

# SEND FAMILIES NEWS SPLASH

**A newsletter for parents/carers  
covering all things SEND in  
Swindon**

## Welcome



Welcome to the March 2023 edition of our parent carer monthly newsletter, which has been developed following a request from families. This newsletter is not a replacement for or a repeat of the weekly SEND News Splash.

This month's SEND Families News Splash includes:

- A profile of our Statutory SEND Service - Delivery Support Officers
- Home Carers
- Independent Travel Team
- Updates this month on the Local Offer

If you would like to see the back editions of the SEND Families News Splash, you can visit the [SEND Families News Splash](#) page on the Local Offer.

# Meet the SEND Service



## Statutory SEND Service - Delivery Support Officers

The SEND Statutory Service has two main functions:

1. To manage the statutory needs assessment process for children & young people where it has been agreed that the child/young person has met both parts of the legal test
2. To manage the annual review processes for Education Health and Care Plans

In late February 2023 we profiled the Preparation of Adulthood Team and looked at what the team do week in and week out and a little bit about who are the team behind the team leaders!

If you missed this or any of the other SEND Team profiles, you can find it along with other SEND Families News Splash editions, on the [Local Offer SEND News Letters page](#).

This month we will look at the Delivery Support Officers for the Statutory teams.

You can get to know more about members of the SEND Service and view their 'All About Me' profiles, on the [Meet the SEND Service page](#).



## Introduction to the Delivery Support Officers by Annabel T

Within Swindon's Statutory SEND Service, there are five delivery support officers (DSO's). These officers sit within the review teams (north and south), the assessment team, the preparation for adulthood team and the SEND Operations Team

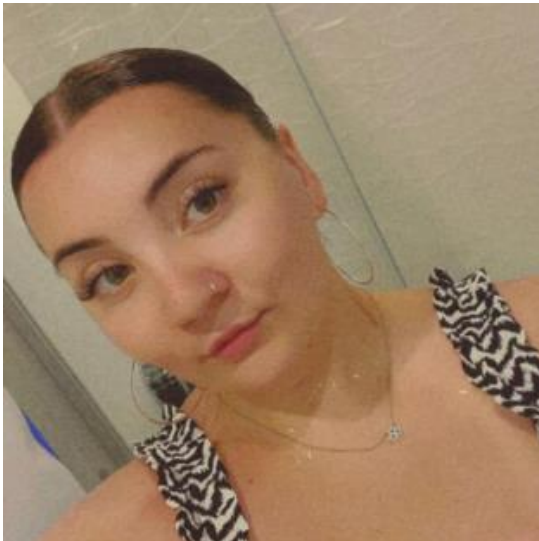
The DSO's are the front door to the service and process all emails, post, phone calls and SEND Portal submissions into the service. They are responsible for receiving and responding to emails and phone calls from members of the public appropriately, triaging accordingly, passing onto the correct officer and saving to the system. The SEND front door implementation has meant that we are now able to track calls where our families feel that they have not been responded to in a timely manner. We triage all correspondence and provide a performance report on timely call backs to our team members; team leaders and Head of Service on a monthly basis

On average, the DSO's process around 2000 contacts into the service per calendar month and these can range from queries that directly relate to the SEND Service, but will also signpost people to services using Local Offer website.

As DSO's are busy processing so many correspondences it is essential that they are able to think on their feet to make sure people receive the help they need whilst feeling listened to ensuring that children and young people remain central to the work we do.

The DSO's also support with data entry, drafting and sending out letters in a timely manner, preparing and attending meetings including SEND Panel, and any other administrative duties that help with the smooth running of our statutory teams.

Our DSO's are a consistent and reliable source of support providing an efficient standard of service to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and their parents and carers.



## **Annabel, Delivery Support Officers**

What does Annabel like about being a DSO:

What I like most about my role is being the first point of contact for a lot of people who use or rely on the service. The SEND Service can be a busy, fast-paced environment and sometimes we get calls and emails of all different natures. I thoroughly enjoy conversing with families and professionals through meetings, phone calls or emails and reassuring them that they are being listened to and they do matter. Sometimes a little task such as responding to an email with what action has been done can really lighten up someone's day and make them feel recognised within the SEND Service.

My role is based within the assessment team and what I enjoy about working in this team is knowing that each request, query, piece of advice or phone call relating to a statutory assessment is actioned in a timely manner and passed onto the correct member of staff to try and prevent any delays but also, to achieve the best outcomes for that child or young person going through the statutory assessment process.

To me, the best thing about being a Delivery Support Officer is delivering support to my colleagues within SEND Service, anyone who relies on the SEND Service for advice, care and structure and being part of a supportive service to the children, young people and their families within Swindon.

Below the DSO's have described what they enjoy about being Delivery Support Officer's. Here is what they said.



