

# The IRIS Magazine

April 2020



For Parents Of Children And Young People With Special Educational Needs And Disabilities in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

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PROJECT

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# A MESSAGE FROM ASK US

To all Parents, Carers and Young People,

We know that this current situation is very unusual and we appreciate that for many, this uncertainty brings anxiety, worries and questions about everyday life, especially for those with SEND.

Our team are continuing to work as normal, with our advisers operating from their homes to keep the AskUs Nottinghamshire service running as usual. However, to maintain the safety of both our colleagues and customers, all advice, guidance and support is now being delivered by telephone, or other digital methods, rather than through face-to-face sessions.

Our helpline is open 24 hours a day. Please leave a message and our advisers will try to get back to you within two working days where possible. Please do keep in mind that while we are doing our best to keep up with the increased demands for our services at this time, there may be a delay in our advisers getting back to you, but we will.

Please note, the helpline number (0800 121 7772) can be used for all enquiries, including support with accessing mediations and tribunals.

New information is being published daily and our advisers are trying to keep up to date with changes to SEND processes. Please refer to The Council for Disabled Children's website for a list of resources and guidance about coronavirus. This page will be kept under review and new resources added to the categories as they become available.

[councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/news-opinion/news/covid-19-support-and-guidance](https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/news-opinion/news/covid-19-support-and-guidance)

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work of public services, who are working hard to meet the needs of those children and young people with SEND who are most vulnerable and who are overcoming additional challenges that these circumstances bring, to continue to provide essential services.

Thank you for your ongoing support and understanding during this time.

*Catherine Connolly*

Ask Us Nottinghamshire



## WHY DO THINGS LOOK DIFFERENT?

Advice from the Government means that many of the events we would usually include in the magazine have been cancelled or postponed until later in the year, including the Parent Carer Conference and Rainbow Parent Carer Forum's Annual Event. Because of this, we've decided to remove the central section which is usually dedicated to local events and include more information and advice about the current situation, as well as things to do and helpful resources to lean on while the social restrictions are in place.

# 10 QUICK FACTS ABOUT THE LOCAL OFFERS

The Local Offer is a great place to find information about local events and updates from local organisations and groups, as well as up-to-date information about coronavirus and government advice. We know that not everyone will have used the Local Offer before, so here are ten quick facts to help you to get to grips with it.

1.

IRIS works with two SEND Local Offers: Nottingham City Council ([www.asklion.co.uk](http://www.asklion.co.uk)) and Nottinghamshire County Council ([bit.ly/NottsHelpYourself\\_SEND](http://bit.ly/NottsHelpYourself_SEND)).

2.

Local Authorities (Councils) must have a SEND Local Offer - it's the law.

3.

The SEND Local Offer includes information about:

- Local activities
- Advice and support
- Accessibility
- Education, training and work
- Childcare for disabled children
- Transport and travel
- Transitioning between schools
- Health care

4.

The SEND Local offer is broken down into easy-to-use sections and can be filtered by age range, activity or advice topic.

5.

The SEND Local Offers are accessible - with text size and colour options and Browsealoud enabled (For Nottinghamshire County Council).

6.

You can use the SEND Local Offer to create lists and download contact information for local activities and groups. By creating a free account, you can save your lists to come back to later.

7.

If you are looking to apply for the Short Breaks Offer from either the County or City council, you will access it via the SEND Local Offer.

8.

Both the City and County Councils make decisions about the Local Offers through conversations with young people, parents, carers and professionals. You can get involved through the Local Offer and see what past changes have been made as a result of consultation in the 'You Said, We Did' sections.

9.

Both SEND Local offers have a section for young people who are looking for advice and who want to make decisions about their lives more independently. These are great resources for learning about adulthood and the responsibilities that it brings.

10.

The SEND Local offers are free to use!



# WHAT IS HAPPENING AND WHY?

There's a new type of virus called COVID-19. It's part of a collection of viruses called Coronavirus. This one is new and is making people around the world become ill and has sadly led to some people dying. To stop the virus spreading to more people, the Government have asked everyone to stay at home, with no unnecessary journeys or social contact.

