



# **SENCo newsletter**

## **Spring 2024**

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### Dingley's Promise



### **Have you heard about the free SEND training from Dingley's Promise? The story continues.....**

After a successful expression of interest in the summer term we are delighted this year to be able to offer a free training opportunity which is available to the whole early year's workforce in Leicester City from Dingley's Promise.

The programme is a series of ten courses over five years (we are currently in year 3) aimed at empowering early years practitioners to deliver inclusive practices by upskilling them through training and shared information/learning resources. It is expected that the training will increase learners' awareness of the needs of all children, especially those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and their confidence in supporting the learning and well-being of all children in their setting.

Courses include:

- ❖ *Introduction To Early Years Inclusive Practice*
- ❖ *Early Years SEND Transitions*
- ❖ *Managing Behaviours that Challenge*
- ❖ *Having Difficult Conversations with Families*
- ❖ *Voice of the Child*

There are a further 5 courses to be developed.

Last term we have been able to launch this offer in lots of different ways so hopefully by now you may have heard of the programme. We don't want you to miss out so we will continue to promote.

We now have just over 200 learners from settings, schools and local authority teams. The highest number of learner come from early years settings, nearly 150 of you have signed up and started this training which is amazing. We are keen to lose momentum so if you or your colleagues have not signed up yet, all the information you need is below.

## How to sign up to the Dingley's training

Its easy.... Register at <https://dingley.org.uk/dingleys-promise-training/early-years-inclusion-programme/>

Someone will get back to you in about 5 days with a link to access all the courses

All the training is online and can be completed at your own pace.

### *Of those who have completed the training so far...*

- **88% Feel more confident as a result of the training**
- **96% Believe they can support more children**
- **99% Would recommend this course**
- **94% are committed to making a change in their setting as a result of the training.**

## The Dingley's Promise Mark of Achievement award

Settings/schools can now achieve their very own Mark of Achievement to reflect their passion and commitment to inclusive practice in the early years.

To qualify for the Dingley's Promise Training Mark of Achievement you must meet the following criteria:

Settings with 4 practitioners or more: 75% will have undertaken the inclusive practice course along with 2 additional courses of their choice.

When your setting/school has achieved the above, please notify our training team via email on [training@dingley.org.uk](mailto:training@dingley.org.uk)

Once the course completions are verified you will receive a certificate, a window sticker to display in your setting and Dingley's Promise notepads and pens to celebrate your achievement.



## Disability Access Fund

### **Don't miss out! You may be eligible for funding to help with children with SEND in your care.**

All early year's providers including schools who deliver Funded Early Education (FEEE) places for 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to a one off payment of £828 per year for children in receipt of Disability Living Allowance.

Providers are responsible for identifying eligible children through a discussion with parents.

This payment is there to support providers to make reasonable adjustments in order to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and disability (SEND) and could be spent on training and /or resources.

For further details follow the link below

<https://families.leicester.gov.uk/childcare-professionals/send-for-professionals/disability-access-fund/>

## Vision Support Team

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Vision impairment is a low incidence disability. As a result, there is often only a single child or young person with a diagnosed vision impairment in a setting. As a team, we value the importance of creating opportunities for children and young people with a vision impairment and their families to meet to share experiences.

We have several events planned for this academic year, but the two articles below will tell you about two of the events we did at the end of the Autumn term.

The team will be sending a 'VST SENCO Update' via email to all SENCOs in settings with a child or young person with a vision impairment. This update will contain more information specific to vision impairment and will include exam access arrangements and accessing modified past exam papers, independent travel training and requesting modified resources from the team.

## Family Event to 'Enlightened' at Abbey Park



Wrapped up warm and braving the cold November evening temperatures, several children, young people and their families (not forgetting gorgeous Clara the Guide Dogs Buddy Dog) along with members of the Vision Support Team, visited the fabulous 'Enlightened' at Abbey Park.





