



Welcome to January's edition of the SENDIASS Spotlight!

SENDIASS UPDATE

Hello everyone, and a very Happy New Year from all of us at SENDIASS! We hope 2026 has started gently for you and brings plenty of good things your way.

As we step into the new year, we're saying a fond farewell to Heather, one of our SENDIASS Advisors. Heather has been a valued member of the team, supporting families with compassion, warmth, and dedication and we wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

The good news is that we also have two new team members joining us over the coming months. We're excited to welcome them onboard and look forward to introducing them properly once they're settled in.

As always, the team continues to be busy supporting children, young people, parents, and carers.

Remember -if you're looking for information or guidance, our online

resources are available anytime. You can also come and chat with us in person at one of our library drop-ins or outreach events. We'd love to see you!

We are also beginning a renewed push to gather testimonials from parents, carers, and young people. These lived-experience voices are incredibly powerful in helping us demonstrate the real-world difference SENDIASS makes. Hearing directly from families allows us to show decision-makers - both locally and nationally - the impact of our support, the gaps that still exist, and the value of investing in accessible SEND information, advice, and guidance. Over the coming months we will be showing and explaining ways we will be gathering testimonials but if there is anything you would like to send us now, please send it to norfolksendiass@norfolk.gov.uk.

Wishing you all a positive start to the year ahead.



Imogen talks about the role of a Helpline Advisor and how we can help.





Phase transfer with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Phase Transfer is a process that takes place for children and young people with an EHCP.

What is a new phase of education?

This is defined in regulation 2 of the SEN and Disability Regulations 2014 (the “SEN Regs”) as a transfer from:

- (a) early years education to school;
- (b) infant school to junior school;
- (c) primary school to middle school;
- (d) primary school to secondary school;
- (e) middle school to secondary school; or
- (f) secondary school to a post-16 institution.

Step by step guide of the Phase Transfer process -

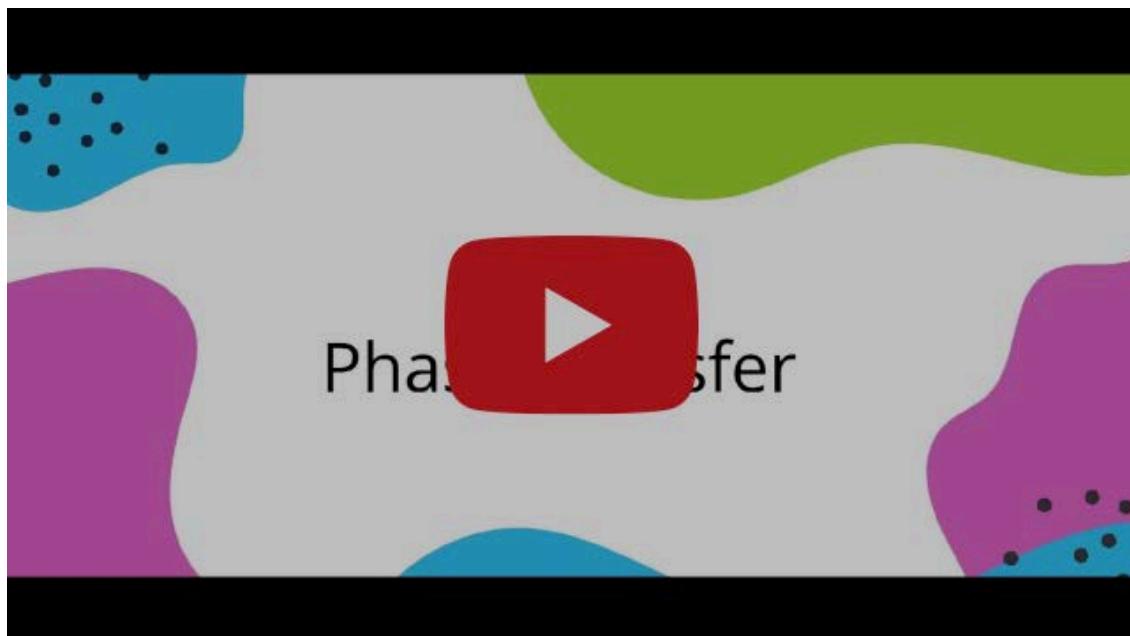
- The process should start no later than the Autumn term of the year before the child or young person is due to move from one phase of education to another.

