

SEND & Inclusion Service Newsletter

Spring 2024

Durham
County Council



Welcome...

to the Spring 2024 edition of the SEND and Inclusion Newsletter.

This term we would like to welcome Danny Meek – SEND and Inclusion Service Manager for Theme 1.

Danny comes from Gateshead Local Authority where he held several roles from 2002. He has experience within Youth Justice, Early Help, Integrated Youth Support, Connexions and from early 2020 Danny led their Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Team as Team Manager.

Danny has worked closely with SEND Casework teams, schools, settings, and local area SEND partnerships and he is “excited about the challenge and opportunity to improve the lived experience for the children and young people of County Durham”.

In this edition we spotlight the inclusive work undertaken by Little Listeners Pre-School Group, Delta Independent School and under 14s girls running group ‘Sole Sisters’.



Front cover photo from Cognition & Learning training, see page 9 for more details

We also have some updates on eXtreme group partnership work, Sign Language Week, Family Hubs, various training offers and SEND Casework/SEND Advisory advice and tips.

SEND Advisory Officer
Julie McClure

Telephone: 03000 262 822
Mobile: 07884 753 160
julie.mcclure2@durham.gov.uk

SEND Advisory Officer
Wendy Boyes

Telephone: 03000 262 784
Mobile: 07900 701 940
wendy.boyes@durham.gov.uk

SEND Local Offer

www.durham.gov.uk/localoffer

Little Listeners Pre-School Group

Little Listeners is a friendly and supportive group for deaf pre-school babies/ children and their families

The group is delivered by The Deaf and Hearing Support Team and led by a qualified teacher for deaf children and young people (QTOD), Communication Support Worker (CSW) and Deaf Worker. The group provides opportunities for families to meet each other, develop listening and communication skills through music, stories and fun.

Activities include:

- **interactive music and movement using Baby Beats™ to develop listening,**
- **targeting language (through speech and British Sign Language),**
- **demonstrations of activities to use at home,**
- **BSL sessions - usually linked to a topic or story.**

Our sessions aim to engage pre-schoolers and their families to nurture communication and language skills that will support them on their journey to be confident at communicating.

Our fortnightly sessions are held at Elvet Methodist Church and there is parking available. It is free for families to attend.

The group is open to any preschool child/baby with an identified hearing loss who are prescribed at least 1 hearing aid. To access the group please contact your child's Qualified Teacher of the Deaf (QTOD).

Supporting Sensory Support Services

Telephone: 03000 264 530

Or email: CYPSSensory Team CYPSSensoryTeam@durham.gov.uk

Both me and my son have made some lovely friends at the group and have arranged days out in the holidays something we couldn't have done if it didn't exist.

Little Listeners has brought my son on so much, from the first session to the last he's much more confident and loves to join in.

The group itself is perfect, the boys and girls know their little routine every week and look forward to the next activity

As a parent it's nice to be around others in the same position.

There's nothing we'd change about it, well maybe having it weekly ha-ha.

My son absolutely loves it and it shows in group when he is so happy and playful.

I think it is a well thought out homely group. Something I was nervous for at first, but now hate missing.

Joint eXtreme group and SEND Strategic Partnership meeting

The eXtreme group at Investing in Children held a joint meeting with the SEND Strategic Partnership on 30 January 2024. The eXtreme group is a group for young people with SEND in County Durham to have their say about services.

The joint meeting was arranged so that the young people and professionals could get to know each other better to help with working together more in the future. The young people presented on all of their work and highlights from 2023 and then they did some speed networking in small groups.



They also talked about the different areas of the [SEND Promise](#) in small groups and made plans for what else needs to be done to support young people with SEND in County Durham.

The group are looking forward to doing more joint meetings in the future.

“I enjoyed the interaction and being listened to about the issues I care about”



Children and Young People's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Promise for County Durham

If you know any young people that would like to join the eXtreme group, please email: info@investinginchildren.net or telephone: 0191 307 7030



Delta Independent School ADHD Friendly Schools Award

Delta Independent School have just been awarded the ADHD Friendly Schools Award. They signed up in 2023, took part in a 2-part training session with the ADHD Foundation and evidenced the ADHD Friendly School Pledges. Here are some examples:

"We pledge to provide regular opportunities for all learners with ADHD to have access to physical activity and exercise during the school day."

