



SENCO NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2022

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Disabled Children's Service

Local Offer Live 2022 is coming soon, and will take place on Thursday 10 November, 10 – 5pm at The Kube, Leicester Racecourse Leicester LE2 4AL. There is plenty of space for parking and minibuses if you would like to visit with students.

The event will host 50 stalls sharing information and advice about education, social care, health and activities and services available in the city. Starz from Ash Field Academy will be performing and there will also be inclusive story telling.

This year, for the first time we have a "Celebration of Success award ceremony". Children and young people with SEND, have been nominated for their achievements in the categories below and will be receiving their awards from local services and businesses who have sponsored the awards such as Cadent, SEND Community of Practice, Educational Psychology, Disabled Childrens Service, Adult Social Care, Special Education Service and Inspire together.

- Positive contribution to society
- Arts, Music and media
- Shining Star
- Good friend
- Sports
- Self Advocacy

This email address can also be used for further information and queries about the live event please email info@lcpcf.net

Early Years Support Team

Reminder: Speech, language and communication pathway in Leicester City

The Leicester SLC Pathway is part of the national Balanced System® Pathway available for families and staff across the UK. For more information, please follow this link [Family Information | Speech, language and communication pathway \(leicester.gov.uk\)](#)

Disabled Access Funding (DAF) has increased – Don't forget to claim!

All early year's providers including schools who deliver Funded Early Education (FEEE) places for 3 and 4 year olds (Nursery/F1) are entitled to a one off payment of now £800 per year for children in receipt of Disability Living Allowance. The process for claiming DAF is through the provider portal.

The Easy Peasy App – free access for all Leicester City residents including early years practitioners

We're pleased to offer all early years practitioners, families and Leicester City partners fully-funded access to use EasyPeasy as part of the Talk and Play project.

The EasyPeasy app brings together the best ideas, advice, and inspiration from a global community of parents, experts, and parenting brands for parents and their 0-5 year olds.

How to get the app - scanning the QR code is the fastest way to access the app. We welcome you to use these assets to promote the app within your setting, through your communication channels or within your network meetings. You can also download the app directly from the [iOS appstore](#) or [Google playstore](#). Premium access will be applied when a Leicester City postcode is entered during sign-up.



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Learning, Communication and Interaction (LCI) Team

‘Speech and Language UK’ – formerly known as The ‘I Can’ speech and language charity

The I Can speech and language charity which many of you may be familiar with have re-branded and are now known as ‘Speech and Language UK’. They have a new updated website with valuable SLCN information and resources for both families and educators

On this website in the educator’s section, you will find

- Links to short online courses
- The Speech and Language communication framework
- ‘What Works’ database for SLCN interventions
- The communication Trust materials and resources and much more

[Educator Hub \(speechandlanguage.org.uk\)](https://speechandlanguage.org.uk)

Free Clicker 8 and DocsPlus demo / training – 15 November at 2:30

You are invited to join (via MS Teams) a 30–40-minute demonstration from Cricksoftware education consultant.

The software functions will be demonstrated showing how it can be used to support students’ writing (+ more), including during exams.

Plus, Questions & Answers

To book a place contact Paula Jones paula.jones@leicester.gov.uk

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Team

Anti-Bullying Week: United against Bullying: Monday 14 to Friday 18 November 2022

The theme for this year's Anti-Bullying week is 'REACH OUT'.

On Monday 10th October 15 schools attended SEMH's free Anti-Bullying Primary Course. This course was funded by Public Health to support the wellbeing and mental health of children in schools.

The course included aspects of Restorative Approaches to support schools when dealing with conflict, thoughts around how to ensure the wellbeing of all parties involved and discussions for building a whole school ethos as well as resources to contribute to focus on Anti-bullying week.

This course was well received, and participants felt they gained:

"Skills and expertise in regard to anti-bullying" and "how to deal with bullying in school, how to effectively implement a restorative approach, ideas for anti-bullying week."

The collaborative part of the day was useful for schools to share expertise and practical ideas of what is currently working well in schools. One course participant commented they had gained "Insights into how to help both bullies and victims, ways of implementing kindness strategies, working with practitioners from other schools to gain ideas and insights into their behaviour policies" Another commented "It exceeded all expectations and has given me ideas that I can implement immediately."

