

# Our Voice

Spring 2024  
Issue 32

Making a Difference...



**contact** For families  
with disabled children

Our Voice sponsored by the Department of Education via Contact

## Welcome... to our Spring 2024 Newsletter

Our Voice had another busy year in 2023. Times have remained challenging, but we have continued to grow as an organisation. We were delighted to welcome our 1,000th member to our mailing list in November 2023, and we continue to reach out to more and more families through our events, regular communications and our growing social media following.

We've enjoyed meeting more families at our events including our termly family parties and our annual 'Meet the SEND Heads' Parents' Conference which was back to a face-to-face event for the first time since 2019. Responding to parent carer feedback, we introduced termly mini versions of the parents' conference focusing on specific service areas, which have proved popular and useful for parents. See pages 2, 3 and 4 for highlights of our past and future events.

The launch of new Youth and Family Hubs has given us great new opportunities and we're pleased to be running regular drop-in sessions, at the Ponders End Hub, for parent-carers to meet members of our team and

other parents, in an informal and inclusive environment. This is the first time that we have had a physical location to meet with parents and we're looking forward to organising a variety of different speakers for some of the sessions, and to expanding sessions to the Craig Park hub soon.

Our Voice secured external funding which allowed us to deliver a programme of Healthy Parent Carer courses, where small groups of parents work together to focus on improving their own wellbeing. Courses are continuing over the next few months and will include translation into some of the most widely spoken community languages including Turkish, Somali and Bengali, so that as many people as possible can be included and get the chance to benefit.

We are about to embark on an important project delivering training and drop-in sessions focusing on Positive Behaviour Support, which we hope will benefit many families.

The core of our work is making sure that parents' views are fed back to the Local Authority and Health as services are developed



*Some of the Our Voice Management Team from left to right: Jackie Pummell, Fazilla Amide, Khilna Gudhka, Natalie Sherman, Liz Willis, Resim Clear, Seema Islam, Natalie Newman, Tee Richards, Rupali Bhullar and Akosua Osei*

and reviewed, and we have been busier than ever with this work. We feed into the National Network of Parent Carer Forums, of which we are a member, both as part of the London Region and on a national level.

It's important that we continue to reflect your views in this way, so please do keep feeding back to us whenever you can, through our events, discussions and surveys, or by emailing us or calling our helpline.

To access the links in this printed version of our newsletter, please go to the Our Voice website [www.ourvoiceenfield.org.uk](http://www.ourvoiceenfield.org.uk) where you'll find a digital copy of the newsletter.

## New team members

We are delighted to have welcomed two new members to the Our Voice team



Ayan Hassan joined the Our Voice team in September 2023 as a parent volunteer. 'I have two children and my son is Autistic. I was fortunate enough to take part in the Healthy Parent Carer course run by Our Voice and have since been attending the various activities and events they've organised.

I'm excited to be able to support Our Voice in reaching more members of the Somali community in Enfield as a Somali speaker myself, with my cultural understanding and having a lived experience as a SEN family.'



'I'm Hollie Welch and I've been a member of the Our Voice team since early 2023, prior to this I accessed Our Voice's services, conferences and attended events with both my children for several years.

I have two sons who are both autistic, in addition, my eldest child has severe learning disabilities and profound communication challenges so attends a specialist secondary school, my youngest child attends mainstream primary school.

I'm a proud and active member of the neurodivergent community and believe my lived experience both through my own life and through that of my children, as well as being an advocate and carer, gives me valuable insight and understanding when working with children, young people, parents and carers. I represent our community and share collective views when working with statutory and voluntary sectors to improve services for children and young people with disabilities or special educational needs in Enfield.

I'm also an 'Expert by Experience' to NHS Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust (paediatric portfolio). Supporting families in our community is something I feel passionately about and I'm delighted to have the opportunity to contribute to the vital work that Our Voice does.'

Contact: Khilna or Jackie on 07516 662315 E-mail: [info@ourvoiceenfield.org.uk](mailto:info@ourvoiceenfield.org.uk) [www.ourvoiceenfield.org.uk](http://www.ourvoiceenfield.org.uk)  
chat to us [facebook.com/ourvoiceenfield](https://www.facebook.com/ourvoiceenfield) [Follow us @enfieldourvoice.](https://www.instagram.com/ourvoiceenfield/) [instagram.com/ourvoiceenfield/](https://www.instagram.com/ourvoiceenfield/)

Please pass our newsletter on to others – parents and service providers who might find it useful.

