

Feedback From Families – Summer Term 2025

Overall Themes for the Term:

- SEND Team communication – mixed experiences for families
- Annual reviews – improvements required in timeliness and quality
- Reasonable adjustments and Ordinarily Available Provision – this needs to be consistent across a school (and the Borough)
- School/college not providing provision that is stated in the EHCP
- Access to information – more through school and also evenings, helplines and support groups
- Masking
- Parent anxiety

SEND Update for Families with WBC & Health (via Zoom)

Full slides and Q&A document are available on our website here: [SEND Update for Families with WBC & Health 2nd July 2025](#) and [Update Slides from WBC & Health](#)

12 parents attended

Themes

- Funding and banding issues
- Provision in EHCPs is not being provided by school.
- Annual Reviews not capturing this information effectively
- Request for information about new local provision

PINS (Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools)

Parent Survey Responses:

- Total responses to the June 2025 PINS Parent Survey: **791**
- Results of the first PINS parents Survey: [PINS Parent Survey June 2025](#)

Parent Engagement Activity:

- 22 Parent Engagement Sessions delivered
- 144 parents attended in total
- 22 Feedback sessions held with school Senior Leadership Teams (SLTs)

Key Themes:

- Masking
- Awareness of neurodiversity across whole school staff and also children's peers
- Isolation
- Communication and information
- Capacity issues – more early intervention

SENDIASS Drop-in's

(SVW attend to chat with parents and gather feedback/signpost whilst parents waiting to see SENDIASS). Total attendees Spring Term: 27

Comments from those attending the drop-ins:

April (8 families)

- Schools are not making reasonable adjustments for all children.
- IEP not followed/support staff not contacted to help child, child just suspended. Child now not attending due to mental health, school threatened families with fines rather than support to get child back into school. School says it will do things but never follows through. Communication is very poor.
- Schools do not provide support detailed in EHCP. Suggesting to parents of children with autism diagnoses in school that they move schools.
- Parent anxiety high
- Families not aware of support services that are available in the Borough

May (6 families)

- Would like more visibility on schools SEN stats eg number of EHCP students they have, how many children transfer out who have EHCPs or are on SEND support, what are schools SEND strengths/weaknesses
- Advice for parents on which schools can best meet which needs
- More sharing of parent experiences to inform school choice, there seems to be themes coming from certain schools.

June (9 families)

- Parents with children in secondary schools get no information from school to help them find information that could help them understand, learn more and socialise with other parent carers of children with similar needs

- Parents feel alone and unsupported and are not aware of organisations in the Wokingham borough that offer information, social events and activities for their children to help support their whole family
- Awareness of the PINs project has reached most schools. Those attending secondary schools ask for it to roll out to these schools asap.
- *Those attending SENDIASS drop-in sessions feel supported and positive moving forward once they have talked through their concerns with SENDIASS officer*

July (5 families)

- Families looking for support and access to helplines/groups in evening and weekends as they work full time.
- Parents seeing benefits in going for Right to Choose as more efficient and reduced waiting time.
- More parents seeking mental health support for themselves as they struggle to navigate complexities of SEN processes/timelines/contacts/responsibilities etc whilst also needing to help guide their child/young person
- Parents not aware of who can help them. More signposting from schools would be helpful.

SENDIASS Training courses

EHCP Annual Reviews Process - 15th May (4 parents attended)

- School did not follow AR process, timelines did not follow no documents circulated. Had a meeting with the school 2 months after plan was issued and senco said "well just call this an early AR, since it basically was" We had no opportunity to review and feed in
- EHCP far too woolly - nothing is specific as WBC said couldn't make it more specific as it wasn't in the EP report - now no use and nothing specific

SEND Support in School – 1st July (4 parents attended)

- Part-time timetable issues
- Communication between school and families difficult – a dedicated link person would help
- Some schools completely unwilling to listen to parents

Preparing for Adulthood – 18th June (4 parents attended)

- More information is required in Annual Reviews about independent travel training (ITT). Parents had not heard about ITT
- Not clear about post-16 school/college application process
- SEND transport – PTB working so much better and better communications

Drop-in & Chat sessions

10th June (3 family attended)

- Communications with SEND team – for 1 good, definite improvement seen, for other 2 families, very “hit and miss”
- Families bounced between services, with no one really taking responsibility. Ends up with child not attending school and no one really supporting family

Carers Partnership Event – 11th June

Engaged with 7 families

- SEND team communication poor – no response to emails, waiting for a special school place (child currently in mainstream)
- Would like more information for Preparing for Adulthood (14-year-old child)
- School senco is excellent, good communication and adjustments made. All teachers in school made aware of adjustments that are needed.
- Using Right to Choose as NHS waiting lists are too long.

Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) market stall event - 21st May

Engaged with 14 families

- Lack of PfA for EOTAS young people – what happens next!
- Senior school not making reasonable adjustments and selectively excluding child to “keep them out of the way”
- School not sending AR paperwork, SEND team do not chase the school for it
- Information requested for families moving into the Borough
- Communications issues, variability across SEND Team
- Poor communications during Tribunal process
- AR not completed, failure between SEND team and school

Zoom Update on Ordinarily Available Provision

23 Families attended

Q&As from the session: [OAP Q&As 8th & 10th July](#)

Themes:

- How will implementation be ensured? How will Academies be held accountable?
- Are there sufficient resources for schools to support this?
- How will this align with EHCP applications?

Zoom Update on Neuro inclusion Transformation

15 families attended

Q&As from the session: [Berkshire Neuro Inclusive Early Help System Change July 7th](#)

Themes:

- Will there be additional support for schools to support the CYP when they are identified earlier?
- Who is completing the assessment and how will they be trained?
- Will those with lived experience be involved in the development of this project?

