


 The logo consists of two overlapping speech bubbles. The left bubble is green and contains the word 'SEND' in white, bold, uppercase letters. The right bubble is pink and contains the word 'voice' in white, lowercase letters.

Warwickshire special educational needs and disability news and information

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### Local Offer

Information about services and support available for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) aged 0-25.

The Local Offer should:

- Improve choice and control for families.
- Help professionals to understand the range of services and provision in the local area.
- Inform the joint commissioning for children and young people with SEN and disabilities.

## Supporting children, young people and families - Warwickshire's Local Offer

**National reforms have changed the way that support is provided to children and young people aged 0-25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Each local authority area has developed a Local Offer which lays out the education, health and social care support that is available.**

Warwickshire's Local Offer is available online at [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/send](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/send). It has been created with input from parents and carers to make sure it meets real needs and reflects what local people want to see.

The Local Offer signposts to a range of support services and groups, and provides detailed information about the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and changes to assessment; transition from children's services to adult services; and advice and guidance around other key issues, such as health and transport. It has been developed over a period of 18 months involving public consultations, meetings and other engagement exercises, and the latest version was launched in May this year following a number of improvements to address feedback from parents. Significant progress has been made with support from the Department for Education, and Warwickshire's Local Offer is now compliant with SEND provision requirements laid out in the Children and Families Act.

It has been a challenging process and the council recognises that the Local Offer will require regular review and development. The ongoing involvement of parent / carer group Family Voice Warwickshire is welcomed to help to continue improving the Local Offer, with the shared goal of achieving the best outcomes for the county's children, young people and families.

To support further development eleven work streams, which are introduced later in this publication, have been established to look in detail at the different areas of provision within the Local Offer. Each of these groups offers a range of opportunities for parents and young people to work with the council and health colleagues to influence and shape future services and support.

If you would like to get involved with service design, development, delivery and review please contact Laura Edwards by email to [lauraedwardscc@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:lauraedwardscc@warwickshire.gov.uk) or call 01926 742011 to express an interest or find out more.

# Letter from the editors

**Hello and welcome to the first issue of SEND Voice! We are thrilled to have this opportunity to share news about Warwickshire's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Programme, and it's wonderful that we can start this issue with such positive news about Warwickshire's Local offer. Those of you who have already been involved with the SEND Programme will know that the Local Offer of support has undergone some major changes over the last few months, and we must say a huge thank you to everyone who has been involved in the development process.**

In this issue, you will find lots of information about the SEND Programme and about some of the people who are currently making it happen. We wanted to make sure that there is something in here for everyone – including those who are brand new to the Programme and are wondering (quite understandably) where to start – so you will find some background information about the SEND Reforms and the changes to legislation that have prompted these. Pages 3-6 are all about our SEND Programme and the work streams that are leading on each area of change. For those readers who are already involved with one or more elements of the Programme, we hope this newsletter will answer some of the questions you may have about what's happening in other work streams, and will give you an overview of the Programme as a whole.

It is really important to us that activity within the SEND Programme is carried out in partnership with the children and young people who access SEND services, and their parents and carers, and so on page 7 you will find some information about Co-production and what this means in terms of getting involved. Page 10 is all about young people's engagement with the Programme, including an introduction to the Wacky Forum – Laura was lucky enough to go and meet with this group in June and had a really productive morning discussing Co-production Principles and how these can support young people's participation. There are lots of opportunities for Co-production detailed throughout the newsletter, but don't forget to check the back page for key dates and contact details if you'd like to find out more.

Finally, we would like to say a big thank you to everyone involved in producing the newsletter. The Editorial Team is made up of Council Officers, parents, and representatives from Health and SENDIAS, and everyone has worked really hard to bring our first issue together. A special thank you goes to Iain Paterson, head teacher at Woodlands School, for suggesting SEND Voice as our title!

Happy reading!