# OUR VOICE UPDATE

Between January 2023 and January 2024 Our Voice ran new events and our established family favourites including:

- 'Meet the SEND Heads' Parents' Conference in June.
- 'Our Voice presents: Get to Know the Joint Service for Disabled Children' in November 2023 and 'Our Voice presents: Get to Know SEN Services' Jan 2024.
- 4 online workshops for parents and carers.
- 3 courses of our 6-week Healthy Parent Carer Programme
- Spring, Summer and Christmas parties.
- Launch event and the first sessions of our new drop-in service at Ponders End Youth and Family Hub.

We supported and presented at several LA events for parents including the 'Preparing for Adulthood' event and a 'Rising to Reception' session. Additionally, we went to 17 coffee mornings at schools, Enfield Carers Centre and in a coffee shop (organised by parents).

## Our Voice Parents' Conference 2023

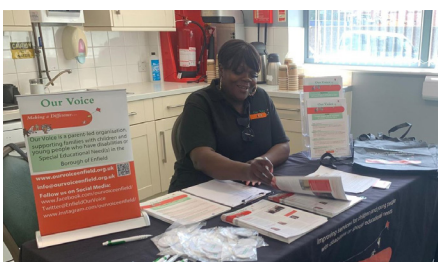
We've been running our annual 'Meet the SEND Heads' parents' conference at the Dugdale Centre Enfield since 2017, and this event has gone from strength to strength over the years. In 2023 we were delighted to be able to return to an in-person event for the first time since 2019. More than 70 parents joined us at our new venue, the Green Towers Community Centre in Edmonton.

This is a crucial event as it gives parents an unparalleled opportunity to put their views and concerns directly to the decision-makers in the LA and Health.

### The event included:

- Q&A session with a panel of all the Heads of Services.
- Workshop exploring mental health support for children and young people.
- 1:1 appointments with representatives from the different service areas.
- A 'Marketplace' style event with tables from Our Voice, SENDIASS, Enfield Carers Centre and the Enfield Branch of the National Autistic Society.

Feedback from participants was



overwhelmingly positive with one parent saying, *'I made more progress in the 30 minutes of my two one-to-one sessions than I have done in over 6 months of emails and phone calls.'*

Another commented *'The event was so well organised. Thank you for all the hard work that went into it. The coordinators were excellent in ensuring people got to ask their questions and provided information themselves from their experience of being in the system. I look forward to next year's event!'*



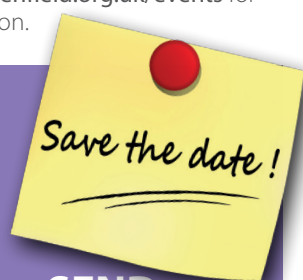
## Looking ahead to our events for the rest of 2024

We have some confirmed and some in the pipeline. Our Spring party will take place on Sunday 24th March and our next mini conference 'Our Voice presents: Get to Know Health and Therapies' is on 13th March 2024.

We'll continue running our Healthy Parent Carer Courses (see article on page 4) and our online information workshops on the varied topics which impact us as parents and carers.

We're hoping to organise a series of events for young people aged 14 – 25 years, subject to our successful funding bid.

So you don't miss a thing and get the earliest opportunity to book for all our events ensure you're on our mailing list (see page 3 on becoming a member). You can also keep an eye on our Events page [www.ourvoiceenfield.org.uk/events](http://www.ourvoiceenfield.org.uk/events) for more information.



## Meet the SEND Heads Q&A 2024

The most important date in the Our Voice calendar is our 'Meet the SEND Heads' Parents' Conference. Keep an eye on our events page for more information and the booking link.

It'll be a face-to-face event, like last year and we'll be joined by the Heads of all the Service Areas looking after children and young people with SEND from across the LA and Health, to answer your burning questions. This will include the Heads of SEN Services, the Joint Service for Disabled Children, Education, Transport and Travel Brokers, Health, Health Therapies, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Educational Psychology Service, Integrated Learning Disability Service and the Enfield Advisory Service for Autism.

There'll be a workshop and as part of the booking process, you'll have the opportunity to book one or more 15-minute one-to-one sessions with representatives of these different areas, so you can discuss issues specific to your child in more detail.

