



HaringeyAutism

Your local branch of the National Autistic Society

Information Pack for Parents and Carers

2021/22

Please email us **now** with your contact details to **haringeyautism@gmail.com** if you wish to be added to the Haringey Autism mailing list and to receive our regular news items.

Being on our free e-mailing list will keep you updated with important local and national changes that may affect you, and with opportunities for local respite and provision and activities for you and your child and for training events for you as a parent. It will also link you to a large network of parents who understand your situation, invite you to any events that we run.

Introduction

***If you don't have time to read through this booklet right now,
just start with these four things:-***

- 1) Apply for the DLA(Disability Living Allowance) form by downloading and printing from www.gov.uk site or tel: 0800 121 4600 and request a form.**
- 2) Get an appointment at Markfield to help you complete the DLA form - call the Family Support Team Administrator on 0203 667 5233, call their helpline on 0208 802 2611 for educational issues and check their website for free training courses, children's and parents' groups. www.markfield.org.uk**
- 3) Ask to be added to Haringey Autism NAS mailing list: haringeyautism@gmail.com**
- 4) Then read the very last section of this booklet from page 53 onwards – How Can I help my Child at Home?**

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About Haringey Autism

Haringey Autism is the Haringey branch of the NAS (National Autistic Society). This pack has been designed for parents and carers of children and young people with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder or who suspect their child/ young person has autism.

Have you just had a child diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder, (autism, or autism spectrum condition)? Autism is a lifelong condition that affects how a person communicates and interacts with other people. People with autism may also experience a need for sameness or familiarity that leads to them having, for example, unusually strong interests and/or rigid behaviour. Autism is also referred to as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC). Autism has had various different names in the past (e.g., Asperger's, classic autism).

An autism diagnosis can be difficult to come to terms with. You may be coping with a condition you know very little about and trying to find new ways for everyone to live together and feel supported. It is estimated that approximately one in 100 children in the UK have autism.

Many parents feel there is very little guidance on what to do next.

Our own organisation, Haringey Autism, is the Haringey branch of the NAS (National Autistic Society). We are over 400 families in the borough all with children on the autistic spectrum. We send out regular information by email to keep families in touch with a range of activities or services being offered to families, we run a helpline and advice service via email or phone, a website (<http://haringeyautism.port5.com>) where you can find this pack, all available free of charge. Email if you wish to be added to our mailing list or want to seek support:

Email haringeyautism@gmail.com

We hope this pack will help you find your way through the minefield of local health, education, social services, and respite care and so be able to better access what help is there for you. We hope it will help you to meet other parents who have the same concerns as you, understand your situation and can offer their valuable experience to you. Lastly, we hope it will open up to you some fun ideas of where to go and what to do with your child in and around Haringey, to enlighten you on ways to help with behaviour, everyday problems and communication.

The first edition of this pack came out in 2002. This copy was updated in January 2021. To keep our next version up to date, it would help greatly if you find a new or changed system, organisation, playscheme etc to let us know so that we can update the master copy. Many thanks, Haringey Autism.

Abbreviations

Some Abbreviations you may hear and what they mean:

ABA	Applied Behavioural Analysis
AEN	Additional Educational Needs
ASC	Autistic Spectrum Condition
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
AS	Asperger Syndrome
CAF	Common Assessment Framework (form)
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CDC	Child Development Centre
CIN	Child in Need
CP	Child Protection
CYPS	Children and Young People's Service
DLA	Disability Living Allowance
EHCP	Education Health and Care Plan
EP	Educational Psychologist
EY	Early Years
GFCF	Gluten-free casein-free
HFA	High functioning autism
IASS	Information, Advice and Support Service
IEP	Individual Education Plan
LAC	Looked after child
LD	Learning Difficulties
LDA	Learning Difficulties Assessment
LEA/LA	Local Educational Authority/Local Authority
LSA	Learning Support Assistant
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulties
NAS	National Autistic Society
OT	Occupational Therapy
PDA	Pathological Demand Avoidance
PCT	Primary Care Trust (Health services)
PIP	Personal Independence Payments
RAS	Resources Allocation Systems (form)
SENDIASS	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service
SCD	Social and communication disorder
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulties
SALT/SLT	Speech and Language Therapy/therapist
SNA	Special Needs Assistant
SPOE	Single Point of Entry
TA	Teaching Assistant
TAC	Team around the Child
TAF	Team around the Family

How to use this booklet

This booklet is divided into four sections to help you to find the relevant information. Please note the number within the geometrical shape on the right of the page; this will be the section you are currently reading.

1

**Diagnosis &
what happens next**

Pages 7 - 12

2

Education and Specialist Help

*Pre-schoolers
Primary School children
Secondary and post 16 children*

Pages 13 - 34

3

Basic Services

*Health
Haringey Social Services / Respite Care
Financial Help*

Pages 35 - 45

4

Support

*Leisure and Activities
Support Groups and Helplines
How you can help your child at home*

Pages 46 - 61

How do I get a diagnosis for my child?

The characteristics and severity of autism varies from one person to another, this is why autism is referred to as a 'spectrum' disorder or condition. In order for a diagnosis to be made, a person will usually be assessed as having significant difficulties with social communication and social interaction and will have one or more of the following characteristics:

- *Be resistant to change or doing things differently*
- *Have restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities - for example always playing the same game in the same way or repeatedly lining toys up in a particular order*
- *Many people with autism will also have problems with 'executive functioning' – they have significant difficulties with planning, organizing, and regulating their behaviour.*
- *Strong sensory preferences and/or sensitivities are also very commonly seen in children with autism.*
- *Have great difficulties communicating what they need or want because of their difficulties with verbal and non-verbal communication.*
- *Struggle to do 'chit-chat' or to have reciprocal (2-way) conversations (they may not know how to start or keep a conversation going and/or like to focus on things that interest them/they know about).*
- *Find it hard to understand other people's non-verbal communication (facial expressions, gestures) and tone of voice.*
- *Have a very literal understanding of language and find metaphors and idioms confusing.*
- *Don't know and/or understand the unwritten social rules around what is ok and what is not ok to say (and may, therefore, make insensitive or insulting comments) and do not understand how to behave in social situations (and may, therefore, for example, stand too close to another person).*
- *Struggle to understand and interpret other people's thoughts, feelings and actions.*
- *Have difficulties predicting what will happen next in social situations.*
- *Develop complex rules and systems to manage social interactions.*
- *Have behaviours such as biting, pinching, kicking, pica (putting inedible items in the mouth), or self-injurious behaviour.*

If you suspect your child has autism, you will need a medical diagnosis to access appropriate help. The benefits of early help (starting from as early as age 2) are well documented, and so an early and accurate diagnosis will be to your child's advantage.

Generally, within Haringey, if an autistic spectrum disorder is suspected, your GP or community health visitor, health worker, SENCO, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist or educational psychologist will refer you to the local

Child Development Centre (CDC) at

St Ann's Hospital, St Ann's Road, NI5 3TH

Tel: **020 3224 4655** Email: **whh-tr.CDCReferrals@nhs.net** or

website: **<https://www.whittington.nhs.uk/default.asp?c=3963>**



Your child will be assessed at one, or more often two, meetings.

A written diagnosis with a description of your child's main areas of strengths and difficulty will follow in due course after the final assessment clinic.

