

October 2022

SEND newsletter

Special Educational Needs and Disability



Welcome from Caroline Marriott



I am pleased to have the opportunity to open our first newsletter for the 22/23 academic year and hope the return to school from the summer holidays has been a positive one for you. I know that returning to school or starting a new school is a very busy time and that whilst this can be exciting for some of our children and young people it can also be a worrying time for others. Just as soon as one academic year starts we are in full swing looking at children and young people that will move between phases of education in September 2023. We are keen to hear from you if your child has an EHC plan, we ask that you please let us know your school preferences.

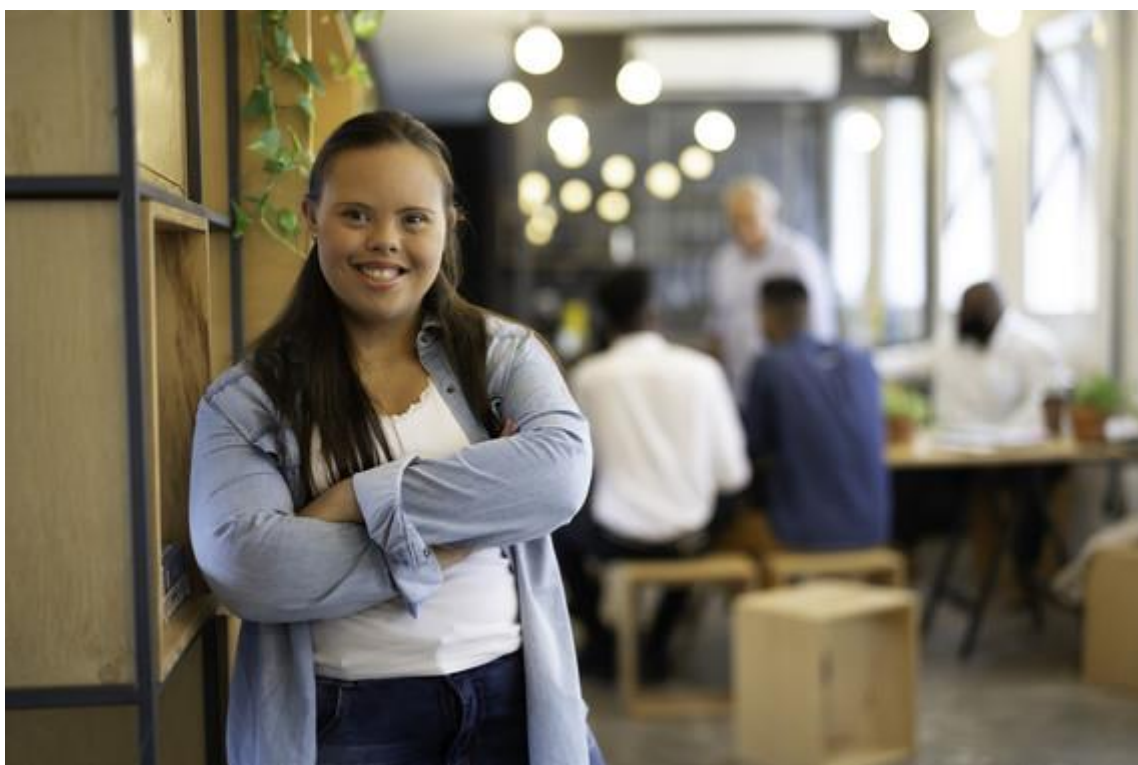
I also wanted to take this opportunity to share some personal news with you, as I will be leaving Milton Keynes City Council at the start of January for some new challenges. I am grateful for the almost 9 years I have had in my role and it has been a privilege to support and develop services for our children and young people with SEND in MK and their families. As I move on at the end of the year, the SEND teams will continue to provide the advice and support as usual.

Update on Specialist Provision planning

Following the positive informal consultation on special school place planning options in Spring 2022, work is now underway on all 5 proposals:

1. Development of SEMH Places at Stephenson Academy and Romans Field School, the two new classrooms have been completed at Romans Field School and work has started at Stephenson and is due to finish by September 2023.
2. Development of a High Complex Needs Provision, we are currently looking for expressions of interest from MK special schools to work with the LA in developing this provision and will have further updates in the new year.

3. Development of a new ASC / Complex needs school for 4 – to 19 year olds, we are currently looking at the next steps in progressing this option and will keep you informed.
4. Review and Development of additional communication and interaction resourced provisions including a unit provision at St Paul's Catholic School. We began the formal consultation on St Paul's on the 4 October and all the details can be found [here](#). Please let us know your views!
5. Commissioning of additional post 16 / 18 provision, we are at the first stage of this work and have started to develop a specification for what is needed.



Occupational Therapy Resources

[Milton Keynes Children and Young People's Occupational Therapy Team](#) have released new videos to support with sensory differences. These can be found on the OT website and also the [SEND Local Offer!](#)

Planning Wheels

This is a tool that you can use to help identify strategies that you can try with your child, it is not intended as a prescription. The focus continues to be on functional activities.

1. [Using planning wheels to support your child with sensory differences](#) (Presented by Alison Standish, 24:53)
2. [Planning Wheel animation with subtitles and BSL](#)
3. [Planning Wheel animation without subtitles and BSL](#)



Milton Keynes Speech and Language Therapy Team Resources

[Milton Keynes Schools Speech and Language Therapy Team](#) provides services to all primary and secondary schools within Milton Keynes, including some with specialist education provision, a variety of resources for primary and secondary aged children and young people are available on their website to support families and professionals.

