

The Link

SEND Newsletter

Autumn Edition 2019

Welcome to The Link – our termly newsletter to keep parents up to date on all things SEND.

The days are getting colder and we move closer to the holiday season!

In this edition, we shine a spotlight on dyslexia support for schools and tell you all about our first SEND Visioning Event.

There's updates about Trafford's TASC pathway as well as all the great things going on at Trafford Parents Forum.

There's all change with Trafford PYPPS! Find out more from their new manager in the advice and guidance section.

We are also proud to announce an national award win for Trafford Family Information Service.

Read about some great services including Billy & Andy's Music School and The Toy House. And, as always, you can find out about other fun activities, events and training in our What's On.

CONTENTS

Spotlight On...	2
SEND News	4
Advice & Guidance	8
The Local Offer	9
Trafford Parent Forum	11
Activities & What's On	12
Services	14

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It only takes 5 minutes to complete the short form which you can find online:

www.trafford.gov.uk/thelink

Spotlight on: Dyslexia Support in Trafford

Improving awareness of the needs of pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD), which includes dyslexia, has long been a focus of the SEN Advisory Service (SENAS).

We do this through the role of our consultant for SpLD, Julia Brown.

See more on the local offer about:

[Special Educational Needs
Advisory Service
\(SENAS\)](#)

Since 2007 Julia has provided training courses for SENCOs, class teachers and teaching assistants on dyslexia and dyspraxia. Julia has also provided training to whole school teaching staff on dyslexia friendly strategies and resources.

Training has included:

- 5-day dyslexia courses
- Half and full day dyslexia courses
- Assessment and identification of difficulties
- Personalised literacy interventions
- Half day dyspraxia courses
- Diagnostic assessments for SENCOs

- Working Memory Difficulties
- Phonological Awareness
- Dyslexia input on courses for newly qualified teachers (NQTs)

Developing staff to support dyslexic pupils in Trafford schools

The local authority introduced a Dyslexia Aware Quality Mark in 2009.

17 schools now have this award, and another 10 schools are currently working towards achieving it!

You can see which schools have achieved the award by using a filter on the Trafford Directory.

[Schools and Education listings](#)

For the last six years we have delivered a course in conjunction with Manchester Metropolitan University to teaching assistants. The “Certificate in Supporting Pupils with SpLD” course is accredited by the British Dyslexia Association.

We now have 60 teaching assistants who have completed this certificate to become ALSA (Approved Learning Support Assistant) qualified to support dyslexic children.

Spotlight on: Dyslexia Support in Trafford

New training for schools!

As the numbers of children and young people needing support in schools is growing, and in order to keep up with current need, we have created a new 10 week course.

The new course is specifically designed to support schools in meeting the needs of dyslexic pupils. It aims to help schools be able to design, and deliver, a multi-sensory literacy programme.

There were 18 teachers and teaching assistants who attended in the Spring Term 2019. The course is currently being advertised again for next Spring.

Referrals about specific pupils

In addition, the SEN Consultant can receive a referral from schools about individual children or young people.

This can occur when the child or young person's needs are still causing concern, despite the school's every effort to follow support and interventions within the Trafford Graduated Approach guidance.

Find out more on the local offer:

[Trafford's Graduated Approach to Special Educational Needs: A Family Guide.](#)

[Cognition and Learning](#) [Trafford's Graduated Approach](#)

Your guide if you are a professional, or would like to see more about the types of support that can be used to help pupils with dyslexia

Julia's response to these referrals might include:

- An advisory visit to observe or discuss current provision, and make adaptations to interventions, where necessary.
- An assessment of the child followed by a detailed diagnostic report, with recommendations for support. This will also usually mean a meeting between Julia, the school SENCO and you as a parent carer.

Julia carried out more than 100 specific assessments for pupils with specific SpLD needs between 2017 and 2018.

Between 2018 and 2019, 136 assessments were completed.

With thanks to Sally Smith, SENAS Service Manager and Advisor for Inclusion, and Julia Brown, SEN Consultant for Specific Learning Difficulties, for providing this article.

SEND News

SEND Visioning Event

The new academic year certainly started with a bang, with Trafford Parents Forum's SEND Visioning event held on Monday 9 September at the LifeCentre in Sale.



