

Winter Newsletter

December 2025 Edition

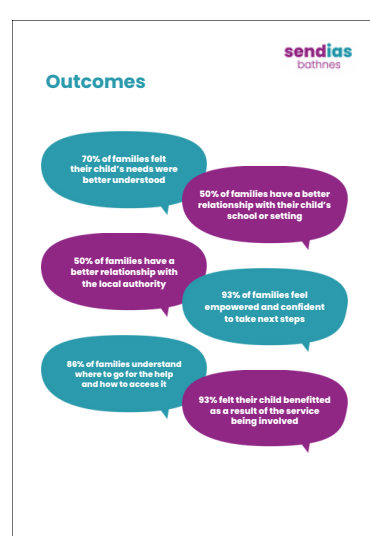
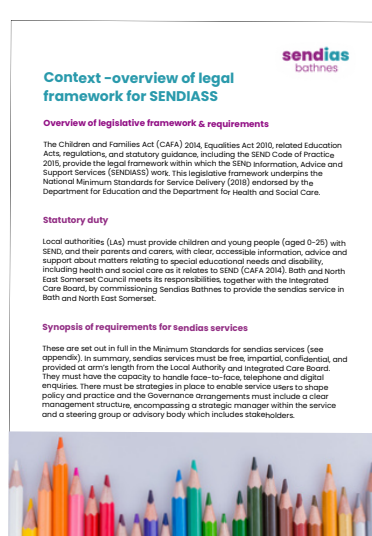
Welcome to the Winter edition of our newsletter!

As the festive season approaches, we're delighted to bring you a Winter Newsletter with updates, helpful resources and information which aims to support you and your family over the holidays.



Round up of news

We welcome Fiona and Mary, our new Meeting Supporters. They have completed training and are ready to support families in the new year. Our volunteers remain at the heart of what we do, supporting families, contributing to community events, and making a real difference across Bath & North East Somerset. Thank you to all our volunteers for their dedication and enthusiasm!



Annual Report now available

We are proud to announce that our Annual Report for 2025 is now published and available on our website. The report highlights our key achievements, stories from families, and our vision for the year ahead. Read our 2025 Annual Report [here](#).

Theme of the Month

Our theme for December is social emotional and mental health. You can follow our information series on this topic [here](#).

We know that winter can bring challenges as well as celebrations. We are sharing details of services and resources which may of help:

Contact's Listening Ear service offers a confidential space if you need someone to talk to: [contact.org.uk](https://www.contact.org.uk)

Mind offers a mental health support line and also has a list of helplines, some of which are open 365 days a year: [mind.org.uk](https://www.mind.org.uk)

There are also lots of useful links here: [livewell.bathnes.gov.uk](https://www.livewell.bathnes.gov.uk)

Speech, Language, Communication & Social Skills At Christmas

Witherslack Group have published an article written by their Speech & Language Therapist, Corrina Lunn, exploring top tips to help support your child through the upcoming holiday: [witherslackgroup.co.uk](https://www.witherslackgroup.co.uk)



National News – White Paper

The long-awaited Schools White Paper, which was due to set out the Government's planned reforms to the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) system, has been delayed until 2026.

Minister for School Standards, Georgia Gould is hosting nine face-to-face events, run in partnership with the Council for Disabled Children, and five online events covering the department's five principles of reform. At the events parents, families and the sector will be able to share their views. The first event took place in Bristol on 2 December 2026. For those who were not able to attend this event, views can be submitted on-line or at future events. To find out more about the five principles, give feedback and sign up to events, click [HERE](#).

Spotlight: Information and Advice Officer

This issue highlights the key role of an Information and Advice Officer. Angela, a Senior Information, Advice and Support Officer, shares insights into a typical week.



Angela – Senior Information, Advice and Support Officer

As a Senior Information, Advice and Support Officer, I spend most of my time supporting and empowering parent and carers with the knowledge and confidence they need to navigate the complex and often difficult world of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

My week, and days start with checking emails and messages from parents, carers, and professionals. Each situation is individual/unique – from how to access SEN support, write parental Education Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment requests, understanding Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) to clarifying appeal/tribunal processes. Recently, I supported a parent preparing for a tribunal hearing, helping them understand their rights and what evidence they needed to present. Another aspect of my role is supporting the team to manage workloads, prioritise referrals, and ensure that parents/carers receive timely contact with the appropriate person.

Much of my time is spent on calls and meetings, listening carefully to concerns and offering clear, impartial advice. It's about helping people feel heard and supported as well as answering specific questions. I have supported a parent all the way from an EHC needs assessment request to reviewing a draft EHCP as well as having guided a parent through the steps to request additional support in school. I also liaise with schools, local authorities, and other agencies to make sure everyone is working towards the best outcomes for the child or young person.

Every day is different. It is so rewarding seeing a parent/carers feel more confident, or understanding their child's rights, reminds me why this role is so important.

SENDIAS isn't just about information – it's about making a real difference. If you have questions or need impartial advice about, SEND, please contact us and let us know what you need support with, and we will do our best to help.