For all children, the diagnosis will mean that your child will be added to the autism register held by the autism team, and their diagnosis made known to Children's Services. For under 5s, it may lead to you being offered a place on the 'Social Communication Group' run by the Speech and Language Therapy department for autistic children or children with a social-communication disorder, and it may propel you more quickly towards the Early Years Panel check, who allocate specialist pre-school places, and also get you a place on an Earlybird scheme run by the autism team which will teach you more about how to understand and manage your under-5 child.

For secondary school age children, the referral will go to Haringey CAMHS rather than to the CDC or direct to Tavistock and Portland.

For under 12s, if the diagnosis is not straightforward and a second diagnostic opinion is needed, the child will be seen at Great Ormond Street Hospital.

The Child Development Centre (CDC) is based at St Ann's Hospital. Tel: 020 3224 4655.

I'm struggling to get a referral – what now?

If you're finding it difficult to get a referral for your child, being assertive and persistent can help. You might also find the following tips useful.

It is often easier to get referrals from your child's preschool/nursery/school as they can provide better evidence based on their observations and interactions.

- *Before your appointment, prepare notes on what you want to say to your GP.*
- *Keep a diary to record any unusual behaviour by your child and how often it happens.*
- *Give your GP some information on autism from The National Autistic Society (see above section on Diagnosis) or encourage your GP to contact them on email info@nas.org.uk if they have any questions about the condition.*

My child has a diagnosis, now what?



There are a number of Haringey services who may now enter your child's life to provide support. All are over-stretched and recent government cuts have done nothing to improve the situation, and you may at times feel like you need to become a lobbyist more than a parent to get the right help, but don't give up, you are your child's main advocate, and the help can be there if you keep at them long and hard enough.

However – there is also a lot you can – and will have to - do yourselves – please educate yourself about your child's autism, extraordinary abilities and extraordinary difficulties. The more you learn about autism, the more fascinating you will find your child. Learn about the causes of behavioural problems, common everyday problems and how to improve communication. You can make life so much easier for your family and for your autistic child if you do. See the back of this pack for some starting ideas.

The main areas of state-funded provision and responsibility are divided between the Local Authority in the Children and Young People's service which is made up of Education Services and Social Services provided by Haringey Council, and the Health Service , provided by Whittington Health.

Education Services – The SEN (Special Educational Needs) department are responsible for providing for inclusion in mainstream nursery care, under 5 centres, pre-schools, primary and secondary education, and also placements in specialist in-borough and out-of-borough schools, Earlybird programme, pupil referral units and supporting some home-schooling programme (only from the tuition centre at Bruce Grove Tuition Centre). EHC plans (Education, Health and Care plans (see page 11) also fall under the umbrella of the local authority's SEN department. Education services also fund the Educational Psychology service who assess children for statementing and annual reviews, and the SENDIASS (Information, Advice and Support Service) based at Markfield (Alena Lerari, SENDIASS Manager), who can provide advice and support to Haringey parents having problems obtaining an EHCP or accessing appropriate education for their child.

Social services - The Disabled Children's Team fund some home-centred advice and short breaks through an assessment called RAS (Resource Allocation System form), to assess what your level of need is; if you qualify you should be awarded a Personal Budget. They also oversee Child-in-Need (CIN) meetings, when families with disabled children are really struggling to cope.

Health Services - provide diagnosis, on-going health care, speech and language therapy, health visitors, occupational therapy and mental health services such as CAMHS.

Contact the SEND Local Offer Team:

Phone: 020 8489 1913 Email: sen@haringey.gov.uk

Additional Needs and Disabilities, Alexandra House -

2nd Floor, 10 Station Road,

Wood Green N22 7TR

For any of the Haringey SEN team, please see the numbers below.

- Autism Advisory Team - 020 8489 5084
- Central SEN Services - 020 8489 1913
- Educational Psychology Service - 020 8489 3004
- The Hearing Impairment Team - 020 8442 2754
- Language Support Team - 020 8489 5090
- The Inclusion Team, including Area Senco's - 020 8489 3498



Post-diagnostic support

- Parents/carers of children under 11 years old diagnosed at the Child Development Centre at St Ann's Hospital are offered a two part post diagnostic parent group
- CAMHS offer post diagnostic support for the young person/family dependent upon need, referral is needed for CAMHS. Usually, children are seen for challenging behaviours or severe mental health needs.
- Language and Autism Support Team (LAST) offer a range of programme of events and training for parents/carers and families of children with Language and Communication Needs, Social Communication Difficulties and Autism. Together with the Child Development Centre and other professionals they offer parents/carers access to a two part 'Autism Family Seminar' session using resources developed by the National Autistic Society.
<https://www.haringey.gov.uk/children-and-families/local-offer/health-services/language-and-autism-support-team>
Contact: Telephone: 020 8489 5039
Email: LAST@haringey.gov.uk

Local authorities are required to develop a Local Offer which gives information on provision for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) both in and outside the local area. See: <https://www.haringey.gov.uk/children-and-families/local-offer>

There are a number of different official support strands:

Charities/Parent Groups that might be helpful

LOCAL CHARITIES

Markfield: A disabled family centre in Markfield Park, South Tottenham.

There are 3 parents groups: for parents of under 16s (Fridays), for Turkish speaking parents(Wednesdays), and for parents of over 16s in Transition and Adulthood(Fridays). The carer forums meet from 10 am to 12 pm during a 10 week term. Markfield Park, Markfield Road, London N15 4RB Tel: 0208 800 4134
Email: enquiries@markfield.org.uk

A new team of Befriending Volunteers will be matching families with volunteers after spring 2021. Run by Lisa and Rakhat - email familyadmin@markfield.org.uk

A huge range of free courses on all aspects of parenting a SEN child, plus an under 5s development group Stepping Stones. See the website for upcoming courses on Makaton, Positive Behaviour Support, Autism, Occupational therapy, EHC Plans and more. Email familyadmin@markfield.org.uk



SENDIASS at Markfield: <https://markfield.org.uk/haringeys-send-information-advice-support-service/> Haringey's Special Educational Needs Independent Advice and Support Service for help with any educational issues.

Call 020 8802 2611

NAS - The National Autistic Society is the leading charity for autistic people and their families. NAS offers confidential information, advice and support. They can be contacted by telephone 0808 800 4104 or via their online enquiry forms <https://www.autism.org.uk/enquiry>

Your local branch is Haringey Autism, email haringeyautism@gmail.com with any queries or requests for local information or signposting.

Kith and Kids: an organisation with a lot of activities specific for people with autism, severe learning difficulties, their families and siblings. Based in Tottenham at The Irish Centre.

Tel: 0208 801 7432

<https://clarahost.clara.net/www.kithandkids.org.uk/>

Caris: Caris offers holistic support and advise to families with children in the borough of Haringey. CARIS Haringey, St Philip's Church, Philip Lane, N15 4HJ. Play sessions, holiday schemes, food bank, clothing, help with housing advice for those in temporary housing

Tel: +44 020 8801 3004 Email: info@carisharingey.org.uk

Mums in Mainstream: a Haringey group for Mums or female carers of kids with Autism diagnosis. It is not for Autism professionals. It is not restricted to Haringey locals but most are based within the borough. It is a members-only FB group, joining is by word of mouth and invitation.

Send enquiries and requests to join to: 07961 393945

ABC Autism BAME Community: A Haringey group for BAME children with autism.

