

SEND

EXCHANGE

Monday 26th January 2026
10.00-12.00
Microsoft Teams



AGENDA



- Welcome
- Introductions
- Anthony Turner | Manchester City Council – SEND in Manchester
- Mari Saeki | Neuro inclusive Organisations Network (NiON) and the GM Autism Consortium
- Published Ofsted Reports – Inclusion Insights
- Discussion
- AoB

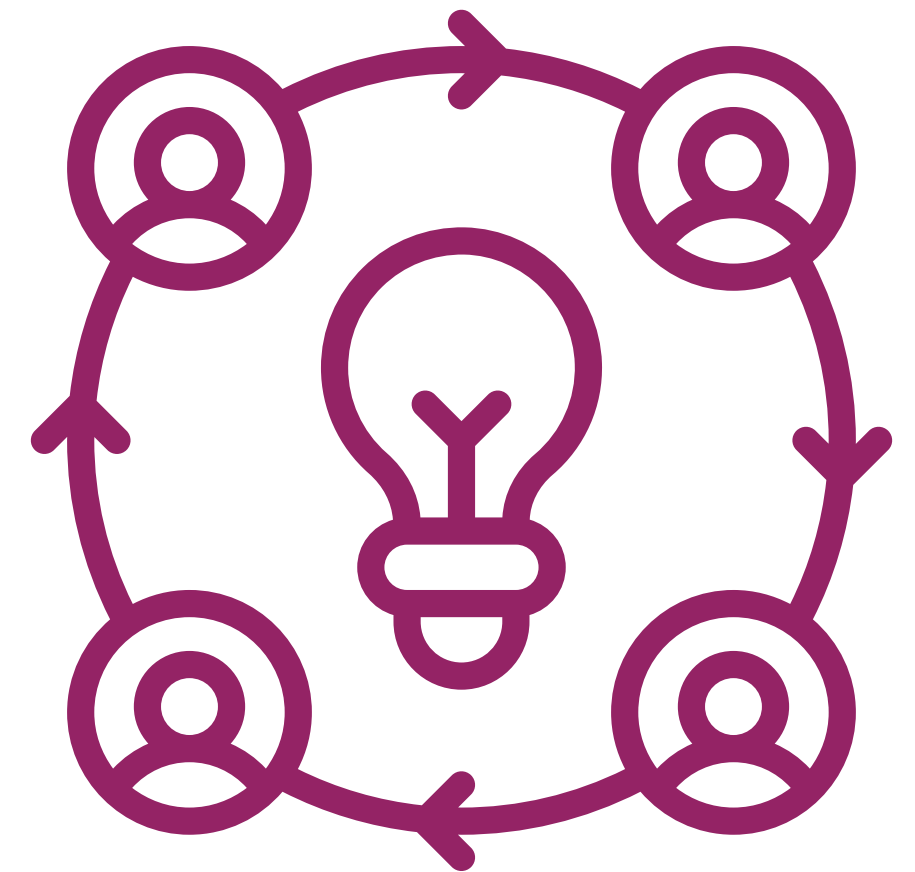
EXCHANGES



SHARE GOOD
PRATICE



DISCUSS
CHALLENGES



COLLABORATE

CURRENT EXCHANGES

GMLPN Member Exclusive



QUALITY



SAFEGUARDING



SEND



FE RECRUITMENT
& WORKFORCE



MENTAL HEALTH
& WELLBEING

EXCHANGES

Open to all providers in GM



CEIAG

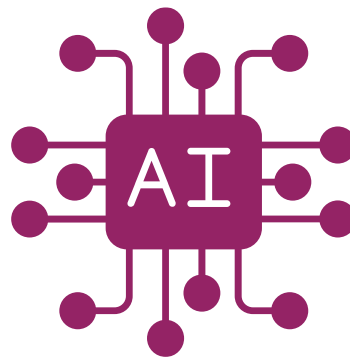


BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

People and Employer Engagement



**Provider
Networks**
Community
of Practice



AI

In partnership with ALPS Alphi (Surrey Provider Network)

IMPACT EVALUATION



<https://www.menti.com/al18zmqpp8qr>



GM SKILLS AWARDS 2026

NOMINATIONS OPEN!