Looking for ways to keep busy over the winter break? Many local organisations offer inclusive activities and events for children and young people with SEND. Check out the Live Well B&NES and Youth Connect South West websites for the latest listings or visit your local library for family-friendly events and sensory room bookings.

Specific SEND & Inclusive Events:

Activate: Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme offers government funded holiday activities with a free meal for any child who is eligible for benefit related free school meals. To find out more and check eligibility click [HERE](#)

Phoebe's Green Christmas Digital Show: The inclusive theatre charity Embracing Arts offers a free digital sensory show, Phoebe's Green Christmas, available online for families to enjoy at home. Just register [HERE](#) for a pass to watch for free:

Rainbow Resource Scheme: Signing up for the free Rainbow Resource Scheme via the [Live Well in Bath & North East Somerset](#) website provides regular updates on local specialist groups, sessions, and a discount card for various local attractions.

General Free Christmas Events in BANES:

The following are general free events in accessible locations, which families can enjoy at their own pace:

Christmas Advent Trail on Bath Skyline: A free, self-guided trail in the Woodland Play Area where families can find 24 doors. It is an outdoor activity suitable for a casual outing. For more details click [HERE](#)

"Kids Go Free" Bus Travel: Children aged 5 to 15 can travel for free on buses across the West of England (including Bathnes) between December 20, 2025, and January 4, 2026. For more information click [HERE](#)



Opening Times over Christmas and New Year

Our service opening times remain the same throughout December and January, except for bank holidays, when we are closed.

Please note that from Christmas Eve (24/12/2025) until 05/01/2026, it may take us a little longer to respond to enquiries. We have less cover so that all staff can have a rest. We appreciate your patience and understanding during this period.

We will have a short break from our library appointments over the festive period, but we are here to answer your telephone calls, emails and enquiries as usual.

To book appointments please visit the 'events' page on our [website](#).

Please contact us in the following ways:

Via our website: sendiasbathnes.org.uk

Call us: **01225 394382**

Email us: sendias@bathnes.gov.uk

Text us: **07530263401**

Social Media: **Stay connected with us on Facebook and Instagram for the latest updates and upcoming events.**

Volunteer with us!

Could you give a few hours a week to speak to families over the phone, who have engaged with our service?

An important part of our work is to gather feedback from service users and we are looking for a volunteer to support us with this

This is an interesting and flexible role during term time and full training is provided

Please visit the Volunteer section of our website for more details

For an informal chat please call Jane on 01225 395065



Appointments and Resources

If you're preparing for meetings or need quick information, our online request form covers a range of topics, from support in schools to annual reviews and Education, Health and Care Plan processes. Request Information [HERE](#).



Our telephone appointments offer tailored advice and support - book a free 30-minute consultation with a trained practitioner. Evening sessions are available for those who need out-of-hours support.

Support at Meetings

If you have an education meeting to attend and would feel more confident if someone came with you to take notes, our Meeting Support Volunteers (MSV) can help. Find out more about what to expect [HERE](#).

Looking Ahead



Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for the latest updates and details on upcoming events.



Save the Date!

Look out for the following events in the New Year

14 Jan 6pm-7.30pm

Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Needs Assessments
Virtual Information Session (Teams)

20 Jan 5.30pm-7pm

SEND Out - children & young peoples participation group meeting
Virtual Session (Teams)

28 Jan 6pm-8pm

Evening 'SEND Surgery' appointments
Evening Virtual Information Session (Teams)





Where We Will Be:

We look forward to seeing you when we are out and about at the following activities/events of our partners.

22nd December, 8.45–10am

HAF Sporting Sensations session

Roundhill School

22nd December, 3.30–4.30pm

HAF Sporting Sensations session

Weston All Saints Primary School (WASPS)

23rd December, 10.30–12pm

HAF Recreate Sports Sessions

Wellsway School

30th December, 9–10am (TBC)

SEND Trampolining

Bath Leisure Centre

14th January, 9–10am

SASS Coffee Morning

Longfellow's Cafe, Fosse Way Cafe

14th January, 4–7pm (TBC)

Bath College SEND Open Event

City Centre Campus

26th January, 10.30am

SEND Portage Play & Explore

Bath Children & Family Centre, Charlotte Street, Bath

30th January, 9am

SEND Coffee Morning

Somerdale Educate Together

23rd February

Volunteer Fair

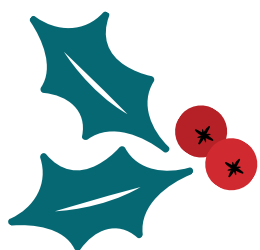
Bath Guildhall

26th February

Bath College Apprenticeship & Careers Event

Apex Hotel, Bath

Thank you for your ongoing support throughout 2025. We hope you find this edition useful and wish you and your family a joyful festive season and a peaceful New Year. We look forward to working with you in 2026!



**With best wishes,
The Sendias Bathnes Team**

Contact Us

sendias
bathnes

Please contact us in the following ways:

Via our website: sendiasbathnes.org.uk/getintouch

Call us: 01225 394382

Email us: sendias@bathnes.gov.uk

Text us: 07530 263401



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