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What's New?
18th Jan 24

Family Hubs drop-in sessions

Our drop-in sessions at the Ponders End Family Hub continue next Tuesday afternoon 12 – 2 pm.
See our website [here](#) for more details and information about the Family Hub.




Our Voice drop-in service

For parents/carers of children & young people aged 0-25 with Special Educational Needs/ Disabilities

At the Ponders End Family and Youth Hub



Join members of the Our Voice team for our regular drop-in sessions at the **Youth and Family Hub** in Ponders End.

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| Tuesday 23 rd Jan | 12 pm – 2 pm |
| Wednesday 7 th Feb | 10 am to 1 pm |
| Tuesday 20 th Feb | 12 pm to 2 pm |

See the Our Voice events page for more information and further dates.
<https://www.ourvoiceenfield.org.uk/events>

Our Voice is the official parent carer forum supporting the families of children and young people aged 0 -25 years with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, living or attending school in the London Borough of Enfield. We are not part of the Local Authority but we work with them to improve services for the families that we represent.

Ponders End Youth and Family Hub
129, South Street, Enfield,
EN3 4 PX
(next to Oasis Hadley Academy)

Drop in – no need to book



An opportunity to talk to one of the parent carers from the Our Voice team about any questions you may have, and to chat with other parents of children with additional needs.

Last chance to tell us about your experiences choosing a school and enter our prize draw

We would really like to hear about your experiences when looking at either Primary or Secondary schools for your child with additional needs. We know that all schools are meant to be inclusive for children with Disabilities and Special Needs – but is that the reality? Did you feel that your child would be welcomed and supported at the schools you visited, or were you discouraged (actively or subtly) from sending your child to that school?



Please let us know by completing the short survey by the end of 31st January.

For primary schools please complete the survey [here](#)

For secondary schools please complete the survey [here](#)

It should only take around 5 minutes to do. You will need to complete a separate survey for each school you want to talk about. To thank you for your time we will randomly select **3 survey entries from each survey to receive a £20 Amazon voucher** (see survey page for details and make sure you have given us your contact details if you would like to be included). We will be making the draw in early February and winners will be notified by the 9th February.

Money Matters workshop for parents of children aged 5 or under

Contact's online workshop on 23rd Jan 7 – 9 pm will give advice on benefits and how to maximise your finances if you have a child with additional years aged 0-5. It covers

- DLA, Carers Allowance and other benefits (dispelling common myths)
- Grants and discounts available on utility bills, leisure activities and for carers
- Services available to support you with making applications
- How to get further help and guidance if you need it.

Book [here](#).



Update on Free School meals

In a huge win for parent campaigners led by Natalie Hay and Contact, the Schools Minister has agreed to update free school meals guidance [following a debate in Westminster last week](#). The changes will make clear that local authorities and schools are legally obliged to offer reasonable adjustments to children who [can't have their free school meal in the regular way](#), such as by providing supermarket vouchers.

Additionally, last month, [the government conceded](#) that free school meals should be provided to eligible children in [education otherwise than at school \(EOTAS\)](#). This was in response to legal action by a group of parents led by Natalie Hay. As a result, almost 2,000 disabled children across England missing out on a free school meal can now get funding for a free lunch from their local council.

More information for anyone affected by these changes is on [Contact's resources page](#).

Enfield Carers Centre

Jan – June Newsletter

The Enfield Carer's Centre Newsletter is now out for January – June 24 – full of information about events and support for parents and carers. You can see a copy [here](#).

Events coming up at the Enfield Carers Centre:

The Enfield Carers Centre runs a wide variety of different events, many of which will be useful for parent carers of children with additional needs.

Events in January and February which are likely to be particularly useful include:

Carers' Legal Information Telephone appointments on 15th Feb and 20th Feb – see page 11 of the newsletter.

The Learning Disability and Autism Carer Group meets regularly on Fridays from 12.30 – 2 pm. The next session will be on 2nd February and will give information about Mencap and One-to-one and what support these services provide. See page 10 of the [newsletter](#).