Facebook: ABC Autism Bame Community Tel: 07534 723969 email: abamecproject@gmail.com

The Challenge Group: a under 5's playgroup for families with babies and children with additional needs. Based at St James Church, Muswell Hill Road, N10. Term times, Fridays 10 to 11.30am.

Tel 020 8883 6277 – Celia Webster, Hannah Whitehead..

Action For Kids: <https://www.my-afk.org/> a charity supporting disabled children, young people and their families with after school and holiday schemes, and work training. Based in Hornsey.

Difficult Parents: <https://www.difficultparent.com/>- this is an independent parents' group who are keen to reach parents who may not want to attend meetings but will contribute their views online, or offer support and online discussion

NATIONAL CHARITIES



National Autistic Society. A helpline and huge range of online information about autism.
www.autism.org.uk

Family Fund: A national charity, Provide grants for a wide range of items, such as washing machines, fridges, computers, holiday vouchers.
www.familyfund.org.uk

Caudwell Childrens Charity: a national charity, Caudwell Children helps disabled children across the UK. They act as a safety net for families who are unable to gain the help they need with grants and sensory packs and advice.
Tel: 0345 300 1348 Email: charity@caudwellchildren.com
<https://www.caudwellchildren.com>

Contact. A national organisation with a wealth of information on disability and benefits and your rights and a helpline.
www.contact.org.uk

Challenging Behaviour Foundation: A national charity focussed specifically on children, young people and adults with severe learning disabilities whose behaviour is described as challenging. Making a difference to the lives of children, young people and adults across the UK by providing information and support, running workshops and speaking up for families on a national level. General Enquiries: **01634 838739** Family Support Line: **0300 666 0126**
www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk

ACE: <http://www.ace-ed.org.uk/> - ACE Education, 72 Durnsford Road, London N11 2EJ
Tel: 0300 0115 142

IPSEA <https://www.ipsea.org.uk/> - Independent Parental Special Educational Advice offers free and independent legally based information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with all kinds of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The **Haringey Autism** emailing system will always carry details of any forthcoming local courses. Join Haringey Autism by email: haringeyautism@gmail.com – your local NAS group and link up with other parents – always a great means of support and information sharing!

Children and young people with autism may have difficulties in one or more of these areas of need which impact on their education:

Communication and interaction – difficulties with speech, language and [communication](#). Children and young people may have difficulty taking part in conversations, either because they find it hard to understand what others are saying or meaning, or because they have problems with fluency of speech and sound production. Children and young people on the spectrum have difficulty making sense of the world and may be easily distracted by certain stimuli, such as noise, bright lights or strong smells. They will often have problems with [changes](#) to their routine.

Cognition and learning – difficulties in gaining basic literacy and numeracy skills or understanding concepts. Children and young people may need more practical activities, tasks set out in smaller steps, or specific programmes to support development of literacy and numeracy skills.

Social, mental and emotional health – difficulties with emotional and social development, immature [social skills](#) and difficulty making and sustaining good relationships. Children and young people may become withdrawn and isolated, or display challenging, disruptive behaviour or have [meltdowns](#). Some children on the spectrum may have additional diagnoses of attention deficit disorder (ADD) or [attention deficit hyperactive disorder](#) (ADHD).

Sensory and/or physical needs – these needs can be wide ranging and may require adaptations to the curriculum, study programme or physical environment. Many children and young people on the spectrum may also have [sensory](#) and/or physical needs. For example, they may be hypo- (under) or hyper- (over) sensitive to noise, sight, smell and touch. They may also have fine and/or gross motor skill difficulties, such as difficulties with pencil grip, balance and awareness of personal space.

The School based stages of support

SEN Support in mainstream education

Getting the right support in education is important and your child/young person may be entitled to extra help in school (via SEN Support) if they have severe difficulties in one or more of the above areas of need. All state maintained nurseries, mainstream schools, academies and free schools that are not special schools, Pupil referral units, 16-19 & alternative provision academies and further education settings must comply with their 'best endeavours' duty to make sure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil on roll, who has SEN. (Section 66 of the Children and Families Act 2014).

Furthermore, The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2015) explains how local authorities and others should identify, assess and provide for children and young people with SEN See:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

The SEND code of practice describes the level of support offered to children with SEN. In your child's classroom, all work should be differentiated (set at an appropriate level for each child) but if an early education setting, school or college believes that a child has SEN, they will need to put in place extra support. This is called SEN Support and may include the use of professional services from outside the early years setting, school or college.

To request SEN support for your child in school, request a meeting with the SENCO (The SENCO is the teacher in your child's school or nursery with day-to-day responsibility for SEN) and the class teacher.

You may find it helpful to ask if a friend or advisor from SENDIASS (Markfield) can come to the meeting with you.

This draft letter may help. It's a good idea to keep a copy of your letter to take with you to the meeting as a reminder of the concerns you've listed.

Dear [insert head teacher's name],

Child's name and date of birth I am concerned that [insert child's name] is not making adequate progress in school and may have special educational needs. In particular I am worried about:

[list your concerns e.g.

- slow rate of progress in reading
- difficulty in relating to others
- possibility of being bullied
- poor communication skills]

I would like to meet with you to discuss my concerns and what the school can do to help.

I would also like to bring my friend/advisor [insert their name]. The questions I would like to discuss are:

[list questions]

I would like a copy of my child's school records and a copy of the school's SEN policy.

I hope that we can work in partnership, so that [child's name] can do as well as possible.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

[Your name]

Before the meeting:

- *It's useful to do some preparation before meeting school staff. The following questions may help you:*
- *What extra help has your child received and how effective has it been?*

- *Is your child's progress reviewed regularly? Have you had the opportunity to comment on their progress?*
- *Have any professionals, such as an educational psychologist, seen your child and suggested ways to help?*
- *Does your child have a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder? If so, does the school have details of it? Are your child's difficulties getting worse? What changes would you like to see?*

At the meeting:

Discuss your child's needs,

The SENCO must make an analysis of their needs, using the teacher's assessment and experience and evidence of their progress, attainment and behaviour.

The SENCO must agree if Special Educational Needs (SEN) support is required and draw up an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a support plan

Your views and your child's views should also be taken into account. You should always be consulted and kept informed of any action taken to help your child and of the outcome of this.

Ensure that support is put in place and his/her pupil profile is shared with other teaching staff

Support and profile reviewed at least annually

Once your child has been identified as having SEN, the school should take action to put effective support in place. You must be told about any special educational provision put in place for your child and the four main steps of implementing the SEN support which form part of the graduated approach must be adhered to.

Step 1 – Assess

There should be a clear analysis of your child's needs based on the teacher's assessment and experience of your child as well as information about their progress, attainment and behaviour. The assessment should be regularly reviewed. In some cases, outside professionals who may already know your child will liaise with the school to help inform the assessments.

Step 2 – Plan

You must be notified if it is decided that your child needs SEN support. You should also be consulted about the interventions and support to be put into place for your child, as well as the expected impact on their progress and when this will be reviewed.

All staff working with your child should be aware of the approach and teaching strategies being used and of any additional support being provided. This should be recorded on the school's information system.

Step 3 – Do

The class or subject teacher remains responsible for your child's progress on a daily basis, working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved to plan and continually assess the impact of the support/interventions being put into place. In turn, the SENCO should support the class or subject teacher in further assessments, problem solving and advising on effective implementation of the support.

