



# Kirklees Local Offer Annual Report 2019-2020

Written by the Kirklees Local Offer Team, November 2020



## Introduction

Welcome to the annual report on the Kirklees Offer for 2019-2020.

*'Local authorities must publish a Local Offer, setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have Special Educational Needs (SEN) or are disabled, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. In setting out what they 'expect to be available', local authorities should include provision which they believe will actually be available.'*

*The Local Offer has two key purposes:*

- *to provide clear, comprehensive, accessible and up-to-date information about the available provision and how to access it; and*
- *to make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving disabled children and those with SEN and their parents and carers, and disabled young people and those with SEN, and service providers in its development and review.'*

[SEND Code of Practice](#)

In February 2019, council officers and members of PCAN (Parents of Children with Additional Needs) took part in a Yorkshire and Humber Peer Review of the Local Offer using the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 Statutory Guidance self-evaluation framework to ensure that the Kirklees Local Offer was compliant with the statutory guidelines and to evaluate its quality. Whilst the Kirklees Local Offer is compliant with the statutory guidelines, it was clear that it wasn't as used or useful as we wanted it to be. In summer 2019 we started to produce a tender for a new Local Offer website alongside PCAN to define the structure and requirements that we want for the new Kirklees Local Offer. We will be launching the new Kirklees Local Offer at the end of 2020.

We have worked closely at all stages with the people that use the Local Offer including parents, young people with SEND, schools, professionals, members of the public as well as groups such as PCAN and KIAS (Kirklees Information, Advice and Support Service). This has developed a true co-productive mindset for the Local Offer team and we are committed to continue working in this way as we continue to move forward.

We would like to take this opportunity to celebrate the contribution of PCAN in the co-production of the new Local Offer. PCAN have worked tirelessly to gather and communicate the views and feelings of a very large collection of parents all with their own unique experience of living as a parent of a child with SEND and the challenges this can bring. These views have been shared since the first local offer, however now we, along with PCAN feel that we have truly included parents, carers and young people's views and this is what makes all the difference with the new Kirklees Local Offer.

PCAN have provided a vital voice in directing us to something which meets their needs and explains things in a simple, straightforward and clearly understandable way. They have helped us develop a very simple ethos to all the information we present.

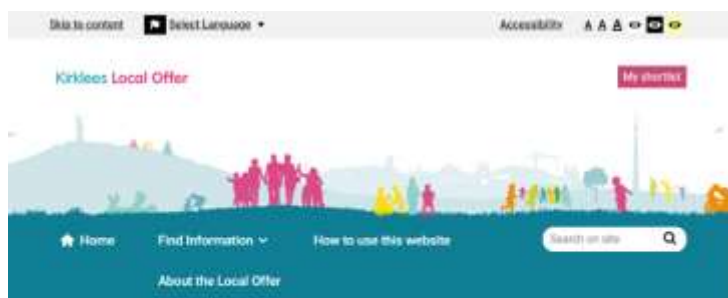
**What is it? Who is it for? How do I access it?**

We continue to work closely with PCAN in the continuing development of the Local Offer.

This co-production work has resulted in us contracting Public Consulting Group (PCG) to be the web developers for the new Kirklees Local Offer.

By using an external web developer, we have had much more freedom to create a friendly, easy to use site which appeals to both parents and carers, as well as young people. PCAN parents told us that one thing that they didn't like on the old Local Offer was the overall look and feel, it felt too much like a local authority site. The new site also has built in accessibility features which allow user to alter the look and feel of the site, as well as using Browsealoud to read out the site content is built in.

We have worked closely with PCAN, KIAS, individual parents and young people in the design of the new site including a new banner design which has become the Local Offer branding and will be used to promote the Kirklees Local Offer.



The development of the look and features of the new site was done following direct consultation with parents via PCAN who told us what they would find helpful.

**Welcome to the Kirklees Local Offer**

This is the place for information about support, services and activities for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in Kirklees.



The young persons area is being developed alongside the Your Voice engagement team, who helped us identify what categories and type of content they would like to



The age buttons came from a direct request from parents to be able to easily find services, activities and schools for specific age ranges.

