

**Norfolk & Waveney
ASD/ADHD Support
Service November
2021**



Dear Families...

Well done for making it through the first half term of the school year. Hopefully the teething problems have been resolved and your children and young people are beginning to settle down into the new school year. We had so many calls from parents asking for support around school

issues early in the term that our Zoom Information Session for Parents in October was called 'Let's Talk about School'. For those who were not able to join us, here are some of the main points which may help you to avoid fireworks beyond 5th November.



A good school should be:

- Inclusive – not just including your child in the curriculum but in the wider school community including clubs, trips, performances and sporting activities.
- Differentiating – making the small adaptations to class work and home work to help each child to succeed. This might be as simple as giving a poor speller a word bank to use in a writing task or a poor writer a pencil grip.
- Looking for barriers to learning – and using their 'best endeavours' to overcome them.
- Responding to needs and not waiting for diagnoses.
- Communicating with parents about the barriers they see and the steps they are taking to address these.
- Making 'reasonable adjustments' to allow children identified as having special educational needs or disabilities to access learning and make progress.
- Accessing the external agencies available to them as and when necessary.
- Using a system of 'plan, do, assess, review' to support children and considering an Education, Health and Care Plan when enough progress is still not being made.

My child needs more support. How do I approach the school?

- Have a clear understanding of the previous section and what a good school should look like. I hope it did not sound complicated because it really is not. To sum up, your child should be able to take part in the things other children are enjoying, his teacher should plan his work to give him the best chance of success. If he is

struggling the school should try to work out why and put additional supports and interventions

in place. They should monitor how successful these are and keep you up to date with how things are going and think about an EHCP application if he is still not making progress.

- Have a look at the school website. The school will have key policies online for parents to read including their SEND policy. If a school has written something in their policy, they should be doing it. You should also be able to read their SEND Annual Report which is your school's contribution to the Local Authority's 'Local Offer' and also have a look for their SEND Provision Map which will list the various interventions they use to address the needs of children with SEND.
- Know some of the key terminology. "I think it is so unfair that Jack cannot go on the school trip. He is so upset." Will not have the same impact as "Surely barring a child from a school trip is not inclusive? As a child with SEND, should you not be making reasonable adjustments to allow him to access the trip alongside the others?" Or "I know we do not have a diagnosis yet, but my understanding is that you should be basing your approach on his needs and not his diagnosis." Or "Jack has such a short attention span, which you recognise, so why is his homework the same as everyone else's with no differentiation?"
- Keep lines of communication open by being assertive but never aggressive. You want the school to see you as a parent they can work with and this can only benefit your child or young person.
- Recognise the things which have already been done for your child, even if it was a while ago. A useful approach is to thank the school for what has already been done, but then ask 'what more can we now do?'
- Think about emailing the school with your concerns rather than speaking to someone in the playground. This allows you to clearly set out all the issues without forgetting any. Finish with asking that they please respond to each point as soon as possible. You will then have the email trail as proof of what they have promised to do.
- Be open about any challenges you are dealing with at home. Just as it can be undermining for you when the school tells you that your child is 'perfect' in school, the reverse can be true if you tell the school they are 'perfect' at home. If you tell the school about difficulties and the strategies you are using to improve things, it says 'I am playing my part and I now want you to step up.'
- Be realistic, especially if you are dealing with a mainstream school, which may be underfunded and understaffed, while trying to deal with many children with SEND. 1:1 TAs for example are the exception now. Adults in class will be supporting a