## **Lisa, Delivery Support Officer**

What does Lisa like about being a DSO:

"I really enjoy the varied tasks that I carry out as a delivery Support Officer. I am one of the first points of contact and therefore having worked hands on in SEND previously I am privileged to be able to use my knowledge and experience to support both families and EHCP Coordinators."



## **Sally, Delivery Support Officer**

What does Sally like about being an DSO:

"I enjoy working as a Delivery Support Office in a friendly supportive team."

As the first point of contact via phone and email, my role is varied and busy. I enjoy talking to and assisting parents, children, young people and professionals with the processes the SEND Service provides.

I have both experience and empathy for SEND children and young people and am pleased to be working in a role that supports them. The best part of my role is knowing that I have helped to support a family to access the support they really need."



## **Anna, Delivery Support Officer**

What does Anna like about being a DSO:

"I love the variety of situations we deal with, ranging from questioning parents to busy coordinators to financial queries, just to name a few. As a DSO I am able to communicate with and help my SBC colleagues and with the wider public, and it's incredibly rewarding to see positive outcomes as a result of my role within the wider SEND service."

There is currently a vacancy DSO position in SEND Operations following the departure of the previous post holder.

You can get to know more about members of the SEND Service and view their 'All About Me' profiles, on the [Meet the SEND Service page](#).

## **Home carers**



Home from Home is a scheme in Swindon that give short breaks, respite, to families with children and young people of all ages with disabilities. The arrangements are flexible and typically one weekend a month but may be more or may be less depending on the needs of the family. Home from Home provides families with regular and much needed short breaks, with the knowledge and peace of mind that their children are being cared for in a caring and safe environment. This not only provides families with some respite, but also provides the children with opportunities to extend their own 'families' and expand their experiences.

The scheme is overseen by Swindon Borough Council's Fostering Team, working alongside the Disabled Children's Team. Carers are assessed, trained and supported like all our foster carers are, and the expectations are the same. Home from Home carers receive an allowance. This is a good option for people who work full time.

We are hoping to reach individuals who have worked with children and young people who:

- Need assistance with mobility
- Individuals with complex health and care needs.
- On the autistic spectrum or
- Have learning difficulties

Although applicants do not need to have experience with disability, as training will be provided, these skills and experience are valuable in being a Home from Home carer.

Can you please help us with getting the word out about our need for more carers?

There is a lot of information about fostering and Home from Home on our website.

[Home from home placements | Swindon Borough Council](#)

Call: [07917 503447](tel:07917503447)

Email: [fosteringrecruitment@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:fosteringrecruitment@swindon.gov.uk)

## Independent Travel Team

On Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March the Independent Travel team had their soft launch at the Conference for Head Teacher's at STEAM museum.



## INDEPENDENT TRAVEL



The Independent Travel Team, Charlie and Morgan, attended the event to 'soft' launch the Independent Travel offer, giving out information and never before seen Independent Travel promotional materials.

The team were able to have many discussions with a range of different professionals and services from different educational provisions. They also shared what the vision for the Independent Travel offer was and how it would benefit Children/Young people as well as their parents/carers. The offer also benefits educational provision by promoting and teaching independence.

The team had a lot of positive feedback on what the offer provides and for putting this into place. They also received many questions about further development such as; could they start at primary schools and could they go into classrooms to teach the early stages of independent travel such as road safety and stranger danger etc.

Feedback was 100% positive and everyone is keen to see what the Independent Travel Team will be able to offer and how they will be able to make a difference to the lives of our young people.

**The ITT offer will be launched officially on 9th May 2023.**

To find out more about the Independent Travel Team you can visit their [Swindon Local Offer page- Independent Travel](#).

## Updates this month on the Local Offer

# The Swindon Local Offer

The Local Offer is being updated all the time, it can be quite hard to know what information is on the Local Offer from week to week.

Below are updates on new pages to visit on the Local Offer this month:

- [Supporting children where English is not their first language](#) - This page provides links to websites with resources suitable for learners with English as an additional language. On this page you will find links to resources included websites that are recent, free and contain either advice, downloadable teaching or planning resources and are suitable for children from a variety of language backgrounds and ages.
- [Speech and Language Therapy's Useful information and resources](#) - is a page full of resources for children and young people that are good for promoting listening, understanding, expressive language and vocabulary.
- [Flexible Joints](#) - Swindon Borough Council in collaboration with students from Swindon New College, helped produce, film, edit videos for this page, which explains what it means to have flexible joints and how to live and manage the experience.

## Helpful links

[The Local Offer](#)

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[Meet the SEND Service](#)

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[Independent Travel](#)

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[Frequently Asked Questions for SEND](#)

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[Local Offer YouTube page - PLEASE SUBSCRIBE!!!](#)



[If you would like to give feedback on the Local Offer please click here](#)

**Swindon Borough Council**

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