

SEND voice

Warwickshire special educational needs and disability news and information

Contents

- Pg 2** Hello and welcome
- Pg 3** Children's experiences
- Pg 6** A Spotlight on...Support for families
- Pg 9** SEND processes news
- Pg 13** Schools' experiences

A Spotlight on.... Support for families



SEND stands for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. There are four areas of SEND: communication and interaction; cognition and learning; emotional, social and mental health; physical and sensory. A child or young person with SEND may have difficulties with more than one of these areas – this is often referred to as having 'complex needs'.



New local SEND guidance to be published online

Read the full article on page 6.

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/send

Hello and welcome

Hello and welcome to the 2021 Spring edition of SEND Voice!



As the Strategy and Commissioning Manager for SEND and Inclusion at Warwickshire County Council, it is my pleasure to be able to update you all in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities within Warwickshire.

The SEND Voice has returned and it is a privilege for me to use this platform to celebrate the outstanding work, practice and achievements that goes on with Warwickshire from our early years settings, through to school age and post-16. It is my hope that the SEND Voice publication will be a place to hear about examples of good practice, case studies from our young people and SEND news from across Warwickshire – all things (and more) that the previous SEND Voice offered.

I am really passionate about all children and young people no more so than children and young people with special educational needs. It is my intention over the next several years to ensure that outcomes for children and young people in the County are deemed as good or better. I am extremely lucky to work with a fantastic team of people, including early years, schools age and post-16 Leaders who also share my passion.

This newsletter was last published in the summer of 2020 and at that point, the COVID-19 pandemic was a relatively new phenomenon. Of course now, nearly a year later, the world remains quite a different place and we continue to follow the official guidance in combatting the virus with a hope for a return to more normal times.

SEND Voice is back as a digital edition and we hope to publish more editions over the next year to keep you up to date with SEND support for families and relevant news in Warwickshire. Our driving goal in the County remains unchanged as we want to see all children and young people in Warwickshire leading fulfilling lives as part of the communities.

In this edition of SEND Voice there are interesting stories on young children staying social during COVID-19 (Page 5), a new Warwickshire Parent Carer Forum (Page 7) and updates to the Panels process (Page 6). Please do read on.

Duane Chappell

Children's experiences

Rhiannon's journey from the summer of 2020!

Rhiannon has a diagnosis of 'high-functioning autism'. During her time at secondary school, she suffered with severe social anxiety and struggled to attend school due to something known as Emotionally Based School Refusal (EBSR).

When Rhiannon came to the attention of the Flexible Learning team in October 2014, she described her anxiety as 'crippling' and was unable to reintegrate into secondary school. The team began to build trust through sessions in cooking therapy and understanding relationships. Low level cognitive behaviour therapy was also used alongside support from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services although it took time for Rhiannon to feel able to use these strategies. Rhiannon went on to take a beauty therapy course after identifying this as an interest.

She did this through a combination of online and home learning and was enabled to complete face-to-face elements of the award with a tutor at home.

In 2017, Rhiannon was supported by the Flexible Learning team to study at home for her GCSEs.

Although this was a challenge, it gave Rhiannon something to 'get her teeth into' and in 2018 she achieved GCSEs in English Language (grade 9), English literature (grade 8) and maths (grade 4). She also completed an accredited make-up artistry course and was able to do some work alongside her tutor at three wedding parties. Since gaining her GCSEs, Rhiannon has also achieved an AS level in English literature and is currently working towards her English language A2 component alongside a GCSE in psychology.

February 2021 – Update

Rhiannon keeps in touch with the Flexible Learning Team to show the progress that she is making on her educational journey. Rhiannon has gone from strength to strength over the last seven years! She has overcome many social and emotional barriers to be able to make progress. Rhiannon started a degree course with the Open University in September 2021.

She has highlighted the impact that the dedicated staff have had in ensuring that she made a successful transition.

She said in a recent email: "I hope you're both doing well, especially what with extended lockdown and generally depressing news being reported. But I am faithful that sooner or later, we will get out of this mess! It's just a matter of staying as sane as possible until then.

"As you can imagine, uni is keeping me on my toes hugely, and tonight I've just submitted another essay about child psychology and the impact of caregiver bonds. I've attached it, as I thought you may enjoy reading it. It's somewhat relevant to what you guys deal with in your work, and you might find some of the things I spoke about interesting! I also just want to show-off a little bit, like a child putting on a performance for their parent - I want to make you both proud :)."