GMLPN
Greater Manchester
Learning Provider Network



Greater Manchester
Chamber of Commerce

Timeline



**w/c 24th
November
2025**

**Nominations
Open**



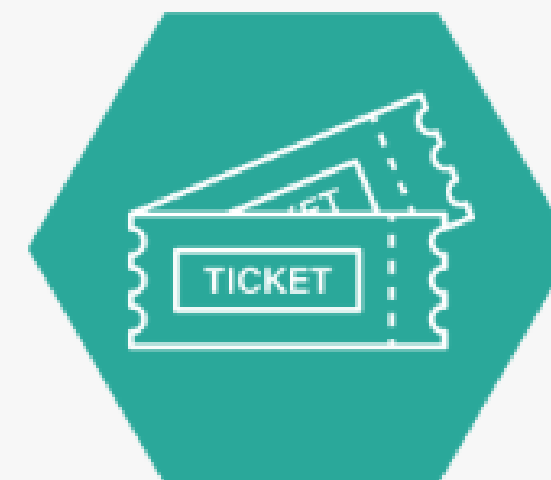
**13th February
2026**

**Nominations
Close**



**w/c 30th
March 2026**

**Shortlists
Announced**



**w/c 30th
March 2026**

Tickets Open



2nd July 2026

**Awards
Evening**



Award Categories



- **Intermediate Apprentice of the Year**
 - Sponsored by Pearson
- **Advanced Apprentice of the Year**
 - Sponsored by GMColleges
- **Higher Apprentice of the Year**
 - Sponsored by Rochdale Training
- **Degree Apprentice of the Year**
- **16-19 Learner of the Year**
 - Sponsored by NOCN
- **Adult Learner of the Year**
 - Sponsored by NCFE
- **Shining Star of the Year**
 - Sponsored by The Growth Company
- **Unsung Hero of the Year**
 - Sponsored by Gateway Qualifications
- **Team of the Year**
 - Sponsored by 1st2 Achieve Training
- **SME of the Year**
 - Sponsored by The Edge Foundation
- **Large Employer of the Year**
 - Sponsored by the NW Apprenticeship Ambassador Network
- **Community Initiative of the Year**
 - Sponsored by Howorth Air Tech
- **Partnership Project of the Year**
 - Sponsored by Manchester, a UNESCO City of Lifelong Learning
- **Outstanding Contribution to FE & Skills 2026**

SEND EXCHANGE CHAIR



Sally Green
Head of Specialist Provision
Tameside College





SEND IN MANCHESTER

Anthony Turner

(Manchester City Council)

**| Sean McLaughlin (Career
Connect)**

GMLPN SEND Exchange

26th January 2026



MANCHESTER POST-16
PATHWAY PARTNERSHIP

Post-16 & SEND in Manchester

Anthony Turner, Manchester

City Council

Sean McLaughlin

Career Connect



Introduction and Context

Rising SEND Complexity

SEND complexity and vulnerability are increasing, requiring specialised support and careful attention to young people's needs.

Impact of Socio-Economic Factors

SEND challenges intersect with mental health, poverty, and care experience, compounding vulnerability in education outcomes.

Local Manchester Challenges

Manchester faces demographic growth and educational capacity pressures impacting SEND learners and transition outcomes.

Strategic Priorities for Inclusion

Leaders must focus on strengthening transitions, supported employment, and inclusive capacity through coordinated action.

National NEET Trends

Rapid EHCP Increase

EHCP numbers in England rose by 10.8% in 2025, continuing a steady upward trend since 2014.

Growing Case Complexity

More learners have multiple conditions such as autism, severe learning difficulties, and mental health issues.

