



Weekly Snapshot from EFF

Week ending- 14th February'25

You said:	We did:
South update Re: Deaf service No readily available list of childminders or nurseries.	<p>Kate received an email from Matthew Bysouth, Lead for Teacher of the Deaf (ToD) service. He confirmed that they do not maintain a list of childminders, nurseries and schools that support deaf children, as all settings have a duty to 'include' deaf children and young people. Matthew's team provide specialist support to the settings regarding the needs of their deaf learners and support a large number of settings/schools in Essex.</p> <p>Families in Essex should have a Teacher of the Deaf from this service allocated to them, unless the family has opted out of this support. Referral into the service usually happens when a diagnosis is given. He advises that parents and carers should contact their allocated Teacher of the Deaf for further advice and support with choosing a setting for their child. They will be able to support you with attending a setting, delivery of free deaf awareness training and providing any information to settings regarding the needs of your child.</p> <p>If you are a HI diagnosed family that has opted out of the Teacher of the Deaf service, but now needs support, then Matthew advised to contact him and his team on the following email address education.psi@essex.gov.uk</p>



	<p>Referrals into the service need to be made by a professional such as SENCO, Health Visitor, Audiologist, etc after a hearing impairment diagnosis is given. Please speak to your SENCO or health professional about the referral criteria and your eligibility.</p> <p>Please continue to share your experience and feedback on our Graffiti Wall Feedback Wall Essex Family Forum</p>
<p>Mid Update Re: School Readiness at a Home Start session in January, Claire heard from families who were worried about their child starting school in September – would the school be able to support their child, and would their child be able to settle in school?</p>	<p>This was raised at the Mid Essex Startwell Working Group on 13th February – Mid Essex are holding School Readiness Roadshows throughout March (please see the main ‘Weekly Snapshot page for the link to this). Parents can attend and speak to teachers, SEND teams within Essex County Council, Autism Central and SENDIASS about their concerns. These roadshows are being held in schools in Mid Essex, in the early evening from 6pm, and parents are welcome to bring their children along.</p> <p>This term the Local Offer SEND Roadshows across Essex will have a focus on Early Years – there are workshops for parents/carers along with SEND Professionals to talk to, including SENDIASS and the SEND teams. For more details on the SEND Roadshow click here.</p>
<p>Mid Essex – Parent/carer question “Can something be included in an EOTAS package to provide for physical exercise if a child has weight issues?”</p>	<p>This will be raised within the Mid Essex SEND Joint Working Group in order to find out what the options are.</p>
<p>Mid Essex – Parent/carer question “What happens with a child’s education when a family is moved between social housing, and they are moved a long way from the</p>	<p>This will be raised within the Mid Essex SEND Joint Working Group.</p>



child's school? How do they travel to and from the school? What if the nearest schools are full?"	
NEE Update Re: Language Barriers – <i>(Feedback received via support group who supports BAME families in NEE).</i> Parents and carers for whom English is not their first language can have difficulties understanding and completing forms.	This was raised at the NEE Joint SEND Working Group and Julia and Katrina are highlighting this at accountability board as an Essex wide issue.
NEE Update Re Use of enforced part-time timetables – We received queries from families whose children have been suggested/or put on part-time/reduced timetables. Families are seeking advice/support regarding their options in response to this.	Please click here to see the information from SENDIASS regarding 'reduced timetables'. We will raise this issue with team and seek information regarding who parents/carers can contact within the Local Authority about this.
NEE Update Re Sports activities in Clacton - In NEE we have heard via one of the providers of sports activities for SEND children and young people that families have reported that there is a lack of available sports activities in the Clacton area. Families have feedback that they would have to travel to Colchester to access activities and this isn't always possible.	We will be attending the 'SEND Sensation' Parent Voices session on the 25 th February and will feedback your comments at this session. If you have any further comments/feedback please share this with us prior to the above meeting. Email hello@essexfamilyforum.org

In other news...

- Claire attended a workshop at Essex County Council County Hall on Tuesday with regard to the development of the Young People's Local Offer. She heard how the development team are researching the views of young people and their families on what this should look like and what it should contain – this is still very much in the development stage but more information will be released as we receive it.
- Julia, Katie & Claire attended the Essex All Age Partnership Board on Wednesday and Julia presented the main findings of our last Family Impact Survey. This was



very well received and started plenty of discussion on how improvements can be made for families.

- Ange, Katrina and Julia attended the first SEND Accountability Board (to replace the SEND Partnership Board). Issues such as with Shared Care Agreements and access to medication, difficulty receiving Blue Badges and termination of Peaceful Ponies as an AP provision were escalated by us. We will be following up on these issues but please do provide further feedback via the Graffiti Wall. Also, presenting was Newton consultancy who will be looking at better outcomes for SEND Families in Essex. They will be working closely with us and there will be communications shortly on how to get involved.
- Sarah attended the MAZE parenting programme at Whitehall School in Clacton to talk to SEND parents and carers on the course about EFF and what we do and how they can use their/their families voices and experience to feedback and help use improve services and provision for SEND families across Essex ([MAZE Parenting Programme - The MAZE Group](#))

PINS Project updates...

- Kate hosted the last official PINS meeting for Stambridge Primary this week. Mrs Loveless is looking forward to working with her parent rep and has really taken the time to consider the best way to move forward and engage with time poor parents at the school. Feedback has shown that parents struggle to get to the in-person sessions due to work commitments and her ideas to continue parent engagement and relationship building include looking to co-produce a newsletter with the parents and rep to support and help with all things SEND. We wish them every success in their venture. They have been a pleasure to work with.
- Stacey attended a SEND parent/carers coffee morning at Burnt Mill academy in Harlow. Feedback from parents was positive. School has some good procedures in place, mostly recognising needs of the student and offering necessary reasonable adjustments to support. The SEN team have worked hard over the last 3 years, where not only SEN team but all teaching staff have systems where they know what each child needs. They are always looking to improve and welcome feedback.