**Laura and Joanne**

Editors-in-Chief

**Laura Edwards** is part of the Co-production Team at Warwickshire County Council. Find out more about her on page 7.

**Joanne Eburne** is member of Family Voice Warwickshire: 'I am a single parent/carer with 2 sons age 18 and 15, my eldest son has Down's syndrome, Classic Autism, ADHD and Type 1 Diabetes. In the past I have had a career as a Microbiology Laboratory Technician and as a Quality Assurance Officer.



I am a positive person and because of my son I have met some great people; however at times I have felt isolated and without the right level of support. For the future I would want all parent/Carers and children and young people to have good support, services and access to information, and hope that SEND Voice will be a step towards this.

## **SEND Reforms**

Changes to what local authorities must do to support children and young people with SEND. The Reforms took effect in September last year and relate to the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice (0-25 years).

# The SEND Programme: an update from the workstreams

## SEND Programme

The programme of work that Warwickshire County Council has put in place to meet new requirements for SEND provision. Within the Programme are 11 working groups, called 'work streams'.

**There are eleven work streams that make up the SEND Programme. A work stream is a working group, dedicated to implementing a particular area of the SEND Reforms. Each work stream is led by an Officer from Warwickshire County Council or from Health, and has parent representatives who attend the monthly work stream meetings and are partners in decision-making. At any time the work streams have a number of projects on the go, and there are always opportunities for more parents, professionals and young people to get involved. Read on to find out more...**

## W1: Embedding Co-production



**Work stream lead: Amanda Burn, WCC Quality Assurance and Safeguarding in Commissioning Manager**

**Parent Reps: Jill Potts, Joanne Eburne, Sue Robus**

Our work stream has been making great progress in broadening engagement and offering opportunities for parents and young people to get actively involved in shaping SEND services and support. Since February

this year, we have appointed a dedicated SEND Co-production Officer (Laura); worked with Family Voice Warwickshire to develop a resource list mapping parent and young people support groups throughout the county; and facilitated a stakeholder workshop to bring people together to share their ideas about effective co-production. Following the workshop, we have supported each work stream lead to develop a Co-production plan, to make sure opportunities for parents and young to get involved are identified and used.

We have identified new objectives to be delivered by October 2015, and have no doubt that the next few months will bring some really exciting opportunities for Co-production:

- SEND newsletter – if you're reading this, the first issue has made it to press, and we hope to bring you a second issue at the beginning of next year. The Editorial Team will also be supporting the development of some 'get involved' parents linked to the Local Offer.
- Development of Children and Young People's Forum - we are working closely with colleagues who already support children's engagement and participation to progress this, and hope to be able to share further opportunities soon.
- Co-production training day – a workshop for Commissioners from social care, health and public health, and the SEND work stream leads, took place on 24th June, with training delivered by Governance International. This workshop will inform training to be co-delivered by officers and parents later this year to parent groups, elected members, and any other interested parties.

For more information about the Embedding Co-production work stream, please contact [lauraedwardscc@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:lauraedwardscc@warwickshire.gov.uk)

## W2: Safeguarding



**Work stream lead: Adrian Wells, WWC Interim Service Manager – Integrated Disability Service (IDS)**

**Parent Reps: Catherine Robbins, Lisa Ruddick, Dawn Lamont**

The Safeguarding work stream has focussed its initial work on a key issue raised by parents at the Local Offer consultations last year – the issue of parents and/or carers being assaulted by their children and young people. As can be imagined this is a complex problem and the work stream is currently still scoping out the issues concerned. This work stream currently has parent representation from Family Voice Warwickshire and SENDIAS.

## W3: Information, Advice and Guidance

**Work stream lead: Elaine Coates, WCC Business Unit Development Officer, Early help and Targeted Support**

**Parent Reps: Sue Robus, Julia Anne Cantwell**



Our work so far has focussed on developing the webpages for families, to provide all the information about Warwickshire's Local Offer. Feedback from the public consultation was that our first attempt was hard to find your way around and some of the language was confusing. So we contacted two groups of parents to help us to improve the navigation, agree a new menu set up and feed in some more detailed views about the words we used. We also increased the amount of information for young people over 16, as families told us we needed to tell them more about support for this age group.