People can leave the house for:

- Essential shopping
- Exercise - one form of outdoor exercise per day
- Medical purposes - to collect medication or attend an appointment
- Travel to and from work, for essential workers

The virus spreads between people through germs which can be breathed in or stay on your hands and get into your body when you touch your eyes, nose or mouth. People who have symptoms of the illness are staying away from the public so more people won't get it. For most people, the illness is like a cold, which makes them cough, sneeze and gives them a high temperature, or fever. However, for people with existing conditions, it can make them really unwell. Currently, people with those conditions or diagnoses are being asked to stay at home for 12 weeks to make sure they don't come into contact with anyone who might be infected. Staying inside all the time sounds boring and will mean that some things have to change in your home, but there are plenty of things you can do to make the most of the time together and keep learning while you are not at school. There are also loads of ways to stay in touch with friends and family while you are apart, so you don't have to miss out on anything while you help everybody to stay safe from the virus.

## Doing Your Bit

The news and social media can make this feel like a scary situation, but everything that's happening at the moment is to keep as many people safe and healthy as possible. You can do your bit to help by:

1. Staying in your house and garden.
2. Washing your hands and keeping things clean and tidy around the house.
3. Being patient with the grown-ups in your life, who are following rules made by the government and who might not be able to take you out as much as normal or do some of the things they usually would.
4. Keeping in touch with relatives and friends by phone or over the internet.

## MAKING THE MOST OF TIME AT HOME

There are many reasons you can find yourself spending more time at home than usual, but recent events have probably meant that you and your family have been staying at home when you may otherwise have been at school, work, day care or with friends.

Being stuck inside can sound boring, but it's a great opportunity to make memories, develop skills and do things that you might not have time for during the usual day-to-day routine.

If the social restrictions mean that you're at home more than you usually would be, it can be helpful to put a new routine in place temporarily. This can be calming for anybody who feels a bit lost or unsure about how they will spend this time. This could include time for:

- Arts and crafts
- Learning something new
- Reading
- Screen time
- Meals
- Family time
- Reflection and emotional wellbeing

The routine doesn't have to be rigid and it's perfectly normal to overrun or skip activities altogether when the day calls for it. Life is unpredictable, so flexibility is key. It's also important to remember that you know your family's needs best and you're best placed to make decisions about which activities and routines work best for them.

If you're struggling for fresh ideas to fill the time, here's five to get you started:

- A day-time slumber party: get your duvets, pyjamas and snacks and snuggle up to watch your favourite films together.
- Start a journal and encourage children to record their feelings and thoughts.
- Find a new recipe and get the whole family involved in it.
- Have a family brainstorming session about your hopes and dreams for the future. Holidays you want to go on and designing your dream house are both great starters to get the creativity flowing, even if the answers aren't always realistic!
- Make a vision board. There's more about this on page 9.

# KEEPING IN TOUCH REMOTELY

Thanks to technology, it's now easier than ever to spend time with people without being in the same house - or even the same country!

There are so many apps which allow you to chat via voice and video, including:

- Discord
- Zoom
- Whatsapp
- Skype
- Facetime
- Facebook Messenger

While chatting, why not play online games together, either on your consoles (Switch, PlayStation, Xbox, for example) PC or phone. There are lots of free multiplayer games available for all ages and abilities, just be sure to let an adult or carer know what you plan to play or download before doing so.

You could also arrange a regular virtual get-together, such as a book club. Use this time to get reading - again, there are lots of free books and reading materials online. Spend some time reading, then set a time to talk about it.

If reading isn't your thing, you could do the same with films, TV series, comics - anything you both own or can access.

Keep in touch with your family and close friends as much as possible. Sometimes hearing a familiar voice is all that's needed to brighten your mood, and a good chat for half an hour over a cup of tea is a great way to spend some free time.

Another idea is to ask your family members to be your pen pals. Using social media or with a parent to help, send photos and messages about the things you are doing, such as playing in the garden or helping around the house, and ask them to send you pictures and messages back.

**Remember: Ask a parent or carer when using apps and downloading software, they will help you to stay safe online and make sure that you are not spending money without realising.**



# INFORMATION AND HELPLINES

## Local Authorities

**Nottingham City Council  
Coronavirus Support Line  
Golden Number - 0115 915 5555**  
[www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/coronavirus)  
Connecting those in self-isolation to community support groups and neighbourhood volunteer teams. Open 9am-5pm Monday-Friday

Please note, Deaf people can use Notts Deaf Society's BSL interpreting service using Skype to contact the Golden Number - 0115 915 5555. Contact bslnotts on Skype, Monday-Friday 9am-5pm.

