

Feedback From Families – Spring Term 2024

Overall Themes for the Term:

- **Communication problems with the SEND Team – continues to be a major issue for families.**
- **Data – parents would like to see this. Mediation & tribunals increasing, is this just stalling tactics by WBC?**
- **Ordinarily Available – Not happening at the moment, more information required for families and schools.**
- **Information – families still say it is hard to find information about services and processes locally.**

Safety Valve Update with Families (via Zoom) – Thursday February 1st

Full Q&A document available on our website: [SEND Update for families with WBC & Health 1st February 2024](#)

Themes:

- Post 16 - lack of provision, lack of clarity in Annual Review process
- SEND Team communications – continues to be an issue
- Data - mediation & tribunals increasing, is this just stalling tactics
- CAMHS Crisis Teams – parents still directed by professionals to A&E
- Short Breaks – no SEMH provision (8 years), no wrap around care, lack of holiday clubs. Parents forced to give up work
- Ordinarily Available – Not happening at the moment, how are you
- going to make sure all schools do this?
- Schools affecting children's mental health
- Complaints systems still too complicated

SENDIASS Drop-in's

(SVW attend to chat with parents and gather feedback/signpost whilst parents waiting to see SENDIASS)

Total attendees Spring Term = 50

5th Jan (9), 15th Jan (4), 2nd Feb (16), 19th Feb (7), 8th March (8), 18th March (6)

Comments from those attending the drop-ins.

January

- Non-English-speaking families feel isolated. No guidance/ translation/ help integrating into schools or clubs.
- 2 Parents needed advice to help with children self-harming – very difficult to find help.

February

- SEND team communications poor. No answers to emails/calls.
- High volume of parents attending session following the Zoom updates from WBC and at the end of the phase transfer deadline for naming a school on EHCP.

March

- Parents starting EHC Requests to Assess as schools refusing.
- Parent support needed for children EOTAS. Multiple parents reporting EBSA and selective mutism – all looking for more parent support as none out there.
- Communications with SEND team still an issue particularly with staff leaving and not telling parent or handing over to new case worker.

Parent Carer Participation Groups via Zoom and face to face – 6th March

Parents attending: 9 via Zoom and 3 face-to-face meeting.

Priority areas for improvement:

- Concerns that schools do not have funding to be able to deliver Ordinarily Available and what happens when child is in a school that does but transitions on to a school that doesn't. The child will be the one to suffer.
- Schools telling parents they are unlikely to get an EHCP for their child. But schools need more money for Ordinarily Available
- CYPIT are not delivering services. Parents can't get SALT or CAMHS input. This impacts the extent of needs identified and, within the EHCP process, the LA then say no to assess.
- Not enough support for phase transfers and feels like an unlinked process rather than a knowledge handover. Feels like falling off a cliff edge not knowing what to expect at new setting. Especially into secondary and PfA into further education option.

Language (request from Childrens Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee following concerns about language used by Officers at January meeting about the language Professionals should and shouldn't use)

- Do not parent shame/parent blame/ be suspicious parent is only playing the system. Home life is difficult – it is not a choice parents make.
- It is 24/7, 365 days a year, don't talk about holidays, finishing work etc – parent carers may never get a break.
- Do not apply guilt for asking for what child needs/entitled to - diagnosis is definitely not a prize.
- It's not just language that can be misused. Attitude to SEND needs understanding and this can come from learning from those who have lived experience.
- Lack of understanding in school believing child is 'lazy', or will grow out of Autism or Dyslexia, or that child is OK as they are 'compliant' in school and telling parents that this is 'just the way they teach' when asking about a particular attitude to child in class.
- Seems to be more emphasis on the child making the effort to change rather than those around them understanding and then making reasonable adjustments.
- School refusal is a negative judgement as many children want to be in school. EBSA describes their situation better.
- SEND and SEND funding shouldn't be seen as a 'burden'. Makes families feel guilty.
- "Golden ticket" – SEND isn't!
- Don't blame parents for being informed.

