

Annual report on feedback about the East Sussex local offer

April 2016 to March 2017



About this report

The local authority (East Sussex County Council) has a legal duty to:

- publish online information about what is available for children and young people with SEN and disabilities in East Sussex age 0 to 25
- work with children, young people and parents to develop the services available
- publish an annual report showing comments from, or on behalf of children and young people with SEN or disabilities and their parents.

Our local offer is at www.eastsussex.gov.uk/localoffer.

Information on the legal requirements for the local offer is in the [SEN \(local offer\) regulations 2014](#) and the [SEND Code of Practice 2015- chapter 4](#)

The feedback

Various feedback was received during the year. It was either spontaneous feedback from parents and organisations supporting them, or was feedback gathered by web user testing, consultation and partnership with the East Sussex Parent and Carer Council (ESPaCC).

This report includes what you said and what we did about:

- gaps in the information
- making the information accessible
- improving services

Gaps in the information	
What you said	What we did
Various parents said it was hard to find information on carers' assessments.	Published an online self-assessment form , with help from ESPaCC.
Autism information: i-Contact requested more in depth autism information.	We worked together to review the fact sheets and add diagnosis information to the local offer.
EHC needs assessments and annual reviews. SEN and Disability Advice Service customers frequently asked for more information on these processes.	The SEN and Disability Advice Service, Assessment and Planning teams and Amaze Independent Support Service agreed to work together on this during 2017- 2018.
<p>We asked parent groups to search for information, and give their feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities for disabled children so that parents can have a break or work were hard to find and there were long lists to read. Also hard to find out how to get a social worker for a disabled child. • Hard to find information on mental health services, and what schools can do to help children with emotional difficulties. • SEN home to school transport information is easy to find but eligibility criteria is hard to read. ESPaCC separately fed back that the online form is hard to fill 	<p>We will publish a help for families section in the summer of 2017 to put childcare, leisure, short breaks and social care information together. We added an 'accessibility and additional needs' section to individual service records on the escis directory so that it is clearer what community services can do for disabled children.</p> <p>We will improve the emotional wellbeing and mental health section and link it to the behaviour difficulties in school section during 2017 to 2018</p> <p>The need for improvements is agreed, and is included in the work to be actioned during 2017- 2018.</p>

<p>in for some people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Escis directory: can be confusing going between eastsussex.gov.uk and escis.org.uk. Some people thought the escis search bar on the right hand side of the page was the search bar for the Council website itself. 	<p>We have removed the escis search bar from the local offer pages, and have improved how we signpost to escis from within the pages.</p>
<p>Holiday activities: SEN and Disability Advice Service customers often ask for information on holiday activities but these are not usually on escis because they are arranged at short notice or are one off events.</p>	<p>We will use the i-go facebook page more to publicise events. We have asked support organisations to put their events on the escis events listing.</p>
<p>Information on individual services: ESPACC said this is sometimes out of date.</p>	<p>There is sometimes a delay in uploading updated information from service providers. We are putting more resources into this process. We welcome ESPaCC's offer of checking new service offers before publication.</p>
<p>School SEN information reports: Some SEN and Disability Advice Service customers could not find their school's report.</p>	<p>We reminded schools about what they must publish, via the Virtual Schoolbag communication system.</p>
<p>Broken links, wrong numbers and spelling mistakes: Parent and staff told us about these.</p>	<p>We made many changes to webpages as needed.</p>

Making the information accessible	
What you said	What we did
Style of website: ESPACC and iContact said they would like more images and a friendlier website. Some thought it should be separate to the Council's main website.	We will keep the local offer as part of the main council website, because it integrates well with other information that users need and we do not have the resources to put it in two places. We will use more videos and diagrams in individual pages where relevant to the content and to help with accessibility. We are exploring whether we can put images on the local offer home page and landing page and will continue to work with parents on this.
Landing page: The ESPACC group said this has too many items.	We agree and are reviewing this.
Families' awareness of the local offer: The ESPaCC group and the CQC/Ofsted inspectors said that lots of families do not know about the local offer.	A new communications plan will ensure more families, and those supporting them, will know where to get information. The ESPaCC group and other organisations will have the information they require to publicise the Local Offer to families.
SEND Matrix: iContact and SEN and Disability Advice Service customers said the Matrix was hard to read, but was very important because it tells them what schools should do.	We will publish improved information about the matrix during 2017 to 2018.
Personal budgets: Some SEN and Disability Advice Service customers found it hard to understand the information because there are three kinds of personal budgets.	We are splitting the information on education, health and care personal budgets into their relevant sections.

<p>Disability accessibility of website: A member of ESPaCC said the website did not meet national guidance for disability accessibility.</p>	<p>Our web team has confirmed that the site meets required national standards.</p>
<p>Improving services We have set up a local offer feedback cycle so that we can co-ordinate feedback from families and co-ordinate our response. This is new and the Local Offer Working Group which includes parents will monitor this during the coming year.</p>	
<p>What you said</p>	<p>What we did</p>
<p>Autism support: iContact surveyed parents and wrote a report giving a range of suggestions for service improvement.</p>	<p>This was passed to senior managers in ISEND and is being taken forward through several projects to improve services and schools' response to autism.</p>
<p>The SEN and Disability Advice Service fed back common difficulties experienced by families.</p>	<p>This feedback is used by managers when developing services and policy. For example, feedback was used when creating the new 'Additional Needs Plan' format.</p>
<p>Giving feedback about the local offer: As part of a peer review, representatives from Kent, including parents, said our local offer is not very clear about how to give comments.</p>	<p>We will put an opportunity to comment on the landing page. The website no longer has a 'comment on this page' facility, so we are exploring other options.</p>
<p>Parent feedback to ISEND services and through parent groups showed a need for more parenting support for families with children and young people with autism.</p>	<p>ISEND put in a bid for Public Health funding to develop the CLASS+ service. This service has three tiers of support including coffee mornings where parents are supported to network and support each other; training and support groups (e.g. for siblings, parents of girls with autism), and one to one parenting support on a specific area of challenge.</p>
<p>East Sussex Parent and Carer Council (ESPaCC) work with the local authority and other agencies to influence strategy and service development</p>	<p>ESPaCC will include a summary of what they were involved in, and what happened, in their annual report which will be published in October 2017.</p>

Surveys of people using East Sussex County Council children's services	You said, we did report 2015- 2016
Complaints	Children's Services Complaints Report . The report for 2016 to 2-17 will be published in July 2017