# OUR HIGHLIGHTS

## New mini conferences

We launched our new mini conferences because of feedback we received from you during our parents' conferences. Parents appreciate the event but wanted more of them and the opportunity to focus more closely on specific areas.

So, we listened and launched the 'Our Voice Presents' series of events. 'Our Voice Presents: Get to Know the Joint Service for Disabled Children (JSDC)' was a pilot of 20 parents and followed a similar format to the annual parents' conference:

- Q&A panel session chaired by Seema Islam, Our Voice Chair and led by Miri Dharmo, Head of the JSDC.
- Choice of two workshops – Positive Behaviour Support or Short Breaks.
- 1:1 appointments with two senior members of the JSDC team.

Our second mini conference 'Our Voice Presents: Get to Know SEN Services' was held on 31st January and attended by about 50 parents and included:

- Q&A panel session led by Barbara Thurogood, Head of SEN Services, and Zulkifl Ahmed, SEN Services Manager (with opportunities to submit more questions after the event).
- Choice of two workshops – Education Health Care Plans and Annual Reviews or What support should mainstream schools provide at SEN Support?
- 1:1 appointments with team leaders from SEN Services.



**Look out for our next mini conference 'Our Voice Presents: Get to know Health and Therapies' which is on 13th March 2024 at Park Avenue Disability Resource Centre in Bush Hill Park. All places must be pre-booked. See our events page for details.**

## Our Voice membership

We hit a milestone late last year and welcomed our 1,000th member to our mailing list in November.

Our membership has grown steadily over the last few years, with over 180 new members joining our mailing list during 2023.

Our following on social media has increased across Instagram, Facebook and X/Twitter, with more than 500 people following us.

### Are you on our mailing list yet?

Our members receive regular weekly updates with information useful for families of children and young people with SEND. As a member, benefits include:

- Advance notice of Our Voice events before we communicate them more widely, giving you a chance to book early. This is important because places are often limited and our bigger events (like our parties for families) are popular, meaning that they are sometimes fully booked within a few days and are therefore never offered more widely.



- The chance to book our exclusive events just for members such as pantomime trips.
- Opportunities to have your say on changes that affect SEND services locally and nationally.
- Updates to changes in SEND services from the Local Authority and Health, and on national developments that will affect children and young people with SEND and their families.
- Useful information about other events for parents and local inclusive or SEND specific play and leisure activities.

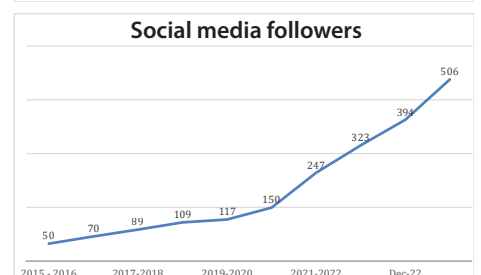
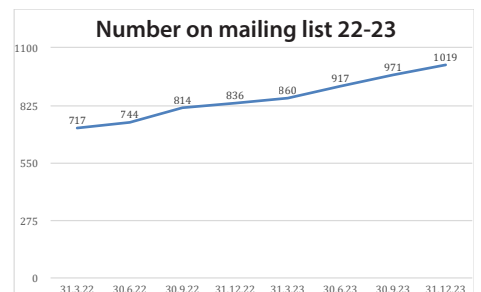
You can join our mailing list in several ways, by email [info@ourvoiceenfield.org.uk](mailto:info@ourvoiceenfield.org.uk), by phone **07516 662315** or sign up at our website [https://www.ourvoiceenfield.org.uk/contact\\_us](https://www.ourvoiceenfield.org.uk/contact_us)

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# OUR VOICE UPDATE

## Healthy parent carers course

Parent carers often overlook their own health and wellbeing as they prioritise their children's health and caregiving responsibilities. This 6-week programme, developed by Exeter University, runs for small groups of around 10 parent carers each time, and is designed to give parents an opportunity to work together as a group to improve their own health and wellbeing by giving time to focus on their own needs and promoting empowerment, confidence and resilience.



The course is shaped specifically for parent carers rather than parents in general and is delivered by trained facilitators who are parent carers themselves, so understand the unique challenges. We know that parent carers can find it challenging to find time to focus on their own needs and this is a vital opportunity for them to do just that. It's very different to other courses available – it is not a parenting course or about how to get support for your child.

