

Welcome to April's edition of your SEND newsletter!

Spring is here. It is finally time to start enjoying the longer days and sunshine! This month, we have a spotlight on Autism Acceptance Month, with some useful information about the services and support available from The Autistic Girl's Network.

We also have an update on the priorities set out by Special Voices on your behalf, in 2024. A reminder to check out the Local Offer pages on the Family Information Service website as these contain information on events, training and services that are available to support you, and our children and young people in Slough. [Slough Information and Services Guide | Special Educational Needs and Disabilities - Slough SEND Local Offer](#)

Thank you for taking the time to catch up with us. If you would like to make any contributions to future editions or just to share your news, please get in touch. SENDnewsletter@slough.gov.uk. We would love to hear from you!

Panathlon Challenge

Panathlon is a national charity which gives young people with disabilities and special educational needs every year the opportunity to take part in competitive sport.

In 2023/24, a record 66,706 young people participated in their events - mainly through competitions held externally with other schools, with additional participants with their in-school virtual programme. There are opportunities in various sports such as swimming, football and even some virtual at home challenges to enable young people to stay active. [Panathlon Challenge](#) |

[Competitive sport for children with SEND](#)

Please refer to the timetable of sports/events for future dates and venues: [Events - Panathlon Challenge | Panathlon Foundation Ltd. Registered Charity: 1072638](#)



Contacting the SEND Team

There are two dedicated email addresses to help you contact us, and to help us effectively respond to you, we would ask that you please use the correct email address depending on the nature of your contact with us:

SEND_ECHNArequest@slough.gov.uk

This email is the address to send all your ECH Needs Assessment requests.

SENDteam@slough.gov.uk

This email is for all other enquiries.

Or call us on **01753 787676**.

Join our mailing list, so you don't miss out on future updates on the Service!

Do you want to receive copies of this newsletter on a regular basis? If so, please join our mailing list. Also, please encourage any parents you know who would find this newsletter interesting and useful. Colleagues working to support children and families are also encouraged to subscribe for direct updates and information. Please email us at SENDnewsletter@slough.gov.uk to be added to the mailing list.

We are working hard to improve the way we communicate with you and ensure that children and young people are at the heart of everything that we do!



Our SEND and Inclusion Strategy went to Full Council for approval this month

This strategy sets out our priorities for the next 5 years and how we are going to deliver them.

It includes the outcomes we are trying to achieve, the actions we will take and how we will know when we have succeeded. This will include a road map of delivery and workstreams for the implementation of the refreshed strategy, supported by a new working group.

The updated strategy is now based on an understanding of what we are doing better and where we still need to improve. This is informed by what children and young people, families, education settings and other partners have told us as well as the key messages from Working Together to Safeguard Children, (DfE 2015, update 2018) and the SEND Code of Practice (DfE/DoH 2015).

The strategy sets out what it means to be inclusive, what the SEND picture in Slough looks like, describes effective multi-agency working and the local area partnership.

It reflects the key principles of Slough's Children and Young People's plan: Happy, Safe and Loved, Thriving, broken down into five priority areas:

- Thriving and Achieving - Inclusion and Education Provision
- Safe - Access to different experiences and services
- Loved and Supported - Listening to families
- Prepared for Adulthood - Supported to be independent
- Healthy - Positive health and wellbeing outcomes.