Enlightened is a mile long magical outdoor light trail that was set up in Leicester to coincide with both Diwali and Christmas celebrations. It was a great immersive experience where we got to explore sparkling illuminations such as the tunnel of light, laser lights, dancing fairies and magical creatures and tens of thousands of colourful bulbs all set up within the woodland of Abbey Park. We all even had the chance to 'Make a Wish.'



Everyone had a great night and some new friends were made during the experience. It was lovely to see everyone and here's hoping that 'Enlightened' returns to Leicester again next year.



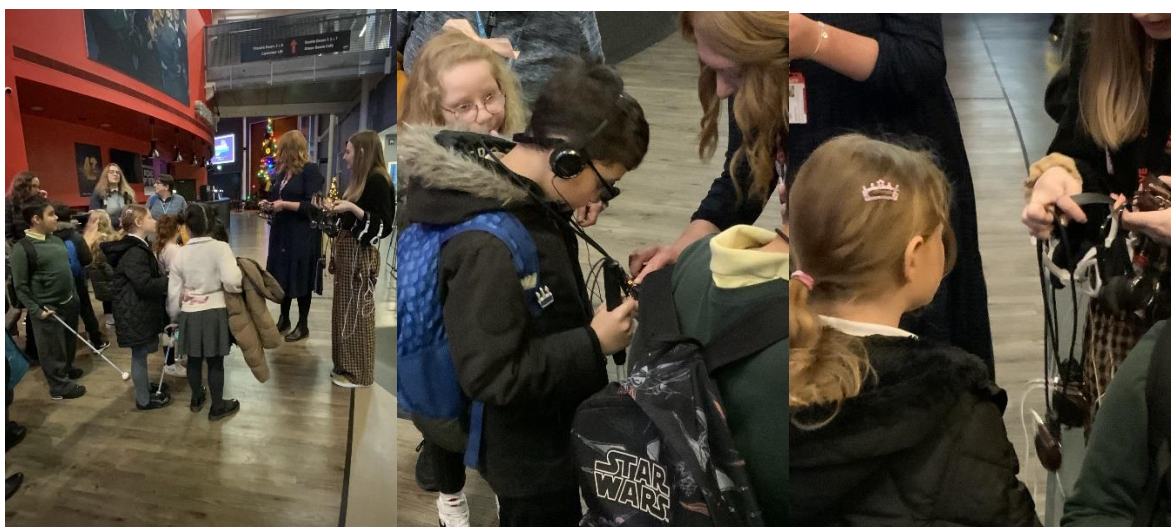
## Primary Event to Curve Theatre

On Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December, a group of nine primary school children joined us for a Christmas theatre trip to Curve to watch an accessible performance of 'The Owl who came for Christmas'.

The Curve very kindly put on a special Touch Tour just for us so that we could all explore the scenery and props up close before the show started. We met the audio describers, Nadine and Kate, who showed us the puppet for the main character, Rosie the Owl, and some of the costumes that would be used in the show. We got to walk on the stage and lots of us enjoyed feeling the artificial snow that would be used later!



We then went for a quick demonstration on how to use a headset with audio description. There were different types of headphones for us to try.





Then, we took to our seats ready for the performance! In the 15 minutes before the show started, Nadine and Kate described the stage and the scenery, so we could check that all our headsets were working.

At several points throughout the show, we got to join in flapping our arms like a bird or wiggling like a worm! We all thoroughly enjoyed the show, especially when the characters sprinkled snow over the audience at the end.



It was wonderful to see the children interacting with each other and enjoying having the opportunity to take part in the touch tour and try using audio description. We are already eager to find out what the Christmas show will be for December 2024!

## Quality Inclusion Team

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### Element 3 Hints and Tips

#### For the purposes of this document:

E2 = Element 2 funding

E3 = Element 3 funding

CYP = Child or Young Person

EHCP = Education, Health, and Care Plan

BERA = Best Endeavours and Reasonable Adjustments i.e., Ordinarily Available

#### GENERAL:

- Only include the SPECIFIC BERA associated with the NEED of the CYP and does not need to be complete; it is a working document. Do not include ALL NEED and WHOLE SCHOOL as this information will be sought via other means.

