

# Gateshead SEND Network News

Gateshead  
**LOCAL  
OFFER**

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## Hello!

Welcome to the Gateshead SEND Network Newsletter. Children and young people across the region have faced extraordinary difficulties over the past 18 months. The COVID pandemic has affected their education in an unprecedented fashion and, as the new academic year begins, we'd like to congratulate them all on their fantastic efforts in rising to the challenges they have faced.

Gateshead Council's SEND team strives to continually improve the services available to children, young people, and families of those with additional needs. For more information go to [www.gateshead-localoffer.org](http://www.gateshead-localoffer.org), follow the Gateshead SEND Local Offer Facebook page or visit the [Gateshead Local Offer YouTube channel](#).

An easy read version of this newsletter can be found [here](#).

## SEND Careers Event

Gateshead Council's SEND Team have worked collaboratively with Gateshead's Careers Information, Advice & Guidance (IAG) Team to organise a Preparing for Adulthood & Careers event. **The event will be held at the Dryden Centre SOTA building on October 20th 2021, 1:15pm-6:00pm** and will include representatives from Gateshead's Careers Information and Guidance, Working Gateshead and Learning and Skills teams. Local employers and agencies will also be at the event which is aimed at anyone with an EHCP from Year 10 – Year 13 from any specialist school, college or educational placement.

Lee Peacock is the Careers IAG Lead at Gateshead Council and helped organise the event.

**"The event aims to help young people and their families start thinking about their next course and the job opportunities that follow", he said. "Parents and carers are welcome to join the event - we want to make sure that they also feel happy and well supported when making decisions regarding post-16 options."**

For further information please contact Lee Peacock (Careers IAG Lead) [leepeacock@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:leepeacock@gateshead.gov.uk), phone 0191 433 3856, or speak to your school, college, or educational placement about it. To register your interest and book your place please visit <https://forms.office.com/r/p46m27xhUt>. Please complete and return forms by 13 October to secure your place.



# Gateshead PCF Family Fun Day

Gateshead's Parent Carer Forum organised their first Family Fun Day at Dunston Activity Centre in August. Children and families were kept entertained by a range of inflatables and craft activities whilst representatives from the NHS, Gateshead Council's SEND Team and the Chronicle Sunshine Fund were present to answer enquiries from parent carers.

Boe Sparks is a member of the PCF and part of the steering group who organised the event. "It was such a pleasure seeing all the children have such fun and being able to meet everyone after such a difficult year", says Boe. "We are looking forward to getting back in September and to start planning our monthly coffee morning and our next family fun day for Christmas - ho ho ho!"



For information about future events or to register interest in joining the Forum, please contact [info@gatesheadparentcarerforum.co.uk](mailto:info@gatesheadparentcarerforum.co.uk). The Forum also publishes regular newsletters aimed at keeping local parent carers up to date regarding services, activities and support groups available to them. Click on the [Gateshead PCF Local Offer](#) page for more information.

## Independent Travel Training

Independent Travel Training is about giving young people the skills and confidence to travel safely on public transport, expanding their knowledge of road safety and how to plan journeys. It can open up lots of new opportunities for young people, making them less reliant upon others, supporting friendships and helping them to explore opportunities for college, training and employment in the future.



Luke Birkbeck

Luke Birkbeck is the lead travel trainer for Gateshead Council's Travel Care team.

"To be an independent traveller is a huge life skill for a young person and can open a plethora of new opportunities," says Luke "During the travel training programme a young person will gain confidence in

using public transport, personal safety, using timetables and what to do if things go wrong. I will go with the trainee on their journey, giving encouragement and guidance until they develop the skills to travel on their own."

### Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

"I think it is a good experience," says one graduate of the programme. "I went from someone who could barely leave the house himself to someone who could show a bus pass and go anywhere I wanted."

"It was a great experience for our son and has given him a much greater sense of independence," says one parent. "By the end of the summer he was comfortable making his way to school on the bus and has been able to develop those skills on other bus routes since. It was better having someone outside the family working with him on his travel skills and he really liked Luke which helped massively."

