



Warwickshire Parent Carer Webinar (SEND)

Launch of SEND & Inclusion Strategy

18 February 2025 - Q&A's

Holiday Club and Childcare Provision

1.

- a. Does the SEND & Inclusion Strategy consider holiday clubs/childcare during school holidays for children with multiple/complex needs who can't access mainstream clubs? I understand priority is given to those families who qualify for HAF, but if you don't there is no provision you can access?**
- b. How will the strategy support our SEND children outside of the academic year, when routine and familiarity are crucial for their well-being? With 13 weeks of school holidays (including training days) and working parents only entitled to a statutory 4 weeks plus 8 days of leave, many families face significant challenges. Existing holiday childcare options, such as kids' clubs have no obligation and cannot meet the needs of SEND children, leading to refusal to allow children to attend in holidays, causing distress for both children and parents. How does the strategy address this gap and prevent families from being forced into impossible decisions, such as leaving employment to provide the necessary care?**

Warwickshire hosts 'Search Out Warwickshire', a community directory on the SEND Local Offer with a SEND filter, which enables a search of organisations offering support aimed at young people and their families with SEND. In addition, two newsletters (one universal and one specifically for families with SEND) are issued informing families of upcoming activities and events. You can read the Family Information Service (FIS) newsletter [here](#). You can read the SEND newsletter [here](#). This year, this also included signposting to activities commissioned in the school holidays specifically for families with SEND as part of the Holiday Activities Fund



(HAF). Further information about Warwickshire Holiday Provision can be found
HYPERLINK "https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/holiday-provision-1" [here](https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/holiday-provision-1).

Across the whole of the HAF programme, 21% of attendees have SEND. In terms of activities which are specifically for children with SEND, we expect all providers to offer inclusive activities, and one-to-one support can be applied for to support this as part of the HAF provision. We recognise, however, that this does not offer assistance to families who don't qualify for a HAF code.

This an area of continued focus that we will explore with the new Head of Early Support and Children Disabilities Team when they start in post in the summer. We are also exploring this matter with the Short Breaks Commissioner. We will provide an update through the [SEND Newsletter](#) when this is available.

Autism & ADHD Pathway

2.

- a. Is it possible to get a diagnosis for things such as ASD or ADHD already in reception? We were told 6 years old is the minimum before school would even entertain supporting a request for diagnosis.**
- b. Parents of children with ADHD and autism often experience significant challenges due to a lack of regularly organised, strategic support meetings. This leads to information overload, confusion about available resources, and feelings of isolation and overwhelm. The current system often fails to provide parents with the practical tools and knowledge needed to effectively support their children's complex needs. Is there any strategy on this?**
- c. What are the current waiting times for diagnosis for ADHD and Autism?**
- d. I wish to book an assessment for my child age 11.5yrs - Possibly mild dyslexia / mild ADHD. How quickly can this happen? Do I fund it myself?**

Children under the age of 6 cannot be diagnosed with ADHD in the UK, but autism can be diagnosed earlier.



Advice and referral pathways for neurodevelopmental conditions are available [here](#). Waiting times for autism have reduced, but waiting times for both Autism and ADHD are above 18 weeks. There is work happening across the system to understand and respond to the increased numbers of people coming forward for an assessment to inform a plan which will be implemented over the next 18 months.

Speaking to your child's SENCO at their school/setting is a good place to start as an assessment would also be informed by their observations of your child and the SENCO would be the person to advise on what support can be offered in school, using the [School Inclusion Guidance](#) and consider who else could provide advice, for example Specialist Teachers or Educational Psychologists.

There has been some coproduced work as part of the Autism Strategy to develop an Information and Advice Booklet, to bring together trusted and reliable information to support Neurodivergent People, including children, young people and their families pre and post diagnosis, which can be found [here](#) and there is guidance for schools available in the [Graduated Approach for Neurodivergent Children and Young People](#)..

The [Dimensions of Health and Well-being Tool](#) is a free online tool providing a personalised profile and self-care information to support adults, children and young people in Coventry and Warwickshire.

[Community Autism Support Service](#) can offer support for families where children or young people are waiting for an autism assessment or have a diagnosis. They offer Group sessions, 1:1 sessions, and peer mentoring.