This young person has a bright future ahead of her now, and that is something that the team are all extremely proud of.



Case for success:

An example of a smooth return to mainstream education

In this case study, a pupil came to Leamington Vineyard Learning Centre (LVLC) in Year 7 following a permanent exclusion. This pupil was unable to look staff in the eye, unable to interact with peers safely, unable to focus for more than 5 minutes of academic learning and unsafe in multiple ways both at home and in the community.

Whilst attending LVLC they learned about their love of sport and began to help lower their barriers, building positive relationships. The provider worked intensively with other professionals to help re-engage this pupil with education. Slowly, this young person began to complete some English work. For the first time, they began to be proud. The provider contacted their family each day to talk about their achievements and celebrated their progress. One day, this pupil asked quietly if they could display their work on our walls. The provider states: "I will always remember the look of pride on their face when another pupil commented "Hey, *****! Is that your work? It's alright, that!"

Slowly, this pupil began to take more pride in their appearance and arrived looking smarter and positive about being in education.

Working with the educational psychologist the provider was helped with ideas and strategies to help this young person safely interact with peers. The provider worked very closely with this pupil and their family to prepare them for the day they would be allocated a new school via the Fair Access Protocol to reintegrate back into mainstream.

The panel day was one of uncertainty for this pupil, their family and the provider. Who would have them? Would they make



friends? Their behaviour at the panel was understandable as sometimes pupils cry or display deep anxiety in what can be a stressful experience for them. The provider planned a transition package for the new school and once a school was identified staff from across the AP and school met.

This pupil is now months down the line in their new mainstream school. They are now a well-presented pupil wearing their full school uniform with pride, enjoying life with their friends, and looking happy with life. Their attendance is good, and they are achieving well across the board in all areas. They are thriving within their mainstream school all because of the appropriate targeted support whilst they were in AP and the advice, guidance and support provided by the AP to the mainstream school to support this pupils' reintegration putting them "Back on Track".

Young people's experiences of SEND

A girls' group

Charlotte, Clea, Frankie, Georgia and Rose are a group of girls in the county who all have one thing in common: they are deaf.

Like most children, they are the only pupil in their primary school with a hearing loss and this has led to feelings of isolation and resentment towards their deafness.

The girls' group was established to bring these girls together, to reassure them that they are not alone, while at the same time helping them to develop a personal understanding of

their deafness and an opportunity for them to share their experiences.

Unfortunately, the group only had one face to face meeting before having to meet online. However, the fun has continued, with virtual scavenger hunts, craft activities and games. In their more recent session, Charlotte and Clea both gave a presentation about their deafness, the challenges they face and what strategies help them the most.

They did an excellent job, and both learnt things they didn't know previously.

The Blue Sparkle Team



In this story, Hollie S and Hollie C talk about their experiences of meeting up virtually with other deaf children.

"Hi, I am Hollie S, I am deaf, and I meet two girls, Leah and Hollie C on Teams who are also deaf.

"We are all the same year group but from different schools. Leah explained we chose the name 'The Blue Sparkle Team' because we like the colour blue and sparkles!

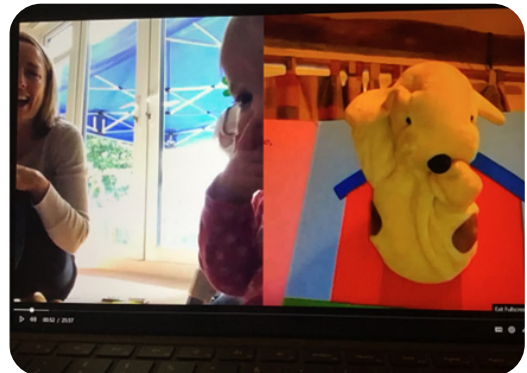
"We meet every Thursday and talk about our different hearing losses and deafness. It is nice to know and meet other people that struggle with their deafness. We talk about the problems we have to deal with every day and have helped each other learn from our own experiences. We have also been learning some British Sign Language (BSL) phrases."

Hollie C said: "It has been nice that we help each other and are kind to each other. We agreed it is sad that we are going to different secondary schools but maybe one day we can all meet up."