We have run 3 courses this year, thanks to us successfully obtaining external funding from Wellbeing Connect. All participants were invited to attend a celebration event at the new Ponders End Youth and Family Hub.

One parent commented *'The course helped me to take a step back and really think about my day-to-day routines and how I can improve upon and make small changes to enrich my life.'*

Another says, *'There is always so much going on in a carer's life that it was useful to have 'permission' each week to reflect on what needed to be working better for my wellbeing.'*



Other feedback was positive *'This course was for myself. I'm happy to have been part of this parent health and wellbeing course because I learned so much for myself and enjoyed the sessions.'*

Going forward Our Voice has organised and paid for four additional people to be trained as facilitators to deliver upcoming courses, including some who can deliver the course in Somali, Turkish and Bengali.

The next course starts in April 2024, including versions translated into Somali and Bengali and again after the May half-term including translation into Turkish.

## New drop-in service

Finally, we have been able to realise our long-held ambition to have a regular Our Voice drop-in service. Previously hampered by the lack of a suitable venue, we are delighted to have a space at the new Youth and Family Hub, 129 South Street, Ponders End, Enfield, EN3 4PX where we can hold it.

We launched in December 2023 and Autism Central ([www.autismcentral.org.uk](http://www.autismcentral.org.uk)) joined us at the first session to talk about the support and workshops they offer for parents.

These regular drop-ins are vital and will give parents opportunities to discuss any issues they have face-to-face and meet up and chat with other parents. We'll be inviting speakers from other organisations and from the Local Authority and Health to some of the sessions.

Our next sessions are Wednesday 6th March 2024, 10am – 1pm, and Tuesday 19 March 2024, 12 - 2pm.

We plan to open our second drop-in service at the Craig Park Youth and Family Hub soon. For more information and dates visit our events page <https://www.ourvoiceenfield.org.uk/events>



## Party highlights

Last year's parties were hugely popular and booked up very quickly, some with a week. These events are an important way for families to meet and connect with each other, to build networks of support and for children to have fun together. They provide a supportive and inclusive environment for families to spend time together and are a great way for us to hear informally from parents and answer their questions. They reduce isolation for parent carers and children – we carry out surveys at the events which show that the majority of our attendees feel isolated some or most of the time.



More than 90 parents and children joined us for our **Spring Party 2023** for a fun afternoon at Waverley School, Enfield. Children were encouraged to dress up as their favourite

superhero and there was a bouncy castle, Captain Fantastic's Superhero show, arts and crafts, face-painting and food and drink. The Head of the Joint Service for Disabled Children attended and provided a drop-in service for parents to discuss their individual issues.

Our **Summer Party** at Russet House School, Enfield included a pirate show from Captain Fantastic plus a bouncy castle, facepainting, food and drink, soft play, sensory room and party bag for each child. One parent



commented, *'The event was well organised, there were various activities that appealed to different interests and needs. Thank you to the team.'*

The Magic and Punch and Judy show from Mr Marvel was the star of the Our Voice **Christmas party**. About 100 people attended and there was a visit from Santa who gave a gift to each child. We were joined by the Head of the Joint Service for Disabled Children, who talked to parents about individual issues.

## Online workshops

Although we're beginning to deliver more events in person, we know that online events are valuable for some families. This year we ran four sessions including **'Choosing a Primary School'** and **'Choosing a Secondary School'**, in conjunction with SENDIASS that were well attended.

# OUR VOICE UPDATE

## The national picture

Our Voice is one of 152 parent carer forums across England which come together to form the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF)

We feed into national discussions, mainly through working with other forums in the London Region and giving input to our two London Representatives. We have particularly close links with the region as one of our two coordinators also has a separate role as the administrator for the London Region.

Every year the NNPCF and Contact hold an annual national conference bringing together representatives from many of the different parent carer forums.

In February 2023 Khilna Gudkha and Natalie Newman from the Our Voice team attended the event in Bristol, taking the opportunity to network with and learn from other forum representatives, as well as engaging in discussions on topics affecting SEND on a national level.



This February another two members of our team will attend the national conference (nnpcf.org.uk) in Newcastle upon Tyne.



