

# May 2022

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



*We hoped that through 2021 things would start to return to normal, but again it was a very disrupted year, and we know that it was very stressful for many 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, we continued to build on our virtual events.*

*Highlights of our work last year:*

- *Continued to build our membership and have increase the number of families we contact by 30%*
- *We now have contact with over 1200+ families through email, social media, and contacts with other local voluntary groups. **Thank you to each and every single one of you for all your comments and feedback.***
- *Continue to offer Max Cards to all our members. If yours has expired, please get in touch.*
- *Ran more than 26 events for parent carers including 17 training sessions, drop-ins on SENDIASS, the SEND Innovation & Improvement Programme, Phase Transfers and Short Breaks, 62 % more events last year!*
- *Ran surveys on SEND Sufficiency in the Borough, Short Breaks and the SENDIASS service.*
- *Produced an updated Local Offer Booklet 2022 (instead of our live event) which was sent out to over 1200+ families, all pre-schools, primary and secondary schools in the Borough.*
- *Represented families at the SEND Innovation & Improvement Board (SIIP) and the 5-work stream, including the Accelerated Action plan for Transition to Adulthood.*
- *Kept our website and social media updated with the information for families.*

*Due to family and work commitments Helen Corbett was unable to re-join the committee and Kathy Rzyzsko resigned – thank you both for all your hard work and contributions to our work.*

*We are encouraged that parent are now starting to see an impact of some of the issues that we have highlighted and worked with education, health, and social care on. These include:*

- *85 % of EHCP assessments being completed in 20 weeks.*
- *Staffing of the SEND team increased to 18 (11 of these permanent positions).*
- *Transport process reviewed and new process implemented with monthly panel (which includes a parent rep) to approve requests.*
- *Ordinarily Available (what all schools should make available to all children in mainstream settings) updated and rolled out.*
- *Preparing for Adulthood parents' guide produced.*
- *SEND IIP updates for parents with the WBC Director of Children's Services.*

*We know there is still lots more to do and will continue to ensure that your voice is represented wherever we can.*

*If you are interested in joining our team, please do get in touch.*

*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.*

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

**Sarah Clarke**

*Chair SEND Voices Wokingham*

## CONTACT US



[www.sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk](http://www.sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk)



[info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk](mailto:info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk)



**SEND Voices Wokingham**

The results of the Ofsted/CQC revisit were received in late June 21. The revisit report stated “The area has made sufficient progress in addressing five of the six significant weaknesses identified at the initial inspection. The area has not made sufficient progress in addressing one significant weakness”. The area still requiring improvement was the “underdeveloped pathway to enable young people with SEND to make a successful transition to adulthood”

As a result, the Local Area was required to produce an Accelerated Action Plan (AAP) to address this. The Local Area will be inspected again in July 22 to ensure that this plan has been met. We will be collecting information in our Annual SEND Survey (see later), to share with Ofsted & the CQC to tell them about the lived experience for families on this as well as all other areas of SEND provision locally.



We have been very involved in the APP to address the improvements required around transition to adulthood and played a key role in pulling together the new Preparing for Adulthood information guide for Parents and Carers. A copy is on our website here: [PFA Guide](#). Thank you to all the families who helped with this document.

We have continued to be actively involved with the SEND Improvement & Innovation work (which carried on the work initiated on the other 5 areas identified in the original Ofsted Written Statement of Action). The 5 work streams involved over 450 hours work – maintaining the increase in hours we saw in 20/21 with the WSOA.

## It's back! – SAVE the DATE



### Local Offer Live 2022 – Family Information & Fun Day Saturday October 8<sup>th</sup> 11am-3pm at St Crispin's Leisure Centre

More details and how to book your tickets soon

## Events for Parent Carers

Although there were still restrictions on face-to-face events, we were able, with 26 events for Parent Carers including 17 training/workshop sessions, (EHCP Process, Annual Reviews, SEN Support in Schools, Effective Communications and Preparing for Adulthood), 4 drop-ins (SENDIAS, Phase Transfers, Transport, SEND IIP update, Short Breaks) and 2 focus groups (SEND Sufficiency in the Borough).



Sadly, for the second year, 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. However, with funding from the Pears Foundation, we were pleased to be able to produce an updated 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 2022. We worked with the team at the CAN Network to send out the guide. Copies have also been distributed to every school and pre-school in the Wokingham Borough. If you would like a copy, please email [Info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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.



## Launch of our Annual SEND 2022

We are launching an annual SEND survey to get a complete understanding of the SEND services for families in the Borough and the impact that the SEND Innovation & Improvement work is having on families lived experience.

