

# SENCOMMS

UPDATES FROM WALSTALL'S SEND SERVICES

SUMMER 2023

**Hello and welcome to our Summer Term SENCOMMS!**

*For our final newsletter of the academic year, we have lots of exciting things to share with you around SEND and Inclusion within Walsall Local Authority!*

## TEAM NEWS

We are very happy to confirm we have recruited **8 new SEN Casework Officers** who will be joining us after the summer break. We had an excellent cohort of candidates interview for the position and the successful candidates really were the cream of the crop! Keep your eyes peeled for them soon. We are very excited for them all to join our fabulous team.

**Stephen Davis** our EHCP Team manager has decided to move on from Walsall Council. We wish him all the best for the future. We are pleased to share that **Claire Bancroft** will act as interim Team manager

We pleased to inform you that **Rachael Beards** has been successful in gaining the position of SEND services manager. Rachael will oversee the Educational Psychology Team, the Early Years Team, our Inclusion service, and our Inclusion Team. We would like to say a massive congratulations to Rachael on gaining this role and we know that she will be fantastic!

**Amy Isaacson** is our SEND Local Offer coordinator and Engagement Lead, who has moved over to the SEND and Inclusion Team from Early Help. Amy's key role is to oversee the coordination of our SEND Local Offer website, including the current redesign, and to lead on all engagement and participation in relation to SEND with parents, carers, children, and young people. Amy is excited to become part of the team

# EHC ASSESSMENT TIMELINESS

We are continuing to improve statutory assessments. In June we made 100% of our decisions to assess within the statutory 6 week timeframe and we issued **83.1% of new EHCP's within 20 weeks**. This is above the national average of 50.7%.

Despite this wonderful progress, the EHCP team are continuing to work hard to make further improvements and our current focus is on annual reviews.



## FACE Parent Carer Forum

Our Parent Carer Forum FACE Walsall have been working hard with us this term, helping to coproduce services in Walsall for children and young people with SEND.

They are currently recruiting for new committee members to join them in working with us to make a difference and share their lived experiences. If you would be interested in joining them, please get in touch through [facewalsall@gmail.com](mailto:facewalsall@gmail.com)

We would like to thank FACE for all their hard work and support over the last few months.



## Update from the Educational Psychology

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) continues to operate in a challenging landscape due to a national shortage of trained Educational Psychologists. Despite this, the EPS is delighted to share that we have appointed a Senior EP and Specialist Senior EP who will be joining us in the autumn term. Dr Jane Linton leaves us as she retires at the end of summer term after over 18 years of working as an EP in Walsall. We wish her well as she starts a new chapter of her life.

The EPS is also very pleased to share that we have recruited 4 colleagues into newly created Assistant EP roles from September. The roles are linked to the Mental Health Support Teams project which aims to provide early intervention in mental health and wellbeing through schools. The assistants will be supporting strategic Whole School Approaches to mental wellbeing as well as supporting other EPS activities.

# Calling SENCOs

We are looking for **SENCOs** to join our Local Offer SENCO working Group starting in the Autumn term, please contact [LocalOffer@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:LocalOffer@walsall.gov.uk) or [amy.isaacson@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:amy.isaacson@walsall.gov.uk)

**SENCOs please email to join up to our SENCO forums [inclusion@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:inclusion@walsall.gov.uk)**

## Parents and carers - Please get involved

We are looking for parents who would like to take part in a range of different groups such as Quality Assurance, Inclusion and the SEND Local Offer.

We are also looking for parents and carers of children or young people with an EHCP who would be willing to tell us their journey and help us learn from your experiences .

Please contact [amy.isaacson@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:amy.isaacson@walsall.gov.uk) for more information

## Working Together Coffee Morning

Come along to our coffee morning in collaboration with SENDIAS  
Wednesday 16th August 10.30am  
Manor Farm Community Association



## Young People...

We would like to invite any young people 11-25 who have SEND to come along to our young person's group.