- number of children. They may make sure your child understood the teacher's instructions and help them to start the task but then move away to support another child. A good TA will support as required but try to avoid over-dependence. Schools are allocated a set number of hours of an Educational Psychologist's time per term and sometimes will have no choice but to tell you that there will be a wait for your child to be seen. And remember that they are responsible for ensuring that *every* child is safe and that they can *all* make progress and reach their potential.
- BUT, there are so many 'reasonable adjustments' which cost nothing and which can make a big difference to a child. These could be as simple as allowing a child to eat away from the dinner hall at lunchtime if the noise and smell are difficult, relaxing the uniform code if wearing school shoes or school caps for example is problematic, allowing a child inside school five minutes early (or late) to avoid the playground crush or noisy locker room, letting you know in advance that her teacher or trusted adult are off sick so that you can prepare her for the change, using her specialised subject in a writing task to give her a chance to shine, having a clear visual timetable visible from her desk or giving her classroom 'jobs' which not only raise self-esteem but allow movement breaks..
- Do look at the excellent websites which specialise in giving parents information about education, SEND and knowing their rights. You will find more about these below.
- Be aware that an EHCP is not right for every child and often schools are reticent because they know an application is likely to fail. They were mainly designed for children with the most complex needs across the areas of education, health and care so perhaps with a medical condition, missing lots of school and so falling behind educationally, for a child who, despite clear evidence gathered over a period of time of various interventions, is still not making progress or for a child who really needs a specialised setting to meet their needs and will not get a place without an EHCP. But please know that you can apply yourself if the school won't and that your child does not need to have a formal diagnosis of any kind.



The above is very much a whistlestop tour to try to help you to feel more informed, empowered and confident about approaching a school with some of your concerns. Just as your children are individuals, schools have individual strengths and difficulties but if you tell a school that you want to work with them to make school a safer, less worrying or more productive place for your child or young person, most will respond very positively.

If you want more information or advice about SEN Support in schools and what your rights are, your first port of call should be Norfolk SEND Partnership at

www.norfolksendpartnershiass.org.uk /Suffolk Sendiass at www.suffolksendiass.co.uk

You can view a short video by the Norfolk SEND Partnership on the NHS Website, Just One Norfolk. Click on the link <https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/childhood-development-additional-needs/behaviour-sleep/positive-behaviour-support-pbs/pbs-session-6> Go to bottom of the page and click on the icon which says FAQs about Education.

Norfolk and Suffolk each have a Local Offer website containing masses of information about Schools and Learning, EHCPs and exclusions.

IPSEA (Independent Provider of Special Education Advice) <https://www.ipsea.org.uk/> even provide model letters which you can use in communicating with schools or tribunals.

Special Needs Jungle <https://www.specialneedsjungle.com/> has parent-led information and resources about children and young people, 0 – 25.

What support can you access in NOVEMBER 2021?

ON-LINE GROUPS

DROP IN TEA/COFFEE AND CHAT (ZOOM)

ZOOM MEMBER ID 943 5373 4984 PASSCODE 107899 Next meeting is Wednesday 24th November 10 – 11am

A friendly, informal chat with like-minded parents and a member of our team to answer questions.

NOVEMBER Information Session for Parents/Carers (ZOOM)

Our Information Session on Thursday 25th November 10 – 11am is Understanding Sensory Needs in Children with ASD Meeting ID: 927 0515 3725 Passcode: 297430

Learn more about sensory needs and the use of visuals.

FACE TO FACE GROUPS

PUFFINS ASD PROGRAMME – a *post-diagnosis* course for parents/carers

Do you now have a **formal diagnosis of ASD** for your child or young person? Would you like to attend a free, comprehensive four week course with input from NDS professionals? Read on.....A few places still available in **Norwich** on **4th, 11th, 18th and 25th November**, 9:30 to 12:30 at Breckland Hall, Breckland Rd, New Costessey, NR5 0RW

Week One – Understanding ASD and Supporting Behaviour (Family Action)

Week Two – Sensory Processing – led by Occupational Therapist (NDS)

Week Three – Education – led by ASD Specialist Team (EPSS)

Week Four – Communication –led by Speech and Language Therapist (NDS)

For more information about this four week course please ring 01760 720302 and ask to speak to Susan or Kerry or email Swaffham@family-action.org.uk If you cannot make this course, don't worry. We will soon be advertising our full programme of Puffins courses for 2022.