They evidenced this pledge with the refurbishment of their gym, which students can access throughout the day and each form class has a dedicated session per week. They also started opening and staffing their sports hall during breaks for students and allowing in class movement breaks.

They are currently exploring funding options to create a sensory movement room. They also have standing desks for students and have developed their curriculum so that they have more hands-on subjects as part of their core offer.

"We pledge to provide opportunities for all learners with ADHD to learn self-calming strategies such as breathing, progressive muscle relaxation or mindfulness."

Delta Independent School evidenced this pledge by demonstrating they had a full-time mental health lead who runs various interventions focusing on this pledge. The mental health lead organises numerous events throughout the year. They also have a dedicated regulation area, that has various resources to help students regulate such as mindful colouring, sensory tent, headphones and beanbags. Each class has access to various resources to help regulate students. They run Zones of Regulation intervention and have a whole school display.

Contact:

Lucy Hillary

Vice Principal/SENCo

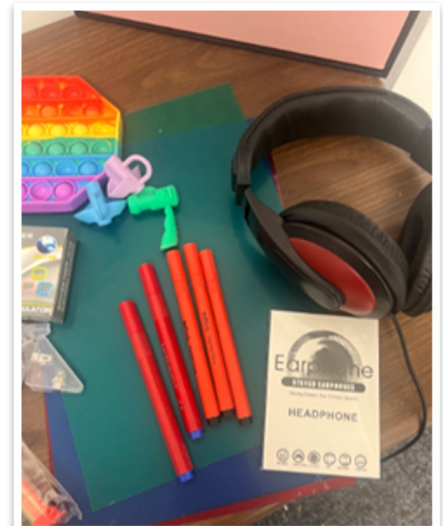
l.hillary@deltaindependent.school

<https://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/training/training-for-education/adhd-friendly-schools-award/>



Staff comment

"The SEND provision we have now is second to none. Staff feel more confident in teaching those with additional needs"



Staff comment

"Students are more settled and feel confident asking for movement breaks"

Sign Language Week

Did you know that from the 18th to 24th March is Sign Language Week?

Sign Language Week is an annual national campaign led by the [British Deaf Association \(BDA\)](https://www.bda.org.uk/)



To commemorate the first time British Sign Language (BSL) was acknowledged as a language in its own right by the UK Government on 18 March 2003, we celebrate Sign Language Week every year in March.

The aim of Sign Language Week is to celebrate and educate the public about British and Irish Sign Language.

Sign Language Week aims to encourage more people to start learning these beautiful, unique, visual languages, and to protect and preserve sign languages for future generations to come.

If you would like to learn British Sign Language there are a range of courses available in the locality.

Whether you would like to learn just to have fun, learn something new or improve your communication skills there are many reasons to try British Sign Language. Why not give it a try.

Here are some links should you want to find out more.

Sign Naturally

<https://www.sign-naturally.co.uk/>



Deaf Empowering Network

<https://www.deafemp.com/bsl-training-for-individuals/>



Sign it Hear

<https://www.signithear.com/courses>



Signature

<https://www.signature.org.uk/sign-language-week/>

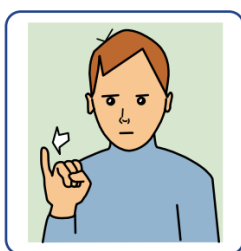


British Deaf Association

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



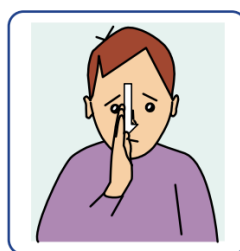
good



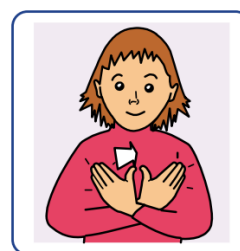
bad



happy



sad



love

Vision Awareness session for local under 14 girls Running Group



A local running group for under 14 girls, 'Sole Sisters' was set up in spring 2023, with the vision of encouraging young women, who might have been put off PE in school, to participate in running and physical activities in an inclusive and non-competitive environment. The aim is to provide weekly sessions which focus on running, but also provide taster sessions in other activities, some of which have included Cross-Fit, water polo, tennis and Ultimate Frisbee. The sessions also focus on other aspects of healthy living such as nutrition, wearing the right clothing for sport and developing social connections.