Some suggestion from the Parent Carer Participation Group to help improve services:

- Communication from SEND team still a big concern. Seems they have no understanding of common courtesy to acknowledge a message let alone reply. An acknowledgement would save the constant chasing to check if message was received.
- It would help to have someone who had an oversight of SEND team communications and could monitor (report on) response and resolutions.
- Schools could do more to advertise the Local Offer as this would take pressure off the Senco and help parents navigate find information.
- School Governors to be more involved and aware of the SEND needs in their school and be accountable for delivering on the Ordinarily Available
- Leaflet with option for all the schools available /summary of what needs they meet would be useful – especially if this was on the Local Offer
- Transparency and consistency across schools to make parents aware when their child is either getting SEN support or on the SEN register.
- Provide parents on SEN support with details of their child's individual learning plan (IEP) and regularly review it.

SENDIASS Training sessions

(SVW host these sessions)
Total - 41 parents attended.

EHCP Annual Reviews 23 January (7 parents attended) - Session Comments:

- Annual Reviews for children on EOTAS - what is the process? It needs to be clearer and publicly available.
- SEND Team communications - impossible to get a response from them.

PfA 26 February (12 parents) – Session Comments:

- Parents asking if there is a drive to reduce EHCPs.
- More clarity and clear process for ending of EHCP when child goes to university.
- More promotion and information about the Elevate Hub needed.
- More support needed from Senco's in school to support and advise process for EHCP A/R to finalise transition placements.
- Flow chart of age-related Social Care who's who needed.

EHCP Process – 6th February (12 parents) – Session comments:

- More information on Ordinarily Available needed.
- Parents asking for stats on % of requests that translate into a plan (either at first request or after appeal)
- Information on all schools and their specific strengths or differences in provision (a summary on the Local Offer/from the SEND Team) not being directed to individual school websites. SEND team ask who parents want them to consult with but parents are not aware of what is available within mainstream or specialist and SEND Team do not provide any information to help.

SEND Support & Effective Communications 11th March (10 parents) – Session comments:

- Lack of clarity and SMART targets on One Page Profiles used for SEN support, not consistent across different schools.
- More information required on what is Ordinarily Available (schools don't know)
- Lack of clarity relating to specific needs in EHCP already in place for child age 3 starting school in September.
- Not enough understanding in school to identify needs for child who is academically achieving but struggling socially.
- Unclear who pays for "reasonable adjustment" resources – eg chewables, sensory protecting gloves etc (school or parent) – SENDIAS advise to speak with school to start with needs-based conversations and what would child need as far as sole use/sharing. There seems to be inconsistencies across schools in this area (and some won't let children bring in their own fidget toys/ make reasonable adjustments)

Post 16 Phase Transfer Comments (requested feedback 4/4/24 following concerns raised by families)

- I am having issues (with phase transfer) and haven't received my final ehcp for my daughter
- Following a complaint I submitted to Wokingham Council, I've since had a response from my case officer (just before Easter) who has apologised 'for the year I've had' and finally issued the EHCP, naming my child's college. We waited seven months for this EHCP, and I've been completely ignored when trying to work with them (the SEND Team) and left to sort it out all on my own. I'm still waiting for my application for school transport to be sorted and this is well over the reasonable timescale. I'm happy for you to use anything in this (anon) as a way of highlighting how poor their services are at the moment. In my view WBC SEN services are failing to deliver and are experiencing huge service failures that are not being tackled by the senior leadership (Director /Service Manager level) at Wokingham Borough Council. The Chief Executive needs to start taking action and performance managing those senior staff involved. The huge exodus of staff from the service also makes me think that the leadership are operating completely ineffectively and, in a silo, and demoralising the team as well, this isn't just about volume of workload this is about leadership, direction and day-to-day management skill, which seems hugely lacking.
- Parent emailing SEND team 4/4 to request responses to numerous emails and telephone messages to confirm child's move to College in September. No updates received from EHCP review in Dec 23.
- No phase transfer Annual Review, no communication about settings that had been consulted and the results of these, emails sent to incorrect email address, no finalised plan issued without consultation on setting named with parent/child. No response to emails sent to SEND team asking for updates.
- The finalised plan for phase transfer deadline for sixth form was missed (31st March). Still awaiting phase transfer consultations presumably? This is really worrying for us.
- My child had good phase transfer annual review from their school updating changing needs. Meeting was driven by them but was attended by someone from Sen team (but can't remember their name). Can't say that I got much input from them and at the time I didn't know what I needed to ask. Amended EHCP was issued by the deadline and stated current location for continuing into post 16 education. However, we had visited another setting as is norm for post 16 and found the same courses running at Farnborough 6th. My child applied for both school 6th form and Farnborough 6th had interview at both and now has acceptance at both. Difference between both settings is the exam results required to start are different. So, our question is when my child gets his results and they