We have added an Easy Read button following feedback from colleagues within the Learning Disability world. This opens an easy to use page in Easy Read format with links to lots of Easy Read guides.

### **Other features of the new Local Offer:**

- Comprehensive directory of services, activities and schools we expect young people in Kirklees to access including independent specialist settings.
- Powerful search function which will search information, schools, services and activities related to the search term.
- Clear and easily identifiable icons on information pages to help users understand which section pages relate to.
- My Shortlist feature which allows users to create their own printable booklet of information.
- Comprehensive information landing page covering a wealth of categories with contributions from a wide range of education, health and care professionals.
- Easy to use comments feature.
- Jargon Buster on the home page.
- “How to use this website” section with easy to follow videos.
- The option to select the site language.

Kirklees Council has also strengthened their approach to the Local Offer by appointing a Local Offer Development & Engagement Lead, as well as appointing a SENDACT Senior officer into a secondment role to support the development, with a focus on engagement with young people and their families. The Local Offer Team also has two BSO’s who make up one full time BSO role.

This means that there is now in position a team who will continue to work with the people of Kirklees to develop and review the Local Offer to ensure it continues to meet their needs. Feedback on the Local Offer is an essential part of this, informing the future commissioning of SEND services across education, health and social care.

Kirklees Local Offer: [www.KirkleesLocalOffer.gov.uk](http://www.KirkleesLocalOffer.gov.uk)

### **The Covid-19 pandemic**

The new Kirklees Local Offer has been produced during a very challenging time globally, which has resulted in the whole Local Offer team working remotely, whilst this has not been a barrier in itself to developing the Local Offer it has made engaging with members of the public, parents, schools and young people incredibly challenging. Kirklees staff were asked to work remotely unless there was not alternative and it was essential, which has meant the Local Offer Team has not been able to attend any schools or youth groups. We continue to try and work remotely and to try and engage young people and parents/carers.

## Your Voice

A piece of engagement work was carried out with the Your Voice team to connect with young people to gather views in relation to the Local Offer, this only resulted in a very small number of responses, but this has been used to develop the young persons area of the site. We continue to work with this team to further engage with young people.

## Findings from 2019 Peer Review

Local Authority officers from Wakefield reviewed the existing Kirklees Local Offer and this identified some key elements of the feedback that need to be considered with the new Local Offer site are that it needs to:

- be more accessible to people with a range of needs eg braille options, translation options and easy read options

We have: inbuilt extensive accessibility features now feature, including the ability to choose the language of the site and a direct link to Easy Read guides

- contain more information about provision that is available outside Kirklees

We have: information from a very wide range of services, activities and schools outside of Kirklees is included, plus direct links to independent specialist settings

- be easier to navigate so that information is easier to find

We have: information navigation is now much clearer and logically laid out into categories. A more powerful search feature makes information easier to find

- include more information around Preparing for Adulthood, particularly housing for young people with SEND

We have: an extensive Preparing for Adulthood section including specific information relating to housing and living options for those with SEND

- include more evidence of feedback from and co-production with young people

We have: made the "You Said – We Did" section clearer; however, as the site was produced during the Covid-19 pandemic, working with young people has been incredibly challenging due to restrictions on Local Authority staff working face to face with young people. Due to school closures and the challenges that existed once schools re-opened, engagement with young people has been limited. However, the Local Offer team is working with the Your Voice team to develop engagement projects working in Kirklees special schools in order to work on content for the Local Offer with young people. We have also commissioned an engagement project along with education, health and social care which has resulted in a tender for an activity based engagement project being created to work with young people who are not in special schools to develop content for the Local Offer. Through this work we hope to re-establish a Kirklees SEND Youth forum to work closely with the Local Offer team to develop the Young Persons area of the site.



## Findings from 2020 Peer review of new Local Offer

As part of the continued development of the Local Offer, the Kirklees Local Offer team are now a part of the Yorkshire & Humber SEND Local Offer working group. A key part of this work is the peer review of each members Local Offer. Leeds LA colleagues carried out a peer review of the new Local Offer prior to launch using a Mott Macdonald peer review template, which is considered to be an excellent “litmus test” for a Local Offer.