Long Stratton – Norfolk Positive Behaviour Strategies – **STARTS 1ST NOVEMBER**

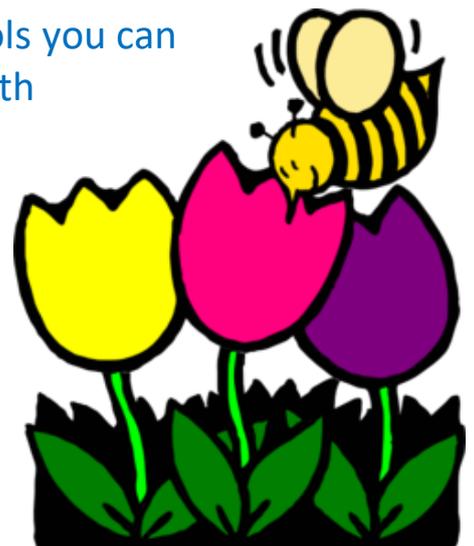
Dealing with challenging behaviour? Needing some tools you can use at home? Wanting help to understand you child with additional needs?

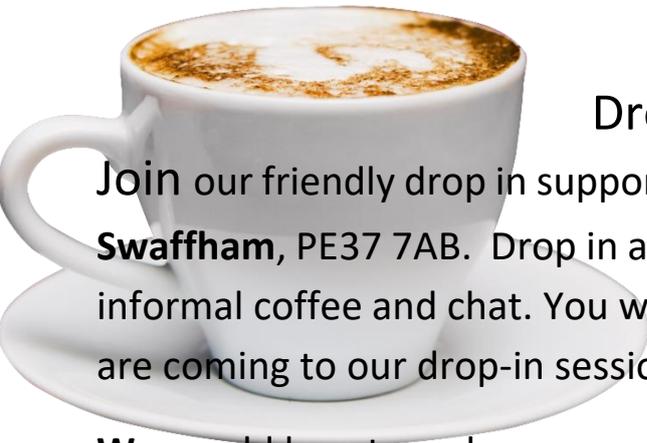
We will be running a face to face Norfolk Positive Behaviour Strategies course in Long Stratton on the following dates:

Monday 1st, 8th and 15th November from 10.30-12.30pm



Please contact our Swaffham office on 01760 725801 to book a place or to find out more.





Drop in for coffee and a chat.....

Join our friendly drop in support sessions upstairs in Costa Coffee, Market Place, **Swaffham**, PE37 7AB. Drop in any time between **9:30am and 11:30am** for a very informal coffee and chat. You will get 10% off your drink and snack if you say you are coming to our drop-in session.

We would love to welcome you on **Wednesdays 10th November, 8th December, 12th January and 9th February**. Go on, put those dates in your diaries.

**COMING
SOON!**

January 2022



Norfolk Positive Behaviour Strategies



Join this free, three week course running in Gaywood Church Rooms, Gaywood, King's Lynn, PE30 4DZ
Mondays 10th, 17th and 24th January 9:30 to 12.

Meet other parents who understand what you are dealing with.
Gain a greater understanding of what makes your child tick.
Learn new strategies to use at home.
Chat to our team about the challenges you are facing.

Contact us on 01760 725801 (Ask for Susan, Mary or Toby)
or email Swaffham@family-action.org.uk to book your place.



Also in January 2022
Norfolk Positive Behaviour Strategies
will be coming to..
THETFORD
Contact us as above for more information.



To contact us for advice and support related to ASD/ADHD:

Phone Swaffham 01760 725801/720302 or Email
Swaffham@family-action.org.uk

Phone Gorleston 01493 650220 or Email Gorleston@family-action.org.uk

For North and South Norfolk and Norwich please ring Swaffham
or Email Central@family-action.org.uk

Unsure which area to contact? Use any of the above – We are all
here to help you.

