

SEND FAMILIES NEWS SPLASH

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

Welcome



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

This month's SEND Families News Splash includes:

- A profile of SEND Travel Team
- Applying for SEND Travel

- Travel Passenger Assistants
- “You said, we did” – Timing of requests for education health and care needs assessments
- Deaf Awareness Week
- Peer awards at the SEND Conference 2023

If you would like to see the back editions of the SEND Families News Splash, as well as the weekly SEND News Splash, Swindon SEND Families News Splash and the Speech and Language newsletters and resources, you can visit the [SEND Newsletters](#) page on the Local Offer.

Meet the SEND Service



Introduction to the SEND Travel Team

In March 2023 we profiled the Delivery Support Officers and looked at what these individuals do, week in and week out, for their teams. We also found out what they love about the roles they do.

So far we have looked at the review teams (north and south), the assessment team and the preparation for adulthood team. If you missed any of the 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 Travel 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](#).

SEND Travel

Kerry, North Travel Team Leader, SEND Travel



Hi, my name is Kerry and I work as the North Travel Team Leader

Between the North and South team, on a daily basis, we work hard to ensure that over 900 children and young people are able to attend education which is no mean feat. The team often also assist by covering as passenger assistants when sickness levels are high. In addition to this they plan routes, assess applications, pay invoices and arranging transport for social care passengers to activities such as to day care or appointments and whilst maintaining our own small fleet of transport. North and South are split into 2 teams.

North Travel Team



Kerry, North Travel Team Leader, SEND Travel

What does Kerry like about being a Travel Team Leader:

"Knowing that the assistance we offer makes a difference to so many local families."



Carrie, Travel Coordinator

What does Carrie like about being a Travel Coordinator:

"The thing I like about my job is knowing that we help to relieve some of the pressure on struggling families."



Justine, Travel Coordinator

What does Justine like about being a Travel Coordinator:

"Knowing that children are travelling to school safely, and achieving their goals."



Miles, Travel Assistant

What does Miles like about being a Travel Assistant:

"The best thing about my job is being able to make a positive difference to the children & young people that need transport to be able to get to school."



Kieran, Travel Apprentice

What does Kieran like about being a Travel Apprentice:

"The best thing about my job is being able to transport Children and young people to and from school so we can relieve stress from parents."

South Travel Team



**Suzanna, South Travel
Team Leader, SEND
Travel**

What does Suzanna like about being a Travel Team Leader:

"The great team I work with."



**Pamela, Travel
Coordinator**

What does Pamela like about being a Travel Coordinator:

"It's very versatile and it explores my abilities to deal with the challenges that I face on a daily basis. I also enjoy understanding the different levels of disability that are experienced by children and young people and helping to provide them with a great service."

**Oana, Travel
Coordinator.**



What does Oana like about being a Travel Coordinator:

"The best thing about my job is to ensure that children and young people are safe on their journeys to and from school."



Yvonne, Travel Coordinator.

What does Yvonne like about being a Travel Coordinator:

"The best thing about my job is that it's very rewarding when you have satisfied service users."

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

Applying for SEND Travel



The travel application window is now open and will close on Sunday 4th June 2023.

In order to avoid any delays, travel applications need to be submitted as soon as possible for the start of the autumn term. Applications may take up to 6 weeks to be processed.

Please note the closing date of 4th June does not apply to EHCPs where Section I states 'type' and not a specific provision name.

You need to apply if:

- You are applying for transport for the first time
- You went through the appeals process last year
- Your child has gone from age 7 to 8, meaning the eligibility criteria changes from 2 to 3 miles
- Your child is changing schools
- You have changed address

All applications from Swindon Borough Council residents are assessed fairly and equitably according to the Home to School Transport Policy 2023/2024, the policy is available from: [Swindon Local Offer - Swindon transport policy](#).

For all families wishing to apply please use: [Swindon Local Offer - Applying for school travel assistance](#).

For any questions please email the relevant travel hub:

travelsouth@swindon.gov.uk

travelnorth@swindon.gov.uk

SEND Travel application page on the Local Offer

Travel Passenger Assistants



The role of a Passenger Assistant is such an important role. Our 120+ PAs transport and support over 900 Children and Young People with SEND to get to school. They act as an essential link between home and school and they face a range of challenges daily.

In February 2023, the Council's communications team ran a story about our PAs and the role that they play, this followed Councillor Ibitoye shadowing one of our morning runs, with one of our long serving PAs Derek. It was lovely to see the team receive such praise, recognition and publicity. If you missed it here is the link: [Praise for council transport team \(swindonlink.com\)](https://www.swindonlink.com).

If you know of any family, friends or acquaintances who would like to join the PA Team please do let one of the Travel Team Leaders know, we are always recruiting for these roles so would love to hear from them.

“You said, we did” – Timing of requests for education health and care needs assessments



The SEND Service is continuously looking at ways to improve collaborative working with schools, parents and other partners. As a parent or a professional known to a child you are free to make an EHC needs assessment at any time – it is a legal right you have. However, following feedback from school settings that ‘consultations’ (which happens at week 16–17) were falling in periods of schools closure, such as the summer holidays and other 2 week holidays we have created a calendar which indicates ‘good’ (colour coded in green) submission weeks that will avoid this happening.

Submitting a request with this in mind, means there will be no delay in naming a school in section I of your child’s EHCP. Schools will be open and available to provide a response to us in a timely fashion, highlighting if they feel they can or cannot meet your needs. As part of the assessment you will always be asked to express a preference for a school for your child to attend.

