

## Ambitious for SEND newsletter - June 2022 Edition

Welcome to the summer term edition of our termly Ambitious for SEND newsletter for parents. Currently we ask schools to share this newsletter with parents and we also publish each edition on our Local Offer but by subscribing it means you won't ever miss an issue.

[Subscribe to our newsletter \(external link\)](#). Here are some really good reasons why we think you should!

- It's a great way to stay in touch with what is going on in the local area for young people with SEND
- We know parents are incredibly busy, so we only send these out termly (just 3 a year)
- It takes less than a minute and you can unsubscribe at any time
- Currently, these newsletters are shared through schools and via our Local Offer which means parents may miss them

Please share this with any parents that you think might want to receive this information.

[Read the plain text version of this newsletter, and previous Ambitious for SEND newsletters on the Council website \(external link\)](#).

### Celebrating 50 of Sutton Music Service: Anniversary concert 9 July

Join Sutton Music Service on 8 July as they celebrate their 50th anniversary with two special concerts at the Fairfield Halls in Croydon, featuring their flagship orchestras, bands, and choirs performing a wide range of pieces.

[Find out more about the Anniversary concerts and reserve your tickets \(external link\)](#).

## Help and resources for parents and carers

1-1 Telephone support for parent carers

Contact runs a Listening Ear service for parents and carers:

- Who might be struggling emotionally and looking for strategies to help them cope
- Who need to talk to someone who understands the extra challenges that they face and who can point them in the right direction to get the support they need for their family

Contact offer 1-1 telephone appointments with a family support adviser for parent carers looking for a listening ear, reassurance, and practical and emotional support. [Read more about Contact's Listening Ear service \(external link\)](#).

## AFC Crisis Messenger service

The AFC Crisis Messenger text service is a free, confidential, 24/7 text message support service for children and young people as well as parents and carers who are feeling overwhelmed or are struggling to cope.

The service is staffed by trained volunteers who will work with you to take your next steps towards feeling better. Staff can help with issues such as anxiety, worry, panic attacks, bullying and depression and are available to talk at any time of day or night.

If you need support, you can text AFC to 85258.

## SEND Local Offer

The SEND Local Offer is dedicated to providing SEND information and guidance. The website includes information on Education, Health, Social Care and Leisure. It is for children, young people, their families and professionals.

[Join the Sutton Local Offer Facebook page to keep up to date with local SEND news \(external link\).](#)

Sutton Information and Advice Service (SIASS) here to help!

SIASS provides free, impartial, and confidential information, advice, and support to families of children and young people with a special educational need or disability. [Visit the SIASS website to learn more \(external link\).](#)

[Find out how SIASS support parents \(external link\)](#) or [read their latest newsletter \(external link\).](#)

## What is a Next Steps Meeting?

Next Steps Meetings follow decisions not to initiate an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA), or not to issue an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). They are an opportunity for families and professionals to come together to build support support around the child or young person in a positive way.

They build on what is already working well for children, and look at what else could be done too. There is new guidance available which has been developed from feedback from parents/carers and professionals.

[View the guidance on Next Steps Meetings \(external link\).](#)

## Autism support and resources

### Parent autism resources

- Cognus can provide one-off Understanding Diagnosis sessions for school-aged children and young people, together with pre-recorded workshops for parents and carers. [Register your interest for a one-off Understanding Diagnosis session \(external link\).](#)
- [View Autism Parent/Carers workshops \(YouTube external link\).](#)
- [View Top tips to support autistic young people \(YouTube external link\).](#)

[Find other films from Cognus on YouTube \(external link\)](#)

### Autism advice sessions

Cognus runs Autism Advice sessions for parents and carers, and half-termly sessions for schools and professionals. Sutton parents can sign up for a 1-to-1 advice session to talk about their young person and get some new ideas and strategies. Sessions are monthly, and you will be given a 30 minute time slot at the next available time. To request a slot, email [theautismservice@cognus.org.uk](mailto:theautismservice@cognus.org.uk)

### Autism workshops for parents and carers

Cognus' next termly parent and carer workshop is on Monday 18 July from 6pm - 7.30pm, with just a few spaces still available.

Topic: Understanding Emotions, covering:

- Difficulties with identifying emotions
- Strategies to support, such as the Zones of Regulation

[Register your interest in Autism workshop \(external link\).](#)

### UK's first online platform for autistic young people

Ambitious about Autism is hugely excited to have recently launched the Ambitious Youth Network, a safe and moderated online space for autistic young people aged 16 to 25 to help them understand their autistic identity and reduce isolation and loneliness that many feel.

[Find out more about the Ambitious Youth Network \(external link\).](#)

### Cognus' Autism service

Cognus is commissioned by the London Borough of Sutton, to provide education services to mainstream schools and specialist education providers in Sutton. They deliver a wide range of 26 services – from Admissions and Music, to SEND and Therapies.

