

CLlr Karen Soons

karen.soons@suffolk.gov.uk

07864 601 887



@KarenSoons



@KarenSoonsf
orWestSuffolk

Instagram

@karensoons1

July 2021 Newsletter

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Independent review of aspects of Suffolk's SEND services to be carried out by experts from Lincolnshire

It has been announced that a multi-agency team from Lincolnshire will carry out an independent review into SEND provision.

This review will be carried out by a senior professional with no links to, or direct involvement with, Suffolk's provision and will focus on the processes, communication protocols and family-facing elements of SEND services within Suffolk County Council.

The SEND (special educational needs and disability) review will focus on the processes, communication protocols and family-facing elements of SEND services within Suffolk County Council. It will not look at specific cases or the provision given to specific children.


The review will start next week and will be completed within six weeks. The report, with any recommendations, will be published on Suffolk County Council's website, shared with those who contributed to it and also scrutinised, in public, by the council's Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee.


The review team from Lincolnshire will consist of two senior officers from Lincolnshire County Council, performance analysts and the chair of the county's parent carer network.

Councillor Rachel Hood, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for education, SEND and skills, said:

"Lincolnshire has excellent SEND provision and the team has kindly agreed to review certain elements of our service and will make recommendations based on their findings which will be of great value to us.

"Families with experience of Suffolk's SEND may share their feedback of the communication process for the review, but we ask that this is relevant to the scope of the review. We have set up an email account for families to feed in their comments. It is important that a range of stakeholders are heard so we can fully understand our strengths and weaknesses and identify next steps. Ofsted have confirmed that we have made significant improvement in this area, and the findings of this review will enable this improvement to continue."





SEND services in Suffolk are delivered in partnership by Suffolk County Council, Suffolk's NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups and education settings.

The review will look at:

- The effective flow of cases
- Communication with young people and families
- Processes for dealing with incoming enquiries from young people and families in a timely manner
- A focus on the family-facing elements of the service
- The allocation of provision and, where appropriate, placement in a timely way for children


In recent weeks, there have been calls from some parents and carers of children with SEND - known as the Campaign for Change (SEND Suffolk) - for a lawyer-led audit of the council's compliance with the legal requirements set out for the service. Suffolk County Council has considered this request, but has decided not to move forward with it because:

1. It is the role of Ofsted to inspect all aspects of SEND provision, including those that would be included in such an audit. Ofsted and CQC has already made two monitoring visits to Suffolk and have identified areas of progress as well as areas of improvement
2. A new national SEND inspection framework is being launched, meaning further detailed inspections will take place
3. The county council already has an internal and external auditing process for Education, Health and Care Plans
4. There is an established complaints procedure for parents and carers who feel that the service they are receiving is not appropriate or sufficient

Suffolk County Council is eager to work collaboratively and productively with the Campaign for Change group, and parents and carers not involved or represented by the group, to make improvements in SEND services.

Councillor Hood added:

“We know that every parent and carer wants the best for their children, especially when it comes to education and care. Suffolk County Council wants the same and must strive to provide the very best services we can.




“This review will be immediate, in depth and independent and we will act on the recommendations made as swiftly and thoroughly as we can.

“We want to reassure parents and carers that this is a priority and we will make improvements where they are needed as quickly as possible.”

In Suffolk nearly 18,000 young people are supported in some way through local SEND services, including 5,900 with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) or those receiving support in education settings. Demand has grown very significantly. Prior to the 2014 national SEND reforms, Suffolk held approximately 3,000 statements of SEND.

If you would like to participate in this review then please share your experiences of the processes, communication protocols and family-facing elements of SEND services within Suffolk County Council at SendReview@suffolk.gov.uk. This email account is only



Suffolk County Council launches the new Cassius service

On June 1st, Suffolk County Council launched the new Cassius service.

We're partnering with Alcove, Rethink Partners and Provide CIC to deliver their innovative care technology service to people in Suffolk over the next 3 years.

From July, the Cassius service will give our social work practitioners, occupational therapists and other front line professionals, new ways to support people to live better and independent lives.

Initially the service will launch with a high impact, targeted range of technology that will continue to grow into the full Cassius collection. This means that the technology can be customised to meet people's needs and to address individual challenges which will help them live independently at home for longer.

Cllr Beccy Hopfensberger, cabinet member for Adult Social Care at Suffolk County Council said:

"We're really excited to launch this new service with our partners. It will offer a simple, accessible, seamless and flexible approach which will help people to embrace the benefits of care technology and provide better outcomes.

"Our teams have worked hard over the last couple of years to create a vision of how we would like our digital care model to be – setting us aside from other local authorities. As we move away from the

traditional analogue approach, we are embracing this opportunity to provide a pioneering and intelligent service that will evolve and adapt alongside societal needs."

Cassius will focus on technology that promotes independence and provides monitoring and assessment in the first instance, but that is data driven to provide impactful insights into people's needs – this will help inform more targeted care and support where it is needed, and give people, loved ones and care providers peace of mind, real-time information and back-up support if it is needed.

In the coming months, this will develop into a wider, more integrated package of technology that will support additional needs and opportunities.

Suffolk Archives launches new Escape Room series and wider events programme

It was announced on June 1st that Suffolk Archives' brand-new Escape Room series will kick off on Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th June.

Suffolk Archives' brand-new Escape Room series kicks off on Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 June 2021.

