

BRENT SEND NEWS

FOR PARENTS, CARERS AND PROFESSIONALS



"Most of the old moles
I know wish they had
listened less to their fears and
more to their dreams"



Extracted from 'The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse' by Charlie Mackesy

Welcome to the second edition of our SEND newsletter

We're nearly there.... a new SEND Strategy based on dreams, not fears, that celebrates the excellence of our children, young people and young adults.

The consultation for the SEND Strategy ended on 31 May. We have captured your dreams, and over the coming months we'll be working alongside parents, carers and young people to shape these dreams into our new collective priorities. The new Strategy will be launched in September 2021.

We're nearly there.... a new preparation for adulthood virtual hub for young people, developed with young people, which will be up and running this September.

We're nearly there.... A new offer for 16-to-25 year olds, developed with you, for you.

We're nearly there.... to be able to celebrate

together in person, our wonderful young people and Brent young champions, who have delivered this new Strategy, virtual hub and post-16 offer.

Keep your eyes peeled on the Local Offer.

Information about all these projects will be posted over the summer. And yes, summer is here.

Now all that's left for me to say is thank you. Thank you for being so amazing during a year like no other. For ensuring children, young people and young adults are at the heart of everything we do and can achieve the very best that they can.

Most of all, thank you for enabling me to remember that parents, carers and their children are the experts, who we have lots to learn from.

Enjoy the summer, **Sharon Buckby**

Head of Service for Inclusion
and the Virtual School Headteacher



SEND UPDATES

As Covid-19 restrictions ease, some health and education services have resumed face-to-face visits, alongside online appointments. Brent's 0-19 Service, which includes [health visiting](#) and [school nursing](#), is now offering both in-person and virtual appointments.

A support and advice line has been set up for parents, young people and professionals, available five days a week from 9am to 5pm, on **020 8102 4900**.

For the latest information on how specialist SEND services are running, visit the [Covid-19 resources and information section](#) on the Local Offer.



SEND NEWS



WELLBEING IN EDUCATION

Staff from 45 nurseries and primary and secondary schools have benefitted from emotional support and wellbeing training thanks to [Brent's Educational Psychology Service](#).

The Wellbeing in Education project aims to help educational settings to better understand, support and problem-solve the emotional needs of their pupils, families and staff, and to be able to signpost them to appropriate support if they need it.

Two wellbeing leads were nominated from each Brent setting to take part in the training, which uses a mix of presentations and seminars to help them to strengthen their existing systems of support. Participants have praised the course and said they've valued the opportunity

to share ideas and problem-solve with colleagues.

Brent's Wellbeing in Education project is part of the Department for Education's Return to School programme, which focuses on supporting families whose mental wellbeing may have been adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Although it finishes at the end of this academic term, the Educational Psychology Service is committed to working with schools to support this area of work in the future.



NEW FACE AT BOAT

Zoe Cowan has joined Brent Outreach Autism Team (BOAT) as an autism support worker, working

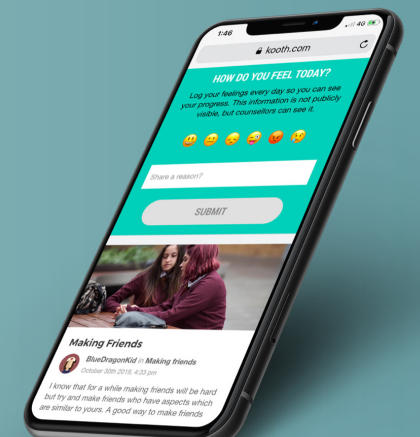
mainly in primary settings. Zoe was previously a learning support assistant in a mainstream school in Barnet for over ten years, where she worked with children on the autism spectrum. [Find out more about BOAT.](#)



WORKSHOPS FOR FAMILIES

Brent Parent Carer Forum CIC has received funding from the People's Health Trust to run wellbeing workshops over the next two years for families who have children and young people with SEND. Have a look at the forum's [newsletter](#) for more details, latest updates and events.

ONLINE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SUPPORT



[Kooth.com](#) is a free, anonymous and safe way for 11-to-25-year-olds to get online mental health and wellbeing support. Counsellors are available 365 days a year and the service can be accessed via a mobile, tablet, laptop or computer.

As a fully commissioned service for north-west London, Kooth works alongside local mental health and youth service providers. There is no waiting list, and you don't need to be referred. Over

4,000 users are currently logging in every day to access:

- one-to-one confidential chat sessions with online practitioners and counsellors
- peer-led mental health support
- age relevant content and a digital magazine
- chat forums with other users.

Kooth says it has seen a 42 per cent increase in children and young people seeking help since the start of

the Covid-19 outbreak, echoing concerns that the pandemic is having a particular impact on the emotional wellbeing of this age group.