The group has started off with a small number of girls joining from different secondary schools in the area. One of the members has a vision impairment (VI), and the run leaders had already attended the England Athletics workshop to become Guide Runners. A QTVI from the Durham Sensory Team, who herself is one of the run leaders, provided a VI awareness session for the group last July. The session aimed to develop the girls' understanding of the difficulties facing a person with VI while running, as well as providing practical tips and advice on how to support a runner with VI.



The group used simulation glasses and sleep shades while undertaking a variety of activities, including running around a series of cones, passing balls to each other and using a long cane to navigate an obstacle course. They were also taught basic procedures and skills for acting as a sighted guide to a person with VI.

All of the group enjoyed the session, and the young person with VI played an active part in teaching some of the key skills as well as discussing her own vision impairment and how it affects her. This not only boosted her confidence within the group but also allowed for an open and frank discussion around VI and general disability awareness.

If you would like to find out more about becoming a Guide Runner, please look at the following link:

<https://www.englandathletics.org/take-part/programmes/findaguide/become-a-guide-runner/>



Family Hubs – for you and your family

Family Hubs are pleased to announce some new programmes and drops in for families of children with SEND. All of the sessions are open to any family in County Durham. Parents can attend any Family Hub, and there is no formal diagnosis needed to access any of the sessions on offer.

These include courses for parents, drop in sessions delivered by SENDIASS and the Educational Psychology Service, as well as workshops for parents.

Being a Parent of An Autistic Child is delivered by trained Parent Group Leaders who are themselves parents of autistic children, and Durham Learn are delivering **Supporting your Autistic Child**. These programmes not only cover information about autism and strategies parents can use in the home, but also support parents by bringing them together with others who have the same experiences as them, so they know they are not alone.



Stepping Stones is for parents of children with any additional needs aged 0 -12 year olds supporting parents with strategies they can use at home, planning for challenging situations as well as peer support.

The **SEND Team within the 0-19 Health Service** are delivering workshops to parents in common areas of concern, such as sleep, sensory eating and toileting. Topics for these will change over the year based on needs identified by parents and carers.



SENDIASS Drop-in sessions in the Family Hubs continue to be well attended and support parents and carers with information and advice about their child's education.

Starting February 2024 the **Educational Psychology Service will be delivering drop in sessions** to give parents and carers the opportunity to talk about any concerns they have and gain tips and advice.

We are also pleased that **Daisy Chain** and the **North East Autism Society** are delivering in person workshops from the Family Hubs. Daisy Chain are also delivering Peer Support Coffee mornings, where parents can come together, have a cuppa and a chat. Both are also offering online workshops that can be accessed for free.

Further information about all the sessions above as well as venues, dates and times can be found on our website at www.durham.gov.uk/FamilyHubsSENDGroups



Take a look at our new [Family Hubs video](#) or visit www.durham.gov.uk/helpforfamilies

SEND Advisory Training 2024

Date	Time	Advisory Training	Venue
21/05/24	9am - 3.15pm	SENCO as a Strategic Lead	EDC Spennymoor
12/06/24	9am - 3.15pm	New SENCO Training	EDC Spennymoor

Book by emailing the SEND and Inclusion admin team at:

SENDInclusionAdmin@durham.gov.uk

SENCO Networks Summer 2024

Please note: SENCOs do not need to book a place onto the SENCO Network.

Date	Time	SENCO Network	Venue
Wednesday 26 June	9.30am - 12 noon	Primary	Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 26 June	1.30pm - 3.30pm	Primary	Microsoft Teams
Thursday 27 June	9.30am - 12 noon	Primary	Microsoft Teams
Thursday 27 June	1.30pm - 3.30pm	Secondary	Microsoft Teams
Friday 28 June	9.30am - 12 noon	Special	Walworth School
Friday 5 July	9.30am - 12 noon	Nursery	Microsoft Teams

Primary Inclusion Partnership Support

There will be initial triage, Continuing Professional Development and coaching for schools.

Pupils who gain a place will attend Nurture Hub for a minimum of one term, maximum of three terms. Nurture Hubs are for pupils without an EHCP from Year 1 to Year 6.