The Cognus' Autism Service s made up of Rebecca Duffus and Kemi Awooner (who work jointly across the Autism and Paving the Way teams). They work to support young people of school age, and the schools and families around them. They help make sure there is access to information about autism and strategies to support children both in school and at home.

[Learn more about Cognus' Autism Service \(external link\).](#)

## Surveys and consultations

### SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper

The government has published their ideas on how to improve SEND processes in England. They want to hear the views of parents/carers, young people and children. [Read the Paper and tell the Government what you think \(external link\).](#)

### Consultation on the law relating to reviews of EHC plans launched

The Department for Education has launched a consultation, 'Reviews of Education, Health and Care plans: proposed timescales', on the actions that a local authority should have to take if it proposes to amend an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan following a review meeting. They are seeking the views of parents and carers on whether local authorities should:

- \* Have an additional four weeks after review meetings to finalise any changes they propose to a plan; and
- \* Have to circulate material for a review meeting a week earlier than currently.

[Take part in the consultation which is open until 12 August \(external link\).](#)

### Research into screening for psychological needs of children - take part

Are you a parent or carer of an adolescent and interested in learning more about your child's psychological needs and how to support them?

Researchers at University College London (UCL) and the Anna Freud Centre are using a questionnaire to find out more about the psychological needs of adolescents.

[Read about the questionnaire and how to take part \(external link\).](#)

### MENCAP's Big Learning Disability Survey

Mencap would like to invite people with a learning disability to take part in their 2022 Big Learning Disability Survey.

The survey was fully co-produced by people with a learning disability and asks questions on topics they say are important to them, including healthcare, discrimination, mental health, and money and support. MENCAP hopes that the findings will help us all to provide better support to people with a learning disability.

[Take part in the 2022 Big Learning Disability Survey \(external link\).](#)

## Information and other support

Summer Holiday Activities (HAF) programme coming soon

Our Summer Holiday Activities programme is coming! Eligible families will imminently receive a letter confirming they can apply.

[Visit HAF for details about what's on, where and when and how to book! \(external link\).](#)

Tax-free childcare help for parents and carers

Tax-free childcare is available to parents and carers of children up to 11, or 16 if they are disabled.

[Find out the support available to you, even if you are self-employed \(external link\).](#)

Cognus' Family Focus newsletter

Please check out Cognus' latest Family Focus newsletter, packed with information for families this summer term. [Subscribe to receive future editions! \(external link\).](#)

Children's Centres activity programme for under 5s

[Take a look at the Summer 2022 Activity Programme for families with children under 5 \(external link\).](#)

Sleep deprivation - resources for helping children with additional needs to sleep

- Scope's free Sleep Right Service - a free online and telephone support service that helps parents and carers of disabled children to improve their child's sleep. [Visit the Sleep Right Service \(external link\).](#)
- Scope's Sleep Right Podcasts cover topics such as relaxation, bedtime anxiety, sleep foods and more. [Listen to the Sleep Right Podcasts \(external link\).](#)
- [Read Sleep Charity's Early Help Sleep booklet \(external link\).](#)
- [Find useful guidance in Contact's Helping your Child to Sleep booklet \(external link\).](#)
- [View Scope's Help your Disabled Child to Sleep information \(external link\).](#)

## Other News

Pupils from Sherwood Park attend Duke of Edinburgh Award Celebrations at Buckingham Palace

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Four former students of Sherwood Park School celebrated completing their Bronze, Silver and Gold Duke of Edinburgh awards in the gardens of Buckingham Palace. [Read about the celebration here \(external link\).](#)

## Parent Carer Forum

Get involved in your local Parent Carer Forum

The [Sutton Parent Carer Forum](#) organises a variety of activities and events to support families of children and young people with SEND across the borough, in partnership with a variety of different organisations.

[Learn more about Sutton Parent Carer Forum \(external link\).](#)

## End of year surgeries

An opportunity to discuss individual and specific issues in a private meeting with the professionals. [Read about the surgery on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022.](#)

(Please email to book your individual appointment with any of the panel. Appointments do need to be booked in advance.

suttonparentsforum@outlook.com.

## Preparation for Adulthood

[Find out about Workstart Supported internships and Project Search \(external link\).](#)

## Supported Internships

Supported internships are aimed at young people aged 16 to 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), providing them with life experiences needed to gain paid employment. Places still available for two programmes starting in September 2022. [Find out more about Supported Internships \(external link\).](#)

## Independent Travel Training

A small number of schools and colleges have been taking part in a pilot to offer independent travel training to pupils in Sutton - delivered by school staff who know the children and young people best! Read more about it here.

## Subscribe to Ambitious for SEND

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