It was attended by parent carers, professionals, and those from voluntary and community groups in Trafford. The day was free to attend and there was a very delicious lunch included!

The day was the starting point of developing a shared vision for all children and young people with SEND in Trafford. Attendees were encouraged to have some 'blue sky' thinking, ensuring creativity, forward-thinking and a collaborative plan for SEND in Trafford.

Our parent carer voices were inspiring. The bravery to be open and share experience was so helpful at the start of this journey. It's crucial to the rest of the journey too!

Professionals, voluntary and community groups also made such a valuable contribution. Their willingness to talk and listen was really important and again, will play a big role in moving forwards.

It was remarkable to see, the commitment of everyone there willing to take on the challenge of a new approach to working together.

Feedback was positive all round!

"I really, really, really enjoyed myself." Jayne, parent carer

"It was a brilliant event. A great opportunity to mix and hear others' perspectives." Suzanne, parent carer

This is not a one-off event but the start of a journey of development for SEND in Trafford. Keep an eye out on future editions or get in contact with Trafford Parents Forum for more opportunities to get involved!

With thanks to Rebecca Blinkhorn, Trafford Parents Forum Engagement Officer for writing this article

[Contact: Trafford Parents Forum](#)

SEND News



Trafford's Autism and Social Communication Pathway Update

As we featured in the Spring Edition 2019 of this newsletter, Trafford has developed a new Autism and Social Communication pathway.

This pathway is for children and young people registered with a Trafford GP who are aged between 0 and 18 years of age. It is known as the TASC pathway.

The TASC pathway has been designed to respond early to initial concerns, and allow for a plan to be put in place straight away to meet the child or young person's needs without the need for a formal diagnosis.

The first stage of the pathway typically involves two school terms of support, usually put in place with support from the child's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).

See more on our local offer:

[Role of the SENCO](#)

All schools have been offered training on the TASC Pathway process, and all but one school has attended.

See more on our local offer:

www.trafforddirectory.co.uk/tasc

[Frequently asked questions](#)

[Parents Workshops](#)

"Phase 1" launched in January this year, which means that some children and young people will have now received two terms of support from their school.

Following this, a decision will be taken between you and the SENCO about whether a full diagnostic assessment of your child's social communication skills is required.

If this is the case a referral will be made to TASC: Trafford's Autism & Social Communication Service.

Prior to the launch of "Phase 2" of the pathway, the TASC service has been working incredibly hard to reduce the numbers on the waiting list.

At the start of February there were 263 families on the waiting list. By the start of September this had reduced to 45.

On average over 31 families per month have been assessed, more than treble the rate that was previously seen.

The Autism team have worked incredibly

SEND News



hard and have achieved this by:

- Utilising staff trained in Autism assessments from other services, using locums to cover these posts
- Staff within the Autism service working additional hours
- Additional support from Trafford's Educational Psychology service

Additional funding has been put in place in order to address the waiting list. Recruitment has proved to be more difficult than we had anticipated. However it is estimated that by January the team should have got through the waiting list.

Now that Phase 2 has started SENCOs are able to refer directly to TASC if they have completed the two school terms of support. There may be some backlog when the first set of referrals are received due to the recruitment issues. We will continue to do everything possible to ensure we are utilising all available capacity.

We will continue to update you on the pathway in this newsletter, via the Trafford Parents Forum and on [Trafford's local offer](#).

With thanks to Ben Willmott, Commissioning Officer, for writing the TASC update article.

New page on Trafford's Local Offer: Services for children, young people and adults with Autism

Alongside information about Trafford's TASC pathway, a new webpage around services for people with Autism has been created on Trafford's local offer.

It contains some key information about:

- Diagnosis
- Post Diagnostic Support
- Specialist Services
- Education
- Employment
- Support for children and young people
- Support for parent carers
- Support for adults

See it now on the local offer!

[Services for children, young people and adults with Autism](#)

If you have any thoughts or feedback about this page, please contact us at Trafford Family Information Service:

0161 912 1053

FIS@trafford.gov.uk

SEND News



Name Change!

