



Weekly Snapshot from EFF

Week ending- 17/1/2025

You said:	We did:
<p>West Essex – Stacey had discussions with Family Well-Being Hub in Waltham Abbey regarding the need for a free youth club in the Epping forest district area. We asked parent/carers in the area for their thoughts and received a lot of feedback saying this would be very well received.</p>	<p>We are pleased to share that because of your voice and feedback you made it happen! They now have a youth club running at the Hazelwood family hub in Waltham Abbey.</p>
<p>Update South – Short Breaks: Feedback included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Uncertainty around what the short breaks offer is from Butterflies.</i> • <i>Some parents are finding it difficult to access Butterflies, not getting past the meet and greet stage.</i> • <i>The stay and play suggested meets are not suitable for older children and not a great environment for a meet and greet.</i> • <i>No meet offered in an environment familiar to the child.</i> • <i>Only day trips are offered for older children which are not suitable for everyone and minimises choice/options.</i> • <i>Feeling that Butterflies didn't understand the needs of older children.</i> <p><i>There is confusion around Activ8 being a part of short breaks, with parents approaching them as an alternative, and being told they only offer SEND provision to those who receive free school meals.</i></p> <p><i>There is no clear list of mainstream providers for parents to access, who have received</i></p>	<p>Kate and Julia met with Hazel from the Short Breaks team to discuss the feedback from various sources. Hazel explained the flexibility of the Butterflies offer, addressed booking system issues, and clarified the relationship between Short Breaks and Activ8 Essex. She also agreed to update the Short Breaks website with more information on mainstream providers and support for those aged 19+.</p> <p>Butterflies Offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible and supports young people with complex needs. • Focuses on promoting independence. • Families previously supported by other providers should contact Butterflies to see what they can do for them. • Butterflies will help young people transition to age-appropriate support after they turn 20. <p>Booking System:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butterflies reverted to their old system due to issues with the new one. • Families who haven't heard back should contact Butterflies or reach out via our Graffiti Wall for assistance. Feedback Wall Essex Family Forum



<p><i>funding from the short breaks team to offer a SEND provision.</i></p> <p><i>There is no provision for those aged 19-25 in the South.</i></p>	<p><u>Short Breaks and Activ8 Essex:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not linked; Activ8's SEND offer is separate from Short Breaks. <p><u>Website Updates:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Breaks website will list mainstream providers in receipt of Short Breaks funding. • Information/links to support for those aged 19+ will be added. • Changes aim to make accessing the Short Breaks offer easier for parents and carers. <p><u>Ongoing Feedback:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will meet with Hazel to share further feedback when received.
<p>*Update* Issues accessing Blue Badge through the Hidden Disabilities route</p>	<p>As we are hearing more and more about this issue from families, we are putting out a post on our Facebook page shortly, asking for families' experiences with this. This will enable us to show the full extent of the issue when we feed this back to the senior leaders within Essex County Council</p>
<p>Mid Essex – at a Home Start session this week, Claire heard from families who were worried about their child starting school in September – parents/carers questioned if the school be able to support their child, and if their child be able to settle in school?</p>	<p>This will be highlighted at the next Mid Essex StartWell meeting in February</p>
<p>We have received feedback in NEE regarding changes within the continence services, specifically to the changes to the offer of the continence pads provided to those eligible. There is concern around the impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the children/young people using pads that are not meeting their needs/not effective • their families, practical and financial implications • their educational settings 	<p>We will raise this feedback within the relevant team. We ask that you continue to share any additional feedback on this issue via the graffiti wall.</p>



In other news.....

- Claire met with Tracy Edmonston from the ESSET Outreach Service – she is working with mainstream schools in Mid Essex to support them with strategies for their SEND children. She will be taking copies of our Supporting Your Neurodivergent Child to the schools she visits to benefit families.
- Claire & Julia attended meetings this week for the SET Therapies pilot – they provided input for the wording of letters to families explaining the process of the pilot.
- Claire & Kate attended the monthly Forum for professionals working around the Learning Disability Annual Health Checks, and gave feedback as to why families may find it difficult to take their young person to their Annual Health Check.
- Katrina represented EFF at an online NNPCF discussion group held by the Law Commission on the Disabled Children’s Social Care Consultation Paper. This covers the current legal framework for disabled children’s Social Care and provisional proposals on how the framework could be improved. Parent carers can see the consultation and respond here until 31st Jan [Law Commission consultation on disabled children's social care law - Ministry of Justice - Citizen Space](#)
- Stacey attended an introduction/demonstration of a new service in Essex – KIDS autism Hub. This is for 12+ year olds who have recently received a diagnosis of Autism, or are on the pathway awaiting assessment. It is a website where individuals log-in to access advice and support. They run regular Webinars on a wide range of topics. Access is also available to the parent/carers of young children. They have put a lot of thought and effort into this service. The people running the workshops have lived and professional experience, so individuals can gain a lot of support, advice and understanding.
- Sarah attended the Maze Coffee Mornings in both Clacton (last week) and Mistley this week and gathered feedback, shared the “Supporting Your Neurodivergent Child” resource pack as well as signposted parents and carers to relevant support and information.
- Sarah attended the PINS coffee mornings at Hazelmere Infant School and Monkwick Infant school this week.