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## DSPL 9 Weekly Newsletter 8

15.01.25



**Happy New Year and welcome back to the Spring Term.  
We hope you had a restful break.**

**Available  
Now!**

### **Spring Term DSPL 9 SENCo Forum/HFL SEND Briefing**

Date: Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March

Time: 1-4pm

Venue: The Grove Academy, Fourth Ave, Watford WD25 9RH

**Please be reminded that by signing up you are agreeing to attend both the HFL SEND briefing and the DSPL 9 SENCo updates. The event will run from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. We kindly ask that if you are unable to commit to attending for the full duration, please refrain from booking. This ensures that all participants can fully enjoy and engage in the event.**

<https://buytickets.at/dspl9/1502449>

**This event is funded by DSPL9 and as a result, any 'no shows' (without sufficient notice to enable the place to be given to a colleague on the waiting list) will be charged at £22.00.**

**Should you need to cancel your place this MUST be done by emailing [admin@dsplarea9.org.uk](mailto:admin@dsplarea9.org.uk). Please not cancel or change your booking via any other means. This is to ensure the place can be made available to waiting DSPL9 colleagues.**

## DSPL 9 SENCo Surgeries: January/February 2025

Myself and Mandy Brandon will be available on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January from 8-8.30am to answer any questions of queries that you may have. Please use the links below to access these opportunities:

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January

### Microsoft Teams [Need help?](#)

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 329 168 421 70

Passcode: frAKTd

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February

### Microsoft Teams [Need help?](#)

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 342 329 400 174

Passcode: UGV25m



### SEMH Focused Solution Circles

In collaboration with Chessbrook ESC, DSPL 9 will be adapting the fortnightly solution circles on offer in the spring and summer term to make them more specific. Each session will now have an SEMH focus and be divided into primary and secondary specific session.

Access to these sessions will be via a google form which will be shared by either myself, Mandy Brandon, Gita Newth or Emma McShannon. On completion of the google form you will be offered a date and time (3.30-4.30pm) to access this support.

Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> January	Primary SEMH Focus
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> February	Secondary SEMH Focus
Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	Primary SEMH Focus
Monday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	Secondary SEMH Focus
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> May	Secondary Focus
Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> May	Primary SEMH Focus
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> June	Primary SEMH Focus
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> July	Secondary SEMH Focus

For further information please contact either myself, Mandy Brandon or the Chessbrook team.



### DSPL 9 EBSA Support: tier 3 and 4

The deadline for the second round of **tier 4** support is **20.01.25**. Please ensure any referrals and supporting evidence for this support is sent via schoolsfx to [admin@dsplarea9.org.uk](mailto:admin@dsplarea9.org.uk)

Bookings are currently being accepted for the tier 3 solution circles in the spring term:

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March

Please contact [admin@dsplarea9.org.uk](mailto:admin@dsplarea9.org.uk) to book a place before completing the paperwork.

As always, any questions please contact [gemmhall@dsplarea9.org.uk](mailto:gemmhall@dsplarea9.org.uk)



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# Save the date!

DSPL 9 Schools Professionals Conference 2025

## 'Inspiring Inclusive Practice: Meeting Today's Needs.'

Join us in the Summer Term for our supporting complex SEND in mainstream focused conference including:

- Keynote speakers from *When the Adults Change* and HFL.
- Workshops provided (to cover all ages phases) by Chessbrook, The Acom Centre, Coinbrooke School, Bushey Meads School, Cherry Tree & Maple Cross Schools, Emotional Wellbeing & Behaviour Specialist (Early Years) and Over The Rainbow.
- A performance from the fabulous *Electric Umbrella*.

**Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025**  
**@ The Stanborough Centre, Watford,**  
**9am-4pm**

Full outline and objectives will be shared Early in 2025 but until then please save the date in your calendar.

This event is open to Primary and Secondary colleagues, as well as Early Years professionals, based in maintained settings or schools.

There will be a charge to attend this event. 'Early Bird' booking reductions will be available.

### **New to SENCo session: Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January**

The next New to SENCo session will be taking place via MS teams on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January. The focus for this session will be **VSEND** and will provide SENCos with an opportunity to explore the tool and consider the benefits attached to using it.

Please use the link below to access the session:

**Microsoft Teams** [Need help?](#)

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 342 506 457 226

Passcode: E6Gx7mC7

**NB: This session can be accessed by any experienced SENCos who would benefit from refreshing their knowledge.**

**DSPL 9**  
**Benchmarking and Planning Tool Sessions**

DSPL 9 would like to invite SENCOs to attend either of the sessions provided to take time to complete their Benchmarking and Planning Tool and reflect upon their current practice prior to the survey in the summer term.