**My Place youth centre on a Monday evening at 4:30-6:30.**

We discuss all things related to SEND services and the Local Offer and share ideas on how to make provision and services better in Walsall.

For more information about our next session please email

[amy.isaacson@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:amy.isaacson@walsall.gov.uk)



## Young Person's Group

Are you a young person aged 11-25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) living in Walsall?

Would you like to have your say on the services for young people with SEND?

If the answer to these questions is "YES!" then come along and join the **Young Person's Group** where we discuss the services in Walsall for Young People with SEND, including the SEND Local Offer website, activities, education, health services and much more.

You will also have the opportunity to attend meetings and represent young people of Walsall.

If you would like to join the group and to find out more contact: Amy on 07787274566 or [amy.isaacson@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:amy.isaacson@walsall.gov.uk)

Food and drinks will be provided at the group (you decide what we order!)

 Walsall Council



## Supported Internships with Endless Possibilities

Are you, or do you know a young person between the ages of 16-24 who have an Education Health Care Plan and would be interested in a Supported Internship work-based placement?

Walsall Council are please to share that we will be offering these placements both within and outside the council. For more information call 01922 655678 or email

[learninganddevelopment@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:learninganddevelopment@walsall.gov.uk)



  
Endless Possibilities

### Supported Internship Programme

Walsall Council has made a commitment to support young people aged 16 to 24 years old with learning disabilities and/or autism with an EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan, to be able to access opportunities within and outside of the council. Specifically we will work with our line managers to create opportunities across the organisation for Supported Internships.

Supported Internships are work-based learning placements. The aim is for a young person to secure a job at the end of the placement. Placements should last between 6 to 12 months and normally would be at least 20 hours per week. There could be opportunities to rotate between work placements. This is unpaid work.

Supported Internships will:

- Help young people gain qualifications
- Help improve Maths and English to be able to use them in real life
- Help develop confidence in own ability to perform successfully at work
- Increase job opportunities and widen social networks

To give young people the very best chance of accessing/competing for opportunities, support has been developed and includes the below. It is important to state that support will be person centred and therefore bespoke, ensuring the very best outcomes for the young people concerned.

- A visit to the Council
- Shorter work taster sessions
- A guaranteed one to one interview
- A bespoke work experience placement - timeframe will be developed to suit the individual
- Access to a wide range of learning opportunities including Customer Service, Resilience Training, Health and Safety, Safeguarding Awareness

In addition to the above, during the work placement period, the young person will be coached/mentored not only by their own Job Coach but also by experienced officers within the Council's Learning and Development Team as well as officers from the wider Council Directorates.

Interested in finding out more about Supported Internships?

- If you are a young person aged 16 to 24 years old with learning disabilities and/or autism with an EHC Plan you are eligible for a Supported Internship so please contact us to find out the next steps.
- If you know someone who might be interested in or who would benefit from a Supported Internship then please contact us to discuss the referral process.
- If you are a Team/line manager within the Council and are able to offer a work placement opportunity then please contact us to discuss the programme requirements.

For further information and general enquiries please contact the Learning and Development team on Tel: 01922 655678 or email: [learninganddevelopment@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:learninganddevelopment@walsall.gov.uk)

 Walsall Council

# You said... we did...

Parents are requesting assessments from an Educational Psychologist as they feel needs have changed but some schools are saying it isn't possible.

We will always reassess when needed. We are implementing new training for all SENCOS  
New EP's are joining Walsall

Email queries are not being responded to in some areas in a timely manner

There has been delays answering main switch board number and sometimes calls being disconnected.

We are setting up a communication system which will work via locality emails. This will ensure emails are always answered. We have a duty rota to return all calls.

## Contact us

Jude , Rachael and everyone from the SEND teams wish you all a lovely and restful summer holiday.

Please remember we are here all through the summer so please do not hesitate to get in touch

[sen@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:sen@walsall.gov.uk)



01922 652871

