

# **Sheffield Local Offer Annual Report**

## **1 September 2019 - 31 August 2020**

### **Introduction**

Welcome to Sheffield City Council Local Offer Report 2019-20. This report will provide an update on what we have achieved between September 2019 and August 2020, feedback we have received, our response to this feedback and our plans for the future.

The key purpose of the Local Offer is to:

- Provide clear, comprehensive, accessible and up-to-date information about the available provision and how to access it, and
- Make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly 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 Authority continues to commission the Sheffield Parent Carer Forum (SPCF) to work with us to:

- Improve, update, and maintain the Sheffield Local Offer website
- Ensure that the Local Offer provides a high-quality experience, which meets user requirements
- Ensure the Local offer is in alignment with statutory duties/responsibilities
- Ensure the Local offer provides an effective communication tool.

### **Structure and Usability**

The Local Offer Website is part of the council's 'Sheffield Directory' which also provides information on Sheffield's care, health and education services, events and activities in one place.

To ensure that the site was user friendly and easily accessible, Parent Carer Forum focussed on:

- Improving search-ability by correcting keywords and categorisation of listings, and suggesting changes to filters and category names.
- Identifying missing providers and encouraging and supporting them to create listings
- Reviewing school listings and providing support to help schools access their listings to ensure their SEND information was up to date on the Local Offer and link to the SEND information reports on their school websites

## **Content**

Sheffield Parent Carer forum continued to review and identify missing content aligned with statutory requirements. They liaised with council and health service managers to co-produce or review information and make approved information available online for young people and their families.

## **Improvements**

The following information was added:

Home educating your child with SEND

Identifying SEND in the Early Years

Working with advocates in relation to children and young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

Alternative Provision

Reduced or part-time timetables

Special Educational Needs coordinator (SENCO)

Additional information for the Transitions Guide

Additional Information for Transition into Adulthood

Specialist equipment for children and young people with SEND

Taking part in your community

Locality SEND processes

Staying safe when out and about

Help with Housing

Adapting your home  
Buying a home  
Care and support at home  
Living with, or visiting, an approved carer in their home  
Moving into a supported living scheme  
Renting your home  
Homelessness

In addition, a Covid section was added in April 2020, with public health advice, government updates, changes to local services, details of where to get support, and information and resources.

## **Feedback and Engagement**

### **User Testing**

We are currently reviewing the Sheffield Directory including the Local Offer, with the view to re-develop the platform. As part of this process, we engaged with users through usability test sessions. We wanted to listen to the needs and wants of our customers, understand what was working well and where further improvements were required. The primary purpose of the testing sessions was to determine usability strength and weaknesses of the Local Offer through representative tasks. All participants were recruited by Sheffield Parent Carer Forum.

Feedback we have received will be fundamental to improving the platform, ensuring that it is user friendly and provides easily accessible information and advice for children and young with special educational needs and disability and their parents.

### ***Positive findings based on feedback from test participants:***

- Found listings pages easy to understand
- Found filter functionality intuitive
- Wanted to see supported conditions on the school listing content page - *most important piece of information for parents to quickly ascertain whether a school will be suitable for their child.*

- Wanted to see school facilities for SEN shown on the School listing content page – *parents assessing whether a school meets their child’s needs, they are looking for facilities such as ‘quiet space.*

**Main areas for improvement:**

- Filters and categorisation
- Filters required when searching from the homepage
- Structure of the Sheffield Directory - *Participants were not aware that the site had three separate categorisation structures, this made it hard to find what they expect to see.*
- Content pages – overwhelmed with too much information
- Search function – difficult to navigate the site between three structures
- Landing pages – these were getting in the way of tasks
- Display on mobiles – needs to be more user friendly

**Other feedback from parents**

Feedback and questions from parents about local SEND provision collated by SPCF and SENDIAS are listed in the “You said, we did” report for February 2019 - March 2020 (add LINK once published). The questions will be used to further develop the information on the Local Offer.

The online feedback form on the Local Offer website was used by 10 people. Feedback received was in line with what we gathered from the user testing sessions.

**Engagement Activities**

Below are examples of some of the engagement activities that have taken place over the last 12 months.

Activity	Impact
Keep in Touch Meetings between SPCF, SENDIAS, Sheffield City Council and Sheffield CCG	Process in place to gain views and feedback from parent carers – you said we did, bi-annual feedback report tabled at Inclusion Improvement Board and available on the Local Offer Website.

Bi-monthly Meeting with Director of People Services	Continued engagement between parent support groups and the LA..
Providing advice and information	SENDIAS and SPCF provide children and young people and their parents with information about the Local Offer and general support available around SEND provision and services.  SPCF continue to be a key link for the LA to share information with parents through the SPCF website and social media.
SPCF representation and collaborative partnership	SPCF represent the voice of parents at strategic boards/meetings within the People's Portfolio.  SPCF provided feedback on the Strengthening Inclusion Strategy/Programme and contributed to monitoring the progress of outcomes specified under each key theme.  Developing and improving the Local Offer Website.

### Sheffield Directory Hits

2020/21		
Quarter	Overall Sheffield Directory	Local Offer
Q1 (Apr-Jun)	109,347	4,386
Q2 (Jul-Sept)	153,401	4,334

2019/20		
Quarter	Overall Sheffield Directory	Local Offer
Q1 (Apr-Jun)	212,093	4,519
Q2 Jul-Sept)	214,525	5,316
Q3 (Oct-Dec)	193,723	5,321
Q4 (Jan-Mar)	200,297	5,458

<b>2018/19</b>		
<b>Quarter</b>	<b>Overall Sheffield Directory</b>	<b>Local Offer</b>
Q1 (Apr-Jun)	201,280	3,902
Q2 Jul-Sept)	197,170	4,662
Q3 (Oct-Dec)	192,855	5,107
Q4 (Jan-Mar)	216,079	5666

This demonstrates that the number of hits fluctuates during each quarter. In comparison to 2018/19, there were more users accessing the Local Offer during 2019/20, quarter 1 and 2. There was a drop from April to September 2020, this may have been due to the COVID pandemic.

### **Future Developments**

Due to the COVID pandemic, development work on the Sheffield Directory was placed on hold, for most of 2020 and early 2021. Next steps for the development of the Sheffield Directory are now being identified.

In the meantime, the Local Offer site is being maintained and updated by The Sheffield Parent Carer Forum, with regular input from local authority officers.

Feedback received through the user testing exercise, the online feedback form and reports from SPCF and SENDIAS will inform future developments of the Local Offer.