It was fantastic to learn about the great practice already in schools and feel the passion in the room from professionals who are supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children in schools.

For further information:

[Anti-Bullying Week 2022 – Reach Out](#)

For further resources and information:

[Anti-Bullying Week 2022 – Primary School pack](#)

[Anti-Bullying Week 2022 – Secondary School pack](#)

Leicester City Council's Anti-Bullying Award

Positive Peaceful Places (PPP)

PPP has been developed to support schools in evolving peaceful practices in all its forms. The award looks at how schools can develop structures, policies and systems but also to develop justice, fairness, a shared ethos and the building of healthy relationships – all of which links to the 2019 Ofsted Handbook.

The first schools have now successfully completed the award, and many schools are currently on their journey towards accreditation. We are continuing to run the award but with adaptations that suit schools due to social distancing and recognising the challenges schools face at the moment.

It would be wonderful for more schools to join us in gaining accreditation and celebrate their achievements through this award. We have a team of staff who can train and support you through the process.

Get in touch:

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Other Resources and Suggestions to Make Your Week Effective
 Book Ideas – General Books About Diversity and Themes Associated with Bullying

	<p>Elmer by David McKee Story about a multicoloured elephant who paints himself grey to look like other elephants. Helps celebrate the value of being unique and to be yourself.</p>		<p>Giraffe is Left out By Sue Graves Giraffe feels left out because he hasn't been invited to a party but his friends have. Looks at the value of kindness and explores themes of excluding others.</p>
	<p>The Pirates Next Door By Johnny Duddle The Jolley-Rodger Pirates arrive as new neighbours into the neighbourhood but are judged by their appearance by everyone except Matilda. Addresses themes of acceptance and difference.</p>		<p>Tyrannosaurus Drip By Julia Donaldson and David Roberts A rhyming tale that finds a duckbill in the wrong nest. Despite name calling he demonstrates the courage to still be himself.</p>

	<p>Feather Boy By Nicky Singer</p> <p>A KS2 novel about Robert who is bullied by Nicker at the same time as his parent's marriage is breaking up. Themes of courage and resilience.</p>		<p>Buried Alive By Jacqueline Wilson</p> <p>Suitable for KS2 this story is about friends on holiday who are joined by two others that arrive who spoil and ruin their stay. With help they learn to stand up to them.</p>
	<p>Secondary – Noughts and Crosses By Malorie Blackman</p> <p>Callum and Sephy are friends but can no longer be together in a world where difference is not tolerated. Encourages pupils to think about difference.</p>		<p>Secondary – Hollow Pike By Juno Dawson</p> <p>Lis moves country to try and escape her tormentors but ends up in events linked to a murder. Looks at the relentless malice of school bullying.</p>

Lists of books to support different themes can also be found at:

The Book Trust

[Themed booklists for children | BookTrust](#)

Huff Post

[35 Children's Books That Teach Empathy And Kindness | HuffPost UK Parenting \(huffingtonpost.co.uk\)](#)

Activity Ideas

Random Acts of Kindness

Encourage your pupils to undertake random acts of kindness within their school, family and friends. You could create bags of joy that contain little messages and pictorial gifts to leave anonymously for a person or perhaps even assign one child a day to give the gift to a chosen class member. Alternatively, to the bag this could be a card or little pass given with a free hug or smile recorded on it.

Wrinkled Heart

Help pupils consider the impact of hurtful words by using a large heart shaped piece of paper. As you read a story (perhaps one of suggested above) scrunch up the heart each time someone was unkind to the main character. Try to flatten out the heart each time in the story someone was kind. At the end discuss the wrinkles on the paper and consider how although people have tried to make things better it does affect the original person. They are healing but this experience will stay with them. Then encourage the key message of think before you speak or act. It may be powerful to display and explain this in your classes.

Kindness Challenges

Set yourselves as a class or school to undertake kindness challenges. This could be for example, a school food bank collection, visit to the local care home to sing them a song or litter pick around the local area.

Kindness challenges can be given on a bingo grid for each pupil and they are then given a period of time to cross off and achieve as many as possible. A certificate for achieving different levels of achievements might be nice to be issued as a reward.