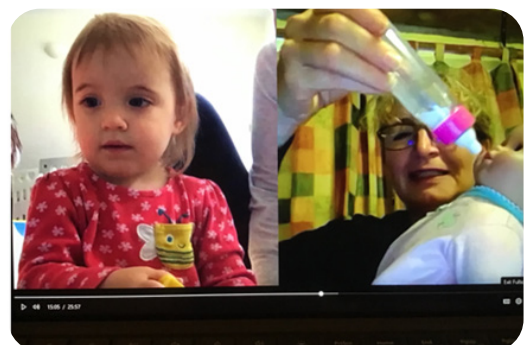
Virtual Home Visit

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, the Hearing Team has not been able to offer home visits to pre-school children. However, they have been able to meet up with some children via Microsoft Teams video calls.

Here is Iris touching her nose along with Spot the dog!



She's then watching very attentively as Baby's fed some milk.



Well done Iris!

New local SEND guidance to be published online

Warwickshire County Council's ambition across the county is to ensure that the highest expectations for all young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are met so that they are succeeding and achieving their best in schools and settings close to home. Following the review of the SEND Provision Matrix (School age), the Warwickshire SEND Inclusion Guidance is being developed in consultation with practitioners and parents, and promotes Warwickshire's inclusive, needs-led ethos in supporting young people with SEND in mainstream schools.

The aim of Warwickshire SEND Inclusion Guidance is to provide comprehensive, accessible information for practitioners and parents about the provision and support that is expected to be made available in all mainstream schools and settings supporting Warwickshire young people aged 5-16 years. It therefore forms an important part of the Local Offer for SEND. In line with the SEND Code of Practice (2015), its purpose is to help schools to implement effective extra support for young people who are not progressing at the expected rate, at the Graduated Response level.

The Warwickshire SEND Inclusion Guidance is being produced as a web-based document designed to enable relevant information to be found quickly and accessibly, with a view to regularly updating information. It will be trialled, and refined following feedback, during the Summer Term 2021. We are pleased to announce that Warwickshire SEND Inclusion Guidance will be published and available on-line from 1st September 2021.



New SEND Panels from April 2021

Our SEND and Inclusion Change Programme is ongoing and as part of the SEND and Inclusion Strategy (Statutory Duty), the Dedicated School Grant (DSG) Recovery Plan identified that better decision making and refreshed guidance is required to ensure more children with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans are supported with appropriate packages in mainstream settings.

Currently requests are made to Warwickshire County Council and then assessed via the Panel Process to confirm a plan. The SEND and Inclusion Change Programme has identified that there are currently nine panels in place, and these will be reduced to two panels to validate decisions on EHC plans. The objective is to ensure that rather than discussing casework at the Panel meeting, the required decision is already prepared for validation at the Panel. These new panels will help improve educational outcomes for learners in Warwickshire.

The following are the new panels' frequencies and their purpose:-

- **Statutory Panel** – This panel will ensure a co-ordinated approach towards the request for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment for children and young people with SEND within Warwickshire. It will validate decisions on the drafting of an EHCP and the allocation of financial resources to support the child or young person's final EHCP.
- **High Needs Provision Panel** – This panel will validate decisions as to whether requests for additional funding, and/or High-Cost Placements can be approved to support the child or young person's needs.



Should you wish to ask any further questions, please email:

sendchange@warwickshire.gov.uk

Warwickshire Parent Carer Forum

We are delighted to announce that a new parent carer forum for the Warwickshire area has been formed. Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice is a representative group led by parent carers for parent carers of children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities (0-25). The group are looking forward to working with various agencies to help shape and improve local services.

Elaine Lambe from Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice said: "It is fantastic to have the opportunity to partner with the council to ensure that children and young people in Warwickshire meet their full potential and that families get the support



that they need. We are looking forward to welcoming parent carers into our membership and ensuring that their voice is heard by decision makers to make services better for everyone."

Ian Budd, Assistant Director, Education Services, at Warwickshire County Council said: "We are really excited to work with Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice. Warwickshire is committed to working with parents and carers to take forward our SEND and Inclusion Change Programme. The current challenges that we face in the system for our learners with special educational needs and disabilities cannot be overcome by working in isolation. By working together, we hope to improve outcomes for our children and young people, operate clear, fair and transparent processes and create an inclusive, sustainable system."

Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice will be talking to local families over the upcoming months to help them decide on the local priorities and to be able to take their collective voice forward into discussion with service providers.