Step 4 - Review

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There should be a clear agreed date to review the effectiveness of the interventions and support put into place and the impact it has had on your child's progress. You and your child (where appropriate) should be given the opportunity to present your views. The class, or subject teacher, working with the SENCO and any external professionals involved with your child, should revise the support in the light of your child's development and progress made.

Involving specialists

If your child makes little or no progress following interventions and support put into place, they should consider involving specialists from outside agencies. This might be, for example, an educational psychologist, an autism outreach specialist or a speech and language therapist, who can give advice and provide more specialist assessments.

You should be consulted if a professional from outside the school is to be involved with your child's education. Any involvement of outside specialists should be discussed and agreed with you and the support your child will receive should be recorded and shared with you. A date should be set for when progress will be reviewed.

What is an EHC plan and does my child need one?

For children or young people who have special educational needs that are more significant, complex and that can't be met through school resources, the local authority will need to make an assessment of their education, health and care needs and may draw up an Education, health and care plan (often referred to simply as 'a plan') which must be reviewed annually. The EHC Plan is compiled by the Local Authority's Special Educational Needs department and takes into account the reports written by the school SENCO, educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, clinicians, teachers, parents and other involved professionals from health and social care.

A plan would have details of any transport needs your child may have and information on any personal budgets and direct payments that you may have chosen.

Local authorities and schools should be re-assessing children and young people with statements and arranging for details of their needs and support to be transferred into an Education, Health and Care plan.

Some children will be given support through school resources before they are offered an assessment. Others may be offered an assessment without having received support in school, depending on their level of need.

When should I apply?

The process for applying yourself for an EHC plan/ Statement is called 'Statutory Assessment or an EHC needs assessment', you should ask for this if you believe:

- *that your child may have a learning difficulty or a disability which is holding them back at school; and*
- *that the school is not able to provide the help your child needs*

You should also ask your LA for a statutory assessment if your child is under school age, and you believe that they will need extra help when they start school. You can do this independently, or your SENCO at nursery or school can do it for you if they are enrolled at school/nursery.

If the SENCO refuses to help, you can still go ahead independently and ask for an assessment. The following letter may help: <https://www.ipsea.org.uk/making-a-request-for-an-ehc-needs-assessment>

The SENDIASS service at Markfield can also help you with this. Call Alena 020 8802 2611. The Local authority must reply within 6 weeks to let you know if they agree or not to go ahead with the assessment.

How do I apply for an EHCP?

Obtaining an EHC Plan that you agree with and which will provide what you feel to be sufficient provision can be a difficult and time consuming process. The time from the first request for an EHC needs assessment to the issuing of an EHC Plan should be no more than 20 weeks.

You need to put your request **in writing** to the Director of Children's Services who is currently, Ms Ann Graham

Director of Children's Services

River Park House, 225 High Road, London, N22 8HQ

T: 020 8489 3883

Email: ann.graham@haringey.gov.uk

Or you can use this link to find the latest contact information:

<https://adcs.org.uk/contacts/directors-of-childrens-services>

The SENDIASS service can help you with the request this (tel 020 8802 2611), they will have a model letter you can use, or you can download one from <https://www.ipsea.org.uk/making-a-request-for-an-ehc-needs-assessment>

When should I hear back?

The Local Authority (LA) must reply within six weeks. Remember: Always ask in writing. Keep a copy of your letter as you will need this should you wish to appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SEND) in the event of a refusal

If the LA refuses to assess they must inform you in writing of your right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. This appeal must be lodged within two months of receiving the refusal letter.

If they agree to assess, they have 14 weeks to carry out the assessment.

You may be told that a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) or Early Help form needs to be filled in before you can apply for assessment. A CAF or Early Help is a multi-agency referral form and is a very useful tool to get you support from education, social services and other departments.

A draft EHC plan will be written and sent to the parents who have 15 days to suggest any changes. In total, the finalised EHC plan should be issued not later than 20 weeks from the initial request.

Once issued, an EHC plan is reviewed annually and provision made can be changed. In reality, very little changes on the EHC plan each year once it has been issued, so it is worth holding out for what you feel to be a plan that will give decent provision for the next few foreseeable years.

2

If you wish to meet with the Special Educational Needs Dept face to face, or to better understand the assessment and EHC plan process, to ask questions and to set up individual appointments if necessary, call SENDIASS for help. Tel 020 8802 2611.

Disagreeing on provision

If you feel that any of the main reports made on your child are inaccurate, or understate the problems, you can ask for changes to be made to that report because understating problems could well result in lesser provision being offered. Make sure your EHC plan/statement is also unequivocal on provision – if the report states your child has a particular need they should specify and quantify what provision your child should have to meet those needs.

If you get nowhere with changes you need to the draft plan, some parents do splash out and have an independent evaluation made by an independent expert to back up their point, however private reports are expensive to obtain - expect to pay £1000 for an independent educational psychologists assessment or £650 plus for a Speech and Language or Occupational Therapy tribunal report from the London Children's Practice (tel 020 7724 1156) for instance, and are not as highly regarded by local authority providers who believe they are not as objective as their own reports.

You can meet with the SEN case officer to discuss your case, however remember that if you request more than one meeting, this might delay the whole process. (A private child advocate is also worth considering though, like going to a solicitor, this costs money. Try www.advocacyandmediation.co.uk.) Most parents in the borough use the **free SENDIASS service at Markfield** to advocate for them and write any necessary letters. Tel 020 8802 2611.

Ace Education: <http://www.ace-ed.org.uk>

IPSEA: <https://www.ipsea.org.uk>

Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (known as IPSEA) is a registered charity (number 327691) operating in England. IPSEA offers free and independent legally based information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with all kinds of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). They also provide training on the SEND legal framework to parents and carers, professionals and other organisations.

Appealing against the Local Authority's decision



There are several points at which you can appeal to a tribunal if you cannot agree with the Local Authority, including if the Local Authority:

- *Will not carry out a statutory assessment of your child's special educational needs, following a request by you or by your child's school.*
- *Refuses to make an EHC plan/statement of your child's special educational needs, after a statutory assessment.*
- *Has made an EHC plan, or has changed a previous EHC plan/statement, and you disagree with the contents.*

The process is explained in material that will be sent to you by the LA when they let you know their decision. www.sendist.gov.uk have a pack explaining how and when to appeal. The IPSEA.org.uk website is also very good on this appeal/tribunal process. There are strict deadlines, so if you are unhappy at any stage make sure you seek support; The SENDIASS, NAS, AFASIC, Contact-a-family, IPSEA and ACE helplines can all give advice, and can suggest reading material to help you through the process. Going to tribunal is sometimes inevitable, but is intensely stressful and can be very expensive, and both sides tend to do all they can to avoid it.

Mediation before a tribunal is now required to try to prevent the high costs of a tribunal.

Transport advice and Help

By law if your child must travel more than 3 miles to get to their educational provision you are entitled to school transport provided by LA. Speak with your SEN case worker.

If you have any difficulties securing SEN transport for your child contact <https://sentas.co.uk> email: info@sentas.co.uk or Tel: 07986 768 085. Gavin offers great knowledge and support!

What specialist help is available to my pre-schooler?