## Area SEND Inspection – the parent carer perspective



Ofsted and the Quality Care Commission (CQC) carried out a Local Area SEND Inspection for the London Borough of Enfield in March 2023, looking at the arrangements for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Much of the process in the new inspection framework involves the inspectors talking to the different Local Authority and Health Services about what they do to support families and looking at a very small sample of individual cases in detail.

It's vitally important for the views and experiences of a broader group of parents and carers and their young people, to be heard by inspectors to make sure they get a balanced picture, which they do via surveys sent out to parents and carers, and to young people, and from talking to us as the local Parent Carer Forum. This information is critical in helping the inspection team to decide on their key lines of enquiry.

Our Voice was actively involved in the inspection process through

- Promoting the parent-carer and young person's surveys to make sure as many views as possible were heard by the inspectors.
- Preparing a detailed overview, which we sent to the inspection team detailing the areas where the LA and Health work well to support children and young people and the key issues and challenges that we know about through our personal experience as parent-carers and through all the inputs we have from all our members.
- Meeting with the inspection team to talk through these issues in detail, looking at both the good and the difficult experiences of our families.
- Giving our input to the evidence prepared by the Local Authority and Health for the inspectors.
- Joining most of the meetings between the LA/Health and the Inspectors, to make sure that the parent perspective was included.

The inspectors judged that the local area partnership's arrangements lead to inconsistent experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. This means that re-inspection will take place within 3 years and progress against the action plan will be monitored. For example, the inspectors noted that Annual Reviews are not updated quickly enough to ensure Education Health Care Plans always accurately reflect current needs – an issue that Our Voice has already been flagging with the Local Authority.

You can see more information on the specific points raised on our website at <https://www.ourvoiceenfield.org.uk/news/show/226>. We'd like to thank the parents who helped by giving their views to us, and directly to the inspectors, enabling them to get a balanced picture of the situation in our area.



## Have your say

Our most important function as an organisation is making sure that we feedback your views as parents and carers to the key decision-makers in the Local Authority and Health. We gather views in a variety of different ways – through the emails you send us, calls to our helpline, surveys and through our events including formal feedback through surveys we carry out and informal feedback through talking to participants.

During 2023 we attended around 125 meetings with the Local Authority and more than 40 with Health services to ensure that parent-carers' views were represented.

We also provide lots of opportunities for parents to feedback directly to the LA and Health. These include invitations to focus groups, direct feedback at our events, especially 'Meet the SEND Heads' and 'Our Voice presents: Get to Know' events and through letting you know about local and national consultations that have a specific impact on children and young people with additional needs and their families. For example, during December 2023 we encouraged parents to give their views on proposed changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme, the draft Adult Social Care Travel Assistance policy, the draft Enfield Autism Strategy and the draft Enfield Joint Local Health and Wellbeing strategy for 2024-2030.



## News from the SEN team

Update from Barbara Thurogood, Enfield's Head of SEND and Inclusion Service who tells us it has been a very busy year so far for SEND services.

## Staff update

Helen Baeckstroem is the team's new SEN Improvement Lead and will work to help improve parental experience with us in Enfield. She will be setting up meetings with parents to go through our Self Evaluation Framework and will start to work on our new framework so that we can commence delivery from April 2024.

Meghi Stavrinis is on Maternity leave so Maria Mulvihill is taking over the role until she returns. Maria is a qualified teacher and has worked in education for some time and is already proving to be an asset to our service.



## Ofsted inspection

Our Local Area Ofsted Inspection happened in March 2023. The inspectors' report identified plenty of positive outcomes and work going in Enfield plus three specific areas we need to develop further. Each of these three areas had already been identified in our self-evaluation framework.

I hope you have had the chance to look at our Action Plan on the Local Offer. We will start to discuss this more at some roadshows with parents, schools, and other stakeholders to gather your feedback for our next Self-Evaluation Framework for the academic year 2024-2025.

## Change Partnership Programme

We are part of the SEND Change Partnership Programme with Barnet, Camden, and Islington. The SEND Change Programme is a national programme to test some of the changes the Government wants to make to the system for supporting children and young people with SEND.

As part of the partnership arrangements, we'll be reviewing a new Education, Health and Care Plan which will be piloted for 80 children. We'll be informing parents who will be involved in the pilot and then gathering their feedback and thoughts about the new plan.

Once the pilot is over, the DfE will review the feedback and then make national changes.

