



Delivering Special
Provision Locally



DSPL 9 Weekly Newsletter 1

09.09.26



Welcome back to another school year. We hope you had a good summer and managed to have a well deserved break. It looks to be another busy and exciting year and DSPL 9 will be here to support you through it, so please get in contact with us if you have any questions or queries. Remember no question is a silly question!

For those of you who are new to the role of SENCo and DSPL 9, we hope you find the DSPL 9 newsletter useful and informative, and enables you to stay up to date in the world of SEND.

Any queries or questions, please do not hesitate to make contact:

gemmahall@dsplarea9.org.uk

07376 394191



The Acorn Centre

The Acorn Centre offer has been updated for this academic year. To access all information regarding services available please [click here](#).

All information can also be found on the [Acorn Centre Website](#).



Delivering Special
Provision Locally



DSPL 9 EBSA Support Package Relaunch Webinar

Date: Monday, 21st September 2026

Time: 9:30 AM – 10.30am OR 1-2pm

Venue: Microsoft Teams

DSPL 9 will be holding two virtual webinars to relaunch the hugely successful EBSA support package and provide information of the updates to the service in the new academic year.

Tier 3 solution circles have been a great opportunity to discuss individual cases and gain different perspectives, ideas, and solutions. (SENCo)

What an amazing resource. Our school have really benefited from this service and we would like to continue to use this resource next year. The advice given and professionals involved are fantastic and the children have made progress. (SENCo)

Excellent service provided, joined up approach was really successful. Luke (Nessie Therapist) was excellent, very supportive and knowledgeable. Rebecca (FSW) was fantastic and approachable. (Pastoral lead)

Life changing. (Parent)

I'm feeling very grateful to everyone who has supported us. Without the intervention I am not sure (child) would have made it through the rest of year 6. (Parent)

All new and experienced SENCos and Pastoral Leads are invited to attend EITHER session to find out what support is available through the EBSA support package and how to access each of the tiers.

Monday 21st September
2026

9.30-10.30am

[Click here](#)

Monday 21st September
2025

1-2pm

[Click here](#)



Delivering Special
Provision Locally

Triage Service: IMPORTANT UPDATES

The new and improved DSPL 9 Triage Service launches this term with an updated offer of support and online referral form.

What's on offer?

- Support for parents and carers
- Drawing and Talking Therapy
- Year 6 – 7 Transition Support

How to access the support:

Support for parents and carers

Referrals to access support for parents and carers will now be through the completion of a [short google form](#):



Following completion of the form, a member of the Triage Team will be in contact.

Drawing and Talking Therapy

Drawing and Talking Therapy is an attachment-based therapeutic intervention that provides children with a safe and supportive space to process emotions, anxieties, and unresolved feelings.

Katherine delivers a 12-week Drawing and Talking Therapy intervention each term across DSPL 9. Waiting list are currently in place. For further information, please [click here](#) or contact Katherine McNamara on katherinemc@dsplarea9.org.uk

Year 6-7 transition support

Specialist Transition Support provides tailored 1:1 support for Year 6 pupils without an EHCP who are moving to a community secondary school and whose complex needs require intensive support to ensure a successful transition.

For further details, please [click here](#) or contact Lisa Sillitoe on Lisasillitoe@dsplarea9.org.uk. To make a referral to this service please click here or use the QR code below.



Department
for Education

Inclusion Strategy

As you will be aware, schools across England will be expected to produce and publish an Inclusion Strategy by 31 December 2026. To support you in creating this document please use the links below:

[Developing an inclusion strategy using the inclusive mainstream funding](#)

[Inclusion Strategy template](#)

[Preparation toolkit for inclusion strategy development](#)



This annual training will be delivered by Mandy Brandon (SISO for DSPL 9) and will cover the following aspects:

- What to do prior to applying for a needs assessment
- How to complete the request effectively
- What paperwork should/should not be included?
- What to do if a needs assessment is not needed but parents are insisting

The training is refreshed and updated each year, so we recommend attending this year even if you attended last year.

**Date: Thursday 5th November
Time: 3.45-5pm
Venue: Microsoft Teams**

To book your place please [click here](#)



Focused Intervention Funding

Please be reminded that all FIF applications MUST now be sent to admin@dsplarea9.org.uk clearly stating it the email subject your cluster number. Please [click here](#) to see the full updated DSPL 9 FIF document.

