

Stockton-on-Tees Local Offer - Update 2017

We published our Local Offer (LO) in 2014, highlighting the services and support available for children with SEND and their families. It is predominantly an online resource; however, a printable version can be directly accessed by the homepage of the LO and or by contacting the service. The LO is regularly updated by the designated officer in the SEN Team who liaises with Stockton Parent Carer Forum, Health and Social Care.

Most recently following consultation with parents/carers, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council made available supporting factsheets providing 'easy to read' information covering among other topics personal budgets and transport through the Local Offer. The Local Offer includes upcoming events that will be occurring in the local SEND arena, for example, training sessions for professionals and local activities.

Children and young people with EHC plans and their parents are routinely asked for their views during the Annual Review process, to ensure they are receiving the right level of provision based on their needs; this process also helps to identify gaps in provision. Questionnaires are completed to gather the views of young people about the EHCP process and how involved they felt in the process, however this is a very recent development. Children in Out of Area placements are asked their views every 6 months via a questionnaire.

In 2017 our Local Offer has been scrutinised during a peer review from another Local Authority and it is compliant with the Code of Practice.

A range of publicity materials have been disseminated to children and their families, services and organisations, including flyers, leaflets, posters and TV screen advertising displayed in Council buildings. Stockton Borough Council's SEN and Engagement Service and other third party organisations working with children with SEND also advertise the Local Offer through word of mouth, and by supplying a touring display in local libraries, schools and parent/carer groups for example SPCF, Parents ADHD group and Parents at CAMHS.

Provider self-evaluation processes seek views on services we provide, which in turn, is used to identify gaps in service provision and not available via our Local Offer.

We have recently produced an annual review report on the Local Offer which involved Stockton Parent Carer Forum, SENDIASS and SEN Professionals working across several sector services. Prior to production the 2017 report was scrutinised by the SEND Development Group for accuracy and content, and it was found to be fit for purpose. The pages most visited are also included in the published report. And we should do this next year helping to distribute questionnaires to parents-carers within their networks to gather views to feed in.

We have established 2 specific focus groups which are working to improve the ways in which we communicate and engage with parents, carers and children/young people with SEND.

We are investigating the development of a Local Offer Facebook page to provide timely information to young people, parents and carers, who have told us during consultation that they want to know "what's on" in the area for children and young people with SEND and their families. We are also looking into the feasibility of redesigning the Local Offer to make it more user friendly and eye catching however this is dependent on resources being available.

