

Bringing the local offer in Leicestershire to life

SEND NEWS

Winter
2022

FREE

Transforming
SEND and Inclusion
in Leicestershire

see page 3



▶ **Transforming
SEND and Inclusion
in Leicestershire**

Produced by

A warm welcome to the new edition of SEND News

Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, on behalf of the SEND team at Leicestershire County Council, we want to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

▶ It's been a busy year for Children & Young People Services, and you can read more about what's been happening in this newsletter...

SENDIASS has launched a new website, a one-stop shop providing free, impartial and confidential advice and support for children and young people with SEND aged 0-25 years. It's designed to help with a range of issues - like education, health and social care - all in one place. We hope you will find it a useful resource.

School admissions are well under way, with applications for first time admissions open until 15

January. We'd like to remind you that if your child is undergoing assessment for an EHCP, it's important to still apply for a mainstream school - this doesn't decrease their chances of being offered a specialist school place.

Our Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) is running again, and children who receive benefits-related free school meals can get stuck into sports, art and crafts, drama and much more. Each session includes a free nutritious meal - **book online here**.

Finally - our Transforming SEND and Inclusion programme looks to improve the experiences of children and young people.

Partners across health, care, education and the voluntary sector are working together with parents and carers so you can help us shape our support services.

We want to say a big thank you to the parents and carers who have been involved in the feedback sessions we've held so far. Keep an eye out for more events in the New Year.

We're looking forward to positive outcomes Leicestershire's children & young people Services in 2023. ■



Jane Moore
Director of
Children & Family Services,
Leicestershire County
Council

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Deborah Taylor
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Transforming SEND and Inclusion in Leicestershire

Transforming SEND and Inclusion in Leicestershire, or TSIL as it has become known, is looking to improve the experiences of children and young people with SEND.



Together partners are working across health, care, education, the voluntary sector, and with parents and carers to improve how we support children with SEND and their families.

The work is building on what has already been happening to improve SEND support in Leicestershire. It will take account of the increased demand for support, and financial challenges.

It's different from past work as there is a much greater focus on all organisations involved in supporting a child (health, education and the council) - this is sometimes called 'the system'.

As partners, we want to work together to ensure every child with SEND has the right support, at the right time, in the right setting for them to succeed and thrive in their education. By working together, we want to deliver positive and lasting changes across special educational needs support.

Why do we need change?

In February we reviewed the current SEND system and identified opportunities for further improvement:

- Inclusive practise – ensuring everyone involved in supporting children and young people take action, and gives the right support, where needed
- Service transformation - ensuring the council understands the needs of children and young people and their families; and makes transparent, needs-based decisions with timely and clear communication
- Accurate information - ensuring that across the council and wider system there is accurate and timely information about children and young people that is maintained and managed effectively, and visibility of this allows evidence-based decisions to be made
- Communication and engagement - ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to work together to improve the offer available to children and young people, and that everyone understand the part they play to make a difference

Over the coming months we'll be doing detailed work on all of these areas to design improvements.

The **Leicestershire SEND Hub (link is external)** will help to ensure parents and carers are actively involved in this work, and that messages are reaching families. The SEND Hub is impartial and works to represent the voices of parents and carers across Leicestershire.

We'll be giving you regular updates through this newsletter, and keeping our **TSIL webpage** updated with the latest information and **frequently asked questions**.

Thank you again to all of the parents and carers who have provided information and feedback on this work so far – there will be more events held in the New Year.

Transforming SEND and Inclusion in Leicestershire



Applying for first time primary school place?

The closing date is approaching to apply for your child's first primary school place. Applications for the autumn 2023 intake need to be made by Sunday, January 15, 2023.

▶ School place offer day for the autumn first-time primary intake 2023 will be April 17.

A range of information is available at www.leicestershire.gov.uk/admissions to help families start applying.

Families are encouraged to:


- Put down three schools, including your catchment school, to help ensure you have the best chance possible of securing a school of your choice. If you're not sure if a school is your catchment school, check this with them directly. Most have information on their websites.
- Contact the admissions team if you have already submitted your child's application but want to go back in and add more schools / include your catchment school. You can do this via the FTA amendments form, available via www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools-colleges-and-academies/school-admissions


Choosing a catchment school is important because if the council cannot offer a place at one of the schools listed, parents and carers can then be offered a place at the child's nearest school which still has available places.

This may not be local if you've not listed your catchment school as one of your choices, as places there may have already been filled by others who listed it in their applications.

If you child is undergoing assessment for an EHCP, it is important you still apply for a place at a mainstream school. This does not decrease your chances of being offered a specialist school but does ensure your child will have a school place.

Councillor Deborah Taylor, Leicestershire County Council cabinet member for Children and Families, said:

 "Making a first-time primary school application is a big milestone, and there can be lots to consider.

 "We work incredibly hard to allocate school places, but demand can be high, and we need families to select all their preferences so as to give themselves the best chances possible of securing a place at their preferred schools."