For older students in secondary encourage the pupils to dedicate a week of spreading positivity on social media through the messages they send to friends.

Explore How Kindness is Shown

Consider researching local, national and international acts of kindness to bring awareness of pupils that this can be shown in many different ways.

Kindness Catchers (origami paper fortune teller)

Make a kindness catcher using origami and under each flap consider an act of kindness for example: give a compliment, tell a joke, give a high five, share some class resources with them, let your friend go first.

Circle time

Using a talking object explore kindness encouraging your pupils to finish a sentence such as... *one nice thing in my life is....* or *something kind that has happened to me was when ...*

Thank You Post Box

In your school or classroom create a physical post box that people can use to send messages of kindness to each other.

Fill your Bucket / Jar of Kindness

Thank you, messages can also be placed in a physical bucket, or on the wall display bucket after using the 'Have You Filled Your Bucket' story and kindness concept. Alternatively, the messages can be put in a jar and shared at times to suit the class.

Shout Out boards

In staffrooms and classrooms people can write down and 'shout out' to acknowledge the act of kindness that was shown.

Attenborough Arts Centre are looking to recruit a SENCO to join their voluntary steering group for the SENsory Atelier programme.

The programme is nationally and internationally significant, influenced by the pedagogy of Reggio Children, Sightlines Initiative and House of Imagination and with academic links to Universities across the UK. Our focus is on utilising art as a tool to explore wider learning and skills development with disabled young people and those with SEN, working in partnership with 9 Leicestershire Special Schools, teachers, young people, artists, and the wider community around each child.

The Steering group meets 4 times per year to provide support and challenge to the Programme Manager, helping to ensure the programme meets its intended aims and is representative of the voices of its stakeholders. Joining the steering group offers networking with a national team of experts in their fields, and opportunities to link with further CPD as part of the programme.

One aim of the programme is to share learning within both SEN and Mainstream education, particularly through links with SENCOs, and we are looking for someone able to attend, offer insight from their context, and interested in supporting advocacy for the arts as a tool for education in local, national and international platforms.

The current steering group members are:

Teachers and senior leaders from all 9 schools.

Jeremy Webster – Attenborough Arts Centre, University of Leicester

Marianne Pape – Attenborough Arts Centre, University of Leicester

Bob Christer - Attenborough Arts Centre, University of Leicester

Caroline Rowland - Attenborough Arts Centre, University of Leicester

Dr Gill Brigg – Independent SEND Theatre and Arts Education specialist

Hazel Townsend – The Mighty Creatives

Gemma Bhagalia – The City Classroom

Lucy Turner – The Whitworth, The University of Manchester

Sian Watson Taylor – Independent freelance artist

Dr Penny Hay – Bath Spa University, House of Imagination

Debi Keyte-Hartland – Director of Sightlines, attending as independent

Lisa Pittwood - Independent Safeguarding Reviewer, Early Help for All project

To express your interest, please contact Bob Christer, SENsory Atelier Programme Manager, Attenborough Arts Centre - bob.christer@le.ac.uk Tel: 0116 252 5343
Read about SENsory Atelier on our blog – [Unlocking The World](#)

Special Education Service (SES)

SEND Travel Policy update

A statutory consultation was carried out between 25 October 2021 and 16 January 2022 where the Leicester City Council consulted with a wide audience on proposed updates to the current SEND Travel policy for children and young people up to the age of 16 years, and those with SEND attending post-16 education

- On 5 April 2022, the council confirmed the decision to implement the updates in full by the 25 August 2022
- The updated policies outline:
- The council's responsibility to encourage, enable, support and assist young people with additional needs to participate in education and training
- The council's commitment to support children and young people to develop their independence, enabling them to prepare for adulthood
- How the council will meet its obligations to provide Home to School and College Travel to children and young people with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities, living in Leicester who are eligible to receive it. The policy also gives advice on the support available and the commitment to encourage independent travel to and from school or college.