A link to the survey is here: [SVW Annual SEND Survey 2022](#)

The survey will run until the 30<sup>th</sup> June and is for all families who live in the Wokingham Borough and who have a child with any additional needs or disabilities to understand where services are working and where improvements still need to be made. By completing the survey, you will have the option to be entered into our draw for one of 5 £20 Amazon vouchers. We will use the answers to prioritise our work to make sure they are the areas that are most important to you.

## Surveys last year.....thank you for your feedback

A **BIG** thank you to all the parent carers who have completed surveys or consultations for us during 2021/22. 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:

**SEND Sufficiency in the Borough** - The Oaks new special school is due to open September 2023. The Resource Base / SEND Unit review is now complete. WBC are in consultation with schools around the proposals before presenting to the WBC Leadership Team for sign off.



**Short Breaks for those with Direct Payments (DPs) & Short Breaks for those without DP's** – this information has been shared with WBC Social Care and the commissioning team; they are currently waiting for more commissioning resource to progress this work.

**SENDIASS service** – Various recommendations from the survey are being progressed by SENDIASS to improve their service.

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:

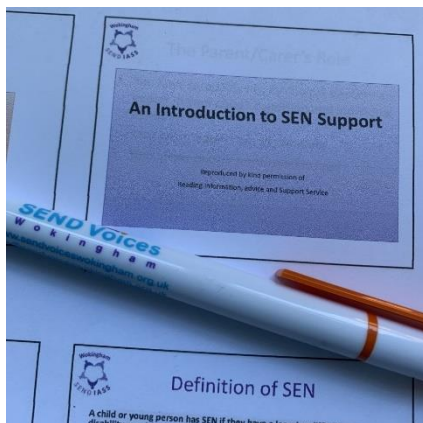
- Berkshire West SEND Joint Implementation Group
- DfE SEND Update
- Short Breaks, SENDIASS Steering Group
- SEND Providers Forum
- WBC Operational Meetings
- SEND Transport Forum
- Berkshire West CYP Mental Health Forum
- WBC Autism Strategy
- WBC Learning Disability strategy group
- Hydrotherapy Pool Group
- Healthwatch



- Healthwatch West Berks – Mental Health – Thinking Together Project
- WBC Residents Equality Forum
- Mental Health Admission Avoidance
- NHS West Berkshire – Keywork Project
- National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) regionally and at a national level

## Training Courses for Parent Carers.

We have continued to host our SENDIASS training courses online, feedback from families says this makes them more accessible and easier to attend. A big thank you to Julie and her team, this meant we were able to host 17 training/workshop sessions covering the EHCP Process, Annual Reviews, SEN Support in Schools, Effective Communications and Preparing for Adulthood as well as specific sessions to support Phase Transfers. These courses are repeated every term, full details and dates of upcoming courses are on the events section of our website.



Brilliant and eye opening

Gives you the confidence to tackle some of the difficult issues with the relevant departments

## Parent Reps needed!



With the ongoing SEND IIP work we know that we will need your help. We are looking for parents who would be able to review documents such as updated Annual Review paperwork, feedback on the

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](mailto:info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk)





## 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 2021/22

#### Summary of INCOME

Department of Education Grant	£ 17,500
Pear's Foundation grant (LO Guide & Membership)	£ 5,207
<b>Total Funding 2020/2021</b>	<b>£ 22,707</b>

#### Summary of EXPENDITURE (Actuals April 2022)

Parent Events	£ 956.08
Parent Remuneration	£8649.00
Training	£ 115.00
Infrastructure/Web development	£2184.52
Information (newsletter etc.)	£ 989.21
Admin Support	£5384.75
Expenses	£ 88.65
Other	£ 485.19
LO Guide & Membership	£5325.91

**Total Expenditure 2021/22** £24,178.31

(£1,471.31 overspend covered by existing funds)

#### Our Plan for 2022/23

We will apply for a £17,500 grant from the Department of Education Grant for 2022/23 in May. If successful, the grant will be received in two separate payments across 2022/23.

### Become a Member – Get your voice heard!

Membership is **FREE**.

Full details on our website:

[www.sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk](http://www.sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk) or you can email us on [info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk](mailto:info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk) or through Facebook.

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



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SEND Voices Wokingham



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### Executive Committee

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Vice Chair  
Treasurer

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Debbie Jacobs  
Jacky Mackenzie

Secretary  
Committee Members  
Participation Coordinator

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