A new version of the webpages was made live at the end of April and was well received by families and professionals. However, this is not the end of the story! We are now working on:

- Developing the information for parents and young people about how to give their views and get involved further. We will be working with the team who produce the newsletter to get this right.
- Exploring whether to add videos or animations to our webpages, which some parents and young people have told us might be helpful. We need to get some more information on this (such as the time and cost involved) before we can make a final decision.

We always value feedback from families. You can do this through clicking on 'comments and complaints' at **www.warwickshire.gov.uk/send**.

## W4: Data and Information



**Work stream lead: Kate Harker, WCC Service Manager – Children's Commissioning**

**Parent Reps: Stuart Moir, John Atkins**

This work stream is focussed on obtaining and organising robust information about Warwickshire's SEND population. Work is progressing in getting a SEND data set for Warwickshire collating information from across education, health and social care. This is to make sure that we know our 0-25 populations, their needs and priorities, where they are based etc to inform our commissioning of services. We currently have two parent/carer representatives on this work stream and their input and scrutiny has been invaluable in our work so far, and Warwickshire now has a disability register which families are populating directly – this information will be used to further inform the data set. Our priorities for the next few months include more work on the SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), and further information gathering around the 0-5 and 19-25 age groups.

## W5: Personalisation

One size  
doesn't fit all.



**Work stream lead: Adrian Wells, WWC Interim Service Manager – Integrated Disability Service (IDS)**

**Parent Reps: Catherine Robbins, Charlotte Williamson, Dawn Rowley**

The Personalisation work stream has spent the last couple of months focussed on ensuring the development and delivery of a new resource allocation system (RAS) tool to meet the eligible identified needs of children, young people and their families. The work stream has developed a training package to be led by parents and delivered to the Social Workers who will be using the RAS tool with families to ensure that the tool is used in the right manner to assess needs. The parents in the work stream have also co-produced the report to Cabinet recommending that the RAS be implemented from 1st October 2015. Future plans for the work stream in the future include widening the scope and membership.

## W6: Joint Commissioning



**Work stream lead: Jo Dillon, Associate - Well-being, NHS Arden and Greater East Midlands Commissioning Support Unit**

**Parent Reps: Tracey Finch-Wright, Natalie Thake**

The Joint Commissioning work stream brings together colleagues from the local authority and the NHS as well as parents from Family Voice Warwickshire. Currently, the group is reviewing a number of services which are funded by both the local authority and the NHS.

The review of occupational therapy has led to a proposed new model of delivery for lower level interventions. As the change requires funding, this proposal is still being considered.

A task and finish group has been established to address the issues of the overnight short breaks review, clarifying the process for assessment and review.

Finally, a review of speech and language services is about to begin. This will focus on clarifying the local offer of services for speech, language and communication needs.

## W7: Early Years (0-5)



**Work stream lead: Zoe Harwood, WWC IDS 0-5 Strategic Manager**

**Parent Reps: Christina Pratt, Eden Mehari**

This work stream is focussed on improving provision for children from birth to starting school. Our initial pieces of work have included:

- Mapping current provision for children aged 0-5 with SEND, and their families

- Highlighting any gaps or potential opportunities in SEND provision to identify areas for future development
- Developing and embedding ongoing communication, evaluation and monitoring arrangements with families and early years' providers

A key priority has been increasing parental engagement with service development activity. Here are some of our achievements so far:

- Two parents are on this work stream group and have helped to identify good practice in EY service provision as well as gaps and challenges;
- A parent of a child with ASD provided a parent voice at 0-5 Strategy Workshop in June and will continue her involvement with the Programme;
- Countywide - parents will now be more informed and consulted about the universal health/education integrated 2 year check (with user friendly information and case study examples to be collated);
- Early years groups including Earlybird Autism Parent groups & Little Ears (groups for children with hearing loss and their families) were amongst those consulted during Local Offer development.
- All services have agreed to adopt an Early Support model – team focussed around the child and family - and there has been countywide training including parent delivery;
- Training for practitioners around the SEND Code of Practice includes a large section on parental involvement and sharing good practice.