**Nottinghamshire County Council  
Coronavirus Information -  
Customer Service Centre -**  
0300 500 8080 - 8am-6pm Monday-Friday [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/coronavirus](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/coronavirus). Latest news and information about the ongoing situation

**Nottinghamshire community support and volunteering response hub**  
[www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/coronavirus/nottinghamshire-community-support-and-volunteering-response-hub](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/coronavirus/nottinghamshire-community-support-and-volunteering-response-hub)

**District Council Homepages and phone numbers:**  
All District council websites have links to their Coronavirus updates on their homepage.

**Ashfield District Council**  
[www.ashfield.gov.uk/](http://www.ashfield.gov.uk/)  
01623 450000

**Bassetlaw District Council**  
[www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/](http://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/)  
01909 533 533

**Broxtowe Borough Council**  
[www.broxtowe.gov.uk/](http://www.broxtowe.gov.uk/)  
0115 917 7777

**Gedling Borough Council**  
[www.gedling.gov.uk/coronavirus/](http://www.gedling.gov.uk/coronavirus/)  
0115 901 3901

**Mansfield District Council**  
[www.mansfield.gov.uk/](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/)  
01623 463463

**Newark and Sherwood District Council**  
[www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk](http://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk)  
01636 650000

**Rushcliffe Borough Council**  
[www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/](http://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/)  
0115 981 9911

## Disability Helplines

**Mencap Charity**  
working with people with a learning disability, their families and carers.  
Helpline: 0808 808 1111 (Monday- Friday, 9am-5pm)  
Website: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

**Disabled Students Helpline**  
This line provides advice to disabled students who are studying in England. Opening hours: 11am-1pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. 0330 995 0414 (Free)  
Email: [students@disabilityrightsuk.org](mailto:students@disabilityrightsuk.org)

**Disability Direct**  
Not-for-profit aiming to help people of all abilities to live independently.  
Phone: 0115 9785095  
Website: [disabilitydirect.com/derby/dd-nottingham/](http://disabilitydirect.com/derby/dd-nottingham/)

**Scope**  
Scope's helpline provides free, independent and impartial advice and support on issues that matter to disabled people and their families.  
freephone: 0808 800 3333  
textphone: Use Type Talk by dialling 18001 from a textphone followed by 0808 800 3333

**Disabled Living Foundation**  
Free, impartial advice about mobility products or other types of daily living equipment for older and disabled people  
0300 999 0004

## Mental Health Support

**Young Minds**  
Information on child and adolescent mental health. Services for parents and professionals.  
Phone: Parents' helpline 0808 802 5544 (Monday-Friday, 9.30am-4pm) Website: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

**SANE**  
Emotional support, information and guidance for people affected by mental illness, their families and carers.  
SANEline: 0300 304 7000 (daily, 4.30pm-10.30pm)  
Textcare: comfort and care via text message, sent when the person needs it most: [www.sane.org.uk/textcare](http://www.sane.org.uk/textcare)  
Peer support forum: [www.sane.org.uk/supportforum](http://www.sane.org.uk/supportforum)  
Website: [www.sane.org.uk/support](http://www.sane.org.uk/support)

**Samaritans**  
Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.  
Phone: 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline)  
Website: [www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk)

**CALM**  
CALM is the Campaign Against Living Miserably, for men aged 15 to 35.  
Phone: 0800 58 58 58 (daily, 5pm to midnight)  
Website: [www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)

**Men's Health Forum**  
24/7 stress support for men by text, chat and email.  
Website: [www.menshealthforum.org.uk](http://www.menshealthforum.org.uk)

**Mental Health Foundation**  
Provides information and support for anyone with mental health problems or learning disabilities.  
Website: [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

# MANAGING MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

We're all feeling a little more anxious at the moment and while some anxiety is normal, there are 1.5 million people in the UK with an intellectual disability where the anxiety may be much stronger.

