Social Care and Education SENDCo Newsletter

Wednesday 4 November 2026

For the attention of all SENDCOs.
All Schools, Academies, Independent Schools, and Colleges

SEND monthly bulletin – November

Dear all,

As we move into November, we would like to share some key SEND updates, reminders, and resources to support our collective commitment to inclusive practice.

Local SEND reform plan approved

We are pleased to share that Leicester's local SEND reform plan has been approved by the Department for Education (DfE). This is an important milestone and provides a clear framework for improving services and outcomes for children and young people across the city.

Building on the learning from the Change Programme Partnership, the plan sets out how education, health and social care partners will work together over the next three years to create a more inclusive, sustainable and responsive SEND system.

Our vision is for every child and young person to receive the right support at the right time, helping them to achieve and thrive in their local community.

Visit the Local Offer website to find out more and to read the full plan - Local SEND reform plan.

.....

SEND reform engagement sessions

School and settings engagement events

Since the start of term, Jessica Nicholls, Shelley Piercy, Lou Eames and Michelle Deeming have been undertaking engagement events with our key partners.

These have included headteachers, CEOs and SENDCos from our settings, schools and Post-16 providers. In these sessions we have shared the thinking behind the

Leicester's local SEND reform plan and have also captured the wants and needs of our key stakeholders.

Their thoughts and feedback will underpin our plans around the development of cluster working; a refreshed SEND support service offer and expert at hand deployment. Slides from the sessions will be shared shortly.

Parent and carer engagement events

Thank you to everyone who helped promote and support our recent SEND reforms parent and carer engagement events.

The sessions provided valuable insight into families' experiences, priorities and the challenges they face. The feedback also highlighted how these experiences connect to the key building blocks of Leicester's SEND reform programme.

The findings will help shape future parent and carer engagement activities and inform ongoing SEND reform work across the city. Families told us they would like easier access to information about available support, clear and consistent communication between services, and greater opportunities to contribute their views and experiences. These insights will support our shared ambition to provide the right support, at the right time, as close to home as possible, while ensuring that parent and carer voices continue to influence service improvement and future developments.

.....

- **Sensory physical team**

The sensory physical team is a newly formed team comprising of hearing support (HS), vision support (VS), physical disability (PD) and assistive technology (AT) specialisms.

The HS and VS teams continue to offer the same support to children and young people and families across the city. The day-to-day work of the teachers, teaching assistants and technicians in both teams will be unaffected.

.....

- **Training and networks offer updates**

Anti-bullying training workshop

The SEMH team will be hosting a free workshop for schools on Thursday 5 November 1pm to 3pm at New Parks House. The session will cover:

- Supporting school communities to address incidences of bullying. We will also provide information and links to resources related to antibullying activities that can be completed in school.
- An overview of positive and peaceful places - Leicester city's anti-bullying award.
- How whole school restorative approaches can create and promote a positive and peaceful school environment where students feel safe and can achieve their full potential.
- Time to share good practice from your setting and problem solve with colleagues across Leicester city schools.

To book your please visit booking live.

Positive peaceful places (PPP) – LCC's anti-bullying award

Would your school be interested in achieving Leicester city's accredited anti-bullying award? Schools will work alongside the SEMH team to develop positive relationships, restorative practice and inclusive learning environments. PPP provides a framework for creating peaceful school communities where bullying is less likely to occur.

Cost is £600 which includes the support and guidance to achieve the award and a three-year accreditation.

For further information please contact Amanda.Matlock@leicester.gov.uk or Bhavin.Pathak@leicester.gov.uk.

ECT support

We are running a number of courses this year for early careers teachers. For further information and to book, visit BookingLive ECT Courses » Leicester City Council - SEND.

.....

EBSA training

Training for school members who did not attend last year's EBSA training sessions

We are pleased to announce that we are able to offer free EBSA training to any school participants who were unable to attend the sessions last year. The course will be run over two full days on Tuesday 23 February and Wednesday 7 April and we request that participants do attend both sessions.

To book a space visit » Leicester City Council - SEND.

Additional training for school participants who attended last year's EBSA training

We are pleased to invite staff from Leicester city schools who attended the two-day emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA) centralised training during the 2025-2026 academic year to attend a free two-hour EBSA implementation workshop.

This follow-up workshop provides an opportunity for colleagues to come together, reflect on their experiences, and share progress made in implementing EBSA approaches within their school settings.

The session will focus on the implementation and embedding of the EBSA toolkit resources alongside wider school-based strategies that support children and young people experiencing emotionally based school avoidance.

This workshop is designed to support schools in moving from training into sustainable practice, ensuring that EBSA-supportive approaches become embedded within whole-school systems and culture over time.

Workshop details

- Date: Thursday 12 November 2026
- Time: 9.30am to 11.30am
- Venue: New Parks House, Pindar Road, Leicester, LE3 9RN
- Cost: Free of charge

You can book your place on BookingLive.

.....

Virtual SENDCo network

Thank you to everyone who attended this term's virtual SENDCo network. The PowerPoint and recording can be found on the SENDCo networks' extranet page.

.....

Secondary support base network

In line with the SEND reforms, our Secondary IAP / Inclusion Network has been renamed. This network was established last year to provide a space for school-to-school support for pupils who needed additional support outside of their mainstream classroom, with local authority input as needed.