We will be developing a Local Area Improvement Plan and will share more information with you on this as it becomes available and developing a Dashboard around SEN performance comparing performance against local, London, statistical neighbours and national outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

We'll be trialling mediations for some cases. In Enfield, we currently hold "Way Forward Meetings", this is where we try and amicably resolve any disagreements.

## Youth Justice Award and SEND

The Youth Justice Service and the LAC and Vulnerable Team worked hard to receive an accolade for their work and received the Quality Lead Award for securing consistently good outcomes for children and young people with SEND. This is a good outcome for some of our more vulnerable children.



## School place planning

We have been increasing places as much as possible in Enfield due to the increased demand – we are planning to open more secondary ARPs in 2024. This is good news, and we look forward to working with schools to do this.

## Nurture groups

We are planning to develop our Nurture Group offer for children with identified SEMH and attachment needs. The groups have produced good outcomes for children over time and help them make personal and academic progress. As a result, we aim to develop the offer to provide more nurture groups in our schools and to create a pathway that includes more general, practical nurturing strategies for use with the whole class.

## EHCP performance

We've been doing well on our statutory timelines, issuing 100% of plans on time, within 20 weeks, which is the government and legal target. However, we had a high volume of requests before summer from parents and schools and this caused a capacity issue as we couldn't see and assess children over the school holidays. As soon

as term started our EPS and health colleagues have been working to meet the demand, but it has meant our timelines have slipped to 77%, which is still well above the national average, but we are working hard with our partners to improve this as quickly as possible to get back to 100%.



## News from Integrated Learning Disability Service

Charlene Thomas, Service Manager updates us on services and support.

The Integrated Learning Disability Service (ILDS) is a team of health and social care staff from Enfield Council and the NHS. We support adults (18+) with learning disabilities and their families. We also work with young people 16+, alongside Children's Services, to plan their transition into adulthood.

### New team members

We have some successful new recruits to the Assessment and Care Management Team including Team Manager, Zinovia Terzaki, Assistant Team Manager, Emefa Tsiopotey and Senior Practitioner, Michelle Stewart.



### Focus on Preparing for Adulthood

In Enfield we like parents/carers to start engaging with the transition to adulthood process, known as Preparing for Adulthood (PFA), when their child is around 14 years old. Whilst this may seem early, it's important to be well informed on what the potential changes could be so you can support your young person through the changes. If faced with all the changes at the point of transition it may be overwhelming.

We want to support parents/carers through transition, so that if eligible under the Care Act, young people move into adulthood with the right care package and support in place at the age of 18 years. The Local Authority's Preparing for Adulthood booklet is a key document to help you understand the process and support and is on the Local Offer.

### Attend events

You should attend as many PFA events as you can, they're designed to support each stage of transition. Held annually you can attend each one as many times as you like. Events include information sessions/training on the Preparing for Adulthood Transition Process, Decision making and the Mental Capacity Act, applying for Education Post 16, Supporting young people, parents, and carers during transition, Understanding Welfare benefits, Support planning, Personal budgets, Getting a Home, Health Services, Day Services and Getting a Job. Details of all these events are on the Local Offer.

We work closely with a parent/carer, Jane Richards, who runs a support network known as Families in Transition to Adulthood (FITA). Having been through the process with her son, Jane can advise about the events and is able to support parents/carers on a 1:1 basis, helping them resolve issues or concerns.

### More support

Monthly Drop-in sessions, on the first Friday of every month from 10am – 12pm at The Enfield Integrated Learning Disability Service, Enfield Highway Carnegie Building, 258A Hertford Road, Enfield, EN3 5BN, offer young people (16+) and parents/carers the opportunity to meet with Jane Richards from Families in Transition to Adulthood (FITA) and Charlene Thomas- Head of Service, Assessment and Care management, ILDS. To book a place call Jane Richards from FITA on 0781 6070098.

We also work with Our Voice Parent Forum who contribute and participate in strategic discussions about transition at the Transition Implementation Group.

Since September 2023, the total number of parents who have accessed PFA events and support is 91.

Our 2023-24 programme has in the main returned to face-to-face events and to help us understand your experience of transition and understand if we have the process right, an on-line survey will be circulated to parents/carers within 3 months of them receiving their Adult Care and Support Plan.