Some key elements of the review which identified gaps in our Local Offer are:

- Comments - the local authority response and the actions they intend to take published on the Local Offer

We have: provided a clear “Comments and Reports” button on the home page linking to a “You Said, We Did” section as well as links to the annual report.

- Out of area education provision included on the Local Offer in the same way as the in-area education provision

We have: added direct links alongside the maintained Kirklees settings in our directory side of the site to all out of area settings from neighbouring authorities, as well as alternative provisions within 20km, maintained and independent special schools within 40km and National Specialist Colleges within 60km. We have also made easy access to the Section 41 list and Natspec website.

- Travel (in terms of how to apply for home to school transport, as well as transport policies)

We have: made links to the existing Kirklees Local Authority pages regarding school transport clearer, including how to apply. We have also added direct links to the transport policies for both pre and post 16. It has to be noted that the School Transport service is undergoing a review and how the service will run is not established at the time of writing this report. The Local Offer team is continuing to work with this team to update the information on the Kirklees Local Offer.

- Phase transfer/higher education (specifically could find information about transitions/phase transfers or DSA)

We have: made the information about change of phase easier to find and easier to understand by adding description of the terms used. We have also made it clearer where to find information about DSA (Disabled Students' Allowances).

- Disagreement resolution, mediation, tribunal/appeals and complaints (couldn't find information)

We have: now created a page directly providing information related to this area as we did not have a page specifically about this area, it was contained within other pages. We have a clear complaints link at the bottom of every page.

- What the Local Authority expects education settings to offer (couldn't find specific information about what the Local Authority expects educational settings are to provide within their budgets)

We have: added more information about notional budgets, quality first teaching and what is expected from every school within Kirklees in terms of SEND provision.

- Involving parents (reference to involvement of parent carers but not explicit about how this has been done)

We are: developing a new page being developed which has direct quotes from parents who have been involved with the co-production of the Local Offer. You Said We Did section is much clearer now, but doesn't state who said what.

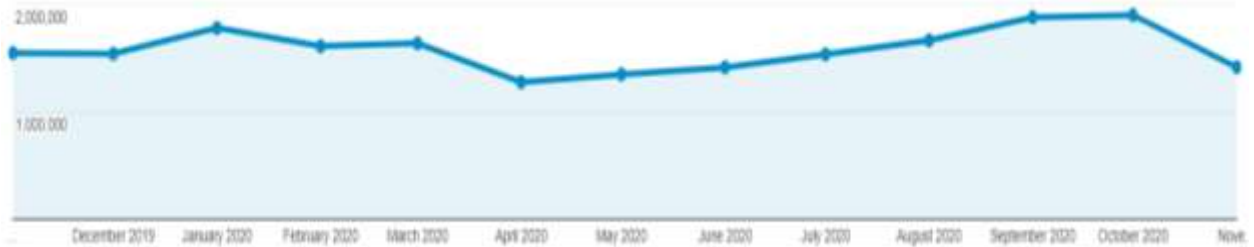
- Publicity (cannot see any reference to social media being used to publicise the Local Offer, links to the new Local Offer and how to access if you do not have internet access)

We are: working with the Kirklees Comms department to publicise the new Local Offer in time for launch including; social media posts, posters, flyers, features in school newsletters and signposting on Kirklees webpages. Additionally, all links to the legacy site will redirect to the new Local Offer upon launch.

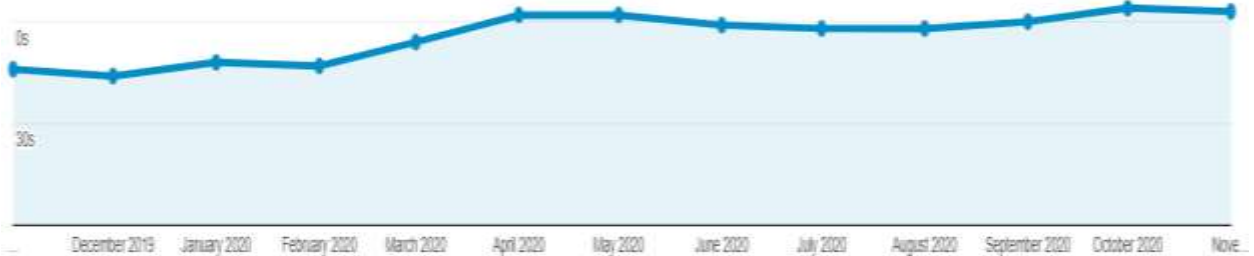
### Summary of the Local Offer performance

As the new Kirklees Local Offer has not yet launched, we are not able to provide any analytical data for the new site. However, we have included analytical data from November 2019-2020.