Referral form, email:
pip@durham.gov.uk

NASENCO - use code DRHM-CC <https://www.bestpracticenet.co.uk/nasenco>

SEND and Inclusion courses



About our courses



SEND and Inclusion Advisory Team courses



Cognition and learning courses



Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) courses



Communication and interaction courses



Sensory and physical courses



Equalities and interventions courses



Supporting medical conditions courses

For more information about SEND & Inclusion courses, visit: www.durham.gov.uk/sendcoursedirectory

Cost:
£160 or
0.5 credits

Durham
County Council



Cognition & Learning Summer Conference 2024

Wednesday
10 July 2024
9am - 4pm

Education Development
Centre

Unlocking potential Practical approaches to meeting needs for all

Join us in the morning to unlock the potential of all children and young people by providing staff in school with practical and innovative approaches to learning through a range of workshops.

After lunch we will be exploring barriers to reading in primary and secondary settings, including phonological awareness, phonic approaches and a range of word reading strategies.

We will explore the latest research, share success stories and collaborate to create inclusive environments that foster growth and development for our children and young people in Durham.

To register your interest in this event follow <https://forms.office.com/e/fuWZRHP0r>
For any other queries regarding the conference please contact: cognitionandlearning@durham.gov.uk

Makaton Pilot - 'Let your hands do the talking!'

Discover the incredible benefits of using Makaton in your setting.

Makaton is a powerful communication tool that bridges the gap between individuals with communication difficulties and the world around them. By incorporating Makaton into your curriculum and daily routines, you can unlock a world of possibilities for your children and young people.



Here are just a few of the amazing benefits:

POSITIVE SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

Makaton promotes social interaction and meaningful connections between children, young people and adults. Pupils can engage in conversations and build relationships with their peers.

IMPROVED COMPREHENSION

Makaton utilises visual cues, supports memory skills, following instructions and grasping new concepts.

INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Makaton is a visual communication system that promotes inclusivity, participation and social interaction

EMPOWERING INDEPENDENCE

Empowering independence - Makaton will empower your children and young people to become more independent communicators. They will learn to communicate their needs without solely relying on verbal communication.

ENHANCED COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Makaton uses a combination of signs, symbols and speech to support communication skills. You will be able to empower children to express themselves more effectively and foster a better understanding and connection with their peers.



Contact us today at: cognitionandlearning@durham.gov.uk to transform your setting into an inclusive, empowering and communicative environment.

What's New in Cognition & Learning

New Offer for Schools

What schools have said about us

'It was useful to have an advisory teacher in school all day and discuss ideas.'



'I didn't realise that the outcomes and recommendations would be the same as when a child has a face to face assessment.'



'I felt reassured that I was doing the right thing to meet the needs of a child in my class.'



What is a Cognition Clinic?

Cognition Clinic: Individual pupil input and record

This includes

- Half day (4 pupils) or full day (8 pupils max) of support .
- Approx. 30-minute discussion with staff to discuss pupil's needs and next steps.
- A short, written record including recommendations and strategies.

Cost:

- 1 credit/£325 half day(4 pupils)
- 2 credits/£650 full day (8 pupils)

What is an Online Consult?

Cognitive online consultation: Individual pupil and record

This includes

- Approx. 45-minute online discussion with staff and parents/carers to discuss a pupil's needs and next steps.
- A short, written record including outcomes, recommendations, strategies.

Cost:

- 0.5 credit/£165



Interested?

Contact: cognitionandlearning@durham.gov.uk

We are delighted to announce that EAL (English as an Additional Language) teams across the North East, including Durham, are holding their first EAL conference this summer on Thursday 27th June, 9.30 - 4pm at Newcastle Falcons Rugby Ground. For more information and to book please see below or email Anna Mason/Maria Callaghan at eal@durham.gov.uk. The conference is open to both Primary and Secondary staff at a price of £75 per person. Please note that there are 200 places in total and we anticipate a high demand!



NORTH EAST EAL PARTNERSHIP (NEEP)
PRESENTS

EAL REGIONAL CONFERENCE

“Celebrating difference;
building bridges”



Speaker

Eowyn Crisfield

Lecturer, author and
specialist in Languages
Across the Curriculum (LAC).



Speaker

Jean Conteh

Author, experienced
practitioner, NALDIC
contributor and bilingualism
expert.



