



SENDIASS UPDATE

We're delighted to share some positive updates from the SENDIASS team this month.

We're excited to welcome Frances, our new SENDIASS Advisor, who has already thrown herself into her training with great enthusiasm. As part of this, you may start to see Frances at our library drop-ins and outreach sessions, where she'll be learning alongside the team and beginning to meet families and professionals.

Congratulations are in order for Emma, one of our Engagement and Advice Team, as she has now successfully completed her training. Emma is currently out and about independently, meeting with families, children and young people, as well as professionals, across our outreach sessions and library drop-ins. This marks an important milestone, and we're delighted that Emma is now able to offer support directly within the community.

We know that family life can be busy and that plans sometimes change. If you find that you no longer need a scheduled appointment, we'd really appreciate it if you could let us know as soon as possible. At the moment, we have a high demand for our service and there are wait times for

appointments. We've had several occasions where appointments have been missed or cancelled at the last minute, which means we're not able to offer that time to another family who may be waiting for support. Wherever you can, please try to give at least 24 hours' notice if you need to cancel or rearrange. This small step helps us reuse appointments and make sure support is available to as many families as possible. We completely understand that unexpected things do happen, and we're grateful for your help and understanding in working with us to support everyone who needs our service.

We'd also like to remind you that the SEND Reform consultation is currently open and provides an important opportunity for parent/carers and professionals to have their voices heard about the future of SEND support. The consultation closes on 18 May, and we strongly encourage you to take part and share your views. [SEND reform: putting children and young people first - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#)

We're also continuing to gather testimonials from parents, carers, young people and professionals. These voices are incredibly powerful in showing the real-world difference SENDIASS makes. They help us demonstrate to decision makers - 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. If you'd like to share feedback, please email us at norfolksendiass@norfolk.gov.uk or add it to our pinboard here [Feedback and parent/carer pinboard | Norfolk SENDIASS](#)

Thank you, as always, for your continued engagement and support.

Niamh Keane, SENDIASS Manager

ADVISOR updates

Our advisors have put together some commonly asked questions and information. You can find out more in our [information zone and resources](#) on our website.

ADVISOR UPDATES David Bingham, SENDIASS Advisor



We support families with children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where a child has been, or is at risk of, permanent exclusion, or if the education, health or social care provisions no longer describes the child.

An early review of an EHCP can be requested in those circumstances.

Although an EHCP must be reviewed at least once a year, an early review can be requested at any time. However, the local authority does not have to agree to hold one. If an early review is agreed, it must follow the same process as an annual review.

To request an early review, you should contact your EHCP Co-ordinator and explain why you feel it is needed. It is also important to keep the place of learning informed and let them know you have made this request. If the local authority refuses an early review, there is no right of appeal, but you can ask for a reassessment of needs, gather further evidence, or consider making a formal complaint through the local authority's compliments and complaints process.



Sally Bailey, SENDIASS Engagement and Advice Worker



While we have been out and about across Norfolk this month, we've spoken to several families of children and young people with EHCPs who are unsure about when they can appeal the contents or placement of an EHCP to the SEND Tribunal. The EHCP process has many stages, so it's completely normal to feel uncertain about when the Right of Appeal actually applies.

So, when exactly do you gain the Right of Appeal?

1) When the first final EHCP is issued

You gain the Right of Appeal as soon as you receive the first final EHCP, and you have 2 months to begin the appeals process.

2) Following an Annual or Early Annual Review of the EHCP

The Local Authority (LA) must send a decision letter to you within 4 weeks of the Annual or Early Annual Review to say if they will maintain, amend or cease the EHC plan.

If the LA decide to maintain or cease the EHC plan, you gain the right of appeal immediately from the decision letter, and you have 2 months to start the appeals process.

If the LA decide to amend the EHC plan, you will gain the right of appeal when the final amended plan is issued. This must happen within 12 weeks of the review meeting. If you disagree with the final amended EHCP, you then have 2 months from receiving it to start the appeals process.



ADVISOR UPDATES Amy-Lou Mulligan, SENDIASS Advisor



We have been supporting a number of families who have submitted phase transfer appeals and are unhappy with the dates that they have received for their tribunal hearing.

In this situation, you can use a SEND7/ Request for Change form. A SEND7 form is something you can use if you feel your appeal needs to be heard sooner. For example, if your child's needs are urgent or their current situation isn't working, you can explain this on the form and ask the Tribunal to bring the hearing date forward.

You don't need to use complicated language—just clearly describe what's happening, how it affects your child, and why waiting longer would make things harder for them. The Tribunal will then look at your reasons and decide whether an earlier date can be offered.

