



## SEN Team, SEND Futures, SEND Action & practical stuff 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019

Dear All

Societal change takes time and the journey is long – my children are now 19 and 22 – and since they were young, I've seen the world move forward. Its slow, but its moving...

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### 1 SEN Team Coffee Mornings

Unfortunately, the SEN Team Coffee Mornings planned for July have been cancelled due to a lack of bookings.

The SEN Team are the people, the case officers, who administer the Education, Health & Care Plans; you may have spoken to them on the phone and e-mailed them often – you may never have met your case officer face to face. The idea behind the Coffee Mornings was to give everyone the opportunity to meet informally.

The SEN Team say that following the first successful round of SEN Coffee Mornings earlier in the year, the overwhelming response was to hold these termly... but perhaps this has changed now?

Either way, the SEN Team are keen to hear from parent/carer and families with ideas and suggestions on what would be most helpful for families.

Please share your ideas and contact the SEN Team via the Local Offer - put SEN Team Coffee Mornings into the subject bar:

E: [sendlocaloffer@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:sendlocaloffer@achievingforchildren.org.uk)

## 2 SEND Futures Conference – Kingston & Richmond

The #SENDfutures conference took place on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June and, having attended this event in 2019 and 2018, there is a shift in approach and progress in terms of valuing the whole team around the child as equals. Parents, carers, children and young people attended and presented as equals; there's lots to work on – but oh my, what a difference a year makes!

One of the young people quoted Confucius *“The man who moves a mountain begins by carrying away small stones.”*

One of the parent presenters, parent to a 6-year old, said he felt he was standing on the shoulders of parent/carers who had gone before him – in working to make the system better for all of us.

These statements resonated – as parents and carers, we enter 'the system' and many of us choose to get involved in trying to make things better. Then our children grow up... and parent/carers new to 'the system' do the same. It's small steps... but steps nonetheless...

### Overall theme

Whilst the theme was 'Listen, Learn, Lead' behind this were presentations and films about 'what went well' and 'what didn't'.

There is plenty to improve but there are things that work; one parent presenter of a younger child said that *“there is a system there”*, it is hard, but it exists and for that he was grateful.

The same parent also said that we, as parents, should make no excuse of how difficult the system was; *“our children are facing challenges every day and we have to do the same”*

(Those of us with older children may, perhaps, consider that parents entering 'the system' now are coming into a world of Education, Health & Care Plans, not Statements; a system that aims to focus on the child and their strengths – not their deficits)

The SEND Inquiry will no doubt expose the many flaws of the SEND Reforms implementation (2014 -2108), but the law stands now... children and young people (and their parent/carers) **must** be at the centre of decisions about themselves.

### Videos and slides from the day

There are three videos on this page – all with parents, carers, children and young people only and in their own words.

The first video was shown on the day and is just over 10 minutes. The other two are shorter supporting videos. As families, there is little that is unfamiliar in these videos; and as well as families, the audience included the Leaders of both Kingston and Richmond Councils, alongside many professionals, schools and commissioners.

You can also find all the slides from the day on this same page:

<https://kr.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/local-offer/information-and-advice/send-consultation-hub-and-resource-bank/send-futures-conference-2019>

A parent opened the conference and tweeted:

*“Such an honour to open the #sendfutures Conference. Such an amazing opportunity for everyone to come together to Listen to the voices of young people, Learn about what's going well and Lead the way to continue to improve practice for continued positive reform.”*

### [More to come...](#)

There were workshops during the day – these slides are not yet on the Local Offer. Subjects included making our boroughs more inclusive and welcoming for all (irrespective of need) and how the world of Post-16 works. More on these to come next week – also details from the exhibitors on the day.

## **3 Reminder – current Consultations in Richmond and Kingston**

### [Richmond - SEND Futures](#)

*“We would like to hear views about our draft Plan, which sets out how Richmond Council, Achieving for Children and the Richmond Clinical Commissioning Group will improve SEND services over the next three years.”*

### [The Consultation and Plan](#)

The online consultation (7 short questions, with links to background reading). The survey starts with bullet points of data that the reader may find helpful.

<https://kr.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/local-offer/information-and-advice/send-consultation-hub-and-resource-bank>

And...

- The Draft Plan
- An easy-read version of the Consultation
- An easy-read version of the Draft Plan

The consultation closes at midnight on Sunday 14th July 2019.

