

May 2023

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



Registered Charity Number: 1201621

We were very pleased that 2022 saw some return to normality and we were once again able to run face to face events. Along with our ongoing work with Education, Social Care and Health, which has once again increased, 22/23 was a really busy year.

We know that things are still very difficult for families and would particularly like to thank everyone who has taken the time to attend one of our events, complete a survey or contacted us about issues that are affecting their family. We couldn't do what we do without your feedback – **thank you.**

Highlights of our work last year:

- Our first Annual SEND Survey for Wokingham Borough had a great response and has been vital evidence, highlighting the priorities for families.
- Continued to build our membership, we have increased our membership by 30%.
- Regular contact with over 1250+ families via email, social media & contacts with other local voluntary groups.
- Continue to offer Max Cards to all our members. If yours has expired, please get in touch.
- Ran 27 events for Parent Carers, including 14 training/workshop sessions, 6 drop-ins, 2 focus groups and 4 coffee mornings.
- Produced a [SEND Guide for Parents](#) which is available on our website and hard copy.
- Distributed our [Local Offer Guide](#) to our members, GP's & schools
- Produced an [Early Years information flyer](#).
- Represented families at the SEND Innovation & Improvement Board (SIIB) and associated workstreams, including the Accelerated Action plan for Transition to Adulthood.

- Kept our website and social media updated with the information for families.
- Became a Registered Charity as of 1st April 2023.

We were very sad to say goodbye to Judith Newman, one of the founder members of the forum and Aleca Rzyso, thank you both for all your contributions to SEND Voices Wokingham.

We know there is still so much more to do and with the announcements of two new SEND schools, increased SEND school places, more focus on post 16 opportunities, a SEND Support service for schools and improved SEND Local Offer, to name but a few. We continue to work with Wokingham Borough Council and Health partner to ensure families lived experience improves. We will continue to ensure that your voice is represented across all areas of work.

As part of our charity structure, we are setting up a Parent Carer Advisory Group. This group will help inform our priorities and get involved with specific projects such as playpark accessibility and SEND Local Offer website. If you would like to be involved, please get in touch.

Although we are a small group, we all believe in our children and their potential and know with the right provision and opportunities 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 steering committee for all their efforts during yet another difficult year, you are an amazing team. We are delighted that the steering committee are continuing with us as Charity.

Sarah Clarke & Terri Walsh

Joint CEO's of SEND Voices Wokingham

CONTACT US



www.sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk



info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk



SEND Voices Wokingham



Local Offer Live 2022

We were delighted that October 2022 saw the return of the Local Offer Live and attendance hit a new high!

There were information stalls where parent carers could find out about support, services and activities that are available locally along with representatives from Wokingham Borough Council SEND Services and the voluntary sector.

We had some wonderful activities too, like the Berkshire Reptile Encounters, face painting, and circus skills with Circus Scene which provided entertainment for the children and young people. Thank you to everyone who supported this event.

Due to the huge demand for tickets, we are reviewing the event to expand the capacity for Oct 2023. We also listened to your feedback about the need for more information for 14+ and with Wokingham Borough Council are planning a dedicated Preparing for Adulthood area, with information stalls specifically for the 14+ age group.

SAVE the DATE!



Local Offer Live 2023 – Family Information & Fun Day Saturday October 7th 10.30am-3pm at St Crispin's Leisure Centre