- The process starts with the LA reviewing the EHCP.
- Following the review LA sends proposed amendments and a copy of the plan (with section I left blank) to the parent or young person.
- The parent/carer or young person has 15 calendar days to have their say about the content of the plan and to request that a particular place of learning is named.

The local authority then issues a final amended plan with a letter giving parents or the young person the right of appeal by the statutory deadlines which are:

- 31st March if the transfer is from secondary school to a post 16 placement
- or 15th February in all other cases

For more information on how to appeal a final EHCP please see our 'Appealing to the SEND Tribunal' resource section on our website.



Phase transfer with an EHCP

Library Drop-in's

We will be at Library's to answer any questions you may have, advice and signposting to further support.

All sessions are subject to change, and any changes will be advertised on our Facebook page. Please be aware these sessions do not offer a private room to talk, we will be based in main areas of the library. As we are not taking bookings, we will do our best to speak to you on a first come, first served basis. The sessions will be restricted to 20 minutes during busy times.

These sessions are informal and friendly, our Advisor's can give you next steps advice about your child's education, SEN Support, EHCP and other SEND processes. We will be in the main areas of the library, just look out for our banner!

Don't forget to follow our Facebook page (just search for Norfolk SENDIASS) so that you can keep up to date with where we will be.

The Engagement and Advice Team also attend a variety of local outreach events.

Find out where you can find us



Norfolk SEND Youth Forum update

This month we invited back researchers from Adapt-Ed, based at the University of Hertfordshire. They returned to provide an update on their research about

food in Special schools, having consulted with the Youth Forum last year. They were able to share how members contributions had impacted their work, and provide an overview of the project and how it has developed.

Our young people have told us many times that they really appreciate this kind of feedback, and it was very interesting to learn more about the project. You too can find out more by listening to a podcast they have produced.

Podcast

The Adapt-Ed project team and Broxbourne SEND Youth Council produced a podcast and a poster. Here is podcast link – School Food for SEND podcast (2025)



We will be staying in contact with this project, and we hope the Youth Forum will make further contributions to their research.

Our meetings are every month online, and we have started to plan our next social activity to take place in March. We welcome new members so please get in touch if you would like to join this brilliant group!

Please take a look at some photos of the Youth Forum in December, when we met in Norwich for Bowling and a meal. This has become something of a tradition for the group; where our members and parent/carers join us to meet up, build relationships, celebrate the work the group does, and of course to get into the Christmas spirit!



CLICK TO REGISTER ONLINE

Engagement and Outreach Update



January has been a busy, bright and positive start to the year for the SENDIASS Engagement and Advice Team!

We've really enjoyed getting back out and about, catching up with families, schools and professionals right across Norfolk, and continuing to offer clear, impartial advice and support to parents, carers and young people with SEND.

Community Groups and Charities

This month we partnered with Family Hubs for two welcoming community sessions: the Shine Coffee Morning in Gorleston and Hopper's SEND Group at Hope Church in Wymondham. Both groups offered relaxed spaces for parents and carers to ask questions, share experiences and access helpful information about SEND support and local services - all while enjoying a lovely cup of tea and biscuits.

We also enjoyed visiting The Hamlet Centre Coffee Morning, where we delivered a short presentation about SENDIASS, followed by supportive conversations with families in a friendly setting.

Schools and Education Engagement

We attended the Open Academy Year 11 Parents' Evening to offer information and advice about SEND processes, school support and next steps. We look forward to returning for future Parents' Evenings this year.

Our team also joined the Inspiration SEND Network Annual Conference, connecting with education professionals to continue important conversations

about SEND support and inclusion.

Partnership Working and Community Events

We took part in the Community Engagement Meeting at St Matthew's Church in Norwich, where we connected with local organisations, learned about the valuable work happening across other services, and shared updates from SENDIASS - strengthening our collective efforts to better support families across Norwich.