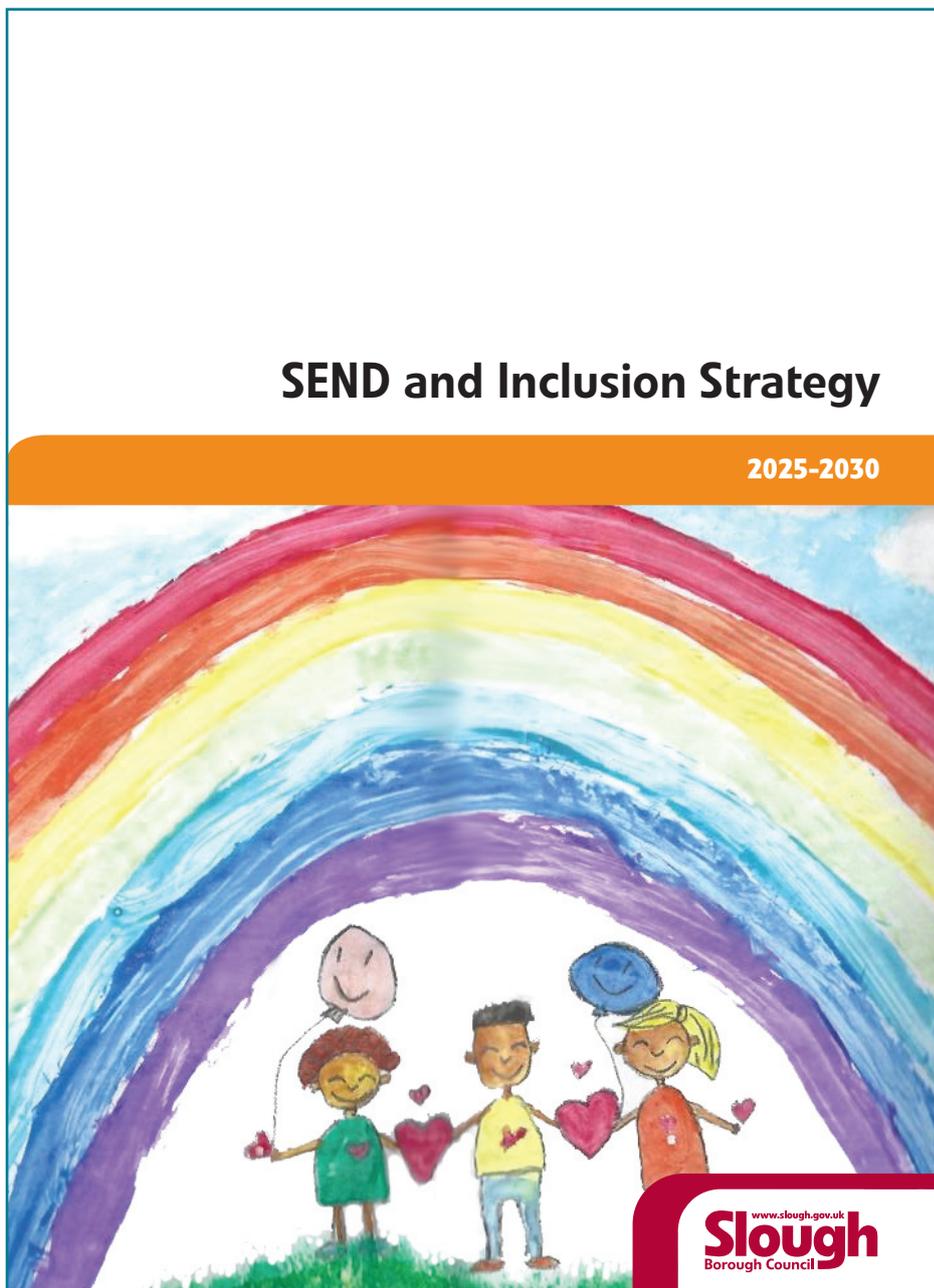
For each priority area, the draft strategy sets out:

- An overview
- What children, young people and their parents/carers told us
- What are we going to do?
- We will know we have improved when
- We will know we have been successful when children, young people and their families tell us.

We will be covering more of what this strategy means for our young people in May's Newsletter - so keep an eye out for further details in due course.

SEND and Inclusion Strategy

2025-2030



Autistic girls network

More women and girls than ever before are discovering that they have autism, many had been missed or misdiagnosed due to outdated stereotypes about autism. But that is slowly changing.

In the past, it was assumed that people with autism were overwhelmingly men and boys, and only very rarely women and girls. This is wrong. There are many women, girls, and non-binary people on the autism spectrum.

Although we now know much more about the experiences of autistic women and girls, society's understanding of autism has been limited by outdated stereotypes and incorrect assumptions.

Although autism research and professional practice are slowly catching up to the realities of life for autistic women and girls, many barriers to diagnosis and support remain.

The Autistic Girl's Network is a small, registered charity which offers advice, support and information for individuals, parents, carers and families, around the experience of autism in girls. More information can be found at www.autisticgirlsnetwork.org



Our Vision

We empower, support and provide community for autistic women, girls and their families, advocating for the change necessary to build in a world in which they can flourish on their own terms.



Our Mission

To support autistic women, girls and their families by providing education, resources and community, helping them develop a positive sense of self.

30 Day Art Challenge

Calling all children & young people!

**Feeling particularly proud of your artwork?
We would LOVE to see it!**

Feel free to share it with us here at Slough Borough Council with a view to it appearing on a wall in the building and possibly appearing in our future SEND Newsletters!