You can find a link to the SEND7 here: [Request for change: Form SEND7 - GOV.UK](#)



ADVISOR UPDATES Imogen Pagendam, SENDIASS Advisor



We have recently supported several families who were unsure whether a school can request that parents or carers collect their child when they become dysregulated in the educational setting.

The answer is no.

A school cannot ask a parent or carer to take their child home to "cool off," or because staff feel they cannot meet their needs. This practice is unlawful and is considered an illegal suspension.

The only circumstances in which a place of learning can ask you to collect your child are:

- when your child is unwell, or
- when the school has issued a formal suspension or permanent exclusion.

If you are ever unsure about your rights or need guidance, we are here to help.



Family Support (Early help)

Early Help provides support to families as soon as challenges start to emerge, helping to stop difficulties from becoming bigger. It is available to families with children and young people up to 18, or up to 25 for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Support can include practical help with day-to-day challenges, parenting advice, help with emotional wellbeing, and support around issues such as finances, housing, or concerns about a child's wellbeing. Early Help is designed to build on family strengths and does not require a formal social care referral.

In Norfolk, support is offered through **Family Hubs**, giving families access to advice, groups, workshops, and Early Help professionals online, in the community, or at local centres.

Families can ask for Early Help directly through Norfolk County Council. Find out more or request support here:

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/40407/Early-help-for-children-and-families>

What is Early Help?

Early Help is support offered to families as soon as challenges start to emerge.

It helps prevent difficulties from becoming bigger and ensures families get the right support at the right time.

It's available for:

- 👤 Any family with a child or young person up to 18
- ♿ Or up to 25 with SEND


Norfolk
SENDIASS
Information, Advice
and Support Service

How Early Help helps

Early Help can offer:

- ★ Practical support for day-to-day challenges
- ★ Advice around routines, behaviour & parenting
- ★ Support with health or emotional wellbeing
- ★ A safe space to talk and feel listened to
- ★ Access to services without a social care referral

Support builds on your family's strengths, helping create positive and lasting change.




Who Early Help supports

Early Help can support parents and carers with:

- 🏠 Housing
- 💰 Finances
- 🧠 Mental health
- 👶 Concerns about a child's wellbeing

These things can impact family life — Early Help is there to make things easier.




How to ask for Early Help

Families can request Early Help directly through Norfolk County Council.

Early Help professionals will work with you to:

- ◆ Explore what's going well
- ◆ Identify what's challenging
- ◆ Plan next steps
- ◆ Provide one worker or a team depending on your needs

Request support here:
Early help for children and families – Norfolk County Council





Library Drop-in's and outreach

The Library drop-in 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.

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.

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

Take a look at our online calendar to check where you can find us!

Find out where you can find us



Throughout April, the Engagement and Advice Team have been busy out and about across Norfolk, attending schools, community groups, events and library drop-ins. We've had the pleasure of meeting so many fantastic families, children and young people, and it's been great to chat, listen and offer information, advice and support in a wide range of welcoming spaces. Below is a snapshot of what we have been up to this month.

Teen Agency Event:

We were delighted to attend the Teen Agency event at Diss High School, a fantastic day focused on helping young people learn about the support available to them locally, particularly around mental health and wellbeing. We set up a SENDIASS information stand alongside an interactive activity designed to help students think about what supports their learning in school and what can sometimes prevent them from accessing the help they need. This activity encouraged meaningful conversations, giving students the opportunity to talk with us, ask questions, and learn more about how SENDIASS can support them. We spoke with many children and young people throughout the day, making it a valuable opportunity to engage directly and hear their views.



SEND Youth Voice Day:

We were very excited to be part of the SEND Youth Voice Day at County Hall. The aim of the day was to give young people with SEND the opportunity to share their views and ideas on how their experiences, and the information available to them, can be improved. Six young people attended and took part in a range of fun and interactive activities, sharing thoughtful and honest feedback. As a thank you for volunteering their time and contributions, each young person received a £20 gift voucher. A further Youth Voice Day will be taking place on 29th May at County Hall. If you are a young person with SEND, aged 11-25, or know someone who may be interested, they would be very welcome to join us for the next one.

“Now That’s What I call Autism”

Event:

We really enjoyed meeting and talking with many families at the *“Now That’s What I Call Autism”* event at The Forum. This exciting annual event, run by ASD Helping, is a vibrant celebration of autistic people, culture and creativity. It was fantastic to be part of such a positive and inclusive day. If you missed it this year, be sure to look out for it again next year!

Elective Home Education Event:

We were delighted to take part in the Elective Home Education event at County Hall, run by the Elective Home Education Team. It was a fantastic opportunity to have conversations with families who are already home educating, as well as those exploring whether home education might be the right option for them.