There will be two themed rooms which allow participants to delve a little deeper into the stories of two of the fascinating individuals featured in the current Pride in Suffolk's Past exhibition: Louisa Garrett Anderson and Nina Layard.

Contestants are invited to pit their wits against the Suffolk Archives Escape Room Masterminds, decoding cryptic messages, solving riddles, and gathering clues in a race to uncover these inspiring stories before time runs out!

Both Louisa Garrett Anderson and Nina Layard lived from the late 1800s to early 1900s and although never openly acknowledged at the time, had female companions who supported them fully in both their professional and private lives.

Aldeburgh born Louisa was a surgeon and suffragette who lived and worked her whole life alongside her partner Dr Flora Murray. Even in death the two women remain together, buried in a shared grave under the inscription 'We have been gloriously happy'.

Nina was an Ipswich-based archaeologist, prehistorian and poet, who lived her life with Mary F. Outram, the two women often travelling together to take part in excavations. The couple shared an inseparable bond and are buried together in the same grave in Kelvedon Churchyard.

The first edition of the Escape Rooms series has been inspired by the discoveries made during the research phase of the Pride in Suffolk's Past exhibition, which uses original archival documents to explore and share previously hidden experiences, in the hope that future generations can better understand how things have changed over time, and what work is still to be done.

Councillor Andrew Reid, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Public Protection, & Communities, said:

"It is really exciting to see the breadth of the events programme that Suffolk Archives are offering this year and we look forward to expanding this even further across the county in the future. The creation of The Hold on the waterfront in Ipswich gives us so many new opportunities to engage with Suffolk residents and visitors in interactive and immersive ways and we are very grateful to The National Lottery Heritage Fund and all our other funding partners who have enabled this to happen."

Just one jab is half a job – keep testing and get second vaccination

Suffolk residents are being encouraged to jab, test, protect the rest as lockdown easing is delayed by four weeks.

Health bosses in Suffolk are urging people waiting for their second COVID-19 vaccination to take regular tests to help curb the spread of the virus.

People are being asked to test twice a week and to take their vaccine as soon as it is offered to them.

Of the Suffolk population of 761,350, a total of 629,889 are eligible to receive the vaccine.

NHS vaccination figures show that of those eligible, 62% (393,477) have had two doses, but 38% (236,412) have only had one dose - or no vaccine at all. That figure does not even include children who are not eligible for a vaccine but can - and do - get infected.

This means that almost four in ten people in Suffolk have had either one or no jabs at all and therefore risk catching the virus or passing it on to other people.

The Delta variant of the virus is now the most prevalent in the UK and the concern for health bosses is that although the vaccine is highly effective - more than 80% after two doses – one dose is only around 33% effective. (2)

The figures do not record how many eligible people have refused a vaccine, but Stuart Keeble, Director of Public Health for Suffolk, said they showed the importance of getting both vaccinations when offered and testing regularly to break its spread.

“If you have both vaccinations you reduce considerably the chances of it harming you but if you only have one and think you are safe then my advice would be ‘please think again’. A single vaccine on its own is not enough.

“The Delta variant is now widespread in the UK and the data shows you are more likely to need hospital if you develop it, so please make sure you get both vaccinations.

“Everyone can also do their bit in curbing the spread by testing regularly. The more cases of infection that can be identified and isolated the harder we make it for the virus to spread throughout Suffolk.”

Councillor Matthew Hicks, leader of Suffolk County Council and chair of the Local Outbreak Engagement Board, said the decision of the government to delay the easing of restrictions was the right one.

“We must be realistic. However much we were looking forward to the easing of the rules, the fact remains that the country was not ready and the Government has been clear that to have gone ahead as planned would have been the wrong path,” he said.

“The delay gives us more time to vaccinate as many people as possible with both doses, thus ensuring more of us who are potentially at risk are protected.”



Suffolk Fire Ride 2021

On June 22nd it was announced that Felixstowe Fire Station and Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service are inviting cyclists of all abilities to join them in taking part in their annual cycle sportive.

Starting at Felixstowe Fire Station, this year's routes will be set amongst the lovely rural lanes and beautiful rolling countryside found in east Suffolk and will raise money for the Fire Fighters Charity.

The event is being organised with safety in mind and COVID secure arrangement will be shared with all participants prior to the event.

Hosted by **Felixstowe Fire Station**, the ride takes place on **Sunday 4 July 2021**, and offers a choice of two signed distances – 50Km and 100Km, plus a local family route.

The Suffolk Fire Ride is a friendly cycle sportive suitable for all levels of riders and promises to be an event for all the family to enjoy with Felixstowe being a seaside town, with attractions for all the family, local shops, pier and amusements. All participants will receive a limited edition 2021 Suffolk Fire Ride medal.

Event details

Date: Sunday 4 July 2021

Venue: Felixstowe Fire Station, High Road West, Felixstowe IP11 9BB

Time: 8am, Registration opens 7.00am

Distances: 50Km, 100Km, plus Family Route

Dan Fearn, Interim Chief Fire Officer for Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, said:

“The Suffolk Fire Ride is a much loved and eagerly anticipated annual event, and we are always grateful for the support of those taking part and their family and friends.

“The ride is open to cyclists of all abilities and the money raised from the event will go towards supporting fire fighters across the country through the Fire Fighters Charity.”

The online entry fee for any distance is £20 (registration fees apply). We guarantee that no less than £17 per entry goes to the **Fire Fighters Charity**. On the day entry £30. Family Route £5.