

# Special Educational Needs and Disability in Peterborough



## SEND Update



I am delighted again to welcome you to another edition of our newsletter (Spring 2025). As the Head of Service for SEND and Inclusion, I am excited to share with you the latest updates, achievements, and initiatives taking place across the SEND partnership. It's good to see the days are getting longer and that the weather is warming up, bringing a sense of renewal and energy.

Our commitment to fostering an inclusive environment and supporting the needs of all children and young people remains at the forefront of our efforts. The SEND and Inclusion Service here at Peterborough City Council is particularly focused on hearing the voice of children, young people, and their families to help improve and develop services. We hope that you will see this reflected in our work over the coming months.

The goal is to continue making a positive impact and ensure that every child and young person receives the necessary support to thrive.

James Bird

Head of Service - SEND and Inclusion



Peterborough SEN and Inclusion Services (SENI) brochure – 2025

**Special Educational Needs Inclusion (SENI) Services**

A guide to our services 2023-24



Peterborough SEND Information Hub (Local Offer)

Please [CLICK HERE](#) for the Peterborough SEN and Inclusion Services brochure for this Academic year. This is a guide to our services with information and FAQs on each service as well as structure charts for the whole service, which have been updated for this academic year. If you have a query regarding the service, you will most likely find it on this brochure ranging from contact details to service information. You can also find a copy of this on the Local Offer if you [CLICK HERE](#). Please note – the first page is a structure chart for each service and the following pages go into detail about roles / responsibilities and what the service does.

## World Book Day 6th March 2025

"We are celebrating World Book Day 2025 on 6 March. This year we are asking you to Read Your Way celebrating the reading that your child chooses to do in their free time without judgement.

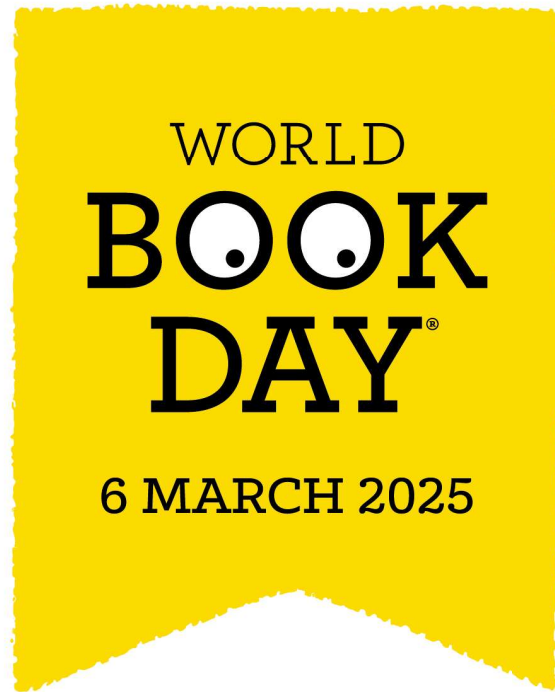
We're inviting everyone to **Read Your Way**, to give children and young people the opportunity to discover reading on their own terms.

**Read Your Way** encourages everyone to let go of reading pressures and expectations, and lets children find fun in reading.

Children and parents tell us that reading can feel like work, so we're here to unlock the fun! Here are some activities:

- [Snuggle up with a picture book video](#)
- [Listen to a free audiobook together](#)
- [Let us help you with some reading recommendations](#)
- [Listen to MC Grammar's World Book Day Songs"](#)

You can find more information on the [World Book Day Website](#).



## Children's Mental Health Week 2025: 3rd-9th February 2025

Children's Mental Health Week 2025 took place from 3-9 February 2025. This year's theme is 'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself'.

This year's theme is to encourage children, young people and adults to embrace self-awareness and explore what it means to them. This will help them grow and develop resilience to cope with what life throws at them.

You can still download Children's Mental Health Charity Place2be's [official free resources](#) for families. These jam-packed resource pack includes top tips for families around encouraging children and young people to express their emotions.



## National Apprenticeship Week 2025: 10th – 16th February 2025

The 10th-16th February marked National Apprenticeship week A week-long celebration that brings together businesses and apprentices across the country to shine a light on the positive impact that apprenticeships make to individuals.

National Apprenticeship Week 2025 encourages everyone to consider and celebrate how apprenticeships and skills help individuals develop rewarding careers, and employers to develop a workforce with future-ready skills. Together we will inspire the nation with engaging stories of apprentice and learner progression – sharing their increased confidence, skills, knowledge and how such programmes have kick-started incredible careers.

Visit the [National Apprenticeship Week website](#) to find out more and to access resources.



