

September 2020

Inclusion and SEND Parent Newsletter

Is there anything you would like to see in a future issue? Email andrew.smith@bury.gov.uk



With updates from

The Inclusion Service

The SEN Team

Social Care

Transport

Plus:

Top Tips on Managing the
'Return to School Anxiety'

Information on Local Groups
and Activities

Update from the Service Manager for Inclusion

Covid 19 update from Inclusion Service

Despite frequent changes to the schools' guidance for returning to full opening from 1st September, Inclusion teams are in the process of returning to face to face school support. In the first instance, this will be for our Sensory Support teams and our Primary SEMH Team. We will also continue to support schools virtually through Microsoft Teams and Zoom meetings as well as by telephone.

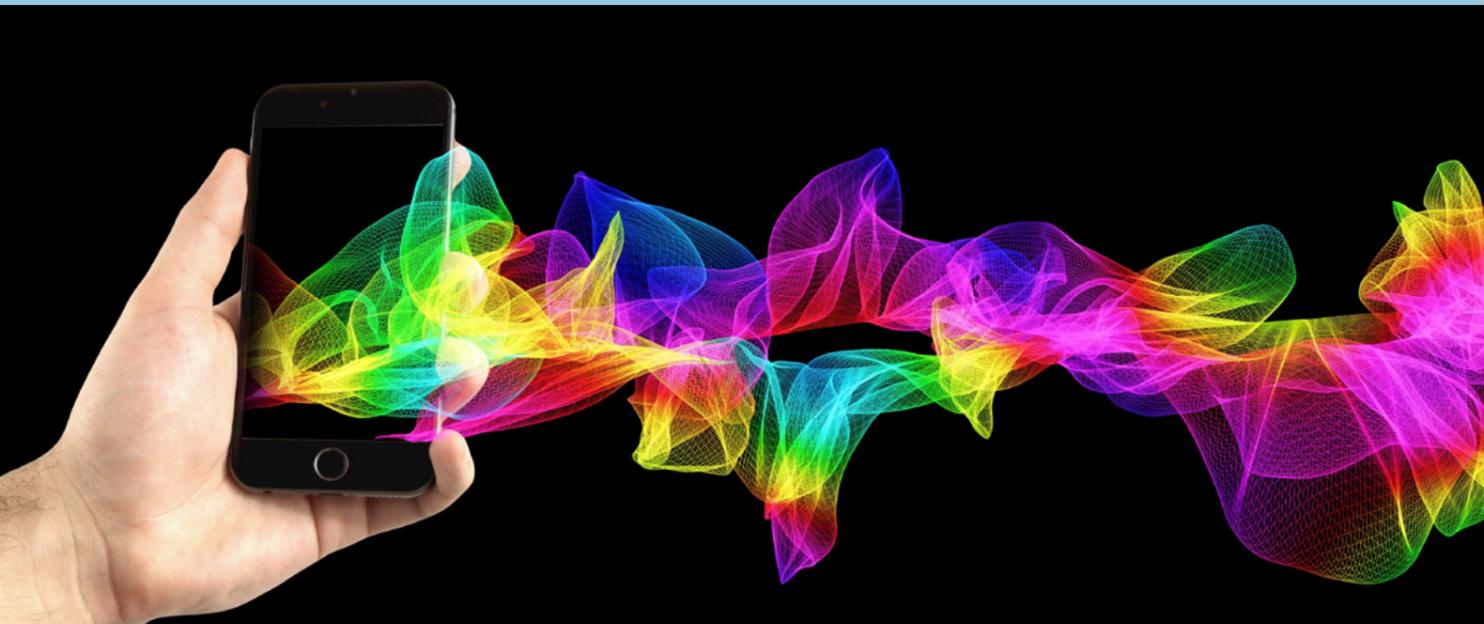
Our first activity will be to contact Sencos to find out each school's arrangements for receiving outside visitors. Where Inclusion teams support individual pupils, the team members will be contacting teachers and teaching assistants to plan their return to casework.

The schools' helpline and the Educational Psychology Service helpline for parents and schools will both be available throughout the autumn term as an increasing number of pupils return to education. Inclusion team members will be on standby to offer advice and support in respect of those pupils who are finding their return to school particularly difficult to manage.