Early education is part of the foundation stage of education. Early years practitioners must review the progress of all children between the ages of two and three. If your child is identified as having SEN, a graduated approach of assessment, planning and reviewing their progress should be adopted. All early education settings must have regard to the code of practice, have a written SEN policy and nominate a member of staff to act as their SENCO.

In Haringey, there are many early years childcare options that can support children with special educational needs. These include children's centres, nurseries, childminders, nursery classes in primary schools, playgroups and preschools, or an independent school.

You may hear these called 'early years settings'. You can find out more about early years settings and childcare in Haringey on the [childcare and early years pages](#). Each setting has to report on its website their experience with children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. You can look up the setting's 'SEN Information Offer' to see what experience each setting has.

If you need support finding Early Years provision for your child with SEND please contact the [Childcare Brokerage Service](#): <https://www.haringey.gov.uk/children-and-families/childcare-and-early-years/childcare-options/childcare-brokerage-service-2-and-3-year-olds>

All early years settings must make reasonable adjustments for children with special education needs and must follow the Special Educational Needs (SEND) Code of Practice (https://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/send_code_of_practice_approved_by_parliament_29.07.14.pdf)

For further information visit the Family Information Service Directory: <https://fisd.haringey.gov.uk/> and carry out a search for 'children with disabilities' or 'SEN' or call Haringey's Disabled Children's Team on 020 8489 3671.

https://www.haringey.gov.uk/children-and-families/childcare-and-early-years/childcare-options#children_with_special_educational_needs

https://www.haringey.gov.uk/children-and-families/childcare-and-early-years/childrens-centres#haringey_childrens_centres

Children Centres	Address	Phone number
Broadwaters	Adams Road N17 6HE	020 8885 8800
Park Lane	139 Park Lane N17 0HB	020 8489 4945
Pembury House	Lansdowne Road N17 9XE	020 8801 9914
Rowland Hill	315 White Hart Lane N17 7LT	020 8808 6089
Triangle Children, Young People and Community Centre	91-93 St Ann's Road N15 6NU	020 8802 8782
Stonecroft	100 Prioory Road, N8 7HR	020 8340 7050
Welbourne	Stainby Road N15 4EA	020 8493 1197
West Children's Centre Team	Not centre based	07970 242 803 childrencentrewest@haringey.gov.uk
Woodlands Park	Woodlands Park Road, N15 3SD	020 8802 0041
Woodside	59 White Hart Lane N22 5SJ	020 8888 4398

Pre-school year education problems - contact numbers - Haringey borough funded:

Autism advisory services in Haringey

The Advisory Teachers work in close partnership with therapies such as Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy, to improve outcomes for children with Autism. Haringey schools/colleges can request additional support and/or training from the Haringey Language and Autism Support Team.

Also see the [Language and Autism Support Team page](#)
or contact last@haringey.gov.uk for more information.

Schools can make referrals to and request support from Haringey Speech and Language Therapies, Haringey Educational Psychology Service and Haringey Occupational Therapy Services. Please ask your school or educational setting regarding this.



Children with additional needs and disabilities,
Haringey Children and Young People's Services,
Additional Needs and Disabilities,
Alexandra House - 2nd Floor,
10 Station Road, Wood Green, N22 7TR.
Tel: 020 8489 1913

Nathan Jones

Head of Service for Integrated Service for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Dennis Scotland

Consultant Service Manager

SEN Team includes SEN officers Teresa Joseph, Annette Grange, Janis Cornelius, Cyslyn Morris Syretta Walton-Harry, Team email is sen@haringey.gov.uk. Tel 0208 489 1913

Borough Lead for Therapies and Specialist Nursing Whittington Health. Based at: G1, St Ann's Hospital, St Ann's Rd, N15. tel: 0208 442 5731 or leave a message with the Therapies Secretary Marion Picknell tel: 0208 442 6040

For any of the Haringey SEN team, please see the numbers below.

- Autism Advisory Team - 020 8489 5084
- Central SEN Services - 020 8489 1913
- Educational Psychology Service - 020 8489 3004
- The Hearing Impairment Team - 020 8442 2754
- Language Support Team - 020 8489 5090
- The Inclusion Team, including Area Senco's - 020 8489 3498

David Collins : Principal Educational Psychologist educationalpsychology@haringey.gov.uk

Joanna Putler : Assistant Principal

Portage Team Tel: 020 8489 1408

Early Years Inclusion Team: Tel: 020 8489 3498

Liz Alsford, Haringey Lead for Additional Therapies (SLT): 020 3224 4399.

Admin Eri Iwanaka: 020 3224 4399

Haringey Portage Service

Portage workers visit children at home with their families and help children to develop their skills through supporting parents in play based activities with their child. The Portage workers will visit families until your child starts in an Early Years Setting, advising and supporting parents in all areas of the child's development. They will also work closely with the professionals working with your child. The aim is to help parents/carers to identify what is important to them and their child and plan goals for learning and participation.

Main contact: Irene Malone - Early Help Administrator

Telephone number: 0208 489 5039 Email: irene.malone@haringey.gov.uk

Address: Alexandra House, 10 Station Road Wood Green, London N22 7TR

Early Years Inclusion Funding – also known as top up – this has led to significant changes in the Early Years landscape with increased choice for parents and developing skills for playgroups etc through more experience of children with additional needs.

Early Years Brokerage – support to find childcare for children with SEND – they are trying to move away from the Early Support Place model with pre-commissioned places in particular settings to a broader offer as this gives parents the flexibility over childcare they need.

DLA – if a child receives DLA, this entitles nurseries with additional funding and also parents with access to a Free 15 hour place for 2 year olds

Haringey SENDIASS (Information Advice and Support Service, previously known as Parent Partnership Service), provided by Markfield exists to help parents access LA services. They can help you with advice and support, filling in forms and attending school or LA meetings with you to speak on your behalf. You can meet them at the Markfield Project or at some of their outreach surgeries. Book first on 020 88004134 or email familyadmin@markfield.org.uk Helpline Mondays to Fridays on 020 8802 2611.

Area SEN Coordinators (SENCOs)

The Area SENCOs are a team of qualified early years professionals who all have extensive experience of working with children with a range of additional needs, including Autism, Downs Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Global development delay, and speech language and communication difficulties.

They offer support and advice to private, voluntary and independent early years settings (children's centres, nurseries, childminders, playgroups and preschools) to help develop inclusive practice and plan for children with additional needs.

They offer training and workshops for early years practitioners and SENCOs to cover a range of SEND issues as well as providing advice on appropriate strategies to use for particular children and supporting settings to make timely referrals to other agencies, including EHC needs assessments.

They also support parents with information around Haringey's education system and procedures as well as the types of places available to children in mainstream education or special school.



Settings should complete the Request for Area SENCO form, on Haringey website, to refer your child to the Area SENCOs. Tel: 020 8489 3498 Email: areasenco@haringey.gov.uk

1. Social Communication Group.

Run by Speech and Language Therapists at one of the local health centres as part of the referral pathway for pre-school children with autism or a social-communication disorder, the social communication group runs for 6 - 8 weeks working on language, play skills, turn taking etc. Tel: 020 8442 6338.

2.Haringey Speech and Language Therapy.

