



Weekly Snapshot from EFF

Week ending- 27/6/25

Essex Family Forum receives many comments through our online Graffiti Wall, at events and through our Family Champions. Although we are not able to address all of these through this snapshot, please be assured that all feedback is raised with services and issues that are shared repeatedly are being highlighted.

You said:	We did:
Local Area SEND inspection deferral - Families have shared that they felt the inspection should have gone ahead, as it could have provided a clear opportunity to understand what was working well and where improvements were still needed. Many expressed that capturing good practice from individual areas could have helped establish a stronger starting point for the new ICB, ensuring that lessons learned were carried forward.	Essex Family Forum is also extremely disappointed by this decision and has submitted a formal response (see below for where you can read it in full). We are particularly concerned that both Ofsted and the CQC agreed to the deferral, and we have contacted them directly to raise these concerns. All related documents and updates can be found here: News Essex Family Forum
Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training Rollout - Families have been asking how much longer it will take for the mandatory Oliver McGowan Training to be fully rolled out across all NHS services and other organisations such as the police, schools, and more. Some noted that the ambulance service is only just beginning to receive it, and others have only recently had access themselves, despite working within the NHS. It's been questioned why the rollout is taking so long.	The Health and Care Act 2022 requires CQC-registered providers to ensure staff receive training in learning disability and autism that's appropriate to their role. While the government's preferred programme is the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training, other training may be delivered by providers or services, if it meets the required standards. This means some staff may not have received OMGT specifically but should have completed equivalent training. Providers were expected to update their training by July 2022, with refresher training recommended every three years or when staff roles change.
ARFID Support & Information - We've heard from families that navigating ARFID support isn't always straightforward and that getting the right help can be especially difficult for	In Essex, a commissioned ARFID pathway offers assessment and consultation, with care plans tailored to each young person. Some families may also be offered CBT-



<p>neurodivergent children and young people. Families have told us this lack of support can feel really worrying, particularly given how serious ARFID can be.</p>	<p>based support through CAMHS. Referrals can be made via the SET CAMHS single point of access. Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) CAMHS NELFT NHS Foundation Trust</p> <p>The NHS funds BEAT to deliver ARFID-specific support, including <i>Endeavour</i> — a 10-week online course for parents/carers of children aged 5–15. Learn more on BEAT's website The UK's Eating Disorder Charity - Beat or use their HelpFinder Tool to explore support near you. Local peer support is also available through SEND the Right Message, a South Essex-based charity offering in-person and online ARFID groups STRM Support – Send the Right Message</p> <p>If you're worried about your child's health or nutrition, a GP or another professional may be able to refer to a dietitian. We've asked the Local Offer team to include BEAT's ARFID services, including the NHS-commissioned <i>Endeavour</i> course, in the ARFID section, as these aren't currently listed.</p> <p>Please continue to share your experiences with us via our Graffiti Wall Feedback Wall Essex Family Forum</p>
<p>Social Care Support - We are hearing from families that are struggling to get needs assessments and/or support from social care when they have children with violent, challenging behaviour especially in the home.</p>	<p>As we hear this a lot from families, we are looking to set up a meeting with Social Care leads as soon as possible to look at the options</p> <p>Please continue to share your experiences with us via our Graffiti Wall Feedback Wall Essex Family Forum</p>
<p>Applying for an EHCP - Families have told us that some schools are refusing to apply for an EHC Needs Assessment for their child, even though the family believe their child is struggling in school</p>	<p>An EHC plan may be necessary when a child/young person (aged up to 25) need more help than is available through special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) support that is ordinarily available.</p>



	<p>You can find out more on the link below about what an EHC plan is and how to apply for an assessment. You can apply as a parent or a young person aged 16-25 can apply for themselves.</p> <p>What an EHCP is and who they are for Essex Local Offer</p>
<p>Pre-school sessions for SEND - Some families are telling us that some pre-schools will only offer a few sessions a week for a child with SEND due to their additional needs</p>	<p>This is being raised with the Start Well teams and Early Years teams to see what should be on offer to families</p> <p>If you have experienced this, please share your experiences with us via our Graffiti Wall Feedback Wall Essex Family Forum</p>

In other news.....

- Kate attended the South Essex Roadshow last week, connecting with parent carers, local support organisations, and education professionals. Key topics included post-16 and secondary school transitions, support for children out of school, and limited mental health services for neurodivergent young people. Feedback on the new OA document will be shared with the SEND Navigator team to support ongoing improvements and ensure parent carer voices continue to shape the information and resources being developed.
- Ange and Kate met with the PFA team for their regular monthly feedback and information-sharing meeting, with a focus on improving how events and updates are communicated to families and professionals. The ECC SEND PFA Targeted Employment team are working to strengthen post-16 pathways and Preparing for Adulthood by improving coordination, clarity, and timeliness. A new events calendar and inclusive transition resource pack are in development for launch from September 2025. The team also emphasised their commitment to better communication and to ensuring that young people's voices are heard and supported as they move into adulthood.
- Sarah attended the North East Essex SEND Roadshow which was held in Tiptree on Tuesday 24th June. Sarah also attended the North East Essex Joint SEND Working Group meeting.
- Ange, Katrina and Kiri attended the Feedback COG and were part of a conversation about the SEND Transformation Programme, which is being designed with the help of Newton



Europe. More to come on this and we will be looking to set up a parent carer event in the Autumn Term.

- Ange and Katrina also attended the Essex SEND Accountability Board where, as well as updating the Board on EFF work, we had an update on the EHC Needs Assessment data. We continue to monitor this progress very closely. Please see our News page here for updates and please do continue to provide feedback on our EHCNA survey which will remain open for continuing evaluation [News | Essex Family Forum](#)
- Stacey attended the WEST Essex SEND Roadshow in Ongar this week. It was a lovely venue. We had a steady trickle of parent/carers come through. We were able to have some in depth conversations, and was good to see some parent/carers making connections with each other 😊
- Ange, Katrina, Jo and Kiri have all been in conversations this week regarding Mental Health support resulting a few meetings planned with various professionals. This is something that is at the forefront of everyone's thoughts and we need your experiences and concerns on our Graffiti Wall, please. [Feedback Wall | Essex Family Forum](#)

Please note: The Graffiti Wall and Snapshot is designed to give anonymised feedback and cannot be used to answer individual queries.

All EFF staff are part time and work on a flexible basis. If there are weeks when a quadrant does not appear represented in this snapshot, we are still working hard. Please bear this in mind.