



# SEND | Special Educational Needs & Disability

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) reforms

## Newsletter – July 2014

Welcome to the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) newsletter, a bi-monthly publication that aims to keep families and professionals updated with the latest SEND news and developments in Hertfordshire.

Hertfordshire wants to achieve better outcomes for children and young people with SEND and improve the way families are supported. New ways of working are therefore being introduced in line with the Children and Families Bill reforms that will become law in September 2014.

Keep up to date with progress of the Act and sign up to RSS feeds at <http://bit.ly/1jQVMnG>

### New Code of Practice now available

The code is still to have final approval from parliament, but otherwise will not be changed. The availability of the code, regulations and information about transitional arrangements will help local authorities and their partners, early years providers, schools, colleges and those working with children, young people and parents in further developing their plans for implementing the reforms from September 2014 onwards.



## East of England info sharing website

As part of the East of England Support Team, Hertfordshire will be contributing to a regional information sharing [website](#), which was launched on Friday 18 July. This will be freely accessible to anyone interested in the systems being developed and the materials produced around the reforms.

## Membership of Hertfordshire Additional Needs Database reaches 4,000

We are delighted to announce that Hertfordshire Additional Needs Database (HAND) now has over 4,000 members.

With their HAND cards these members benefit from the concessions offered by many leisure venues all over the UK and abroad. If you would like more information about joining HAND, please email [claudia.houghton@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:claudia.houghton@hertfordshire.gov.uk) or telephone 01992 556984.

We publish an online newsletter, [HAND News](#), which has news of inclusive leisure activities, sports, support groups for parents, carers and young people, new government and local authority initiatives and the way these will affect those needing support, and much more. Do read the newsletter.

## Information events for families

Families can find out about the services available in Hertfordshire for Children and Young people with SEND in Hertfordshire at our SEND in Herts events. For more information visit: [www.hertsdirect.org/send](http://www.hertsdirect.org/send)

Tuesday 16 September 10.30am – 5pm. Stevenage Arts and Leisure Centre, Lytton Way, Stevenage, Herts SG1 1LZ.

Monday 29 September 10.30am – 5pm. Radlett Centre, 1 Aldenham Avenue, Radlett. WD7 8HL.

## What is your local offer and how does it differ from the services currently available to parents whose children have statements of special educational need?

The Local Offer is a tool to help families find out what is available in Hertfordshire from social care, school, health services, community groups and more. It will not just be a list, but will ensure that it is clear directory of what services families are entitled to, or available activities and how they could access them. It will be the first time that people will be able to freely access this information in one place. It will be easy to search and we are working to ensure that the language is not confusing. We have an early version of the [Local Offer](#) available now, which was designed alongside parents from Hertfordshire, but the new version will offer more features and better information.

## Outcomes for Life

### How the education, health and care plan is making a difference in Hertfordshire

**Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) is leading the way in helping to improve the lives of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).**

Through its SEND pathfinder programme, Hertfordshire trialled changes that the government wants to make to SEND services before they become law in September 2014. One of the most significant changes is the introduction of a new education, health and care (EHC) assessment and plan, which puts families at the centre of the planning process and focuses on what is important for the young person.

The EHC assessment looks at life beyond education and brings the different services together. It has the ability to totally transform the way professionals now work with families and young people.

One family that has already benefited from the new way of working are South Oxhey residents John and Janie Smith\* and their son Lee\*. Lee has autism and borderline dyspraxia. Lee has many difficulties and as is common with autism, needs consistency and familiarity in order to avoid feeling overwhelmed or anxious. Any change of routine can set him back.

Lee's mum Janie said: "We tried talking to Lee's school to explain that something was wrong and get some support," explained John, "but we weren't being listened to. Lee clearly wasn't functioning well at school, getting further behind in class and coming home agitated and angry. We were told this was okay, even though we had provided several medical reports." To read the rest of the [case study visit the SEND webpages](#).

\*Not their real names

### Take part in the survey: how can we keep in touch

There is a short, online survey you can complete, which allows you to say how you are involved in the SEND reforms, how useful you find the newsletter and how you would prefer to be kept updated about SEND reforms in future. The survey will remain open until 30 August. To take part just follow the link: [how can we keep in touch?](#)



**For more information about Hertfordshire's SEND pathfinder please visit:**

[www.hertsdirect.org/send](http://www.hertsdirect.org/send)