



*Harrow Special Educational
Needs and Disability.*

Review and Feedback on Harrow's Local Offer

One Year On

How was the Local Offer developed?

Harrow's Local Offer was developed in consultation with parents and carers of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and young people themselves. Throughout 2014 focus groups were held around the community, involving parents, carers, schools, health representatives and other stakeholders. We worked closely with the local parents' forum Harrow Parents 4 Disabled Children (HP4DC) and Harrow Parent Partnership, now known as SEND Information and Advice Service (SENDIAS).

These groups helped inform what should be included in the Local Offer and the preferred format. The Local Offer was published online on the Harrow Council website in August 2014.

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What we were asked to include in the Local Offer

A number of briefing sessions and forums were held during the summer term 2014, in order to have wide ranging discussions about the content of the Local Offer. A set of flyers were developed as parents had told us they did not want the information to be purely web-based. These were distributed out to schools, GP surgeries, libraries etc.

Education - Parents told us that they needed to access information on local schools provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs. The Council has worked with schools to ensure that their reports on special educational provision within their school are easily accessible on their web-sites. A link from the Local Offer website to the schools web page was added. Parents informed us that all schools websites are different and sometimes information was hard to find. We have been working with school to ensure that there are direct links to each school's report, and that this information is easily accessible.

EHC Plan -The new coordinated education, health and care plan assessment template was trialled with children and young people with special educational needs and their parents before being implemented. This has been revised and adjusted since being introduced in the light of experience and feedback from parents, schools professionals and voluntary groups.

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The Council's assessment process and education health and care plan template have both been judged by the Department for Education as legally compliant with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2015 and provide a good basis for the development of education health care plans. A special comment was made in relation to the Council's approach to recording the aspirations for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities within the plan.

Local Offer website - As the local offer developed it was recognised it was not working effectively within the main Council website. There was clearly a difficulty in locating information easily, the search facility was problematic and links to information were not working reliably. The Council has since changed the website and created a sub-site within the main Council website.

The content of the website information was shared with parents and they told us that some of this was too wordy and needed to be in plain English. This was addressed through a Glossary of Terms which now appears on the front page. Parent/carers said that it was important to be able to access information with a tablet or smart phone, so web pages were written in a way to break up large chunks of text, with lots of headings.

Transitional arrangements - A transition plan was published in September 2014 as part of the Local Offer. The transition plan was developed and produced with parents and schools and colleges. It sets out the timetable of how the Council will transfer children and young people who receive support as a result of a statement of special educational needs or a learning difficulty assessment to an education health and care plan (EHC Plan). The Council initiated 292 transfer

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reviews in the period September 2014 – August 2015. Good progress was made and 80% of the transfers to an EHC Plan were completed on time.

The Council has reviewed and revised the transition plan and is working towards completing all transfers to EHC Plans by April 2018.

College and Post 16 Provision - Parents wanted to see information about local colleges and post 16 provisions. Other useful links including information about the Pathway to Adulthood materials were added.

A Preparing for Adulthood working group is working on up dating the Transition Pathway which will be added to the Local Offer site. The Adults Service Transition Team was involved in up dating information in relation to leisure, employment and training.

We are working very closely with special educational needs schools' councils in order to develop disabled young people's champions who will represent the voice of young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Social Care - Parents wanted information about respite care and short breaks. The Local Offer contains links to short breaks policy and services. Harrow Council will be reviewing the way in which it delivers the Children with Disabilities and Short Breaks Services. As part of this review the Council will consult on a number of options with parents, carers, children and young people during autumn 2015. The outcome will shape the future development of these services and the new Local Offer for social care and children with disabilities.

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Health - Parents wanted more information on individual Health Services, particularly specialist services for children with complex health needs and disabilities. Working closely with our health partners in Harrow's Clinical Commissioning Group we worked to ensure this information was on the website and are continuing to work with our health partners to develop the Health Local Offer information.

Local Information and Advice - Parents were asked about the most useful information on sources of advice, help and guidance and what organisations should be included within this section of the web-site.

Information, advice and support -The Council has put in place arrangements for providing independent information, advice and support for parents and children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities across education, social care and health, including independent supporters. The SEND Information and Advice Service (SENDIAS) is provided under contract by Family Action who formerly provided the Council's parent partnership service.

In addition, Barnardo's and Family Action provide independent support to parents and young people.

Mediation - The Council has for several years commissioned access to high quality mediation from an organisation called KIDS. It is now mandatory that families and young people obtain a certificate to evidence they have contacted the mediation service before making an appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal.

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SEN Transport - Families wanted to be able to access information on SEN transport pre and post 16. A link was made to the Council's website where the current transport policies are located.

Personal budgets, including personal health budgets - Parents and carers wanted to know more about personal budgets and how to access them. A clear policy is in place and included as part of the local offer, setting out the scope currently of personal budgets. It is intended in due course to extend and widen significantly the personal budget approach to supporting children and young people with disabilities and their families.

What are we planning to do in the future?

Communication and Engagement with parents - In Summer 2015 the chair of the existing parent/carers forum, Harrow Parents 4 Disabled Children stepped down. The local charity 'Kids Can Achieve' is supporting the re-launch of the new forum and the development of a steering group, by the end of the year. The Council is keen to support Kids can Achieve in their work and to re-engage with a new group of parents in order that we can continue to develop the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities reforms including the Local Offer and other strategic areas of work.

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Local Offer - The Council acknowledges there is still a great deal of work to do in order to develop the Local Offer and ensure that families know what the Local Offer is.

Providers within Harrow will be contacted to ensure that the details and information about the service they offer is clear and up-to-date.

Consultation - Harrow's Children with Disabilities Service (CwDS) is planning to review its Local Offer and change the way it delivers its social care and short breaks service, during autumn 2015. This will include encouraging more families to take up the offer of personal budgets in line with the Special Educational Needs Disabilities reforms and implementation of the personalisation agenda.

Harrow Council will also be reviewing its Special Educational Needs Transport Policy.

Service review - A service review will be undertaken of Adults Social Care Service in order to develop a joint Transition Service across Children's and Adults Social Care, which incorporates the extended provision of support services to young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

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