At a time when structure and routine is quickly changing it can have huge impact on emotional and mental wellbeing. These changes are also difficult for care providers who may also feel in an unfamiliar place.

Working with your social and healthcare providers will help carers and family members effectively manage the changes that may take place, however, we wanted to provide a few bits of friendly advice that could help.

## Set a new structure

Get up at the same time every day, have a wash, have breakfast, do some reading etc. It may feel difficult at first, but routine can help a lot with new adjustments

## Keep moving

It can be hard when time outside is limited, but it's important to keep active where possible. If you are currently following a physio plan or have recommended exercises which suit your mobility, keep them up!

For those with increased mobility, there are a range of exercise-related videos on YouTube, including Cosmic Kids Yoga. For a fun challenge, why not build obstacle courses in your front room using cushions?

Whether you go all out or just do some light stretches, make time for activity every day.

## Sing a song!

Singing is proven to make us feel good. Even if you can't sing, you can have so much fun getting stuck in it together. The Quarantine Choir on YouTube has short videos to teach you to sing a song. TheSofaSingers.net meets weekly for people all over the world to sing together over the internet.

## Give each other space

Respecting time alone is important, try creating an 'alone-zone' in your home - whether it's a full games room, or a corner of the house with a beanbag and headphones. Having your own space can make the world of difference.

## RESOURCES FOR MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

### Mind

Mind's Infoline provides an information and signposting service, 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (except for bank holidays).

- mental health problems
- where to get help near you
- treatment options
- advocacy services.

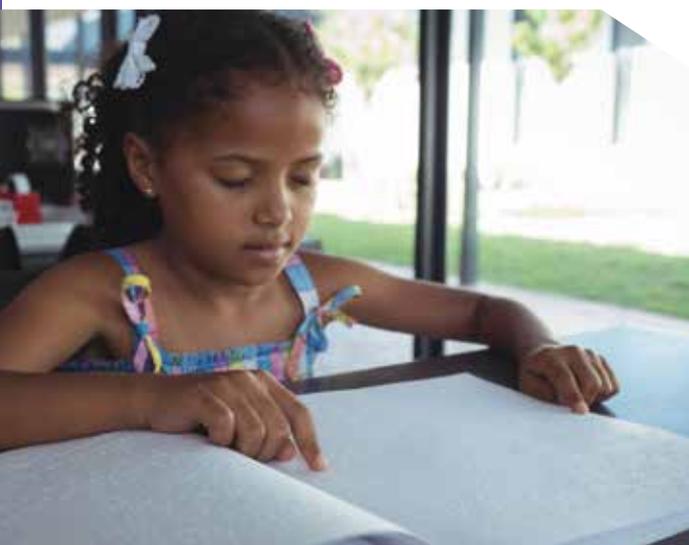
www.mind.org.uk  
Infoline: 0300 123 3393  
Email: info@mind.org.uk

Text: 86463  
Post: Mind Infoline, PO Box  
75225, London, E15 9FS

### Samaritans

Here to listen, no judgement, no pressure, and help you work through what's on your mind

www.samaritans.org  
Helpline: 116 123  
Email: Jo@samaritans.org



## RESOURCES FOR KEEPING ACTIVE

**P.E. With Joe Wicks** - www.thebodycoach.com - Daily P.E. lessons which the whole family can get involved in

**Kids Health** - kidshealth.org - Information for parents on all aspects of life, including keeping fit and healthy

**Cosmic Kids Yoga** - www.youtube.com/CosmicKidsYoga - Yoga for kids, also available as an app

### NHS

The NHS has lots of information about how much exercise children should be doing and the types of exercise that might be best.

www.nhs.uk

# EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

As schools are now closed, learning at home has never been more important. There are many websites, apps and YouTube channels dedicated to supporting parents, children and young people to make learning fun and engaging. This is a small selection of those resources, and you can find a much bigger list at [askusnotts.org.uk/learningathome](http://askusnotts.org.uk/learningathome).

## Websites

### Twinkle

[www.twinkl.co.uk](http://www.twinkl.co.uk)  
Twinkle has a dedicated SEND learning section and is offering free access to all resources. Use the code CVDTWINKLHELPS when you sign up.

