



Supporting families with children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

NEWS 06.01.2021

Lockdown guidance, share your experiences, events, workshops and more

We hope you managed to have a break over the festive period and that the New Year will bring some hope of a more normal life for all of us.

For our first newsletter of 2021, we're unfortunately back in lockdown.

We will try to bring you up to date information and guidance from both national and local governments regarding guidelines and services during this period.

Share your Experiences

We have introduced a new feature on our website <https://www.lambethparentforum.com/> to allow parents and carers to feedback to us about any issues, or good practice, that they experience with their children and young people with additional needs.

We will use the information you tell us about anonymously in our work with Lambeth education, social care and health partners, to give a fuller picture of the lived experience of families, and hopefully resolve issues as they arise.

You can find the Issues Log Form on our website [here](#)

Do let us know if you experience any issues with schools, social care or health services.

Unfortunately, we cannot raise issues individually and we always recommend that you follow the appropriate contact/complaint route which should be on the 'providers' website, or we can help signpost you to the appropriate route.

Government Guidance

The new lockdown came into force in England from midnight last night, 5th January 2021. The Guidance can be found [here](#)

It says that everyone should stay at home and only leave home for essential reasons.

Schools and colleges are closed, except for children and young people of key workers and those considered vulnerable, including children and young people with EHC Plans, child in need plans, child protection plans and looked after children. The vulnerable category also now includes children and young people identified by educational providers and local authorities (including social care) who could benefit from continued full time attendance. This may include those on SEN Support in mainstream schools who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home.

Guidance on those who can access educational settings can be found [here](#).

Decisions on whether your vulnerable child or young person should attend their education setting should be made in co-production with families.

Children and young people not attending their school or college should be provided with remote learning until February half term. We would hope that this learning would be suitably differentiated for children and young people with SEN, and schools should work with families to achieve the best outcomes.

For those people who have been identified as '**Clinically Extremely Vulnerable**' from Covid-19, there is additional Guidance [here](#)

Coronavirus Information from Lambeth Council

Information about the current situation in Lambeth and how to get help can be found on the Council [website](#)

There is information for parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities [here](#)

If you have to isolate and need help with shopping etc, there is information about what's available [here](#)

Lambeth Parent Forum Events

Whilst we still can't meet face to face, we have a few online events coming up in January.

If you would like to take part in any of the following, please let us know info@lambethparentforum.com

Focus Group: NHS Long Term Plan Key Workers - Monday 11th January 2021, 10am

If your child has a learning disability and/or autism with high levels of anxiety or challenging behaviour have you ever thought about going to A&E because you didn't know what else to do? Or felt that you just can't cope?

The NHS England Long Term Plan, published in 2019, set out strategic commitments for children and young people with learning disability and/or autism.

One of the commitments is:

By 2023/24 children and young people with the most complex needs will have a designated key worker.

NHS England will introduce a new scheme in 2021 for children & young people at risk of being admitted to hospital. These families will be provided with immediate, personalised support by a team of 'key workers' who will help the family to help keep their child out of hospital.

We have invited Ian Sutton, who is the Project Lead at South East London CCG for this scheme, to come and talk to parents/carers who have experience of this situation to discuss what you would want to see from this Key Worker scheme.

If you've been in this situation and would like to share your experience to help shape the new service, contact us info@lambethparentforum.com.

Virtual Come Together! Coffee Morning - Wednesday 13th January 2021, 10.00 - 12.00

Hosted jointly by Lambeth Parent Forum and Family Action Lambeth on Zoom, we will have guests from LB Lambeth to share information on the new draft Preparation for Adulthood Strategy, plans for a new SEND Youth Forum, and for a new Communication Strategy to improve how information is made available and shared.

If you would like to attend, please register here: https://family-action.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAKceGprDsvGtELyFQqmI_beABhNf0m5WPm

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. Please note, this confirmation email will come from rosemary.merricks@family-action.org.uk
We will also confirm Zoom meeting details on the day before the Coffee Morning.

EPEC Being a Parent Course - weekly, 19th January to 23rd March 2021

We all know that being a parent of a child with SEND can be challenging at the best of times, but the difficult times we face now have placed extra stresses and strains on us all. Over the past months we've been hearing from Forum members how the Covid pandemic has affected family life and we know mental health and wellbeing has been a key area of concern for parents, children and young people.

As part of our response we have secured funding to offer Lambeth Parent Forum members free access to an evidence based group that will support participants to develop practical skills to manage the challenges by:

- looking after yourself as a parent
- recognising and managing your children's emotions
- learning positive parenting strategies
- supporting your children's resilience

The group will run online on Tuesday mornings from January 19th - March 23rd with a break for half term, and it will be led by two trained and experienced facilitators who are parents of children with SEND and who have tried and tested the strategies with their own families.

If you'd like to find out more or register for a place, please contact us info@lambethparentforum.com. Spaces are limited so please contact us asap.

Funding for this course is part of the Government's £750m charities package, and is being granted through Pears Foundation's trusted, long-term Partners to ensure funding gets to frontline organisations and their communities.

Workshop: Money Matters with Contact - Tuesday 26th January 2021, 10.00 - 12.00

Financial matters, and the benefit system, can seem very confusing at the best of times. During the disruption of the Covid-19 lockdown this year, many families experienced changes in their financial circumstances. We're offering a free online workshop for Lambeth Parent Forum members, in partnership with Contact, which will help you to make sense of financial matters and opportunities for you and your family.

This Zoom online workshop will cover:

- an overview of benefits (DLA, Carer's Allowance) – dispelling common myths
- opportunities for grants and discounts available on utility bills, leisure activities and for carers
- hear other parents' experiences
- share as much or as little of your story as you wish
- explore how you can obtain further help and guidance if you need it

If you would like to attend, please register here: <https://family-action.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0rc-mhpjIqGd0VqubExAeyelgtACCTaWns>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. Please note, this confirmation email will come from rosemary.merricks@family-action.org.uk. We will also confirm Zoom meeting details on the day before the Workshop.

Information and Support

SEN Online Drop In - The January Drop In session with Lambeth SEN Team has been moved to **20th January 2021, 11am - 12.30** to allow everyone to get back after the holidays.

You can book a 15 minute slot to speak with a member of the SEN team by emailing Tlms@lambeth.gov.uk or text **07740 745580** with your preferred contact number. Sessions are held via Microsoft Teams.

In February they will be back to the first Wednesday of the month, **3rd February 2021**.

A2ndVoice CIC are continuing to provide a range of online events for families with children and young people with autism and/or learning disability, with a particular focus on the experiences of African, Caribbean, Asian and Minority Ethnic families. More information can be found on their [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page

Caleidoscope CIC is another community organisation supporting families with children with autism who are offering free online webinars and courses. More information can be found on their [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page.

SOS!SEN has lots of information about special educational needs on their [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page including webinars and booklets. Their Helpline is open Monday-Friday 9.30 -12.30am and 1- 4pm, and Tuesday evenings 8 - 10pm on 0208 538 3731

Contact, the charity for families with disabled children, has a free national helpline 0808 808 3555 if you need advice, information or support with any questions you may have about life with a disabled child including education, medical conditions and social care. There's also lots of information on their [website](#) They also offer 'Listening Ear' appointments - 1:1 telephone appointments with a family support adviser. You can book an appointment by visiting their [Eventbrite page](#)

Special Needs Jungle regularly posts information about special educational needs on their [website](#)

DASL (Disability Advice Service Lambeth) run Peer Support Groups for families in receipt of Direct Payments. If you're interested in joining the groups contact direct.payments@disabilitylambeth.org.uk or have a look at their [website](#)