Trafford Children's First Response

Formally known as MARAT (Multi-Agency Referral and Assessment Team) this key front door service is now called Trafford Children's First Response.

Children's First Response is Trafford's single point of contact for all members of the public and professionals to report concerns, request advice and share information about a child and / or family.

It is also the first point of contact for accessing the Short Breaks team.

A Short Break is an activity for a child or young person with special educational needs or disabilities, that also provides a break for the parent carer and the family.

See more on the local offer

**[Short Breaks](#)
[and Trafford Short Breaks Team](#)**

There is a new email address for the service: firstresponse@trafford.gov.uk

The phone numbers however will stay the same. They are: 0161 912 5125 during office hours (Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm) or 0161 912 2020

during out of hours (Emergency Duty Team).

If you are worried about a child and they are at immediate risk of harm, please contact the Police on 999.

There is also a new webpage about Trafford Children's First Response on Trafford Council's website:

www.trafford.gov.uk/firstresponse

This webpage links to new Levels of Need information, which is used by professionals to determine the kind of support a child or family requires.

See more: Trafford Council website

[Trafford Children's First Response](#)

[New levels of Need](#)

Levels of Need for Professionals

A launch event for professionals was held on 1 October 2019 to introduce the new Levels of Need.

Further events are continuing throughout the month.

An online referral form will be available for professionals to complete soon.

Article by Eli Edwards, with thanks to Emma Gilpin, Communications and Marketing Manager, Reform

Advice and Guidance

Trafford Parent Partnership and Young People's Service Update

It has been all change for Trafford PYPPS over recent months.

Celebratory cakes were served when the service and Trafford Council said goodbye to Geraldine English on 30 August after thirty-two years of working for Trafford.

Staffing changes

Carol Thistlethwaite has joined the PYPPS Team as the new Team Leader.

Carol has been working with children, young people and families with SEND for almost twenty years; starting off at Stockport Council's Sensory Support Service supporting deaf children and young people in both mainstream and special school settings.

Carol moved to Trafford Council's Education Health and Care Plan team in a coordinator role in February 2017.

Carol is looking forward to supporting children, young people and families in Trafford with the rest of the PYPPS team.

PYPPS are also pleased to announce that Joanne McLeod will be stepping up to a Caseworker role from October.

Joanne has worked for PYPPS since April 2018 and has been working hard on her legal training in preparation for this.

Many families already know Jo as she has been taking phone queries and responding to email enquiries. Jo is excited about starting her new role within PYPPS.

Other news

PYPPS are working with the Family Information Service to redesign their website.

We will be letting you know all about the new website and other changes to the service in the Spring 2020 edition of the Link newsletter, so keep your eyes peeled!

The PYPPS team are also looking forward to collaborating with Trafford College.

They will be attending Inclusion Week as well as looking at delivering some joint information sessions with students on the EHC review process.

With thanks to Carol Thistlethwaite, PYPPS Team Leader, for writing this article

[Parent and Young People Partnership Service](#)

SEND Local Offer

A Graduated Approach to Special Educational Needs

Early education, schools and colleges use the Graduated Approach to help children and young people who have special educational needs.

It recognises that children learn in different ways and can have different kinds or levels of SEN. So increasingly, step by step, specialist expertise can be brought in to help with the difficulties that a child may have.

A lot of work has been undertaken with schools, early years education providers, other professionals and parent carers to have information about Trafford's graduated approach available in a way that is easy to follow and understand.

We have developed a simple guide, explaining about the Graduated Approach in Trafford. You can access this guide through your school or early years SENCO or you can view it on the local offer website.

Trafford Parents Forum and the SEND

[Trafford Graduated Approach to Special Educational Needs: A guide for parent carers and young people](#)

Communication and Engagement subgroup which includes parent carers and a mixture of professionals, have been very much involved in developing this guide.

The guide has been presented to SENCOs, parent carers and other professionals at a variety of events. We are pleased to say that feedback has been very positive.

Hard copies have been distributed to schools and early years providers. They can help you help go through the guide if you have any questions.