We are anticipating a busy half term but will maintain a flexible and responsive approach to support our schools and families as we negotiate a full return to school.

Cath Atherden

Service manager, Inclusion



Update from the SEN Team

Named SEN Caseworkers

The number of SEN Team Caseworkers has increased across the borough and all schools and settings will have a named SEN Caseworker from the beginning of this autumn term. Each Caseworker will have responsibility for managing the caseload of children or young people with EHCPs attending each school or setting and they will carry out all statutory requirements and associated work for each child or young person in attendance. This will provide a single point of contact for schools and settings when SEN issues arise. All schools and settings will be advised shortly who their named Caseworker will be along with the current cohort of pupils attending who have an EHCP.



Vulnerable and Shielding Children and Young People

As a priority, named Caseworkers will be working with schools and settings to identify those children or young people with an EHCP who are on roll but are not attending as the autumn term begins. These children and young people will each be in receipt of specific support to meet the needs identified in their EHCP and schools and settings will be responsible for ensuring their needs are met whilst they are not attending.

SEN Caseworkers will make contact during the first week of term to confirm how schools and settings are planning to ensure these children and young people's needs are being met whilst they are unable to attend. The caseworkers will also liaise with families to monitor how support is being addressed and to identify any gaps in provision.



School and College Transport Team Update

Over the past few months the transport team have been busy planning and re-planning transport for the new academic year in line with guidance issued by the Department for Education.

From the Autumn Term (September 2020) the local authority is not required to apply social distancing on dedicated home to school transport. This is due to dedicated transport carrying the same cohort of children/young people on a daily basis and they do not mix with the general public on the journey to and from school.

Although social distancing is not required on home to school transport we are continuing to encourage distancing wherever possible.

Additional measures have also been introduced to transport which include:

- Some transport routes now reflect the 'bubbles' within the school setting

- Enhanced cleaning of all vehicles with particular attention to high touch points (grab rails, seat belts etc). Some contractors have also purchased an 'ozone machine' to sanitise the vehicle and remove traces of bacteria.
- All vehicles will operate with open windows or roof lights to allow free flow of air through the passenger compartment of the vehicle
- Wherever possible vehicles are being filled on 'first in, last out' basis with pupils getting on first seated at the rear of the vehicle and the bus filling forwards.
- All passengers are seated in forward facing seats with no face to face

seating

- Use of face coverings is advisory for pupils over the age of 11 – we have not made this mandatory on Bury's home to school transport. Due to the varying needs of the pupils a large proportion of the children/young people we transport cannot tolerate wearing face covering. Where a pupil is able to wear one, we will encourage use.
- Controlled loading/exiting of the vehicle on school premises. Some schools have also introduced staggered start & finish times to ensure bubbles do not mix, these times have been replicated on transport.
- Schools will continue to ensure children/young people wash their hands before entering the vehicle and immediately on exiting.
- PPE is not generally required for home to school transport however pupil escorts will be issued with 3 reusable/washable face coverings.
- All pupil escorts will be issued with hand sanitiser, sanitising wipes and tissues.
- Any pupil escorts, drivers or children displaying symptoms of covid-19 must not report for work / access transport.

The team will continue to follow all guidance issued by the Department for Education and Public Health England (PHE). A specific covid-19 risk assessment is in place for transport and will be subject to continuous review, the risk assessment is available to view on the Transport web page: <https://www.bury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=10420>

September is a very busy period for the team. We are continuing to work remotely and are available from 7:30am to 4:45pm, Monday to Friday during the school term. There may be occasions when it is difficult to reach us by telephone as we are all on calls, please leave a voice message and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

We appreciate some parents are anxious about their children travelling on dedicated home to school transport.

As an alternative to transport we are also able to offer a mileage reimbursement or a personal travel budget to support attendance at school.

If you would like to take your child to and from school yourself using your own vehicle we are able to reimburse the mileage between your home address and school. Mileage reimbursements are based on two return journeys per day.

