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SEND - Special education needs and disabilities

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The co-production team is passionate about making sure everyone receives the support they need to be happy and live their 'best life'. This area of our work allows us to use our experience of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to shape the way Blackpool Council SEND services work.

How we work

We bring together people with lived experience of SEND including young people, parents, carers, and adults to collaborate with professionals and service leaders. Together, we reflect on what's working, what could be better, and how we can make meaningful changes.

Our work is supported by:

- A young people's advisory group
- A parents and carers advisory group
- A small team of adult volunteers and sessional workers with lived SEND experience

Whether as volunteers, advisors, or paid sessional workers, everyone involved plays an equal role in shaping SEND services in Blackpool.



Our areas of focus

Blackpool SEND Local Offer

We work with Blackpool Council's inclusion team to improve the [SEND Local Offer](#) a central hub of information for families and professionals. Through co-production, we ensure that the Local Offer is:

- Clear and accessible
- Regularly updated
- Based on what families and young people tell us they need

Thanks to this collaboration, website visits have increased by over 1000%, and other councils are now looking to Blackpool as a model of good practice.

Preparation for adulthood (PfA)

Together with Blackpool's PfA Team and local partners, we've co-produced a PfA strategy to support young people with SEND as they move into adulthood.

[Preparation for adulthood \(PfA\)](#)

This work includes collaboration with schools, colleges, health professionals, and parents to ensure that planning for the future starts early and reflects each individual's strengths, goals, and needs.



Mental health and resilience

We continue our work from the HeadStart Programme, focusing on mental health support for young people with SEND. Working with partners such as Blackpool Teaching Hospitals and Lancashire Mind, we co-produce resources that improve access and understanding.

National SEND co-production community of practice

Blackpool co-production team has launched a national community of practice, bringing together local authorities, parents, and young people from across the country to share learning and good practice in SEND co-production.

We've welcomed participants from Birmingham, London, Cumbria, and more.

To join, contact Sarah Wells email: coproduction@blackpool.gov.uk

Our principles of practice

Guided by social pedagogy, our work is shaped by the concept of Heart, Head and Hands:

- Heart – How we behave
- Head – How we think
- Hands – How we work

These principles help ensure our work is values-led, evidence-informed, and grounded in real experiences.

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