## Useful Resources to help with your child/young person's mental health

We are hearing from some of our parent/carers that there are some concerns about their children and their mental health. If you relate to this, firstly you are not alone. Secondly, we wanted to include some resources and websites that may be beneficial for you and/or your child/young person to use to support themselves with mental health. We know in life that we all have difficulties when things don't go well especially as we head into the winter months;

therefore, we must promote ways to improve our children's mental health with positive strategies and how to reach out for support if and when it is needed. Here are some useful tools to use:

- [Keep Your Head – Mental health and wellbeing information for children, young people, adults, professionals, and schools across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough \(keep-your-head.com\)](https://www.keep-your-head.com) - a local website for support and strategies
- [Home - Kooth](https://www.home-kooth.com) - a national website for support and strategies.
- [Shout: the UK's free, confidential and 24/7 mental health text service for crisis support | Shout 85258 \(giveusashout.org\)](https://www.giveusashout.org) - a text service to access support.
- [mighty-moe1.pdf \(primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com\)](https://www.amazonaws.com) - a resource booklet to start conversations about anxiety.

We hope the above resources help.

What can we do to make your maternity care better?

**NHS**  
North West Anglia  
NHS Foundation Trust

**We want to hear from you**

If you are currently pregnant and come from a black, brown, or mixed-race background, or if you are navigating life with a disability or neurodiversity.

**What can we do to make your maternity care better?**

Contact us on WhatsApp by sending a text or voice message with your response to the question above.

**07889137153**

Expires: 31st August 2025

## The Early Years SEND Specialist and Portage Service 'EarlyBird Programme' offer

As a service we are fortunate that we have Portage Home Visitors/Practitioners within our team that are licensed as trainers to deliver the National Autistic Society (NAS) EarlyBird Programme, in Peterborough. This excellent 9-week Programme is designed for families that have a child under 5 years, with a diagnosis of Autism. Each week the trainers cover topics related to Autism.

Topics include:

- Understanding Autism / Supporting interaction / Communication differences / Understanding sensory differences / Developing play and interpreting behaviour.

Once you have a place on EarlyBird you receive an informative parent/carer handbook which clearly explains all the ideas and support strategies. We look at real life examples through videos of families who have young children with Autism and professionals who are working with them. The family are also offered two home visits during the nine weeks, to discuss how they are implementing the ideas.

Another great strength of the programme is the peer support within the group as parents/carers share together and relate to the differences, challenges and enjoy the successes their children have.

We aim to run EarlyBird three times a year subject to demand and we can offer two places per family. We meet at a central venue in Peterborough. Currently the Programme and materials are free to the family. For further information and to be considered for an EarlyBird programme, please contact Sarah Bernard, Portage Manager, Peterborough EarlyBird lead at: Sarah.bernard@peterborough.gov.uk with your name, Child's name and DOB, address (Please note we only accept families living in Peterborough), confirmation of diagnosis of Autism, a phone number and email address.

What our parents and carers say:

'This Course has been one of the best experiences ever. Having the help, support and understanding has been an eye opener for me. I will definitely use the tips and resources at home to help my child. I cannot thank you enough'

'I have really valued the information and support given and meeting other parents to talk about issues'

'It was really amazing. Brilliant. To be with other parents who get it. I understand my child a bit more now. I honestly can't sing the trainers praises enough. They do an amazing job. I wish every parent of an autistic child had the opportunity to do it'



*1 - An Accredited Trainer with the National Portage Association.*

## Portage Sensory Learners group

Our group offers a small, safe space for pre-school children and their parents/carers to attend a relaxed supportive session. The children are often on the Portage waiting list, are being visited by a home visitor or are supported by Barnardo's and have additional support needs and/or complex needs and disabilities.

The aims of the group are for families to benefit from sharing experiences with other parents in a safe environment and Sobia and Lubna strive to give the children and parents more confidence in attending groups, as often they may feel unable to access universal services and groups.

- We are friendly and inclusive in our practice and plan activities to support the children's needs and developmental growth.
- The session encourages sensory play which offers a natural and fun way for children to discover, examine and understand their world.
- The activities and resources provide opportunities for children to actively use their senses as they explore their world through sensory play which is crucial for brain development which supports cognitive growth, language development, gross and fine motor skills and social interaction.
- We are also able to signpost families to other community groups and services available, relevant to their child's needs.
- We endeavour to observe and listen to children, their parents and learn about what they are interested in and put this into our group planning.



It is very special when we see and parents enjoy seeing their children explore, create and connect through different sensory experiences. Parents often comment how it has been amazing to see their child's progress. The children become more confident exploring squishy textures and are drawn to the vibrant colours of the sensory resources and soothing sounds of the gentle music or rhymes to close. There is a real sense of discovery for our little ones.