For more information on the Independent Travel Training programme, please email Gateshead's Travel Care team via [lukebirkbeck@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:lukebirkbeck@gateshead.gov.uk)

## Learning Disability Annual Health Checks

People with a learning disability often have poorer physical and mental health than other people. This does not need to be the case. Annual health checks are for adults and young people aged 14 or over with a learning disability. Anyone aged 14 or over who's on their GP's learning disability register can have a free annual health check once a year. Adults and young people aged 14 or over with a learning disability who

are on the GP practice learning disability register should be invited by their GP practice to come for an annual health check. Most GP surgeries offer annual health checks to people with a learning disability. However, GP surgeries don't have to offer this service. If your GP surgery hasn't offered you an annual health check, you can ask them if they could provide one.



Newcastle Gateshead  
Clinical Commissioning Group

Find out more by watching the [Health Is Everybody's Responsibility](#) video or going to the NHS website [Learning disabilities - Annual health checks](#).

# Keiron's Success Story

Kieron is 19 years old; he has a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and the difficulties associated with this meant that his early education was severely disrupted. It also meant that he was unable to attend school and was home-schooled for two years.

Gateshead Council's SEND Team helped Kieron identify a place at an education provider which helps young people prepare for the world of work. "I enrolled in Year 7, then went to the college", says Kieron. "Until Year 11 I did science, PE, English Maths and Design Technology. I passed my Maths with a 6 and passed English with a 4, and I passed my Personal Training course and Mechanics. At college I did work related things – I tried construction



then got into mechanics. I completed a two year course in about 8 months."

Kieron received help and input from Gateshead Council's Careers Information and Guidance (IAG) Team who helped him identify work-based preferences and opportunities. Kieron has successfully completed his studies and now has a full-time job which he independently travels to and from. "My dream job is to be a firefighter", says Kieron. "I need to get a lot fitter first, then see where we go."

Keiron is rightfully proud of his achievements after overcoming his difficulties, and has this advice for other young people: "Stick in. You don't realise how many opportunities you have until they're gone."

Gateshead Council's SEND Team takes pride in the valuable services it provides for children and young people with SEND and their families. For more information, contact 0191 4333626, email [senteam@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:senteam@gateshead.gov.uk) or look at Gateshead's SEND Local Offer: <https://gateshead-localoffer.org/>

## Useful Information:

**Gateshead SEND Information and Support Service** can help you with a range of SEND-related issues. For more information, visit their website or email [daiss@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:daiss@barnardos.org.uk). Service users at Gateshead SENDiass have made a [YouTube video](#) explaining what the service offers and how they can help you.

**Gateshead's Children with Disabilities Team (CWDT)** provides emotional and practical social care support to meet the needs of children who have substantial, long-term disabilities which have a profound impact on their lives. Their vision is for families with disabled children to have the support they need to live ordinary lives as a matter of course. For more information, please see the [CWDT web page](#) or visit the [Gateshead Local Offer](#) website.

**Gateshead Autism Information Hub** is now back up and running following the easing of COVID restrictions. The Hub is available to anyone with an interest in autism – parents/carers/family members, professionals, practitioners, or individuals with autism, with or without a diagnosis. Drop in sessions are held at the Elgin Children's Centre on the second Monday of each month 09:30-11:30am. Phone 01914336300 or message the Gateshead Autism Information Hub Facebook page for more details.

**The NHS Little Orange Book** contains advice and tips on how to manage common illnesses and problems that babies and young children often experience in the first 5 years of their lives. It also has information on more serious conditions, what to look out for and how to get help. Please contact your health visitor, GP or the Gateshead Children, Young People & Families team at [ngccg.cypfgh@nhs.net](mailto:ngccg.cypfgh@nhs.net) to obtain your copy.

**Contact us:** Special Educational Needs and Disability Team, Gateshead Council.  
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