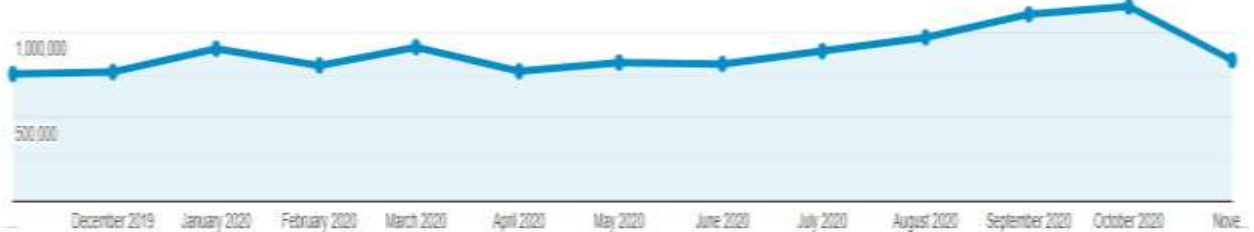
**Pageviews** - documents every page viewed by a user



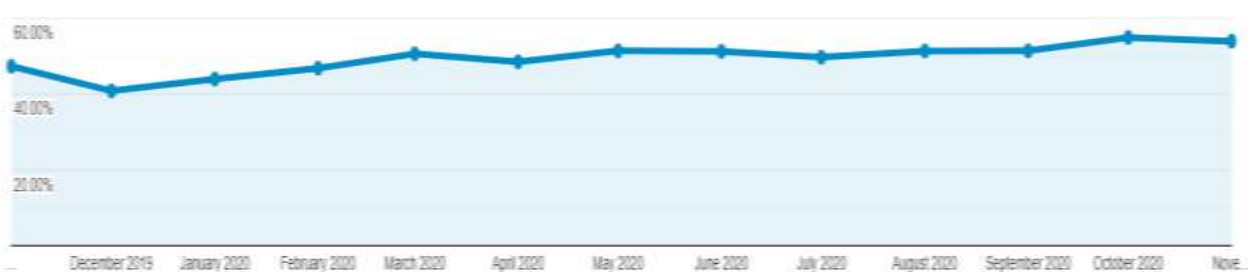
**Average time on page**



**Unique pageviews** - the difference between pageviews and unique pageviews is that unique pageviews do not include multiple visits to a page by a single user



**Bounce rate** - the bounce rate measures the number of users who leave the site after viewing the landing page, without exploring the site any further: ideally this figure would be close to zero





## What we have learnt from the Performance Summary

There appears to be an overall trend in site usage steadily since April 2020, this is significant as this was roughly when the national Covid-19 lockdown began. At this time the schools closed and parents were at home with their children. Parents at this time may have been searching for advice on how to best support their children with SEND when at home and so searched for advice on the Kirklees Local Offer.

Whilst there has been an increase in visits to the Local Offer during this time, the high bounce rate of 50% on average suggests that users cannot immediately see what they want from the opening page, or are put off by the appearance of the site. This confirms feedback about the importance of the look and feel of the site and if the information can be found easily. We have worked hard on the new site to address these issues.

The average time spent on a page is about 2 minutes, which suggests that users are taking the time to read the page content. The 'average time spent on a page' statistics do not include the 'bounces' or visits to the last page a user viewed before exiting the site.

One thing that has to be noted that due to the redevelopment of the Local Offer, Kirklees staff have spent an increasing amount of time using the existing site to compare old and new information. This could have accounted for the increased site traffic too.

What we can learn is that we need to make the site interesting, engaging and easy to use. We need to make sure that we can keep users attention, this will be measured in a reduced bounce rate and increased unique pageview time.

