

Ambitious for SEND newsletter, March 2022

Introduction

Welcome to the spring term edition of our termly Ambitious for SEND newsletter for parents!

[PLEASE SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER!](#) - click on the link to receive our newsletter directly to your inbox - here are some really good reasons why we think you should!

- It's a great way to stay in touch with what is going on in the local area for young people with SEND
- We know parents are incredibly busy, so we only send these out termly (just 3 a year!)
- It takes less than a minute and you can unsubscribe at any time!
- Currently, these newsletters are shared through schools and via our Local Offer which means parents may miss them!

Please also share with any other parents that you think might want to receive this information!

A Headteacher's take on what being ambitious for SEND actually means

Hear from **Emma Bradshaw**, Executive Principal at the Alternative Learning Trust, to get an insight into how we work with school leaders to better support children and young people with additional needs and her role in that work. [Listen to Emma now](#)

Sutton Information and Advice Service (SIASS) - here to help!

SIASS provides free, impartial, and confidential information, advice, and support to families of children and young people with a special educational need or disability. We support parents, carers, and young people with a wide range of information, advice, and support - [find out how](#)

Let's celebrate Autism Week 2022 - 28 March to 3 April

To celebrate Autism Week 2022, Cognus and Sutton Partners have arranged a range of activities taking place later this month. From **play sessions** to **parent workshops** to a **youth-led conference** there is something for everyone - [take a look at the Cognus website for more information and book your places now!](#)

Have a child with autism but finding it hard to access the information you need? Have you seen the Autism Support map?

We know it can be tricky to find the information you need in a simple way. Cognus has produced an **Autism Support Map** with lots of useful information on support for parents, teachers and children all in one place, and will be updated on a termly basis so if you have ideas for additional sections, or know of other resources that are missing, please get in touch with Rebecca.duffus@cognus.org.uk

[View the map on the Cognus website](#)

Has your child recently been diagnosed with Autism? Try our Early Bird Programme

The Early Bird programme is run by Playwise and offers a 10 week course to help parents and carers who have recently received a diagnosis for their child, to help them understand more about autism, your child's behaviour, discussing strategies and sharing ideas. [For more information see our flyer](#)

Get involved in your local Sutton Parent Carers Forum

The [Sutton Parent Carers Forum](#) organises a wide variety of activities and events to support families across the borough, in partnership with a variety of different organisations. Their most recent workshop on 1 March explored the support available in mainstream schools to support pupils with SEND - [find out more about what was discussed](#).

Other events:

- [Play and Stay Easter Festival for children with SEND - 12 and 14 April](#)
- [Renaissance Legal Virtual Webinar \(Decision-making for vulnerable people\) - 5 May](#)

Find out about three ways we are supporting young people with SEND to prepare for adulthood - do you know someone that might benefit?

Supported Internships

Supported internships are aimed at young people aged 16 to 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). They provide students with real life experience needed to gain paid employment. Interns will work for 6 months to one year, completing three, ten-week job rotations and will be supported at every stage by a Job Coach.

They are offered by local colleges such as Carshalton and Orchard Hill, and other Further Education providers.

Sutton Council is working in partnership with Orchard Hill College to bring you two supported internship programmes, one where [placements take place within Sutton Council](#) and another [DFN Project](#) where placements will include Sutton Heath & Care.

If you know someone who might be interested then click [here to find out more or to complete the expression of interest](#) form.

Independent Travel Training

We invited schools and colleges to take part in a pilot (November 2021 to June 2022) to offer independent travel training to pupils in Sutton - delivered by school staff who know the children and young people best! Muschamp Primary School, Carew Academy and Orchard Hill College are taking part in the pilot.

Nominated staff have now completed their training and the programme is being delivered within the education settings. We will keep you posted on how the pilot progresses however in the meantime you can find out more about our independent travel training offer [here](#).

Careers Programme at Carew Academy

As part of Carew Academy's Work Experience Week, London Borough of Sutton's Oonagh Bensberg (Development Manager - Education) and Carolyn Scott (Commissioning Manager - SEND) volunteered to teach interview skills to classes across years 10 and 11. Feedback from the school was positive, reflecting that the students found the sessions beneficial:

"What I saw was absolutely fantastic – the kids were engaged with you and the content of the lesson; they were giving well thought-through answers and really thinking about the questions you were asking them. These lessons will massively help them not only in their mock interviews tomorrow but also in their future interviews... It was also really clear how hard you worked on creating the content of the lesson to suit our students" - Louise Cooper, Assistant Principal and Head of Upper School.

Read about other activities over the [Work Experience Week at Carew](#).

Ambitious for SEND Early Years Parental survey

Thank you to all the families that submitted a response to our online survey, or attended the focus group held at the Playwise hub last month to provide their feedback and experiences with local services for families with children under 5 that have or may have a SEND. [Read about what families told us about SEND provision in Early Years in the borough](#).

Easter Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

This Easter we have worked with providers to bring another amazing, FREE Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme for children, receiving benefits-related free school meals, who has a special educational need and disability or is a looked after child. All eligible children will receive a unique code to book on to events.

Find out what's on, when, where and register at www.sutton.gov.uk/HAF

Investing in SEND facilities in Sutton's Schools

In line with our desire to strengthen SEND provision in the borough, the Council is investing over £3 million to support schools to improve their learning environments for children and young people with SEND. To date, over £1 million has been spent across 37 projects at over 25 different schools and early years settings within Sutton.

Here are some examples of what's been done so far:

- Green Wrythe Primary School has been funded to refurbish all 8 of the classrooms in their Rainbow Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) base provision, which has significantly improved facilities for children with ASC
- Muschamp Primary they have used their funding to create a sensory learning space, the installation of trampolines, a sensory garden that will support children attending the Language Opportunity Base
- Manor Park Primary School will use their funding to create a nurture, sensory and Occupational Therapy area within the school.

The funding for these projects has been distributed through a process of application rounds. Previous rounds were held in spring 2021 and autumn 2021, with a further round planned for summer 2022.

Should you wish to discuss any ideas you may have for this grant, or have any questions, please contact jack.cutler@sutton.gov.uk.