Other than the Social Skills Group, some children may also receive one to one speech and language therapy in short bursts of weekly or monthly interventions in school, or may join groups at community clinics. The Speech and Language Therapists may also visit you at home. If you wish to self-refer to the Speech and Language Therapy service, write to: G1, St Ann's Hospital, St Ann's Road, London N15 3TH. Or tel/fax: 020 8442 6866. Or contact the SLT administrator at Tynemouth Road Health Centre. Tel 020 8275 4008.

3.Children's Community Occupational Therapy Team

There is a Early Years specialist autism OT team who can offer sensory assessment and advice to under 5s and help with practical difficulties with dressing, feeding, handwriting etc. They are based at the CDC. Tel: 0203 224 4655 or 0203 224 4770.

4. Haringey Portage/Early years intervention team and specialist pre-school nursery places.

Your child may be referred onto the Early Support service who will arrange a Team around the Child, and a keyworker to coordinate help from different agencies and school or nursery placement including the specialist pre-school places in childrens centres.

Children's Centre nurseries generally have considerable experience with children with special needs and are increasingly familiar with working with autistic children. They will all have access to a SENCO, educational psychologists and speech and language therapists (in mainstream nurseries, you will need to self-refer to the educational psychology service for help or the nursery may do so themselves, and speech and language therapy is usually only available in the nursery if the child has an EHC Plan).

Main contact: Irene Malone - Early Help Administrator. Tel: 0208 489 5039

5. Home programmes

There are a number of children in the borough still following part-time home-based behavioural intervention programmes developed in the United States, also known as ABA or Applied Behavioural Analysis. There are a number of models with ABA, Verbal Behaviour and Options the better known. The majority of the children on home programmes are just doing it part time

at home alongside normal attendance at special or mainstream school. The LA do not fund programmes. Some parents choose to pay for some private additional tutoring at around £20/hr for a tutor and anything from £35 to £80 an hour for occasional supervision. Caudwell Children charity no longer offer grants for ABA.



For more information on ABA contact a reputable national provider such as The UK Society for Behaviour Analysis (<https://uk-sba.org>) or Autism Partnership. Tutors can be found on www.ABAtutor.co.uk

6. Mainstream nurseries with some extra support and speech and language therapy or more help if you have managed to get the help detailed on an EHC plan in time.

Charity providers – under 5 parents groups and play sessions

Markfield under 5s. Thursdays 11 – 2. 020 8800 4134. An inclusive drop in stay and play in the middle of Markfield Park, South Tottenham.

Markfield Stepping Stones programme – a free 12 week language and play programme for under 5s and their parents. 020 8800 4134. Plus free training and courses on autism, managing behaviour, Makaton, and much more at Markfield – see their website.

Palace for All – a wonderful charity just over the Haringey border in Islington near Crouch Hill station. Based at Brickworks, 42 Crouch Hill, Finsbury Park, London N4 4BY, tel 020 7561 1689, this organisation offers numerous treatments and also small group and 1 to 1 speech and language therapy and teaching. There is a termly charge but it is very reasonable. They also have lots of drop in play sessions.

Challenge – a Friday morning termtime, 10 to 11.30am drop in for under 5s with special needs at St James Church Hall, Muswell Hill Road, N10. The parents organising this group include a child psychologist and a physiotherapist.

What specialist help is available for my primary school aged child?

2

The majority of autistic children in the borough fall into one of the following groups:

- a) attend a local mainstream primary school, with additional help ranging from zero to full time one to one support.
- b) Attend a local special school or specialist unit in a mainstream school run by the council, or a local independently run special school.
- c) are out of school and running a home programmes or getting a few hours help via the Tuition Service (Pupil Referral unit for medical needs) in Bruce Grove.
- d) A very few needing exceptionally high levels of support and a very structured 24 hour curriculum go to out of borough residential special schools.

The LA's present policy is to very much to increase in-borough provision, particularly by increasing the number of children in supported mainstream settings and to vigorously oppose parents' requests for out of borough placements except in extreme circumstances where needs very clearly cannot be met in borough.

The amount of specialist help, support, and speech and language therapy your child gets in a mainstream setting is largely dependent upon the provision outlined in his/her EHC (Education Health and Care plan.) For many, obtaining an EHCP is the only way to get help for their child.

I. Special schools and units for autistic primary age children, attended by Haringey pupils

- **The Brook School** – Adams Road, N17. A newly built special school with amazing facilities on a shared site with a mainstream primary school (Willow) on Broadwater Farm. For children with autism and/or complex needs. Tel: 020 8808 7120. admin@thebrook.haringey.sch.uk
Headteacher Maureen Duncan.
- **Mulberry School** Parkhurst Road, N17 9RB. Tel: 020 8801 0189. office@mulberry.haringey.sch.uk
A mainstream primary school with an autism unit. Children will integrate into any mainstream classes their abilities allow them to access.
- **Vale at Lancasterian Primary School** special educational needs including physical disabilities, sensory impairments, medical conditions, developmental delay, learning or communication difficulties and social, emotional needs. King's Road, N17 8NN Tel: 020 8801 2299
- **The Grove School** – ages 4 – 19, exclusively for children with autism, based in Haringey on Downhills Park Road.
Lucia Santi, Headteacher. T: 020 3876 6555 website: <https://thegroveschool.co.uk>
- **Holmewood School**. An independent school For children 5 – 19 with high functioning autism, Aspergers and other specific learning difficulties. Has lower school in Woodside Park 020 8920 0660 and upper school in Muswell Hill 020 3908 8991



- **Treehouse School** – Ages 4 – 19. Woodside Avenue, London N10. Tel: 020 8815 5424. Independent school run on ABA lines.

- **Kestrel House School** – Age 5 – 16 provision. An independent school for children with autism at 104, Crouch Hill, N8 9EA. 020 8348 8500

Out of borough provisions:

- **The Bridge School** Has several sites see website for details <https://www.thebridgelondon.co.uk/home-2-2-3/contact-us/> Takes 3 - 19 years.(autism). Autism units in mainstream schools. (Places generally reserved for Islington students)
- **Woodcroft school** – Tiny independent school. Ages 5-12, Loughton, Essex. (MLD autism, Aspergers) Tel: 020 8508 1369
- **Hillingdon Manor School** Independent school for children with high functioning autism/Aspergers, age 3 – 19. Primary ages tel 01895 420315. Secondary ages tel 01895 813679
- **West Lea School** State run school. Ages 4 -17, Has two sites one for primary **Meridian Campus** and one for secondary **Haselbury Camous**. (Aspergers, autism, complex needs) Tel: 020 8807 2656 Run by Enfield LA, places generally reserved for Enfield pupils.

The NAS <https://www.autism.org.uk/our-schools>,

John Catt's directory on <https://www.specialneedsguide.co.uk/>

<https://www.goodschoolsguide.co.uk/school-search>

Autism London, Gabbitas <https://gabbitas.com/school-search-support/#!/plannin>

and

https://schoolguide.co.uk/?utm_source=bingads&utm_campaign=search&utm_term=school%20guide_p

These independent schools are expensive, and LA's can be very reluctant to fund places at them, preferring to provide in-borough for their autistic children. Whichever route you take, contact the schools early, take a look around and if you decide you would like a place there, register your interest with the school and the LA as fast as possible. Parental preference is supposed to count in your choice of school you have chosen for your child but getting approval for an expensive place will not be easy as funds are very limited and tend only to be allocated when inborough placements have been demonstrated to be unable to meet the child's needs.