Send your artwork to Slough Borough Council -
Send Newsletter, Children's Services,
4th Floor Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road,
Slough, SL1 2EL or email:
sendnewsletter@slough.gov.uk

We look forward to seeing some of the world through your eyes!

If art isn't your thing, then showcase your talents - poems, spoken word, music, writing and performing!

1. Draw your favorite animal
2. Draw a flower
3. Draw what you want to be in the future
4. Draw your favorite food
5. Draw something in your house
6. Draw your favorite activity
7. Draw anything with only your favorite color
8. Draw your family
9. Draw yourself conquering your greatest fear
10. Draw you and your friend together
11. Draw your favorite memory
12. Draw your house
13. Draw your pet or a pet you would want
14. Draw something in your room
15. Draw your favorite part of the day
16. Draw something you do on the weekends
17. Draw your favorite hobby
18. Draw something that makes you laugh
19. Draw your favorite holiday
20. Draw your favorite school subject
21. Draw a character from your favorite book/movie
22. Draw a place you want to visit
23. Draw your favorite TV show
24. Draw your favorite outfit
25. Draw the last place you traveled to
26. Draw something in your backyard
27. Draw your favorite fall activity
28. Draw a family tradition
29. Draw your dream house
30. Draw yourself

Autism Acceptance Month

World Autism Acceptance Month is an opportunity for everyone to come together and raise awareness, foster acceptance, and create a society where people with autism are supported, understood, and empowered.

Whether you're at home, at school, or at work, your involvement can make a real difference. It's about how you show up - whether you are supporting your colleagues, students, or family members, your actions can help create an inclusive and accepting world.

SENDIASS or SEND-AID? What is the difference?

Developed with partners, this flyer has been created to outline the distinction between SEND-AID and SENDIASS to help you, as a parent, in identifying where to contact when you require advice and guidance. This advice is also available in Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi, Polish and Arabic.

Support for parents of children with SEND in Slough

SEND-AID

Special to Slough and as part of our early help offer, SEND-AID offers information and guidance to parents of children with SEND.

We provide information, advice and support on:

- Local SEND services, activities, and support groups
- Education for children with SEND
- Completion of forms and applications to access financial support
- Basic behaviour management
- Explanation of the EHCP process and support with making an application for an Education Health Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA)

SEND-AID can be accessed face-to-face, at a local children's centre/family hub, on-line or by telephone. It is bookable through EarlyHelp@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk

SENDIASS

Slough SENDIASS is a statutory service that provides free, impartial, confidential, accurate information, advice and support about education, health and social care for children, young people with SEND and their families.

We provide information, advice and support on:

- All aspects of SEND, from initial concerns and identification through to ongoing support and provision
- The law on SEND, health and social care
- SEND Transport
- Personalisation and personal budgets
- Resolving SEND disagreements and mediation
- The Local Offer

SENDIASS can be contacted on 01753 787693 or via sendiass@slough.gov.uk or www.sloughsendiass.org.uk



GEMS

Autism & ADHD Support Service
East Berkshire

The GEMS team is passionate about transforming services for children, young people and adults who have been diagnosed with, or who may have autism and/or ADHD. Helping people navigate their way through a range of information and make sense of this, reflecting their personal needs and preferences.

As a parent/carer, you may feel that more information, help, or advice is needed when supporting the needs of your child, who may have behavioural, sensory, social and/or communication challenges. GEMS recognise this and have provided a variety of FREE courses and workshops that will help develop your knowledge of autism and/or ADHD.

Your child does not need to have a diagnosis for you to be able to attend, they can be waiting for an assessment, or you can suspect they may have autism and or ADHD. You will be listening to and speaking with trainers with extensive experience of delivering autism and or ADHD courses and will have the opportunity to meet and share strategies with other parents/carers.

To view and book on available training on a range of topics, visit the website www.gems4health.com/workshops

Landline: 01753 373 244

Freephone: 0800 999 1342

Email: gems.4health@nhs.net



Bear cubs

Ages 5 to 10

First and third Monday of the month - 4pm to 5pm

7th April - Lego Fun - Dedworth Library, Windsor

21st April - Easter Monday - No session

5th May - May Bank Holiday - No session

19th May - Big on Bouncing - Slough (fee applies)

2nd June - Story Time - Langley Library





On the 1 April, the SEND Strategic Partnership Board met (as they do every 6 weeks) to discuss all things SEND!

