



SENCo newsletter

Spring 2022

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Introduction from Sophie Maltby, Head of SEND Support

Well, we have made it through the dreaded first spring half term and are officially on the run down to the summer. The days are getting longer, and the flowers are starting to grow which always makes me feel so much more positive and hopefully you too.

Thank you as ever for your ongoing hard work in what continues to be unprecedented times. Even as some of the threats from COVID are hopefully receding the impact of illness and absence has made the last few months even more challenging and this is not likely to end in the short term.

In SEND we have been working really hard to keep going and juggle all of the priorities following a significant rise in the number of referrals to the service and requests for Statutory Assessments as well as our own staffing challenges. I am sure this pressure has been echoed for you in school.

The Element 3 consultation has now been completed and we are awaiting a final decision which should be in place for the beginning of April. Alongside the formal consultation a significant piece of work has been undertaken by the team to revise the application processes and make them digitalised. This work is almost complete so please look out for the training opportunities after Easter. We are keen to train all SENCOs on the revised processes which will be implemented in the new academic year.

We are busy planning the SENCO network day for June and very excitingly are (everything crossed) hoping to deliver this face to face at City Hall. In the past, we know you have all really valued the chance to network as a group and so were keen to make this happen for you. Especially this year as we have so many new SENCOs to welcome into the group. You might even get a nice lunch! So again please look out for information around this and book the date in your diary.

Do take care of yourselves and thanks for all your excellent work.

Sophie

Sophie Maltby
Head of Service- SEND Support

Referrals to SEND Services

We wanted to clarify some important details regarding referrals to SEND Support Services to make the process smoother and enable us to respond in a timely manner.

- There is an expectation that all children referred to any of the teams within SEND Services should be at SEND Support and additional information is provided to evidence the graduated approach and the provision you have already put in place. (We recognise there are times where there has been a sudden change in circumstances, or the graduated response may be linked to social care and health involvement).
- Please identify the team you want to work with the child clearly and document any previous discussions you may have had with your link teacher/EP.
- Please identify what work you are envisioning to take place. This is particularly important for traded pieces of work.
- Further supporting evidence needs to be uploaded with most referrals. Different teams sometimes need different things, please see below.

EYST:

- SEND support plan or equivalent including targets for the child (**without this your referral will be returned for more information**).
- reports from other professionals involved.

SEMH: (if appropriate)

- Physical Intervention reports
- Exclusion information
- Assessments such as EP reports Boxall Profile and SDQ
- Social Care involvement noted
- Individual support documentation such as provision map / individual support plan/ individual timetable

LCI: (if appropriate)

- Information from school-based assessments
- Data from in school assessments
- Pupil Passports/provision map
- Positive Behaviour Plan
- Paediatrician report
- SALT report

High needs block funding for pupils in mainstream settings

Leicester City Council recently consulted with children and young people, parents/carers, colleagues and mainstream education settings on the funding that is awarded to support children and young people with SEND.

Further information

The consultation process which started on 8 September 2021 proposed to end the distribution of funding based on the additional SEND top up and instead allocate more funding to the banded rates. These new banded rates would be awarded based solely on the individual needs of children and young people.

Thank you to everyone that responded to the consultation which closed on 8 December 2021. The vast majority of the 132 responses were received from parents and schools.

The final report is being taken through local authority governance for a decision, which will be confirmed in early April. Agreed recommendations will determine the implementation for Element 3 funding and transition of arrangements for schools

Training sessions - new Element 3 application and reapplication form

All schools and settings have been invited to attend a training session which will introduce SENCOs to the new electronic Element 3 application process.

We are hosting ten in-person training sessions for SENCOs and Inclusion Managers on the new Element 3 application and reapplication form. The training sessions will take place on Monday 25 April to Friday 29 April 2022.

Each day, there will be two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. You will be given the option to select your preferred date and time. It is important to give at least two preferences so that we can allocate spaces appropriately.

After you complete the form, we will confirm your training date but in the interim, please keep the dates you have selected, free. More information will be sent to you after you register interest in the training sessions via the email address you provide.

Book your place (online form) - deadline Friday 4 March 2022

If you would like further information, please contact jabeen.layne@leicester.gov.uk

Early Years Support Team

Part Time timetables: Some clarification for Early Years Children with SEND

Frequently Asked Questions

Can a school place a pupil on a part-time timetable?

As a rule, no. All children of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a child's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition or SEND needs prevents a child from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the child is expected to attend full-time.

Does this still apply when a child is *not* statutory school age?

Yes. If a child has been asked to attend less hours than they are being funded for because of their SEND needs, they are being treated differently than other pupils who have not got SEND so reasonable adjustments must be made otherwise the child is being put at a disadvantage. Therefore, same rules apply as above, any pastoral support plan or other agreement must have a time limit by which time the child would be expected to attend their full funded entitlement.

