

June 2021

We are the independent voice of families, representing their experiences to improve lives



The last year has certainly been a year like no other! Who would have imagined that it would bring more lockdowns, home schooling, facemasks, and a whole new set of challenges for SEND families.

We continue to have regular contact with the Local Authority, Education, Social Care and Health teams during these difficult times and talk to them about the issues that families are raising.

Although we were not able to run many of our regular events and training in person, like everyone else we have adapted, moved things online where we can.

Highlights of our work last year:

- *Continued to build our membership and have increase the number of families we contact by 20%*
- *We now have contact with over 1200+ families through email, social media, and contacts with other local voluntary groups*
- *Continue to offer Max Cards to all our members*
- *Ran more than 16 events for parent carers including 7 training sessions, drop-ins, consultations on the Ordinarily Available, Transport Policy & SEND Strategy Outcome Measures, and focus groups on the new EHCP template*
- *Ran surveys on the EHCP Process, Coproduction Charter, Home to School Transport, SEND DfE Conversation and Parents Experience Services during Covid Lockdown*
- *Produced a Local Offer Booklet (instead of our live event) which was sent out to over 1200+ families*
- *Represented families at the SEND Implementation Board (SIB) and the 6 work streams that resulted from the Local Area SEND Services Inspection in Wokingham and the resulting Written Statement of Action (WSOA)*
- *Produced a Covid-19 Guide for SEND families and kept our website updated with the ever-changing information*

Like everyone our committee has had challenges to face over the past year. Due to home schooling and family commitments Helen Corbett and Aleca Rzytko were unable to continue as co-chairs, but we are pleased that they have remained involved in the work that we are doing. We also want to send a big thank you to Martin Jones, who has supported us for many years with all things financial, and has now stepped down.

We are very pleased to welcome Lynn Boba to the committee.

Although we are a small group of volunteers, we all believe in our children and their potential and know with the right provision they can achieve so much. We are passionate about improving services and experiences of our families, but we can only do this with your help. Please continue letting us know about your experiences, what is going well and where things can be improved.



You have told us what it is like to be a SEND parent in the word cloud above. Your voice shapes what we do. So, please keep talking to us.

Last but by no means least, I would like to thank the whole committee for all their efforts during this enormously difficult year, you are an amazing team.

Sarah Clarke

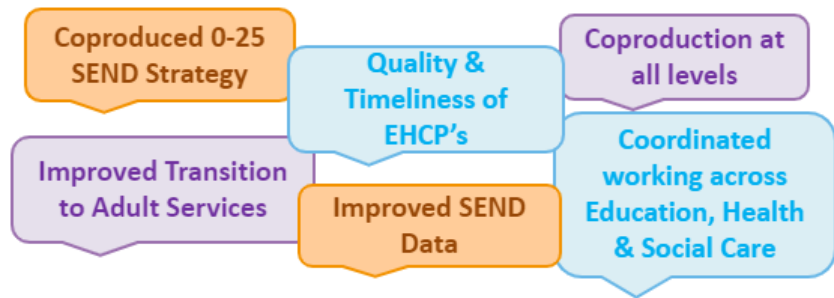
Chair SEND Voices Wokingham

CONTACT US

 www.sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk  info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk

 **SEND Voices Wokingham**

A re-visit inspection to review the progress on the Written Statement of Action (WSOA) over the last 2 years took place in May 2021. Thank you to all the families who took time to respond to the Ofsted revisit survey. At the time of writing this we are still waiting to hear the result of the revisit but will share this information as soon as it is received.



Over the last year our involvement on the WSoA has added over 450 hours work to our workload – a 80% increase in hours vs the previous year.

There has been progress across several of the workstreams. For example, around 75% of EHCP applications are being issued within the 20-week timeframe (National figure is 60%), a Co-production Charter was signed by all partners, the 0-25 Wokingham wide SEND Strategy agreed and has now progressed to the SEND Innovation & Improvement Programme (IIP) for its roll-out. There is still a long way to go and as the programme of work moves from the WSoA two-year plan into the SEND IIP. SEND Voices Wokingham will continue to represent families on all the new workstreams.

Join us on **Tuesday 29th June at 8pm** when Carol Cammiss (WBC Director Childrens Services) will be joining an online session to update families on the progress of the SEND Innovation & Improvement programme since our AGM.

To book a place please email info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk

Max Cards for our Members

We are pleased that we can continue to offer members of SEND Voices Wokingham a FREE Max Card (a Max Card gives families various discounts to attractions across the UK). Full details of how to join SEND Voices Wokingham or to get your free Max Card are available on our website or you can email: info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk. Membership is FREE and the more members we have the stronger our voice when we talk to Education, Health and Social care about the issues that are affecting you.



Events for Parent Carers



Last year we ran over 16 different events for parent carers. Due to the restrictions, we were not able to run our annual Local Offer Live Family Information Day, which we run in partnership with the Wokingham Borough Council CAN (Children with Additional Needs) Network. Instead, we produced a Local Offer Guide. Although not exhaustive, it gives information about some of the organisations and services locally that can provide activities, help, information and support to you and your child aged 0-25 years with any Special Educational Need or Disability.

The information provided was correct of February 2021. We worked with the team at the CAN Network to send out the guide. If you would like a copy, please email info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk

Parent Reps needed!



