



## SEND newsletter

Special Educational Needs  
and Disability

### Welcome from Vic Courtis - SEND Lead

Welcome to the last newsletter of this year. It has been a busy year with lots to celebrate and we have some exciting changes starting to happen across SEND. We have been working with our partners to develop opportunities to increase our special school places with more information to follow soon. St Pauls Emmanuelle Unit is opening in September and work has started on our new complex needs provision that is a satellite from The Walnuts School. These provisions will mean that some of our children with the most complex needs can stay local when previously they might have had to access education outside Milton Keynes. The Local Area have been working on a new and improved SEND Strategy and we enjoyed meeting people from all areas at our SEND day on the 4 July. We will be sharing our SEND Strategy, SEF and action plans on our [Local Offer](#) in early September. Finally, I would like to say thank you to all our parents, carers, education settings and services for all your support and hard work this year. I wish you all an enjoyable summer break and hope you manage to have some time with your families and friends. We look forward to working with you all in the autumn term.



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### SEND: Now and Moving Forwards Together Event

On Tuesday 4 July, the local area for SEND organised an event with a variety of stakeholders including our children, young people, parents, carers, and professionals in education, health and social care to find out what the local area are doing well and where we can improve our offer. We also looked at the commitments in the SEND Strategy and discussed if they were still relevant for our children and young people.

This information will feed into the local area's self-evaluation and will be crucial in our action planning as we move forward.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our children and young people, parents, carers and professionals who attended the event and shared their experience and views.

We will now be looking at the information we gathered from the event and will provide feedback to all our partners in the local area.



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## Short breaks voucher scheme feedback

Milton Keynes City Council is in the process of assessing the short breaks voucher scheme, and we are really keen to hear from those who use the scheme to ensure you get the best service and offer possible moving forwards. Please complete our [survey](#) to help us improve our offer!

[Short break voucher scheme survey](#)

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## Furze House Update

At Furze House we are in the middle of a renovation project to improve the building for the children and families that use our service. We have finished the kitchen work and have moved onto the bathrooms. The bedrooms have also been redecorated and the building



is looking fresher and more modern for the children to enjoy.

The children have been helping the team pick new prints and décor around the building to brighten it up and make the space more child friendly. We have also had the bedrooms redecorated and a new safe space bed installed. This bed is much needed for the children, and we are able to now offer overnight care to those who need this type of bed, giving families a much deserved break and opening up our service to more children.

The team are as focused as ever on delivering new experiences to the children and we have been out at the farm, cinema, zoo, trampoline parks, museums, shopping, swimming, walking and parks all over Milton Keynes and the surrounding areas.

**Before**



**After**



## Meet the team: Sally Cass Senior Specialist Teacher for Health and Transitions



Hi, I'm Sally Cass and I have been working with the EHC Specialist Teaching Team since September 2022 as Senior Specialist Teacher for Health and Transitions. Before taking on this role, I was SENCo and Director of Inclusive Learning at Lord Grey Academy for 12 years. This was a role I loved as I am passionate about inclusion and making sure that children and young people get the right support to achieve their potential. Altogether, I have worked in Milton Keynes for 29 years: my first role in Milton Keynes was at Sir Frank Markham Community School as a French teacher and I have worked for the Local Authority before as Behaviour and Attendance Consultant, supporting schools across the city. Working in Milton Keynes for such a long time means I meet lots of people I have taught in the past and I particularly like meeting former pupils who are now parents of children and young people I am supporting!

I am really enjoying my role at the Local Authority, which is varied and very interesting. I support children and young people who are transferring to Post 16 and Post 18 education, as well as those who are transitioning from hospital back into school. I enjoy finding the right provision for young people and seeing them thrive in settings which suit them.

In my spare time I like to read, knit and sew. I also like gardening and have recently started to grow vegetables. I've just harvested my first crop of radishes which taste great!

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## Learning Disability Awareness Week

It was Learning Disability awareness week in June and the time of year when our young people are preparing to transition into adulthood. Annual Health checks from the age of 14 years for young people with Learning disabilities is available at your GP surgery and is now included in the EHC plan review paper work.

[Our community Adult Learning Disability service](#) has been raising awareness of the support they offer. The team has specialist Learning Disability Nurses, Psychiatry, Psychology, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Dietetics working alongside social workers in an integrated way to support adults from 18 years old.