## W8: EHCP Planning



**Work stream lead: Pat Tate, WCC Service Manager – Vulnerable Learners**  
**Parent Reps: Christina Pratt, Charlotte Williamson, Sue Robus**

Work stream 8 focuses on assessments and

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP).

Updates on some of the key areas are:

- For children who are not progressing at the expected rate, documents have been produced which lay out
- The different types of support that schools can provide, divided into 3 levels (universal, targeted and higher needs), without the need for a child to have an EHCP (SEND Matrix)
- The criteria which will act as a guide to whether a child is likely to require a statutory assessment of their needs (the assessment which has to happen to decide whether a child needs an EHCP). This document is designed to be used by parents/carers, schools and local authority officers to help make fair, reliable and consistent decisions for learners.
- The Matrix for the next academic year is finished, and is in the process of being distributed. An electronic version can be accessed via this link: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/sendocs>
- The criteria are currently out for consultation (until 26th June) with the intention of being finalised by September 2015.

Pivotal to the success of converting children with an existing statement to an EHC plan, is the SENDAR (SEND Assessment and Review) team. Recruitment to SENDAR is underway to ensure that they have capacity to meet demand and clear current backlog of work. This will be welcome news for pupils converting to the new EHC Plans, as well as those currently requiring new assessments. At present, SENDAR are prioritising the conversions of Year 11 leavers and Post-16 students.

In common with the rest of the SEND programme, this work stream team are engaging and involving parents, young people and other stakeholders with the intention of using their feedback to guide future improvements to the service.

## W9: Preparation for Adulthood (16-25)



**Work stream lead:**  
**Sarah Bradwell,**  
**WCC Post 16**  
**Learning and Skills**  
**Manager**

**Parent Reps:** Jill Potts, Anne McMahon, Joanne Eburne, Wendy Griffin

This work stream focuses on driving the strategic direction and development of a local offer for young people aged 16-25 with SEND. The group aims to develop a countywide offer to meet the ongoing education, care and independence, and preparation for employment needs of young people, and to support preparation for adulthood. The group's current objectives include:

- To work with local providers to enable increased provision for young people with complex needs, and where appropriate, reduce the number of out of county placements.
- To develop a range of local pathways that meet the individual needs of students and prepare young people for adulthood.

Since this work stream was set up in January 2015, the group has met three times. Four local area co-coordinating groups (covering all 5 districts in Warwickshire) have been created to drive the work forward, with representation from parents and professionals. Details of the groups are as below:

**Eastern area**, covering the Rugby district, chaired by Chris Pollit (Brooke School)

**Southern area**, covering the Stratford upon Avon district, chaired by Judith Humphry (Welcombe Hills School)

**Central area**, covering the Warwick district, chaired by Jane Naylor (Round Oak School)

**Northern area**, covering North Warwickshire and Nuneaton & Bedworth districts, chaired by Martin Shelton (North Warwickshire and Hinckley College)

If you would like to find out more, please contact [timcorkery@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:timcorkery@warwickshire.gov.uk) or on 01926 743008.

## W10: Strategy and Quality Assurance



**Work stream lead:** Hugh Disley,  
**WCC Head of Early Help and**  
**Targeted Support**

**Parent Reps:** Rebecca Page, Stuart Moir, Sue Robus

This group's focus is to develop and establish a Quality Assurance Framework to enable scrutiny

and monitoring of the SEND programme. This will help us to make sure that work streams are making progress and to ensure consistency in their implementation. We are also responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of embedding Co-production into all work stream activity and measuring success by focussing on the outcomes & experiences for parents and young people who get involved in shaping and influencing services and support. Alongside our own QA work, we will support other work streams to share good practice and challenge as appropriate.