The group gives parents the opportunity to talk to other parents, which has been invaluable, and supports their well-being.

Sensory Learners places can be booked on the [Barnardo's Facebook page](#) and sessions run on a Thursday afternoon 1.00- 2.00pm term time only, at the Fulbridge Child and Family Centre.



For more information visit [Peterborough Early Years SEND Specialist and Portage Service Facebook page](#) or contact [sobia.sadaf@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:sobia.sadaf@peterborough.gov.uk) Tel: 07870 152443

## NESSIE – Parents Offer

NESSIE support the positive mental health of children and young people. They do this in three ways:

- NESSIE offer 1-1 and group arts therapies for children and young people;

- NESSIE offer training and supervision of professionals in educational settings;
- NESSIE offer training forums and support to parents and carers.

NESSIE is fully funded to support families of children and young people with emotional and mental health needs.

[Please see below flyers with resources / events and support for parents/carers.](#)

The flyer features a photograph of a man, a woman, and a young boy sitting at a table in a classroom, engaged in an activity. In the top left corner, the logos for Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council are displayed. A circular logo on the right side contains the NESSIE logo, which includes a stylized bird and the text 'NESSIE Helping Children & Young People Thrive'. Below the photograph, the text reads 'CAMBS/PETERBOROUGH FUNDED PARENT AND CARER SUPPORT' in green, followed by 'Nessie is funded to support families of children and young people with emotional and mental health needs.' in white. At the bottom, four circular icons represent different services: 'Free Webinars and events', 'Peer Support Groups', '1-1 Solution Focused Therapy', and 'Parent Support Line'. A white banner at the very bottom contains the contact information: 'Call or Text 07932 651319' with a phone icon, 'For More Information: Parent Page' with a globe icon, and social media icons for Facebook and Instagram.

Cambridgeshire County Council  
PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL

**NESSIE**  
Helping Children & Young People Thrive

**CAMBS/PETERBOROUGH FUNDED  
PARENT AND CARER SUPPORT**

Nessie is funded to support families of children and young people with emotional and mental health needs.

Free Webinars and events  
Peer Support Groups  
1-1 Solution Focused Therapy  
Parent Support Line

Call or Text **07932 651319** For More Information: **Parent Page**

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## PARENT RESOURCES

Many short videos including...



Transitioning to a  
new school



Building resilience  
and confidence



Dealing with  
anxiety

Top Tips including...



Supporting Anxious  
Children  
Bitesize



Self Harm  
Bitesize



Bereavement and  
Loss  
Bitesize



For more resources visit:  
[\*\*Resources Page\*\*](#)



**NESSIE**  
Helping Children & Young People Thrive

Cambridgeshire County Council  
**PETERBOROUGH**  
CITY COUNCIL

## Cambs/Peterboro Parent/Carer Events Coming up...

**Free Live Online Webinars**

<p><b>Anxiety</b> Wednesday 12th March '25 7:00pm to 9:00pm <a href="#">MORE INFO</a></p>	<p><b>Self-Harming Behaviour</b> Thursday 13th March '25 7:30pm to 9:30pm <a href="#">MORE INFO</a></p>	<p><b>When Children and Young People Struggle to Attend School</b> Thursday 27th March '25 9:30am to 11:30am <a href="#">MORE INFO</a></p>
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**Online Peer Support Group for Parents/Carers of Children Struggling to Attend School - 6 Week Course**  
Starting Wednesday 26th February '25  
9:30am to 11:00am  
[BOOK HERE](#)

## Work and Health

WorkWell is a free service that helps people who may be struggling to find or retain a job due to a health need. A Work and Health coach will talk to you about what you need and help you find the right support. They can connect you with different services, like health professionals and local groups. WorkWell wants to make sure everyone feels better and has a good chance at getting a job, so you can do both—work and feel healthy!

Please see below flyer for more information.

## WorkWell: Supporting Work and Health

WorkWell is a free service that helps people who may be struggling to find or retain a job due to a health need. A Work and Health coach will talk to you about what you need and help you find the right support. They can connect you with different services, like health professionals and local groups. WorkWell wants to make sure everyone feels better and has a good chance at getting a job, so you can do both—work and feel healthy!

You are eligible for WorkWell if:

- ⊕ You are 16 years or older.
- ⊕ You have the right to work in the UK.
- ⊕ You live in, or are registered with a GP or JobCentre Plus in Peterborough.
- ⊕ You have a health-related barrier to work.

You do not need to be claiming any Government benefits to access the service.



### How to Access WorkWell

Scan the QR code to arrange a call back  
From the WorkWell Hub.