Sylwia (SLTAP) and Kim (Community LD & MH Nurse) had a stand near Café Civic to raise awareness of Learning Disability and how the LD Health team can support Service Users.



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## SEND Video Resources

Please remember that we have our SEND videos available on the SEND Local Offer, that support a number of topics, for example:

- [Introduction to ASC and SCD](#)
- [What is Sensory Processing](#)
- [Recognising Sensory Signals in Children](#)
- [Emotional Regulation](#)

- [Autistic Spectrum Condition and Sleep Difficulties in Children and Young People](#)
- [Autistic Spectrum Condition and Toileting Difficulties in Children](#)
- [Supporting Your Child To Manage Their Anxiety](#)
- [Supporting Siblings and Encouraging Socialising](#)
- [Strategies To Support Behaviours of Concern](#)

These videos can be found in our [Programmes and workshops](#) section on the [Local Offer!](#)

Please keep an eye out for our updated programme and workshops available in the autumn term.



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## Local Offer Updates

The Local Offer Team continues to update the Local Offer with information, advice and support please see our [new video](#) and [document](#) to support navigating the Local Offer, we hope you find this supportive.



We are continuing to assess how to make our SEND Local Offer accessible to all our families in Milton Keynes.

We are working to constantly improve our SEND Local Offer and would love to hear your [feedback](#), please complete our [survey](#) to help us improve our offer.

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## **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

We wanted to share some information that may be supportive over the summer period and to highlight some of the services:

### **ChatHealth**

ChatHealth is a text service for young people aged 11-19 (or aged 25 with SEND) to confidentially ask for help about a range of issues or make an appointment with a school nurse. They can also find out how to access other local services including emotional support or sexual health services.

Chat Health Milton Keynes TEXT 07480 635517

### **Children and Family Centres**

We offer support and activities for families from 17 Children and Family Centres across Milton Keynes. These centres are hubs of activities and services for families and the local community

All of our Children and Family Centres offer a range of services for families from pregnancy to 5 years old. Our Family Centres also have services for families with children up to the age of 19 years, support the community with sessions and support for adults who may not have children or whose children may have grown and left home.

### **Reflect / Shout**

Reflect is a free, confidential and 24/7 text support service for anyone in the UK who needs advice or help. It is delivered by trained volunteers and clinicians who are available around the clock to listen and support anyone who is feeling anxious, lonely, overwhelmed or not quite themselves. It is part of the wider network of Shout services across the UK.



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## Holiday Activities and Food Programme 2023 (HAF)

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme is a national targeted programme funded by the DfE for children in **receipt of benefit related Free School Meals** that delivers programmes during the Spring, Summer and Winter school holidays.

The Summer HAF programme will be taking place 31 July – 24 August and seeks to deliver another bumper packed range of enriching activities, continued use of a central online booking system to check eligibility and improve the booking experience.

For Summer we have SEND specific sessions available at 6 locations

- Caldecotte Xperience (Simpson)
- Slated Row School (Old Wolverton)
- Safari Health Hub – Cedars School (Newport Pagnell)
- Safari Health Hub – Cold Harbour School (West Bletchley)
- Thomley Hall (Worminghall)
- MK Dons Set (Broughton Gate)

Sessions will be available to book via the online [booking system EEQU](#) from 3 July – if you wish to locate Specialist SEND holiday clubs, you are able to utilise the filter option to bring up the correct specification of session you aim to attend.





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## Parents And Carers Alliance (PACA) MK



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

PACA share experiences with decision makers to bring about real change to develop local services and to make lives better for our families.

PACA have highlighted courses at Milton Keynes College, that may be supportive to families, these course are free.

[Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Autism](#)

[Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Distressed Behaviour in Children](#)

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## Summer Events

We have recently shared our [special edition newsletter](#) with parents and carers of all the events over the summer holidays, this can also be found on our Local Offer. We will continue to update our calendar of events and our [Facebook page](#).

We also have our SEND Support Line that will be open over the summer holiday period, please keep an eye on our Facebook page for opening hours!



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*By sharing this information, we are not endorsing or quality checking any events or activities, and parent/carer/families remain responsible for their own research. We recommend contacting providers directly.*

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## 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.](#)