. We cannot wait to meet those chosen at the award ceremony on 3rd December!

National Publications

Read the latest speech from the Secretary of State for Education online [Bridget Phillipson's Speech to the Confederation of School Trusts - GOV.UK](#)

The DfE also are calling for evidence to help with their curriculum and assessment review. There is a commitment to ensuring the review provides a curriculum which is inclusive for all children and young people and gets them ready for life and work. We know that the current offer does not always work for those with SEND and additional needs so please do share your views with the DfE via their webpage [Curriculum and Assessment Review - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#)

Additional Needs Board Meeting

The last Joint Additional Needs Board meeting took place on 7th November. The key messages were:

- The Board were pleased to hear about how well the ICB, SISS, SPCV and primary schools were working together to deliver the Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity (PINs) project over the next two terms. Members are looking forward to hearing about how the bespoke training and support provided to the 15 schools in the borough improves whole school and intervention provision as well as upskilling staff and strengthening partnerships between schools and parents.

- The Board heard from the new lead for Early Help in Solihull who shared that all schools in the borough now have an allocated Early Help Co-ordinator to help them provide support to their pupils and families. Members were also pleased to hear about plans for a helpline for families and professionals in the new year.
- The Board also heard about the review of the Healthy Child Programme service and agreed to promote the current surveys for parent carers and professionals to feedback on experiences by 2nd December through the webpage [Healthy Child Programme service specification | Your Voice Solihull](#)

Solihull Community Paediatrics :

Following the step down of [nhs.net](#) email accounts within UHB Trust we now have a communitypaediatricteam@uhb.nhs.uk email which is replacing the [NHS.net](#) email address. This is for Community paediatrician specific referrals, general queries or to pass on information to a clinician.

This new email address is accessible to all admin/secretarial staff members and will be checked on a daily basis when the service is open.

An out of office message has been put on the [NHS.net](#) email address informing recipients that the email address will not be monitored after Saturday 30 November and to resend their email to our new address. We appreciate this may take a while for recipients to get to used so we will monitor both email addresses for a short period of time. Please can we request all professionals and parents use the new email address from Saturday 30 November 2024 so we can ensure we are receiving, reading and responding to emails in a timely manner.

For ADHD enquiries and all ADHD referrals please use : soladhd.nursingteam@uhb.nhs.uk

For repeat medication or prescription issues please use communitypaedsscripts@uhb.nhs.uk

EYFS – changes to the guidance

You may have seen the early years statutory updates alerting providers of future changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage [EYFS] requirements. Many of these safeguarding changes already exist in practice in our Solihull settings. They are to help ensure best practice in safeguarding arrangements for young children to help keep them safe. [Further information can be found here](#) ahead of September 2025 implementation.

There are also changes to the [childminder](#) version of the [EYFS guidance](#) for 1st November.

Solihull early years registered providers are supported by early years team members This includes an annual visit offer as well as extra SEN support for a settings SENCo if children have been referred to them. **Ofsted** visit schools every four years for good and outstanding graded schools and for early years settings every six years. They would visit more frequently for settings who are less than good. In Solihull we follow the [DfE Local Authority Statutory Guidance](#) for education and care.

To ensure children are safe, we may temporarily remove providers from our register of providers which means that they cannot claim early education funding. This is when Ofsted grade safeguarding as ineffective. At this time, we have 98% of Solihull early years and childcare providers graded as good or outstanding, which is great news.

Dingley's Promise - Mark of Achievement

Track your setting's journey to a Mark of Achievement from Dingley's Promise by logging training using this 'MoA criteria tracker' <https://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc/training/training-from-other-providers/>. We know we have settings with a strong commitment to inclusion training who could sign up for their Mark.



Comic Relief Inclusion Project Parent Carer Inclusion Champions Facebook Group

Join our closed Facebook group to share ideas and build greater connections with like minded parents and carers of children in the early years with SEND

The logo for 'Dingley's Promise Training' features a stylized blue heart shape above the text 'Dingley's Promise' in a blue, rounded font, with the word 'Training' in a smaller, black, sans-serif font below it.

Building SEND inclusion in the early years



The voice of the child in Solihull [early years]

Every term the Early Years Team share a summary of some of the ways that children we support through the EY TAC [team around a child] process have their voices heard. Here are a few of the observations about how young children show how they feel in a variety of different ways. Parents and team members try hard to 'listen' and learn from the responses children make and try to interpret what a child's [behaviours](#) and sounds tell us about the child's views.

This includes how, by using the strategies shared during our visits, children begin to engage and are motivated to join in playful activities. It is lovely to hear how a child attends more to [speech and language](#) strategies or anticipates during ready steady go activities. By joining in with a child's play, following their lead and playing side-by-side and then progressing to some [shared](#)

[play](#) and turn-taking games, we hear about the ways parents and team members notice [interactions](#) developing.

Children begin to anticipate the routines of the visit and a parent notices children who begin to use the [simple Makaton signs](#) to ask for more or request to stop. Sometimes children are less reluctant to allowing team members to join them in a shared space and may acknowledge a support practitioner with a smile or end the session with a wave. This can lead to children being more trusting that new adults, as they join a setting for the first time, hold interest for them and don't pose a threat but a fun opportunity to [engage in play](#). We hope that parents feel more confident too, and recognise the great job they do as they [play](#) with their child.



[Solihull school ready definition](#)

We have added a video to explain our co-produced Solihull school ready definition. [You can see the guidance and video here](#) with guidance published for parents to explain '[What to expect in the Early Years Foundation Stage?](#)'

We need to have high expectations to enable all children to achieve their potential. Early support can help promote the development of skills for maximum independence. It is not just about transition arrangements in the summer term, but about schools and wider early education settings understanding a child's needs.