## Community nursing

The Community Nurse Duty Team supports service users and their families with health issues. Please contact the team for support, advice or help ([community.nurses@enfield.gov.uk](mailto:community.nurses@enfield.gov.uk)) or 020 8379 5759 or to explore whether a referral to the nursing team is required for longer term support.

There are regular Health Drop-in sessions at several day services and on site at the Carnegie building. Details of these are available on MyLife ([mylife.enfield.gov.uk](http://mylife.enfield.gov.uk)). The clinics utilise the Whzan Kit to record observations which, if your

GP is set up, can be accessed by Primary Care services, as well as 111 and 999. Accurately recording baseline observations is vitally important to ensure timely escalation and access to appropriate health care interventions.

The Health Drop-ins allow observations to be taken in a comfortable environment, and supported by those who are familiar to them. Additional time can be taken to support the client to familiarise themselves with the equipment, support de-sensitisation and encourage increased participation in health checks and health monitoring.

Our Specialist Epilepsy Nurse hosts monthly clinics at Park Ave Resource Centre to support people with their epilepsy. Appointments can be booked to offer advice and support.

In December the Community Nursing Team hosted two successful vaccination clinics in partnership with Medicus Partners. Held at the Carnegie Building and Park Avenue, the sessions made reasonable adjustments to ensure our clients and staff have equitable access to health prevention. If you or a family requires access to the seasonal vaccination program, or any other vaccines, please contact nurse duty for advice.



## Educational Psychology Service update

Suzy Francis, Head of Enfield's Educational Psychology Service (EPS), updates us on the service it provides to schools and the increasing demands in SEND.

## Recruitment & staffing

We have welcomed several senior and main grade EPs to our service, putting us in a strong position going forward and we're grateful to Khilna Gudhka, from Our Voice for providing an invaluable parent-carer perspective, as a member of our interview panel.

## Our statutory work

The EPS completed 609 statutory advices for the EHC needs assessment process in 2023. We work closely with the SEN Service to ensure that we provide high quality advice for every child.

Currently we're running four weeks behind our statutory timescales and are working with additional locum input to help us recover our timelines. We liaise closely with our SEN colleagues to support them to meet their statutory timelines.

## School anxiety and refusal

Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) is a term used to describe the difficulty children and young people experience in attending school due to emotional reasons, such as stress, anxiety and/or feeling overwhelmed. It can result in prolonged periods of absence from school and we know that it's a growing concern for families.

In partnership with the Enfield EBSNA network, the EPS facilitates termly workshops for parents and carers, and for school staff. For information about the workshops, which will also be promoted by schools contact [eps@enfield.gov.uk](mailto:eps@enfield.gov.uk)

## Pupil support

The EPS trains and supports Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) and we know that they do fantastic early intervention work in schools for children with social, emotional and mental health needs. We have 83 trained ELSAs in the borough, across 26 primary schools and seven secondary schools.

## Contact

The Contact free phone helpline offers help and support to the families of disabled children. The confidential service can be contacted on **0808 808 3555** or at [helpline@contact.org.uk](mailto:helpline@contact.org.uk)

The service is staffed by experienced advisers and is intended as a one-stop-shop for parents and family members. For more information visit [www.contact.org.uk](http://www.contact.org.uk)

## Supported learning

Mediated Learning Support Approach (MeLSA) teaches the psychology of learning and how to use mediation to develop pupils independent learning skills. It provides excellent evidence-based frameworks for identifying learning needs, choosing, implementing and evaluating interventions, and approaches for whole class teaching and learning. We're excited to be delivering training and we will offer ongoing supervision and network meetings each term. Eleven schools have signed up a total of 20 staff.

## Work with schools

Around 85% of Enfield schools consistently buy time from the EPS. This year saw the launch of our skill mixing model, with schools offered EP and Assistant EP time. Schools receiving the mix of EP and



Assistant EP time tell us they're happy with the model, which supports a broader range of work, including intervention work and staff training. All EP time is planned in partnership with SENCOs, including for children who have EHCPs.

## Telephone line

We continue to provide a telephone support line (020 8379 2000) for parents and carers to discuss any concerns in relation to your children's learning, wellbeing or development. Issues we can help you think about include emotions (for example, fears and worries, low mood, anger), transitions at school and home, parenting and signposting to appropriate services.

This is not a route to educational psychology involvement for your child, which is best discussed with the SENCO at your child's school. The service was well used over the Christmas holidays, with 30 parents requesting calls.