Challenges in Timely Delivery

Only 46.4% of EHCPs met the 20-week deadline in 2024, reflecting delays impacting families and services.

Funding and Resource Gaps

Funding constraints strain local authorities and specialist providers, limiting support despite rising demand.

National NEET Trends

NEET Trends and Statistics

NEET figures fluctuated around 12.5% of youth in 2025, with temporary improvements impacted by economic instability.

SEND and Vulnerabilities

Young people with SEND face greater NEET risks due to mental health, care experience, and education exclusion.

Gender Disparities in NEET

Young women have recently increased NEET rates, while young men remain slightly more affected overall.

Strategies for NEET Reduction

Supported internships and vocational pathways are key to bridging education and employment for vulnerable youth.

Manchester Context

Strong Education Amid Inequalities

Manchester has high-quality schools but faces persistent inequalities for vulnerable learners such as SEND and care-experienced youth.

Capacity Pressures Post-16

Demographic growth has increased post-16 learner cohorts, straining resources and limiting flexibility for complex needs support.

Barriers for Vulnerable Groups

SEND learners, care-experienced, and EAL students are disproportionately NEET, facing delays in placements and limited specialist support.

Coordinated System-wide Response

Manchester requires aligned education, health, and social care services to expand employment pathways and improve interventions.



Career
Connect

Manchester NEET Prevention and Reduction Service

SEND Exchange, January 2026



NEET SEND Young People in Manchester - Context



SEND young people are overrepresented in the city's NEET cohort

EHCP NEET up to 15% of cohort
SEND Support over 20% of NEET cohort

Stretched resources within the council

NEET joiners – the majority of the YP with SEND who become NEET come from mainstream settings

SEMH as primary support characteristic

Supporting SEND NEET young people



Two full-time SEND specialist Careers Advisers in the Manchester NPRS team



Fortnightly NEET EHCP Panels



Strong specialist provision offer in the city



Supported Internships



[Career Connect SEMH Research](#)



0161 2327863



manchester@careerconnect.org.uk



[Website](#)

Charity number: 1141077



**Career
Connect**

Career Connect

Manchester Millennium Powerhouse,
140 Raby Street, M14 4SL



[linkedin.com/company/gmcp](https://www.linkedin.com/company/gmcp)



[@cconnectmcr](https://www.facebook.com/cconnectmcr)



[@connectmanchester](https://www.instagram.com/connectmanchester)

Strategic Priorities

Strengthen Post-16 Transitions

Proactive, person-centered planning from Year 9 to support smooth transitions into post-16 education.

Expand Supported Employment Routes

Promote supported internships and apprenticeships to provide meaningful employment opportunities for SEND learners.

Build Capacity in Provision

Invest in specialist and inclusive education settings and develop workforce skills to meet growing SEND needs.

Leverage Data for Targeted Support

Use data analytics to identify risk clusters and deploy resources for maximum impact in SEND and NEET support.

GMLPN SEND Exchange

26th January 2026



MANCHESTER POST-16
PATHWAY PARTNERSHIP

Post-16 & SEND in Manchester

Anthony Turner, Manchester

City Council

Sean McLaughlin

Career Connect





NEURO INCLUSIVE ORGANISATIONS NETWORK (NION)

**Mari Saki (National
Autistic Society)**



GM LPN SEND Exchange session January 2026

Mari Saeki

Project lead Greater Manchester Autism Consortium,
National Autistic Society



Who are Greater Manchester Autism Consortium (GMAC)?