[Milton Keynes Early Years Complex Needs Speech and Language Therapy Team](#) is a specialist team which develops the communication, eating and drinking skills of pre-school-age children with longer term difficulties. The team offer a variety of resources to support:

- [Messy play](#)

- [Objects of reference](#)
- [People games](#)
- [Ready steady go games](#)
- [Intensive interaction \(video\)](#)
- [Motivator choices \(video\)](#)
- [Ready, steady, go \(video\)](#)

Halloween Resources

Halloween can be a difficult time for some of our children and young people. There are unexpected knocks on the door, scary decorations around shops and houses and people dressed up in costumes. The SEND team have produced a [short social story](#) to support your child over the Halloween period. We have also created some [visuals](#) for you to use with your child, that you may find helpful.



Parent programmes:

We offer a variety of [programmes for parents and carers](#) to develop their own knowledge and understanding of different SEND and introduce a range of strategies that can be used when supporting children. You can also find information about our new EBSA workshop below.

[Autism in the Early Years \(2 - 5\)](#)

This programme is designed for parents and carers who have a child aged 2-5 with autism or social communication needs.

[Autism in teenagers](#)

A parent and carer programme with Specialist Teachers and Educational Psychologists. The programme consists of five sessions followed by an in person get together with the opportunity to ask Specialist Teachers questions and meet other parents and carers.

Workshops for Parents and Carers by [Milton Keynes SEND IAS:](#)

- [SEN Support](#) - 16th November at 10am

- [Education Health Care Plan \(EHCP\)](#) - 24th November at 10am
- [Annual Review of an EHCP](#) - 7th December at 10am

If you have further questions, please [email MKSENDIAS](#).



Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

PACA is working with Milton Keynes City Council on a parent's guide to EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance). We really appreciate the input from parents on this and will share the guide as soon as it is ready. In the meantime, there is an [Emotionally Based School Avoidance Guidance for Schools](#) on the [Local Offer](#).

The [Educational Psychologists](#) are offering a [parent and carer EBSA Workshop](#). This workshop aims to support parents and carers of school-age children and young people whose experience of anxious thoughts and feelings is leading to school avoidance. These difficulties are often referred to as Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA).

Save the date - SEND Information Day

Saturday 4th February 2023

MK Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Day

MK SEND Information, Advice and Support Service and PACA MK are holding their annual information event for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. There will be workshops for parents and young people to attend, information stands by various local organisations, health services and MK local authority. A free crèche will be available for parents to book and refreshments will be provided as well.



Meet the team

Uday Thakrar - Head of Sensory Team

The Sensory Team support children and young people with Sensory Needs – Hearing, Vision and Multi-Sensory Need. We work with children and young people from birth to 25 years old.



The team comprises of specialist who provide advice, information and support around sensory needs to the child/young person, parents/carers and setting staff.

We are based at St Paul's Catholic School. We work closely with other partners in Health, Education and Care, as well as external organisations who support sensory needs.

Phase Transfer - September 2024

If your child is currently in year 5 and due to start Secondary school in September 2024, now is the time to start looking at choices. Schools in Milton Keynes will be hosting open evenings for families to visit, be sure to check your local feeder schools website out to find out when their opening evening is.



October half term events!

Wednesday 26th Oct: [Better Days BLMK Daffodil planting workshop](#)

Thursday 27th Oct: [Art Together SEND Family workshop](#)

Thursday 27th Oct: [Xtra Special Families Halloween Holiday Fun](#)

Friday 28th Oct: [Spectrum's Spooktacular Halloween Party](#)

Saturday 29th Oct: [Child Exhibition Tour \(SEND\): Larry Achiampong: Wayfinder](#)

Saturday 29th Oct: [PACA online cookery workshop](#)

Family Fund are hosting various free [Ipad and tablet workshops](#) over the half term (making movies, making music, create a Halloween card and more!)

Check out your nearest [children and family centre](#) to see what free and fun activities they are hosting over the half term.



Milton Keynes City Council 'Help for Households' Drop-ins

If you are worried about your finances and how you are going to make ends meet, MKCC and wider support services want to offer help and advice.

- [CMK Market – 28 October 10am to 4pm](#)

If you would like to learn more about how you could get help with paying your rent and Council Tax, help with essential costs including food and energy bills, plus money saving tips, the team are there to help.



Sign up!

We produce this newsletter half termly. If you are not receiving this directly and would like to, [please follow this link to sign up.](#)

We welcome your views on the newsletter and any ideas you have for future editions, please share your views via [email](#).

[Sign up here!](#)

This newsletter has been co-produced between and the MKC SEND Team and Parents and Carers Alliance MK.

PACA is an independent forum for parent carers of children and young people with disabilities or additional needs who live in Milton Keynes.

We share our experiences with the SEND Team as an independent voice representing what matters to families in MK. We do this by taking an active role in meetings such as the Short Breaks Steering Group, Local Offer Group and Additional Needs and Disabilities Strategy Group.

The idea for this newsletter came from our regular meetings with Caroline Marriott, with the aim of keeping parents informed and up to date with the latest developments in SEND.

If you are a parent and would like to join PACA MK, or would like to know more about us, please visit [PACA MK](#)

Note: Please do not respond directly to this email.

For SEND queries email: [SEND support line](#)

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