

Feedback From Families – Autumn Term 2025

Overall Themes for the Term:

- Inclusion in mainstream – lack of ordinarily available provision and reasonable adjustments.
- Increase in part-time timetables, use of isolation and exclusions for children with EHCPs and on SEN Support.
- SEND team communications
- Annual Review process
- EHCP process – no's to assess and not accepting private reports
- Lack of consistency of SEND registers across the Borough, children being taken off SEN registers with introduction of Ordinarily Available Provision
- Information & signposting for parent carers

Local Offer Live

What is Going Well?

- PINS Project (x2!)
- We have hugely benefited from services. It's great to hear about others though
- Schools are very supportive around involving kids with neurodiversity. This is through time-out cards and movement breaks (from child)
- LAs response to emails is getting better
- Annual Review actually had useful information on PFA this year 😊
- Very informative event, loads of stuff I didn't know
- Brilliant for parents (LOL Day) and my son loved it!

What Can Be Improved?

- Annual Review paperwork was too babyish for my young person, and they refused to fill it out
- More support from the LA in managing the practicalities of an EOTAS package. As a working parent it's unmanageable
- More training for all staff at schools for SEN education
- More support from schools
- Communication – what's and why's
- Not getting back Annual Review paperwork
- AR paperwork for phase transfer is too long when all the information is in the EHCP
- EHCP not done before panel, so they had the wrong information and not up to date
- Not enough support

- The new SEN Officers should introduce themselves when they take over your child's case and leave and email when they are leaving the council job
- PDA help and support is nonexistent
- Correct information - who is responsible for what GP, schools etc.
- Confusion over who has responsibility for mainstream or specialist
- Support for parents – help with masking
- Waiting lists – how do we speed them up?
- Support for families who get stuck between school saying they cannot meet need and LA saying school can – what can be done to break this cycle?
- Employment support/opportunities for SEND young people without an EHCP – like supported internships for those who have EHCPs
- Introduction of banding calculation (for child who already had an EHCP) meant that new school does not have sufficient funding to meet need as specified in EHCP

What Really Matters

- More educational facilities for SEN
- Information availability for parents and carers
- 16+ transport for out of Borough placement should have COT by default
- Diagnosis of LD should not be a painfully difficult process
- That parents are listened to and believed by professionals and not fobbed off at OTT
- GP surgeries for SEN parents & carers should be more empathetic
- Improving our education system to suit our children and the world today

Themes

- Annual reviews
- Information and support for parents & carers
- Improve education experience for SEND Children and young people

SENDIASS Drop-in's

(SVW attend to chat with parents and gather feedback/signpost whilst parents waiting to see SENDIASS).
Total attendees Autumn Term

Comments from those attending the drop-ins:

September 12th (9 families)

- School not inclusive. All SEND provisions that were in place last year have been removed without any discussion with child/parent (e.g. no SEND area/sensory area that children can go to, no time out cards, no pupil passports). Introduction of extremely strict behavior policies and no reasonable adjustments. First week back and excluding children with SEND needs. SEND Team Communications - Officers not responding to emails and blocking phone calls, extremely poor communication. No footers on emails with escalation process

- “Never felt so let down by the SEND team, worse it has ever been – they couldn’t care less about the needs of my child”
- No help post autism diagnosis – 3 pages of web links no help, family feeling overwhelmed and don’t know where to go for help.

September 23rd (1 family)

- EHCP issues

October 10th (2 families)

- Poor transition between years at primary school, no information shared with next class teacher. Not recognising all child’s needs only recognising diagnosed condition (which is not the thing that is causing issues for the child getting into school). Parent not able to book appointment with SENCO, told Family Liason worker deals with those issues.
- SEND Team communications – mixed, for some good, others still struggling to get responses
- Reasonable adjustments not being made for child, who had been out of school for a significant time, to be able to access specialist school place.

October 21st (4 families)

- Concerns over part-time timetables
- EHCP Process – statutory timeframes not followed

November 28th (4 families)

- PfA annual review process – don’t know how it works, who should be there, what reports I should see and timeline. More information needed
- SENCO (senior school) also class teacher and therefore does not have capacity for number of SEND children in the school. ND referral discussed and agreed but SENCO doesn’t have the time to complete the referral forms (this has been requested several times)
- Support for school refusal

December 9th (2 families)

- General information and support needed. Families do not know where to go for help and support. This included what schools should be providing as well as support in the wider community.