Following the summer term FIF moderation, the following feedback was provided:

- Section 4: What additional intervention is required?
 - 'Less is more': Please specify the name of the intervention, who will deliver it, the duration of the intervention, and the school term(s) for which funding is requested.
- If there is any indication that the school is completing an EHCNA, the application will automatically be turned down.
- Strand 2 – Support for Reception aged children who have complex needs and will need an EHCNA/EHCP
 - The strand can only be applied for in the first term that the child starts at the school.

Please also be reminded of the following information regarding the FIF group applications:

- As this is HNF we would expect each child to either be on the SEND register or being supported for a SEND/SEMH need.
- Group applications are for a maximum of 6 children; all children need to be identified on the same form
- The application MUST identify a specific intervention that meets the needs of all the children within the group
- The intervention MUST be above OAP and adaptive teaching
- The length of intervention/funding being requested MUST be identified
- The application MUST identify the expected impact for those children accessing the group intervention

To access the FIF group application form and for all information around the FIF process, please [click here](#).



All DSPLs have been working collaboratively over the last term to develop a DSPL TA Academy. This will provide TAs across Hertfordshire with access to half termly high quality training covering a range of topics and themes.

Half termly online training opportunities

- These sessions cover a range of topics and themes.
- TAs will be expected to sign up to each of the sessions they would like to attend.
- All training sessions will take place on teams.

[Click here for all information on half termly training sessions.](#)

In addition to the TA training opportunities on offer for TAs across all DSPLs, DSPL 9 will be offering a combination of termly online and face to face support. It is intended that these sessions will further support local TAs across the academic year.

Online termly drop ins:

Please use the links below to join these sessions:

Autumn 1: Wednesday 21 st October 1-2pm	Click here to join meeting
Spring 1 Wednesday 20 th January 1-2pm	Click here to join meeting
Summer 1 Wednesday 5 th May 1-2pm	Click here to join meeting

Face to Face termly solution circles

Each term, one school will have the opportunity to book a Solution Circle to take place on site. During the 90-minute session, TAs/LSAs from the school can bring up to two cases for discussion.

Solution Circles will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Please note that once a school has made a booking, it is the school's responsibility to ensure the date is honoured, that TAs remain available to attend, and that cases have been identified and considered in advance of the Solution Circle session.

	Date and Time	Booking Link
Autumn 2	Tuesday 1 st December 1-2.30pm	https://buytickets.at/dspl9/2287714
Spring 2	Tuesday 23 rd March 1-2.30pm	
Summer 2	Tuesday 15 th June 1-2.30pm	

Please contact Gemma Hall gemmahall@dsplarea9.org.uk if you have any questions regarding any of the support on offer.

SENCo Drop-Ins

This academic year Gemma Hall and Mandy Brandon will be moving the weekly drop in sessions to a Thursday morning (before school) or lunchtime and rotate this on a weekly basis.

These sessions are an opportunity for any SENCos, Head Teachers, Pastoral Leads or staff to jump onto a call and ask any question big or small that is SEND related.

MORNING SESSION:

The first session 8-8.45am session will take place on Thursday 10th September and will run until the end of the summer term:

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/33742930953952?p=UVsoWANjoUGmNQEut3>

Meeting ID: 337 429 309 539 52

Passcode: 9SM3ML3v

LUNCHTIME SESSION:

The first session 12-1pm will take place on Thursday 17th September and will also run until the end of the summer term:

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/381362195089344?p=npG00zLkEDiny3CZcM>

Meeting ID: 381 362 195 089 344

Passcode: 7a6kk6nK



DSPL 9/Chessbrook SEMH Solution Circles

Following positive engagement and feedback, the SEMH solution circles will continue in the this academic year. To access these useful sessions please complete the google form below. You will then be offered a date and time to attend (all sessions are virtual).