The current Autism strategy ends in 2026 and future development plans regarding autism and ADHD are being led by the NHS Integrated Care Board. We will feed this back so that this issue can be picked up in their planning.

Search Out Warwickshire contains links to other parent support groups and Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice have collated a list [here](#).

We are also working with colleagues across the system (Health, Education and Social Care, and Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice) to understand more about the experience of Parent Carers with their own needs and what is needed to support them in advocating for their child.



- e. My daughter is waiting for an autism assessment, but she has DLD, but I feel school aren't supporting her; this has been going on since nursery and now she's in year 2.**

We would recommend that in the first instance you ask to speak to the SENCO at the school regarding this. Here are some [resources about DLD](#), which may be of use. SENDIAS also provide independent advice and guidance, and you can find out more [here](#).

Resourced Provision

3.

- a. Looking at the Resourced Provision placements currently available, there is a high % in Nuneaton and Rugby compared to Leamington - is this based on population % splits for SEND children or location availability (facilities). And are there plans to provide more in the Leamington Area?**

The development of Resourced Provision places across the county is part of the SEND & Inclusion Strategy. There are plans to have a minimum of two primary schools in each local consortia (consortia cover 8 - 20 schools in a locality) as well as three secondary schools in each District and Borough. Whilst the Council cannot mandate a school to host a Resourced Provision, we have been encouraged by the number of schools coming forward. In Leamington, there are Resourced Provisions at Lillington Primary School and Briar Hill Infant School, Trinity Secondary School and Oakley Secondary School and further discussions are taking place with other schools. A full list of the County's Resource Provisions can be found [here](#).

- b. We recently liaised with a Specialist Resource Provision in Warwickshire, to get an idea/see the school to possibly move our kid from mainstream and were told that they don't do showings anymore,**



as approved by the LA. How, as parents, are we supposed to make a decision without seeing the placements? What is the process please?

We would encourage all Resourced Provisions to make visits available, however it is up to the schools as to how they manage this. Some arrange group tours, and some special schools are developing virtual tours. It is important to acknowledge the impact on the current students if there were a high volume of visitors looking around, so settings will be trying to strike a balance. We have developed a couple of videos so far to showcase some of our Resource Provisions. You can see [Peter's Place at Trinity](#), [The Launchpad at Boughton Leigh Junior School](#) and [The Haven at Stockingford Academy](#).

c. Are there any plans to provide more training/education for mainstream SENCO's/teams around Alternative Provision?

The focus is on developing staff to support a range of needs within school. This is part of our workforce development project. By upskilling staff in schools, it is hoped that need can be met within the setting and so less need for external alternative provision. There is an expectation that schools use the [School Inclusion Guidance](#) and advice from external professionals to support them in developing the provision for individuals. The use of Alternative Provision should be purposeful, based on an understanding of the child or young person's needs and have a clear plan for reintegration or alternative pathway.

The Alternative Provision Guidance can be found [here](#). You can find more information about Alternative Provision [here](#) where this relates to children or young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan, which includes i) a [short video](#) explaining rules about Alternative Provision i) [Guidance](#) for those with an EHCP and iii) a [Process](#) for those accessing Alternative Provision.

Inclusion, neuro-affirming practices, Emotionally Based School Avoidance, and SEN Support in School

4.



- a. How are the SEN support Children with no EHCP identified within the school data? Is this recorded on SEN registers? If so, I would suggest this is under-reported. My experience at primary age is a number of children with clear SEN needs including diagnoses not being included on the SEN register.**

Yes, this is based on the SEN register. Inclusion on the register is based on need, rather than diagnosis.

- b. Is there a way to find out if a specific school has signed up to the School Inclusion Charter please?**

The School Inclusion Charter sets out the minimum that Parent Carers can expect from schools based on the SEND Code of Practice; the Charter was coproduced with schools and there is an expectation that all schools in Warwickshire are meeting these minimum standards. Schools can demonstrate their commitment by sharing it on their website, as part of their SEN information report and/or making it visible in the school reception. Currently (May 2025) 47% of schools have displayed the Charter on their Website and we continue to encourage schools to display and share it with families through their newsletters etc and consider how their school can develop their approach according to the Four Cornerstones of the [School Inclusion Charter](#).