ECC Benefits advice sessions are currently only available for those who already have forms for completion and/or deadline dates, as well as the correct evidence and information. On Thursday 8th February there will be a group information session regarding the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) from 9 – 11 am or one-to-one form filling appointments between 11 am and 1 pm or 2.30 – 4.30 pm. You must pre-book. See page 15 of the [newsletter](#) for more information.



CARERS' LEGAL INFORMATION TELEPHONE APPOINTMENTS

FREE ten minute appointments for Carers with two local Solicitor firms*

Topics covered: Care Act 2014; Care Home Matters; Carers Rights; Community Care; Court of Protection; Lasting Power of Attorney; Trusts or Wills.



Craybeck Law - Craig Ward 3rd Tuesday of each month 2pm - 3pm:
Telephone only appts: 16th Jan, 20th Feb, 16 Apr, 18th Jun
Face to Face appts: 19th March, 21st May

Anvoner Law—Samantha Anastasiou 3rd Thursday of each month 10am - 12pm:
Telephone only appts: 18th Jan, 15th Feb, 21st Mar, 18th Apr, 16th May, 20th Jun

*Sessions are subject to availability. Call **020 8366 3677** or email info@enfieldcarers.org to book an appointment

ECC Benefits Advice Sessions

We will be holding the following benefits information sessions online and **face-to-face** in the coming months. The group session will explain the benefit and eligibility criteria as well as what information/evidence is needed to make the application.



Due to the fact that we currently have a very reduced benefits service the one-to-one appointments below are only available for those who already have forms for completion and/or deadline dates as well as the correct evidence/necessary information.

You must call ECC to book a place/obtain the meeting link for any of the sessions and/or appointments. Drop ins cannot be accommodated.

| Hybrid Group info sessions | Individual Appointments |
|---|--|
| DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE (DLA) Thursday 8th February 9am-11am | One-to-one form-filling appointments 11am—1pm or 2.30pm—4.30pm |
| ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE Thursday 7th March 9am-11am | One-to-one form-filling appointments 11am—1pm or 2.30pm—4.30pm |
| PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT (PIP) Friday 19th April 9am-11am | One-to-one form-filling appointments 11am—1pm or 2.30pm—4.30pm |
| CARERS ALLOWANCE Learn the basics about this benefit, who can claim and how. Friday 15th March 11am-12 noon (face to face only) | |

Autism Central: events from the London Autism Hub

The London Autism Central Hub offers guidance to families, carers and personal assistants of autistic people. This includes opportunities to book one-to-one appointments and a range of different workshops. You can see details and booking links [here](#).

The next online sessions during January and February are:



Understanding your Child's Behaviour- This workshop will help you understand your child's behaviour and provide ways in which you can support them **Thursday 18 Jan 2024**
07:00:PM - 09:00:PM

Supporting Disabilities in a Mainstream Setting- For parents and carers of children who attend mainstream settings **Tuesday 23 Jan 2024 10:00:AM - 12:00:PM**

Understanding and Supporting an Anxious Child - This workshop will help you understand the causes of anxiety and how it makes your child feel. And discuss strategies to support. **Thursday 25 Jan 2024**
07:00:PM - 09:00:PM

Autism and Education - This workshop will provide you with information to help navigate the education for your young person. **Tuesday 06 Feb 2024 10:00:AM - 12:00:PM**

Understanding Teenage Behaviour - This workshop will help you understand your teen's behaviour and provide ways in which you can support them. **Tuesday 20 Feb 2024**
10:00:AM - 12:00:PM

Growing Up Sex and Relationships - A workshop for parents and carers exploring how best to support your child going through puberty and teenage years. **Thursday 22 Feb 2024**
10:00:AM - 12:00:PM

Understanding and Supporting an Anxious Teenager - this workshop will help you understand the causes of anxiety and how it makes your teen feel. And discuss strategies to support **Tuesday 27 Feb 2024 10:00:AM - 12:00:PM**

Play and Leisure update

See our ['What's On Guide'](#) for information about other SEND-specific and inclusive activities and days out in and around the Enfield area.

Disability Tennis sessions – restarting this Saturday

WANT TO PLAY TENNIS?