If you would like to get involved with the forum or share your experiences please email warwickshireparentcarervoice@gmail.com or follow them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/warksparentcarervoice

Parent Carer Support Pathway to all those who care for a child with a disability

The Warwickshire County Council Children with Disabilities Team will be offering a wellbeing conversation as part of the parent carer assessment – a practitioner from the team will carry this out. This conversation will lead to better informed decisions and allow them to identify the parent's needs and tailor available support that will help them, as well as their child and wider family members.

Importantly, the parent carer support pathway can be completed as a standalone assessment or in conjunction with an assessment of the disabled child's needs.

How can the Parent Carer Support Pathway help?

The wellbeing conversation may result in signposting to an appropriate local provider. For instance, if the parent is experiencing health

or mental health needs, a referral can be made to adult services for support for the parents themselves.

It may be that providing an agreed one-off financial payment for a specific outcome in order for the parent to purchase a service, piece of equipment or access an activity could help to support them in their caring role and improve their wellbeing.

The important thing to remember is access to the parent carer support pathway and a wellbeing conversation has no restrictions. It is not time limited and can be accessed as often as is required. If the parent's needs change following the agreed outcome, parents are encouraged to contact Warwickshire County Council either by email childrenwithdisabilitiesteam@warwickshire.gov.uk or by calling 01926 413737 (option 4).

Early Help and Targeted Support

In September 2019, Early Help and Targeted Support (EHTS) rolled out a new offer within Warwickshire. The service redesign and expansion create rapid access to family support services so families can access the right support at the right time.

The dedicated team of Family Support Workers (FSWs) have created a helpline that is available to families who are seeking advice and support concerning parenting, challenging behaviour, parental conflict, and complex family matters. FSWs are also working directly with families within the home and communities to empower them to make agreed sustainable change.

Family Support Helpline Monday-Friday 9am-4pm on 01926 412412.

EHTS have also appointed six Parent Trainers to deliver a rolling programme of parenting courses and training to professionals, parents and carers across Warwickshire. Multiple evidence-based parenting programmes are being delivered such as Solihull Approach, Family Links Nurture Programme and Sleep Better. Parenting programmes are currently running virtually but will return to face to face across weekdays, evenings, and weekends by summer 2021.

For courses and details please visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/children-families/parenting-courses

Targeted Support Officers and Early Help Social Workers work in each locality across Warwickshire supporting and training the professionals networks to implement effective Early Help and Targeted Support to families.

For further information please see our webpages including contact details for locality teams: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/children-families

SEND processes news

Ongoing conversations about financial support

As part of the SEND Change Programme, Warwickshire County Council (WCC) is reviewing the process of calculating the financial support for each child with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. The aim is to ensure that the appropriate level of funding is allocated for children/young people (0-25 years old).

We aim to address the lack of individually costed EHC Plans to ensure the process accurately accounts for the SEN needs of the child or young person. Schools have provided feedback that the current process is slow and bureaucratic, the current financial provision is too low and not fit for purpose. The goal is to make sure the setting has the appropriate funding to provide resources for them and to not encourage movement to alternative settings.



WCC is working in conjunction with representatives from early years, mainstream schools, special schools, post-16 provision and Schools Forum to ensure we fully understand the issues and get the right solutions. We are at the start of these discussions and it is envisaged that a trial will take place over an academic year before any final decisions are proposed county-wide.

Re-design of the Local Offer Webpages

The Local Offer is a term used to explain services and support that are available locally for families with SEND in Warwickshire. Importantly, the Local Offer is a national descriptor so that if you were to move to a different area of the country you could still easily find your new area Local Offer.

In Warwickshire, we know that our Local Offer needs improvement. Feedback from parents/carers, young people and professionals all said that it wasn't easy to find what they wanted. A small working group has been set up to redesign our Local Offer so that it is easier to use and families can find what they need. The group is made up of family information advisers and volunteer parent/carers. They have used the feedback from parent/carers, young people, and professionals to tell us what they liked and didn't like about our Local Offer.

We are now working to create categories which we hope will make it easier to use and find what you need. This work is a big project and it does not stop here. Over the next year, we will continue to work on the content to make it more accessible by using video and animation as well as text. It is important that we get regular feedback from our users to help us continue to make changes as we understand what works best. There will be opportunities for people to get involved on an ongoing basis. This could be by using a quick feedback link to tell us about something you like, can't find or perhaps a broken link.