Our work stream members include; Hugh Disley, Amanda Burn, Jane Carter, Ann Lowe and Karen Smith from WCC; Ross Caws from NHS Arden and Greater East Midlands Commissioning Support Unit; Rebecca Page and Stuart Moir, who are parents and representatives from Family Voice Warwickshire; and Sue Robus from SENDIAS.

## W11: School-age Provision (5-16)



**Work stream lead:** Jonathan Wilding,  
**WCC Interim Commissioning Manager –**  
**Special Educational Needs**

**Parent Reps:** Sue Robus, Family Voice  
**Warwickshire TBC**

### **Development of additional resourced SEND provision**

Warwickshire Council recently carried out a SEND needs analysis (with a focus on education), which identified some gaps in Warwickshire's range of SEN provision. This can mean a limit to options for pupils who, with the right level of specialist support, could thrive in mainstream education.

A steering group, reporting to the SEND Programme Board, has been set up to coordinate work across the county to bring special schools together with mainstream school partners to identify local needs and develop opportunities for new provision.

The group will engage with parent representative groups to plan these developments, designing the type of provision required, considering the different options and reaching agreement on how best to invest resources.

### **The intended impact of these developments will be:**

- Increased availability of a wider range of specialist provision with flexibility to meet the needs of vulnerable learners with SEND
- Mainstream schools will be better equipped and able to meet the needs of a wider range of learners
- More opportunities for learners with SEND to be educated in high quality provision closer to home as part of their local community

If you are part of a parents' group who would be interested in discussing plans in your area please get in touch with Warwickshire's SEN Commissioner - Jonathan Wilding at: [jonathanwilding@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:jonathanwilding@warwickshire.gov.uk)

# Co-production

## What is Co-production?

**At the SEND Stakeholder workshop in February 2015, parents, young people, Council Officers, and colleagues from Health came together to discuss what Co-production meant to them.**

**Here are one group's ideas:**

### **Parent Carer's view:**

'Never being on the outside of decisions relating to my child and our family.'

### **Young person's view:**

'Finding out from the young person what they want to communicate or understand'

### **Professional's view:**

Shared understanding, shared solutions.

Co-production is all about working together to make joint decisions and to make sure everyone's voice is heard. To achieve this, we need a shared understanding of what effective Co-production involves. We are currently working with parents, young people and professionals to develop a set of principles to exemplify what good Co-production looks like.

## Co-production Team



Warwickshire County Council has a team of Officers whose role is to support and embed Co-production. Over the coming issues we will tell you more about who they are and what they do. To start us off, we would like to introduce Laura Edwards,

dedicated Officer for the SEND Programme.

Laura joined Warwickshire County Council in September 2014 as a Children's Commissioning Support Officer and moved to the role of Co-production Officer this April.

Prior to working at the council Laura worked as a teaching assistant and a nursery practitioner before training as a primary school teacher.

In her current role Laura is a dedicated Co-production Officer for the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Programme, where she works with other officers and supports them to find opportunities for parents and young people to be involved in developing services. She also works closely with local parent group Family Voice Warwickshire to increase awareness and understanding of the national SEND reforms

outlined in Government policy and to ensure that parents throughout the county know how to get involved in council business and service shaping. Laura will also be looking at ways to make sure the views of young people with SEND form part of the programme.

Co-production is defined as making decisions with others, and recognising that people who use a service are best-placed to design and improve it. Through co-production council officers work with people who access services, and those who provide them, to help shape and develop services, making sure that everyone is an equal partner in the process. The difference this makes is that it puts customers and carers at the centre of decisions, and gives people real ownership of the services they use.