- Element 3: all provision that is above and beyond Ordinarily Available (BERA) within a mainstream school. You should describe how the provision meets the needs of the child and what makes it additional to the mainstream offer.
- Think EHCP structure and style. E.g., General = Child or Young Person's (CYP) story.
- Proofread your finished application, look out for errors in costing, misspelling of names and his/her, check no other CYP's information is included.
- For the purposes of Transition and Emergency Funding Applications **one term = 13 weeks.**

## **FORM:**

### **Element 2**

- E2 is the previous and current provision. What has been done in the last year to support the CYP in line with the Graduated Response.

### **Golden Thread**

- Provide evidence of reviews, this can be within your SEND Passport etc.
- Need - Outcome - Provision (is it all reflected in the timetable?)
- Is professional advice reflected in the request? Do outcomes and provision match.
- The GENERAL section should be the chronology (Story of the child) but not the need. The needs of the Child or Young Person will go in the NEEDS section.
- Professional advice – summarise, do not copy and paste. Comment on implementation.
- Reminder that a SMART OUTCOME that is short term is now required for all applications. Outcomes can be written in the same style as for an EHCP, there is Outcomes training available from SENDSS.
- SEND passport should reflect current provision and show evidence of the Graduated Response (Assess – Plan – Do – Review). The SEND Code of Practice suggests a minimum of two reviews.

### **Timetables**

- Add a Title. Label the timetable with CURRENT or PROPOSED.
- If timetables are colour coded, please remember to add a key.
- Alternative or in house nurture provisions or classes, should have a description added that includes staffing structure and how it directly supports the CYP's NEED through the provision offered.
- When an intervention is mentioned in Need, Provision or Advice that is referenced, it should be evident in the proposed provision and timetable.
- For Groups, please work out the funding per child i.e. If the CYP is in a group of 8 and the TA is paid £18 per hour you need to divide hour rate by number of CYP.
- When a CYP is within a small group but is supported directly by an adult to access this, please note this on the timetable so that it is clear.
- When referencing CONTINUOUS PROVISION, please provide a description of what this looks like in your setting and how the adults are used to directly support the CYP. E.g.

Continuous supervision throughout the provision both inside and outside to ensure safety of the child and peers. (Including a description of the unsafe behaviours of the child e.g., absconding)

Direct support with:

- Communication and Interaction, e.g., commentating and facilitating interaction.
- Using resources safely and exploring resources and their function.
- Transitioning from one activity to another safely using signs and/or symbols.
- Co-regulation and modelling of suitable regulation techniques
- Self-care needs, nappy changes, using the toilet, washing hands, eating skills.
- Attention and maintaining focus such as prompting, commentating, invitations to play.

**What to include and what not to include:**

Keep the application short and sweet if possible. NEED-OUTCOMES-PROVISION-REVIEW

| Yes please  | No thanks                                     |
|---|---|
| Timetable   | CPOMs   |
| SEND Support Plan/IEP/Pupil Passport (with review)            | Learning journals / observations              |
| Part time and reintegration timetable with review minutes     | Diagnostic Letters                            |
| Current Assessment and Attainment Data (summary)              | Historic data                                 |
| Specific BERA (from Sept 2023)                                | Whole School / All Needs BERA                 |
| Chronology of support   | Health referral letters                       |
| Personal Care Plans / Positive Handling Plans / Medical Plans | EPIF Records                                  |
| Professional Reports (RECENT)                                 | PEEP  |
| Evidence of review  | Social Care Meeting Minutes / Plans / Reports |
| Alternative methods of child voice                            | Exclusion reporting and recording forms       |
|   | All Needs BERA (in current format)            |

**Emergency E3:**

A one-off payment for 13 weeks to allow time to put support in place and allow for assess, plan, do and review. This is in addition to Element 2 spend.

