Thurrock Council's Local Offer Annual Report 2020/21

The purpose of Thurrock's Local Offer is to allow children and young people in the borough, who have Special Educational Needs (SEN) and/or a disability, to be able to find information in one place. The Local Offer aims to provide clear, comprehensive and accessible information about what services and provisions are available in Thurrock for parents, children and young people. The Local Offer is also about making services more responsive to local need and aspirations.

Thurrock Council's Local Offer has been created by working alongside children, young people and their families.

Local authorities must publish comments about their Local Offer received from or on behalf of children with SEN or disabilities young people with SEN or disabilities, and their parents, as Part of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.

We are continually improving our Local Offer, which is shaped by feedback we receive from children, young people, families and professionals. The annual report provides a summary of the changes we have made as a result of the feedback we received in the previous academic year. This can be found under the **'You Said, We Did'** section of the annual report.
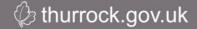
If you would like to provide feedback, our online survey can be found at:

https://consult.thurrock.gov.uk/local-offer-survey

You can also send any general feedback to FIS@thurrock.gov.uk

April 2021 - Major development work completed

In April 2021 we went live with a new Ask Thurrock and Local Offer site. We completed months of collaborative work with key stakeholders including service users, parents and Thurrock Council staff. Based on feedback the layout and colour scheme have been modernised, accessibility options have been added and the search functionality improved.

Responses - You Said, We Did

We have collated all feedback that we have received from consultations with young people, parent/carers and professionals into a 'You Said, We Did' format, to show you how we are improving the Local Offer to fit Thurrock's children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and their families.

You said…….	We did…….	Next steps
"There are no accessibility options on the website" **In addition to this we previously had feedback from someone who was visually impaired who said they were unable to enlarge text size.**	We now have accessibility options such as: • Users can change size of text; • Users can change the colour of the Local Offer; • Users can change the size of the mouse pointer or use a reading mask.	To continue to monitor government guidance so we are aware of any changes to accessibility guidelines and continue to monitor feedback received.
"Page titles are too long and not concise, the titles do not make it clear what information the page contains"	We recently completed a piece of work where we reviewed pages on the site with large titles. We shortened the titles with a clear description of what information the page contains.	We have created a document which we send to all new contributors to the website on best practices for webpages. This includes advising them to use clear and concise titles.
"Website is not easy on the eye. Information for children and parents is not easy to locate"	Following the refresh of the Local Offer we now have dedicated sections for: • parents/carers • children/young people • practitioners	We will continue to monitor the content on each section. We will also continue to develop sections and pages to be more child friendly.
" The Search Box is not giving me enough results and I am not seeing the information I expected to see"	The upgrade included a new and improved search functionality. In addition to this we have added keywords to the majority of pages on our site. This has improved matching search results.	We have already had some good feedback on our Search Functionality and we will continue to monitor keywords on our pages. Our document which goes to contributors also advises them to include as many keywords as possible as this improves search results.
"When I use the website on my phone and tablet I can't see the site at all"	The upgraded website is now Mobile and Tablet friendly. This means when using the site on such devices the website fits to the screen size automatically.	We will continue to monitor technological advancements.

"English is not my first language and I am unable to use the website"	We now have google translate software installed on the site. This enables users to change the language of the site to any available.	We will continue to seek feedback and ensure we are reaching all users possible.
"The maps on this site does not work well like on other sites"	We have now added some enhanced Google Map software. This has enabled users to get directions to services and pinpoint locations on a map.	Over the next 12 months we are hoping to further enhance our Google Map features.
"We want a separate Post 16 section"	We have now created a brand new Post 16 SEND page. This page has images and videos and has proven popular with visitors to our site.	We will continue to act on feedback and further enhance this page when needed.
"An easier format and more visual site"	The P16 team have commissioned a company to produce 10 videos that showcase the different provisions available in Thurrock.	We will continue to ask our contributors to use videos and images where possible.

Content Updates

Since April the FIS Team have worked with Services particularly the Post 16 Team to increase the number of videos on our Local Offer. In addition to this a new **Post 16 SEND** page went live. This page has a large selection of images and videos.

PQBI have worked with the SEND Quality Assurance and Professional Development Manager and the SEND Inclusion Support Officer to:
- o Develop two new zones – **SEND Development** and **We Are Listening** zones
- o Support providers in updating their session details
- o Create a SEND Focus Group page with Live Calendar
- o Launch a **competition** for CYP to design a Local Offer Mascot