The projects Laura will be working on as part of her role are exploring new ways to engage with children and young people, such as virtual engagement through social media. Working with colleagues from Grapevine and New Ideas to think about opportunities for joint working, and in the longer term working with a range of partners to develop a young people's forum, so that all children and young people in Warwickshire who are affected by the SEND Reforms have the opportunity to have their voices heard. In conjunction with Family Voice Warwickshire she

will be identifying learning and development opportunities around co-production, including some training for elected members in the autumn.

Talking about her role, Laura said: "I have already met some parents who are really committed to improving SEND services, and who have done

some fantastic work so far, and I feel lucky to be working in partnership with such a passionate group of people as we move forward. I am also really looking forward to meeting parents who are new to the SEND Programme, and hope I can support them to feel more confident about getting involved."

**If you would like to know more about the SEND Programme, any aspects of co-production or if you would like to find out more about getting involved, email [lauraedwardscc@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:lauraedwardscc@warwickshire.gov.uk) or telephone 07919 891085.**

## The Challenges

### Co-production

It has been my privilege to have worked with the SEND Reference Group since it started and our journey started with very small steps to one where we now have parents on all of our work-streams. We still have a long way to go to get it right across all we do. The Quality Assurance work-stream leads on this and their purpose is to make sure that it is not about the 'what' we do, it is as much about the 'way' we do it. The intention is always to seek participation and engagement from the start from all interested parties; it does not always work but we are getting better at it.

### Transport Consultation

The Transport consultation affects over 9,000 students. A small proportion of these have SEND and so the consultation needs to identify the particular issues it raises for our children and young people with SEND and what it means for their families. Families will already have received a letter informing them of the consultation.

The consultation began in June to meet the deadlines and so we would like to arrange further sessions in the new term to catch up with those parents who have not been able to attend the sessions so far. We will work with Family Voice Warwickshire about how best we can do

this. This will give people the chance to respond by the 17 September deadline.

There are three ways to respond to the consultation.

- Respond to the survey
- E-mail direct to the link [transportconsultation@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:transportconsultation@warwickshire.gov.uk)
- Write to: Education Transport, Warwickshire County Council, Saltisford Office Park, Ansell Way, CV34 4UL.

### Education, Health and Care Plans

The Government gave us a very challenging target to convert statements of special educational needs and Learning Disability Assessments (LDAs) to EHC plans by April 2018 and we have had some additional money to help us. What we needed were experienced staff who could handle the capacity and these people are being identified all of the time which will help us to meet the time-lines, as will the different agencies getting used to the new format and getting the information back to the SENDAR team when it is needed. In the meantime I appreciate your patience but please keep letting us know if you are still waiting. More information is available at [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/requestehcassessment](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/requestehcassessment).

### Hugh Disley

Chair SEND Reference Group & Quality Assurance Work-stream

# Family Voice Warwickshire

**Family Voice are a group of parents and carers who meet and discuss support and services within Warwickshire and advocate for families of children and young people with SEND. We believe that your experiences, your views and your hopes for your child/young person can have a positive impact on the services and professionals that support families like ours. Together we can make a BIG difference.**

## These are just some of our biggest achievements!!

- Parents and Carers are developing their working relationship with Warwickshire County Council (WCC) and are Co-producing The SEND reforms. In a new initiative 'Bringing Warwickshire together' we hope to encourage parent carers, support groups, professional agencies and WCC to meet and talk together about the reforms and services that will be available for our children and young people. (The first few meetings have been really successful)
- Family Voice Warwickshire Membership is increasing all the time. Over 400 families and professionals so far.
- Our monthly advertised forum events have included contributions from SENDIAS; Core Assets; Independent supporters (offering support with EHC plans); Discussion with Laura Edwards Co-Production Officer; a meeting to look at The 'Local Offer' website.
- Speakers at future forums will talk on 'The Carer's Act' and 'Deputyship'. These will be advertised soon.
- There is now parent/carer representation on the Special Educational Needs and Disability Board (SEND Board), SEND work streams and the Autism board. If you would like to get involved let us know! Training can be provided and you will not be alone!
- Parent/carer representatives are involved in interview panels for key posts relating to SEND
- We have an on-line calendar used by multiple groups to provide information relating to meetings and events throughout the county.
- We are developing a management system that will be rolled out throughout 2015 to help improve communication for all parent groups throughout the county.
- Family Voice Warwickshire is in a strong position to continue to work with WCC and we feel positive about the future for all children and young people with SEND in Warwickshire.
- Family Voice Warwickshire representatives will be involved with the future work of the new Transitions Team, which will support young people moving from children's to adult social care services.