THURSDAY

27th June 2024



TIME

9.30am-4pm



International
Refugee
Committee

Healing Classrooms

Providing resources and
support to achieve safe and
supportive provision for
refugee students.



Speaker

Smajo Beso

Chair of Bosnian Genocide
Educational Trust; promoting
peace in the UK.



Speaker

Anna Mason

Secondary EAL Pedagogy



VENUE

Kingston Park
Rugby Club,
NE138AF

Ticket includes:

- Workshops
- Refreshments
- Lunch
- Marketplace
- Networking



Only £75



Workshop
Schools of Sanctuary
Building a welcoming and
inclusive society.



Workshop
Northumberland County
Council EAL Service
Primary Strategies



SCAN TO
REGISTER

School Peer Support Networks

For education staff who work with autistic children and young people (CYP) and those with social communication differences

There has been increasing demand for support for our autistic children and young people (CYP) in schools and other educational settings over the past few years; it is one of the biggest areas of primary need as identified in SEND and EHC Plans. In response to this and to further develop our support offer for schools, we are proposing to help set up locality peer support networks.

What is a Peer Support Network?

A peer support network is a group of education staff who come together regularly to:

- identify, share and celebrate good practice, including strategies, resources and approaches
- embed evidence-based approaches in schools, using the Autism Education Trust frameworks where appropriate
- use solution focused approaches to support each other with CYP who have complex presentations
- keep up to date with new developments and ideas
- identify gaps in knowledge and CPD
- work collaboratively with peers from different settings.

What are the hoped for outcomes for the networks?

We hope that the **outcomes** of setting up such networks would be:

- Staff in education settings feel better supported and will have greater understanding of their autistic CYP.
- Staff in education settings feel more confident when using approaches and resources
- Better outcomes for autistic children and young people through collaborative approaches that provide consistently good practice across settings
- CYP receive the right support at the right time, including during key transitions
- CYP feel less anxious about school and there are improvements in school attendance
- Parents feel more confident about how their child is being supported in school.

What would a Peer Support Network Meeting involve?

Initially the networks will run **termly** and will follow a similar **agenda** which would include:

- Meeting in one of the locality schools - schools take turns to host
- Sharing good practice
- A focused CPD slot on a theme agreed by the members of that network
- A solutions circle activity.

If your school is interested in joining a peer support network, please contact any of the following members of the Communication and Interaction Team:

Nicky Farren nicola.farren@durham.gov.uk

Mary Potsig mary.potsig@durham.gov.uk

Liz Mulholland elizabeth.mulholland@durham.gov.uk

SEND Advisory Officer costs and contact details

The team offer a Service Level Agreement (SLA) which would normally run over the financial or academic year, however they can be started at any time.

SEND Advisory SLA - 4 or 8 hours support	£380/£700
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We are also able to offer a number of services or 'one off' sessions to suit your school's needs. See below:

Bespoke 1 - 1 hourly consultation	£100
Half day SEND 'health check' (including written report)	£410
Quality assurance audit of SEN Information Report and Accessibility Plan	£180
Whole school twilight training (up to 2 hours)	£195
Bespoke SEND Review* (see details below)	£990

Other packages can be organised for individual schools/trusts/COLs - contact the team directly to discuss further.

*Bespoke SEND Review

The details of a SEND review would be negotiated by or with the setting, but generally this would comprise of a full day visit to school by at least two appropriate advisory staff. A review could include interviews with key staff, pupils and parents; an examination of SEN data and SEN related paperwork. It could also include a learning walk and/or observation of SEN interventions or book scrutiny. A written report detailing findings, including strengths and areas for development would be provided to school.