2. Mainstream primary school with varying levels of support

2

There are many children on the more able end of the autistic spectrum attending mainstream school with support from a LSA (Learning Support Assistant) or TA (Teaching Assistant). Hours of support provided vary from none to full-time one to one support, depending partly on the needs of the child and partly on how doggedly the parents have fought for the support.

The quality of support provided can be essential to making inclusion successful. Try to ensure that your child's TA or LSA receives or has received training in autism from the autism support team (020 8489 5084). Check whether the support hours will include breaktimes and lunch hours – often the unstructured times that autistic children find most stressful and un-manageable, but which are perversely often not included. The autism team can go into primary schools for up to half a term and train staff in-depth on successful inclusion of children with ASD.

As more money is allocated to schools over recent years for general use for children with special or additional educational needs, far fewer children will receive EHC plans. Those with needs which are not seen as severe or complex will generally get help known as SEN Support without the need for an EHCP. At present this is children needing less than 15 hours a week support.

At mainstream school, your child will have an IEP (Individual Education Plan) which should be updated and reviewed regularly. There will also be an annual review of the child's progress and to check the EHC Plan is still appropriate.

Concerns should be addressed first to the SENCO or the school's educational psychologist, to the Autism Team, or to the SENDIASS Information Advice and Support Service (020 8802 2611) who will help you with advice and speak on your behalf if required. (Try the NAS or if you get nowhere with the above, or private mediator Fiona Slomovitch at www.advocacyandmediation.co.uk for whom you will have to pay costs).

Or Bola Aworinde at www.erada.co.uk or email: admin@erada.co.uk

Speech and Language support in schools for pupils from Year Three onwards, is generally restricted to those who have statements. Parents may self-refer to the service, or schools can refer children to the service with parents' consent. Contacts are listed on the next page.

Palace for All in Brickworks, 42 Crouch Hill, London N4 4BY provide very good value speech and language therapy and one to one teaching at much lower rates. Tel: 020 7561 1689 <http://palaceforall.org.uk>

Primary age education problems - contact numbers - Haringey borough funded:



- Autism Team - Ellika McAuley, Esther Joseph, Letecia Knight, Tel: 020 8489 5039
- Nathan Jones & Dennis Scotland, Heads of Service for Integrated Service for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Tel: 020 8489 3190
- Janet Miller, team mgr, SEN, Children and Young People's Services. Tel: 020 8489 3877. Team includes SEN officers Teresa Joseph (duties include Riverside and out of borough maintained special schools), Annette Grange, Cyslyn Morris (duties include Vale School)
- Liz Alsford, Head of Additional Therapies (SLT): 0208 442 5731.
Admin Eri Iwanaka 020 3224 4399
- Educational Psychology Service. David Collins Tel: 020 8489 3004
- SENDIASS (Independent Advice and Support Service, previously known as Parent Partnership Service, at Markfield) – Tel: 020 8800 4134 / 0208 802 2611.
Email familyadmin@markfield.org.uk.
This body exists to help parents access LA services when you meet brick walls or need help getting through the system.

What specialist help is available for my secondary age child?

2

I. Special schools

In Haringey:

- **Riverside** – A large special needs provision in a mainstream secondary school based at Woodside High on White Hart Lane (Wood Green end of the road) For children with autism and/or complex needs. Ages 11-16. Contact Martin Doyle (head). Tel 020 8889 7814
- **The Grove** – ages 4 – 19, to be run by the Heartlands Community Trust who opened Heartlands High, and exclusively for children with autism, based in Haringey. See their website for updates www.hctnewschoolforautism.org.uk) A school for children with autism, and for those with high functioning autism/Aspergers whose needs cannot be met in mainstream school.
The Grove School, Downhills Park Road, Tottenham, London, N17 6AR. T: 020 3876 6555
E: office@thegroveschool.co.uk
- **Vale at Northumberland Park School** – Northumberland Park School, Trulock Road, London, Greater London, N17 0PG. Tel: 0208 801 6111
- **Holmewood School.** An independent school, attached to an international mainstream school in Woodside Park and Muswell Hill, which has provision for children with high functioning autism, aspergers and other specific learning difficulties. Tel 020 8920 0669/0
- **Treehouse School,** Woodside Avenue, Muswell Hill, N10. Independent school run on ABA lines.Tel 020 8815 5424. (Autism, severe learning difficulties)

Outside Haringey

- **JCoss** – Jewish School in Barnet, with an autism unit. See website www.jcoss.org 020 8344 2220
- **The Southover Partnership.**Very small autism and behavioural support school based in Southgate and Finchley. The Southover Partnership School provides a holistic education for children and young people with autism, behaviour, emotional and associated learning and social difficulties, and those at risk of exclusion. Admissions are made via local authorities. 1st Floor, 322 Ballards Lane, London, N12 0EY. T: 020 8446 0300 www.southoverpartnership.com
- **Hillingdon Manor,** 01895 813 679 (autism/aspergers)Harlington Rd, Hillingdon, Middlesex UB8 3HD (Independent school). Ages 3 - 19
- **Odyssey House School,** 2c Northwood Road, London, N6 5TN,
Tel: 020 8348 8009 info@odysseyleducation.org.uk
- **The Bridge School,** Takes ages 2 - 19 years.(Islington LA) Website www.thebridgelondon.co.uk Takes mainly Islington pupils.



- **West Lea**, (autism and Aspergers) Haselbury Rd , Edmonton. Ages 3 - 19 Tel: 020 8807 2656 (Enfield LA) Takes mainly Enfield pupils
- **Stormont House**, Downs Pk Rd, London E5.(Hackney LA) Tel: 020 8985 4245. Takes mainly Hackney pupils, but has pupils from othe boroughs. High functioning autism and Aspergers catered for.
- **Oak Lodge School**, Heath View, East Finchley, N2(Barnet LA)(learmig difficulties and autism) Tel: 020 8444 6711
- **Sybil Elgar School** – Havelock Road, Southall, Middlesex UB2 4NY. NAS school
- **Hendon School**. The **HARP** unit is a autism resource provision within this mainstream school in the borough of Barnet. (Autism/Aspergers) 020 8202 9004
- **Edith Kay Independent School** – 32 Crouch Road, Brent, NW10 8HR Tel: 020 8961 4204 or 07983 934 923

Residential special schools include:

- **Helen Allison School**, an NAS run school in Meopham, Kent, approximately 75 minutes drive from Haringey. Offers daytime or weekly boarding or overnight respite provision for children with autism/Aspergers. Tel 01474 814878. Head is Jacqui Ashton Smith. Ages to 5-19. Tel 01474 814878
- **West Heath**, Ashgrove Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1SR. tel: 01732 460553 fax: 01732 456734. <https://www.westheathschool.com/form/?pid=21&form=16>
- **St Johns school and College** in Brighton, Tel: 01323 872940
- **Cotswold Chine school**, Telephone: [\(+44\) 01453 837550](tel:+441453837550) Fax: (+44) 01453 837555
E-mail: info@cotswold-chine.org.uk
Address: Cotswold Chine, Box nr Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL6 9AG, United Kingdom
- **The Sheiling school**, Horton Road, Ashley, Ringwood BH24 2EB 01425 477488
- **Acorn Lodge School**, Residential school in Norfolk Tel: 01953 888 656
- **Prior's Court School**, Thatcham, Berkshire. Tel: 01635 247202. 38 week or 44 week weekly boarding for children with autism and challenging behaviour/complex learning. To age 5-19 and 19 - 25.
- **Fullerton House School**, Doncaster. A 52 week school for children with severe challenging behaviour and autism. 0800 0556789.
- **Hassocks HVS**. A residential school for children with autism/aspergers who suffer high levels of anxiety. West Sussex. 01273 832901
- **Tadley Horizon** school. Ages 5-19. Tadley, Hampshire. 01189817720
- **Broomhayes School**, Devon. NAS run termly boarding school.To age 19. Autism and challenging behaviour.
- **Cambian group**, Many residential school UK wide Tel: 0161 507 3723