- c. What plans do WCC have to focus training relevant to multi agency and educators on neuro affirming principles, rather than clinical diagnosis approach?**

The Specialist Teacher Service provides a wide-ranging training offer to schools including on neurodiversity, which is neuroaffirming. It is up to schools whether they buy this training or not. The recent PINS project (Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools) demonstrated the quality of the Council's training in this area and was appreciated by the 23 schools that took part. There is a second phase of this project, and more schools will be involved for the next 12 months.

WCC has developed the Graduated Approach for Neurodivergent Pupils, which sets out a neuro-affirming approach - [Graduated Approach for Neurodivergent Children and Young People](#).

As part of the Autism Strategy work, resources have been created to support people to understand and adopt neuro-affirming language. For example, there are new



[Infographics](#) highlighting key messages about language. [Dimensions](#) has also been updated to reflect neuro-affirming practices.

The [Oliver McGowen training](#) is freely available to all agencies who have a need for awareness about the care and support of autistic people who people with learning disability.

d. How is it that schools wait for crisis to put in an intervention rather than support a child to avoid reaching crisis point. What is the reach in terms of Autism in Education Training and how is the effect measured. I am speaking in relation to Autism

In line with the Code of Practice, we expect all schools to provide a graduated approach and have provided [School Inclusion Guidance](#) and [Autism in Education Training \(AET\)](#) available which is evidence-based, with further information links available on the guidance pages.

All schools can access the free Autism in Education Training and in the last year (2023/24) there was an uptake of 75% from primary settings and 44% from secondary. There is a focus on increasing the uptake from secondary settings. Of those who attended 93% rated the training as good or above. Attendees rated an average of 4.44 out of 5 for increased understanding of autistic children and young people as a result of the course and 4.59 out of 5 overall.

e. Is there more information on the EBSA pathway please?

The Emotionally Based School Avoidance Pathway (EBSA) is currently being piloted. It will be shared when the evaluation is finished (which is expected to be by the end of this academic year 2024-2025). The training resources include input from the Educational Psychologists and one of the training resources includes input from young people about their experience of school and what support has helped them with EBSA. The training resources will become part of the universal offer once they are completed.

Sufficiency of Placements

f. The South Warwickshire Local Plan indicates 8,000 – 54,000 new homes in the coming years. Based on a significant proportion of those



housing families with children, expansion of Evergreen will only cover existing need, not new homes.

Our plans for expansion, including Evergreen, are based upon the sufficiency data for school places that is updated every year.

g. New schools need to be started now. Delay in making that decision will only make the situation worse and more costly in the future.

In the last ten years, Warwickshire has opened three new special schools, redesignated one special school and expanded seven other special schools. Comparatively Warwickshire has a high number of special school places. We are working hard to increase our number of resourced provision places; we currently have 25 Resourced Provisions and our ambition is to have a further 31 bases, which would give a total of more than 529 places. Feedback from young people has been that if resource provisions had been available when they needed them, they may have been able to meet their needs, rather than them needing specialist provision, hence the prioritisation in the strategy for resourced provision. Accessing Resource provision for these young people would have given them a much greater choice and access to a broader and more variety curriculum. If young people's needs can be met in resource provision, which gives them more options as they progress through school, this will mean that special school places are more available for children and young people for whom they are the right setting.

h. Are there plans to expand generic special places alongside mainstream-hosted Secure Resource Provisions?

Yes, capital funding has been agreed for expansions to Oak Wood and Evergreen Schools, however these have been delayed due to issues with planning permission.

i. What is the view about increasing places in schools rated as Requires Improvement or lower (as was) by Ofsted?

We only create places in Requires Improvement schools where it is considered that establishing a resourced provision would help to improve the overall performance of the school.



Education, Health and Care Process

j. What proportion of appeals for Education Health and Care Needs Assessment are successful after initially being unsuccessful?

Approximately two thirds of requests for EHC needs assessment are agreed. Of those that go through appeal and mediation, over half are agreed - usually due to further evidence being provided.