It may be possible for us to provide you with a Personal Travel Budget to make your own bespoke arrangements to support travel to and from school. Personal travel budgets can be used in a number of ways such as:

- Cover the cost of driving your son/daughter to and from school
- Arrangements with a friend or relative to take children to school
- Arrangements to car share or book a joint taxi with other parents where their children attend the same school
- Arrangements to book an individual taxi
- Purchase of a travel pass for an adult to accompany your son/daughter on public transport to get to school
- Purchase of travel passes for other children so they can travel to school whilst parents transport the child in receipt of the personal budget
- Purchase of breakfast/after school clubs for other children so you are able to travel with your son or daughter to and from school

If you would like to discuss any of the travel options available to you or have any queries regarding transport please contact us on 0161 253 6968 or email schoolandcollegetransport@bury.gov.uk

Children's Social Care Update



As schools reopen and parents juggle the need to get their children back to school so they can reach their full potential whilst keeping them safe, Children Services continue to support parents/carers to get life back to the new normal. Schools are taking the lead on this and there is regular communication across services to make sure that there is an individualised plan for each child.

Parents of children supported by Children Services want what is best for their children and their right to a family life without any intervention from professionals and agencies. For some families they will always have some support but how this looks is a changing picture. We all need to empower parents and carers to be confident to choose the right carer to enter their home and look after their child.

There are some changes within Children Social Care including a new Service Manager who has a dual qualification of social worker and Registered Nurse (LD) and has lots of experience across the field of social care.

The children with Disabilities Team

Manager, Clive Groves, retires at the beginning of October and we would like to wish him well for his future, hoping that he gets to do all the things he has put on hold during his time with CWD team. Mel Oldham is also leaving Bury to begin a well-deserved promoted post. We are waiting for a new permanent Family Support Worker who will be welcomed to assist with direct payments and completion of Personal Support Plans with parents and children.

Children's Social Care are committed to working in partnership with families and to enable children and families to feel they have autonomy and use direct payments in more effective manner.

Stay Safe, Stay Healthy, Stay Happy

Our 10 top tips for managing the 'return to school anxiety' during COVID 19

One of the biggest worries young people have shared with us is returning to school with three of the main concerns being

Feeling unprepared for the return to school; being unsure of what changes will happen and when

Other people not following the COVID guidance

Some young people have said being at home during lockdown has been incredibly relaxing due to fewer demands and being around fewer people who do not always understand their needs. Young people are worried about these things recurring when they return to school.

We wanted to write some tips and advice for managing the 'return to school anxiety' during this difficult time. We have written our 15 top tips and we believe every tip is incredibly important, so please take the time to read through them if you can. Either a young person can read this for themselves, you can pass the tips on to them in a way that they will understand or you can just try the tips for yourself!

Tip 1: Seek Clarity

One of the biggest causes of anxiety at the moment is the huge amount of uncertainty that comes with COVID 19. Changes are happening daily and most people feel in the dark about what is going to change and when.

Many anxious people feel the need to plan ahead and make back up plans for any negative experiences that may occur during the day. The less uncertainty there is, the less 'troubleshooting' you will need to do and the less anxious you will feel.

Therefore, one of the best ways to reduce this anxiety is by working together with someone



that is trusted to work out what is certain and what isn't, perhaps by talking through uncertainties for 10 minutes a day. For things that are still uncertain, thinking about probabilities can also be helpful. Using words such as 'likely', 'very unlikely' for each scenario can help to give a sense of clarity in these uncertain times.

Tip 2: Use an emotion scale

Understanding emotions can be difficult, especially when people are feeling overwhelmed by their worries. Using an emotion scale is great for helping to identify and share feelings, in addition to providing guidance to others on how to help!

A five point scale is a great emotion scale to try. (Here is one that Andy wrote himself and uses at home). It is incredibly helpful the person using it as well as for the people supporting; they can understand what needs to be done to support people before they become overwhelmed by their emotions (if it is used proactively and at regular intervals throughout the day). More can be learned about five point scales and how to use them effectively at: <https://www.5pointscale.com/>

Rating	Looks/Sounds Like	Feels Like	What Helps
5		AAARRRGHHH!	Leave me alone and give me time and space
4	Shouty/ angry OR quiet and unresponsive Can't listen very well. Fast pacing and movement	I am about to explode!	Going to a quiet space/ moving away Heavy muscle activities Listening to angry music Reduction in demands Blocking out sensory input <i>Do not ask me why I am upset until I am calmer</i>
3	Very fidgety. Quiet. Struggling to listen.	I am feeling very annoyed/ worried	Sensory calming strategies Having a break, then having a chat with someone about what is wrong
2	Normal (for me!)	I am content, despite slight discomfort	Keeping things as they are Continuing with sensory regulation strategies
1	Smiley and energetic/ chatty	I am very happy	Keeping things as they are



