

February 2026



SEND Family Newsletter February 2026

A newsletter for the families of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in Telford and Wrekin

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Welcome to our SEND Family Newsletter!

Dear Parent Carers,

Welcome to our latest addition of our SEND Newsletter. I am seeing the sunshine for the first time in what seems like months, today, Spring may be just around the corner! 😊

I am also writing this following the publication of the much anticipated Schools White Paper - [Every child achieving and thriving \(HTML version\) - GOV.UK](#). There is a lot of information for us all to digest. The key message is "Every child with additional needs will benefit from better, more tailored support, as government unveils landmark £4 billion investment to make every school truly inclusive and transform outcomes for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)". Here is a link to an 'easy read version' [Our plan to help every child do well at school easy read version](#). This is the beginning of a long journey to change. I want to reassure you that there are no immediate changes to any of the current legal processes currently in place for SEND children and young people.

You may have read about plans to expand SEND provision across Telford & Wrekin, including proposals for up to 100 new specialist school places as part of the continued development of SEND hubs in mainstream settings. This reflects ongoing work to strengthen local support for children and young people with SEND, and to ensure families can access the right provision closer to home. We will continue to share with you more detailed information about this through our [Local Offer](#) and future [newsletters](#).

I'm pleased to introduce our new SEND Group Manager, Sarah Holt, who shares her experience and priorities in this edition. Sarah brings a wealth of knowledge from both mainstream and specialist settings, and her message offers a clear sense of the approach she will be taking as she begins her role. There has also been a recent change in leadership within the service. Simon Wellman, Director of Education and Skills, has moved on and we wish him well in his new position. I would like to thank him for his hard work and

commitment to children, young people and families within SEND across Telford & Wrekin over the past nine years.

We are also pleased to welcome Rebecca Carey, currently our Head for Achievement and Enrichment, who will be taking on the interim role previously held by Simon.

Warm regards,

Laura Goodfellow

HEAD of SEND and Personalisation



New SEND Group Manager

A Message from Sarah Holt

I'm delighted to be joining Telford & Wrekin Council as the SEND Group Manager. I've spent my career working across both mainstream and special school settings, and my previous roles as a SENCO and Assistant Headteacher have given me invaluable insight into the experiences of children and young people with SEND, as well as those of their families.

This is work I care deeply about, and it's a privilege to continue supporting pupils in a role that enables me to help shape the wider system.

I'm really looking forward to getting to know families and listening to what matters most to you. My focus is on making sure that children and young people across the local authority receive the support they need, when they need it, and that we work together to develop a SEND system that works well for everyone.

I'm excited to begin this journey with you and to play my part in getting things right for pupils across Telford & Wrekin.



SEND Local Offer

Looking for the latest SEND information for your family

The Local Offer aims to bring together useful and up to date information across education, health and social care within one website. You can find information, advice and guidance and a range of local support for children and young people with SEND.

We're always working hard to make the SEND Local Offer as helpful as possible. Together with parent carers and other professionals, we regularly review and update the information.

Below are some of the newest updates on the SEND Local Offer:

[Alternative Provision](#) – information to help families understand different education options.

[Specialist Provision in Telford and Wrekin](#) – clear details about what's available locally.

[Young People Zone](#) – a dedicated space for young people to explore information that they have told us, matters to them.

[Working Together for Parent Participation \(WTPP\)](#) – updates on how families can get involved and have their voices heard.

[SEND Local Offer](#)

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**Let's Talk
SEND**

Family Signing Project Celebration Event

Shropshire Deaf Children's Society held a celebration event to mark the finale of their Family Signing Project

In January, [Shropshire Deaf Children's Society \(SDCS\)](#) held a celebration event to mark the finale of their Family Signing Project funded by the [National Deaf Children's Society](#).

Over the past year, we've been working to create more opportunities for deaf children and their families to develop communication and language skills in the local community. A key part of this has been our SIS ([Sensory Inclusion service](#)) **Family Sign Language Project**.

As part of this project we ran **18 Family Sign Language sessions**, led by a local deaf BSL tutor and supported by volunteers from the charity and SIS. These sessions gave families fun ways to learn together, helped strengthen communication at home, and created valuable peer support networks. We are hopeful that the success of this project will allow us to provide future, local BSL training.