Purpose of the session:

- Completion of the Benchmarking and Planning Tool
- Dedicated time to consider each of the 5 outcomes and if the school is working at an emerging, expected or exemplary level.
- Celebrate the areas that are working well and consider those areas that need to be developed.
- Network with other local SENCOs and discuss aspects of the tool.

Date: Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025

Time: 9.30-11.30 **OR** 1.30-3.30pm

Venue: The Green Room, Bournehall Primary School

To book your place please use the link below

<https://buytickets.at/dspl9/1489408>



**EHCCo Update**

Please note there have been a number of changes to DSPL 9 EHCCOs within the School Age Statutory SEND Team. If you are unsure as to who your EHCCo is, please use the link below to view the updated list on Herts Local Offer:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/education-health-and-care-plans/school-aged-send-team.aspx>

These EHCCOs are part of the reviews team and are therefore only able to support any queries regarding current EHCPs.

PLEASE NOTE: Any queries in relation to EHCNAs and ongoing assessment, needs to be directed to staff within the statutory assessment team. To support these queries an assessment line is available, along with an email address:

01442 453300

[ehcneedsassessment@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ehcneedsassessment@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

Alternatively, if you have received correspondence from an EHCCo within this team you would need to contact them directly.

**Inclusion & Skills, Children's Services**  
**Statutory school exclusion advice line**

A general queries and advice line for schools and professionals for matters relating to school exclusion and suspension.

**Available Monday – Friday (term time only)**

9:30am – 12:30pm

1:30 – 4:30pm

Contact number: 01992 555911

Comnet: 25911

Email: [Statutoryschoolsexcclusionadvice@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Statutoryschoolsexcclusionadvice@hertfordshire.gov.uk)







## SEND Academy Learning and Development Programme

The SEND Academy are offering selected training session to school and settings free of charge. These sessions include:

- The SEND Code of Practice, Working with Settings and Graduated Approach
- Person-Centred Working and 'This is Me'
- SMART Outcomes & Section E of an EHCP
- Specified and Quantified Provision & Section F of an EHCP
- Preparation for Adulthood (PfA)
- Accessibility

Please see the attached programme for 2025. All bookings need to be done via [SENDAcademy@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:SENDAcademy@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

### Consultation; what, why and when?

Please see attached the flyer for the February SEND Academy session, which will cover consultations. There is no need to book; you will find the link to the session within the flyer.

### Educational Advice Form and Guidance documents

Following the educational advice training sessions delivered in the last term, please find attached to this email all the relevant documentation that were shared. It is now being recommended that schools and settings use the new educational advice form as part of the EHCP process.



### School Census 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025

HFL have produced a useful blog for SENCOs to support them in ensuring the information around SEN data is up to date and ready for the census later this month:

The School Census: why it's important for SENCOs to spring clean their SEN data:

<https://www.hfleducation.org/blog/school-census-why-its-important-sencos-spring-clean-their-sen-data>



### 1 year of the SENCO Online Feedback Group – join for 2025

The SENCO online feedback group is a light touch way that SENCOs can hear about opportunities to share their experiences and opinions on SEND topics, that will influence decision making and strategy at the council. Members are emailed with anything from short 5 minute tasks or surveys, through to informal discussion groups or invitations to represent SENCO voice in longer term working groups.

All tasks are optional, and you only have to fill out tasks you are interested in, or have the time for.

Topics covered included:

- Tribunals guidance
- Quality of EHCPs
- High Needs Funding
- Consulting on the children and young person's coproduction model
- annual reviews strategy development
- feeding back on VSEND

There is much more partnership work to be done in 2025 – if you would like to receive emails from the SENCO online feedback group, [subscribe to the group now](#).

Or if you're already a member and have found the group positive, please do share with other SENCOs you know.

## Spring Term Training Opportunities

Please be reminded that any of the courses advertised and delivered by the SLCA or Cognition and Learning Team are for any colleagues who would benefit from attending. Please consider who would be best to attend! (All flyers are attached to this email with further details of dates, times and booking details).