The service recently held a pan-London webinar focusing on how it can support children and young people with SEND, and there are plans for further partnership work with Brent services in the future.



ONLINE PLATFORM FOR 16-30-YEAR-OLDS

This autumn, a new online platform showcasing services, support and opportunities for young people, is being launched. The website will focus on key areas that young people in Brent say are important to them as they move into adulthood: education, training and employment, healthy lifestyles, community involvement and independent living. Young people with SEND have been involved in the design, development and promotion of the site, which is aimed at 16-to-30-year-olds. Parents and schools are also closely involved in its planning.

The project is part of the council's new post-16 Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) programme, which aims to ensure that young people with SEND have access to a broad range of support and opportunities as they get older. A walk-in skills centre, with links across London, is also being

developed and is expected to open in Brent in 2022.

Look out for further news about the launch of the new site on Brent's [Local Offer](#) and in the next edition of this newsletter. To get involved email brentyouthzone@brent.gov.uk

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

If your child has an education, health and care (EHC) plan and is starting school or moving up to the next one, you may find it useful to read our new transition booklet. It includes information about admissions arrangements, tips for choosing a school and how to help your child prepare. [View the guide.](#)

KICKSTART YOUR CAREER

[Kickstart](#) is an employment support service run by the charity Scope which helps disabled people of working age to find work. It is currently taking

referrals from people who are:

- disabled or have an impairment or condition
- aged 16 or over
- living in England
- ready for work
- proactively seeking paid employment.

All sessions are currently being delivered remotely through Zoom, Teams or other digital means. [Find out more about Kickstart or refer someone.](#) Visit [Scope's website](#) for more information about the charity's other employment services.



EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES



ORAL HEALTHCARE

Join an online NHS oral health session for parents/carers of children with physical and/or sensory needs on 29 June at 6.30pm. Learn about:

- brushing tips and techniques
- how to adapt brushes for children with additional needs
- advice on visiting and finding a dentist and much more
- Q&A with a dentist after the session.

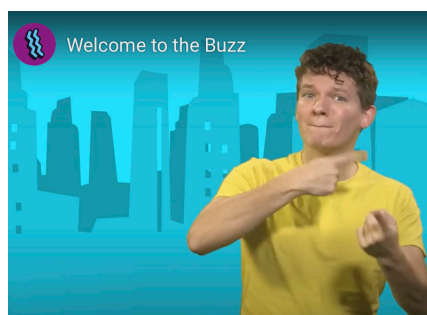
Join on [Zoom](#) using meeting ID 820 6112 3177 and passcode 'evening'.

There are also oral health drop-ins for parents/carers on 23 and 30 June at 9.30am. Join on [Zoom](#) using meeting ID 848 3298 8368 and passcode 'dropin'. If you would like your own Zoom link for your setting, please email Erinna Proudfoot at erinna.proudfoot@nhs.net

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Keep a look out on [Brent Youth Zone](#) over the coming weeks for details of things to do this summer. Activity camps are being organised

by [Fit For Sport](#) at various locations in Brent and [KidzZone](#) will be running accessible activities at Aspire Leisure Centre. There will also be games, fitness sessions, dancing, drama, sport and singing - run online or in person - by organisations including Brent Youth Theatre, Camp in the Cloud, The Royal Society for Blind Children, KEEN London, SENSE, Project and DanceWest.



WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

More than 1,500 deaf young people have helped design and test a new website called [The Buzz](#). The online platform gives eight to 18-year-olds a safe space to ask questions, discuss problems, share experiences and find deaf-friendly events in their area. The website is fully moderated and free of charge for everyone who signs up. It is growing rapidly and several deaf influencers, such as Jazzy Whips and Benny Ngo, have already signed up to post content.

VIRTUAL SEND EXHIBITION

Venue to Virtual is a free week-long [online exhibition](#) featuring over 50 award-winning companies that provide individually tailored equipment, products and services for people of all ages with disabilities and

additional needs. It's the third virtual event of its kind organised by the charity Disabled Living's Kidz To Adultz team and runs from 28 June to 2 July. Register for the event [here](#).

GET THE LOWDOWN

Several information workshops have been organised for parents this month. These are all being held online, and registration details and reminders will be sent out once you have booked your place.

- Thursday 24 June from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Finding your feet: supporting the move to secondary school for parents of children aged ten and above. Book via [Eventbrite](#).
- Tuesday 29 June from 10.30am to 12.30pm. New beginnings: supporting the move to big school for parents of early years children with SEND. Book via [Eventbrite](#).
- Wednesday 30 June from 10.30am to 12.30pm. On your way: helping to prepare young people with SEND aged 16+ for adulthood and greater independence. Book via [Eventbrite](#).