[SEMH Solution Circle Referral Form](#)

Autumn term 2026	Monday 12 th October	8.30-9.30am	Primary
	Tuesday 3 rd November	3.30-4.30pm	Primary
	Monday 16 th November	8.30-9.30am	Secondary
	Tuesday 1 st December	3.30-4.30pm	Primary
	Monday 7 th December	8.30-9.30am	Secondary
Spring Term 2027	Monday 25 th January	8.30-9.30am	Primary
	Tuesday 9 th February	3.30-4.30pm	Secondary
	Monday 1 st March	8.30-9.30am	Primary
Summer Term 2027	Monday 19 th April	8.30-9.30am	Primary
	Tuesday 11 th May	3.30-4.30pm	Secondary
	Monday 14 th June	8.30-9.30am	Primary
	Tuesday 29 th June	3.30-4.30pm	Secondary



We are delighted to let you know that we have a number of new additions to our lending library including:



If you have not already accessed the DSPL 9 Lending Library and want to find out more [click here](#)



If you want to find out more about the DSPL 9 Lending Library and see the range of resources available, we will be open to all SENCOs on the following date:

Friday 18th September
10-11am
The Green Room, Bournehall Primary School

Come and see what we have!!



Fully funded for Hertfordshire SENCOs with three pathways:

- New to role and at the start of their journey
- New to Hertfordshire and bringing previous experience
- New to a DSPL area with experience and knowledge of Hertfordshire

To find out more use the links below:

[Autumn 2026 cohort](#)

[Spring 2027 cohort](#)



Primary SpLD Online Pupil Focus Surgeries Academic Year 2026-27

DSPL 9 is delighted to continue offering primary schools weekly online SpLD unnamed pupil-focused surgery sessions with Laura Bloomberg.

The purpose of these sessions is to help schools support pupils of concern (SpLD in nature), by giving advice on how to best support their presenting needs and advise on next steps, suitable resources, interventions, quality first teaching strategies, inclusive classroom practice...etc

How do I access this support?

- Sessions will be available every Monday from 9-9.30am and 9.30-10.00am (see dates below)
- Following completion of the google form (link below) you will be contacted by the DSPL 9 administrator to book a date and time to attend.
- Once the booking has been confirmed you will receive the zoom link to attend a session.

What will happen during the session?

- The school SENCo and class teacher **MUST** be able to attend the session.
- Verbal feedback/advice will be provided during the session. No written follow up will be provided.

If a booked session is not attended this service will not be available to you in the future.

Bookings for the autumn term are now available:

Monday 14 th September	Monday 2 nd November
Monday 28 th September	Monday 16 th November
Monday 5 th October	Monday 23 rd November
Monday 12 th October	Monday 30 th November
Monday 19 th October	Monday 8 th December

To access the google form please click on the link below:

<https://forms.gle/9SjqxvEv7tTpfVAp7>

Following completion of the google form, you will be sent a link to book an appointment.

To ensure all schools have fair access to SpLD surgeries, we ask that schools book a maximum of one SpLD surgery per half term. If a follow-up appointment is specifically recommended by Laura, or an additional session is agreed following discussion with DSPL9, further bookings may be made subject to availability.

Please note:

This service is purely available to enable the schools to best support individual pupils. The information provided by Laura cannot be used as evidence for any referrals or applications.

Maths Difficulties Training Autumn Term 2026

Please note, due to unforeseen circumstances, the maths difficulties training due to take place on 20th October will be postponed until the spring term.

Once a new date is confirmed, we will share the updated flyer.



Early Years Emotional Wellbeing and Behaviour Drop-In Sessions.

DSPL 6 & 9 – Watford, Three Rivers and Hertsmere

Virtual DROP-IN SESSIONS for Early Years settings in AUTUMN '26 with Dominique Johnson, an Early Years Emotional Wellbeing and Behaviour Specialist to offer guidance and advice for a range of topics including:

- Emotional Wellbeing
- Behaviour
- Attachment and Relationships
- Transitions and Routines
- Social and Emotional Development
- Self-Regulation

To access this service, please click on the preferred date to book a 30-minute MS Teams time slot. Once in the booking system, please access the calendar and click on your chosen date which will then give you available time slots

The screenshot shows a booking interface. On the left is a calendar for September 2025, with the 17th highlighted. On the right, under the heading 'Wednesday, September 17', there is a list of time slots: 09:35, 10:05, 10:35, 11:05, 11:35, and 12:05. Each time slot has a green checkmark indicating it is available. At the top right of the interface, there is a status bar that says 'You are available' with a green checkmark, and icons for a list and a calendar. A 'Next' button with a right arrow is at the bottom right.

