

# Shaping the Local Offer in Rutland



The Local Offer is all the provision, services and support that families can expect to be available across education, health, social care and in the community for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities. All organisations providing support or services as part of the Local Offer involve children and young people and their families in developing their support on an ongoing basis.

As a Local Authority, Rutland County Council must publish the [Local Offer](#). In Rutland this is part of the [Rutland Information Service](#) which brings together information about support, activities, advice and guidance for all residents in Rutland.

Here are a few examples of where families have helped develop or change the support available. Some of these changes have been driven by the 'Collaborative Group' which is made up of parent/carers and Rutland County Council staff. The group has been working together in 2022 with a focus on 3 priorities – communication with the SEND service, accessibility of the Local Offer and the clarity of the School Support Partnership.

## You said...

## We did...

Parent/carers said that how best to contact the SEND service was unclear and stressful and that even if a response was received, it was not done in a timely way.

The SEND service have introduced a single point of contact which is the [SEND duty email and phone number](#), to deal with questions and queries in a timely manner. Expected response times are made clear and, in most cases, bettered.

Parents were concerned about the capacity in the SEND service which was impacting on timescales.

Rutland County Council have invested in 2 additional [members of staff](#) in the SEND service, have increased the number of cases the new Educational Psychology service can work with, and now has an additional front-line worker in the Inclusion team who is trained in emotional wellbeing.

Parent/carers said there was a lack of trust and respect between families and Rutland County Council which often stemmed from lack of clear communication and was leading to unnecessary stress and anxiety amongst families.

The Collaborative Group of parent/carers and Rutland County Council staff have agreed a 'SEND Promise' to set out core values, responsibilities and how everyone will work together to support the best outcomes for children and young people. This will be published in early 2023.

Parent/carers said that the Education Inclusion Partnership (EIP) was not understood by families because the title was confusing and it was not being explained well to families, even when they were receiving support.

In summer 2022 parent/carers proposed a new name of '[School Support Partnership](#)' which was agreed by the School's Forum in Sept 2022 and is now in use. An improved explanation of the School Support Partnership is now on the Local Offer and used by schools.

Parent/carers said that the Local Offer is hard to find from the RCC website – where many parents new to the SEND system would start their search for information.

A refresh of the Rutland County Council website is due for launch by February 2023 and includes easy routes to the Local Offer from the home page as well as other relevant pages. These links have been tested by parents who agree that this is much improved.

Parent/carers say that many families are still not aware of the Local offer website. One parent suggested that we promote the Local Offer and Aiming High through the Blue Badge application process as those applying are likely to benefit from information on the Local Offer.

A paragraph with an explanation and links to the relevant pages on the Local Offer is now included in the response letter to families applying for a Blue Badge due to their child's disability.

[Rutland Disabled Youth Forum](#) (RDYF) told the Community Safety team that some of the Keep Safe venues were not offering good enough support.

One of the [Keep Safe](#) venues has been removed from the scheme. All others have had visits from the Community Safety team and will be receiving further training early in 2023.

Some parent/carers who are eligible for the Holiday, Activities and Food programme (HAF) told us that they did not feel confident that all the activity providers had the skills or enough workers available to be able to support their child with SEND.

Sessions specifically for children and young people with SEND were run in the summer and Christmas holidays. The providers ensured that skilled workers were available to support all children and young people. The sessions were held at Root and Branch and at New Leaf Triangle who both focus on learning and skill development through outdoor experiences and nature. 30 children and young people took part in activities ranging from animal care to fire making in a safe and supportive environment.

Parent/carers at our Autism support group sessions often spoke about young people with a dual diagnosis of Autism and ADHD and how useful it would be to have professionals who were experts about both Autism and ADHD in one place.

In June 2022, Aiming High arranged an online session with experts from both the [Autism support group](#) and the [ADHD Solutions drop in](#). 10 parents joined the session for the opportunity to discuss the possibility of dual diagnosis. Feedback was that it gave parents the information they needed to improve their understanding of their child and be confident enough to support them better.

Army Welfare Officers and families based at Kendrew Barracks said that they needed more support and activities for children and young people with SEND taking place on site.

[Aiming High](#) now attend the monthly coffee morning to offer advice and signpost to all support available to families. On 5th October 2022, 12 parents joined the 'Introduction to Autism' session at Kendrew and in conjunction with Welfare staff, the Aiming High service, has just started a youth club in the community room called Kendrew Khaos for primary school aged children with SEND.

Families in contact with the Inclusion team had suggested that training should be provided to schools to support children who are school refusing.

In Sept 2022, we launched a 3 year project, to support children with ARNA – Anxiety related non-attendance. The project is delivered in partnership with Educational Psychologists, called Futures in Mind, to support schools with training, supervision and whole school development to address this area of need.

Families told us that 'Getting to Know You meetings' (held at the beginning of the Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment) which were ceased during Covid were really valuable and that they wanted them re-introduced.

The SEND team have now resumed the non-statutory 'Getting to Know You meetings' for families as part of the assessment process.

[Rutland Parent Carer Voice](#) (RPCV) were told at a recent Coffee morning that some parent/ carers had concerns regarding transport - in particular safety questions that RPCV felt needed a response from the Local Authority. Contact was made by RPCV to Rutland County Council, specifically the transport team.