### [Face to face consultations](#)

*“We will also be holding some drop-in events where you can talk to people from the Council, Achieving for Children or Clinical Commissioning Group about the Plan.”*

#### **Monday 1st July – 10am to 11.30am**

Castelnau Community Centre, 7 Stillingfleet Road, Barnes, SW13 9AQ.

#### **Wednesday 3rd July - 7pm to 8.30pm**

Ham Youth Centre, Ham Close (off Ashburnham Road), Ham, TW10 7PL

#### **Thursday 4th July - 1:30pm to 3pm**

Twickenham Training Centre, 53 Grimwood Road, TW1 1BY

If you would like to attend one of these events, please register here.

<https://surveys.achievingforchildren.org.uk/s/20LZ7>

### [Kingston - Are you a parent/carer of a child with autism?](#)

Collaborative Review of Kingston under 5's neurodevelopmental pathway

In layman's terms, a neuro-developmental pathway is the route from a referral (could be from your GP, or perhaps the school) to a possible diagnosis of autism, adhd or other related 'neurodevelopmental' condition.

A collaborative review simply means getting as many professionals AND parent/carers in a room together to discuss what works and what doesn't, and more...

Personally, as a fan of co-production and collaboration, if you live in Kingston, I recommend attending this review – you will be listened to.

### Friday 5<sup>th</sup> July - 10am to 1pm

Queen Anne Suite, Guildhall, Kingston

"Doreen Redwood, the lead commissioner for children from Kingston and Richmond CCGs, would like to collaboratively review with parents and interested professionals the under 5's ASD/social communication pathway including:

- what would be helpful to know and do before a child is referred
- clear information on what is happening during the assessment and its possible outcomes
- what additional help and support should be developed and accessible post diagnosis."

Please email [Nicola.Allday@swlondon.nhs.uk](mailto:Nicola.Allday@swlondon.nhs.uk) directly to attend the workshop.

## 4 #SEND Action

Last week, a group of parents took the Government to court in a Judicial Review (JR) of the paucity of SEND Funding. The hearing took 2 days, a decision is likely in September.

Here are some of the articles that followed the JR:

### [From Special Needs Jungle](#)

*"The judgement in the Judicial Review of a group of parents against the government over SEND funding, has been reserved after a two-day hearing. But whatever the ruling, the parents who drove this forward on behalf of all families of children with disabilities were praised by the judge who called it a remarkable achievement for parents to take the government to court.*

*It was, says Gillian Doherty, parent and founder of the SEND Action campaign group, "...a powerful moment at the end, and I think that's what we're going to take away from it."*

*So, what will happen if the judge decides in their – in our - favour? I'm not sure anyone is clear about what will happen then."*

<https://www.specialneedsjungle.com/judge-a-remarkable-achievement-for-parents-to-take-the-government-to-court>

### [From the Disabled Children's Partnership](#)

*"Today (26 June) three families are in the high court arguing that the government's current level of funding for SEN support in schools is unlawful.*

*Families from North Yorkshire, Birmingham and East Sussex instructed specialist lawyers at Irwin Mitchell to issue a Judicial Review into the legality of how the government provides funding for SEN to local authorities."*

<https://disabledchildrenspartnership.org.uk/families-take-government-to-court-over-lack-of-funding-for-sen-support-in-schools>

### [From the Sun](#)

*"While thousands of parents were cheering their kids on at school sports days this week, two mums were in a windowless courtroom in the Royal Courts of Justice fighting the Government for the basic right to educate their children."*

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/9390735/parents-disabled-kids-sue-the-government>

### [From ITV](#)

*"Landmark High Court case told of 'genuine crisis' in special educational needs funding"*  
2 mins video – there are clear stats on the numbers (35% increase)

<https://www.itv.com/news/2019-06-26/high-court-told-of-genuine-crisis-in-special-educational-needs-funding>

## **5 Changing Places, 1,2,3**

### **#1 The first Changing Places (ever) in Kingston**

*"A new changing places toilet has been unveiled at the Bentall Shopping Centre in Kingston to help improve the shopping experience for those with disabilities, their parents and carers.*

*Kingston Council has worked with the centre to install the new toilet - the first of its kind in the town centre - as part of an ongoing commitment to improve disabled facilities."*

