

SEN factsheet

What is the Local Offer?

All local authorities are required to have a detailed summary of the services that you can expect to be able to access to support children/ young people (CYP) with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The services should cover education, health and social care.

The following is addressed to parents of children and young people but is intended as guidance for anyone involved, including the young person themselves. “Young people” is a phrase which the Children and Families Act 2014 has introduced which means a person between 16 – 25 years of age, in education and with mental capacity.

Purpose

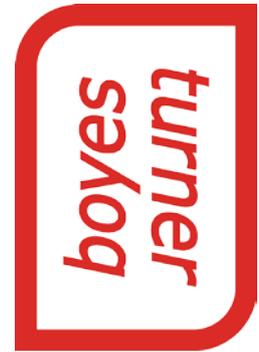
The function of the Local Offer is to go beyond a directory of services. The two key functions are:

- To provide clear, comprehensive, accessible and up-to-date information about the available provision and how to access it.
- To target provision specifically to local needs and aspirations. This should be achieved by involving disabled children and those with SEN and their parents, and disabled young people and those with SEN, and service providers in its development and review.

The Local Offer should also detail the support services available in neighbouring areas which the local authority considers relevant for CYP within its area – e.g. a college in the neighbouring borough with a particular specialism in catering for blind pupils.

The guidance sets out that the Local Offer must be:

- Collaborative – children and parents must be involved in preparing and reviewing the Offer.
- Accessible – it should be easy to understand, structured in a useful way and well publicise.



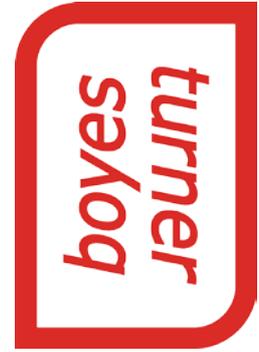
- Comprehensive – it should detail all support available in education, health and social care from 0-25 years. It should also detail how to access that support and any applicable eligibility criteria and where to obtain advice about appeals etc.
- Up to date.
- Transparent – the Offer should be clear about who makes decisions and who is accountable for those decisions.

What should it contain?

The guidance makes a distinction between what the Local Offer must contain and what it should cover.

The Local Offer must contain:

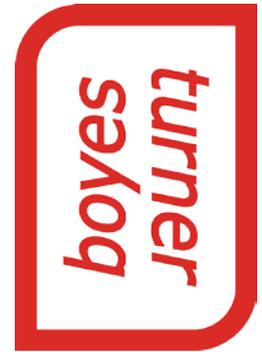
- Special educational, health and social care provision for CYP with SEN or disabilities – this should include online and blended learning.
- Details of how you can request an assessment for an Education, Health and Care (EHCP) and availability of the personal budget.
- Arrangements for identifying and assessing CYP's SEN – this should include arrangements for EHC needs assessments.
- Other educational provision, for example sports or arts provision paired reading schemes etc.
- Post-16 education and training provision.
- Apprenticeships, traineeships and supported internships.
- Information about provision to assist in preparing children and young people for adulthood (see the SEND Code of Practice, paragraphs 4.52 to 4.56).
- Arrangements for travel to and from schools, post-16 institutions and early years providers.
- Support to help CYP move between phases of education (for example from early years to school, from primary to secondary).
- Information about any criteria that must be satisfied before any provision or service set out in the local offer can be provided.



- Sources of information, advice and support in the local authority's area relating to SEND.
- Childcare, including suitable provision for disabled children and those with SEN.
- Leisure activities.
- Support available to young people in higher education, particularly the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) and the process and timescales for making an application for DSA.
- Arrangements for resolving disagreements and for mediation, and details about making complaints.
- Your rights to appeal a decision of the local authority to the Special Educational Needs & Disability Tribunal in respect of SEN and provision.
- Social care provision for CYP with SEND and their families including:
 - Services provided in accordance with section 17 of the Children Act 1989.
 - The arrangements for supporting young people when moving from receiving services for children to receiving services for adults.
 - Support for young people in planning and obtaining support to assist with independent living.
 - Information and advice services made available in accordance with section 4 of the Care Act 2014.
- Information and advice service on the adult care and support system. This should include information on types of care and support, local provision and how to access it, accessing financial advice in relation to it and how to raise concerns. Local authorities must indicate in their Local Offer where this information can be found.

In addition, the Local Offer should contain:

- The support available to all CYP with SEND from universal services such as schools and GPs.
- Targeted services for CYP with SEND who require additional short-term support over and above that provided routinely as part of universal services.
- Specialist services for children and young people with SEND who require specialised, longer term support.



If you have any questions or require advice, please contact the Special Educational Needs team on **0118 467 6547** or senexpertsolicitors@boyesturner.com.

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