The [Transport Service](#) at Rutland County Council listened to the issues raised, responded to operational queries and confirmed they would investigate and take action regarding the concerns about safety. The Transport Manager attended the October coffee morning which was well attended by parents. Following this session, the transport manager has done some more spot inspections to check services are now running safely and smoothly.

Parent/carers told us that some of the information on the [Personal Assistant \(PA\) Network](#) on the Local Offer was out of date, inaccurate and that some PA s did not respond to request for support. A parent was also unclear about who contacts the PA s on the Network.

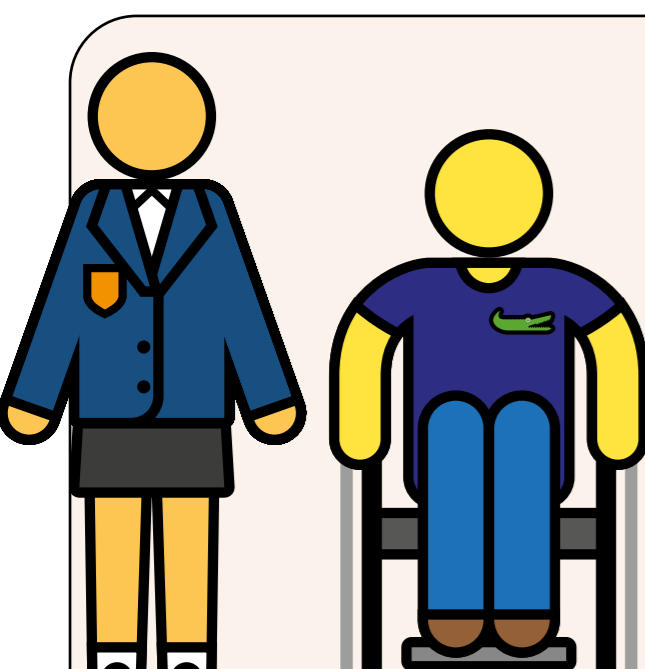
The team supporting the [Local Offer](#) website now ask PAs to update their record at least annually and will be ensuring that any PAs who are inactive are removed. We have re iterated on the Local Offer that families are responsible for contacting potential PAs including those on the PA Network.

Parent/carers told us they were unhappy as they felt that the needs of a parent/carer were only being considered when a full children and families social care assessment was taking place.

As part of the Early Help offer, support for parent/carers has been designed and shaped to reflect what they have told us they would find helpful. Where the family has a lead professional as part of the Team Around the Family (TAF) process, parent/carers' needs are included in the holistic assessment. With input from the Rutland Parent Carer Voice, Rutland County Council have developed a new standalone carers assessment. This will be part of a social care assessment (Section 17) but may also be used during the TAF process.

Children and young people tell us that they want a voice in their EHCP, they want to be taken seriously by those supporting them and that their views taken into account when decisions are made.

Rutland County Council now fund specific time for Nicola from [SENDIASS](#) to support children and young people voice their views, aspirations and concerns. In the past 12 months she has supported 30 children and young people – either before or during annual reviews, as well as group work to build confidence and skills in young people to be able to tell their own story.



Families said they were concerned about suitable school places for SEND children especially at secondary school level.

[Rutland's SEND and Inclusion Strategy](#) sets out priorities to enable students with SEND to be educated locally. Uppingham Community College now has enhanced resourced specialist places: 10 places across KS3/4 for students with communication and interaction needs, including ASD. Other facilities for students with EHCPs have also been developed at UCC. 'Mainstream plus' provides smaller flexible teaching and will build to 50 places over 5 years. These secondary facilities are in addition to the well-established places at Catmose College for students principally with Moderate Learning Difficulties, Cognition and Learning needs.

Parents told us they value the opportunity to access paediatric first aid but not everyone could secure childcare for the two-session accredited course.

In 2022 [Visions](#) have delivered 4 two-day accredited courses with 20 parents attending, benefiting 15 children under 5 years. Following feedback, they delivered one single session, non-accredited course with 2 parents attending benefiting 2 children. There are 6 parents booked onto the next course, and they will continue to deliver both accredited and non-accredited courses.

Following a father's Forest School session in the summer parents told us they would like more for fathers to access.

3 more Forest School sessions were run by Visions in autumn 2022. All have been fully booked and successful. They will continue to provide these opportunities and are planning more. During 2022 there have been 4 sessions with 35 dads attending benefiting 41 children 0-5 years.

Some of the girls at [GAGGLE](#) told us that the ability and age differences of those attending the group was becoming too wide, meaning that they were not all able to get the type of support they needed.

[GAGGLE](#) will now be run as 2 smaller groups based on what would most benefit each girl ie a play based session or a more focussed discussion opportunity. The new sessions will start in January 2023.

Families told the [Rutland Rotaract Family Support Centre](#) (RRFSC) that they prefer social catch ups instead of an evening support group.

[RRFSC](#) have now changed their support groups and now have social catch ups at various locations in Rutland. They also alter the group each month so that one month there is a daytime support group and the following month an evening support group.