- k. Given the timescales are no longer being upheld (i.e. no EHCP final plan within 20 weeks), please can consideration be given to provide clear updates to parents specifying timescales. E.g. We regret that we have not been able to meet the 20-week deadline for your child's EHCP, but we anticipate supplying a final plan within 30 weeks.**
- l. I understand that there are delays with regards to the ECHP 20-week process. However, we are getting no information at all. How long this is now taking? I understand the funding will be back dated, however this does not help the child/family**

Yes, we know communication on this matter needs to improve. We apologise for the delays, and we are bringing in additional staff to address the demand. Recruitment has taken place, and new staff are expected to start in September 2025. We have worked with Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice and sent a letter to families who are waiting for a decision before the end of May to update them on the delays.

We have also restructured our SENDAR Team into an Assessment and Review Hub to streamline work, brought in additional staff to the Assessment Team, and brought in additional temporary staff whilst recruitment is ongoing.

We are reviewing our processes to manage the EHC needs assessment process, to look at options for automation and earlier decision by improve the quality and relevance of the information that is provided to the panel making the decision, so the best information is available at the earliest opportunity to inform decision making.



We have assured settings that funding will be backdated to the due date of the EHC Plan. The provision that a child or young person receives should be in place regardless, as part of the continued Graduated Approach. We recognise that in a minority of situations this may not be possible. If you have further or new information that needs to be considered, please contact ehcna@warwickshire.gov.uk with this information.

m. Why does it take so long (SLA times I receive from emails is 5 days) to get a reply from our plan coordinators that we feel the need to escalate the issues?

Plan Coordinators are currently carrying a caseload of over 300 children. Funding has now been agreed for additional staffing and recruitment has been undertaken. New Staff will be starting in September 2025. Staff do try their best to respond and many do this really well, but we accept that we are not always getting this right. Communication continues to be an area of focus, and we hope that the increased capacity in SENDAR, achieved through the recent recruitment will enable further development on this.

n. Underfunding or simple non-compliance with Children & Families Act is endemic in the system nationwide. What is WCC doing to assure stakeholders that EHCP are both compliant and appropriate to meet need. I refer specifically to Section F and the LA's duty to secure provision?

The Annual Review is the main mechanism in the current system to check whether provision in Section F is being delivered. The Council also take note of Ofsted judgments and follow up with individual schools where concerns are raised.

Lobbying

o. What would be helpful for parents to do to help increase funding for Warwickshire? Should we be contacting our MPs for example?

As part of the Local Government Association, Warwickshire County Council is asking central government for reform for sustainable funding for SEND for all areas. The most



recent report is [here](#). If parents do write to their MPs, we would encourage a focus that both improves outcomes and is financially sustainable for all areas.

There are calls for evidence from Government periodically, which we will share on the Local Offer Facebook Page, and we would encourage Parent Carers to have a say through those measures, but also join Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice. As a parent carer forum, they are not allowed to lobby, but they are representing the views of Parent Carers regionally and nationally through the National Network of Parent Carer Forums, who speak directly to Central Government Departments. The more views they have, the more they can represent these as they constructively challenge and support the developments needs across the system.

Preparation for Adulthood (PFA)

p. Would you be able to provide specific direction for those in KS3/KS4/Onward?

Guidance on how schools can and should be supporting children and young with SEND is available in the [SEND and Inclusion Guidance](#). There is also information about transitions for those [14 years and over](#), [16 years and over](#) and [Post 16 opportunities](#). Here is information about [Extra Support for Tests and Exams](#). SEND Support available in KS3 and KS4 continues to be built on [Quality First Teaching, an Assess, Plan, Do, review \(Graduated Approach\)](#) and all schools should outline what provision they have available to support children and young people with SEND and explain how they will deliver their SEND Policy. If there is an EHCP in place to provide top-up funding to enable the child/young person to access their education, this continues to be reviewed annually and ceases when a young person finishes a level 3 qualification (equivalent to A-levels).

Individual Situations

There were a couple of questions that related to specific individual matters, for which we would advise emailing sen@warwickshire.gov.uk, so they can be responded to. If the child has an EHCP you could also contact the Plan Coordinator directly.



SEND Local Offer webpages www.warwickshire.gov.uk/send

Live Feedback on SEND Services www.warwickshire.gov.uk/sendfamilyfeedback

New Local Offer Facebook page www.facebook.com/WarksLocalOffer

SEND Newsletter can be found [here](#)

Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice

- www.warwickshireparentvoice.org
- www.facebook.com/Warksparentcarervoice

IMPACT - Young People's Forum for SEND - get involved

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ypvoice