### Books

[www.cgpbooks.co.uk](http://www.cgpbooks.co.uk)  
Free revision books for SATs, GCSE's and A-Levels.

### Teach It

[www.teachitprimary.co.uk/family](http://www.teachitprimary.co.uk/family)  
A family of websites where teachers share ideas for lessons and activities. Free for parents until the end of April. Teach It Primary is designed for children in years 2 -6, and the other websites in the group provide resources for older children by subject.

### Classroom Secrets

[www.classroomsecrets.co.uk](http://www.classroomsecrets.co.uk)  
Free home learning resources for all ages and levels, as well as interactive games and videos to help keep children engaged.

## Apps

**NOTE: Apps may include paid content and adverts which can take you out of the app itself. Ask an adult or carer for help if something looks unusual.**

**Teach Your Monster To Read (£0.99)** A fun game which helps with learning to read.

### BBC Bitesize

**Revision app for GCSE's STEM Kids: Science, Technology, Engineering & Math**  
Fun and engaging STEM articles.

### Khan Academy Kids

Free educational games and books.

## YouTube Channels

**Adult/carer supervision may be necessary when using YouTube due to adverts and access to non-educational content.**

### CrashCourse

STEM learning for older learners

### CrashCourse kids

STEM learning for younger learners

### Mathantics

Complex maths made simple. For older children.

### TEDEducation

Ted talks for kids.

### TheRoyalInstitution

Videos to make you think more deeply about science.

### ScienceChannel

All things Science.

### NationalGeographic

Documentaries and videos exploring the natural world, science and history.

## Virtual tours and live streams

Museums and zoos are great places to learn new things and engage with education. Thanks to the internet, kids and adults alike can enjoy the wonders of history and nature without leaving the house.

### Museums and Art Galleries

**Getty Centre, LA** - [getty.edu/museum](http://getty.edu/museum)

**Vatican Museums** - [museivaticani.va](http://museivaticani.va)

**Guggenheim, Bilbao** - [guggenheim-bilbao.eus](http://guggenheim-bilbao.eus)

**Natural History Museum** - [nhm.ac.uk](http://nhm.ac.uk)

**British Museum, London** - [britishmuseum.org](http://britishmuseum.org)

### Zoo and Animal Livestreams

**Nottingham Trent University Peregrine Falcons** - [www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org/peregrine-cam](http://www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org/peregrine-cam)

**Santiago Zoo** - [animals.sandiegozoo.org/live-cams](http://animals.sandiegozoo.org/live-cams)

**Dublin Zoo** - [www.dublinozoo.ie/animals/animal-webcams/](http://www.dublinozoo.ie/animals/animal-webcams/)

Please exercise caution when watching live streams of animals with younger children.

# CREATING A VISION BOARD

Vision boards are great for planning how you will reach your goals, organising projects and generally being creative!

## What is a vision board?

A collection of images, notes and materials which show what you want to do and how you are going to get there.

## What is it used for?

Lots of things! Some people use them to plan projects or activities, while others create vision boards for positivity, to look at when they need a reminder of the good things in life.

## Who can make a vision board?

Anyone! Vision boards are suitable for all ages and abilities.

## Do I need anything special?

Not necessarily. You can create it in a scrap book or on poster paper, and you can use a variety of materials- so if there's something you don't want to include, you don't have to. Vision boards are 100% based on things YOU like.

You can simply use materials that you're drawn to, or spend some time with friends and family, talking about short term/long term goals and select the materials that best reflect that.

Once it's finished, put it somewhere you can see it everyday to keep you inspired. After a few months, revisit your board to see how well it has worked and whether it's time to move onto the next goal.



Some ideas for materials:

- Photos
- Magazines
- Poster letters
- Stickers
- Paint
- Glue
- Pens/pencils
- Scissors

Are you interested in shaping Nottingham City Council's Special Educational Needs and Disability provisions?

Do you have a child or young person who accesses SEND services?

We would like to hear your opinions on how we are doing.

If you live in Nottingham City and are interested in joining our advisory group please get in touch.

