

A Portage Guide to The Local Offer

What is the Local Offer?

Since September 2014 all local authorities have been required to publish and maintain their 'local offer'. This brings together useful information about all the support and services families can expect to find in their area for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The local offer is there to help you find out more about support and facilities for you and your child; what you can expect to find in your area and how to access it. The information covers education, health and social care provision, as well as services available in the voluntary and private sectors, for example from charities or disability groups.

Who is it for?

The Local Offer is for:

- children and young people with SEND from birth to 25
- their parents and carers
- practitioners and professionals.

What is the idea?

The Local Offer should:

- make it easier to find out what you need to know
- give you information about what is available in your area
- tell you where you can get further information.



The Local Offer should also make services more responsive to local needs.

What does it include?

The Local Offer must include or signpost to information on:

- childminders, nurseries, schools and colleges
- transport to and from school and other settings
- how your child's needs will be identified and assessed to see what support they need
- special educational, health and social care provision
- local support groups, like parent carer forums
- support with taking part in sport and other leisure activities
- preparing for adulthood and support for independent living
- where to find more information, advice and support – such as local charities and disability groups.



The Local Offer must also tell you about services provided outside your area which local people are likely to use.

You can find the full list of what must be included in Section 4 of the [SEND Code of Practice](#).

Where do I find my Local Offer?

You can find your local offer on your county council's website - searching for 'local offer'.

If you do not use the internet, the local authority must provide the information in different ways. Contact your county council by phone to ask for written information about your local offer.



How can I get involved?

The local authority must involve children and young people with SEND and parents/carers in preparing and reviewing the Local Offer. It is intended for you and should be shaped by you.

Your local authority would welcome comments and feedback about:

- what information you think should be in your local offer
- is there anything missing from the local offer
- how good are existing services for children with SEND and their families
- how easy it is to find information you are looking for in the local offer
- how can they make the local offer better

The local authority must publish what children, young people and parents tell them about the Local Offer. It must also say clearly what it will do about the comments it has received.

Where can I get more information?

- More detailed information about the Local offer can be found in Section 3.30 of the [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- Chapter 4 of the [SEND Code of Practice](#) also tells you more about the Local Offer.
- If you receive Portage you may want to discuss the local offer with your local Portage service.
- Each local authority will have an independent SEND Information, Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS) - formerly known as the Parent Partnership Service – offering free, confidential and impartial information. Find your local service [here](#)
- Join your local parent carer forum - National Network of Parent Carer Forums – 020 7608 8708 www.nnpf.org.uk info@nnpf.org.uk

There are a number of national organisations that provide information and advice. These include:

Independent Parental Special Education Advice (IPSEA)

General Advice Line 0800 0184016 www.ipsea.org.uk

Contact (previously known as Contact a Family)

Freephone Helpline 0808 808 3555 helpline@cafamily.org.uk www.cafamily.org.uk

Available to download - Information for Parents leaflet – [The Local Offer explained](#)