



Trafford Parents Forum



# Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Communication and Engagement Group Report

2019/2020



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## What is the SEND Communication and Engagement Group?

The SEND Communication and Engagement group plans and coordinates an ongoing programme of engagement with children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and their parents and carers.

The group's remit includes:

- Involving the individual child or young person, and their parent carers, in decision making processes.
- Supporting SEND families and those who work with them to make full use of the Local Offer to access help, advice and signpost to services.
- Communicating with children and young people, and their parents or carers, to ensure that they are clear about assessment processes and the criteria used to make decisions.
- Engaging with children and young people, and their parents and carers, to inform decisions about the strategic commissioning of services.

The group comprises of representatives from:

- Commissioning Team
- Complex and Additional Needs teams
- Educational Psychology Service
- EHC Team
- Family Information Service
- SEN Advisory Service
- Trafford Parents Forum
- Trafford SENDIASS
- Youth Advocacy

### SEND Local Offer on the Trafford Directory

Trafford Directory is the single online platform for publishing information on services, activities, events and community groups in our area together with advice and guidance on how to access support. The directory is managed by the Family Information Service and includes the SEND Local Offer.



In 2019/2020 there were 43,322 of page views on the SEND Local Offer, **7,467 (21%) more page views than the previous year.**

We co-produced a newly structured website that was launched in April 2019. All pages comply with government digital standards and content has been audited against requirements of SEND Code of practice. Content is continually reviewed and is a standing item on the agenda at our meetings.

Trafford's SEND Local Offer was said to have achieved a high level of compliance by Mott McDonald during an unannounced SEND Local Offer support audit. The tailored content for parent carers, young people and professionals were specifically highlighted as an example of best practice.

We have developed a programme of professional engagement to support Health and Social Care teams to use the Trafford Directory and SEND Local Offer. This including delivering training through the FIS outreach service on how to use the Directory and get the best use of the functions available to confidently support families.

Since we started this programme at the beginning of the year we have delivered the programme to 26 individual health and social care teams across the council.

Professionals who have received the training to date have been particularly keen to learn about functionality such as the Browsealoud screen reader and translation software, the sharing of shortlists and SMS messages. They have been especially interested in learning more about specific SEND services such as Short Breaks.

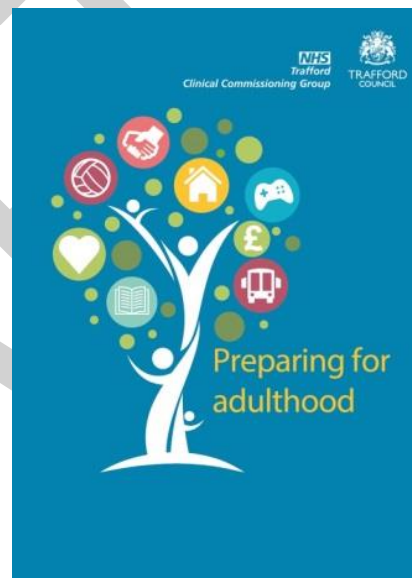
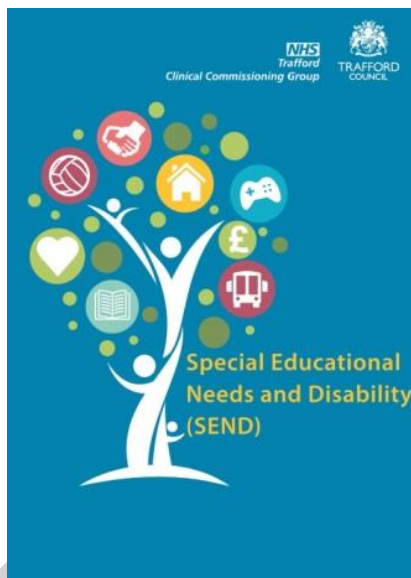
We have been responsible for creating a dedicated hub for Autism which can be accessed via the Local Offer or directly at [www.trafforddirectory.co.uk/autism](http://www.trafforddirectory.co.uk/autism). Similarly a hub for Trafford's Early Help Offer can be accessed via the Trafford

Directory Children and Families area or directly at [www.trafforddirectory.co.uk/earlyhelp](http://www.trafforddirectory.co.uk/earlyhelp)