[https://www.kingston.gov.uk/news/article/914/first\\_ever\\_changing\\_places\\_toilet\\_opened\\_in\\_kingston\\_town\\_centre](https://www.kingston.gov.uk/news/article/914/first_ever_changing_places_toilet_opened_in_kingston_town_centre)

### **#2 New public buildings to have Changing Places toilets**

*"New, or majorly refurbished, large buildings used by the public must have Changing Places toilets, under government proposals being consulted on from today. The 10-week consultation, which closes on 21st July, has been published on Gov.uk*

*Changing Places toilets for severely disabled people to be made mandatory in new buildings used by the public, under government proposals*

*Buildings covered will include shopping centres, supermarkets, sports and arts venues*

*Proposal expected to add facilities to more than 150 new buildings a year."*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-public-buildings-to-have-changing-places-toilets-for-severely-disabled-people>

### **#3 Changing Places now - find a toilet**

*You can find your nearest registered Changing Places toilet in the UK by going to the location map and typing in an address, town or postcode.*

[http://www.changing-places.org/find\\_a\\_toilet.aspx](http://www.changing-places.org/find_a_toilet.aspx)

## **6 New Fb Group – Yr9+ Down Syndrome**

[For parents of young people with Down syndrome approaching/at Further Education](#)

*"This page is for parents & carers of young people with Down syndrome in Y9 and above, therefore considering further education options or already in FE."*

*Note it is a closed group for members – you can request membership via the link below.*

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/878083109220453>

## **7 Key Topics to cover at annual reviews from Yr9**

*From the Preparing for Adulthood people ([www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk](http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk)), this is an updated Word version of their checklist, designed around the four life domains that are widely used to think about planning for an adult life in the community.*

<https://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/downloads/education-health-and-care-planning/key-topics-to-cover-at-annual-reviews-from-year-9-2019---word-version.htm>

## **8 A Fairy Tale for the Greatest Dancer (Andrew Self)**

*"Step Change Studios returns to the Lilian Baylis Studio at Sadler's Wells to present Fairy Tales: a ballroom-inspired show drawing on the universal themes of storytelling, which will feature 20 disabled and non-disabled artists from the UK presenting original dance."*

<http://blog.sadlerswells.com/a-fairy-tale-for-the-greatest-dancer>

## 9 Jellyfish: a sexy romcom that finally reflects real life

"The heroine of Ben Weatherill's play is strong, witty and learning disabled. So is Sarah Gordy who portrays her. About time too, say the writer and actor."

This is... "a play about someone who is neurodiverse and someone who is neurotypical falling in love. Jellyfish was the result. First seen at London's Bush theatre last year, it is now about to open at the National Theatre."

[https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/jun/26/jellyfish-national-theatre-london-ben-weatherill-sarah-gordy?CMP=share\\_btn\\_tw](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/jun/26/jellyfish-national-theatre-london-ben-weatherill-sarah-gordy?CMP=share_btn_tw)

## 10 TAG Youth Club - Summer

"We are a youth club for disabled young people, who seek to provide a safe, stimulating and engaging environment for anyone with a disability to meet up with their friends, take part in fun activities and learn social and life skills"



You can find out about all TAGs events, from now to the end of the year, on their What's On pages:

<https://tagyouthclub.org/whats-on>

### **11 “Who knew that one word could change my life?”**

A short film made by India Carmody for the Dyspraxia Foundation about Living with Dyspraxia  
(3.55 mins)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7ndBE1ujn8&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0hvZJ-0jJ\\_507htI4Z8Y-A2XYd8QZu5dHYL\\_JnEqAAUBhzSwAcEq1rJ80](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7ndBE1ujn8&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0hvZJ-0jJ_507htI4Z8Y-A2XYd8QZu5dHYL_JnEqAAUBhzSwAcEq1rJ80)

### **12 The Curly Hair Project**

*“The Curly Hair Project is a social enterprise which supports people on the autistic spectrum and the people around them. Our work is very inclusive. It's all about developing empathy and understanding for the amazing diversity of people in the world.”*

<https://thegirlwiththecurlyhair.co.uk>

### **13 A Thousand Years Performed By Smerdon Centre**

Finally, a musical ending... a signing song made at Smerdon Centre for Learning Disability Week (4.47mins)

<https://www.facebook.com/DreamMediaBooth/videos/558347598029369>

If you have any questions at all, please ask and I'll do my best to find an answer.

With best wishes, Romany

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