To view this calendar on the local offer, please [click here](#).

The calendar also takes in to consideration external advice givers such as Educational Psychologists, who need to complete an assessment (week 6–12 of the 20 week process) of a child or young person in

context and speak to school staff, as they know them well. If this falls in the summer holidays when your child's school is closed, it will significantly impact on the quality of the assessment which may have implications for you, your child and the school.

We have also created a spreadsheet which indicates when the assessment period would typically fall (week 6-12) as well as the consultation period based on each submission week. This spreadsheet also indicates when any of these key dates falls during a period of school closure, for 2 weeks or more. To view his spreadsheet, [please click here](#).

We hope you and any professionals known to your child find this helpful if you are considering making a request for an EHC needs assessment as it will ensure there are no delays and the highest quality assessment can be completed for your child.

It's important to reiterate **this is just guidance and you or any professional known to your child are free to submit a request at any time.**

Deaf Awareness Week 2023 May 1st-8th



Image by [Freepik](#)

The theme for this years' Deaf Awareness Week is '[Access to Communication](#)'. This is a great time to reflect on all of the things you do in your setting to ensure that your deaf children and young people are included, as well as maybe learning a bit more about deafness.

Here are some suggested activities that you could do:

- Students could be encouraged to think about their own experience of deaf people and share their experiences of people they know or have met who are deaf. What do they already know about deafness? This could be in relation to hearing technology, communication, information about the ear, subtitles or sign language.
- Create a Deaf Awareness Poster to display in your settings – See attached example
- Share a story with your class that has a deaf character – complete a character study or description.
 - You can find a list of books here: [Books \(ndcs.org.uk\)](#).
 - Remember you also have your book bag that was donated by HST and the Local Deaf Children Society! (Primary Schools Only)
- Explore 'How reliable is lip reading?' – [Deaf Awareness How Reliable is Lipreading? Activity \(twinkl.co.uk\)](#).
- Create a mind map of all the different ways of communicating
- Discuss how technology is used to communicate or receive information e.g. text messages, mobile phones, tablets, laptops, PC etc. Which technology do your students use themselves? What are the benefits?
- Sign Language: Discuss what sign language is. When is it used? How is it used?
 - Do any students know any signs?
 - Fingerspelling – Can your students learn how to spell their name?
 - [Fingerspelling Alphabet – British Sign Language \(BSL\) \(british-sign.co.uk\)](#).
- Research some famous deaf people and their careers – what helped them to succeed? [Deaf Awareness Famous People Fact File-Scottish \(twinkl.co.uk\)](#).
- Make links to science by looking at the ear and how it works. Label a diagram of the ear, explore how sound travels, look at loudness and pitch of everyday sounds.

There are some more great resources on the following websites:

[Deaf Awareness Week Activities | Deaf Awareness Week Pack \(twinkl.co.uk\)](#)

Please find below some useful contacts and information:



Useful Contacts and Information



Swindon Hearing Support Team	01793 493920 – office number HSTAdmin@swindon.gov.uk
Great Western Hospital Audiology Department	01793 604065 gwh.audiology.dept@nhs.net
West Swindon Audiology Clinic	01793 889420
Requesting new batteries:	Use your Yellow Battery Card to request new batteries.
National Deaf Children's Society – NDCS	www.ndcs.org.uk
Swindon and North Wilts Deaf Children's Society - SNWDCS	www.swindonandnorthwiltsdcs.org swindon@ndcsgroup.org.uk
Swindon Speech and Language Therapy	localoffer.swindon.gov.uk/content/send-local-offer/landing-pages/health-landing-pages-and-content-pages/health-needs/speech-and-language-therapy/speech-and-language-therapy-menus/
West of England Hearing Implant Team	0117 3421607 WEIP@UHBW.nhs.net
Oxford Auditory Implant Team	01865 234881 auditoryimplantprogramme@ouh.nhs.uk
University of Southampton Auditory Implant Team	023 8059 3522 ais@soton.ac.uk
Fire Services and Smoke Alarms	0800 038 2323 safeandwell@dwfire.org.uk
999 Text Service	To Register: Write an SMS text which just says "register" and send it to 999. They will reply with a message telling you more about the service. When you have read their message reply with "yes".
Adult Services Hearing and Vision Team	Nikki Bullock 01793 463333/07717808954 nbullock@swindon.gov.uk
Disability Living Allowance	www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children
NDCS Advice and Guidance Helpline	Landline: 0808 800 8880 SMS: 0786 00 22 888 BSL Interpreter: SignVideo (through website) (All services available Monday-Thursday 9am-5pm and Friday 9am-12:30pm)

C/O The Dorcan Academy
St Paul's Drive
Swindon
SN3 5DA

01793 544021
HSTAdmin@swindon.gov.uk

**Peer awards at the SEND Conference
2023**



As part of the SEND Conference in June 2023, we are planning 8 peer awards to recognise the work that practitioners and professionals in Swindon undertake for children, young people and their families in Swindon.

Two of these awards are dedicated for families to be able to express their thanks to practitioners and professionals who have gone over and above their job role to support them.

We have extended the closing date for nominations to Friday, 5 May 2023 to allow time for you to consider who you may wish to nominate for an award. If you do wish to nominate someone, please use this [link](#).

Helpful links

[The Local Offer](#)

[Meet the SEND Service](#)

[Travel Assistance pages on the Local Offer](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions for SEND](#)

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

Civic Offices, Euclid Street, Swindon
United Kingdom

You received this email because you
signed up on our website or made
purchase from us.



[Unsubscribe](#)