There is no automatic entry for school in Leicestershire, so it is vital that applications are submitted before the closing date of **Sunday, January 15.**

For more information on schools in the county, there's the 'Your Guide' to education which contains advice and support to help with the applications process www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools-colleges-and-academies/school-admissions/your-guide-to-education ■





Sign up now for free winter holiday clubs

Families are encouraged to sign up now for free holiday activity clubs running across Leicestershire over the festive break.

▶ Bookings are open for the sessions which include activities such as arts and crafts, sports, dance, games, and music, alongside a nutritious meal.

The free clubs are being offered as part of Leicestershire 'Holidays Together' - a Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme funded by the Department for Education.

HAF is a free and exciting holiday programme for children aged 5 to 16, living in Leicestershire and in receipt of benefits-related free school meals. Eligible children and young people can access up to four holiday club sessions this winter - free of charge.

Some holiday clubs will also offer fee paying places for children and young people not eligible for free school meals. Families who are eligible for Universal Credit may be able to claim back up to 85% of their childcare costs www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/universal-credit

Leicestershire County Council is working with Active Together to deliver the scheme, which is being held at venues across the county by schools, voluntary and community organisations, childcare providers, and sports clubs.

Our HAF programmes are inclusive and our providers endeavour to meet all children's needs. Please contact your chosen provider to discuss your child's needs and provide as much information as possible about when completing your registration form so the right support can be put in place.

You can search providers and book your place via the: **Holiday Activity Finder (link is external)**

You can find out more about our winter HAF providers and how to book your free place here www.leicestershire.gov.uk/HAF ■



New SENDIASS website launched

A new website, sendiassleicestershire.org.uk, has launched to help children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities, and their families access support and information.

▶ Leicestershire’s Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) asked Leicestershire County Council to design and develop the new website for them.

We worked with service users to help develop the website to create a great user experience, and ensure it was fully accessible and easy to use; positive feedback on the site’s content has already been received by professionals and service users.

Hannah Patani, SENDIASS Team Manager said:

“We are really excited to launch our new website, SENDIASS Leicestershire. This will enable children, young people, parents and carers

to access the information they need at the time they need it about special educational needs, disabilities, their rights and the law.

“Having our impartial information and advice available on the website will promote independence and self-advocacy for children, young people and parents to ensure that they know their rights and that their voices are heard.”

If you would like free, impartial and confidential information, support or advice relating to SEND, you can contact the SENDIASS Leicestershire team at info@sendiassleicestershire.org.uk or visit sendiassleicestershire.org.uk. ■



Come and join us at a Local Offer Roadshow

The Local Offer Roadshows, which form part of Leicestershire’s Local Offer, bring together services that support children with SEND and their parents and carers all in one place. Meet with representatives from Leicestershire County Council, Health, Leicestershire SEND Hub and lots more.

▶ The end of 2022 has been a busy time for Local Offer Roadshows, we have visited Melton, Charnwood and held an evening event at County Hall. We had over 250 bookings made via Eventbrite, and

over 70 stalls in attendance over the three events and received some wonderful feedback.

“We found the stalls helpful and friendly. We learned about services that we had not previously heard of. The format and layout were well organised.

The atmosphere was light and very good for chatting – thanks!”

If you haven’t been able to attend a Local Offer Roadshow yet don’t worry! we have lots more events planned for 2023. Find out where we will be visiting and when [here](#). ■



Are you worried about Strep A?

Watch local Children's Emergency Medicine Consultant Damian Rowland's expert advice so you can recognise the symptoms and know what to do if your child is unwell.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qf-IgDwO8fA>

Find more info at: <https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2022/12/05/group-a-strep-what-you-need-to-know/>

UK Health Security Agency

#GroupAStrep

Group A Strep (GAS)

Parents know their children best and should trust their judgement when they are poorly. Speak to your GP or call 111 if your child is poorly and getting worse.

Always call 999 or go to A&E if your child:

- ▶ Is having difficulty breathing - such as grunting noises or their tummy sucking under their ribs
- ▶ there are pauses when your child breathes
- ▶ child's skin, tongue or lips are blue
- ▶ is floppy and will not wake up or stay awake.

Get in the know about how to treat minor ailments this winter

The new website: www.getintheknow.co.uk provides lots of useful information about how to access care depending on your needs. Minor ailments such as coughs, colds, back pain, and vomiting are all treatable by contacting your local pharmacy, NHS 111 online or the NHS App first.

▶ NHS services can get very busy, particularly over winter. The Get in the Know campaign is designed to support people to use the right NHS service for their particular medical problem to keep their waiting times to a minimum.

You can access trusted NHS information on hundreds of conditions on NHS 111 online by visiting: 111.nhs.uk, you can also download the NHS App on all android or iOS devices, you can find your local pharmacy by clicking [here](#).

Visit GetInTheKnow.co.uk to learn more. ■

Get in the know about which services to use this Christmas and New Year and get the right care as quickly as possible.



GetInTheKnow.co.uk