In North Norfolk, we attended the Making Sense of SEND event in Sheringham, alongside services from across the county. It was a well-attended and positive day! We supported families by answering questions, providing advice and helping them explore available support.

Finally, we joined the Breckland SEND Sub-Group, where we contributed to discussions about local groups and the support available to families with SEND across the Breckland area.

If you'd like the SENDIASS Engagement and Advice Team to attend an event, group or meeting, please get in touch: nsendiassengagement@norfolk.gov.uk

Coming Up Next Month...

We're excited to be part of the Norwich Science Festival!

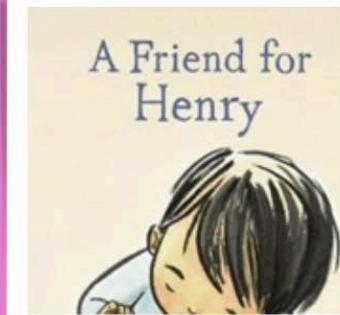
You'll find us in The Snug - a calm, welcoming space where children and young people with SEND can enjoy arts and crafts, or where parents, carers and young people can drop in for information, advice or simply a friendly chat.

Sally, Engagement and Advice Worker

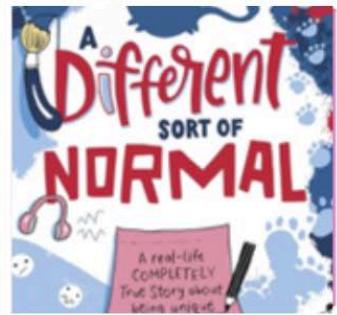
BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS



Talking is not my thing! –
Rose Robbins



A friend for Henry –
Jenn Bailey



A different sort of normal –
Abigail Balfe

The sister in this sibling duo has autism and is non-verbal, but that doesn't stop her from finding creative ways to communicate and share fun moments with her brother. Even though she struggles to speak, she understands everything around her and has plenty of ideas and things to express. Through body language, drawings, gestures, and flash cards, she plays an active role in their life together. Her brother and granny know exactly how to connect with her – whether she's asking for help or lending a hand herself!

Henry really wants to make friends, but it's not easy – and he's getting frustrated. From classmates waving in his face to moving things he's carefully placed, nothing seems to go as planned. Sometimes, people even get cross when he's just trying to be kind. With time, Henry discovers that friendship is possible – and worth the effort. This gentle story explores the challenges of understanding others, inspired by the author's own experience. While autism isn't mentioned, the struggle to connect is universal, and young readers will find hope and reassurance in Henry's journey.

Discover the true story of growing up autistic and undiagnosed, and the challenges of navigating a world that expected her to be 'typical.' Told with honesty and humour, Abigail reflects on her childhood and teenage years through the lens of a later diagnosis at 33. She shares how she experiences the world, what she finds confusing, and the strategies that help her cope. After years of trying to fit in, her diagnosis gave her the freedom to embrace individuality – and celebrate differences.

Books are a great resource from local libraries in Norfolk. They can help and support children and young people with SEND, whilst creating a safe space for family communication. There are many books that can support this. Below are a few examples, and you can discover even more for free, from your local library.

If you are a professional seeking information:

- You are welcome to explore **all publicly available guidance and resources** on our website.
- These cover SEND law, rights, processes, and support available to families.

If you need further support or have a query:

Email us at:

norfolksendiass@norfolk.gov.uk

We will always respond as soon as possible.

Professional Feedback

If you are a professional and would like to share feedback with us, please complete this short form:

 [Feedback Form](#)

Your feedback helps us improve our service for children, young people, families, and professionals across Norfolk.



contact *For families
with disabled children*

Contact provide 1-1 telephone appointments with a family support adviser for parent/carers looking for a listening ear, reassurance and practical and emotional support. Appointments are 45 minutes long and it's important that you book a time and date that you know you will be free to talk, are somewhere that you feel safe and is quiet so that you can get the most out of the time you have.

If you would like to use Contact's listening ear service, please follow the link below to

book an appointment.

[Listening Ear | Contact](#)



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