Maisy's experience at the SEND Live Conference 2026

At the SEND Live Conference 2026, I attended having the dual role of interviewer and representative of the Oxfordshire SEND Youth Forum, giving information to those interested in learning more about our purpose and goals for the future. I worked alongside the SEND Youth Forum and recorded their views; had the opportunity to gain insight from delegates that attended, including OCC member Zoe Black, who is the Local offer and Family Help Co-ordinator. I spoke to charities like Dyslexia Shop within my interviews and gained knowledge about how to improve my interview skills. I'm starting to build on my confidence and tried my best to keep the conversation approachable and light.

A big highlight for me was hearing from Joan Charles that she was able to hear in-person feedback on her service, saying: *"SENDIASS is a service which offers impartial support to someone who has an educational concern about a child. I have had lovely conversations with colleagues who have used SENDIASS, and they have also offered feedback; it has been great!"*

Sarah Howard, A member of the Social Care Team at OCC, said, *"I have found SEND Live today to be a great example of how we can work together and learn. I have had some great conversations."*

Kathy, an Inclusion Consultant, said, *"SEND Live is a great opportunity to hear about different ideas and resources; I also enjoy networking with colleagues."*

I interviewed Rachel from Oxford Brookes, and she said, *"SEND Live is a great way for us all to share in our knowledge, learn from each other, and, for me, it's been nice to catch up with friends."*

I interviewed Rihanna, who was a member of the Work Experience Team, and she said, *"I have engaged with lots of people at SEND Live today. I have enjoyed doing my job, and I like telling people about my tasks for the day."*

I asked my fellow SEND Youth Forum members, Alessandra and Mikayla; they said, *"We are here to promote the SEND Youth Forum. It is a mixed age advisory group of SEND young people. The end goal is to create a more inclusive Oxfordshire. We have found the entire day incredibly interesting; there are many different areas and subjects to learn about. We need to gain confidence when talking about the youth forum, and this is the perfect place to do that."*

I'll be attending the Reverse Recruitment Fair on the 26th of November, and I'm excited to offer my experience to employers at the Listening Lounge and speak to more young people about their barriers to employment. I will be re-interviewing Omar

Mentesh for my next SEND Employment Newsletter to speak about his own challenges and barriers relating to the workplace. Also, to find out more about his incredible work within the criminal justice world.

I will be back again for SEND Live 2027, where I look forward to speaking to more delegates about the importance of inclusion. My SEND Live hopes are for more young people to attend and speak. I will also be representing the SEND Youth Forum again; I hope more members will join me!

If you are interested in seeing the event in action, seek out the SEND Live 2026 highlights video linked here: SEND Live 2026 - YouTube