Has **significant** SEND needs and in collaboration with LA SENDSS professionals:

**New International Arrivals**

- Needs a date of arrival, someone who has come into the country recently (within the last 12 weeks) and has a SEND need, not EAL.

**Crisis situation** (removal from home, sudden hospital visits, life-changing incident, etc.)

- Needs a summary of what the crisis is (do not include cpomms and ensure it is only need to know information).

**Significant escalation of behaviour**

- Expectation is that you have sought advice from professionals regarding the behaviour and if the child or young person has been placed on a part time timetable or excluded, there is a clear plan for reintegration.

**Unidentified complex and enduring needs prior to starting your school.**

- CYP who have arrived in your school without any prior identified SEND need or support.

## Re-applications

- Must include a clear review of previous outcomes and provision. How has the funding made an impact?
- When outcomes are UNMET, what will be different next time? E.g., do they need more time, adaptation to the provision, more interventions, higher frequency of intervention?
- When outcomes are MET, what will the next round of funding be used for? Is there a clear link between the last outcomes and the new ones? What impact did the funding have and how will the next round of funding be used to support the needs of the CYP?

## Social Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH) Team

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### Positive and Peaceful Places Award – PPP

The Social, Emotional and Mental Health team and City Psychology Service continue to drive Leicester City Councils Anti-Bullying Award, Positive and Peaceful Places. A number of schools have successfully completed the award since it was launched and have seen benefits across the whole school, including stronger relationships, restoration of conflict, exploring peace and developing approaches to effectively tackle bullying in schools.

Research has found that the best way to challenge bullying is to take an approach that involves the whole school community, pupils, staff and Governors, sharing ideas and skills to achieve the accreditation. The award focuses on building peace within schools and was developed through work with leading experts in the field of peace and restorative practices.

The Social, Emotional and Mental Health Team and City Psychology Service guide schools through an audit of their current anti-bullying policies and practice. Working together with whole staff, areas of development are identified, and a focussed project is planned to develop Positive and Peaceful Practices in schools.

The award is open to all schools and colleges in Leicester City at a cost of £600 for the three year accreditation. Reaccreditation processes are currently being developed working alongside City Schools.



The approach to Leicester City's to Anti-Bullying has been recognised as innovative and progressive:

**Dr Terence Bevington, Conflict Consultant shared;**

*“Leicester County Council (LCC) has taken the bold and progressive step of reframing what used to be their Anti-Bullying award and have created a much more meaningful and positively focused Positive and Peaceful Places award. With this initiative, LCC places itself at the vanguard of practice nationally and even internationally. As I, and several other authors have identified, applying the framework of positive peace in schools provides a holistic and inclusive vehicle for schools to move forward. Positive peace helps schools to build a culture that priorities the safety, wellbeing and learning of all members of the school community. As an academic researching the potential for peace to make our schools more human, more harmonious and more healthy, I am deeply impressed by the lead that LCC is taking in bringing peace front and centre stage.”*

For further information please contact Amanda Stapleton – SEMH Teacher and PPP Lead  
[Amanda.stapleton@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:Amanda.stapleton@leicester.gov.uk)

Bhavin Pathak – Mental Health Manager - Psychology Service  
[Bhavin.Pathak@Leicester.gov.uk](mailto:Bhavin.Pathak@Leicester.gov.uk)

## City Psychology Service

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### ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) 6 day training

In the Spring term, our second cohort of ELSAs completed their 6 day training with the City Psychology Service. Our ELSAs came from across 16 schools, including Primary, Secondary and Specialist settings, and are now embarked on their ELSA roles in schools. We now have more than 30 new ELSAs trained over the last 18 months, working in our City and nearby schools, supporting children's social, emotional and mental health needs through early intervention.