SENDIASS Training courses

EHCP Annual Reviews Process - 22nd September (3 parents attended)

- School unclear on Phase Transfer process/timings for Annual Review

SEND Support in School – 15th October (8 parents attended)

- Ordinarily Available Provision/reasonable adjustments not being made
- Families having to push for Assess/plan/do/review meetings as not regularly happening
- Hard to get in touch with school SENCO

EHCP Process – 18th November (10 parents attended)

- Concern that there is push back from LA and private reports not being accepted
- School not meeting need but will not support EHCP application

Preparing for Adulthood – 25th November (6 parents attended)

- SEND team communications still problematic emails not being answered - especially around annual reviews
- Families still unsure of post-16 process for those with EHCPs, hard to get communication/confirmation of college place from SEND team
- Parent carers would like more information about apprenticeships and colleges that have functional skills - do not know where to go for information
- Transport issues for post-16. YP attendance dropping due to transport being removed and not being able to travel independently
- Transport team very quick to respond and set up independent travel training meeting
- Caseworkers not attending phase transfer annual reviews

Early Years Feedback - Admission to School

- 5 families (3 with EHCPs in place) unable to visit specialist setting to school ahead of naming school on EHCP for admission into Foundation class. This is causing a lot of anxiety for the families. The families feel they are being excluded from the admissions process that a non-send child would have (be able to attend an open day) and they are not even able to have conversations with the school staff. Some families are considering not sending their child to school as they are not able to view and make decisions about school preferences.

Zoom Update on Ordinarily Available Provision

Attended by 17 parent carers

Questions raised by families are here: [OAP Q&As 20th October](#)

Themes:

- How is it going to be rolled out?
- How will WBC ensure that schools follow the OAP?
- What can families do when OAP is not followed?

General Questions / Comments Autumn Term '25

General feedback and themes via email and social media

SEND Team Communications/Complaints process

- Family report failures in the EHCP reassessment process, including failure to meet statutory timescales, failure to seek up-to-date professional advice, failure to consult parent and child, unlawful Section F wording and removal of provision, safeguarding and communication issues.
- Poor communication and support from SEND Team to secure suitable education for child who has not been in full-time education for 3 years (1 hr per day part-time timetable)
- No response since mid-July (end of September)
- Awaiting response from caseworker, well over 5 working days and have heard nothing.
- SEND Team communication - no response to emails at the moment
- My child's Annual Review is happening imminently, I need to speak to them about some urgent issues, and I cannot get any response from the Case Officer.
- They are still changing case officers without notifying parents, so frustrating to find out when they turn up to a CIN meeting and you had no idea they changed caseloads!
- Parent found out they had a new case officer (the 4th one) because they were trying to sort out a school placement
- We still haven't got the updated EHCP, from the annual review in March! (November 25) and have basically given up chasing now
- Legal timescales for annual review decisions are not being adhered to. Last time i had to threaten a pre action judicial review letter before anyone responded. Looks like I'll be doing the same this time. Months overdue again. It's just not good enough
- The communication promise has proven ineffective, as issues must be repeatedly escalated without receiving responses. Parents are criticised for sending "too many emails," yet queries often go unanswered, leading to further follow-up. Communication feels inconsistent and selective, and long delays, sometimes weeks or months, mean that children are negatively affected because unresolved issues continue to escalate. Despite understanding that the service is busy and bound by statutory timelines, these obligations are frequently not met. Panel decisions are often not issued, and parents receive information that differs from what professionals are told, creating confusion. Unanswered emails force issues to escalate into formal complaints, and there are ongoing concerns about non-compliance with statutory processes, including improper changes to EHCP provisions. Overall, the situation appears to have deteriorated over the past few years, with no noticeable improvements despite repeated promises. This has become so discouraging that attending things like the online Zoom Update meetings now feels pointless.

EHCP/Annual Review Process

- No to assess even though has very high needs 2:1 and safeguarding risks in mainstream school
- No to assess - I'm going through the issues with WBC refusing to assess! I can't understand how they made this decision for my child
- Families still awaiting Phase Transfer forms, some have received them others not.
- Adversarial approach, disregarding or minimising independent reports as part of the EHCP process

Engagement with Young People

- Family encouraged to see new WBC online engagement session for YP but ask for alternatives to craft sessions as this excludes a lot of young people.