### Cognition and Learning Team Training: Spring 2025

**Using Diagnostic Literacy Assessments to Identify a Pupil's Strengths and Needs for Target Setting** – This course is designed to equip schools with knowledge and resources in order to diagnose and carry out assessments using the Cognition and Learning Team's diagnostic literacy assessments. Full support pack of resources will be emailed to attendees after training.

**Understanding and Assessing Persistent Literacy Difficulties** – aimed at Sencos and Literacy Leads at Primary level. This session is designed to help you identify pupils with persistent literacy difficulties who haven't responded to the schools' synthetic phonics catch up programme and may require personalised intervention and adjustments. After training a linked resource pack will be sent to you to enable your school to implement and use the recommended strategies.

#### Using Diagnostic Literacy Assessments to Identify a Pupil's Strengths and Needs for Target Setting



**Key aims:**

- Understand pupils' strengths and needs in literacy to inform next steps in their learning.
- Familiarise yourself with using the Cognition and Learning Team's Diagnostic Literacy Assessments.

This highly informative training session provides the opportunity for practitioners and SENCOs to assess pupil's literacy strengths and needs. The diagnostic literacy assessments are intended to support schools with the assess-plan-do-review cycle for pupils with word reading and spelling issues. It provides a baseline summary and tracking of pupils' strengths and difficulties in phonics, common words and early spelling.

**Cost: £60 per person**

**Please Note: We are unable to accept cancellations once a place has been booked**

To book a place on this training, please email: [cognitionandlearningteam@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cognitionandlearningteam@hertfordshire.gov.uk)  
When booking, please advise which session you would like to attend and the following:

Delegate Name	Senco Email	School Name	School Type e.g. Academy/Maintained	School Email
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#### Understanding and Assessing Persistent Literacy Difficulties

*Delivered by Hertfordshire Specialist Advisory Teachers, Cognition and Learning (formerly the SpLD Team)*



*The training is aimed at SENCOs and literacy leads working with children in primary schools.*

This half-day training session will support SENCOs and literacy leads with the skills to assess and identify pupils who have persistent literacy difficulties.

**Aims:**

- Understand the key factors impacting on early literacy development
- Know how persistent literacy difficulties may present in the Primary classroom
- Understand the cognitive characteristics of persistent literacy difficulties
- Know how to use informal and formal assessments to identify characteristics of persistent literacy difficulties
- Know which strategies or interventions to use to support persistent literacy difficulties.

**Training includes:**

Case Studies

Practical Activities

e-folder of resources

**Cost: £60.00 per delegate**

**Please note: We are unable to accept cancellations once a place has been booked.**

To book a place on this training, please email: [CognitionandLearningTeam@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:CognitionandLearningTeam@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

and advise:

Delegate Name	School Name	School Email	Senco Email	Maintained or Academy School
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## Consultation Advice



**What is it?**

A consultation focussing on a specific recurring need identified across a small group or cohort, for example, early writing difficulties, reading fluency or comprehension, spelling, working memory in the classroom. We will provide strategies and resources that can support an identified common difficulty.

**This consultation will not be based on named or unnamed individual pupils and cannot be used as evidence for an EHCP.**

**How it will work**

School will provide the evidence we have requested and a consultation will be booked in with a Specialist Advisory Teacher from the Cognition and Learning Team. A meeting of approximately one and a half hours will be arranged to provide modelling with staff, practical strategies, recommendations and resources to support the identified need. We may also signpost you to further training delivered by the Cognition Learning Team.

**Form required to access this service**

A Consultation information request form needs to be completed in the first instance to provide evidence that demonstrates what the particular need is and how it is presenting across the group or cohort. After receipt of this form, you will be contacted by a member of the Cognition and Learning Team to discuss your needs in further detail.

**This must not include individual named evidence.**

**Cost: £150.00  
for 1 hour**

If you have any queries, please email: [cognitionandlearningteam@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cognitionandlearningteam@hertfordshire.gov.uk)



Over The Rainbow



Children / Schools / Families

Specialist support for children with additional needs - specialising in ASD, ADHD, PDA, School Anxiety (EBSA), Trauma, Children Looked After, Sensory Needs, Social Emotional & Mental Health Needs

- Specialist Tutoring
- Therapeutic Mentoring
- Training for Schools
- School Support
- Parent Coaching
- Therapeutic Interventions



[enquiries@overtherainbowcsf.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@overtherainbowcsf.co.uk)



[www.overtherainbowcsf.co.uk](http://www.overtherainbowcsf.co.uk)



# SANDY SOULS TRAINING



Would you like to come and unleash your sandy soul?