Tip 3: Practice Mindfulness

Mindfulness is not just about doing meditation or yoga; it is about being in the present moment and accepting thoughts and feelings. This isn't only accomplished by doing meditation but by being in a 'flow' state by engaging in something of real interest. Dancing, gaming, drawing, singing or anything else that can be done 'in the moment' without focusing on other thoughts counts as mindfulness and has a positive impact on wellbeing. During the return to school period, it may be useful to give

more time to allow young people to play games, watch YouTube or anything else they enjoy so they are not fixating on negative thoughts and feelings. It may also be useful to consider:

Writing a Happy List- This can be a list of things you love to do, things you can still do, and a list of things you can look forward to as lockdown restrictions ease in the future. This is a great way to calm down racing thoughts as you can refer to this list when you feel stressed or worried. You could also make some pocket cards, so you can pick out a random activity/

thing to do.

Trying to spend more time in Green Spaces/Nature. Spending time in nature is known to reduce stress, increase energy levels and have many more benefits, so try and take time to go out be in nature as much as you can! There are also lots of great spots in Bury. In addition to popular parks like Heaton Park, Clarence Park and Nuttall Park, there are also several local nature reserves: <https://www.bury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=11211>



Leah McCabe

I am a School Nurse working in Bury. My main role is supporting the health and well-being of children and young people age 5-19. The age variant means everyday is different! I teach health promotion lessons in Primary and Secondary Schools which is always good fun! The School Nurses also deliver a school nurse drop in for teenagers covering a variety of health and well-being topics. I also work closely with other agencies in Bury; signposting children and young people to the correct services to optimise their physical health as well as their social and emotional health



Andy Smith

I am the inclusion ambassador/ SEND advocate at Bury Council. My role is focused prioritising the views of SEND children and young people. At the moment, I am particularly interested in helping to increase the amount of social opportunities that are available for SEND young people, and talking with young people to help them to understand their diagnoses.

I am also the person who creates the newsletter. Therefore, I would love to hear any feedback!

Tip 4: Connect with

others

Try and keep in regular contact with friends as connecting with others and having positive experiences with them is great for wellbeing and can directly reduce anxiety related thoughts and feelings. This could be meeting (socially distanced) at a park or even planning to do something together online.

It may also be useful to consider going out of your comfort zone to get to know others and to try and make new friends. If unsuccessful, there is nothing lost but the effort could result in positive new friendships. See the next article for some recommended activities or groups which it may be worth giving a try.

It is useful to know who you can talk to about any worries or concerns. It could be friends, family, carers, or teachers. But having a list of named people who you can talk to and what you can talk to them for is very helpful.

For anonymous support and advice, The free [Kooth](#) and [Shout](#) services are available to contact.

Back to school and feeling anxious?

shout
Text GM to
85258

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

NHS in Greater Manchester

Back to school and feeling anxious?

kooth

Free. Safe. Anonymous

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

NHS in Greater Manchester

Tip 5: Know that worry is normal

It is important to know that worry is normal part of life, especially when:

- Something new or different is being tried
- Plans are not certain
- There are a lot of 'what if' questions
- There is a pending performance coming up
- Something scary or dangerous is happening

Whilst worry is completely normal, it can still become too much at times! But there are two things that can help with this:

1. **Distraction** – Sometimes you can focus so much on your worries that they blow completely out of proportion so doing something to keep the mind occupied can be helpful. It is difficult to think about two things at once, so doing an activity that takes a lot of thought such as watching a film, playing a game or doing brain teasers can be really helpful.
2. **Challenging your worries** – Worry is **SOMETIMES** helpful, because it gets us to slow down or back away when we need time to figure out what to do

(like reminding you to put on your bike helmet before you go cycling).

And sometimes it isn't (like worrying that your feet might one day outgrow your favourite shoes).

But... worry **ALWAYS** thinks it is being helpful, even when it's not.

So try and think more about when to listen to worries and when to ignore them. If we let worries control too many decisions (especially when it isn't necessary), it can result in feeling 'stuck' and overwhelmed and life can feel really small and boring.