**We will be contacting you soon to ask for your input.**

**How would you like Family Voice Warwickshire to work for You?  
How can you get involved?  
How would you like to be involved?**

**You can contact us at:**

**[familyvoicewarwickshire@hotmail.com](mailto:familyvoicewarwickshire@hotmail.com)**



**[facebook.com/Family-Voice-Warwickshire](https://www.facebook.com/Family-Voice-Warwickshire)**



# Children and Young People's engagement with the SEND Programme

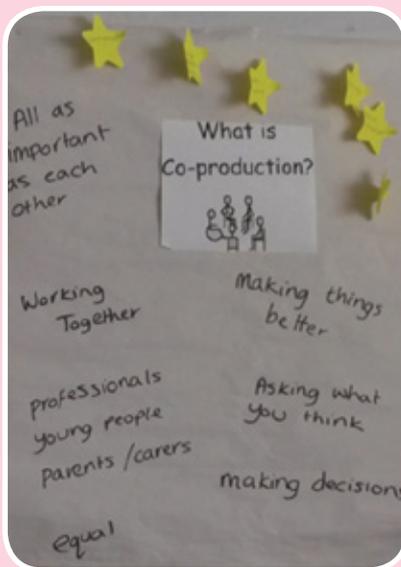
This issue we would like to introduce the Wacky Forum...



**Wacky Forum is a countywide participation and empowerment forum for young people with disabilities, supported by New Ideas Advocacy. Each of the six specialist schools in Warwickshire has a forum made up of up to 12 pupils aged between 14 and 19. Each school forum sends two representatives to the countywide forum who meet in Coventry.**

In June, Laura attended the countywide forum meeting to get young people's views on the Co-production Principles (see page 7). Here are just some of their thoughts, which will feed into the final Principles:

- It's very important that everyone's views are considered when making decisions, even if not everyone gets what they want in the end.
- Everyone – including younger children - should be able to share their ideas without being judged.
- Young people should be able to attend meetings if they want to and / or should have representatives.
- Meetings don't always have to be formal – they could be held in fun places, like the park.
- Having your voice heard can make you feel more confident.



For further information about Wacky Forum and the work they do, please visit their website:

[www.newideasadvocacy.org.uk/wacky-forum.html](http://www.newideasadvocacy.org.uk/wacky-forum.html)

## SEND

Short for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. There are four areas of SEND: communication and interaction; cognition and learning; emotional, social and mental health; physical and sensory. A child or young person with SEND may have difficulties with more than one of these areas – this is often referred to as having 'complex needs'.

## In other news:

Last month, Laura spent some time working with Louise and Danny from Grapevine (an empowerment organisation based in Coventry). They visited some young people at Warwickshire College to talk about ways to get involved in Co-production and 'Speaking Up', and thought about how young people with learning difficulties might work towards their dream jobs. These sessions were well-received by the students, and most of those attending were keen to stay in touch and get their voices heard.