## School SEN Information Report

*'The governing bodies of maintained schools and maintained nursery schools and the proprietors of academy schools must publish information on their websites about the implementation of the governing body's or the proprietor's policy for pupils with SEN.'*

*The SEN Information Report should give details of the school's contribution to the Local Offer and must include information on where the local authority's Local Offer is published.'*

[SEND Code of Practice](#)

In Kirklees all schools and further education colleges are expected to have a link to the Local Offer as part of their SEND Information Report. Furthermore, we are promoting the new Kirklees Local Offer in schools through SEND newsletters, SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators) Net, Heads Up (school newsletter) and through conversations with school staff. All existing links to the current Local Offer will re-direct to the new Kirklees Local Offer.

## Preparing for Adulthood: Local Offer Live 2020

The Local Offer Live has been an annual event since 2016, enabling young people and their families to find out what is available in Kirklees across the four themes of Preparing for Adulthood:

- Education and employment
- Independent living
- Participating in society - having a life
- Being as healthy as possible

Feedback each year enables the event to develop to better meet the needs of young people and their families.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this event did not go ahead this year. However, going forward the Local Offer Live event will be a joint venture with teams from PFA and the Local Offer Team working on this, as well as colleagues from health, social care and education.

There were recommendations for stalls that people would like to see in the future, including:

- Adult continuing health care
- More sensory information
- Job centre to discuss universal credit and employment support allowance
- Job centre plus support for schools' team
- Stands or leaflets about inspiring stories, vloggers, and people with learning disabilities and physical disabilities who have done amazing things
- Travel training
- Independent service users
- SENDACT (Special Education Needs and Disabilities Act)
- Music
- More careers companies

The recommendations from previous year's event are to hold another such event next year and to agree funding for future events, with more promotion of the event being done in schools to encourage young people and their families to attend.

## Feedback from the Local Offer

The Local Offer invites visitors to feedback on their experience of using the site. Feedback is passed on to the relevant service managers to respond to. Previous feedback and examples of our responses are available on the 2018-2019 Annual Report, as well as on the “You Said - We Did” section of the new Kirklees Local Offer. As the new site is not live at the time of writing this report, we have no live user comments, however we have gathered some comments from parents, young people and those who worked to co-produce the new site.

**You said**

**We need to listen to what young people want, ie: sections that reflect what they want to search for.**

Created a new Young People's area, using the themes identified by young people through the Your Voice engagement project to create content buttons for the young people's area.

**We did**

**You said**

**We need to have a marketing strategy.**

We are working with the Kirklees communications team to develop our strategy for the new Local Offer.

**We did**

**You said**

**We need to create more interactive content (video, audio, games) and the content has to be simple.**

When we have created content, we used the simple ethos of “What is it – Who is it for – How do I access it” to ensure the content is simple and clear. We have also added as much video content as possible (including looking at creating our own). We are working with schools, young people, activity providers and services to develop more video content. We will speak with young people about the idea of games on the Local Offer.

**We did**

**You said**

**Some of the content is a bit ‘wordy’, it also needs more images to make it interesting.**

Whilst sometimes this is unavoidable, we have tried to use dropdown boxes to contain larger pieces of text, so that only the relevant parts will be read. We are also working to try and make sure we have images on information pages to keep them interesting.

**We did**

**You said**

**The search function does not bring up all results – it does not search in the dropdown boxes.**

We are working with the web developers to ensure the search function searches the whole of the document including the dropdown boxes.

**We did**

**You said**

**The search function should go straight to an information page, rather than the search landing page.**

We have discussed this with the developers, but this is not something that can be changed easily. We had a clear rationale as agreed with PCAN about how the search function should operate. We will monitor the feedback around this function and can consider how we can respond to this.

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**We did**

## **Conclusion**

We have worked very closely with PCAN, KIAS, parents, young people and colleagues across education, health and social care to co-produce the new Local Offer. We are confident that we are on the right path to produce an excellent Local Offer which meets the needs of the local people of Kirklees, rather than the needs of the Local Authority. We are passionate about continuing this journey and making the Local Offer into a well-used and essential service within Kirklees for parents, carers, and young people with SEND.