Contact



Julie McClure
SEND Advisory Officer
07884 753 160 (mobile)



Wendy Boyes
SEND Advisory Officer
03000 266 784 (direct)
07900 701 940 (mobile)



SEND Advisory team

Children and Young People's Services



The SEND Advisory team offer bespoke support, advice and guidance to a range of educational settings; ensuring they are able to meet their statutory duties and legal responsibilities for children and young people with SEND - relating to the Children and Families Act 2014, SEND Code of Practice 2015 and the Equality Act 2010. Our remit is to work with staff to consider whole school inclusive practice and provision to meet the individual needs of children and young people with SEND. We can offer a flexible menu of support that schools/settings can choose from, including:



High quality support for Special Educational Needs coordinators (SENCOs)/Senior Leaders in one or more of the following areas:

- Whole school SEND systems and procedures.
- SEN data analysis.
- Quality assurance of EHC/SEN Support plans and outcomes.
- Quality first teaching for pupils with SEN.
- SEN interventions.
- SEN book/work scrutiny.
- Quality assurance audit of SEN Information report and accessibility plan.
- Half day SEND 'health check' (including written report).
- SEND action planning.
- Comprehensive SEND reviews.



Bespoke support for new SENCOs to the county.



High quality SEND support for newly and recently qualified teachers.



High quality support for your SEND governor.



Bespoke whole school SEND support/training tailored to the requirements of your setting.

National Award for SEN Co-ordination (NASENCo)

All new SENCOs are required to achieve the National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordination (NASENCo) within three years of appointment. We work in partnership with Best Practice Network - a leading national training provider - to offer this course in County Durham. This means it is personalised to the county's own procedures and creates valuable networking opportunities with other local SENCOs. As well as the 6 face-to-face training sessions, there is also continued support from our team and a personal tutor. More details can be found at: www.bestpracticenet.co.uk/naSENCO or contact one of the team.



Specialist Inclusion Service & Educational Psychology New Core Training Offer

'General' Courses

- An introduction to SEN and the graduated approach
- Making sense of complex needs using simple frameworks
- Enhancing QFT through the psychology learning
- Developing engaged, motivated and confident learners
- Supporting staff development and wellbeing using Solution Circles

Cognition and Learning Courses

- Identifying and meeting the needs of children/young people with literacy difficulties
- Identifying and meeting the needs of children/young people with maths difficulties
- Understanding working memory and other thinking skills
- Understanding executive function and developing learner independence
- Supporting children/young people through Assistive Technology

Communication and Interaction Courses

- Making sense of Autism
- Understanding and supporting the responses of children with social communication differences/Autism
- Using structure and visuals to support children/young people with social communication differences
- Developing language through Communication Friendly Classrooms
- Identifying and meeting the needs of children/young people with speech & language difficulties/DLD

SEMH Courses

- Identifying and meeting the needs of children/young people who are anxious
- Identifying and meeting the needs of children/young people with attentional difficulties/ADHD
- Trauma informed practice in the classroom
- Supporting children/young people with loss and bereavement
- Supporting students who self harm

Physical and Sensory Courses

- Identifying and meeting the needs of children/young people who present with sensory processing differences
- Supporting children/young people's physical development, safety, and toileting needs
- Supporting children/young people with Visual Impairments (bespoke training)
- Supporting children/young people with Deafness/Hearing Loss (bespoke training)
- Supporting children/young people with Multi-Sensory Impairment (bespoke training)

Further details about this new training offer will follow in due course.

The Specialist Inclusion Service & Educational Psychology recognised the need to draw together a more consistent, comprehensive and clear training offer for schools and colleges.

Over the course of the academic year 2023-2024, they are developing a new 'core training offer' consisting of several foundational training courses.

There are 25 total proposed courses, covering all four areas of SEND, plus a few general courses that 'cut across'.

They will be free to access (2 people per school, per session), and delivered virtually across the school year.



Free training and accreditation for schools is available to become 'Prem Aware'

It is believed that there are two children (on average) in each primary school class who were born prematurely and this is likely to increase with more advances in neonatal care.

Free training and accreditation for schools is available to become 'Prem Aware'. This is an opportunity to gain a better understanding of babies born prematurely, learn how it can affect their education and development and how they can be supported within school.

"The training was very useful and will impact our everyday practice. We are now equipped to support those born prematurely with the strategies suggested."

Joanne Edwards, Gayton Primary Academy Early Years Leader.

For more information visit:

thesmallestthings.org/prem-aware-award

or email: premaware@thesmallestthings.org



Is your school **PREM AWARE?**

Did you know?

Two children in every classroom will have been born **PREMATURELY**

*Two to three children in an average-sized classroom will have been born before 37 weeks' gestation.