Other useful information available on the local offer:

[What to expect from your early years providers](#)

[What to expect from your school - Inclusive Quality First Teaching and the graduated approach](#)

More details about specific interventions in Practitioner guides

[Trafford SEND Graduated Approach for Early Years Practitioners](#)

[Trafford SEND Graduated Approach for Practitioners](#)

SEND Local Offer

Trafford Family Information Service wins National Award!

Trafford Family Information Service (FIS) are happy to say that they have once more attained the Families First Quality accreditation.

Not only that but Trafford FIS were the proud winners of the national Award in the category of:

“Defining, delivering and improving information for families.”

The service have won the award for the innovative ways in which it engages with families via a telephone helpline, online directory, email, social media and through a targeted outreach team working in local communities.

A key section of the framework for assessing Families First accreditation focusses specifically on the delivery of information and advice to families with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) - what is called our SEND Local Offer of support.

The Award nomination also details all of the work Trafford FIS have done in developing Trafford's local offer, as well as in the recruitment of our Local Offer Advisor role.



Some of the team attended an award ceremony on Monday 23 September where they were presented with the award.

The award reflects all the hard work and professionalism that the whole team have achieved to make this happen. A huge congratulations to them all.

Contact Us:

[Trafford Family Information Service](#)

Trafford Parents Forum



Our Tuesday morning Drop Ins, at the LifeCentre in Sale are back up and running after the summer!

We meet in the café there, every Tuesday between 10:00 and 12:00 in term time. There is no need to book, just turn up. We get the drinks in and have a tab open for parent carers (just say, "I'm with Trafford Parents Forum!")

It's a place to find support, advice, friendship, or simply a nice coffee and a chance to get away from it all for a couple of hours. Max Cards are also available to buy for £3 (www.mymaxcard.co.uk).



[Trafford Parents Forum](#)

We have some guest drop ins coming up so keep an eye on our Facebook page for more details.

A parent carer has recently established an ADHD support group for Trafford Parents. You can find them on Facebook, [@Trafford ADHD](#). The plans going forward are to set up some parent information events and meet ups for families. Watch this space!

Our Trafford PDA group continues to offer advice and support to families. We will be repeating this year's information day on Monday 27 April 2020. Places aren't yet available to book, just the date for your diary!

Due to bad weather, we had to cancel the summer picnic in the park. We have rearranged it for Saturday 26 October 2019, 2:00pm to 4:00pm at Worthington Park in Sale. We will meet in the small field near to the Charlton Drive entrance. The event is for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), their parents and families. Please bring food, drink and a blanket to sit on. There will be bubbles, gentle music and balloons!

With thanks to Rebecca Blinkhorn, Communication and Engagement officer for writing this article



Leisure Activities and What's On

[Stepping Stones to the Stars Live Concert](#)

Saturday 5 October 2019, 7.30pm

Location: The Met, Bury, BL9 0BW

Gifted performers who are on the autistic spectrum showcase their amazing talents

[ASGMA 10-18 Group, Museum of Science and Industry, Spy Mission, Treasure Trail](#)

Saturday 12 October 2019, 10am-3pm

Location: Meet at Stretford Centre, M32 0HL

Fun activity for 10-18s with autism

[Under One Roof - raving for adults with LD](#)

Thursday 17 October 2019, 6.30pm

Location: YES, Manchester, M1 7BD

Accessible raving for adults with learning disabilities, families and friends.

[ASGMA 16+ activity: Lunch at GBK](#)

Saturday, 19 October 2019, 12pm-3pm

Location: Meet at Orient, Trafford Centre

Fun activity for 16+ adults with autism

[Jump Space Holiday Sessions](#)

Monday 21-Thursday 24 October 2019

Location: Stockport, SK3 0BJ

Bags of Jumping Fun! Trampolining, soft play and sensory October Holiday Sessions

[SMDSSG Let Loose! Half term fun](#)

Friday 25 October 2019, 5.30-7.30pm

Location: Hazel Grove, SK7 5DP

Join South Manchester Down's Syndrome Support Group for half term fun at Let Loose

[ASGMA 10-18 half term activity: Kick Air](#)

Tuesday, 29 October 2019, 10am-3pm

Location: Meet at Stretford Centre, M32 0HL

Fun activity for 10-18s with autism

[ASGMA 10-18s Group: Bowling and Lunch](#)

Saturday, 9 November 2019, 12pm-3pm

Location: Meet at Orient, Trafford Centre

Fun activity for 10-18s with autism

[ASGMA 16+ activity: Paradise Golf and lunch](#)

Saturday, 16 November 2019, 12pm-3pm

Location: Meet at Orient, Trafford Centre

Fun activity for 16+ adults with autism

[SMDSSG Bowling](#)

Sunday 10 November 2019, 10.30am

Location: Dog Bowl, Manchester, M1 5WW

Join South Manchester Down's Syndrome Support Group for bowling fun.