are not enough to get into current setting (stated on ehcp) or they decide they actually prefer to go to Farnborough, how do we proceed with changing setting on EHCP? I will drop this all to Sendiass too but it does raise the question for us as to what part choice or exam results plays in this stage of education?

- Annual review held December 2023. Social worker attended but no-one from SEND, despite request to attend. No response from SEND to any form or contact from me with queries about the EHCP or transfer process. Proposed amended EHCP sent January 2024 in a complete mess. Huge cut and paste job. I requested more time. No response, so I hastily rewrote Section A and returned it with the Placement Preference form on 30 January. I contacted College the week before Easter to enquire when we would get an interview date. Was told they hadn't been sent EHCP for consultation. Nor had another College. Finally managed to contact SEND team. They sent the EHCP to College that day. We received the Final EHCP on 28 March with Section I completed with a generic 'Post-16 college'. College have now made a conditional offer and funding request is going to panel this week. I'm confident funding will be approved and the EHCP will be updated, but really it shouldn't have been so delayed that the EHCP is finalised without a college. They had ample time to send out for consultation. I've had this happen before so I'm not too worried, but extremely frustrated at the lack of/inability to contact, especially concerning statutory obligation to give more time to comment on the EHCP. In the end I couldn't risk not replying in the original timescale. X has been easy to deal with so no complaints, but our Case Officer is different and I have no idea if they even exists! The SEND team appear to be in complete meltdown.
- Finalised EHCP for post-16 phase transfer not received by 31st March statutory deadline.

General Questions / Comments Spring Term '24

General feedback themes via email and social media

- SEND team communication issues and agreed actions not being done
- Changes in SEND Team personnel without informing parents
- Request for SEND Data (EHCP requests, approvals to assess, approvals to issue, mediation and tribunals)
- SEND drop-in's (with Jamie Conran and Sally Furness), parents positive about the meetings, however for the majority no progress has been made following the meeting leading to increased levels of frustration and lack of trust with the SEND team.

Child received no to assess then offered way forward meeting in December but no follow up after meeting. Parent sent chasing emails/phone calls – No response. Went to mediation. During mediation found extra evidence sent during request to assess 'went missing' and never went to panel. Original decision to no assess now overturned, but why is information going missing?

Parent asked us to share the following letter from her child;

I am writing to you about me health plan. My name is X and I am 10 and I am going to tell you my life and why I need a health plan badly. When I was 2 I started autism my mum tried her best to get the health plan but you said no. I am a bit sad with you people because this is my life I have autism and anxiety both doesn't go well together and I can't tell if you are being lazy or don't care. Me and my mum are trying so hard to get this health plan and I beg you to please give us the health plan. At Y school my anxiety goes off and so many teacher assistants go and help me. Me a 10 year old crying in a separate room don't know what to do even sometimes at my house I have mantel breakdowns and I struggle so much you don't know how much it hurts. My family try to help when I have a mantel breakdown and I really need the health plan.

From X 10-year-old in Year 5

So Case Officer left in December and new officer was replacing them, I've just emailed them and got an auto reply saying they have moved on from the SEND team too!!

Those in Wokingham with EHCP's... how do they include preparing for adulthood?

