

SEND

Weekly Newsletter

13 March 2019



Issue 31

Easter's on the way so start booking activities now

It might seem like the Easter holidays are a way off but they'll be here before we know it!

The Somerset Short Breaks Team has just published its Spring Newsletter, Easter Activity Calendar and May Half Term Activity Calendar, so parent carers of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities can start planning breaks and exciting new experiences for the holidays. These should have arrived through your letterbox!

The Easter break runs from 8-22 April and the Activity Calendar is jam-packed with activities and days out. The Spring Newsletter brings you lots of articles of interest and please hold on to your May Calendar for the Half Term from 27-31 May. You can also download or [view them here](#).

Included in the Spring Newsletter are features on:

- Inclusive and accessible activities
- A fully inclusive pop-up leisure facility
- Equine activities in South Somerset
- Autism Somerset
- The Woodland Play Centre

When you're choosing your activities in the Calendar please make sure you contact the provider and book early!

If you're not getting the Calendar and newsletter and wish to, or you want to be taken off the mailing list please email ShortBreaksTeam@somerset.gov.uk



Disabled Access Day 2019

It's Disabled Access Day 2019 on Saturday, March 16.



It's about celebrating the progress made to make activities and places more accessible to all, but it's also about highlighting the continued need to ensure progress continues.

It's an issue very close to the hearts of parent carers of children and young people with SEND because lack of a key facility, such as a changing place toilet can rule out venues.

That's why venues like Magdalen Farm near Chard which offers this facility, and features in the Short Breaks Calendar are so important.

To get involved in DAC 2019 or find out more [visit here](#). Here's a changing [place toilet guide](#).



Children and Young People's Plan

Somerset County Council and its partners will soon be publishing the next Children and Young People's Plan for 2019 to 2022.

It is the vision of all services working with vulnerable children and families - including children and young people with Special Educational Needs and /or Disabilities, aimed at improving not just individuals' lives but the communities supporting them.

At the centre of the process were young people who attended three workshops with senior leaders to discuss priorities for the plan,.

And last month eight of the young people from those workshops came to Somerset County Council to help write the new plan.

It will be launched in April.

You can read the current [Children and Young People's Plan here.](#)

SEND Vision reminder

Do you know our Local Area SEND vision?

All partners in the Local Area should be working with the vision in mind at all times and it is vital that we ensure we are familiar with it and working towards it across all services;

The vision:

"We want every child and young person to have the greatest possible opportunity to be the best they can be, to be happy and have choice and control over their life."

New special school for South Somerset a step closer

A bid by Somerset County Council to establish a new special free school in South Somerset has moved a step closer.

This week the DfE informed the Council that its free school bid had been selected by the Secretary of State to proceed to the trust competition stage.

It means that if successful, the Council will secure the significant capital investment required to build a new Special School catering for up



to 120 children with Social Emotional & Mental Health needs or Speech Language & Communication Needs.

At the moment, Somerset's only similar maintained special school is Sky College in Taunton, meaning children in South Somerset have to

travel long distances to access that type of provision.

It's an exciting development and is a boost to Somerset and its Local First approach to ensure more children and young people with special educational needs can be educated in good quality provision close to home.

Next week we'll bring a more detailed update on the projects that are delivering additional special school places in Taunton and Bridgwater.