Disability Tennis
for teens and adults
An opportunity for anyone with a disability; visible or not to play tennis.

Come and join us
Kenmare Gardens
Palmers Green
N13 5DR
Saturdays 12:30 - 1:30pm



We have adaptive equipment and our club is wheelchair friendly.

WANT TO KNOW MORE:
Text Anne 0780 395 2180

SATURDAYS 12:30 - 1:30 pm (restarting 19th Jan 2024)
Mayfield Tennis Club, Kenmare Garden, Palmers Green, N13 5DR

Are you neurodiverse or have a visible disability and fancy trying your hand at tennis?

No racket needed; we have them.

No experience needed; we have coaches.

You don't need to be able to play tennis; we have volunteers to meet your needs;

No worries about access; we have wheelchair access and accessible bathrooms.

We have brand new fabulous astro turf courts. Great for wheelchairs, safe and good for knees!!!

Tea, coffee, and cake for afterwards. These sessions are FREE.

Not sure if it's for you? Why not pop down and take a look, have a chat or give Anne a call to find out more: Tel 0780 395 2180

Accessible events at the Science museum

The Science Museum runs a series of accessible events, enabling visitors who benefit from a quieter environment to visit the museum outside of regular opening hours.

Visitors will get the opportunity to explore some of the galleries and to visit Wonderlab: The Equinor Gallery and the special exhibition 'Turn it Up: The Power of Musick' at a reduced price.

Early Birds will take place on Saturday 27th Jan from 10 am to 11 am and on Saturday 23rd March 6.30 to 9.30 pm

You can book now [here](#).



Night Owls is a sensory-friendly evening for young adults and adults aged 16 and over. The next session will be on Saturday 10th February. More information and booking [here](#).

Russet House School looking for new governors

Russet House School are looking for two new Governors. Please see the flyer below for details and contact the school directly at office@russethouse.enfield.sch.uk if you are interested.



Come and join our team!

Russet House School is looking for two Governors to join our Governing Body

Russet House is a community special school situated in the London Borough of Enfield for autistic pupils aged 3 – 11 years old. We are extremely proud of our school and all we have achieved, and we continually strive to improve the provision we offer to our pupils and their families.

Being a Governor at Russet House is a very important role. Our Governors help to lead our school, contribute to decisions about the whole school and ensure standards are high by providing challenge and support to our school's Senior Leadership Team.

The role involves:

- Attending three or four Governing Body or Committee meetings each term of approximately 2.5 to 3 hours, usually at the school, sometimes on-line. At the moment, we meet during the day, but we could meet in the evenings if that would suit more of the governors.
- Having a specific area of responsibility in a particular aspect of the school, such as health and safety, safeguarding, finances, curriculum. This would involve one or two additional meetings per term with a senior member of staff. At these meetings a Governor plays an important role in providing their perspective.
- Participating in termly Governor visits which have a specific focus often relating to the curriculum / teaching and learning at our school.
- Opportunities to participate in other fun activities which make up life at Russet House such as the Christmas concert or sports day.

We are a strong group of Governors with a wide ranging set of skills. We are looking to further strengthen our Governing Body and to recruit committed, skilled and talented individuals who want to make a difference. In particular, but not exclusively, we are looking for individuals with experience in any of the following areas:

- education
- autism
- finance/ business

**Please get in touch with the school office (office@russethouse.enfield.sch.uk/ 020 8350 0650) if you are interested in joining our Governing Body team or would like to discuss this further with one of current school Governors.
Finding out more would not commit you!**

We hope that you have found our newsletter useful. If you have any feedback, or anything that you think we could be telling our families about, please let us know. Our contact details are:

Telephone 07516 662315 Email: info@ourvoiceenfield.org.uk

Website: www.ourvoiceenfield.org.uk

You can also follow us on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ourvoiceenfield/> on [Twitter@EnfieldOurVoice](https://twitter.com/EnfieldOurVoice) and on Instagram at

<https://www.instagram.com/ourvoiceenfield/>

If you no longer wish to receive these emails, and/or would like us to remove your details from our database, please email us and we will remove your details from our mailing list and/or database.

