



NEWCASTLE PARENT CARER FORUM

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2024

Welcome to the Summer Newcastle Parent Carer Forum newsletter. We will be sharing what support is available in Newcastle and how to access it.

We always welcome feedback on our newsletters, and for this edition we have been asked to cover a few areas that families feel are difficult to find information about or how to get the correct support for their family.

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There still seems to be some confusion for both families and professionals about pre and post diagnostic support in Newcastle. This has been covered in previous newsletters and all of those editions can be found on the local offer: <https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/newcastle-parent-carer-forum-pcf>.

Please let us know if this newsletter has helped, what other information and regular updates would be helpful.

E-Mail us at
contact@newcastlepcf.co.uk



Newcastle SEND Celebration Events

Newcastle City Council showcased a programme of activities from 1st June to 5th July 2024 across the city to celebrate the achievements of our children and young people in Newcastle who have a Special Educational Need and/ or Disability (SEND).

The aim was to highlight our children and young people, their families, services, schools and settings and anyone else that makes a difference to the lived experiences of our children and young people with SEND and their families.

Many settings and provisions opened their doors to show the great work they do and to show what makes a difference to the lived experiences of our children with SEND. Events ranged from open days at schools and colleges, to art exhibitions and pamper and wellbeing days for parents at Skills for People.

A Newcastle Local Offer Live Marketplace was held at the Civic Centre and had stalls from over 40 services and was attended by over 140 parents, carers, children and young people.

Please take a look at our video of the day by scanning the QR code or following the link below.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvMe54m63W0&list=PLBKQgmAn7FniSl4b_ct9OrKlIte9LZ87c&index=26)

[v=zvMe54m63W0&list=PLBKQgmAn7FniSl4b_ct9OrKlIte9LZ87c&index=26](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvMe54m63W0&list=PLBKQgmAn7FniSl4b_ct9OrKlIte9LZ87c&index=26)





Newcastle SEND Celebration Events



Newcastle SEND Celebration Webinars

As part of the events, parents/carers, children and young people asked for information on a variety of subjects and a series of pre-recorded webinars were made which are now available to view [Newcastle SEND Celebration Webinars Newcastle Support Directory](#).

This page will be updated with new webinars when they are created.

Webinars include:

Newcastle SENDIAS Service
Speech and Language Therapy Service
Support during Early Years
Newcastle Educational Psychology Service
Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
Post 16 Career Options
Independent Travel Training SEND
Six month progress on implementing the Newcastle SEND Strategy



You will see within the newsletter we signpost you to lots of information on the Local Offer. We would like to remind you that there is a listen and translate button if information is needed in a different language or format. There is also a **Recite Me** feature to ensure web accessibility and this reads text out loud. Please give it a try!



New website for Children and Families Newcastle

Please take a look at our new website for children and families in Newcastle:

Children and Families Newcastle

This website shows what services and support can be accessed in Newcastle. This includes the SEND Local Offer and you will see the link to the local offer at the top right of the page. From your feedback, we have created SEND "Thing's to do" page: **[Children and families Newcastle.org.uk/things-do-send-local-offer](https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/things-do-send-local-offer)**

You will also find the SEND Holiday Activities Fund offer on our HAF page: **<https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/best-ever-holiday-activities-and-food-haf-programme>**

We are working hard to re-shape our SEND Local Offer so it works better for families in Newcastle. You will see it develop over the coming months. In the meantime if you have any questions suggestions or need any help finding information on the Local Offer please email our in box: **localoffer@newcastle.gov.uk**

We Take a look at our Celebration event webpage: a film of the Art exhibition, the SEND Local Offer Live event and the fantastic Supported Internships Celebration Event and many more: **<https://childrenandfamiliesnewcastle.org.uk/send-celebration-event>**

Voice team



Our SEND Voice team have worked with young people to produce a Teen Health Wiki: **[Teen Health | Newcastle Support Directory](#)**. This is for young people aged 11-25 and gives top tips about how to be happy and healthy. It includes their audit of accessible toilets in Newcastle. Take a look at what they found here: **[PowerPoint Presentation \(multime.com\)](#)**.



Preparing for Adulthood (Transition)– Next Steps



Planning for the future can be confusing and a little bit scary for anyone. When your young person has additional needs it helps to plan in advance and to know where to get the information you need to make it less difficult.

To help with this, Newcastle Local Authority have developed a Transitions Guide <https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/parent-feedback> and would like feedback from parents, carers and young people to make sure the guide has everything needed to plan for their next steps.

It would be really helpful to know if you find the guide easy to use, if it has the right information and what, if anything would make it more helpful.



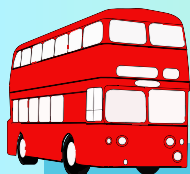
Please have a look at the guide and then complete this simple survey which should only take about 2 minutes. Newcastle City Council really want to get this right and need parents to contribute where they can, as the guide is primarily for them and their young person.