Learn how to support children to connect and tell their stories in the sand.

I will be combining the core skills of Sand Story® with Sand Play to allow children to express themselves and any difficulties they may be facing.

Sandy Souls is non-directive and allows the child to reflect on their experiences (home/school/ community) to support their understanding, particularly for those who are not keen to talk or express themselves verbally.

Learn about the 5 stages of sand story®, sand play and how being an emotionally available adult (EAA) can support children in being able to understand themselves and their situations. Sandy Souls is used as a gentle therapeutic approach for children to tell their story and make better sense of their emotional world. This creative training allows a safe practice for EAA's in being able to support children with additional difficulties.

### Training Taking Place

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 25

9:30-2:30

Westfield Primary Academy

~~Duntons Lane~~

~~Berkhamstead~~

~~Herts~~

~~HP4 3PJ~~

~~£175~~

For more information, please contact Nikki on 07766230760 or email [enquiries@overtherainbowcsf.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@overtherainbowcsf.co.uk) to reserve your place.



Voices of Hertfordshire is a new initiative across Hertfordshire which is based on the multi schools council model which has run very successfully in Essex. Each half term I travel to a school in each district / borough and other schools bring children to the event. We talk about what matters to young people about inclusion and SEND. You can see what some of what the children and young people have got up to so far on our Instagram and you tube channels: [Voices of Hertfordshire - YouTube](#) <https://www.instagram.com/voicesofhertfordshire/>

### Upcoming dates and venues

Please reach out if you would like us to come to your setting especially if you have a cluster of schools who can work together.

Secondary / including secondary specialist			
Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> January	10 – 1130am	Lonsdale School, Brittain Way, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG2 8UT	<a href="mailto:Sarah.stevens2@hertfordshire.gov.uk">Sarah.stevens2@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a>
Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> January	10 – 1130am	The Reach Free School, Long Lane, Rickmansworth, Herts, WD3 8AB	<a href="mailto:Sarah.stevens2@hertfordshire.gov.uk">Sarah.stevens2@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a>
Single school event		Falconer School	
Single school event		Amwell View	
Primary / Middle / Specialist Events			
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2025	10 – 1130am	Fairfield 83 Watford Road, Radlett WD7 8LU	<a href="mailto:Sarah.stevens2@hertfordshire.gov.uk">Sarah.stevens2@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a>
Thursday 30th January 2025	10 – 1130am	Cranbourne School Bridleway North, Hoddesdon EN11 9PP	<a href="mailto:Sarah.stevens2@hertfordshire.gov.uk">Sarah.stevens2@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a>
Monday 27th January 2025	10 – 1130am	Fairlands Primary School (Pound Avenue, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 3JA)	<a href="mailto:Sarah.stevens2@hertfordshire.gov.uk">Sarah.stevens2@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a>

### The agenda for January

#### Child and young persons views on inclusion and SEND for the new Hertfordshire Strategy

- What is SEND?
- What is your SEND need or disability?
- What is a hidden disability?
- What is Inclusion?
- What helps you to feel included?
- If one thing would make a difference to SEND in school what would it be?

#### What you need to know:

- The meetings are around the county and are either primary focused, secondary focused or specialist focused. Simply book on the one you feel most appropriate for your young people. We also offer bespoke sessions as required for specialist settings.
- Primary age - You can bring 5 to 8 pupils from your school to take part. There are between 40 and 50 places per event.
- Secondary age - You can bring 10 pupils from your school to take part. There are between 40 and 50 places per event.
- These events are **free** – open to all pupils – fun and give every young person the chance to talk about what matters to them and have their views heard by leaders across the Hertfordshire SEND partnership.
- The focus is on SEND but anyone can attend. A young person with SEND, a young person who is a family member to someone with SEND or anyone who is passionate about inclusion.
- We will cover things that matter to young people in Hertfordshire, for example mental health, awareness of conditions / disability etc. Over time the agendas will be formed by the young people themselves.
- The meetings are run by myself, Sarah Stevens, an ex-primary headteacher, SENCO and Ofsted inspector with a passion for pupil voice and ensuring young people with SEND are heard, if you have any questions simply email me on [sarah.stevens2@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.stevens2@hertfordshire.gov.uk)
- Adults attending with young people are responsible for supporting with any adjustment required e.g. sign language, hearing loop, large print etc.

Any questions please let Sarah know on [sarah.stevens2@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.stevens2@hertfordshire.gov.uk)