#### What is an ELSA?

ELSAs are teaching assistants and pastoral support staff who have received specific training from Educational Psychologists to help them plan and deliver programmes of support to pupils who are experiencing temporary or longer-term emotional needs. Programmes can be delivered one to one or within small groups and can cover a variety of areas. ELSA's work across both primary and secondary age ranges.

The ELSA project is based on the principle that emotional difficulties can create a barrier to learning. Increasing the capacity of school staff to identify pupil needs and provide appropriate interventions, within the context of a safe and supportive relationship, will help

to improve pupils' mental health and wellbeing and enhance their ability to access learning in school.

ELSA's receive regular group supervision from an Educational Psychologist to provide them with ongoing support and development, and to ensure they can maintain their ELSA status.

The ELSA project is nationally recognised. For more information visit [www.elsanetwork.org](http://www.elsanetwork.org)

[As part of the training, we provide a session for school senior leaders / line managers. Building on the positive response to this session, we will be looking at ways to strengthen the network for Leicester City ELSAs and their schools over the coming year.](#)

## **The training**

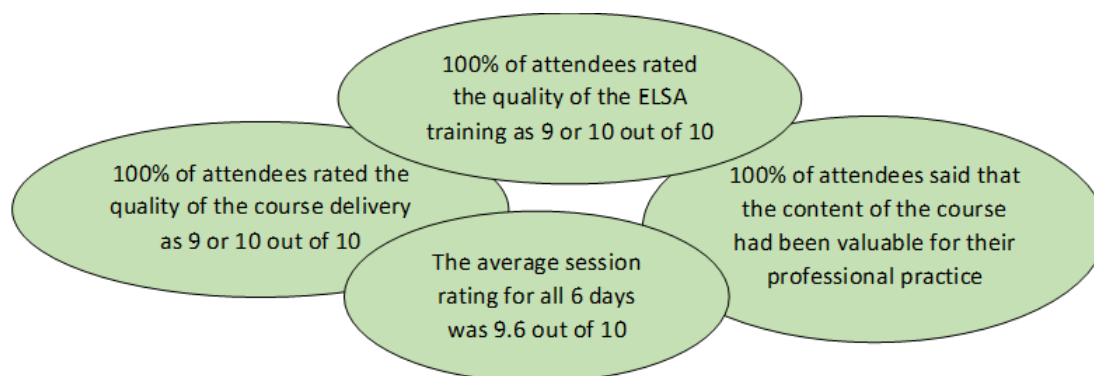
The 6 days of training covers a wide range of areas relating to emotional literacy, including the core skills needed to be an effective ELSA:

- Day 1 – Introduction to ELSA and Emotional Literacy; Beginnings and connections; Active listening and reflective conversations
- Day 2 – Building resilience & self-esteem: Security, selfhood, affiliation (including attachment, self-identity and belonging)
- Day 3 – Emotional awareness and emotional regulation; Introduction to ELSA with line managers
- Day 4 – Managing strong emotions (including anger and anxiety); Autism and emotional wellbeing; Social and friendship skills
- Day 5 – Loss and bereavement; Use of stories (therapeutic stories, social stories and comic strip conversations)
- Day 6 – Supporting Change; Referrals, setting SMART targets and planning

The course trains its delegates to become ELSAs and to deliver ELSA interventions in their school.

**Cost:** £600 per delegate. This includes 6 days of training, and the first two supervision sessions. Ongoing supervision will be required to maintain ELSA status (at an additional cost).

## Training evaluation:



## Feedback from ELSAs:



**Our next training course will start in October 2024. For more information or to reserve a place for your school, please contact Zoe King, Senior Educational Psychologist [zoe.king@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:zoe.king@leicester.gov.uk)**

**Booking will open in the summer term using the link below**

**<https://send-leicester.bookinglive.com/sendeedep-courses>**

## SENCo Briefings 2023-24

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### Links to book:

Please note the change of date

LA Maintained Schools:

[1 July 2024 9-4:00 – City Hall](#)

Courses for Non LCC schools and academies:

[1 July 2024 9-4:00 – City Hall](#)