

Suffolk County Council Inclusion Service: *Information for families*

Dear parents and carers,

With the new term nearly on us, we know that many parents and pupils may have questions and anxieties around what the return to school or college might bring. Most children and young people have not been routinely attending education for some time and while many pupils will be looking forward to returning with their friends, this could be a challenging time for some.

The Inclusion Service want to offer our families and schools in Suffolk as much support as we can and have put in place a package of additional help for families and SENCOs to support the return to education over the next few weeks. This is outlined below and is part of a wider range of support being offered from services across Suffolk County Council and our partner health organisations.

The following additional support will be available over the coming weeks:

- **Telephone helpline for families of children and young people with additional needs** – running from 23<sup>rd</sup> August through to the end of September.

The purpose of this helpline is to respond to queries and concerns around the return to school for your child(ren). For example, it might be your child is anxious about the return to school and getting back to learning after the long period of absence. It might be about Special Educational Needs and the support in place for your child on their return, or it might be a question around school attendance. Whatever it might be, we hope to offer our help and ensure your child's return to school is as easy and as anxiety-free as possible.

If you have any questions or concerns the number to ring will be **0345 606 6172**. The line will operate Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm.

On calling this number you will first reach a Customer Service adviser. You will then be asked to provide some detail about your query. If it cannot be resolved straightaway it will be directed to the right team/officer for support. You will then receive a response within **2 working days**.

- **Additional support for SENCOs** - We are also establishing a separate telephone support line for SENCOs in Suffolk education settings, open from the 7<sup>th</sup> September.

Its purpose will be to support school staff with any concerns or queries about pupils with additional needs returning to school. The line will be available **every day for one hour** supported by specialists from across the Inclusion

Service. Additional consultations with specialist staff will also be offered where schools wish to seek further advice, guidance, and support.

- The **Psychology and Therapeutic Service** also has a wide range of resources available to schools and to families to support the return to school. Please do make use of these by following the links:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/pts/if/free-resources/>

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/pts/if/five-tips/>

- In addition **SENDIASS** has created a **video ‘Back to School – what you need to know in Suffolk’** which you can access here: <https://youtu.be/Oopy368OQT8>

SENDIASS also have a lot of information on their Back to School webpages which you may find helpful:

<https://www.suffolksendiass.co.uk/back-to-school>

Please remember SENDIASS is an arms-length confidential, impartial, information, advice, and support service, as explained here: [www.suffolksendiass.co.uk](http://www.suffolksendiass.co.uk)

Follow the below link too to some **FAQs, information and resources** to support you. We hope you find these helpful.

[Covid-19 Information for parents and carers. Issue 2: 7 August 2020](#)

Wishing you all well and we look forward to working with you all over the next few weeks and months.

**Suffolk County Council Inclusion Service**