There were three sessions across the year which provided opportunities to visit a school support base, hear about APs working on school sites and to receive some training from the SEMH team.

If your school hasn't attended before, you would be very welcome to join. Just contact mairead.richards@leicester.gov.uk so that your email can be added to the contact list for updates. There is no need to have an established support base.

The dates for this year are:

- Friday 22 January 2027
- Friday 5 March 2027
- Friday 11 June 2027

All sessions are 9am to 11am in the Hall at New Parks House, Pindar Rd, Leicester LE3 9RN.

This year Lisa Loaiza-Sanchez and Adilson Hernandez-Evora from the Mead Trust have offered to work with Mairead Richards from the Quality Inclusion Team to organise the content of the sessions.

They would welcome contributions from secondaries across the city. If you would like to showcase good practice from your school or recommend someone who could speak to the network, please let Mairead know.

As part of the network there is also an offer of free training. Bookings can be made below:

Secondary Inclusion- Support Base Network » Leicester City Council - SEND

.....

Primary support base network

The very popular primary support base (formerly IAP) network is continuing this year, with Libby Smith, Head at King Richard III Infant school, returning to take the helm, with the support of Sarah Mounsey (Team Manager EYST) and Mairead Richards (QIT). Dates for the sessions are:

- Wednesday 18 November 2026
- Monday 25 January 2027
- Monday 19 April 2027
- Monday 14 June 2027

All are 1pm -3 pm in the Hall at New Parks House.

If you have something you would like to contribute to a session, please let Sarah know via email at sarah.mounsey@leicester.gov.uk.

.....

- **Children with a parent in prison day**

25 November is Children with a parent in prison day, first launched in 2025 to raise awareness of the hundreds of thousands of children affected by parental imprisonment. The day encourages professionals to recognise parental imprisonment as a significant adverse childhood experience and to ensure that affected children are seen, heard and supported.

Further information has been shared in the SENDCO area to support upskilling school staff. Add in link

The Department for Education (DfE) and Ministry of Justice (MOJ) are piloting improved data sharing and support for children and families with a parent in prison, with Leicester City Council (LCC) selected as one of 10 participating areas. As part of the pilot, LCC is trialling the sharing of information with a small number of education settings on children affected by parental imprisonment, addressing a key information gap identified by schools. The project aims to improve wellbeing, strengthen educational engagement, reduce social isolation, and build family resilience for affected children, young people and families by supporting schools to offer needs-led support. For further information on the pilot, please contact esther.jones@leicester.go.uk.

.....

- **Inclusive provision reviews - spring and summer terms**

Schools are continuing to participate in IPRs and share positive feedback about the process. If you are interested in signing your school up for an IPR in the spring or summer term please email QualityInclusion@leicester.gov.uk with the subject 'IPR'.

.....

- **Alternative provision (AP)**

A reminder that schools need to register with LEBC and complete a part-time timetable notification all pupils accessing alternative provision.

The part-time timetable e-form, available via the school portal page.

Schools are also required to register a pupil's attendance at AP with LEBC. Please complete the LEBC notification form.

By registering students attending AP with LEBC, commissioners will receive:

- A young person's risk assessment for each student, which can be shared with students and their parents/carers.
- Confirmation of key health and safety information relating to the AP provider, including insurance and policy checks carried out annually by LEBC.
- Inclusion on the AP serious incident alerts distribution list. This ensures that commissioners are notified, where appropriate, of any serious incidents reported to LEBC, allowing them to undertake additional checks or consider withdrawing students, depending on the nature of the incident and the outcome of LEBC's investigation.

.....

Multi-agency panels

A huge thank you to all the panel members dedicating their time to attend and support our multi-agency panels. We are keen to increase school representation and would welcome you to attend as observers and as decision makers.

EHCNA

If you would like to get involved please complete the sign up form for the spring term by using this link:

For more informartion, please see the EHCNA Panel Training Video.

Decision to issue (D2I)

If you would like to get involved please complete the sign up form for the spring term.

Element 3 and SENIF panels

If you would like to get involved please complete the sign up form for the spring term.

The E3 and SENIF panel terms of reference have been recently updated and can be found on the Extranet alongside the panel members training video.

Please note that we recommend observing multiple panels prior to becoming a decision maker.

Top – up element 3 funding – reviews of current provision

Panel members have noticed that a number of applications this academic year have not included evidence of a review of the child or young person's SEND support plan, outcomes, provision, or discussions with parents/carers.

Before applying for element 3 or SENIF, schools are asked to demonstrate how the graduated approach has been followed and how existing support has been reviewed. This helps ensure that the child's needs and current provision have been fully considered before additional funding is requested.

To support a timely decision-making process, applications should include evidence of these reviews. Where this information is not available, the panel will need to request it before funding can be considered, which may result in delays to schools accessing funding.

.....

Inclusive mainstream strategy

Just a reminder that completion of the whole school BERA form, is a helpful way to identify your priorities for your inclusive mainstream strategy. It is a digital form within the school portal and is quick to compete.

.....

We look forward to sharing further updates with you in next month's bulletin.

Best wishes,

Quality Inclusion Team

SEND Support Service

Social Care and Education

Leicester City Council

Tel 01164544650

www.leicester.gov.uk

.....

If you have any queries regarding this bulletin, please email QualityInclusion@leicester.gov.uk.