[ASGMA 10-18 Group: Dick Whittington Panto](#)

Saturday 7 December 2019, 10am-2pm

Location: Meet at Stretford Centre, M32 0HL

Fun activity for 10-18s with autism

[SMDSSG Pizza Evening](#)

Friday 13 December 2019, 6-8pm

Location: Pizza Express, M20 6UR

Join South Manchester Down's Syndrome Support Group for delicious pizza.

[ASGMA 16+ Activity: Meal at Coach House](#)

Saturday 14 December 2019, 12pm-3pm

Location: Meet at Orient, Trafford Centre

Fun activity for 16+ adults with autism

Leisure Activities and What's On

Training and Workshops

SMDSSG Free Training Events

October 2019 to February 2020

Location: Sale Football Club, M33 3WB

South Manchester Down Syndrome Support
Group training events

GMAC Free Sensory Needs Seminar

Thursday 10 October 2019, 9.30am-2pm

Cherwell Centre, Heywood, OL10 4SY

Greater Manchester Autism Consortium free
seminar for families of children with autism.

GMAC Free Sensory Needs Seminar

Friday 18 October 2019, 9.30am-2pm

**Location: Offerton Community Centre,
Stockport, SK2 5NX**

Greater Manchester Autism Consortium free
seminar for families of children with autism.

Down's Syndrome Association

Workfit Regional Conference

Friday 18 October 2019, 10am-12pm

Location: Liverpool, L24 9PZ

Hear about the workfit programme and from
people successfully placed in work. Lunch and
refreshments provided.

Newly Diagnosed Deaf Info Days (0-2s)

Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 November 2019

Location: Central Manchester, venue tbc

Information, support and sharing experiences.

Kidz to Adultz North

Thursday 14 November 2019, 9.30am-4pm

Location: Event City, Trafford, M17 8AS

One of the UKs largest free event supporting
children and young adults with SEND.

New to the local offer! (From July 2019)

- [Sportworks and Gorse Hill Studios](#)
- [Inclusive Youth Club, Tuesday Challenge.](#)
- [Sportworks and Gorse Hill Saturday Challenge](#)
- [Sportworks Holiday Sessions](#)
- [ASGMA Roleplay Gaming Group \(16+\)](#)
- [Junior Disability Football](#)
- [Accessible Family Evenings at Sandcastle Waterpark](#)
- [Max Card](#)
- [The Technically Brilliant Club](#)

See [SEND local offer events and training](#) for
more great activities and events being added
every day!

General Holiday events:

- [Halloween in the City](#)
- [Spooktacular Messy Play](#)
- [Brick or Treat at Manchester Legoland](#)
- [Our Kids Social - Sale Spooky Special](#)
- [Lightopia Latern and Light Festival](#)
- [Christmas at Dunham Massey](#)
- [Winter Wonderland 2019](#)

Services

Billy and Andy's Music School!

Billy and Andy's Music School provide accessible music activities to people of all ages with special needs and disabilities.

Every school holiday they run a week-long music club for people aged 16+. These are designed to give people the opportunity to write their own songs, to put on an album, make new friends, play in a group and even take part in the performance at the end of the week.



During term-time Billy and Andy run a group called "Saturday Sounds" at Chorlton High School. The junior music group runs from 10-10:45am and focuses on choosing songs, group singing and exploring different instruments. The senior one runs from 11am-12pm and focuses more on song writing and learning instruments. This costs £36 per term.

Billy and Andy also run activities at residential care homes where they play Living Room Gigs and bring along their custom-made accessible instruments so anybody can join in with the songs.