Local Offer/Information for Families

- Parent carer overwhelmed, did not know where to go for information and needed signposting to just 1 service that would be able to help. Parent didn't know where to start if given too much information in one go. Booklets/online there is too much information.

Schools

- Senior school is not listening to family and recognizing the signs of masking. They are not putting in place the support that the child needs to allow them to access education.
- Child with EHCP at senior school. No support in place at the beginning of the new school year when child has high anxiety and poor attendance previously. Child has not been able to access school for the new term.
- Reasonable adjustments not being made eg. uniform adjustments previously agreed and advised by CAMHS. No SEN unit and assurances made to families that SEN children will be prioritised and supported is not being followed, they are being told they have to do what all other children do.
- Children put into isolation for a whole day when uniform broke
- Reasonable adjustments over school uniform not being made (senior school)
- SEN department has been removed, and all SEN children are to go to isolation room for support.
- My child can't cope and is struggling. Unfortunately, they have been home more than at school this half term.
- No reasonable adjustments put in place for the beginning of term (which were in place previously) - parent told to "see how it goes for 2 weeks and then we'll review" - this is too late for my child they need the adjustments now to be able to get back in after the summer holidays, 2 weeks' time is too late!
- My child has been out of school since summer 2024 and now has a place at a specialist setting for SEMH. I managed to get them in, and the school refused them access to lessons as they didn't have a school jumper on, we hadn't even received any information about uniforms, and our aim was to get my child to attend! They were left to sit in reception for 2 hours so sadly I am back to square one with my child refusing to go now...
- SEN Unit not supporting children learning – it's just "playgroup"
- Child on part-time timetable, school not supporting or signposting family to help
- Child with EHCP suspended from school for being autistic. No reasonable adjustments or provision in the EHCP are being made meaning child could not enter a classroom so was suspended.
- Autistic children being routinely suspended from a school
- Following introduction of the Ordinarily Available Provision child has been removed from the SEN register despite having a number of needs and struggling daily to attend school
- Child with EHCP excluded, school not making adjustments in their EHCP
- School signposted parent to neurodiversity courses, but they are not free and not generalised enough. Parent would like to be signposted to specific courses/information rather than having to try and find information themselves.

- My child has been taken off the SEND register and their IEP removed since OAP has been put in place.
- The Local Authority has not provided a child with the appropriate provision, supervision, reasonable adjustments, or specialist support required for his known disabilities. The child has been repeatedly placed in settings that are unsuitable and unsafe.

ND Referral Process

- SENCO does not have enough time to complete referral

Wheelchair Services

- Young person was assessed and told they needed a new power wheelchair in February 2024. Family were in contact with the wheelchair service just before the contract was handed over about a new power wheelchair which had been ordered and part delivered. A powerchair base was delivered, but there was no interface board to get it working. Engineer visited, ordered parts and also parts required for the manual chair, which the young person is now having to use and is not appropriate. The family was told to contact the wheelchair services again in 6 weeks (when a new provider is in place). The family have now finally managed to get through to someone at the new provider, an administrator who made an appointment for next Monday. Shortly after they were called back, and the appointment has now been cancelled as there are no engineers. The family have been told that no staff were Tupe'd across and therefore there are no engineers to be able to complete any work. The young person has (part of) a wheelchair costing thousands of pounds which is completely useless and is using a manual wheelchair which is completely unsuitable

Social Care/Children with Disabilities Team/ Short Breaks

- Families need for Short Breaks not being met - Child meets the criteria and needs short breaks to meet their needs, there is a very real need for short breaks, parents clearly need the break as there is risk of breakdown. Response from SB - "we are closing the case as we can't identify what we should put in place"
Just lost for words, if you don't fit the boxes or the provision they have they just walk away and leave you with nothing. Feels like assessed needs now not being met as child gets older so that needs don't look so great when they move to adult services.

Transport

- Family being offered PTB when family does not drive
- No coproduction of transport solutions with families, automatic offer of PTB leading to appeal and delays in transport being arranged - families having to wait for up to 6 weeks for transport to be arranged when term has already started and school place being paid for.
- Email regarding (school) transport for year 7 - a data breach made by including everyone's email address.