If you would be interested in finding out more, or would like to book one of these sessions for your school or college, please contact [ls Spicer@grapevinecovandwarks.org](mailto:ls Spicer@grapevinecovandwarks.org) or [lauraedwardscc@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:lauraedwardscc@warwickshire.gov.uk)

For more information about Grapevine, please visit their website:

[www.grapevinecovandwarks.org](http://www.grapevinecovandwarks.org)



# Warwickshire SEN & Disability Information, Advice and Support (SENDIAS)

SEN and Disability Information, Advice and Support

**sendias**  
Warwickshire  
(formerly Parent Partnership Service)

**Warwickshire SENDIAS provides advice, information and support on all matters relating to special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).**

**We can help you if:**

**You are a parent or carer of a child or young person with SEN or a disability**

**or**

**You are a young person up to the age of 25 with SEN or a disability**

**We aim to:**

- work in partnership with parents, children and young people in order to achieve positive outcomes
- ensure that their views and wishes are heard and valued by all professionals
- develop positive relationships between parents, children, young people and all agencies involved

**How can we help?**

**We can provide:**

- impartial and confidential advice by telephone or email
- individual casework
- help with preparing for, and supporting at meetings
- liaison across a range of agencies
- help with writing letters, reports and filling in forms
- support during an Education, Health & Care (EHC) assessment
- support during the transfer of a Statement of SEN to an EHC Plan
- advice on school based support for children and young people with SEND who do not have a statement or EHC Plan in place
- advice on local policy and practice including the Local Offer, Personal Budgets and the law on SEN & Disability
- support in resolving disagreements, including help with preparation for mediation and tribunals
- advice on exclusions
- signposting to local and national sources of advice and support

**Our contact details:**

**Phone:** 024 7636 6054

**Email:** [wias@family-action.org.uk](mailto:wias@family-action.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.family-action.org.uk/wias](http://www.family-action.org.uk/wias)



The Ask Warwickshire website provides a way for the council to engage with Warwickshire residents. The website has been running for a couple of years, and is used to host consultations and short surveys and gather feedback on a wide range of the council's services. The views of local people collected from Ask Warwickshire are used to shape services for the future, help identify local issues and priorities, and are useful to measure customer satisfaction.

Over the past few months Ask Warwickshire has hosted consultations on support for carers, parking charges, household waste recycling centres, 'catch the bus week', cyber crime, and the council's vulnerable learners strategy. You can access Ask Warwickshire at [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ask](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ask) or call **01926 410410** for more information.

## Core Assets



Core Assets Children's Services has been commissioned by the Council for Disabled Children to deliver Independent Support to young people and their families in partnership with Parent Partnership Services, local authorities, and parent and carer forums.

From 1st September 2014, Independent Supporters within each local authority will assist parents and young people through the EHC planning process. As one of these Independent Supporters, we will be working in 27 local authorities, including Warwickshire, to provide parents, carers and children with the impartial information, help and support they need to progress through the new SEND assessment and planning process.

Helpline: **0800 028 8455**

Email: [ISReferrals@coreassets.com](mailto:ISReferrals@coreassets.com)

Web: [www.coreassets.com](http://www.coreassets.com)

## For all your family information needs



A free and impartial information and signposting service for Warwickshire families with children and young people. Contact us for support and advice about all aspects of childcare, leisure, health, benefits, flexible working and much more.

Saltisford Office Park,  
Ansell Way, Warwick, CV34 4UL

Helpline: **0845 090 8044 / 01926 742274**

Web: [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fis](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fis)

## Share your experiences

## - become a Community Influencer

Community Influencers are people with personal experience of social care services, including carers. We believe this lived experience gives people a unique knowledge and understanding of services that they can use to tell us what was good or bad, and help us change and improve services. These people are sometimes called 'Experts by Experience' and we think it is really important that we work with them to get the best services and outcomes for Warwickshire people.

### What is the role?

Community Influencers are joint partners with council officers and they work together to ensure the customer voice is heard and used to design, develop and monitor council decisions and services. They are 'critical friends' who hold the council to account and make sure that customers and carers are always at the centre of all service planning and delivery.

We are looking for more people to work with us in this way, if you are interested please contact Warwickshire County Council's Co-Production Team on [customerfirst@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:customerfirst@warwickshire.gov.uk) or call **01926 742536**