☎ 0800 121 7772

✉ [enquiries@askus.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@askus.org.uk)

Future meeting date: 15th July 2020 from 11.30-2pm.  
At Pearl House, Friar Lane, Nottingham, NG1 6BT



# CHANGES TO THE EHC APPLICATION PROCESS

IN THE  
COUNTY  
ONLY

The Integrated Children's Disability Service (ICDS) Assessment Team in the county is now known as the ICDS Statutory Education, Health and Care (EHC) Assessment Team.

## KEY CHANGES

### 1. EHC Plan template

The EHC plan has a new layout so looks different to the old one

- The Getting to Know Me form is now separate for below year 8 and above year 8
- Annual review process is changing to make it more purposeful, this will fall in line with the changes to the EHC plan
- Introduction of locality emails for more streamlined support
- Introduction of The EHC Hub online

The different sections of EHC plan may at first seem like a confusing alphabet soup. It can help to understand that there are three sections on needs (i.e. your child's difficulties) that are matched by corresponding provision (the help your child will get) to meet those needs:

- "Section B: Special educational needs" are met by "Section F: special educational provision".
- "Section C: Health care needs" are met by "Section G: health care provision".
- "Section D: Social care needs" are met by "Section H: social care provision".

### 2. The EHC HUB

The EHC Hub is a new digital approach to support the process of the Educational Health Care Plans. The Hub provides a secure online platform for families, young people and practitioners to make their contribution to the development of EHC plans.

You'll need to register for an account, and we have a full guide online on how to do this at [askusnotts.org](http://askusnotts.org) with some useful videos, or if you'd prefer you can give us a call on 0800 121 7772 The Nottinghamshire County

Council Education, Health and Care (EHC) Hub can be accessed via [ehchub.nottinghamshire.gov.uk](http://ehchub.nottinghamshire.gov.uk).

For more information about the EHC process, contact the ICDS Statutory Education, Health and Care (EHC) Assessment Team, who coordinate the EHC process for Nottinghamshire County Council.

The ICDS Assessment Team can be contacted via email for new assessments / general enquiries:

- Newark and Sherwood and Bassetlaw - [ICDSEHCBandNSLocality@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:ICDSEHCBandNSLocality@nottsc.gov.uk)
- Mansfield and Ashfield - [ICDSEHCMandALocality@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:ICDSEHCMandALocality@nottsc.gov.uk)
- Broxtowe Gedling and Rushcliffe - [ICDSEHCBGRLocality@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:ICDSEHCBGRLocality@nottsc.gov.uk)

Please also see Nottinghamshire's Local Offer - [bit.ly/NottmLocalOffer](http://bit.ly/NottmLocalOffer), which includes information about SEN and the EHC process.

It is anticipated that Annual Reviews will be added to the EHC Hub's functionality at a later date during 2020-2021. The Local Authority will be in touch once your son's or daughter's EHC plan has been transferred to the EHC Hub. For further guidance on accessing and using the Nottinghamshire EHC Hub in the first instance, please contact [CFCS.Systems@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:CFCS.Systems@nottsc.gov.uk).

Don't forget, if you need support with any of these changes to contact AskUs on 08001217772.

Please note that during the current COVID-19 pandemic, Nottinghamshire County Council is diverting its resources to meet the needs of the most vulnerable young people and we would appreciate your support with this. Please only contact them, during this time, if it is absolutely necessary. Thank you



# SHORT STORY COMPETITION

Do you love writing stories and filling the page with fantastic twists and turns? We're looking for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's own J.K.Rowling, Dr Seuss or Roald Dahl.

The winner will see their story published in the next magazine issue, while both the winner and up to 5 runner's up will have their stories available on our website to share with friends and family. The competition restarts every time you get a new magazine and there will be a different theme each time, so you can keep submitting stories all year round.



## HERE'S THE DETAILS:

- Under 500 words
  - Theme: Springtime
  - You can ask family and friends for help
  - Stories must be sent to [communications@futuresforyou.com](mailto:communications@futuresforyou.com) by **May 29th 2020**
  - Please include the author's name(s) and age(s) in the email
  - Happy writing!
- 

# SIGN LANGUAGE FACTS

Monday 4th - Sunday 10th May is Deaf Awareness Week. So, what better time to share six facts about sign language that you might not have known before?