90%

OF PARENTS** FEEL MORE TEACHERS NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN BORN PREMATURELY

** Survey of 426 parents and carers of children born prematurely, February 2020.



HOW TO ACHIEVE **The Smallest Things PREM AWARE AWARD**

- Train staff**
Senior leaders complete the free online PRISM training at pretermbirth.info. Cascade learnings to all teaching staff.
- Raise awareness**
Schools ask parents for details of their child's birth history as part of the admissions process. This information is shared with the child's teachers.
- Ask for feedback**
Parents and carers are invited to share their views and review any SEN support provided.

Better health and wellbeing for all...

NHS
North East and North Cumbria



Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) - Information for professionals and providers

Resources and documents for practitioners supporting families of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

SEND toolkit

SEN Information Report guidance

Supporting SEND as part of the graduated approach

Templates, referral forms and reports

PfA Outcomes

Teams that provide SEND support

Information leaflets for schools

SEND and Inclusion courses

Developing a whole school Restorative Approach

Supporting pupils with medical conditions

Disability Access Fund (early years only)

SEND e-learning courses

Understanding SEND training

Reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities

Durham's Local Offer is designed to help you find the very best support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (0—25 years).

You can find useful resources such as:

- [SEND Toolkit](#)
- [Preparing for Adulthood Outcomes Toolkit](#)
- [Banding Documents](#)
- [Practical Strategies](#)



Mainstream Schools Provision Descriptors and Funding Bands
Information for schools and other agencies



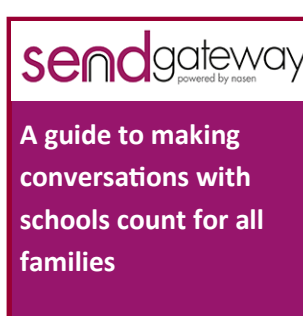
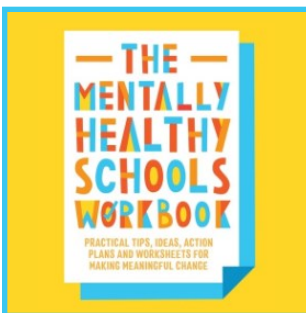
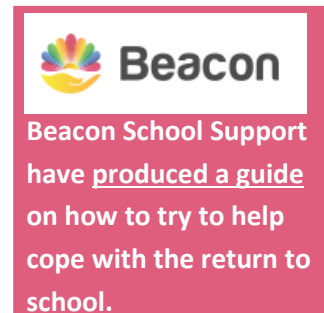
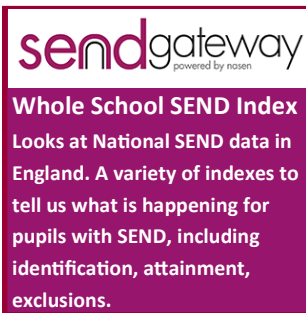
Section 1 - SEND & Inclusion Toolkit
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)

Children and Young People's Services



www.durham.gov.uk/localoffer

Click on the Useful Resources information boxes below to visit the relevant website for more information.



SEND Advisory Team and Casework Team Updates

Communication between SENCOs and Caseworkers

There should be a named caseworker for all new assessments.

- Contact Duty Monday: Friday 9 am - 5 pm - Telephone Number: 03000 265 878 for any queries.
 - Contact Theme 2 or 3 caseworkers to discuss EHCP reviews. All schools have an annual review caseworker linked to them who are there to answer EHCP review queries.
 - It is vital to keep in communication to discuss any potential issues and before things reach 'crisis' point.
- Theme 1: Casework Managers - Jill Harrison
 - Theme 2: Casework Managers - Fiona Whitehouse and Andrew Shaw
 - Theme 3: Casework Managers - Dianne Wilkinson and Peter Nicol.

Data Breaches

Schools must ensure that current addresses are correct on EHCPs* and annual review paperwork. There is a prompt on the new AR record. Latest versions of paperwork are on the Schools Portal.

*N.B. addresses will be systematically taken off EHCPs, in preparation for the new electronic EHCP.

Liquid Logic

Liquid Logic replaced Synergy from 26th January 2024. Updates will be issued in due course on the next phases regarding roll outs.

SEN Support TU Funding Updates

As a result of the work being done to get the SEN Support TU system in place on the new Liquid Logic system, there will be a pause to quality assuring SEN Support TU requests until after February half term. Please be assured that any requests already submitted will have funding backdated to the date they were received into SEN Casework (if funding is agreed).