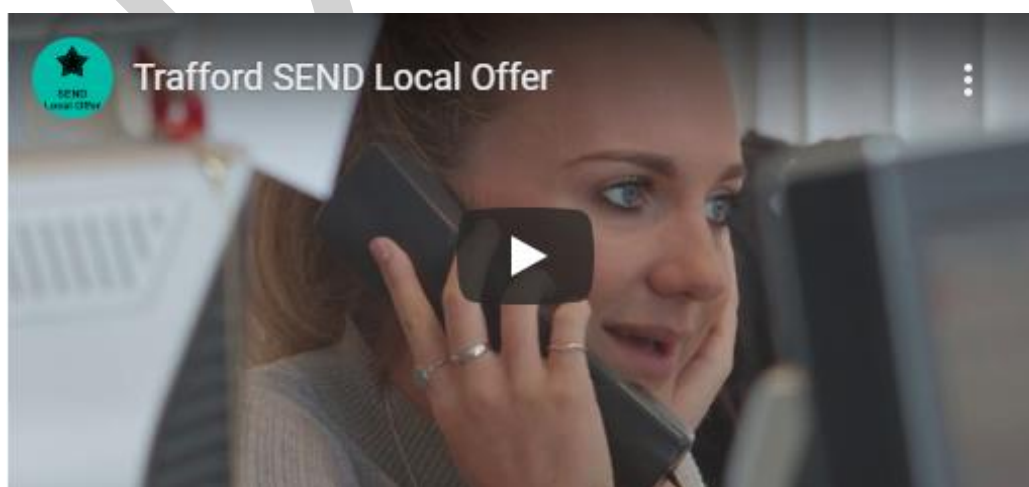
## Branding

A strong, identifiable Trafford SEND and Preparing for Adulthood brand has been developed. The new branding has been used to produce a suite of marketing materials intended to promote the SEND Local Offer.

The leaflets are included in all correspondence to families from Education Health and Care (EHS) Assessment Team and Special Educational Needs Advice Service (SENAS) Family Information Service (FIS) and SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS). Information is also included the children's health red book distributed by health visiting teams and information packs are available on request to all multiagency teams.



## SEND Local Offer Video



In conjunction with a local media company we designed a number of promotional videos aimed at parent carers, children and young people to promote the SEND

Local Offer website. The Family Information Service were instrumental in delivering outreach activity and managing the social media marketing campaigns to promote the videos. The video has been presented to SENCO Forums and schools, who are encouraged to embed this on their websites.

## **Outreach activity**

The group provides a forum for identifying opportunities to engage with parents of children and young people with SEND at community venues and at local support groups during their regular programme of activity.

This has resulted in a wide-ranging programme of outreach activity including:

- Regular attendance at the SENCO forums; Early, years, Primary and Secondary to promote awareness of the Local Offer.
- Training for key stakeholders and professional teams on how to navigate around the Trafford Directory and SEND Local Offer so that they can better support and empower the families they are working with to find and access the services or advice that they need.
- Educational Psychologists delivering workshops to parents of children and young people with SEND. The workshops take place at mainstream schools delivering information on Trafford's Graduated Approach, the SEND Local Offer, the SENDIASS service and Trafford Parents Forum.
- Trafford Parents Forum regularly delivering drop in sessions and SEND surgeries to provide information to families on the Local Offer and to support parents looking for specific information or services.

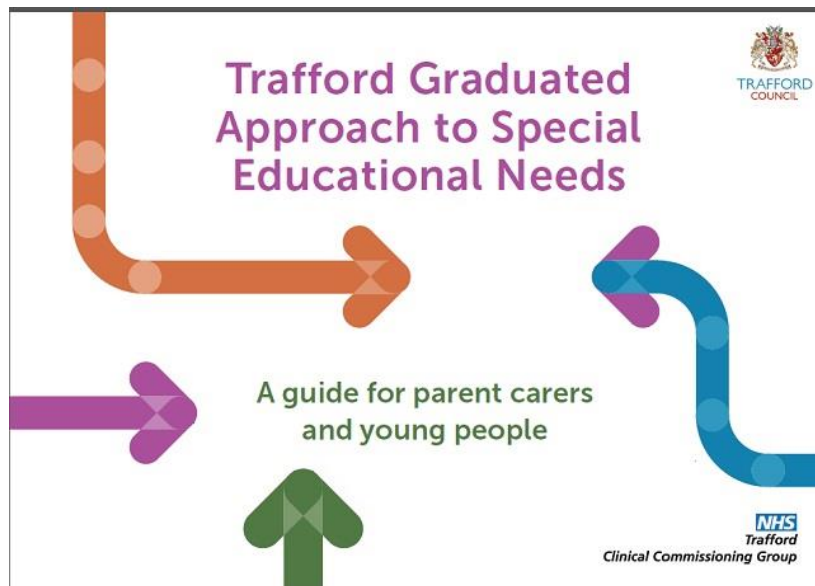
## **SEND Local Offer Advisor**

This role was commissioned through the short breaks review and in conjunction with the SEND Communication and Engagement Group.

The SEND Local Offer Adviser (SLOA) provides advice and guidance, connecting families to appropriate levels of support. With strong links to education, health and care services, the SLOA helps families to understand what is on offer locally and support them to navigate the Trafford Directory website.