1. There are approximately 150,000 people in the UK who use British Sign Language (BSL), not including professionals such as teachers and interpreters, and for half of those, BSL is their first language.
2. Sign language uses more than just hands - body language and facial expressions play a big part too.
3. Just like spoken languages, sign language differs across the world. In fact, it is estimated that there are between 130 and 300 different types of sign language.
4. Rather than spelling out their name, many sign language users adopt a 'name sign' which is similar to a nickname.
5. It's possible to have an 'accent' in sign language, individuals will sign differently depending on their age, ethnicity and level of hearing.
6. The first record of BSL being used was during a wedding in 1570 - when a Deaf groom signed his vows.

Sign Health's website is a great resource which also has a lot of signed information about the current situation: [www.signhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/](http://www.signhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/)

# ALL ABOUT:

# RAINBOW PARENT CARER FORUM

**R**ainbow PCF is a support group and independent voice for parents/carers who have a child with special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) in Nottingham and surrounding areas. It is linked to the National Network of Parent Carers Forums (NNPCF). The Forum is run by parents for parents to promote the well-being of their families.

**A**iming to work together as strategic partners with our local authority as equal members, participating and influencing local decision making on services for our disabled children, young people and their families. Our team of parent/carer representatives help us to have a say in shaping services and in 2019 we launched the **Genuine Partnerships** initiative to ensure that the **Four Cornerstones** - 'Welcome and Care' 'Value and Include' 'Communicate' and 'Work in Partnership', will be the standards which are implemented across all support services that our families receive.

**I**nclusive family activities include regular Forum meetings with peer advice and support on education, health and social care matters, alongside an inclusive play session which is supervised by an experienced team of play workers.

**N**etworking opportunities are provided with our monthly Parent to Parent (P2P) sessions, Forum meetings and Annual Events.

**B**efriending /Social Group for 14-25 year olds meets regularly throughout the year.

**O**pportunities to stay informed via our regular bulletin plus our website and social media.

**W**orkshops for parent carers, young people and professionals are hosted throughout the year.

## OUR HISTORY



## BIG NEWS

In 2015 we secured Big lottery Funding for 5 years. This has enabled us to continue working with parents, carers children and young people to provide advice, support and activities.

This funding is due to end in June 2020, so we're delighted to confirm that we have been successful with our 'continuation funding bid' that will fund us for another 5 years. It means that we can continue to deliver our offer with the 3 posts that the funding covers along with the play work team.

"As the coordinator for over 11 years and despite the long haul of ups and downs, it has been a pleasure to see our community grow and develop. Seeing our parents gain confidence as parents of special children and mentoring each other; plus their children grow up with friends and opportunities to make memories whilst being part of Rainbow, has been a privilege. Without our committed parent carers, team of volunteers, trustees and staff we wouldn't have grown as we have. Next year will mark 35 years of being a support group and we will celebrate this at our 10th Annual Event in March 2021."

- Beverley Frost, Rainbow PCF CEO

"Rainbow continues to play an essential role in supporting parents and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. I am pleased that they have secured a further 5 years funding from the Big Lottery Community Fund for this much needed organisation for Nottingham City families."

- Councillor David Mellen, Leader of Nottingham City Council

"Again the benefit has been immeasurable in being signposted, supported and encouraged. Help in finding personal funding, equipment, play sessions, exhibitions etc... Parents for parents makes such a difference and is very important"

- Parent Carer

"Rainbow has been my rock! Parent support at the end of the phone has meant so much to me. My daughter loves attending the Saturday sessions as she doesn't access anything else and after being out of school for over a year she was very isolated."

- Parent Carer

# WHAT IS THE GRADUATED RESPONSE?

The SEND Code of Practice says “Schools should take seriously any concerns raised by a parent”. Where a child or young person is identified as having Special Educational Needs, educational establishments should take action to remove barriers to learning and put provision in place. This is called SEN support.

The SEND Graduated Response guidance is a tool for educational establishments and has been created to help ensure children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities reach their full potential. It sets out Local Authority expectations for the ways in which all schools and settings should meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.

The graduated approach is a four-part cycle:

## ASSESS

**1** All pre-school settings, schools and colleges should monitor and review the progress and development of all children and young people. High quality teaching, differentiated for each child or young person is the first step in meeting the needs of pupils who have or may have SEN. Most children and young people can make progress if they are taught in this way.

