



Welcome from Allyson Tranter EHC Review Practice Leader

As we approach the well-deserved end-of-term break, we want to take a moment to thank you for your hard work and dedication this term. In this newsletter, we'll be looking at key updates to support our shared commitment to special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

You'll find insights into our latest SEND strategy, updates from the Quadrants, information on EHC needs assessment requests, and an exciting opportunity to encourage more children and young people (CYP) to join the SEND Youth Council.

We hope this newsletter provides useful insights and updates as we work together to support our children and young people.

We are inviting schools to participate in our SEND Strategy Consultation activities

Our Milton Keynes SEND strategy is coming to an end in August 2025.

We would like for you to take a look at our early consultation (open until late April), where we share some initial ideas for the new strategy. You'll find the consultation document and survey on our Local Offer - [SEND Strategy 2025 - 2028 | Milton Keynes City Council](#)

The survey can take as little as 1 minute, and there are optional additional questions if you have an additional 10 minutes. There are also questionnaires for [parents/carers](#) and for [children and young people](#) on the website – please share them within your school community.

We want to hear young people's voices to help shape our new strategy. To do this, we're asking schools to complete a simple activity and share their feedback with us.

Your help in gathering children and young people's thoughts is vital. We're especially keen to know if they connect with our vision and how they think success should be measured.

To guide you through the process, you'll find a [briefing note](#) and a link to the [PowerPoint presentation on the Local Offer](#).

Thank you for your support—we look forward to hearing the feedback!



SENCo Quadrant Meetings

March SENCo Quadrant meeting, a summary from the chairs.

Next meetings are taking place in July [SENCo quadrant meetings and SEND update newsletter | Milton Keynes City Council](#)

North -The North Quadrant found the information on the SEND support offer helpful, with schools creating their own checklists and flowcharts for staff to use.

Regarding secondary phased transfers, schools were aware of where mainstream pupils with EHCs were transitioning but didn't have information about specialist placements. This data, typically shared by the SEND team with primary schools, hadn't been provided by the time of the meeting.

The EHCP "What makes a good one" document was positively received.

There is interest in further training on:

- Roles and responsibilities in planning meetings
- Guidance on what information to keep in plans during reviews

- Writing and tracking outcomes, as well as defining provision.

South - It was lovely to see such a great turn out and some new SENDCos join us in the South Quadrant. It was recognised that the SEND Team and schools are experiencing the same pressure points and the importance of communication across the SEND team to schools was highlighted. Schools are already planning for transition and discussions surrounding a shared template for Primary to Secondary transitions has been raised. Feedback to date has been that SENCOs find the meetings informative and welcoming. We look forward to meeting again in the summer term.

East -During our quadrant meeting in March, we discussed our approach to delivering high-quality EHCPs. The group expressed interest in being actively involved in a partnership approach to enhancing EHCP quality. We shared best practices for conducting annual reviews and highlighted the value of the SEND line, which was seen as a collaborative tool for supporting young people.

Concerns were raised regarding the involvement of wider stakeholders in providing recommendations. Additionally, the group sought clarity on the EHC assessment process and were encouraged to refer to the Milton Keynes Local Offer for guidance. Moving forward, it was suggested that implementing a solution circle would be beneficial.

West -The feedback on the EHCP quality document was positive, though concerns were raised about the pressure of updating plans and delays in making amendments after reviews. Attendance was great as usual, with strong participation from secondary schools. The specialist teaching team shared helpful support information, which was appreciated. Transitions were mentioned, but offer days hadn't happened yet—this will be worked on during the summer term.

Early Years -At our Early Years SENCo Meeting we discussed our use of the local area Ordinarily Available Provision document- and heard from providers who were involved in its creation.

We also considered the 'what good looks like' EHCP document that has been produced- as some of our early years providers will be involved in EHCP draft planning meetings and can play an important part in ensuring an EHCP meets the needs and aspirations of the young child.

Our thoughts are turning to how we might support transitions into EYFS later this year- and we shared information about a working group that has been set up to devise a local area offer for transition. Some EY providers have volunteered to be part of this important work.