The case officer seems clueless and said they don't explicitly write anything for PfA. We have now been told if we want PfA in the EHCP we will need to go to tribunal as they don't agree that it should be included and that the outcomes aren't reasonable even though they are from the Wokingham PfA documents!

Parent blame – Incorrect and inaccurate report from 1 professional caused issues to escalate and extreme distress to child and family. Family not listened to.

Reasonable adjustments not made by GP/hospital for blood tests once young person turned 19. Guthrie test arranged at Dingley's, but then blood test lost, and test will need to be repeated causing a lot of stress to YP and family (as don't know if YP will be able to attend again)

How does a child aged 16 and NHS works please as adult side of A&E don't have any knowledge of hidden disabilities. Apparently irrespective of disability at 16 (after finishing secondary) they are adults. A&E adults' side don't care if they are autistic or overwhelmed, having a panic attack. The young reception girls when I explained had smiles or gave me a blank look as if I was speaking in Greek. After 3 1/2 hours of awaiting my son said take me home or I am going to run. He has a rash that looks like meningitis (but not) GP wanted same day bloods and kidney checked. They wanted to know why he is in A&E he had to wait 5 hours or more to see a doctor. So my son walked out. I refused to sign the form and asked them to inform WBC CWD that he was treated poorly. Is this how it's going to be with YP and RBH A&E? My son will not go to A&E again. GP surgery point blank refusing to help and asking me to take him back to A&E. There is no adjustment for Autistic YP in A&E adults just have to manage it apparently!

I've just returned our comments on the Proposed Amended EHCP but I feel like I've sent it into a black hole. I've been trying to contact our new SEN officer, since November, just before the annual review, to no avail. Proposed amended plan was in such a mess. Someone had just done a huge cut and paste job into Section A of all our comments and observations for the AR. I immediately emailed back and requested more time (twice) so I could rewrite it and put it back into shape. Again nothing, not even an acknowledgment or out of office. I'm dreading the finalised plan and transition consultation.

I've also tried phoning and emailing SENDIASS for some advice, but again, no reply. They are normally good at responding.

On a positive note though, my child now has a lovely PFA social worker and she has done a good job in their Adult services assessment and secured what I think will be a good package of support.

EOTAS providers still not being paid, parents having to chase termly for payments as well as mileage payments.

EOTAS Annual Reviews not being completed in a timely manner.

The common theme is that parents aren't listened to, and professionals have no interest in learning about the law.

Home to School transport – changes to WBC provision having negative impact on child being able to attend school and ready to learn.

As requested in your most recent email, please find below some feedback on our experience of the transition to adulthood team at WBC - there are many aspects of our SEND journey with Wokingham that has not been good over the years, but I believe it is worth highlighting positives too: Our experience of the Transition to Adulthood service has been really good. We were apprehensive before the process began, as we were not really sure what to expect and planning ahead always seems so uncertain for our son. However, our appointed transition social worker, has been superb throughout and in addition, having a consistent professional to liaise with has been refreshing. We felt listened to and understood at the initial information gathering meeting, the officer ensured that what was already working well for us has been continued through the care plan and provided much welcomed information on future decisions that may need to be made, as our son progresses into adulthood. All communication was received in a timely manner and where any problems arose, the officer was quick to look into them for us and respond accordingly. We did have a few blips where an allocated personal payment was incorrect, which the officer very quickly chased for us, and the same personal payment has not been updated into our son's revised draft EHCP Section H after his most recent annual review. But overall, the process has worked really well for us and the officer has been excellent. We are so grateful to

them and again, having continuity with her throughout the process has made a dramatic difference to our experience of liaising with WBC.

Poor communication (Mediation and Tribunal Team this time) continues, and I need this to improve - otherwise we have to keep sacrificing our time and resources, which we should be spending with our family, to cover WBC's errors and inefficiencies.

Transport Appeals not being processed in a timely manner.

I submitted an appeal at the end of January and am still waiting. I haven't even received anything in writing to say they have even received my appeal which I sent signed for and recorded delivery!!

Received an email today re a school transport appeal placed in June 2023.