In the future you could join a SEND online feedback group, complete a survey, or join a working group. We want families to feel they are part of the Local Offer and can make their mark on the website.

Keep a look out for your new design Local Offer and don't forget to let us know what you think.

Warwickshire SEND Information, Advice and Support (SENDIAS)

Warwickshire SEND Information, Advice and Support (SENDIAS) is a free impartial service. It is for all Warwickshire families with children or young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Young people aged 16 to 25 can contact the service themselves or with the support of their parent or carer. SENDIAS supports parents, carers, and young people to feel more confident and empowered to express their views.



Accredited advisors provide information, advice and support on:

- How SEND needs are identified and met
- SEND support available in schools, early years, and post-16 settings
- Education, Health and Care Plans and processes
- Funding arrangements, including personal budgets
- Understanding professional reports and guidance on completing forms
- Understanding and applying the law and local policy related to SEND

Like most organisations, Warwickshire County Council moved to remote working during the

pandemic and continues to use social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook to reach SEND professionals and families.

The council's website also introduced a webpage specific to young people called '[My SENDIASS](#)'. The information is relevant and easy to access. It is an ongoing development.

Feedback on service satisfaction rates has increased. The most common positive statements families make are:

- The service's professional knowledge about the matter
- Friendly and approachable staff
- That they now feel they understand things better for themselves
- That things are now better or improving for them

Quality Assurance Framework to support Education, Health and Care Plans

Warwickshire County Council is committed to delivering high-quality Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) which ensure children and young people with complex needs have an integrated assessment and, where appropriate a single EHC Plan. These plans outline the support required for children and young people to achieve their aspirations with an increased focus on life outcomes, including employment and greater independence. Measuring the impact of service delivery is crucial to achieving improved outcomes for children and young people within Warwickshire.

To achieve this a Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) has been introduced which will provide evidence that we are delivering services effectively and to quality standards that enable us to ensure positive outcomes for children and young people.

The EHCP QAF enables all staff involved in the process to engage with the quality assurance of both the EHC plan and the advice provided

within this statutory process. Alongside the four levels of quality assurance is a feedback survey that records the feedback from parents, carers and young people over 16 years of age when the plan has been issued.

The process and guidance itself is subject to ongoing quality assessment to ensure it is fit for purpose and reflects any changes to after the statutory process.

Introducing the Inclusion Mentors from The Specialist Teaching Service

Inclusion Mentors are a small group of skilled practitioners from a Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) background. They are an integral part of Warwickshire's Specialist Teaching Service, providing additional support for learners with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans where a specific need has been identified. Referrals to STS Inclusion Mentors come via SENDAR EHC Plan Coordinators.

The ultimate goal is to help learners with SEND to experience success in school and to support school staff in effectively meeting the needs of the children. It's also to empower school staff and to help develop their confidence and skills to be able to continue supporting the children effectively long after support has ended.

Successes:

- Teaching Assistants and key staff often find it easier to speak openly with an Inclusion Mentor.
- Inclusion Mentor involvement has shown a high success rate in maintaining school placements.

Feedback:

"I just wanted to follow on from our meeting and say what a great help this has been, not only with this particular case, but with many others as well! It is really valued."

"I just wanted to message you to say how incredibly helpful your Inclusion Mentor has been to us over the past few weeks She has always given us great advice and adapted her plans to our needs. We wish we could keep her for longer!"

"This role is crucial to schools supporting children with complex SEMH needs. It has been key in building the school's confidence that they could meet the needs of this young person."

"Schools are able to meet the needs of the children far better after an Inclusion Mentor has worked with them. Their knowledge of the children and what the school need to do going forwards is always outstanding."

Online SEND Training for childminders is well-received

For many years the Integrated Disability Service (IDS) has been providing free SEND training for childminders to promote high quality inclusive practice.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic the training had been delivered in the evenings at various venues across Warwickshire. For some childminders this could be a lengthy commute after a long day at work.

As the pandemic unfolded it became apparent that the team needed to adapt the way in which training was delivered, so it could be done 'virtually'. A programme was planned and in



Continued on page 12

liaison with childminders, topics were agreed: - The effects of premature birth, Girls with Autism, How to have difficult conversations with parents and Sign and Gesture training. Each of the courses are delivered twice, which helps keep the numbers lower, to encourage group participation.