With the roll out of the SEND Strategy we know that we will need your help. We are looking for parents who would be able to review documents such as updated

EHCP paperwork, a Transition to Adulthood booklet or be able to attend focus groups (virtually) on areas such as SEND Sufficiency. If you think you would be able to help please email: info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk



Job Vacancy ~ would you like to come and work for us?

We are looking for someone to support and develop our Social Media presence, increase and manage our membership and produce a local information booklet.

The role will be on a self-employed basis, for up to 5 hours a week, predominantly term time, at £12/hour, September 2021 to March 2022 (this may be extended depending on funding). Full details on our website: www.sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk or email info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk.

To apply please email us with your CV and a covering letter. Closing date for applications 18th July 2021.

Surveys, surveys, surveys.....Thank You for your feedback

A **BIG** thank you to all the parent carers who have completed surveys or consultations for us during 2020/21. We know there have been a lot but without your feedback on these, we cannot tell Education, Health and Social Care what is working and what needs improving. The results of the surveys you completed last year have resulted in the following changes:

Coproduction Charter – A Wokingham area Coproduction Charter has been coproduced and partners WBC and Health have signed up to working in coproduction *to puts the needs of the individual at the heart of all the decision-making processes and the support and services provided* at all levels.

SEND DfE Conversation and Parents Experience Services during Covid Lockdown - This raised a number of issues around the EHCP Annual Reviews process. As a result, the Annual Review process is being reviewed and updated as part of the SEND Innovation & Improvement programme.

EHCP Process Survey – We continue to run this ongoing survey to ensure that quality of EHCP's is continually monitored and reviewed. The results will be used by the Innovation & Improvement group who are working to continually improve processes.

Home to School Transport – Feedback from parents has resulted in regular meetings with Corporate Transport & the SEND team to address the issues you raise. It has also informed the new Home to School Transport Policy which is being developed.

Please keep completing the surveys and consultations. The information they provide is so important and makes a real difference to improving services in the borough.



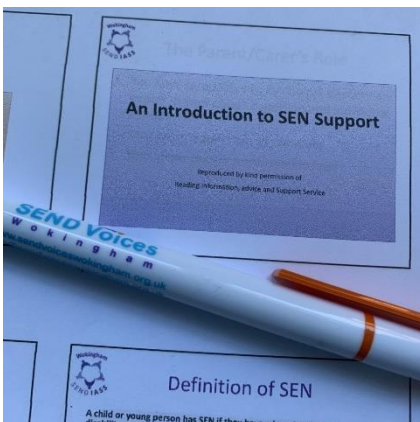
What else has happened behind the scenes?

We are also involved with a number of other strategic groups and boards:

- Berkshire West SEND Joint Implementation Group
- Short Breaks Steering Group
- SENDIASS Steering Groups
- SEND Providers Forum
- WBC Operational Meeting (from SEND, Children with Disabilities and SENDIASS)
- Autism Strategy
- Commissioning of the new ASD Resource unit
- Transforming Mental Health Care to avoid hospital admissions
- Autism/ADHD Early Support Service
- National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) regionally and at a national level



Training Courses for Parent Carers.



We are very pleased that we have been able to switch the SENDIASS training courses on EHCP's, Annual Reviews, Effective Communication and SEN Support in School online. Thank you to Julie Monahan and the team at SENDIASS for supporting these courses. Along with these 4 courses further courses are planned on Phase Transfer EHCP Reviews and Transition to Adulthood. We will be repeating these courses in the Autumn term, as soon as we have more details, we will let you know.

Great course, thank you so much

It was very informative yet relaxed to give us time to process the information and feel comfortable to participate with questions and answers.

The Local Offer

Want to find out more about the services available for children & young people with SEND locally? The Local Offer is an online guide to the range of services, support and information that are available locally and how to access them. It can be found on the WBC website <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/our-local-offer/>. You can also give feedback here about the Local Offer website and the services listed, which will help to improve services in the future.



Finance Report 2020/21

Summary of INCOME

Department of Education Grant	£ 15,000
Additional Grant (unused from 19/20 and not reclaimed due to covid)	£ 7,306
<u>Total Funding 2020/2021</u>	<u>£ 22,306</u>

Summary of EXPENDITURE*

Parent Events	£3666.62
Parent Renumeration	£4576.00
Training	£1088.80
Infrastructure/Web development	£4181.91
Information (newsletter etc.)	£723.35
Admin Support	£5816.25
Expenses	£133.20
Other	£330.98
<u>Total Expenditure 2020/21</u>	<u>£21239.61</u>

Our Plan for 2021/22

We will apply for a £17,500 grant from the Department of Education Grant for 2021/22 in May. If successful, the grant will be received in two separate payments across 2021/22.

*Actuals April 2021

Become a Member – Get your voice heard!

Membership is **FREE**.

Full details on our website:

www.sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk or you can email us on info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk or through Facebook.

Any data we hold about you will be stored carefully and never given to any third parties.



www.sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk



info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk



SEND Voices Wokingham



@SendVW



SENDVoicesWokingham

Executive Committee

Chair
Vice Chair
Treasurer
Secretary

Sarah Clarke
Debbie Jacobs
Jacky Mackenzie
Aleca Rzyzko

Committee Member

Judith Newman, Lynn Boba,
Kathy Rzyzko, Terri Walsh
Helen Corbett (to re-join later)
Terri Walsh

Participation Coordinator