Today, March 2024, letter issued to say appeal accepted and transport being reinstated (even though transport had already been reinstated in Sept 2023). 😞

Letter states Appeal result should be within 20 days.... this results letter has taken NINE MONTHS!!!!....

We sent a long email to Helen Watson last March 2023, to date, one year later, we are still awaiting a reply....

(SEND team) no response from you since your email 1st March which was very unclear about what you were asking (post 16 transition) and there has been no response to my email 4th March. We are still none the wiser as to whether or not School 6th Form have been consulted with. If I do not receive a response in the next 5 working days, I will be raising a formal complaint. The lack of information from the SEND Team, causes unnecessary stress and we are now very concerned that our child will not be able to access the placement of her choice. 26/3 still no response.

I am at a loss on what to do next. WBC SEN team has sat on an EHCP update done as part of emergency review in July and failed to move anything forward. Case Officer did nothing at all to move things forward apart from attending meetings hosted by the social work team and update us that they were still to follow up on her actions meeting after meeting and then effectively dropped him in a black hole before leaving. We were then given another officer in January who is doing exactly the same and hadn't got a clue. I complained to all management contacts I could find in January and was promised a response to my complaint, I have chased up for a response and keep being told someone will respond, I have filled in an official complaint online and still nothing, I have chased again today. Today I had another meeting hosted by the social worker where the SEND team officer has done nothing much to move anything forward and has failed to complete action and failed to respond to emails from the social team for updates yet again and I lost my cool in a big way. Meeting after meeting with nothing happening. Is no one at WBC taking any responsibility for letting our kids down!!! I'm SO CROSS.

I thought getting an EHCP for my daughter was going to be a fight but was really pleasantly surprised when it was not. Please be more transparent with data around numbers of EHCPs issued vs applications made so that parents do not worry unnecessarily.

Is anyone else still really struggling to get any response from Wokingham SEND team? We have no allocated case officer, AR was several months ago and nothing, no funding sorted for the summer term... the list goes on. Formal complaints have been fully upheld yet nothing changes. Just despair at the moment...

Are there any updates on staffing and who is doing what? They seem keen to update on the local offer, safety valve and new schools / units but what about the day-to-day work of AR, funding, replying to emails. This seems to be worse than ever.

Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Meeting 8/1/24

Questions raised by families following this meeting:

They said they have a *list of Alternative Providers that schools work with and the Local Authority work with and I'd very much like to see this and any other information relating to this.*

15.15) *Mentioned Piloting new Alternative Provision Model i.e. EOTAS response – can I ask if parents are included as part of this work? **What information do we have about this?***

(15.36) *“Managed to keep Independent Sector Providers at below inflationary increases – compared to neighbours and compared to most of the country who are seeing sometimes double digit % increases in their fees, we've managed with good work and partnership with our providers to keep these at a lower level” – I'd like more information with regards to this if possible*

16.50) *Discussed reducing the need to 'Jump straight into EHCP' request when could be helped with earlier intervention – I would like to understand more about this and have reassurance that those that have gone beyond that early intervention are not going to have a harder time having their needs met'*

(17.26) Been monitoring the source of current EHCP requests and it's an almost 50/50 split between school and parent requests, this is higher than national average for parental requests and they are working hard with parent community to find out the reason for this – can we ask how they are gathering this feedback and may I also ask if we are allowed to compare to previous stats for parent vs school requests as my concern is that more parents are requesting as having schools getting more resistant to do this due to the changes. Can I please also raise my concerns about what this means for those children that may still very

well meet criteria, being met with resistance and then either not knowing they can do a parent led request or not got the capacity to do so.

25.44 – *there was a question about parental resistance. JR said no point maintaining EHCP if YP moves out of education – can we have stats for ceasing and what KS they are in so we can check if it's mostly down to post 16? And for Post 16s to have more info on the reason? Even if it was something like a category for 'no longer requires an education placement' or 'other' I would just like to challenge the data a bit more.*

JR said should have at least 2 terms of activity of trying to meet needs before applying for EHCP
What about if a child's journey with education is a rapid breakdown and they can't have 2 terms? Potential of months of needs not being met before even starting the long process. Can we have stats for rejections for requests to assess?