For information regarding dates, times and a link to the single request form please see the attached flyer.



The EEF Guide to Inclusive Teaching

Published 6 July, 2026

Introducing the EEF Guide to Inclusive Teaching

We've launched the EEF Guide to Inclusive Teaching. It's designed to support you to help every pupil participate and succeed in school.

The guide contains evidence-informed advice for supporting all pupils, including those with additional needs.

Alongside the guide, we've also published a new set of interactive, scenario-based training resources to help you develop your approach to inclusive teaching.

To find out more about the useful guidance please [click here](#).



Strategic Partnerships Commissioning are pleased to announce the next My Teen Brain Online Training courses that are due to be delivered on:

Wednesday 16th September

This FREE 1-day CPD course, from 10am – 3pm is for Hertfordshire practitioners working with parents of teenagers and/or working with teenagers or young people in Hertfordshire. It provides an opportunity to understand teenage brain development and the adolescent developmental process and consider both risk and resilience. It includes ideas and strategies for professionals working with teenagers and their parents to help them cope with challenging feelings and behaviour and to support young people in an emotionally healthy context. The day brings together the latest understanding from neuroscience and developmental psychology and the principles of The Nurturing Program from The Centre For Emotional Health.

Please find the booking link below for you to reserve your place on one of our Autumn term courses. This training is a very popular and is beneficial to all practitioners who work with Hertfordshire children and families.

If you are interested in booking on to the course, please ensure that you ONLY reserve your place if you have the capacity to attend the training on your preferred day and for the entire duration of the session, from 10am – 3pm.

Wednesday 16th September - [My Teen Brain Online Training 16 September | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

If you would like further information about the course or alternative dates, please email CSStrategic.Partnerships@hertfordshire.gov.uk



Training Opportunities from Hertfordshire: SEND Academy

Please find attached a range of flyers from a range of Hertfordshire services including SENDSAS and EYs. All the training opportunities shared are now fully funded and are therefore free for school staff to access.

Along with accessing the information from the flyers, all training available from HCC can be found on the [SEND Academy Website](#).



Cognition & Learning Team
Autumn 2026 Training schedule



THE EDUCATION HUB

*Promoting the education of children
with a social worker*



SUPPORTING CONCERNS AROUND:

Education & Attainment
Attendance
Transition
SEND & EHCPs
Risk of exclusion
Health
SEMH

An information and advice service for Social Care
and Education colleagues for students known to
Children's Services on CP/CiN plans age 0-18.

Contact us:

education.hub@hertfordshire.gov.uk



SUPPORTING PUPILS WITH DOWN SYNDROME IN EDUCATION

A **THREE PART** course in autumn for teachers, TAs and other education
professionals working with children with Down Syndrome, in Hertfordshire
and the surrounding counties.



Meet our trainer:

Helen Long

Down Syndrome Specialist Advisory
Teacher, SENCo, parent and teacher



Please share with your school community:



Delivering Special Provision Locally



PARENT/CARER COFFEE MORNINGS 2026/27

The aim of these relaxed meetings

- To provide a safe space where you can talk freely about your child/young person and your family, and the challenges you are facing
- To help signpost parents/carers to the correct services/information
- To enable parents/carers to meet other local parents and connect with like-minded people in their community that may be going through similar challenges
- To be a listening and understanding ear, without judgement
- To help parents/carers feel that they are being supported and are not alone

Parents are welcome to bring along toddlers and children - including those that may be struggling to attend school for whatever reason. And of course, refreshments will be provided!

Please join us to find out about the support available locally and to meet other parents and carers of children with SEND.

DSPL9 are delighted to welcome professionals from [SPACE Herts](#) (1.10.26) [OneYMCA](#) (9.2.27) and [ADD-Vance](#) (17.6.27)

- 1st October 11am-12.30pm @ASDA Community Centre [SPACE Herts](#)
- 9th February 10.00-11.30am@ Westfield Family Centre [OneYMCA](#)
- 17th June 10-11.30am @The Green Room, Bournehall Primary [ADD-Vance](#)

If you would like to attend or to find out more please email us at enquiries@dsplare9.org.uk

Flyer attached to the email.