Parent and Carer Support

We were pleased to attend the parent/carers support group run by KIDS Charity at the Viking Centre (held fortnightly on Wednesdays). We delivered a short presentation explaining the SENDIASS service, the advice and support we offer, and how families can access us. It was a lovely opportunity to meet parents and carers, answer questions in an informal setting, and share a cup of tea while discussing individual concerns.

We also supported parents/carers this month by visiting the parent café at Watlington Primary School, connecting with SEND groups held at Thetford Family Hub, and Little Birds in North Lopham, and were pleased to be part of the marketplace event at Ingoldisthorpe Primary School.

Coming Up Next Month

We've got lots to look forward to in May! ☀️

- Come and see us at Making Sense of SEND in Dereham on 21st May
- We will be attending the Games Festival in the Forum on 26th and 27th May (we will be in *The Snug!*)
- If you are a young person with SEND, aged 11-25, you are welcome to join us for the Youth Voice Day at County Hall on 29th May. To find out more click on the link below:

[SEND Youth Voice Day - Norfolk Schools and Learning Providers - Norfolk County Council](#)



What is an Engagement and Advisor Worker within SENDIASS

Book Recommendation

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 is an example and you can discover even more for free, from your local library.

Imogen Pagendam, SENDIAS Advisor

BOOK

RECOMMENDATION



When Bobby gets distracted, he starts to float. Everyone tries to help him, but there are so many sights and sounds and smells which draw his attention away from everyday things. Bobby would like to concentrate like his friends, but it's very hard, so his family and friends come up with all sorts of clever plans. But a string tied around Bobby's ankle just makes him feel empty inside.

In this uplifting story, Bobby's friends and family might just learn that the best way to understand Bobby is to think a bit like him. This is a positive fable that celebrates the value of neurodivergence.

Imogen Pagendam, SENDIASS Advisor

SEND Youth Voice Day

Norfolk County Council want to hear from children and young people with SEND about how their experiences and information for them can be improved.

SEND Youth Voice Days take place in the school holidays and the next one is on Friday 29 May, 10am-3pm at County Hall. Lunch is provided and travel expenses can be reimbursed.

As a thank you for giving up their time, those attending will receive a £20 gift voucher of their choice for each workshop attended.

Sally our Engagement and Advice Worker will be supporting at this Youth Day so if any young people would like to attend but would like to talk to someone first please email our nsendiassengagement@norfolk.gov.uk



SEND Youth Voice Day



Friday 29 May 2026, 10am to 3pm at County Hall

Come and give it a go!

- We want to hear from children and young people with SEND about how your experiences and information can be improved.
- We are looking for young people aged 11-25 to take part.
- We value your time and you will receive a £20 thank you voucher of your choice for each workshop attended.



**We need your input to make positive changes.
Your voice matters!**



For any enquiries, contact the team on send@norfolk.gov.uk
Scan QR code to sign up and find out more.



Flourish Awards 2026 Nominations Open!

Nominations are now open for the Flourish Awards 2026, celebrating the incredible people, projects, teams and organisations making a real difference to

help children and young people across Norfolk to flourish.

We're especially proud to share that the Norfolk SEND Youth Forum has been closely involved in the Flourish Awards process over the last few years. Our young people have supported with shortlisting nominations, ensuring that children and young people's voices are central to recognising what truly makes a difference.

Even more excitingly, the Norfolk SEND Youth Forum were nominated for the Flourish Awards in 2024 and 2025, reaching the finals on both occasions — a fantastic achievement that reflects the commitment, impact and passion of our young people and the work they do to represent SEND voices across Norfolk.

We know the Flourish Awards are a fantastic event and opportunity to celebrate those who have helped make a difference for children and young people across Norfolk so if you know someone, a team, or a project that deserves recognition you can nominate as many times as you like across a range of categories. Nominations close on 29 May 2026, so don't miss the chance to celebrate those helping Norfolk's children and young people thrive.

Make a nomination today: [Nominations now open for the Flourish Awards 2026 "](#)

A dark blue banner with a yellow and pink graphic in the top left corner. The Flourish Awards 2026 logo is centered, featuring a stylized figure in blue, yellow, and pink. Below the logo, the text reads: "Visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/flourishawards2026 to nominate the people or projects helping children and young people in Norfolk Flourish".

flourish
AWARDS
2026

Visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/flourishawards2026
to nominate the people or projects helping
children and young people in Norfolk Flourish

Early needs and support mapping project

A new digital tool is being developed by health services to help children and young people in Norfolk & Waveney get the right support, at the right time.

The aim is to make it easier for families and professionals to spot needs early, find clear information, and access support quickly. Families' views are shaping the tool so it's practical, easy to use, and focused on what really helps.