If you have not read the Transitions guide, please visit <https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/parent-feedback> before answering.



When schools return after the summer holidays we will be attending coffee mornings and community venues to gather feedback and suggestions from parent carers and young people about what they would like to know about preparing for the next steps into adulthood.

These coffee mornings will be advertised widely on the Newcastle pcf facebook page, Newcastle Pass it on Parents facebook page and the Local Offer once venues have been arranged. We look forward to your feedback.



School transport



Newcastle City Council is proposing to make some changes to the way that they support children, young people with SEND and their families to get from home to school and back again each day.

The three main reasons for suggesting changes are:

Firstly, we want all our young people to live an enjoyable, successful and full life and to be as independent as possible. As part of this we have listened to families and researched what other areas do, so that children and young people can get around using different types of transport easily and confidently.

Secondly, there are lots of children and young people who are not yet ready to travel independently. To help with this we can arrange independent travel training for young people, we can organise for taxis or buses to take children and young people to school, and we can provide money to families who want to take their children to school themselves. This will help more young people to be independent travellers and also give more families the flexibility to help them to get their own children to school each day.

Thirdly, we currently help some of our young people with SEND aged 16-17 to get to and from school or college. The costs are over one million pounds each year. The council have to make difficult decisions all the time and we have to think about changing this support.



We want to hear what you think about our proposals.

There are two simple documents which describe some of the options we are thinking about. These can be found on our [Local Offer](#) website. This is the direct link: [Consultation: Post 16 SEND Transport and Personal Travel Budgets | Newcastle Support Directory](#).

These documents will also tell you about the ways that you can tell us you think. You can write to us or complete a quick and simple form online. You can come to one of the drop-in sessions and tell us in person. We want to hear from you before the deadline which is **Friday 20 September 2024**.

If you can't find the two consultation documents then email us at SENDTPConsultation@newcastle.gov.uk.



Screen Time

Lots of parents worry about the amount of screen time that they should allow their children. The Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy team have put together some guidance based on recommendations from the World Health Organisation.

Information from the Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy
Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust:

- Children learn best through interacting with adults and the world around them
- Use of screen time when a child is very young is linked to long-term difficulties with attention, communication, problem-solving and social skills.
- Two hours of television a day can negatively impact a child's behaviour and their ability to manage their emotions.

Strategies to help you to reduce your child's screen time:

Sand timer - A sand timer or digital timer can be used as a visual aid to support your child's understanding of how much time they have left or to count down to the next activity.

Visual timetable – You could include access to the iPad/phone/computer within your child's daily routine to help them to understand that they will be expected to participate in a range of activities within the day.

First/then – Encourage your child to join in with less-preferred activities first such as story-time, imaginative play etc. with the reward of screen time for a limited time following this .

Visit: How is the rise in screen time affecting children? - BBC Tiny Happy People for more information and ideas on how to engage your child in play and develop their communication skills <https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>.

Visit: <https://www.hanen.org/Helpful-Info/Articles/Screen-Time-Affecting-Childrens-Language.aspx> for information and tips on language development and screen time.

Recommendations from
World Health Organisation
(WHO)

No screen time for children
0-2 years old
Up to 1 hour of screen time
a day for children 2-4 years
old

Top tips

1. Turn off background TV
2. Limit your child's access to the TV, iPad/tablet/computer & phone.
3. Spend time playing with your child.
4. Talk to your child about the world around them.

Support while on the waiting list for a diagnosis

There are still lots of queries about how to get support when your child is on a waiting list for assessment and diagnosis.

Here is the link to the website support whilst waiting for assessment [Support whilst you are waiting for an appointment / treatment | Newcastle Support Directory](#).

This includes support services and resources that are available for Parents/Carers to access across Newcastle including the following:

Occupational Therapy

Speech and Language

CYPS

Voluntary Sector

Autism Hubs

Long Term Condition

Neurodiversity



There is also a children and families generic email address that families can use if they require any support to access the site or advice on which services would be most relevant:

nencicb-ng.childrenandfamiliesncl@nhs.net

AUTISM PADLET - SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The Padlet provides a source of information for schools, families and autistic young people. It's updated regularly with information and activities. It provides specific provisions for autistic young people as well as those not specifically offered for autistic individuals, but that may still be useful. The Padlet can be accessed by scanning the QR code.



Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS)

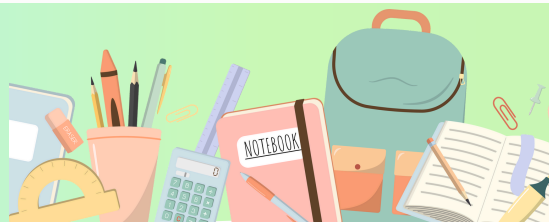
Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) is a new national programme that aims to support the education and health needs of neurodiverse children in schools through partnership approach working with local authorities and parent carer forums.

Newcastle upon Tyne have been selected to be involved in the pilot project and 22 schools will take part.