The post is crucial for delivering a bespoke brokerage service to families with disabled children, particularly at the universal levels. The SLOA also responsible for managing the allocation process for commissioned short breaks.

## Trafford Graduated Approach Parent Guide



We worked extremely hard to co-produce an easy read guide to Trafford's Graduated Approach which has been exceptionally well received by parent carers, SENCOs and other professionals working with SEND families. It is available as a hard copy or in digital format on the SEND Local Offer.

The FIS are responsible for ensuring the guide is promoted and distributed to families of children on SEND Support, SENCOs and other key professionals and teams.

As a parent carer of an SEN Child I would have found this guide invaluable. It is clear, concise and would suit any reading style with lots of white space and visuals.

I particularly found the EHC Assessment section useful as I think a lot of parents get lost in this process.

**Parent of a young person with SEND**

## The Link Newsletter



# THE LINK

SEND Newsletter



The Link Newsletter is made up of topical articles contributed and written by individual members of the group. The FIS are responsible for bringing the content together and communicating the finished article to families and professionals.

The content is aimed at SEND families and professionals to communicate what support is available, keeping them up to date with what is going on across Trafford in the world of SEND.

It is published termly and includes information and updates about:

- Competitions
- Changes to legislation
- Ideas of things to do
- Parent feedback
- Specialist activities and events
- Support network groups

There is also a topical “In the Spotlight” section in each edition which can be used to showcase a new service or service development.

A registration form is now available on the SEND Local Offer website as a pop-up notification to encourage more people to join the distribution list.

There is currently 500 members signed up to receive the newsletter of which 372 are parent carers and 128 are professionals who are working with families who have a child or young person with SEND.



## Social Media

The group regularly contributes social media content to be included on, FIS, SENDIASS and TPF social media platforms to raise the profile of the groups' activity in support of SEND families in Trafford.

Social media content signposts users to Trafford's SEND Local Offer to find relevant information and support. This could include highlighting a new service, launching a new advice and guidance page or section, providing a quick link to frequently used content such as EHC guides, highlighting video content and publishing the Link Newsletter.

Social media is also used to support campaigns led by the Communication and Engagement Group and other local SEND organisations; and also support awareness campaigns for individual health conditions and disabilities to raise their profile, for example #AutismAwarenessWeek,

Social media is of particular importance in delivering information to young people with SEND, their parent carers and professionals working to support them. These campaigns include:

- Events for young people with SEND such as Let's Talk SEND
- Holiday activities and short breaks
- Opportunities for employment, training and internships.
- Social events such as Funtastic Fridays and Everyone Can gaming sessions
- Training, events and surgeries for parent carers

'The Family Information Service ... Facebook page is a superb and well utilised source giving updates, invitations and competitions which provides in my opinion a great community feel. I look forward to the information given on a daily basis, reminders which are both timely and helpful providing accurate details in a 'nutshell' format! Keep up the good work!'

**Trafford Parent**

## Social media stats

Twitter analysis SENDIASS					
	Tweets	Times seen	New followers	Times profile looked at	Times mentioned by other users
March	50	11,289	17	105	13
April	76	16,411	15	204	7
May	56	11,962	7	97	9

Facebook analysis SENDIASS				
	Number of posts	Times seen	Number who engaged with posts	New followers
March	52	4,962	240	11
April	88	10,003	434	15
May	60	3,308	355	12

Twitter analysis Family Information Service					
	Tweets	Times seen	New followers	Times profile looked at	Times mentioned by other users
March	85	26,297	4	152	106
April	104	37,721	15	262	94
May	128	30,580	8	204	39

Facebook analysis Family Information Service				
	Number of posts	Times seen	Number who engaged with posts	New followers
March	85	25,440	626	25
April	101	48,516	1,590	32
May	134	52,837	1,441	23

Facebook analysis Trafford Parent Forum				
	Closed Group Membership	No of likes	People reached	Posts Shared
Jan/Feb	244	1,043	9,000	125
March/April	284	1,145	5,500	270
May/June	304	1,226	5,500	170

Trafford Children's Rights Service	
SM Platform	Followers
Twitter	321
Instagram	114
Facebook	5
Newsletter subscribers	
Young people	65
Aftercare	44

## Preparing for Adulthood

The group are working on Preparing for Adulthood protocol for professionals. It was recognised that it was important to have relevant and easy to read information for young people and their parent carers to help them navigate this journey in life.

A multi-agency subgroup was tasked with organising two workshops, hosted by Trafford Parents Forum and , to listen to and capture the honest experiences, views and thoughts of parent carers of a young person with SEND who is going through, or has gone through, preparing for adulthood stages.

