



# Weekly Snapshot from EFF

Week ending- 24/1/2025

You said:	We did:
<p><b>Mid – Non-attendance fines.</b> At a parent support group in Braintree, Claire heard about two families of children at secondary school who have been fined or close to being fined because their child cannot attend school due to anxiety. Both children have diagnosed SEND and one was refused a letter by the doctor.</p>	<p>This will be brought to the attention of the Attendance Team in Mid Essex to see if there is any guidance for families in this situation</p>
<p><b>North East – Speech and Language Support.</b> We have heard from families seeking additional support around accessing speech and language support. One family shared that they have been told the wait list is very long and they are unlikely to meet the criteria.</p>	<p>Seek further guidance from the speech and language team regarding resources and support available for families.</p>
<p><b>South – ADHD Prescribing Issues.</b> We have heard that some families are experiencing difficulties in accessing prescriptions for ADHD medication from their GP. This seems to be currently affecting those in the Brentwood area.</p>	<p>This has been raised with health board (ICB), and we are waiting on communication from MSE ICB on this issue.</p>
<p><b>South – Parental Blame</b> Conversations with charities and parents at events, coffee mornings and feedback on the GW over the last few months have revealed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents report being blamed by school staff for their child's behaviour.</li> <li>• Accusations feel personal</li> <li>• Lack professional involvement with these families</li> <li>• Difficult to maintain a good relationship with the school.</li> <li>• Stress affects parents' mental health and relationship with their child.</li> </ul>	<p>Kate met with Kerry, the Quadrant Manager for the South SEND Ops team, to discuss various issues. Kerry confirmed that parents should challenge any blame directed at them from school staff. However, SEND Ops cannot get involved unless parents contact the school to complain or report an incident using the school complaints procedure. As this can be stressful, parents can also send an email or letter detailing the incident and request a way forward meeting with the school. At this point, they can request an Engagement Facilitator/Inclusion Partner if needed. She acknowledges the difficulty some parents may face in doing this. Parents are encouraged to seek support from friends, family, or advocacy services like SENDIASS.</p>



	<p>If there's no improvement after these steps, parents can then contact the SEND Ops team for support. An EHCP is not necessary to report incidences of parental blame or poor staff behaviour. Kerry emphasised that maintaining a supportive and respectful relationship between parents and school staff is crucial and they will support where they can.</p> <p>You can find the information for SEND Ops on <a href="#">SEND Operations Team   Essex Local Offer</a></p> <p>Please continue to share your experiences with us via the Graffiti Wall <a href="#">Feedback Wall   Essex Family Forum</a></p>
<p><b>South – Inconsistencies in SENCO Support</b> Some parents are reporting that the information they receive from schools around various support processes and tools for children contradicts advice that is being given to parents by SENDIASS, supporting charities and what is available to the public on the Essex Local Offer and SchoolsInfoLink.</p>	<p>Kate met with Kerry to discuss how to support school staff in knowing where to go to get further advice and information to help families. They also discussed how staff can keep up to date with various new information and initiatives. These include One Planning, Ordinarily Available, EHCP requests, Sensory awareness document, Let's talk, we miss you and TPP for example. School staff have access to all up to date information on Essex Schools InfoLink <a href="#">Essex Schools InfoLink   Essex Schools Infolink</a> This information is in the public domain and accessible to all, including parents and carers</p> <p>School staff can also contact their Inclusion Partners and Engagement Facilitators for support as needed around EP assessments, One Planning and ECHPs, as well as the other SENCOs either within their cluster group or academy trust. If you are not sure of the information around cluster groups, and Inclusion Partners/Engagement Facilitators for your school, please visit <a href="#">Quadrant contacts: South Quadrant structure and contact information   Essex Schools Infolink</a></p> <p>Please continue to share your experiences with us via the Graffiti Wall <a href="#">Feedback Wall   Essex Family Forum</a></p>



**Update - Mid & South – MyCareBridge**

*Some families are reporting App issues. There are still some issues around saving and submitting the form. Parents are unsure of how long they have to complete the form.*

Kate and Claire have been in touch with the portal team. We have been assured that the App has been fixed, which was causing save and submission issues for some parents. The addition of a save function and submission notice have been made. There are plans to alter the view for parents to avoid confusion which seems to have resulted in parents completing the template and not the actual form, causing issues with saving and submission. The time for parents to complete the form has been increased from 2 weeks to 4 weeks.

If you have any issues with My Care Bridge, please ensure that you contact the relevant service provider to report it. Please see the contact details below for each service:

NELFT (Basildon, Brentwood and Thurrock):

[childrensautismADHDassessment@nelft.nhs.uk](mailto:childrensautismADHDassessment@nelft.nhs.uk)

Provide Community (Chelmsford, Braintree and Maldon):

[provide.cccpaediatrics@nhs.net](mailto:provide.cccpaediatrics@nhs.net)

EPUT (Castle Point & Rochford and Southend):

[epunft.Lighthouse.ASD@nhs.net](mailto:epunft.Lighthouse.ASD@nhs.net) or  
[epunft.Lighthouse.ADHD@nhs.net](mailto:epunft.Lighthouse.ADHD@nhs.net)

We are continuing to raise issues as we hear them with the portal team, and would kindly ask that you continue share your experiences with us on the Graffiti Wall [Feedback Wall | Essex Family Forum](#)

## In other news.....

- Stacey has been busy with PINS meetings this week. See website for more details on the project <https://essexfamilyforum.org/portfolio/pins>
- Claire went to visit the new premises for POP Essex, who provide clubs & activities for SEND children and Young People in Braintree. The new premises is wonderful and provides some lovely sessions at the weekend for children, along with a club specifically for girls. Claire talked to the staff, 2 of whom are Family Champions for EFF, and listened to some feedback they are getting from families at the moment.



- Claire attended a parent support group session run by SEND4All in Burnham-On-Crouch on Monday and met some parents with concerns about starting primary school but also about secondary school issues.
- Claire attended a second PINS meeting at Pemberley Academy in Harlow this week.
- This week Sarah attended the Maze coffee morning in Colchester and the PINS coffee morning at Highfields Primary school.
- Kate met with Rachel at SNAP this week to discuss the issues they've been hearing from the parents they support. It was a productive meeting, with both being able to share useful information and feedback.