Centralised Training Offer

Please find our centralised training offer that is available on the [SEND Local Offer](#). sessions include:

- Introduction to PDA: understanding and supporting demand avoidant students
- Effective Use Precision Teaching/Monitoring
- Supporting Numeracy: What teaching assistants can do to enable effective learning
- Executive Functioning: What teachers need to know
- Attachment and resilience
- Adolescent Brain
- Creating positive opportunities to support children's sensory needs for primary and secondary pupils.
- Transition: Y6 to Secondary
- Gathering the voice of the child
- Ordinarily Available Provision for schools and Early Years

[NASEN](#) offers **free training** for SENCOs to help support students with special educational needs (SEND). They're a great way to stay updated.

Please find further information on their website which includes training on [Assistive Technology | Nasen](#).

EHC needs assessment requests

Each year there has been a growing demand for EHC needs assessment requests. To date in the first two months of 2025 there has been 132 requests for assessment submitted.

Parental requests

At this time we have noticed higher demand for parental requests 32% of the requests submitted have been from parents. Often, during discussions in forums, it becomes clear that many of these children or young people have not benefitted from support from external advice being applied to them or their needs are being effectively met through the graduated approach. In such cases, schools generally agree that progressing to an assessment may not be necessary.

As a SEND Team, we would like to share our thanks to settings/schools who respond to requests for information following a parental request for assessment and for offering clarity regarding how needs are being met through a graduated approach included next steps for the child.

We've noticed that some recent requests have been missing key information, such as parent details and the voice of the child.

As a gentle reminder, we encourage everyone to refer to the documents and [guidance notes](#) on the Local Offer webpage. These resources outline what needs to be included when submitting a request for assessment, ensuring a smoother process for everyone.

Essential information

It is expected when considering an EHC needs assessment request for settings/schools to include information about support that has been in place over time. The locally agreed SEN Support Plan document clearly sets out the information required such as strengths and difficulties and the progress made within the APDR cycles.

There are a range of guidance documents found on the Local Offer we also expect to have been considered and evidenced as having informed practice. This includes: [Ordinarily Available provision](#) (OAP); [MK EBSA Guidance](#); [MK Literacy Guidance](#)

In addition, regarding external agency support, it is expected that any advice received by the school can be applied to all pupils with similar profiles of need. This advice should also be evidenced in the APDR cycles. You may also refer to strategies applied as a result of training the school or specific staff members have received (e.g. having attended the centralised training offer or otherwise)

Incomplete requests can lead to delays and frustration, as they may result in a "no to assessment" decision. To avoid this, we kindly remind everyone to review the local guidance before submitting a request. This ensures the necessary evidence and details are provided to support a smoother and more effective process for all.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and commitment to supporting children and young people.

We are looking for new members to join our SEND Youth Council!

Are you a young person with SEND in a **mainstream school** who is passionate about making a difference for children and young people with SEND in Milton Keynes?

We have one **vacancy** in our SEND Youth Council, minimum age being year 5.

We are looking for young people to join our SEND Youth Council to:

- Share your experiences of education, health and social care
- Represent the views of young people with SEND in Milton Keynes and make positive changes!
- Attend a SEND Youth Council meeting every half term with a member of staff from school or supporting adult.

If you would like to find out more information about joining please contact SENDYouthCouncil@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Please see below posters designed by the My Voice Counts members.

OUR VOICE MATTERS



Young people have voices to speak when it comes to the community and share topics including mental wellbeing which is important.

Feel free to give out your opinion about the community to the SEND Youth Council.



Milton Keynes SEND Local Offer

The [Local Offer](#) is a fantastic tool for schools! It provides easy access to important guidance and resources, such as documents for EHC needs assessments and strategies to support children and young people with SEND. By using the Local Offer, schools can streamline processes, ensure they're meeting requirements, and find practical ideas to strengthen support. It's there to make things easier—be sure to take advantage of it!



Updates from SENCOs

We're inviting SENCOs to share any updates or information they wish to contribute to the SEND Update newsletter. We aim to provide regular updates from SENCOs to be shared among colleagues in different schools. Please feel free to reach out to us via [email](#).

Sign up!

We produce this newsletter monthly. 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 would love to hear any ideas you have for future editions. Please share your views via [email](#).