More details and how to book your tickets soon

SEND Guide for Parents

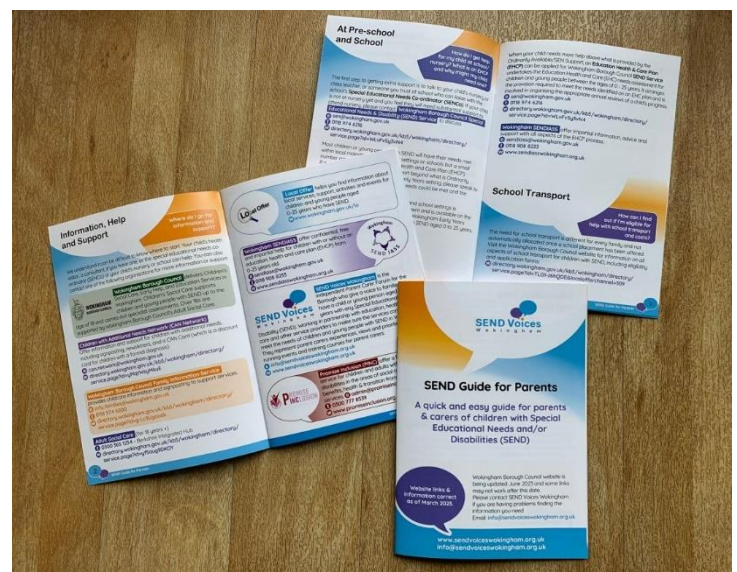
In our Annual SEND Survey, you told us that information was difficult to find, we know that this is especially true for families who are just beginning to navigate the SEND system.

To help we have produced a quick & easy guide for parents and carers of children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities.

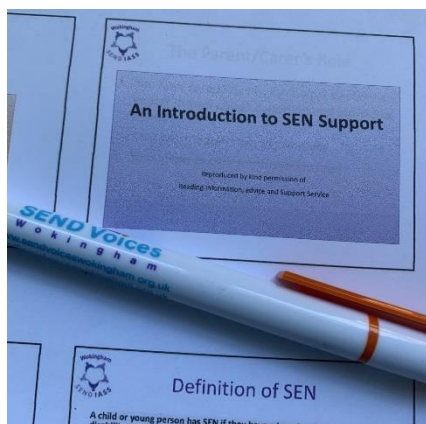
This guide is available on our website: [SEND Guide for Parents](#)

You can click on the website links in the online version and it will take you to the relevant weblink and more information.

We also have hard copies of the SEND Guide for Parents available. If you (or an organisation you know) would like a copy, please email Info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk and we will post it to you.



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 14 training/workshop sessions covering the EHCP Process, Annual Reviews, SEN Support in Schools, Effective Communications and Preparing for Adulthood. These courses are repeated every term, full details and dates of upcoming courses are on the events section of our website.

It was very informative and well-delivered course.

It has given me so much insight into what I should be doing or asking for as I have previously been going in completely blind!

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.



Wokingham Area Annual SEND Survey 2023

Time to Have your Say! Our Annual SEND Survey is now open.

The link to the survey is here: [Annual SEND Survey 2023](#)

The survey covers all aspects of SEND including Education, Health and Social Care as well as availability of Information and parent carer wellbeing. It gives us a real overview of the "lived experience" for SEND families in Wokingham Borough. This survey is for families of **all** children 0-25 years old with special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND), not just those with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) or on formal SEN support at school.

The survey will run until the 16th 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 results to feedback into the SEND Improvement work in the Borough and make sure that the areas that we are focussing on are the 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 2022/23. We know there have been a lot of surveys but without your feedback, 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 feed into and developed the Local Area Self Evaluation for Ofsted and helped to set the priority areas of work, both strategically and operationally.

Annual SEND Survey 2022 - A huge thank you to everyone who responded to our Annual Wokingham Area SEND survey 2022, we were so pleased that we receive 440 responses. The results gave a great understanding of the SEND services in the Borough and what impact that the SEND Innovation & Improvement work had on families lived experience in the last 12 months.

The full results are available here: [SVW Annual SEND Survey 2022](#)

The survey results were shared with the DfE, Wokingham SEND Improvement Board, WBC Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee and it informed a number of workstreams across education, health, and social care. Some of Business case for improvement to the SEND Local Offer

- Preparing for Adulthood - further development of the Post 16 offer
- Development of a SEND Service to support schools
- Production of our [SEND Guide for Parents](#) booklet
- More training for GPs around the 14+ year Annual Health Checks

Transport - A new members of the SEND Team has been recruited to focus on SEND Transport. The Childrens Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee have requested a survey every year in the Autumn Term to check that Home to School Transport is working well.

EOTAS - A first draft of the EOTAS policy was developed. Further work is now planned on EOTAS as part of the SEND & AP Review.