They also work with The Spotlighters, a band of six disabled musicians who formed at one of the holiday music clubs who have since recorded albums together and performed at various venues across Manchester!



The holiday clubs have been running since August 2014 and usually take place at Gorse Hill Studios in Stretford. This costs £160 for the week or £40 a day (10am-4pm).

Services



If you like the sound of any of these activities or would like to know more then get in touch!

[Billy & Andy's Music School](#)

- email: info@billyandandy.co.uk
- Tel: 07429 826053
- Facebook: [billyandandyschool](https://www.facebook.com/billyandandyschool)
- Instagram: [@billyandy_musicschool](https://www.instagram.com/billyandy_musicschool)
- Twitter: [@BillyAndyMusic](https://twitter.com/BillyAndyMusic)

With thanks to Billy and Andy for writing this article!

Blue Badges for people with 'hidden disabilities'

People of all ages with hidden disabilities may now be able to get a Blue Badge. 'Hidden disabilities' is an umbrella term that covers a range of conditions including, but not limited to:

- ADHD
- Amnesia
- Anxiety
- Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)

and Asperger's Syndrome

- Crohn's Disease
- Complex mental health disorders
- Epilepsy
- Huntington's Disease
- Irritable Bowel Diseases
- Lupus
- ME
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Ulcerative Colitis

Those who will be eligible under the changes include:

- Those who cannot make a journey without "a risk of serious harm to their health or safety" or that of others, including young children with autism
- Those for whom journeys cause "very considerable psychological distress"
- Those with considerable difficulty walking, which covers "both the physical act and experience of walking"

This change came into force on 30 August 2019. Residents of Trafford can find out more about [applying for a Blue Badge on the Trafford Directory](#).

With thanks to Jayne Tumblety, Business Change Officer, for the article.

Services



The Toy House

The Toy House is an independent charity working in partnership with numerous groups and individuals from our diverse community.

We have a Managing Committee and the day to day running of The Toy House is organised by Margaret and Jan who are supported by a fantastic group of talented volunteers.

We were established in 1981 by the parents of disabled children who found there were few resources suitable to meet the specific needs of their children.

They worked hard raising funds to purchase items and set up what was known for many years as Delamere Toy and Tape Library. It has had many changes over the years but has continued to support the community since 1981.

In September 2016 we changed our name to The Toy House. We plan to continue to support our community to ensure children and adults develop to their true potential.

We offer a sanctuary for families, including those with disabled children; we offer a helping hand and provide access to specialist toys and equipment.

We are accessible for people using wheelchairs and there is a lift to access the upstairs Sensory Room and bathroom.

There is no referral needed, just turn up and have fun.

We aim to provide an all-inclusive, non-judgmental, welcoming environment which meets the needs of our visitors and:

- Reduce the feelings of isolation in families.
- Offer a listening ear.
- Provide high quality resources to support learning and development.
- Provide an opportunity for our visitors to relax in our sensory room.
- Offer volunteering opportunities.
- *Offer volunteering opportunities to disabled adults where they will receive additional support
- *Offer work experience opportunities to students who may need a little extra support.

*These two groups of volunteers follow Person-Centred-Plans to ensure they are adequately support, nurtured and given the time and space they need to develop to the best of their ability.

Services



Our opening times for Stay & Play are
Monday to Friday 9.30 – 11.30 plus
Friday afternoon 12.30 – 2.30.

The charge for Stay & Play is £3 for one adult and one child and £1 for any extra adult or child. During Stay and Play the children have access to our wide range of toys and equipment, a snack halfway through, a craft activity and at the end of the sessions we get together for a sing – song.

We host a Knitting Group The ladies knit items for homeless people and donate them to a local charity that supports this vulnerable group of people.

Thursday afternoon is Cream Tea Time between 1pm–3pm. This is a ‘child free zone’ and an opportunity to socialise and meet friends whilst enjoying some homemade scones and cream.

Hope to see you soon.

[The Toy House Stay and Play, Toy Loans, Private Groups, Support / Advice](#)

[The Toy House Volunteering for Success Project](#)

With thanks to Margaret Bamber, Toy House manager for writing the article