School attendance August 2020 DfE

The Equality Act 2010 and schools May2014 DfE

Speech, language and communication pathway




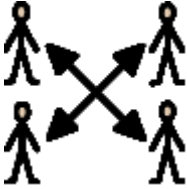


Resources to support early language and literacy developed by multiagency partners involved in Leicester's Readiness for School Steering group are now available.



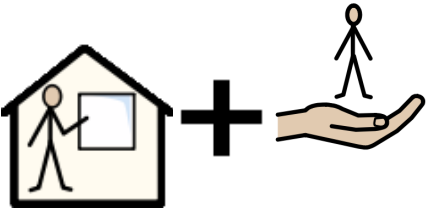

These include:

1. **A communication inclusive spaces framework poster** developed for early years settings and schools
2. **The Balanced System® SLC Pathway**, helps staff and families access the right support at the right time. It includes information and advice to engage parents and wider family members as children's first communication partners and also local and national information and advice on SLC concerns or needs.
3. **An easy read guide to Communication** developed by young people from Big Mouth Forum and the Speech Language and Communication Strategy (2021-2025).

Resources are available here [School's Extranet \(leicester.gov.uk\)](https://leicester.gov.uk/schools-extranet/)

An easy read guide to Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) for parents developed by the Early Years Support Team

 <p>Leicester City Council</p> <p>Education, Health and Care Plan</p>	<p>An education, health and care plan (EHCP) is a document that says what your child's needs are and what support your child should have</p>
	<p>EHCPs are for children who need a lot more support than their nursery or school can usually give</p>
	<p>Before your child can get an EHCP they will have an assessment</p>
	<p>Anyone who knows your child well can ask for an EHC needs assessment if you want it</p>
 <p>Leicester City Council</p>	<p>The Special Education Service in Leicester will say if they agree your child needs an EHCP</p>
	<p>You and other people who know your child will be asked their views about your child's needs and the support they need</p>

	<p>People in the Special Education Service will look at the information and put it all together</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">  <p>Leicester City Council</p> <p>Education, Health and Care Plan</p> </div>	<p>If they agree your child needs more support than a nursery or school can usually give they will let you know your child can have an EHCP.</p>
	<p>The plan should help everyone to work together to help your child</p> <p>You can help decide what nursery or school your child will go to</p>
	<p>It will take up to 20 weeks for your child to get an EHCP if they need one</p>

Hearing Support Team

Supporting Inclusion with Assistance Listening Devices (ALDs)



Some children and students require an Assistive Listening Device (also called a Radio System) in addition to their hearing aids and sound processors (cochlear implants). ALDs can help listening over distance, in noisy environments, in echoey rooms, reduce listening effort and with connection to IT devices. All children and young people are assessed to see if they fit the criteria for having a Radio system as they are not suitable for all students.

Phonak Roger TouchScreen



Oticon EduMic



We appreciate students, families and schools taking care of these devices as we rely on receiving funding to purchase them and they are expensive. For example, a complete Phonak Roger system with 2 receiver's costs just over £1,500. If items are lost or broken, although we try our best it may not always be possible for these to be quickly replaced.

On the TouchScreen radio, experience has shown there are a couple of common faults which occur, often resulting in repair or replacement costs. One being if the radio is swung around when being carried or is not supported by the guide when adjusted to length. This often results in a prong becoming weak and snapping inside the casing.

TouchScreen radio



Hold the guide when adjusting the length of lanyard

Broken lanyard



Broken prong on lanyard

The other common fault is the charging port. If the Radio System needs to be charged at school it is important to know that the micro-USB does not push fully into the port, meaning some of the silver connector is still visible. You will know it is charging as the light indicators flash green. If the micro-USB is pushed flush up to the casing, this will then become dislodged internally.

Radio System



Position of USB

The USB does not push fully into the port on the transmitter. Some of the silver connector can still be seen.

Do not be tempted to push it fully in

If the Radio System is not being used, for example at playtime or dinner time, we ask for devices to be stored safely. We do understand that accidents and breakages do happen but appreciate all your support in these being avoided where at all possible.

Your link visiting Teacher of the Deaf will be able to support you with the use of the Radio System, answer any questions you may have and offer training if necessary.

Learning, Communication and Interaction (LCI) Team

Play Included website

Playincluded.com is a useful website for primary and secondary resources for Lego play activities to help children on the autism spectrum to build friendships; it follows the principles of learning through play. The activities are fun, child led and use a 'learning through play' concept. It helps children make social connections, social communication, and emotional wellbeing through collaborative building with Lego bricks. It is run by 'Bricks for Autism' and you can subscribe to it; this will enable schools to access free Lego play resources and activities for teachers to use within their classrooms with children from reception to year 6. It has been developed by Dr Gina Gomez and her team. The activity sheets give clear learning goals, how to play, what you need and how to extend to different learning levels.