The final report can be found on [School's Extranet \(leicester.gov.uk\)](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/schools-extranet/). If you would like further information, please go to [Family Information | Personal Transport Budget \(leicester.gov.uk\)](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/family-information/personal-transport-budget/)

Link to the transport policy (Local Offer)

[Leicester City Home to school and college SEND Travel Policy 2022-2023](#)

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The Caseworker Model ~ how we work update

The Special Education Service administers the statutory processes for identification and assessment for children and young people (aged 0-25) with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

In the last 12 months we have expanded the team from 6 Education Health and Care Inclusion Officers EHCIOs and Service Manager to 19 EHCIO's (caseworkers) 2 Team Leaders, and a Service Manager

Within this change we have implemented a case worker model which improves accountability and enables each EHCIO to have more oversight to ECHPs and requests and is more of a personal approach for families and professionals. Each full time EHCIO holds a case load of approximately 225 children. During the next few weeks as EHCIO's work on new requests for assessment, or on annual reviews they will contact schools and parents for those children and young people who are now on their case load.

A Duty system has been introduced which means, 5 days a week in the morning a EHCIO is on a rota to answer queries from parents, schools and professionals. The EHCIO will either deal with the enquiry, pass information on to the caseworker or signpost where required.

Gem Simms

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Annual Review data for DfE

Starting in the new academic year (2022-23) we as a Local Authority will be reporting annual review data to the DfE. This is something that is brand new and has never been asked of Local Authorities before. What we will be reporting is the percentage/number of acknowledgement letters (letters that inform schools and parents we have received an annual review) that have been sent out on time – this deadline is 4 weeks from the annual review date, as well as how many final EHCP's we are issuing on time – this is a 12 week deadline from the annual review date.

This therefore means that schools **will have to** send their annual review paperwork in within the 2 weeks as stated in the code of practice in order for us to meet these deadlines, as if the paperwork was sent in 6 weeks after the annual review date, we will have already missed our 4 week deadline for the acknowledgement letter and this further eats into the 12 week deadline of issuing the plan on time.

The local authority will be reporting this data to the DfE on a monthly basis and will be questioned on any of the data that does not fall in line with the timelines set out within the Code of Practice, therefore it is important that the local authority and schools work together to ensure that deadlines are met and EHCP's are issued in a timely manner.

Additional information has been sent out to all schools by the local authorities annual review coordinator regarding this as well as the information being provided on the schools extranet. If any further information is required please contact Caitlin Smith caitlin.smith@leicester.gov.uk. ”

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Vision Support Team and Hearing Support Team

Sensory Team residential to Beaumanor Hall

On Thursday 29 September, a small group of young people supported by the Vision Support Team joined a group of young people supported by the Hearing Support Team on an overnight residential at Beaumanor Hall, Woodhouse, Leicestershire.

The purpose of the trip was to explore new environments, develop skills of independence, work with other young people and, most importantly, have some fun!

There were several activities during the two days stay.

After unpacking in the cabin, everyone went on a walk around Beaumanor Hall and its beautiful grounds to become familiar with the surroundings. There was a lovely sensory garden that was visited enroute.



After lunch, the activity was climbing. Not only was it impressive to see everyone's skills in climbing to the top of the wall but it was also great to see the teamwork and excellent communication as the young people worked in pairs and small groups.



After the evening meal, there was a final activity of the day. The young people worked in two groups to make a 'land buggy'. All of the parts that were needed were provided but the groups had to collaborate to work out how everything fitted together and to make sure the buggy was 'roadworthy'. It was a good team building activity and there was lots of laughter as each buggy was tested.



After a late night and an early breakfast, the activity for the final morning was 'Survival Skills'. This took place in the wooded area near the Hall and again, the young people worked in two groups to create a shelter that would cover the everyone in the group and shelter them from wind and rain.

Two great shelters were made, and both were able to withstand the rain (watering can of water) and wind (tarpaulin being shook). I think the adults enjoyed this activity too!



Once the shelters were complete, everyone enjoyed a mug of hot chocolate made on the campfire before having a go at starting a small campfire themselves.



It was a great couple of days, and I think everyone enjoyed themselves. It is good to hear that some of the young people are still keeping in touch after the residential.

There are plans for another overnight stay at Beaumanor Hall soon and whilst we will be happy to welcome back those who have been this year, it will be lovely to see some new faces.

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