National Autistic Society Project

Funded by:

NHS Greater Manchester (Integrated Care Board)

GM Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS)

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)

The Team:

Mari, Emma, and Abi

What We Do:

Information, signposting, and advice

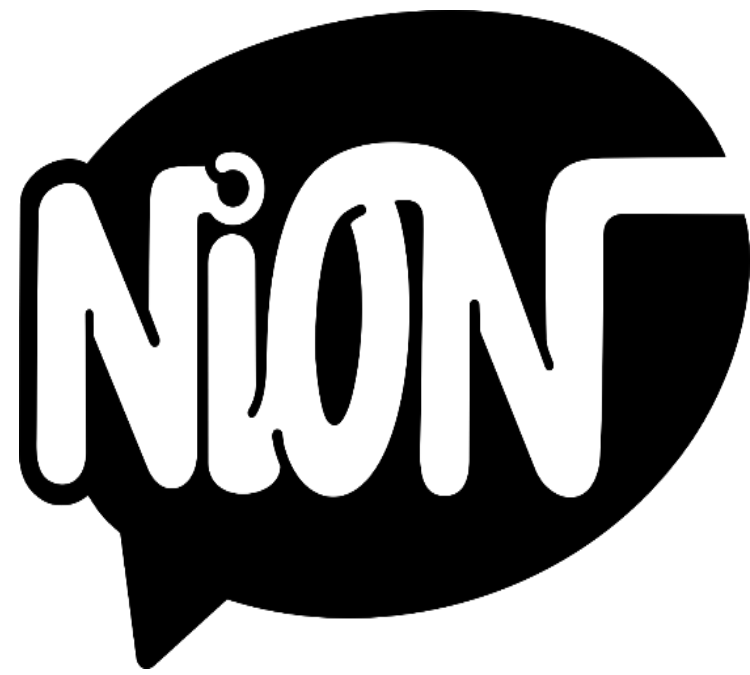
For autistic people, family members, and professionals across Greater Manchester

Support to implement the GM Autism Strategy



What kind of information does GMAC produce?

- Phoneline and website www.autismgm.org.uk
- Parent workshops on:
 - Understanding stress and anxiety related behaviours
 - Sensory
 - Understanding autism
- In school mini taster sessions of all of the above
- Online parent support sessions on teenage years
- Online autistic adult support group
- We recently developed a set of education videos about reasonable adjustments [here](#)
- We developed a puberty guide which can be found [here](#)
- We commissioned an LGBTQ+ guide from The Proud Trust which can be found [here](#)
- We developed an autism and eating disorder resource [here](#)

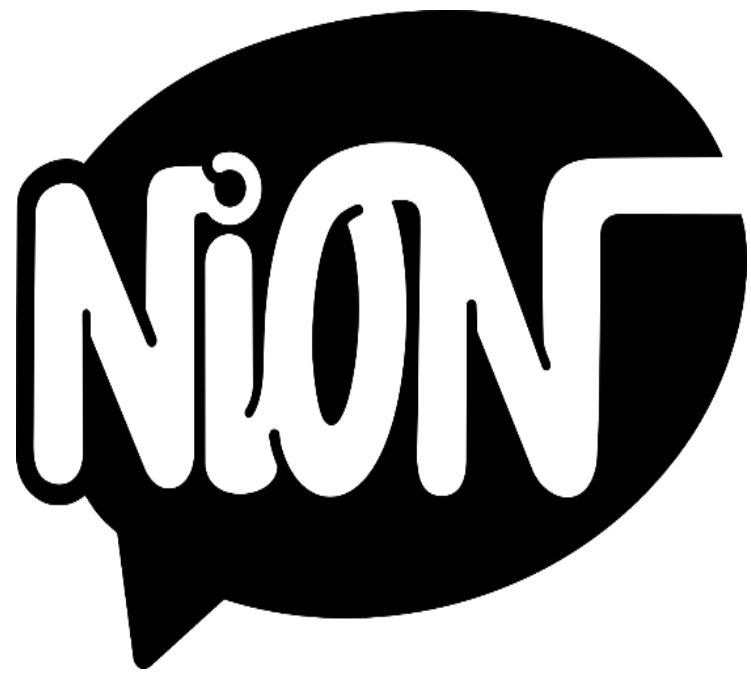


What is NiON?