It is also about helping children know what to expect, and to be prepared, as well as well as supporting children's physical, social, emotional and cognitive skills. You may be interested in this [article in the institute of health visiting](#). [Further information \[including a song\] can be found here](#).

[Multi-agency audits update](#)

Thank you to all services, schools and parent carers who have been involved in the multi-agency audits over the course of this year. These are providing essential reflection and learning to ensure we can continue to improve our collaborative work to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people. For more information [please see this PDF](#), which outlines Solihull SEND And Alternative Provision Partnership Multi-agency audits.

SISS

This month sees the first parent workshops – Understanding my child’s autism – of this academic year being delivered by specialist staff from the SISS Autism Team.

The workshops incorporate the Autism Education Trust (AET) Making Sense of Autism module, a module which is delivered in every Solihull school on a 3 year rolling programme, and develops the knowledge and strategies to support parents, carers and siblings within the family home. 2 workshops are delivered each term, one in the north at Riverside Family Hub and one in the south at Sans Souci Training Centre (moving to Hatchford Brook Family Hub from Easter 2025) There is also an online option offered in the summer term.

Information about the workshops and booking process can be accessed via your school SENCo and all parents with a child in a Solihull mainstream school who has an autism diagnosis are able to attend free of charge.

Educational Psychology Service

It’s been a busy start to the term and our new staff are now well under way with their work in education settings, EHCs, projects, supervision and training. Having been forced to reduce our workload last year due to staffing, this year will be much more active with more EPs in post (7.2fte). We’re looking forward to the third cohort of Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) training starting in the Spring.

There are already 24 schools with registered ELSAs across the borough, improving the emotional wellbeing of children every day. The Attachment and Trauma Aware project and the SEMH project both continue again this year and we are linking closely with our colleagues in SISS, Virtual School, Early Years and School Improvement.

We are working hard alongside our associate EPs and the EHC team to catchup with the backlog of EHC assessments following the Summer and have already reduced the list by over half. We work through the assessments in the order of the panel dates so families are treated fairly and delays are limited to a few weeks. In other areas of the country some waiting lists are now up to a year, so we’re very pleased to be able to offer a good service here in SMBC. Before we know it, it will be Christmas!

DWP Advocacy Team – SEND Sessions

The DWP Advocacy Team are providing free online upskilling sessions focusing on Special Educational Needs aimed at Schools, colleges and organisations who are supporting students in receipt of Disability Services benefits and grants.

During these online Microsoft Teams sessions, they will be covering Disability Living Allowance for Children (DLA Child) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP) including the transition from DLA Child to PIP when the child reaches the age of 16. The session will also include how Access to Work can help and support following secondary education when moving into employment. There will also be a Q&A session during the event.

Employment and skills support

The Council's Employment and Skills Team has recently celebrated a young resident's success in landing a role with their support. When the team first met Luke, he was frustrated with his job search. He felt that Autism had been a barrier to getting an interview. Little did he know that he would land his dream job within weeks with the team's support. Find out more about Luke's story from [this webpage](#).

There is a range of support on offer from the Council's Employment and Skills Team and you can refer to [this webpage](#) for details.

FREE SEND inclusive music sessions for children and young people with additional needs

Solihull Music delivers a wide range FREE SEND music sessions for children and young people aged 7-25 years old.

Sessions take place during term time on Wednesdays 4-6pm and Saturdays 10-12pm.

We currently have spaces for the following sessions:

- Wednesday 4.30-5.15pm PLMD Music Makers Session
- Wednesday 5.15-6.00pm SEND Creative Songwriters sessions
- Saturdays 10-10.45am SEND Music Makers Family session
- Saturdays 11-12pm Inclusive Choir sessions

For more information on our **FREE** Inclusive Music sessions or sign up please click on link below:

[Solihull Music local offer for children and young people with SEND](#)

FREE Early Years Music sessions

Solihull Music delivers weekly music sessions for babies and children in partnership with our Family Hubs

FREE sessions take place weekly as below:

Elmwood Family Hub Thursdays 11.30-12pm (Stay and play /sensory room after the session)

Riverside Family Hub Fridays 10-10.30pm (Stay and play /sensory room after the session)
Hatchford Family Hub Fridays 2-2.30pm (Stay and play /sensory room after the session)

[For more information or sign up please click here](#)



All Age Autism Support Service

services by area or key words.

Landau

All Age Autism Service Directory

A searchable website, www.aadirectory.co.uk to support autistic people, their families and parents/carers, also health & social care professional across Birmingham & Solihull.

The Service Directory has been co-produced with Experts by Experience to provide a single point of access for support services, enabling you to search for

What can you find on the AAA Service Directory?

A range of different support services for autistic people, their families and parents/carers:-

- Local event information
- Details of support groups
- Newsletters
- Articles
- Podcasts
-

Contact Us

The Service Directory is continually evolving so please get in touch if you can't find what you're looking for or wish to make suggestions.

If you would like your organisation to be featured or know of an organisation that should be included, we'd love to hear from you. aaa@landau.co.uk

We're on the lookout for individuals of any age who have a connection to Autism and ADHD to become part of our amazing volunteer team! If you have an hour or two, to spare a week and you're interested in learning how to update an online directory, gain new skills, engage with your community, meet new friends, and help educate and inspire others, we'd love to hear from you! Reach out to us at aaa@landau.co.uk for more information.

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

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