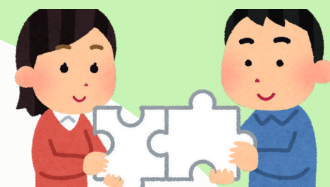
Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) will bring health and education specialists and expert parent carers into mainstream primary settings to:

- help shape whole school SEND provision
- provide early interventions at a school level
- upskill school staff
- support strengthening of partnerships between schools and parent carers

This will support a shift away from the need for diagnosis and more intensive levels of support and focus on strengthening knowledge, skills and improving environments to better meet the needs of neurodiverse children and reframe the focus to how a supportive learning environment and well-equipped school can improve the outcomes for this group of children.



Working with Parents and Carers:



Collaboration with parents and carers is critical to the success of the PINS programme, in order to build or strengthen parental relationships with schools, and to build confidence in local ways of working and the support that they can expect. There must be parent/carer representation at all levels including the governance board overseeing the project. To facilitate this, regular information sharing through coffee mornings will help everyone work together and will start in September. The participating schools will let parents know dates and times.

Housing issues

The lack of suitable housing is not just a local issue, and councils are struggling nationally with the housing crisis. As a result of the questions raised to Newcastle Council regarding housing and adaptations, where many families reported living in unsuitable conditions, the Newcastle Parent Carer Forum has been in touch with Contact to see if this can be raised at a national level, or if any campaigning can be done to support families both locally and nationally.

Contact are a national charity <https://contact.org.uk/> who influence policy and campaign to tackle the inequalities that families face. They also provide information, advice and guidance and have a range of resources available.

We will keep you posted!



Q & A session with Deanne Taylor, Head of SEND, Newcastle Council

In April, Deanne Taylor answered a variety of questions from parents, via the Parent Carer Forum who received questions via Newcastle PCF facebook page and other local SEND facebook pages, school networks and newsletters.

The 26 questions were wide ranging and included: accessing medication if no shared care agreement in place, CYPS support for various conditions, behaviour support, dispute resolution, school staff training, reasonable adjustments, housing and adaptations.

It was a great opportunity to raise issues with the Local Authority and to highlight areas of concern or confusion and please look at the link to find out more [PCF Questions to SEND Collaborative Forum - 17.04.2024.pdf](#) (newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk)



Holiday Time



School summer holidays have started, we have updated our holiday web pages recently which include information about early bird sessions, carer passes, leisure discounts and much more.



What accessible activities are there locally?

For families in England, a good place to start is to look at your council's Local Offer. It will include the support and facilities families can find in their area for children and young people who have special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities. HAF: Best Ever - Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme Newcastle

Support Directory and our city wide offer is here:

<https://childrenandfamiliesnewcastle.org.uk/things-do>

In Newcastle families can get funding for activities for children and young people up to the age of 18 through the **Access Fund**. It is funded by the Local Authority to support children and young people with SEND to have the same opportunities to access leisure activities as their non-disabled peers. It is managed through the **Nunsmoor Trust** and if your child gets middle or high care component of DLA or has an Education, Health and Care Plan and does not receive a personal budget from social care then you can apply. Find out more here:

<https://nunsmoorcentrereust.com/the-access-fund>



Holiday Time

HELL-Sun
Summer

What are the best places to go to for help with funding towards holidays and play schemes?

Many charities can help families with this, ranging from small local charities to large national organisations such as the Family Fund – who often help with holidays.

Contact has a grants webpage has information and tips about searching for a grant, as well as our own downloadable grants list with a summary of grant-giving charities and trusts: [contact.org.uk](https://www.contact.org.uk). You can also use the online Grants Search tool on our website to [search for available grants](#) for holidays and play schemes.

Turn2us is a database of different organisations and charities who can help you find grant funding: <https://grants-search.turn2us.org.uk/> You can search for specific grants that suit your individual situation.

Newsletters for family summer holiday activities:

The Family Advice Team at **Skills for People** have released a newsletter with 30+ pages of activities and events for summer holiday fun in Newcastle. Please contact:

info@skillsforpeople.org.uk if you would like a copy of the newsletter or to be added to future newsletters.

The North East Autism society have released a Newsletter with 52 pages of summer activities across the North East. This can be downloaded for free at: <https://www.ne-as.org.uk/seasonal-resources>

The SEND Art Exhibition ‘Art at the Heart ♥’ is moving to the City Library on 17 July for the Summer Holidays.

It is a great opportunity for all to visit and see the amazing pieces on display and while you're there take a look at all the things that are on offer at the Library including how to take part in Newcastle Libraries Summer Reading Challenge and the program of free summer activities for kids.

For more information about the Library, the location and opening hours please visit: [City Library | Newcastle City Council](https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/city-library)

For a preview of the Art Exhibition at the Civic Centre take a look here: https://youtu.be/gglUGPo3d_w

‘NEVER let anybody dull your SPARKLE ‘ (Young Person age 14)