[Read more here about our BSL Celebration Event](#)

**Future Focus
SEN Education and
Training Event**



**Exploring options for post 16
education and training?**

Come along to our specialist SEN education and training info event on

Monday 11th May at Wellington Methodist Church,
New Hall Road, Wellington,
Telford TF1 1LU from **4 - 6.30pm.**

Key staff from local colleges and training providers will be available for you and your family / carer to talk to.



How much screen time should children have?

Does screen time affect speech, language and communication skills?

More and more children are using screens, this is having an impact upon the way children communicate and interact with each other.

Children's brains develop fastest in the first 5 years of life. During this time speech, language and communication skills are being developed as the brain forms and every interaction counts. Making eye contact, sharing smiles and talking to your child is important to help brain development.

Screens are becoming a huge part of many children's lives and using a screen for too long can stop this brain development.

**What do we mean by too long?
And how can we think differently?**

Helping your child thrive in the early years

How much is too much screen time for children?

Neuro-affirming Language Guide

From Telford & Wrekin Educational Psychology Service (EPS)

Explore our 'bitesize' language guide: designed to help people learn, reflect, and grow in how they use language around neurodiversity. It was first made for people working with children and young people, but it can be useful for anyone.

***'This guide is not about prescribing "correct" words
it's about inspiring a shift in mindset.'***

Why It Matters

When we change our language, we change lives.

Help create environments where neurodivergent children and young people feel seen, heard, and valued.

[Read the full story](#)

[Download the Neuro-affirming Language Guide](#)

PODS Parent Carer Forum Survey

Last chance to have your say!

"Sharing experiences, driving change, building futures
- empowering SEND families"

PODS Parent Carer Forum is keen to hear your voice.

We are collecting your experiences of education, health, social care, and community service, from Telford and Wrekin families with children and young people aged 0-25years

This survey will take approximately 6 minutes to complete.

As a thank you, if you wish to be entered into a prize draw to win a £50 shopping voucher, please complete your name/ email/ telephone details at the end of the form.

[Complete the PODS survey](#)

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SENDIASS Update

Connecting with our community

We're always looking for better ways to reach and support parent carers in our local community. This includes visiting marketplaces, attending school coffee mornings, hosting drop-in sessions, information sessions and offering online support through Microsoft Teams.

We are placing a strong focus on community outreach. Building on the success of last year's drop-in sessions at Lawley Community Hub, we applied for a grant to continue delivering these sessions. We're pleased to share that our application was successful and we are now working with Lawley hub to plan dates for the next 12 months.

Once confirmed, dates will be shared on our social media channels

[Visit the SENDIASS website](#)

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Health Updates

Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service



CAMHS **(Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)** **is moving to a new service model across** **Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin**

Starting April 1, 2026, there's going to be a new way to help children and young people in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin when they're feeling worried, sad, or in need of extra support.

What's changing?

A group of health workers and helpers called MPFT are starting a new service. Lots of families, children and young people were asked what would help children and young people the most, this feedback was used to guide and develop this new service.

If you're already getting help from BeeU, don't worry! Nothing will change for you, and you will continue to be supported.

Read the full story to find out what makes this service special.

[Read the full story](#)

Frequently asked questions

What's changing? Information pack

Healthier Together



Support available while waiting for a health appointment or assessment

There are a range of local support providers that you and your child can access while you wait for a health appointment or assessment.

The **Healthier Together** website provides information for families whose children are waiting for a health assessment or appointment. We recognise that waiting for services can be concerning and frustrating.

Visit the website to find links to resources and support available.

Visit the Healthier Together website

NHS Waiting Times

Is your child waiting to be seen by a speech therapist, occupational therapist or physiotherapist?

Children's Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy services have a waiting time tracker on their websites which help to let you know how long the current waiting time is.

[Read the full story to see how services are improving](#)

What is Glue Ear?

Glue Ear is a condition that lots of children experience in their early years

Glue Ear is caused by a build-up of fluid (which is sticky) in the middle ear and this can cause hearing loss.

This build-up of fluid means that the parts of the middle ear cannot move and work properly. Usually this is temporary and will go away on its own, although for some it can be more persistent and as well as hearing loss, it can impact on language development.