Neuro-inclusive Organisations Network ([NiON](#)) is an employer network of over 150 organisations coordinated by the Greater Manchester Autism Consortium and National Autistic Society. Membership is made up of employers, support organisations and neurodivergent people who want to share good practice and support one another.

The network hosts two events a year and recently supported the development of the Greater Manchester [Bee Neuroinclusive](#) code of best practice by Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter.

We would welcome new members so please do email mari.saeki@nas.org.uk to sign up.



Getting in touch with us

Phone- 0161 998 4667 (Voice mail which we get as an email)

Email- gmac@nas.org.uk or mari.saeki@nas.org.uk

Web form- <https://autismgm.org.uk/contact-us/>

Follow us on X <https://twitter.com/GMAutismC>

Follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/GMAutismConsortium>

Thanks!

Mari



OFSTED INCLUSION INSIGHTS

OFSTED INCLUSION INSIGHTS

25 providers – Inclusion Judgements:

- Strong standard: 3 providers
- Expected standard: 18 providers
- Needs attention: 4 providers

OFSTED INCLUSION

- This evaluation area considers how leaders and staff identify and support the needs of learners and apprentices. These include:
 - disadvantaged learners and apprentices who face challenges that hinder their educational progress; the term 'disadvantaged' refers to learners and apprentices who have been **eligible for free school meals in the past 6 years and those from low-income families**
 - **learners and apprentices with SEND** and learners who receive **high needs funding**; this includes learners and apprentices who receive **additional support with their learning** and those with an **education, health and care (EHC) plan**
 - learners and apprentices who are known (or previously known) to social care, such as those who are **under the age of 18 and in care, and care leavers**
 - learners and apprentices who are known (or previously known) to **youth-justice services**
 - learners and apprentices who face other **barriers to their learning and/or well-being, including those who were previously not in employment, education or training (NEET)**

OFSTED INCLUSION

- Inspectors focus on the factors that professional standards, non-statutory guidance, research and inspection evidence indicate contribute most strongly to inclusion.
- These factors are:
 - setting high expectations for all learners and apprentices, in particular those who are disadvantaged, those with **SEND or high needs**, those who are known (or previously known) to **social care**, and those who may face **other barriers to their learning and/or well-being**, including those **without level 2 English and/or mathematics**
 - establishing a **culture in which early and accurate assessment of learners' and apprentices' needs is prioritised**
 - **reducing barriers** to learners' and apprentices' education, training and/or well-being to support their development, **involving specialists where appropriate**
 - working closely and effectively with learners and apprentices, parents (where appropriate), professionals and staff, and ensuring that learners' and apprentices' views and aspirations are included in decision-making about the support they receive

INCLUSION: WHAT OFSTED IS SEEING NOW



- Inclusion is strong culturally across the sector
- Consistency and impact are the key differentiators
- SEND remains central to the inclusion judgement

WHAT STRONG INCLUSION LOOKS LIKE

- Early and accurate identification of need
- Graduated, flexible support
- Skilled, confident staff
- Strong employer and external partnerships
- Clear oversight and impact evaluation

SEND: GAPS IDENTIFIED BY OFSTED

- Over-reliance on learner self-disclosure
- Generic SEND awareness training
- Static support plans
- Weak evaluation of impact
- Inconsistent employer involvement

WHAT MOVES PROVIDERS FROM “EXPECTED” TO “STRONG”



- Inclusion embedded strategically, not only operationally
- Data used to anticipate risk
- Support adjusted confidently over time
- Learners supported to become independent

INCLUSION & SEND: MOST COMMON NEXT STEPS

- Strengthening staff expertise
- Improving oversight and governance
- Better use of data
- Embedding inclusion strategies
- Improving employer engagement

REFLECTION POINTS



- How confident are we that our processes identify learner needs early, accurately, and more than once?
- To what extent are our support plans flexible, responsive, and genuinely adapted over time?
- How strong and specialist is our staff expertise in SEND and inclusive practice? How do we know this?
- Is inclusion driven strategically across the organisation, or does it rely more on operational good intentions?
- How well do we use data to understand emerging risks, shape support, and evaluate the impact of what we do?
- How effectively and consistently do we involve employers in planning, adapting, and reviewing support?
- How consistent are our inclusive practices across teams, sites, and tutors?
- Do we deliberately build learner independence? And can we show where support has been tapered over time?
- How strategically do we use external partners, and are we making the most of specialist expertise?
- How well do governors understand inclusion and SEND? And how effectively do they provide challenge and insight?