35.43 – *Mentioned ASD Pathway waiting time and Early Intervention being more important than outcome of assessment – "if you can see your child's needs are being met then having the 'Prize' of a diagnosis is less of a 'prize'.....having that label doesn't necessarily improve anything for that child & it's all about what happens in school on a day-to-day basis" (needs being met). Said there has been a dramatic shift in MH issues – CAMHS are overwhelmed, believe more can be done jointly with education/health/social care. I honestly don't think these consultants understand this issue properly and these are opinions they are forming based on something they don't understand. There are still many services/provisions that require a particular diagnosis in order for a child/YP to be taken on. I honestly don't think these consultants understand this issue properly and these are opinions they are forming based on something they don't understand. There are still many services/provisions that require a particular diagnosis in order for a child/YP to be taken on.*

42.30 I would like to push for more stats on this and challenge them to show actual evidence that backs this 'opinion' they have. They need to remember that when parents fight, they are fighting for the LAW to be followed. Judges make decisions based on said law. Any issue about resource implications is something to challenge through government, not blame parents!

Feedback on SEND Drop-in Sessions with Jamie Conran

December 23 Session with Jamie Conran
Feedback collected 4 weeks later Jan 24

We recently contacted all the families who attended either in person or via zoom for their feedback. We asked the following:

- Was the session useful?
- Has progress been made?

We received 13 responses from the 16 families we contacted with the following feedback:

Was the session useful?

Yes - 11

Comments: Session was useful, good to speak to Jamie directly. Appreciated his honesty (wish this was the case more)

No - 2

Comments: complete waste of time!

Has progress been made?

Yes - 4

No – 9

Comments: All 9 are still awaiting a response/follow up and say that none of the actions agreed have happened (even after chasing) or just 'batted back to school', so no progress has been made.

Feedback from families following 2nd progress requested 27/3/24.

- We have no progress. Promised a reply to us in December but hasn't. The educational setting which was suggested hasn't replied to me either.
- We have had zero contact - I have made several phone calls the SEND Team. Each person I spoke to said there was no one who could speak to me. I have sent several emails, including SLT, with no response at all. We have not had any PB invoices paid since my son started his EOTAS Package. They were all sent to SEND Team last year. We were due to have my son's annual review on 8th March 2024 but again no contact. We raised this point at the 1-1 session who assured us the annual review would happen due to it been a legal requirement!
- We have absolutely no idea what is going on and if there is a SEN team at WBC due to the amount of case workers who have left.
- My son finally got our school of choice agreed and has started. Our school of choice was important as his twin brother was already there (so I was travelling to the school twice a day already). It could meet need, had space and was our closest school that could meet need. It was also the only school of 8 that offered him a space but still it went to panel

twice before they agreed. He has transitioned really well. It was a long battle with the LA but the right decision was made for him in the end.

February 24 Session with Jamie Conran (face to face) and Sally Furness (online)

Feedback from families collected 4 weeks later in March 24

We received 11 responses from 20 families who attended the sessions.

Was the session useful?

Yes - 9

No - 2

Has progress been made?

Yes – 1

No – 10

Comments:

- Initially I was very excited to get the opportunity to speak to someone from SEND. The meeting itself seemed to go well and promises of sorting out my issue and a timescale were promised. Unfortunately, that timescale was not kept and when she did finally follow up all she did was copy in my caseworker asking for her to complete the actions, incurring yet more delays. Since then, I received the EHCP only to find lots of faults where my previous caseworker (who has now left) had not added the updated information to the draft from our emergency review meaning that panel rejected the change in setting. 2 weeks ago, I emailed SEND Team managers and my caseworker with my concerns and my local MP emailed too and still I have had no response! So, the promise of better communication has not been fulfilled. I have now had to put in an appeal to tribunal.... Which will be more delay and more time my daughter is out of education. This has gone on since June 2023.
- Complete waste of time
- I spoke with them, and I am still waiting for an update from my case officer as they have requested that my daughter's EHCP be completed before Easter. So, I still have time.
- I found the experience useful.
- I had contacted them on 12/3 and yesterday 25/3 asking for an update as easter is approaching as hear nothing yet.
- They have not replied from the meeting, and Case Officer never contacted me.
- I never really got a follow up from the meeting. I had a meeting with Case Officer but felt like I once again was passed from pillar to post and had to go over everything again. So overall I am no further along. Not updated EHCP, no response to my complaint and overall, nothing has changed. I also had a meeting with Case Officer on 14th March. Lots