So far two courses have been delivered and the feedback has been very positive. In addition to completing the online evaluation forms, e-mails have been sent thanking the team for continuing

to deliver training and how useful it is to still be able to meet virtually. There were suggestions that they found the training interesting and relevant and recognised that it will help to identify the signs to look for and strategies to use to support the children. One participant suggested she wished the training course had been available years ago.

Get in touch with [IDS on the council's website](#).

Inclusive apprenticeships welcomed in Warwickshire

At a time when many businesses are affected by serious skills shortages, a programme led by Warwickshire County Council, is providing an opportunity for employers to recruit young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) via its Inclusive Apprenticeship programme.

A recent online event drew more than 40 people from a variety of different sectors, all keen to explore how they could consider shaping suitable apprenticeship roles in their business, for young people with SEND. Many mentioned in the chat section of the webinar, how they were blown away by the testimony of one young man with SEND, who spoke so openly and bravely about his journey.

Mark Maffey, Business Development Manager at Hereward College for young people with SEND said: "This event was hugely informative and ambitious. Many of our students are looking for employment and training opportunities after lockdown, so the timing of the Inclusive Apprenticeship launch was ideal. The input from such an inspiring group of experts will help us to identify vacancies and map a clear progression route for our Warwickshire learners."

The Inclusive Apprenticeship programme is a pilot scheme, initially supporting cohorts of young people into customer service apprenticeship roles, but with the range of roles being broadened in the coming months.

Employers are being asked to consider how a talented young person with SEND could enhance their business.

The County Council is working with MENCAP and DFN Project Search - a transition-to-work programme, committed to transforming the lives of young people with learning disabilities and autism.

MENCAP has a dedicated employer engagement team to assist employers with any queries they may have around taking on young people with SEND. The programme also offers a dedicated job coach to work alongside each apprentice, supporting them until they are established in their role, and are confident to work independently.

The Inclusive Apprenticeships scheme adds to the work already ongoing locally to support young people with SEND. In 2019, the Supportive Employer Forum was created by Warwickshire County Council and a range of partners to provide internships and work experience with businesses for learners at Warwickshire's special schools and colleges.

To find out more, contact the Warwickshire Skills Hub Team: skillshub@warwickshire.gov.uk



Nightingale Hub established at St. John's Primary Teaching School and Nursery

Nurture and the principles of nurture have always been central to the ethos at St. John's. All staff have been carefully recruited to support Senior Leaders in enabling children to overcome emotional barriers and successfully access learning at whatever level is appropriate to them at that particular time.

Having been through several lockdowns over the last 13 months the impact the Nightingale Hub has had on our children has been significant.

We decided to set up our Nightingale Hub as a bubble to support those children back into school. Liaising closely with parents we created a safe additional class, staffed by a teacher and with SLT support to facilitate a successful return to school.

The aims of our Nightingale Hub are:

- Support a positive return to school.
- Support the period of re-adjustment and help to re-establish relationships with adults and peers.
- Additional provision for morning transition, including time for calming and settling.
- Targeted support to teach mindfulness and breathing techniques.
- Additional focus on well-being and emotion coaching approaches.
- Opportunity to develop emotional literacy and strategies for self-regulation.
- Intervention to re-establish and develop essential learning skills of memory and recall.
- Clear structure and routine and help rebuild concentration and focus through 'chunked' learning.
- Focus on individualised programmes for key learning in Maths, reading, spelling and grammar (this will require liaison with and input from class teacher).
- Incorporate classroom learning opportunities in a supported manner (English recovery curriculum, Learning theme and science curriculum).
- Support the transition back into the class.

The Hub is a safe and calm environment with its own entrance, this makes it easier for children with high levels of anxiety to come into school discreetly. It is based on the principles of nurture and has input from the Head of School, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator and Significant Adult on

Schools' experiences

a daily basis to ensure a high level of support for the children. The vision was the children would reintegrate back into their own class after intervention and this could take anything up to a term. Nightingale would then be used more flexibly for emergency places should the need arise.

During the first full return to school in September 2020, the hub was used daily for 12 children. We used our catch up funding to employ a teacher to run the hub and lead a pastoral curriculum for what we envisaged would last the whole of the Autumn term. In fact, due to the care and organisation of the hub, two children were fully integrated back into class within two weeks, eight children by the end of the first half term and then the final two children on a blended hub and classroom bespoke timetable.