Area	Strong standard	Expected standard	Needs attention
Overall culture	Inclusion is embedded and relentless; it shapes decisions at every level	Inclusive and supportive culture is clearly evident	Positive intent, but inclusion is inconsistent or emerging
Leadership & strategy	Clear, fully implemented inclusion/SEND strategy that drives practice	Strategy in place and mostly embedded	Strategy recent, incomplete or not implemented
SEND leadership	SEND leaders are experienced, influential and strategic	SEND leadership is clear and effective operationally	SEND leadership lacks influence, capacity or clarity
Identification of need	Needs identified swiftly, accurately and repeatedly	Needs identified early, with some review over time	Reliance on self-disclosure or historic assessments
Use of assessment	Robust screening informs teaching and support immediately	Assessment informs support, though not always consistently	Assessment does not reliably translate into action
Support planning	Graduated, flexible support plans routinely adapted	Support plans generally effective and reviewed	Support plans static, outdated or inconsistent
SEND adaptations in teaching	Staff confidently adapt teaching, assessment and curriculum	Staff make appropriate adjustments	Adjustments are limited, generic or inconsistent
Staff expertise & training	Comprehensive SEND CPD; expertise shared across teams	Regular training provided; variable depth	Training is generic, optional or insufficient
Consistency of practice	High-quality inclusion across all teams and sites	Mostly consistent with minor variation	Practice varies significantly between staff
Employer involvement	Employers actively co-create and review support	Employers involved appropriately	Employers not fully engaged in support planning
Use of external partners	Strategic partnerships enhance outcomes	External support used where needed	Partnerships are ad hoc or underdeveloped
Monitoring & data	Data used proactively to predict risk and improve impact	Data used to monitor progress and outcomes	Limited analysis; impact not evaluated
Review of impact	Leaders evaluate what works and adapt quickly	Some review of effectiveness	Little assurance that support is effective
Learner independence	Support reduced deliberately to build independence	Support tapered when appropriate	Risk of over-dependence or unmanaged need
Learner voice	Learners co-design and review their support	Learners consulted and listened to	Learner feedback not systematically used
Outcomes for SEND learners	SEND learners progress and achieve at least as well as peers	Most SEND learners make expected progress	Outcomes are variable or insufficiently analysed
Governance oversight	Governors provide strong challenge and insight	Governors receive information and provide oversight	Governance lacks SEND/inclusion understanding
Response to emerging need	Swift, confident and coordinated	Appropriate but sometimes reactive	Too slow or inconsistent
Ofsted narrative	“Highly inclusive”, “relentless”, “transformational”	“Inclusive”, “supportive”, “effective”	“Not systematic enough”, “too early to see impact”



DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION

- Have you started to change (in terms of processes / reporting) based on Ofsted's revised focus on Inclusion?
 - E.g. reporting "eligible for free school meals in the past 6 years and those from low-income families"
- What are the biggest challenges you're facing in delivering effective SEND support that haven't been fully discussed today?
- What is one aspect of your SEND or inclusion practice that you feel genuinely works well and improves learner experience?

NEXT STEPS

- Summary shared by GMLPN
- Online space to host resources / slides / meeting minutes – coming soon
- Next meeting – 26th March 2026
 - What do they want to cover?

IMPACT EVALUATION



<https://www.menti.com/alzute83qv15>

SEND

EXCHANGE

Thank you!

