

# Gateshead SEND Network News

Gateshead  
**LOCAL  
OFFER**

Issue 9 | September 2022

## Hello!

Welcome to the Gateshead SEND Network Newsletter.

In Gateshead we believe that the voice, opinions and experiences of children and young people with SEND should be at the heart of everything we do. Gateshead Council's SEND team strives to continually improve the services available to 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 at [Issue-9-Easy-Read.pdf \(gateshead-localoffer.org\)](#)**

## Gateshead SEND Careers and Transitions Event 2022

After the success of last year's event, Gateshead Council will host its second Careers and Transitions fair for SEND young people and their parents/carers on Wednesday 19th October 2022. The event will take place at the Dryden Centre SOTA building between 10am-5pm and aims to help young people and their families start to think about their next course and the job opportunities that follow. It will include representatives from Gateshead's Careers Information and Guidance, Learning and Skills teams, and various other local employers and agencies.

"Last year's event was tremendously successful with over 200 attendees and representation from 20 organisations," says Gateshead Council Chief Executive Sheena Ramsey. "This year we want the event to reach even more of our young people and to provide them with an even greater insight into the world of work, their next steps, and the support



that is available to enable them to take those steps with confidence."

Refreshments will be available throughout the day, which will be prepared by students from Gateshead Council's Learning and Skills learning disabilities provision.

For further information please contact [NicholasDoherty@Gateshead.Gov.UK](mailto:NicholasDoherty@Gateshead.Gov.UK) 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>.

# Gateshead SEND Youth Forum

The Gateshead SEND Youth Forum meets monthly virtually and is open to all local children and young people with SEND, as well as those young people who have a genuine interest in improving SEND provisions. They have had a great year so far, getting involved in many valuable and interesting projects at a local and a national level:



- **‘My Voice Counts’ Children and Young People’s SEND Conference:**

Members of the Forum joined the national ‘Youth Voice Matters’ SEND Children and Young People’s Conference. The conference was organised by the Council for Disabled Children and developed by children and young people with additional needs, aiming to promote participation and encourage youth voice.

- **National SEND Review Consultation:**

The Forum discussed the government SEND Review Green Paper and gave feedback about their experiences of education. This was sent to the government’s SEND Review team and will be used to inform changes to the national SEND system.

- **Gateshead SEND Participation Strategy:**

The Forum is currently co-producing Gateshead Council’s Participation Strategy which aims to improve participation of children and young people with SEND in Gateshead.

“After the last meeting... things have got better for me. I was inspired to speak up.”

“I’ve been able to learn what my rights are, and I’ve had an opportunity to voice my difficulties.”

**The Gateshead SEND Youth Forum are always looking for new members.**

For more information about the Forum and how to join visit

<https://gateshead-localoffer.org/gateshead-send-young-peoples-forum/>  
or email [alexthompson@gateshead.org.uk](mailto:alexthompson@gateshead.org.uk).

Accessible minutes from all this year’s meetings can be found at

<https://gateshead-localoffer.org/gateshead-send-youth-forum-accessible-minutes-2022/>

**MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD...**  
**GATESHEAD SEND YOUTH FORUM**

**IF YOU ARE 12-25 YEARS OLD, LIVE IN GATESHEAD AND HAVE ADDITIONAL NEEDS, WE WOULD LOVE YOU TO GET INVOLVED IN GATESHEAD COUNCIL'S SEND YOUTH FORUM.**

**CONTACT ME VIA E-MAIL:**  
[ALEXTHOMPSON@GATESHEAD.GOV.UK](mailto:ALEXTHOMPSON@GATESHEAD.GOV.UK)

SCAN TO VISIT WEBSITE

**Gateshead Council**

# NeuroBears



A local family has set up a new course for autistic young people. NeuroBears aims to explain the autistic experience to young autistic people, helping them to understand and enable them to share how they experience the world with their families and other safe adults.


NeuroBears is aimed at children 8-14 in mainstream education but is accessible to anyone new to understanding their autism. It consists of 12 videos which explain sensory systems, neurodiversity, disability, communication, meltdowns, shutdowns, masking, and much more.

Zoe King of Gateshead helped to design the course. Zoe started their own autistic advocacy project in 2020 and has spoken at international conferences around making public spaces sensory friendly to autistic people. They are involved in the Gateshead SEND Youth Forum and other national political change meetings.

Feedback on the course has been positive, with one young person saying "NeuroBears was fun, engaging and I would definitely recommend it to people struggling with their autism or just autistic people in general."

To find out more visit [www.pandasonline.org](http://www.pandasonline.org) or click [The Neuro Bears - YouTube](#)

## Activities, Information and Resources

- **Learning Disability Annual Health Checks** are for adults and young people aged 14 or over with a learning disability. The local NHS Integrated Care Board has put together a promotional video giving an overview of what it is like to attend an annual health check from a young person's perspective. Find out more by watching Learning Disability Annual Health checks in Gateshead - YouTube or going to the NHS website <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/learning-disabilities/annual-health-checks/> 
- The new **Gateshead Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCO) Network** was launched in January 2022. The Network meets virtually every two months and provides an opportunity for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators to hear key messages and updates linked to Special Educational Needs within Gateshead. More information and details of all previous meetings can be found at [SENCO - Gateshead Local Offer SEND 0 to 25 years.](#)
- The **Gateshead Autism Information Hub** is available to anyone with an interest in autism. The group meets at the Elgin Centre on the second Monday of every month from 09:30-11:30am. For general enquiries contact [karen.thirlaway@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:karen.thirlaway@blueyonder.co.uk) or visit their Facebook page [www.facebook.com/groups/387109345806360](https://www.facebook.com/groups/387109345806360). Details of all dates and times of upcoming meetings can be found at <https://gateshead-localoffer.org/autism-information-hub/>
- The **Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Support for Schools programme** is a free and impartial service to support schools and colleges with their careers advice. If you would like to find out more about how JobCentre Plus can support young people at your school please contact Steve Tough at [Stephen.tough1@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:Stephen.tough1@dwp.gov.uk)

### Contact us:

Special Educational Needs and Disability Team  
Gateshead Council

[senteam@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:senteam@gateshead.gov.uk)

0191 433 3626

 [Follow us on Facebook](#)

We value your feedback and to help us improve our newsletter we have created a short survey which you can access by [clicking here](#)