When Business Support inform schools of a TU request outcome (agreed or declined), they will now just send an email without the attached letter.

Equalities Information – SEND and Data Collection

Your equalities information should generally include data showing how many pupils have a disability in your school. This data should be updated annually and published on the school website as numbers or percentages. It should be created using data submitted by parents via data collection forms (cannot be assumed as SEN). The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability should be used:

'A person is disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. 'Substantial' is more than minor or trivial and 'long-term' means 12 months or more. Although this condition may be managed with medication, please consider your child's life without the availability of medication.

Medical Conditions – Schools should hold a register of all pupils with a medical condition and thus an individual healthcare plan (IHP). This is stored internally and may be shared with school staff as required.

Annual Review - SEN Support with Top Up Funding

Once agreed, SEN Support Top Up funding will continue whilst a pupil attends the same school, pending receipt of Annual Review paperwork. The school **must** undertake an annual review and provide information to the LA detailing the impact of the additional funding and evidence of the ongoing provision.

The annual review paperwork must be received by the LA between **03.06.24 and 30.09.24** in order for the funding to continue.

Schools **must** submit:

- Annual Review of Top Up Funding form, including parent/carers signatures
- Relevant professional reports that underpin current SEN and provision
- The previous 2 reviewed SEN Support Plans
- The current SEN Support Plan (including parent/carers signatures) demonstrating all relevant and purposeful provision.

It is the school's responsibility to inform sencasework@durham.gov.uk when a pupil in receipt of SEN Support Top Up funding leaves their setting.

Local Authority Monitoring and Auditing of SEN Support Top Up Funding

Rolling programme of visits by SEND Advisory Officers started in October 2023.

Schools are given approximately 2 weeks' notice by phone call or email.

Visits are supportive and include discussion, monitoring of SEN Support Plans and tour of the school.

Monitoring visits last up to half a day depending on the number of pupils receiving SEN Support TU.

A Note of Visit is sent to school following the visit.

Continuation of SEN Support Top Up Funding after the Reception Year

For the SEN Support TU funding to continue after the reception year schools are required to submit a full new TU funding request in the following Summer term. School must submit the following supporting documentation:

- A request for Top Up Funding form including parent/carers signature and a chronology of the relevant and purposeful action school have implemented in SEN Support Plans.
- A current SEN Support Plan on DCC format which clearly details the current provision for the pupil, including recommendations from professionals where applicable. Parent/carers signatures must be included.
- Two previous reviewed SEN Support Plans including parent/carers signatures and comments.
- Relevant reports and/or recommendations from professionals involved (usually within the last 3 years or at key points of transition).

Please send all documentation to: sencasework@durham.gov.uk

This will then follow the QA and panel process as a new request.

QA of SEN Support Top Up Funding

Decline at QA

Any requests for SEN Support TU that don't follow the application criteria will be declined at QA.

SEND Advisory Officers will not follow up regarding omissions/lack of clarity etc. Schools are sent an email detailing the reasons for the request having been declined, e.g.

- Evidence of relevant and purposeful action has **not** been demonstrated.
- The provision is not well reflected in the SEN Support Plan.
- The provision is not sufficiently quantified in the SEN Support Plan.
- The outcomes have **not** been robustly evaluated, reviewed and adapted where needed.
- 1:1 support is a high part of the overall request and has **not** been clearly evidenced as part of the assessed needs of the child.
- Request form and SEN Support Plans have not been signed by parents/carers.
- Supporting documents are not included in the submission.

If the request is declined for either of the reasons below, please see timescales for resubmission.

Example 1:

The request is declined as the additional support on the current SEN Support Plan is not quantified sufficiently to enable a banding to be given. The frequency, duration and group size need to be fully quantified against each additional provision.

*Schools can resubmit after they have ensured that the current provision is sufficiently quantified.

Example 2:

The request is declined as the additional support on the current SEN Support Plan is below the support that mainstream schools or settings should provide for pupils through their agreed funding arrangements.

*Schools should continue with a graduated approach to meet the needs of the pupil. If schools choose to re-submit we expect a full review cycle to have taken place. If appropriate, seek advice and recommendations from professionals to inform provision.