This will serve as the basis for the co-production of family friendly information on Preparing for Adulthood on Trafford's SEND Local Offer.

## Youth Engagement Events

The Communication and Engagement group has, for a number of years has worked with key partners to deliver the annual Let's Talk SEND and Let's Talk Youth annual events. The group work closely with Gorse Hill Studios who have been commissioned to run the Youth Cabinet and deliver the Let's Talk SEND events in 2020/2021.

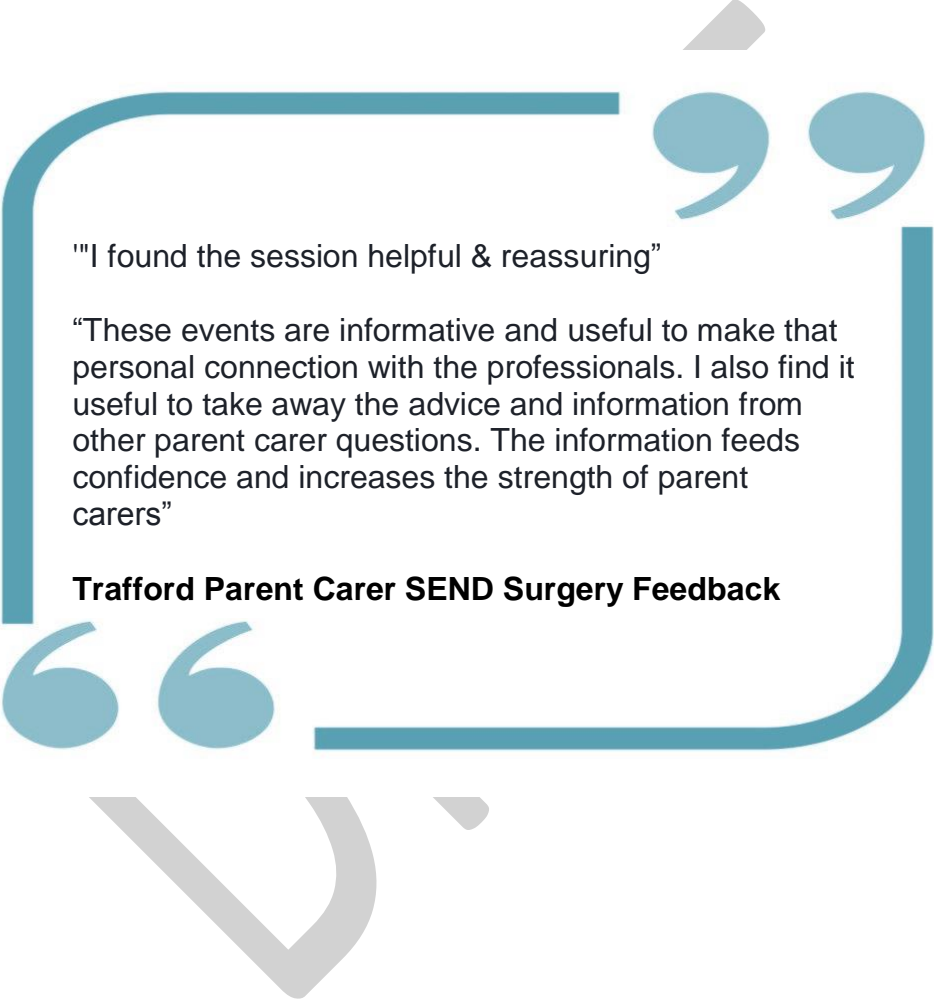
## SEND surgery

The EHC Team, Family Information Service, SENDIASS and Trafford Parents Forum specialists deliver a joint surgery for parent carers to answer any questions from families in relation to SEND. Surgeries take place on a minimum half termly, on a drop in no need to book, just turn up basis. The sessions are well attended and now are delivered virtually.

Through these sessions parent carers have made new friends, been able to meet their peers and many attending, have reported never having met a fellow parent carers facing similar issues. Parent Carers are encouraged to chat and network while waiting for their allotted timeslot with one of the specialist services.

This opportunity has provided a great forum for conversations around being an SEND family, in Trafford. The Family Information Service have used the waiting area as an opportunity for small group's chats and individual conversations about things available to families in particularly through the SEND Local Offer.

The relationship built with other services has really impacted on the services confidence when signposting families to the most up to date and correct information. Being able to put faces to names and understand in a practical sense, how other services work has been really helpful in directing families to the most appropriate service.



"I found the session helpful & reassuring"

"These events are informative and useful to make that personal connection with the professionals. I also find it useful to take away the advice and information from other parent carer questions. The information feeds confidence and increases the strength of parent carers"

**Trafford Parent Carer SEND Surgery Feedback**