

NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL OFFER – ANNUAL REPORT ON FEEDBACK: 2014 -2015

Introduction

The local authority must:

- Publish a 'local offer' which includes information on education, health, care and other provision
- Publish an annual report on feedback about the local offer, showing what children, young people and parents have said about the local offer, and what the local authority has done in response to their comments.

Our local offer is at <http://northumberland.fsd.org.uk>

More information on what the local offer should include is in the [SEND \(local offer\) regulations 2014](#) and the [SEND Code of Practice 2015 – chapter 4](#)

ANNUAL REPORT ON FEEDBACK ABOUT THE LOCAL OFFER 2014 – 2015

This report shows how we worked with families in developing the local offer, what they said and what we did in response to their comments.

| SOURCE OF COMMENTS | WHAT YOU SAID | WHAT WE DID OR PLAN TO DO NEXT |
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| Task and Finish Group, consulting with parents and carers, and young people | Parents, carers and young people advised on the local offer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how information should be presented on the website, • what it should cover • how the local offer will be marketed | Sought feedback on a number of Pathfinder Local Offer websites through a 'shopping list' exercise. We used this information to brief Open Objects (software designer) with regard to the 'look' and content of the Local Offer website. |
| | It was felt that the use of 'optimisation' was critical to enable people to access the website from their smart phones. | Agreed. The website is 'optimised' for smart phones. Optimisation of information will be included in our Local Offer Strategy. |
| Liaison with REC (Respect Equals Change) Forum for young people with SEND | That photos liven websites up. | Agreed. This feedback will be used to guide future development of areas of the website and promotion of the Local Offer. |
| | That the use of YouTube and social media will give a wider reach. | Agreed. To be included in our Local Offer Strategy. |
| In It Together – Northumberland Parent Carer Forum: feedback from | Promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I wasn't aware of the Local Offer until I received an e-mail to complete the survey. | Framework for promoting the Local Offer to be included in the Local Offer Strategy. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs to be promoted/advertised more | Agreed. The local authority is asking those |

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| locality meetings and Survey Monkey survey on the website. | widely – through schools, Sure Starts, nurseries, libraries, support groups, etc. | organisations with website, newsletters or formal networks to promote awareness. |
| | What is the Local Offer? | Agreed. New introductory page added in August 2015. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is not clear from the Home page what the local offer is; no introduction to it. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The term “Local Offer” does not clearly state anything to me. I don’t think it is the right name for the website. It doesn’t stick in the mind, because it lacks meaning. | The new laws regarding special educational needs and disability say we must use that title. |
| | Searches | Agreed. This is true of many types of enquiry. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It took me 5 ‘clicks’ from when I searched for Local Offer on Google to get to the information I needed. | New guidance documents are being published so people can find the majority of answers they need in the first or second click. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It would be helpful if searches listed information in alphabetical order. Search results don’t seem to be organised in a particular way and can be confusing. | Agreed. The website software is being reviewed. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The schools information should be stored in a separate area – otherwise specific searches can bring up long lists of schools. | | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to make it easier to find services to meet your needs. Lists are too long. Parents don't have time to search through pages and pages of irrelevant information. | <p>Agreed.</p> <p>New guidance documents are being published so people can find the majority of answers they need without need for searches.</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you don't know the name of the service you are looking for; e.g. Portage, you may not find it. | <p>This will also help make searches more specific.</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to make sure that links work; e.g. to school websites | <p>We will ask that a named person in each school or service to check the links on the Local Offer each year.</p> <p>Any changes requested before then will be very welcome too.</p> |
| | <p>Content – organisation and accuracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify the front page. There's no need for all the different coloured boxes if they've only got one or two things in them anyway. | <p>We are arranging for groups of parents and young people to look at Local Offer websites rated highly. We will ask for ideas to improve our own model and look to 'learn from the best'.</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More user friendly and under clear headings that mention special educational needs. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information needs to be kept up to date by providers. | <p>Agreed. Providers prompted at six monthly intervals to check and update their entries. Our main intervals will be February and August each year, but some</p> |

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| | | providers will update at other times too. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The information displayed was very general and sometimes inaccurate based on my own knowledge and experience which meant I had little faith in anything else I was told. I couldn't trust this website to give me the full story and am much more likely to ask around to find the services I need. | We hope the new guidance documents will improve your experience and that you find it easier to locate correct and relevant information. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to put things in clear 'key' areas, e.g. services for each locality area together. Option to search by town. | <p>Will be addressed through organisation of information and guidance, including into categories of SEND (e.g. autism)</p> <p>For schools this will be addressed through their SEN Information Report.</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People/places listed need to be more specific about what they offer for special needs children over and above what would be expected; otherwise quicker just to use Google. | <p>In many cases this is true. Yes – the main benefit is to describe what is special and different.</p> <p>For entries such as schools and targeted services we will look to make that clear.</p> <p>However, the law requires that we also publish all universal services, even if they do not have a specialist side to their work too. This does make the total amount of information in the Local Offer</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information is often not tailored to special needs visitors/service users so offers no more than a standard search engine, which would have been quicker. | <p>significantly larger.</p> <p>This will be addressed through guidance documents. The Local Offer content has to include both universal and specialist information.</p> |
| <p>Feedback from individuals. The Family Information Service pass on difficulties they or parents have with finding information/services.</p> | <p>Difficulties finding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare for children/young people with SEND • SEND transport information | <p>Childcare. The Portage and Early Year’s Team supported the families who asked for help.</p> <p>SEND Transport. The school travel team responded to each specific enquiries.</p> |