Glue Ear can be in one or both ears, and importantly, hearing levels can change; it is usually worse for children in the winter months.

Read the attached guidance below to find out how you can support children with Glue Ear.

[Read the full story](#)

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Activities and Events

Special Approach to Making it REAL

PODS and Family Hubs are offering a 'Making it REAL' workshop for families with children aged 0 - 5 with SEND

This workshop supports parent carers to build their knowledge and confidence in helping their children develop early reading and writing skills, while creating a positive and supportive home-learning environment.

Check out the full story for booking details.

[Read the full story](#)

ICAN2 Youth Clubs

A safe, supportive space for young people to grow, socialise, and enjoy new experiences

'4All Foundation', are running 2 youth clubs per week for ICAN2 members **aged 11-17**. A welcoming and fun youth club where young people can make friends, try new activities, and be themselves in a safe, supportive space.

They run every Friday 4.30 - 6.30pm at Arleston Community Centre and Saturday 2 - 4pm at Hollinswood Centre.

If you or your child would like to apply to be an **ICAN2 member** and access these fantastic opportunities, you can download an application form on www.telfordsend.org or email shortbreaks@telford.gov.uk.

If you are eligible, we will send you an information pack and a membership card in the post.



[ican2 on the SEND Local Offer](#)

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Parent Carer Support groups

Telford All Age Autism Hub

Children's services (0 - 18 years) at a glance

For families in Telford and Wrekin, supporting a child who is autistic or awaiting assessment can feel overwhelming. Our All Age Autism Hub Children's Service is here to offer understanding, guidance, and a welcoming community where families can connect and feel supported.

Whether your child has a diagnosis or is still on the assessment pathway, our Hub provides help for children and young people aged 0–18yrs, along with their parent carers. Our aim is to empower autistic people and their families through a non-judgemental environment that builds confidence, knowledge, and awareness of neurodiversity.

Support tailored to your family:

- 1:1 Advice Appointments
- Training Workshops
- Inclusive Group Activities



Read the full story

Read more here. Telford Autism Hub: What's on?

SENDIASS: SEN Support Workshop

Parent carers are invited to join SENDIASS for an informative SEN Support Workshop

This session is designed to help parent carers feel more confident in understanding the support available for children with special educational needs. It will provide practical advice and clear guidance on key areas, including:

- Understanding SEN Support
- The Local Offer and school offer
- The graduated approach
- Preparing for a meeting

The workshop will be delivered online via **Microsoft Teams** on
Wednesday 25th February, 5:00pm – 6:30pm.

To book your place, please call 01952 457176 or email info@iass.org.uk.



Download the leaflet

SENDIASS Survey

Your feedback matters!

Telford and Wrekin Council want to hear from anyone that has had some experience of Telford and Wrekin SENDIASS. We want to understand what is working well and what could be improved in the future to better meet people's needs.

Your answers will be confidential and anonymised and will not affect any entitlement to other services. The survey is voluntary and will take about **10 minutes** to complete.

The deadline for responses is **Friday 6th March**.



[Read the full story](#)

[Complete the survey](#)

PODS 'One Community' Conference

PODS are hosting a 'One Community' Conference, celebrating a range of disabilities and additional needs

We are hosting a conference to bring together a range of experiences at our 'One Community' Conference on **Thursday 26th March 9am- 2pm**.

We will be offering sharing and learning by PODS staff/ volunteer team across a range of disabilities including Down Syndrome, PMLD, Complex Needs, Sensory, Wheelchair users, Epilepsy, Learning Disability, Cerebral Palsy, Musculoskeletal, and more...

This conference is **open to all** – parent carers,

wider community and professionals.



[Book your ticket here](#)

PODS 18th Birthday Celebration

PODS are delighted to invite you to their Birthday party/ ball on Saturday 25th April 2026

It is with great pleasure that we announce PODS will be commemorating 18 remarkable years of service and involvement of parent carers this year. We are organising an 18th birthday celebration spring ball at **The Park House Hotel**, located at Park Street, Shifnal, TF11 9BA, on **Saturday, 25 April 2026**. We would love you to join us.



[Read full event details here](#)

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Local Offer for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)



Discover all you need to know about education, health and care services in Telford and Wrekin.



www.telfordsend.org.uk

Telford and Wrekin

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