Or call 0300 456 2354 to  
speak to a member of the  
WorkWell Team

<https://tinyurl.com/WorkWell-Peterborough>



Get started today and access free,  
personalised support for your work and  
health needs!

## Peterborough Community Children's Occupational Therapy (OT) Team update

Information can be found about the Community Children's Occupational Therapy Team on their website: <https://www.cpft.nhs.uk/occupational-therapy-children>. The team are offering a weekly advice line for parents and professionals for those children and young people (0-18 years old) who are currently not known or open to the service, who may require a referral or support with signposting to universal offers or other services. The 10 minutes advice line slot can be booked by emailing [cpm-tr.childrenotcpft@nhs.net](mailto:cpm-tr.childrenotcpft@nhs.net).

Please visit our *Peterborough Children's Therapies*

NHS Facebook Page [www.facebook.com/pborochildrenstherapies](https://www.facebook.com/pborochildrenstherapies), or our website for further information

<https://www.cpft.nhs.uk/occupational-therapy-children>

<https://www.cpft.nhs.uk/physiotherapy-children>

<https://www.cpft.nhs.uk/speech-and-language-therapy-children>



## Children's Speech and Language Therapy Team Resources

The children's Speech and Language Therapy Team have lots of resources, activity ideas and leaflets to support your child's speech, language and communication skills on their online toolkit – please take a look: [Speech and Language Therapy Toolkit | CPFT NHS Trust](#)



## Transitions in Healthcare

[The Transitions in Healthcare page](#) provides useful information and signposting for young people and families around changes to be aware of, checklists and transition programmes that can be used to support the move into adult healthcare.

## Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice, Support Service (SENDIASS)

Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice, Support Service (SENDIASS) provides information, advice and support to parents, children and young people regarding Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).



SENDIASS can offer:

- Impartial advice and information about Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
- Advice and support for parents, children and young people navigating the Special Educational Needs processes.
- Advice and support for parents and young people to work collaboratively with schools, education, health and children's services, and other professionals.
- Inform and signpost parents and young people to other available support services and organisations.
- Advice and support for parents and young people in resolving disagreements – support through mediations and tribunals.

Contact: 0300 365 1020 or Email [SENDIASS@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:SENDIASS@peterborough.gov.uk)

## Family Voice Peterborough (FVP)

FVP team is working hard to improve the services for children/young people with SEND and their families. Please check our website and social media pages for surveys, our parent carer hub sessions with SENDIASS and other services as well as other events. If you would like any help and support, are unsure of the services available for your child/young person, give us a call on 01733 685510 or visit our website <https://familyvoice.org/activities/>

If you are seeking further information or support for you and your child / young person then check out the [Peterborough SEND Information Hub \(Local Offer\)](#)

Follow Family Voice Peterborough on twitter <https://twitter.com/familyvoice1>

Find Family Voice Peterborough on Facebook [www.facebook.com/fvpcommunity](http://www.facebook.com/fvpcommunity)

Find Family Voice Peterborough on the web [www.familyvoice.org](http://www.familyvoice.org)



## Peterborough Little Miracles Charity

What do Little Miracles Charity do?

“Our Childcare Teams, Family Support Workers and Counsellors provide activities, training, advice and safe-spaces to the whole family even before they receive a formal diagnosis. This includes everyone - the children, their parents, carers and siblings.” More information can be found [here](#). Please see below or [click here](#) to see the upcoming activities timetable. There is a wide range of activities throughout Monday to Friday. For more information about the activities please contact 01733 262226 or email [childcare@littlemiraclescharity.org.uk](mailto:childcare@littlemiraclescharity.org.uk)



## Vivacity SEND Activities and Inclusive Leisure

SEND out of school hours sessions

Vivacity runs term-time sessions and holiday clubs for children and young people aged 7-19 with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), providing opportunities to spend time with their peers.

We feel it is important for children and young adults to come together to be social, engage in activities and support each other. We understand that a lot of children and young adults with SEND can often feel isolated in other mainstream environments, but at [Vivacity short breaks](#)



[sessions](#) they can develop social skills, make their own choices on activities they'd like to do and make friends

## Inclusive Sports

Our programme engages and works with young people and adults with disabilities to increase their participation in sport.

Vivacity's exercise services for children and young adults with disabilities focuses on more than just delivering great sporting opportunities, we aim to develop both physical, mental and social skills in all of our sessions. Participants can expect solid support from our experienced friendly staff who help to ensure they benefit from fun, friendships and fitness. Our [inclusive disability sports programme](#) aims to build confidence, strength and long term life skills.

[www.vivacity.org/inclusiveleisure](http://www.vivacity.org/inclusiveleisure)

