

LOCAL OFFER POSITION STATEMENT

This is an overview or outline of the key legislation/SEND Code of Practice and any other relevant sources of guidance.

Part 3 of The Children and Families Act 2014, the accompanying Regulations and further guidance in the Code of Practice as well as the Children and Social Work Act 2017, sets out the statutory duty on a Local Authority to develop and publish a Local Offer. This must set out the provision they expect to be available for local children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

The duty covers:

- Preparing and reviewing the Local Offer, for and with children and young people with SEND, their families and those providing services for them
- Publishing the Local Offer
- Publishing users' comments on the Local Offer and the action to be taken in response
- Access to information, advice and support must be included in the Local Offer.

This is a general picture in England and Herts and any common views/positions held by key SEND organisations and then outlines the local situation in Hertfordshire as we see it.

The Local Authority **must** publish a Local Offer, in one place, setting out information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care, for children and young people in their area who have SEND; including those who do not have, nor are seeking, an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

It must also specifically cover training for young people, travel arrangements and support for preparing for adulthood. The Local Offer should be comprehensive for ages 0 to 25 years, inclusive.

The Local Offer for Hertfordshire has two key purposes:

1. To provide clear, comprehensive, accessible and up-to-date information about the available provision and how to access it.
2. To make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving, and engaging, children and young people with SEND, their families and service providers, in its development and continuous review.

This is HPCI's position as an organisation.

As a minimum, HPCI wants legal and SEND Code of Practice compliance. HPCI represents a wide spectrum of parent carer views, across the whole range of SEND. This means we give equal weight to any opposing views held by parents on a topic.

The Local Offer:

- Must be the product of collaboration between parent carers, carers, children and young people and the Local Authority. Note: pages that have been co-produced with HPCI have our Kitemark on them.
- Must be free from jargon and complicated language and be easy to access and understand.
- Must be structured in a way that makes it easy to find information.
- Contain **all** information relating to services for children and young people with SEND.
- Should be comprehensive, reliable and up to date, so parent carers, children and young people with SEND are empowered and confident in knowing what support is available across education, health and social care services.
- Must include eligibility criteria for services, where relevant.
- Must be clear about where to get advice and guidance and how to make complaints/provide feedback.
- Should be used as a tool to enable the Local Authority to identify areas of provision for development and improvement – so it is more than a mere directory of existing services.
- Should be promoted effectively to children and young people in an age-appropriate manner, as well as to parent carers, families, relevant professionals and voluntary/support groups so that awareness and use are widespread.
- Should be noted, with specific resources, in service communications and correspondence, as appropriate – part of the ‘waiting well’ aspirations of the Local Authority.
- Should aim to be inclusive for those who do not have access to digital resources or where English is an additional language i.e. offer telephone support as well as online resources, aim to provide as much information as possible in different languages on request.
- Should aim not to exclude those with disabilities. Ensure reasonable adjustments are made such as; including sign-language, larger print and easy-read images/videos etc.
- Should be appropriately resourced to enable the Local Authority to achieve these aims.

That, as a statutory service, a dedicated Local Offer resource/team is best located within the Local Authority and not outsourced to a third-party organisation/agency. An in-house service is able to access professionals in SEND services more

efficiently and effectively, to ensure co-production of content and overall awareness of the Local Offer and statutory duties.

That the local Parent Carer Forum (HPCI) should have regular and consistent opportunity to work in co-production on the Local Offer and how it can best be promoted, updated and maintained to ensure maximum engagement of parent carers, families and most importantly, children and young people with SEND.