## PLAN

**2** Where progress in an educational setting or school gives cause for concern, trained staff should work with parents/carers to develop a plan to make sure that those with SEN or disability receive the support they need for their future learning and development. Class and subject teachers, supported by the Senior Leadership Team should regularly assess progress for all their pupils. Where they are falling behind or making inadequate progress (given their age and starting point) they should be given extra support.

## DO

**3** This should be led and coordinated by the SENCO (or named person at a school/college who has oversight of SEND), but parents and carers should be included at each stage of this cycle, so that they can say what they think and make suggestions with regards to assessment. If the school decides that your child needs SEN support they must tell you. The school should agree with you the outcomes that will be set, what help will be provided and a date for progress to be reviewed. Your child’s class or subject teacher is usually responsible for the work that’s done with your child, and should work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved. The school should tell you who is responsible for the support your child receives. All those who work with your child should be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required (6.49 SEND Code of Practice).

## REVIEW

**4** A date should be agreed for reviewing the effectiveness of the support and the difference it has made to the child or young persons progress. Parents and carers should be included in any progress reviews. Schools should meet with parents at least three times a year (6.65 SEND Code of Practice). If support has been provided, but a child or young person continues to make little or no progress, early years providers, schools and colleges should ask outside professionals to provide help and advice.

# CHARLOTTE'S BLOG



Hi, my name is Charlotte and I live with my wonderful husband Tom and two beloved rescue dogs. I am a 'quirky individual' who loves Doctor Who, swimming and food in all its forms. I am proud to be autistic and see the world in a slightly different spectrum of colour to others. This can enrich my life but living in a world where I don't quite 'fit in' can be painful.

On my 21st birthday I was diagnosed with a rare form of Muscular Dystrophy. Complications from a chest infection meant that overnight I ceased being an independent student and became someone who needed help with every aspect of my life. Time in a care home and then poor and insufficient care from agencies left me feeling deeply disempowered and depressed.

The colour burst back into my life when I met Tom. He is the most humble, compassionate and optimistic person I have ever met. When he asked me to marry him, it was an easy 'YES!'

Tom also has a form of Muscular Dystrophy and we were told the only way we could be together was to move into residential care. This was not the life we wanted.

Then we were offered a Personal Health Budget. This essentially means the NHS gives us the money for our care and we decide how best to use it. This has enabled us to live together in our own home

with 24-hour care. We employ a fantastic team of Personal Assistants, specifically trained to meet our needs, and this gives us the flexibility to do what we want, when we want.

We are incredibly lucky. Many people with disabilities today are not getting the care they need and deserve. We believe everybody should have a meaningful and productive life, with choice and control over how they receive support.

Tom and I do not have the perfect life. We regularly deal with medical emergencies and mental health challenges. But, having such personalised support has enabled us to experience and cherish the adventure that is ordinary married life.

We are passionate about using our experiences to help enable other disabled people achieve their own personal goals. It is therefore a privilege to join the team writing for IRIS Magazine. I hope you find my musings on life entertaining and in some way helpful.



# BABY ANIMAL WORDSEARCH

PUPPY

KITTEN

CHICK

PIGLET

GOSLING

LAMB

CALF

FOAL

FAWN

CUB

F	A	S	J	H	V	U	G	P	O	B	X	Z	F	Q
O	Q	W	C	I	U	A	P	O	Z	Z	L	V	A	H
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O	U	G	Y	D	H	E	Y	U	S	G	U	S	V	C
A	A	D	D	H	L	N	M	N	A	C	U	B	N	N

**GET INVOLVED WITH IRIS!**

We're looking for young people of all ages to get involved with IRIS. Throughout the magazine and website, we have sections with specific opportunities to have your say, but if you think of anything we haven't covered that you want to write, blog or vlog about, just send an email to [communications@futuresforyou.com](mailto:communications@futuresforyou.com)

# UPCOMING ISSUES

July | October | January | April

## Moving House? Let us know!

To change your address or contact details, please go to [askusnotts.org.uk/IRIS](https://askusnotts.org.uk/IRIS) and click the link at the bottom of the page. Alternatively, please email [communications@futuresforyou.com](mailto:communications@futuresforyou.com).

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