of promises: EHCP with me by Tuesday, annual review for June, their diary was empty, X to carry on what he was doing... extremely positive and yesterday found out they are leaving on 31st March, and nothing has been done!!! No EHCP still and his last annual review was 31st October and no early annual review, and no one is replying to emails. The only people that are suffering are the parents. This is such a poor situation.

- Unfortunately, very little progress has been made since I attended the drop-in session.
- I'm still not getting response back from emails and have given up trying now. They say 5 working days to respond to emails but you're lucky if they do get back to you. And my case worker is leaving but I found that out on a send Facebook page not from the council.
- Yes, I did find the sessions useful I felt listened to and had a chance to share my concern.
- Yes, things have greatly improved since I had the conversation.
- It did not address our concerns with our school performing the EHCP review, nor offer much reassurance for the future. Headteacher was appalling and nothing said.
- The session was useful, mostly because it was the only way of speaking to anyone in the SEN team. I did then receive a letter, as promised at the drop-in, letting us know that the case officer will be in touch every 2 weeks while they try to find a school. I have heard from the case officer since then with an update, but I think they will leave it down to tribunal to find a school place and I will see if they maintain contact before then. It was also a relief to find out from the meeting that a tribunal date was likely to be given this academic year, and not after he's due to start secondary school. I have got a date for June, so this was the correct information.
- I found the session very useful. They listened carefully to my issue and made sure they understood my questions. Their answer really helped me to understand the convoluted tribunal / appeal process and helped me to feel reassured that we were making the correct choices about online school. They validated our concerns, and they lifted a sizable weight of worry off my shoulders, which is worth its weight in gold. They were very personable and reassuring and I got a lot out of our conversation.
- They followed up swiftly with a summary of our conversation and asked Case Officer to action my outstanding queries. Unfortunately, since the drop-in, our case has not seen any progress at all. It still hasn't been heard at panel, (our Emergency Annual Review happened on the 26th January - 3 months ago). Case Officer has not kept us informed, despite numerous phone calls and emails. Only when I copy manager in, does Case Officer ever get back to me. Today I found out that our case which was meant to go to panel last Wednesday, still has not been heard and won't be heard until the end of this month. My daughter has not attended school for 15 months and I find this further delay just impossible to understand and accept. By the time this gets sorted, it's going to be well into the summer term, so 2 years out of school! Also, we have a tribunal date in May, which we are trying to avoid through sorting everything out via the Early Annual Review process. I am back to feeling completely exasperated!
- Initially I would have said that I felt the session was useful and they said all the things on the day that made me feel it had been useful.

- 8 days after the meeting I received an email (after chasing) confirming what we had discussed in the meeting. I have not heard since despite emailing him several times and my daughter still has no provision.
- I had privately arranged for my daughter to access The Gateway Award through Promise Inclusion and SEN agreed to fund this. I have just found out that SEN have not paid the invoice and are not responding to Promise Inclusions emails so it looks like my daughter may also lose the only thing she has at the moment.
- Thanks for organising the event though and SVW's support on the day was fantastic.
- I would definitely like the opportunity to meet the SEND Team again to chase them!
- Please pass on my thanks to them for taking time to answer my questions and talk through my confusion and worries (via February SEND drop-in). They were extremely knowledgeable and helpful, and I really appreciated their advice. After speaking to them, my stress levels definitely went down a notch – which my husband and kids appreciated too! (0:

Note: We have removed the names of SEND Team members, we are aware that some, but not all, of those mentioned above have now left the SEND Team