General Questions / Comments Summer Term '25

General feedback and themes via email and social media

SEND Team Communications/Complaints process

- Still not heard back about post-16 phase transfer (April 25). Keep sending emails and only ever get "we will respond in 5 days", no one ever comes back to us.
- Numerous requests to SEND team, questions never get a response (ongoing since February). Now found out that I have a new Caseworker, but no one informed parent. SEND Teams out of office not kept up to date. Still waiting for confirmation of school for September, child keeps asking which school they will be going to, but no information is available.
- SAR's several families have made requests and requests has been denied.
- We've found Wokingham SEND to be non-communicative, making decisions without consulting us or having all the information to hand to make an informed decision, resulting in wasting time and missing opportunities for the last 4 years. We feel intentionally messed around so as not to have to support our child"
- Issues with getting the right provision for your son, that communication response times from the SEND team is poor and that your complaints are not being adequately addressed.

EHCP/Annual Review Process

- EHCP application was rejected at end of March. We asked Wokingham SEN for a Way Forward meeting, and this took them several weeks. We had it this week (End of May) but it was hugely disappointing. The Wokingham representative present at the meeting wasn't on our daughter's panel and could give us no further reason for the rejection, other than the single sentence on the rejection letter. 'School will handle child's needs'. We asked for the Panel minutes and appallingly we've been told there aren't any! How can a decision of this magnitude be taken without any documentation? The school simply can't provide the necessary SEN provision for both financial and resourcing issues, and have verbally

admitted this to us. Our child isn't a lost cause and has been doing very well on a 1 day a week schools program at BCA. Child out of school since January.

- Poor communication, have been chasing for Annual Review paperwork 6 months

Local Offer

- Do Wokingham have any plans to put a full list of approved alternative provision providers on their local offer please (only The Foundry is currently listed)? Reading and Bracknell both have a list of approved providers, yet Wokingham don't.
- Concerns over wording of Parent Carer Needs Assessment on the Local Offer page – specific comments feedback to LO Coordinator

Schools

- Schools are not providing what is specified in the EHCP and are given funding for. Why are the council not checking on this?
- Senior school not supplying provision as specified in EHCP
- Senior school not providing Ordinarily Available Provision or making reasonable adjustments for child leading to school refusal.
- School are amazing, doing everything to support my child (while awaiting diagnosis)

Neurodiversity Referral Process

- Inconsistencies of response from CAHMs to families who have put their child on the autism or ADHD pathway. Some parents are receiving (quite swiftly) confirmation that their child has met threshold and is on the pathway, others have a much longer time frame and others are not receiving any confirmation. When our SEND admin chased for a pupil on the ADHD pathway, CAMHs informed her that the pupil was on the pathway, but no information would be going out for 6-8months! As we submit quite a few referrals, we thought we would highlight this inconsistency to you as we have anxious parents who do not hear anything (from a SENCO)
- Weighting of information from school vs parents causing friction. Parents feel that issues such as masking are not properly recognized and not reflected in the referral paperwork.
- Referral paperwork takes a long time (feedback from schools), parents then report that this is causing long waits for referrals to be submitted.

Social Care/Children with Disabilities Team/ Short Breaks

- Long waits for Short Breaks assessments. Parents do not get acknowledgement that applications have been received.

Health

- The continence team has been amazing

- Feedback from parent after 2 years of trying to secure the right speech & Language support for her child (now discharged as no suitable support available to help) - I didn't know that I could refer my child to the speech therapist myself. I thought that only HV could refer. Had I known it, I would have put my child on a waiting list much sooner. So, it would be great if HV could let parents know from the start that if they are concerned about their children's speech development, they can do referral themselves and encourage parents to do it sooner because of the long waiting list. It is easy to cancel an appointment if not needed, but it takes a long time to get one.

I realise that giving speech therapy to every child that needs it is expensive, but they were willing to give me 6 sessions whereby they would teach me how to help my child. In my opinion, these 6 sessions would have been better spent if the speech therapist monitored my child's speech development by meeting them once every 3-4 months, so it would cover 18-24 months. The purpose of this monitoring is to see if there is an underlying issue that is related to speech delay and needs to be addressed, eg Autism, Auditory processing disorder, Childhood apraxia of speech and so on.

It would be great to have a group speech therapy in which parents attend with children and follow NHS speech therapist instructions. Number one, it is much cheaper for NHS than giving each parent 6 sessions. Number two, parents get to meet other parents whose children also have speech delay. I don't know anyone whose child has a speech delay in Wokingham, so it was a very isolating, lonely journey.

In retrospect, I believe that my child's speech delay is a normal part of development that is not associated with any issues and in a non-medical term it is called Einstein syndrome. Their brain is wired slightly differently from other children and it was not ready to process language until a much later date, but they have an exceptional spatial reasoning and more advanced than other children in other areas. In other words, there was absolutely nothing that could be done to speed up the process. None of the speech therapist that I spoke with were aware of the Einstein syndrome and none of them said that they might be a late talker. So, I think a lot more research needs to be done on how children develop speech, rather than just telling parents on how to talk to their children, as if it is parent's communication style that is to blame for their speech delay. As someone who is fascinated with children development, I was keen to sign up my child for research studies, but the only places that I found that needed children for their research are universities based in the USA. However, this doesn't appear to be the case in the UK.

Transport

- School transport did not arrive (after school). The transport provider eventually answered phone and then cut-off without asking for details of child/school etc. Called back to confirm details and man was very blunt. Later received a call to say transport arranged. Child arrived home 75 minutes after school ended (usually less than a 10-minute drive) with no escort (which should be provided)