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



Accelerated Action Plan for Preparing for Adulthood



The Local Area was reviewed again in February 23 to ensure that the Accelerated Action Plan (APP) for Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) was progressing. We shared the PfA results from the 2022 Annual SEND Survey with Ofsted & the CQC to tell them about your lived experience. The response from the DfE stated "We were grateful for all those who participated in the meeting and in particular for the contributions from your parent carer forum".

The DfE noted that although progress has been made in several areas and a further review is planned for September 23 to ensure work continues in this area. A copy of the Wokingham Preparing For Adulthood Guide is on our website here: [PfA Guide](#).



SEND Innovation & Improvement Programme



We have continued to be actively involved with the SEND Improvement & Innovation work. This has now incorporated the Safety Valve Programme and the SEND Partnership Board. The Safety Valve Programme is a DfE initiative designed to help local authorities tackle overspending on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services; early intervention, local provision and easy access to information all play key roles. This strategic work has totalled over 660 hours work over the last year – yet another increase in hours on 21/22 with the WSOA.

We were very pleased to continue the SEND Innovation & Improvement Update sessions for parents where officers from the Local Authority and Health presented the ongoing work and also answered parent carers questions about services locally. The latest SEND Update and Q&A's are on our website here: [SEN Update 2023](#). We will be continuing these update sessions as well as drop-in sessions with individual WBC teams, we will keep you updated on these via email and out Facebook page.

What else has happened behind the scenes?

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

- Berkshire West SEND Joint Implementation Group
- DfE SEND Update
- Short Breaks
- SENDIASS Steering Groups
- WBC Operational Meetings
- SEND Transport Forum
- Berkshire West CYP Mental Health Forum
- WBC Autism Strategy
- Healthwatch
- WBC Residents Equality Forum



- WBC Childrens Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Health Keyworker Programme & CAMHS LD Mental Health service
- WBC EY Best Start in Life
- SE19 Joint SEND Forum
- National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) regionally and at a national level

The Local Offer

If you'd like 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.



We have also produced 2 guide to help families find information:
[Local Offer Guide 2022](#)
[SEND Guide for Parents](#)

Both guides are available as hard copies. Email info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk for a copy to be posted to you.



We are now a registered Charity Could you be a Trustee or member of our Parent Advisory Group?

The move to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation was approved at our EGM in November 22 and we officially became a registered charity on 1st April 2023 (Registered Charity Number: 1201621) We are now looking for parent carers to either join our Board of Trustees or become members of our Parent Advisory Group.

As a trustee you will help ensure our governance and support the priorities and for SEND Voices Wokingham.

The Parent Advisory Group will help shape our priorities and look at a variety of projects such as accessibility of play parks and libraries and the Local Offer website. This group will represent all areas of SEND and ages 0-25 in the Wokingham Borough. The Parent Advisory Group is planned to start in September and will meet once per term (with either a daytime and/or evening sessions).

If you would like more information or are interested in joining please email: info@sendvoiceswokingham.org.uk

Finance Report 2022/23

Summary of INCOME

Department of Education Grant	£ 17,500
Priority grant (SEND Guide & Charity set-up)	£ 3,375
Total Funding 2022/2023	£ 20,875

Summary of EXPENDITURE (Actuals April 2023)

Parent Carer Events/meetings	£ 2,763.89
Parent Carer Remuneration	£ 4,343.20
Training	£ 15.00
Infrastructure/Web development	£ 3,705.96
Admin Support	£ 6,705.00
Expenses	£ 580.97
Other	£ 881.24
Information & SEND Guide	£ 2,493.41

Total Expenditure 2023/23 £ 21,488.67
(£613.67 overspend covered by existing funds)

Our Plan for 2023/24

We will apply for a £17,500 grant from the Department of Education Grant for 2023/24 in May. If successful, the grant will be received in two separate payments across 2023/24.

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.



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Operational Team



Sarah Clarke
Joint CEO



Terri Walsh
Joint CEO



Jacky Mackenzie
Finance Officer