Jyoti Sharma

Play Interaction Specialist LCI

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Team



Leicester City Council's Anti-Bullying Award

The Positive and Peaceful Places (PPP) award was developed utilising ground-breaking research in the area of peace in education, it supports schools in focusing upon peaceful practices, whilst building challenge and capacity. It considers the way that different kinds of peace are experienced within schools, by the children and young people, but also from the perspective of staff and the wider community too. It links directly to the updated 2021 updated Ofsted framework as well as the Keeping Children Safe in Education document too.

Schools are allocated a member of the PPP team, who supports and guides the in-school champions through the process. The award not only considers structures, policies and systems but also develops everyone's role in creating peace and a sense of justice, focuses on a shared ethos and also the impact of positive relationships and connections.

A number of schools have remained committed to working towards and completing the award, Caldecote Primary school recently invited us to join them for their final peace walk and to share their achievements. They focused on a number of key areas:

- Playgrounds and equipment
- PSHE curriculum
- Restorative Approaches
- Policies
- Sensory area








The project has created positive change in all areas of Caldecote Primary School. The school invested in new equipment for the playground in response to pupil voice. This has been a huge success, resulting in children reporting a positive change, feeling safer and enjoying the opportunity to explore new experiences. Caldecote have also embedded a new PSHE curriculum across the school, ensuring quality teaching and access to a range of important topics, like resolving conflict through the use of restorative approaches.

An imaginative and well used sensory area has been created, for supporting children with a wide range of needs. It is extremely multifaceted, providing support for playfulness and fun, but also for times of calm too, helping children to regulate emotionally more successfully.

Throughout their journey the views of staff and children and parents have been key and have guided the direction of change within the school. Congratulations!

A number of schools have now completed the

Positive and Peaceful Places Award – they have all done brilliantly!

-  Rolleston
-  Whitehall
-  Holy Cross
-  Scraptoft Valley
-  Charnwood
-  Mellor
-  Imperial Avenue Infants

And a number of schools are close to completing too!

For further information contact: bethan.pope@leicester.gov.uk

Vision Support Team

Information to be passed to the parents of children or young people with a vision impairment in your setting

Guide Dogs for the Blind Tech for All Scheme



For children with a vision impairment, technology is vital. It develops learning, creativity, life skills, and ultimately, confidence and independence.

At Guide Dogs, the Tech for All service offers a free Apple iPad or iPhone to children and young people (aged 3-18) with visual impairments, to use outside of school.

These devices can be useful in helping a child or young person's development — both to support learning at home or just to have fun and explore the activities and interests they enjoy.

How do you apply for a free device for your child?

Applications for the Tech for All service is closed for 2021. However, they hope to re-open the scheme at some point in the spring term 2022.

It is possible to register interest by completing an online form which should only take a couple of minutes and involves inputting basic contact information. [Guide Dogs Tech for All - Register Your Interest](#)

If these devices aren't right for a child or young person's needs, they also [offer grants for specialist assistive technology devices or software](#) (such as laptops or desktop computers with screen reading software, refreshable braille displays, video magnifiers or enlarged keyboards) that can provide a fully customised experience to meet your child's preferred style of learning and way they get information. They also provide grants for [sensory equipment and toys](#), to help your child meet important development milestones with a choice of sensory packages with toys.

Please speak to you visiting Specialist Vision Support Teacher for more information.

Disabled Children's Service

Transition documents

Transition is an exciting time for young people with special educational needs and disabilities between the ages of 14 to 25. It is important to start planning and having conversations early to make transition successful.

The Local Offer hosts transition information documents that can support young people and their families to understand and prepare for some of these changes. Please share the documents with families you are working with that may find it useful, they can be found here [Family Information | Moving in to adulthood \(leicester.gov.uk\)](#).



Rix Wiki

The Rix Wiki is an online simple, accessible and easy to build website, which allows children, young people and their family to communicate and share important information. The information can be shared in the format of documents, video clips and images.

The CCG purchased 350 licences which are available to use until August 2022. The pilot scheme is for young people with learning disabilities, ASD and/or have complex health needs in receipt of a personal health budget.

Please follow link to Wiki Steps document which has video clips explaining step by step processes in setting up your own Wiki. <https://rixresearchandmedia.org/shanes-wiki-a-parents-story/>

A registration form can be requested from personalisationteam.llr@nhs.net

For further information or to discuss the project contact Michelle Jones (NHS EAST LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND CCG) michelle.jones10@nhs.net