Anxiety is like the 'know-it-all' in our lives who thinks it is right and that all their advice should be followed. Some of what anxiety says is important for keeping us safe and aware, but some of it is not; anxiety creates too much worry for no reason. Try and take time to look at the facts to work out when this is happening. When it is, tell it to be quiet or ignore it. Acknowledge your worries but carry on regardless to prove that there isn't actually anything to be afraid of!

If you would like more support ask a trusted member of school staff or, if you can, speak to a school nurse

The school nurse drop-in is a confidential service where young people can access support or obtain advice about lots of different health and well-being topics. It usually takes place once a week in Bury high schools. In response to the COVID 19 situation all school nurses are carrying out risk assessments with the schools to ensure the service is delivered in a safe way. All public health guidelines will be followed. Schools will be able to help young people or Parents/Carers to contact their named School Nurse and advise the best way to make an appointment.

We hope you have found these tips useful. If you have any thoughts you would like to share or any useful tips of your own, please feel free to share them at andrew.smith@bury.gov.uk. See you next month for part two!



Information on Local Groups and Activities

More youth clubs and activities are starting to open, meaning that there are more things for young people to get involved with. We wanted to share a few activities in this newsletter, but for more activities and updates on when organisations are reopening, please check the [Bury Local Offer Website](#)

The Phoenix Centre, Prestwich

Before lockdown, the Phoenix Centre ran some fantastic activities, including the popular 'inclusive youth club' on Friday evenings.

As we move into the winter months, The Phoenix Centre will be launching an eSports (computer games) club, amongst a selection of other activities. If you follow their [Eventbrite page](#), you will receive notifications when there are new events and activities that young people can access: <http://phoenixcentreprestwich.eventbrite.com>



The Therapeutic Forest

The Therapeutic Forest is running a range of fantastic activities for SEND young people, including family Forest School sessions, 'Get Active in the Forest' sessions for SEND young people.

You can join their waiting list to be notified of future activities and events here: <https://sprw.io/stt-0856f7>

Part of my role is about supporting groups and activities to be more inclusive for SEND young people. So if you think I can offer support for an activity or group that you are aware of, please do not hesitate to get in touch: andrew.smith@bury.gov.uk

Everyone Can

Everyone Can is a charity based in Sale, that believes every disabled person should be able to do the things they enjoy.

They offer one to one assessments for disabled people so that they can use digital technology to improve their independence, but also run gaming sessions for disabled people (both young people and adults). Everyone Can has offered to let people visit the centre in advance of joining a gaming session if they can help people to give it a try.

Book onto gaming sessions here: <https://everyonecan.eventbrite.co.uk>

Find out more about Everyone Can (including information on their one to one assessments by visiting their website: <https://www.everyonecan.org.uk/>

Bury Ability Counts Football Team

Bury Ability counts open age team (18+ disabled team) are looking for players,

They train 9pm-10pm on Tuesday at Goshen Playing field (The Football Centre, Goshen Sports Site, Tennyson Avenue, Bury BL9 9RG).

If you are interested in joining you are welcome to attend on the day (no booking required) and if you have any questions please feel to email Thomas Bernan on: thomasberman1@hotmail.co.uk



FREE Success Strategy training for young Women in Bury

Delivered by : Qualified and experienced Success Coaches
(Qualified Teachers, Leadership Coaches, NLP Practitioner, Equine Assisted learning Specialist)

We will teach **you** the tools and techniques to improve **your** mind control, boost your confidence, balance your emotional state and so help **you** shape **your** successful future.

In just 10 weeks you can achieve; **Improved physical and mental health, better family relationships, a new life plan and better job/ career prospects.**

If you need a boost to confidence post lockdown or just want to explore what you can do instead of what you cant? Then this is for you !

In the first instance email rebecca@theenterprisecentre.co.uk for more details

Only 6 places available open to ALL and Interviews will take place at a mutually convenient time mid September with a start date beginning of November.... **Lunch and travel expenses provided** and a chance to become part of an amazing local women's network! **This programme usually has a cost of £600 pp !**



European Union
European
Social Fund

We hope you enjoyed our September Newsletter!

Do you have any questions to ask us? Email them to andrew.smith@bury.gov.uk and we can answer them in next month's newsletter!