Partners include representatives from the Department of Education, Health, Head Teacher forums and parents and carers from Special Voices, our parent carer forum, to name just a few. One of the board's agenda items is a discussion on the progress we are working hard to make, and this is based on the five priorities that Special Voices said were important to parents and carers.

These can be seen in the table below, which lists the priorities set

in 2024 and outlines what we have or what we are doing about that concern, such as collaborating with parents at coffee mornings, standardising the format of all EHCPs, reviewing complaints, staff recruitment and reduction in waiting times for therapeutic support.

There has been many 'behind the scenes' improvements made to the service, that all contribute to making the whole SEND system work more smoothly, so you may not see the impact immediately, but it is there, with the improvements being embedded in as we go.

Special Voices have reported that

there is a noticeable positive development in communications, timeliness of plans and an overall sense of improvement - which is encouraging.

We know we still have work to do, but we are still committed to providing the best service to our young people with SEND. Special Voices will decide on five new priorities for 2025, which will help us to target improvements for the service you need.

We welcome any direct feedback, if you have any comments or suggestions - feel free to reach out to us at SENDnewsletter@slough.gov.uk.

Special Voices Priorities March 2024



March 24 families reported...	Updated April 2025
"difficulties in getting a response from the SEND Team"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of improvement - team records/compliments/still concerns <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee mornings/online/newsletter <input type="checkbox"/> RISE partnership/coproduction
"difficulties in getting a response from SENDIASS due to staffing issues"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Staffing issues resolved - data evidences significant improvement in response times and quality of information provided <input type="checkbox"/> Survey planned alongside "secret shopper" activities
"concerns about the quality of EHPs - incorrect information, sections "cut and pasted", different templates used etc"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Single template now used for all new EHC plans <input type="checkbox"/> Internal quality assurance has evidenced improvement in quality <input type="checkbox"/> Recent complaints have not included quality of plans
"their views not being taken into account so that they are not reflected appropriately in the agreed plan"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Internal quality assurance evidences parental views taken into account <input type="checkbox"/> Recent complaints have not included parent views not being included <input type="checkbox"/> This is a key line of enquiry for multi-agency audits to provide evidence
"concerns about access to therapeutic support for their child or young person"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reduction in waiting times for therapeutic support <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Therapies Contrat ready for launch <input type="checkbox"/> Frimley Neurodiversity Programme

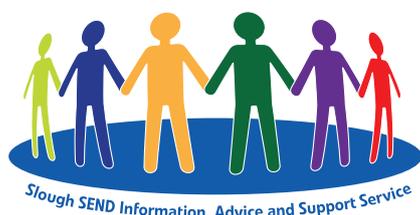
SENDIASS training opportunities

We are pleased to share that regular training sessions on a variety of SEND topics are available on the SENDIASS website.

These training opportunities are designed to support parents, carers, young adults, and professionals alike, offering valuable insights into the SEND system and how to navigate it effectively.

Both **morning** and **twilight** sessions are available, providing flexible options to suit different schedules. We encourage everyone to take advantage of these sessions to gain a deeper understanding of SEND-related topics and improve their knowledge and skills in supporting young people with SEND.

For more information and to book a place, please visit [Slough SENDIASS](http://www.sloughsendiass.org.uk)



Online information sessions for parents of children with SEND, young people with SEND, and professionals

Wednesday 11 June 2025
11am-12noon or 6-7pm.

This session will focus on ceasing the EHC plan.

Upcoming sessions include:

- Wednesday 10 September - Annual reviews
- Tuesday 18 November - Early years SEN support.

To book, email: SENDIASS@slough.gov.uk
(please specify AM or PM session)
or via www.sloughsendiass.org.uk



What's on

Slough Information and Services Guide | Special Educational Needs and Disabilities - Slough SEND Local Offer

We have a full calendar of events, that can be found via your local offer page [Slough Information and Services Guide | What's On](#) which is updated regularly and can be searched by calendar date.

This also links to other events provided by Slough CVS, who have a wonderful array of events and

community news [News - Slough CVS](#) which might be of interest to many of you, from events happening in our Children's Centres to Snack Cafes for our Young People and even community meet ups!

There is so much on there, especially as we are out of hibernation mode and hopefully to better weather.

Thank you for taking the time to catch up with us.
If you would like to make any article contributions, in future editions, get in touch SENDnewsletter@slough.gov.uk. We would love to hear from you!



Newsletter feedback:
this is your newsletter!
If you would like to suggest any changes to this newsletter, see additional information, be added to the mailing list, and/or give feedback, please email sendnewsletter@slough.gov.uk