

Summer News For SEND Families - Manchester Local Offer Newsletter

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With the coronavirus crisis, this isn't an ordinary summer. We've got together with Manchester Parent Carer Forum and Manchester Parent Champions to find out what activities you'd like to do and to try our best to make it happen. There's lots in the pipeline - this newsletter just gives you a taste of what's coming!

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Summer Holidays - Stuff To Do

Everyone has had to be extra creative this summer! But in true Mancunian style, there are some great things planned for SEND families in the city – **and all for free!**

We'll be sending out more newsletters than usual to let you know what's happening. Whilst we're making every effort to give you the correct information, we're in a situation where some details might change. *So keep an eye out for updates!*

Here's some of the fun stuff coming up:

Some activities need to be booked and you'll start to get information about how to do this from next week.

Bee Family Friendly

4CT will be running online family support bubbles throughout the holidays, facilitating families to do stuff together. More info to follow.

Summer Ceramics

This exciting project with Venture Arts will provide boxes for over 100 families to create ceramics over an 8 week period, including firing times. There will also be an opportunity after the summer to display pieces in an exhibition alongside the work of Dominic Bennett and Louise Hewitt, the local disabled artists who have co-designed the project. Booking info to follow.

Park Fun

There are lots of fun, inclusive activities in the city's parks this summer that SEND families can access for free. This includes Tree Top Trek and boating at Heaton Park, cycling and dance at Alexandra Park and animal fun at Wythenshawe Park. Booking info to follow.

Many facilities are starting to re-open in our parks. This includes children's play areas, toilets, cafes and ice cream vendors, as well as multi-use games areas, BMX and skate parks, and tennis courts. Keep up to date with this [information from Manchester City Council](#).

Pedal & Picnic

Join two Simply Cycling staff for an all ability guided ride and picnic on Manchester's green routes, off-road trails and parks. The activity is for two families at a time (max. 10 people) and the routes will be geared around families' needs and abilities. Booking info to follow.

School Play Spaces

Two special schools are opening spaces for play. It's the same as if you were going to your local park but these spaces are especially for SEND families.

You'll be able to book 45 minute play sessions at **The Birches in West Didsbury** from Tuesday 21st July to Monday 3rd August. There'll be juice, milk and biscuits, and toilets available.

Melland High School's playing field in Gorton will be open to families for three weeks - Monday 27th July to Friday 14th August. It's a huge field, but enclosed, so ideal for energetic children to run around safely. You'd be welcome to take a picnic, just be aware that toilets aren't available. Booking info to follow.

Don't forget, there are all kinds of things across the country that you can get involved in virtually, like music making and storytelling! See the 'Stuff To Do' section in our [Local Offer Coronavirus Information & Advice](#).

Coronavirus Updates

Coronavirus Hub – Change Of Hours

The Manchester Community Response Hub hours have changed. Call 08002 346123, Monday to Friday 9am–5pm, Saturday 10am–2pm.

A text messaging service has also been set up. Text 078600 22876 and your message will be responded to by the next working day.

Manchester COVID-19 Plan

The [Manchester COVID-19 Local Prevention and Response Plan](#) sets out what Manchester is doing to prevent the further spread of the virus and how it responds to outbreaks.

Video In Urdu

Women's Voices in Manchester have made a [video](#) to explain in Urdu the importance of social distancing, washing hands, wearing masks and contacting the 111 service for advice.

Education & Learning

Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) have been commissioned by the Department for Education and the Department of Health and Social Care to support local areas to improve their SEND systems. Read more [here](#).

In early July, the Department for Education published detailed guidance to support schools and colleges to fully reopen in September 2020 and early years and childcare providers from 20 July. See more [here](#).

Home Learning For Visually Impaired Children

Henshaws have put together a range of activities including quiz-making, baking and storytelling to help make learning at home fun. Explore their ideas [here](#).

Support From Organisations

Carers Newsletter

Here's the most recent Manchester Carers Network [newsletter](#).

Free Computer In Every Home Programme

[MyOutsourcedIT](#) are a Manchester based company that refurb and donate computers to families free of charge. See the poster [here](#).

Keeping Children Safe Online

As more children are spending time online in the pandemic, the [SafeToNet](#) Foundation is providing one million free-for-life licences of their mobile safety app. Sign up [here](#). Register your details before 1st August and activate the app by 30th August.

Emotional & Mental Wellbeing

Manchester Support For Anxiety & Low Mood

Manchester's Self Help Services (part of Big Life Group) is still open and accepting referrals. They provide free therapeutic support for anxiety and low mood to the whole of Manchester and work with people over the phone and through video calls. You can

be [referred](#) or [self-refer](#). You can also email pws.manchester@selfhelpservices.org.uk or call 0161 226 3871.

New COVID-19 Recovery Support Group

The Manchester COVID-19 Recovery Peer Support Group is for people who would like to talk to others going through a similar experience. The group meets online every Wednesday evening from 6pm. People can call in or join on a tablet or laptop (expenses provided for data if needed). Please text 07702 668169 with your name or email val.bayliss-brideaux@nhs.net at Manchester Health and Care Commissioning.

You may find you're starting to struggle as the pandemic goes on. Take a look at the 'Emotional & Mental Wellbeing' section of our [Local Coronavirus Information & Advice](#) for a range of services that offer support at this time.

Have Your Say

Young People – Share Your Stories

We're planning a special edition of the newsletter to share stories of SEND young people in Manchester at this time. We'd love to hear from young people about your experiences – what's positive, what's been hard and how you are looking forward. Call Ali on 07971 587963 or email a.davenport1@manchester.gov.uk.

Our colleague in Bury, Andy Smith, has asked us to share this [survey for SEND young people](#) (up to 25 yrs) who live in the North West. It's to find out what is and isn't going well at this time, plus what young people think can be improved in their area. The findings will be shared with senior leaders. Any questions to andrew.smith@bury.gov.uk, Inclusion Ambassador/SEND Advocate.

Manchester Carers Survey

Manchester Carers Network have an [online survey](#) about how carers are coping with lockdown and impact it has had on them and the people they support. If you have any questions, contact learning@manchestercarersnetwork.org.uk, or call 0161 834 6069 option 2.

Out of Lockdown Experiences

Do you live in Clayton or Openshaw? Manchester Settlement, a community centre in Openshaw, would like to hear about your Out of Lockdown experiences. What's it like going back to work, reopening your business or seeing friends and family? The aim of the project is to help residents in the area feel more comfortable, informed and at ease with the latest phase of the pandemic. Here's the [link](#) to find out more.