Contact: stephanie.summers2@nhs.net



Early Needs and Support Mapping Project

We want to help children and young people in Norfolk and Waveney get the right support, at the right time. To do this we are creating a new digital tool. Children, young people, families, and professionals are helping us design it. We want it to support the real needs of the people who will use it, which is why your ideas are so important.

Why we're doing this?

Families have told us that they want:

- support quickly, without long waits
- clear information about where to get the right help
- support that helps with all areas of their child's wellbeing



What will it do?

The digital tool will be on the Just One Norfolk website. It will help by:

- spotting what a child is good at, and what they need help with, before problems get worse
- matching each child with support that fits their needs
- giving quick and flexible help so families don't have to wait without support
- giving families and professionals confidence in what support is available



When is this happening?

Work has already started. A first version will be ready by April 2027. Children, young people and families will help test and improve it to make sure it's effective and easy to use.

Where it will be used?

It will be used in Norfolk & Waveney first. Then it will be used across the wider East of England Community Health & Care area.

Who is involved?

- children, young people and families
- community and hospital teams
- schools
- colleges
- early years settings
- public health
- local authority and ICB staff
- voluntary and community groups
- digital teams
- Family Hubs.

How are we making this change happen?

We are:

- learning from other areas that use similar tools
- listening to what families tell us they need
- working with clinical staff to make safe, high-quality information



How will we know it's making a difference?

- parents, young people and professionals will say they feel more confident spotting needs and giving help quickly
- all children and families will be able to get the right help without being passed between services or having to tell their story again and again.

Contact: stephanie.summers2@nhs.net

Making Sense of SEND Event

Making Sense of SEND is a free, friendly information and support event for families & professionals

This event brings together over 20 specialist services under one roof, offering face to face access to advice, information, and support.

You will also have the opportunity to:

- Talk to someone face to face who can support you
- Listen to expert-led talks on SEND topics. The morning session talk is about **transition**, and the afternoon session talk is about **types of support available for young people with additional needs aged 18-25**.
- Give feedback and be heard by the EHCP team or SEND advisor.
Bookable on the day
- Take part in children's participation activities giving children and young people the chance to share experiences.

Free refreshments will be available.

Booking Information

To learn more and reserve a place, please visit: www.norfolk.gov.uk/msos

Follow the link on the webpage for either the morning session 10am-12pm with a talk on transition or the afternoon session 12.30pm-3pm with a talk on types of support available for young people with additional needs aged 18-25.

If you would like to attend both sessions, please book a ticket for both events.



Making Sense of SEND

In person free, friendly information and support about SEND for families and professionals.



**Thursday 21st May 2026
Dereham Memorial Hall, NR19 1AD
10am-12pm and 12.30pm-3pm**

Are you looking for support for your child /young person with SEND and your family?

- Listen to expert-led talks on SEND topics.
- A chance to give feedback and be heard by the EHCP team or SEND advisor. Bookable on the day.
- Speak directly with more than 20 services and get personalised, face-to-face advice all in one place.
- Children's participation activities giving children and young people the chance to share experiences.

Find out more and book your place:



www.norfolk.gov.uk/msos





Norfolk SEND Youth Forum update

In this month's meeting we had ten young people attend. The group agreed to a Professional consultation with Hannah Robinson from NCC, relating to the government's White Paper on the proposed SEND reforms.

The government are consulting on proposals to reform the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) system.

The consultation document explains the changes they plan to make and asks for comments from everyone with an interest.

The changes aim to improve help and support for children and young people with SEND across the 0 to 25 years system.

Hannah asked members three questions; below are the questions and a small sample of members' responses based on their lived experiences.

1. What helps you feel happy and safe in your place of learning?

- A quiet space that's separate from everywhere else, especially one where you aren't questioned or patronised to be able to use it!
- adults who know me and can support my needs
- equipment to make things accessible. Teachers explaining things better. Smaller classes, more TA's

2. What are the top 3 things that help you learn?

- small classes with others like me
- recognising I am struggling even when my grades are high
- smaller classes, less noise and more attention to the students!

3. When you last made a move to a new school or college, what support helped you to make it easier?

- lots of practice (Trial visits)

- Meeting teachers in advance/getting tutor profiles before starting with them
- So having teachers that fully understand that autism and ADHD can come in so many different forms is so so important, to also help those kids who aren't diagnosed yet too

If you would like to read all of their feedback you can access minutes of our meetings on the SENDIASS website.

If you would like to respond to the government proposals you can do so by going on the link below!

[SEND reform: putting children and young people first - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#)

Bridget Robinson, Engagement and Advice Worker

[CLICK TO REGISTER ONLINE](#)

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 you can book a [Professional Referral](#) via our website. These are strictly for Professionals. Please be aware as a confidential service we do not discuss individual circumstances without permission.

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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