During the return to school in March we identified two children that would need bespoke provision in the hub, which was a huge reduction from September. Because routines had been established and we had a strong focus on well-being and mental health in our remote learning, children were confident to come back to the same routines that were in place. Children knew what to expect and as a school we were consistent in our application.

The principles of the Nightingale hub continue in our everyday classroom life. We have continued with Well-being Wednesdays and Fun Fridays to

Continued on page 13



reinforce that mental health and positive self-belief are the foundations of good learning behaviours. We have kept the hub open for those children that wobble, experience temporary trauma or just need some space away from a busy classroom. What has surprised us is how some children actually prefer learning on their own in a quieter environment.

Fundamentally, children haven't changed during the pandemic. They still need social interaction,

positive role models and nurture. However, the way children learn and their learning behaviours have. Some positively and some less so. The Nightingale Hub has evolved from its own bubble to a more flexible provision, there for when our children need it the most. From that point of view it has been invaluable and will continue to be an integral part of our provision, especially when bubbles can mix and nurture can be fully reinstated.

Keeping schools open during COVID-19



Hear from Nick Evans, Head Teacher at Evergreen School about his experience of keeping Evergreen School open during COVID-19.

Evergreen School has continued to remain open for all pupils throughout the lockdown period. We

have managed this by ensuring classes remain in their own bubbles throughout the day, with a consistent team of staff supporting them. Although movement around the school has been restricted, this approach has enabled class teams to focus on the children and young people in their class. Despite the restrictions that a Covid risk assessment

brings, the majority of our children, young people and families have benefitted enormously by having a sense of structure and routine that school brings.

Combined with regular lateral flow testing of both staff and secondary aged pupils, we have been able to closely manage the spread of infection. In addition, all of our staff have now been offered the Covid vaccination. With lives so disrupted outside of school, we have been able to provide a safe and familiar environment that can, most importantly, give our young people what they desperately need.

The continuity of school has enabled many of our pupils to make excellent progress throughout lockdown and school has been a sanctuary for many young people experiencing mental health challenges as a result of the pandemic.



Updates from the Family Information Service




Warwickshire's Family Information Service (FIS) is an information, advice and guidance service for families living in the area. They offer information, including one-to-one support, on a wide range of subjects from family relationships to finance, housing, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), parenting support and childcare.

The Service sends out an e-newsletter regularly to keep parents and carers updated on the latest advice and resources available to support them. Currently, the FIS newsletter is being sent out twice weekly, to provide ongoing support and advice about the Coronavirus (COVID-19) for families across Warwickshire. Under usual circumstances it is sent out fortnightly.

Sign up to the FIS newsletter [here](#)

You can find further information about services available to children and families online and follow the FIS social media channels for more advice and support:

 warwickshire.gov.uk/fis

 [@WarwickshireFIS](https://www.facebook.com/WarwickshireFIS)

 [@WarksFIS](https://twitter.com/WarksFIS)

The Family Information Service can be contacted on:

Tel: **01926 742274**

Email: **fis@warwickshire.gov.uk**

Transitions Guide

The '14-25 Transitions Guide' has been developed by the Warwickshire Parent Carer Forum to help support young people on their journey to adulthood. It includes advice around education, health and social care, as well as transport and travel, benefits, finances and legal matters.

View the Transitions Guide [here](#)

New SEND Panels from April 2021

Should you wish to ask any further questions, please email: sendchange@warwickshire.gov.uk

SEND
LOCAL OFFER

What is the SEND Local Offer?

The **Local Offer** provides information for children and young people with special educational needs (SEND) and their parents or carers in a single place. It shows families what they can expect from a range of local agencies including education, health and social care. All local authorities must have a Local Offer.

View a poster from The Council for Disabled Children explaining the Local Offer [here](#)

View Warwickshire's current Local Offer [here](#)

Give us your feedback

We are in the process of reviewing our Local Offer so that it is easy to use and you can find the information you are looking for in the right place.

Help us improve our Local Offer by sending your feedback [here](#)

Warwickshire SENDIASS

Warwickshire SENDIASS (Special Education Needs Information Advice and Support Services) provides free, confidential and impartial support to parents and carers of all Warwickshire children with special educational needs and disabilities, from 0 - 25 years of age. They produce a termly newsletter to keep parents and carers in Warwickshire updated on the latest advice, support and developments.

Find out more about SENDIASS and view the newsletters online [here](#)