- **Doucecroft School.** *Eight Ash Green, Colchester, Essex. Tel 01206 771234. Autism and aspergers age 2 – 19.*
- **Eagle House School,** *Banham, Norwich, Norfolk. Tel 01953 888656. Residential 38 and 52 week school for children with autism and moderate to severe learning difficulties.*
- **Heathermount School,** *Ascot. Run by Disabilities Trust. Tel 01223 265567*
- **Priory Group Schools** – *the group run several schools specialising in high functioning children – in Surrey, Hampshire, Somerset and Brighton. Tel 01373 814980/466222.*

Details of more schools can be obtained from the National Autistic Society and from the OASIS websites. Autism London have a good factsheet on schools in the Greater London area.

3. Mainstream secondary provision

There are no specialist units for more able autistic children attached to mainstream secondary schools within Haringey but there is The Grove School, which is under The Heartlands Community Trust for pupils aged 5-19 with primary diagnosis of Autism, you must be in receipt of an EHCPlan to apply through Haringey LA.

A very large number of children on the autistic spectrum attend all of the secondary mainstream schools in Haringey with support varying from none, to full time one to one classroom support provided via an EHC plan.

Haringey's very over-stretched autism team, work with children with autism in mainstream schools and their teachers and learning assistants. Tel: 0208 489 5039 email: LAST@haringey.gov.uk

The autism team together with speech and language therapy team's co-ordinate and carry out all the transition work for yr6 primary students to adjust to secondary school, generally 5 sessions, and follow up throughout yr7 in the new school.

If your child is out of school, you may be able to access up to 10 hours a week tuition at or from the Home Tuition Centre or PRU (Pupil Referral Unit) for children with health needs at Pulford House, 4 Pulford Road, London N15 6SP Tel: 020 8489 4459.

The Tuition Centre can teach up to 5 hours a week in the pupils' own home if they are too fragile to cope with attending classes at the Tuition Centre building. Contact Donna Lockett. This service is considered a short term gap while the young person prepares to move on to another longer term placement.

Pulford House, 4 Pulford Road, London N15 6SP Tel: 020 8489 4459

4. Social Skills Youth Group

For children in years 7 and up, Run by the autism team. Tel 020 8489 5038. The group is presently known as the 'Muswell Hillbillies' and meets Thursday after school at Muswell Hill Community Centre behind Marks and Spencers.

From age 14, your child's annual review should also be attended by someone from the Transitions team at social services so that forward planning for your child's future can be started.

Post 16 education



- **Haringey Sixth Form Centre** – This sixth form close to White Hart Lane station, has a special needs section, opened in Sept 2007. (If your child goes to this sixth form centre as opposed to a college, then the statement/EHC plan is maintained by children’s services. Otherwise in other colleges such as CONEL, the college itself becomes responsible for support.
- **Ambitious College** – Pears Campus at CONEL, Head of College: Linda Looney, Address: Clyde Road, South Tottenham, London, N15 4FY. Telephone: 020 3870 8775
Email: admin@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk (address to Nkiruka Egwuonwu)
- **CONEL** (College of Haringey and North East London), High Road, Tottenham, N17. (Autism provision)
<https://www.conel.ac.uk>
- **Riverside** – A large special needs provision in a mainstream secondary school based at Woodside High on White Hart Lane (Wood Green end of the road) For children with autism and/or complex needs. Ages 16-19. Contact Martin Doyle (head). Tel 020 8889 7814
- **Barnet Southgate College** (Autism provisions at Hendon and Southgate sites)Tel: 020 8266 4000
<https://www.barnetsouthgate.ac.uk/contact-us>
- **City and Islington College** Several sites in Islington. <https://www.candi.ac.uk> Tel: 0207 700 9200
- **Area 51 education**, Coburg Road, Wood Green, N22 (For autism, severe learning difficulties and PMLD)
020 8881 7739
- **DALO** – Daytime education service for young people with autism and learning difficulties. Collects in Haringey, based in New Southgate. 020 8368 0943
- **Harington Scheme Cholmeley Pk**, Highgate, N6. Horticulture and life skills courses for young people and adults age 16+. 6 month or 2 year courses. 020 8341 3657
- **Ada** – Ada National College for Digital Skills, Broad Lane, London N15 4AG Tel: 0203 1050 125
info@ada.ac.uk
- **Capel Manor College** various campuses in and around London, courses from post 16 to apprenticeships.
<https://www.capel.ac.uk/campuses-and-facilities/>
- **Ellingham Employment Project** Ellingham Project work to enable people with disabilities to fulfil their potential, specifically with regard to the following areas of speciality: Employment Programmes, transition to employment and supported internships for 16-25 year olds. <https://www.ellingham.org.uk/overview>

For young people with autism needing help with finding work and becoming more employable, try also **CareTrade** for apprenticeships, and **My AFK (Action for Kids)** for training for basic workskills and work placements, **Pathways to Employment** at Tottenham Hotspur, and **Kith and Kids ELSEP** lifeskills and employment programme. And the Job Centres.

Haringey borough funded contact numbers for secondary age education problems:



- Autism Team - Ellika McAuley, Esther Joseph, Esther Joseph, Letecia Knight
Tel: 020 8489 5039
- Nathan Jones, Head of Integrated Services, SEN and Disabilities Tel: 020 8489 3190
- Janet Miller, team mgr, SEN, Children and Young People's Services. Tel: 020 8489 3877
Team includes SEN officers Teresa Joseph (duties include Riverside and out of borough maintained special schools), Annette Grange, Cyslyn Morris (duties include Vale School)
Team email is sen@haringey.gov.uk. Tel 020 8489 1913
- Educational Psychology Service. David Collins Tel: 020 8489 3004.
- Mainstream SaLT Tel: 020 8224 4654
- Occupational Therapy Service (OT) Tel: 020 3224 4769
- SENDIASS (Independent Advice and Support Service, previously known as Parent Partnership Service, at Markfield) Tel: 020 8800 4134/020 8 802 2611. email familyadmin@markfield.org.uk.
This body exists to help parents access LA services when you meet brick walls or need help getting through the system.

The following services are based at the St Ann's Hospital Child Development Centre (CDC) as well as mainstream and special educational settings in the borough. These services may or may not be relevant to your child at some point either before or during their time in education. Further information about these services can be found on the Whittington health website. <https://www.whittington.nhs.uk/mini-apps/service/>

Paediatricians and Clinicians

are at the CDC(Child Development Centre), St Ann's Hospital, St Ann's Road, N15 3TH. Tel 020 3224 4655. Diagnosis and follow up assessments.

Speech and language therapy

You may receive speech and language therapy to a greater or lesser extent at school, but if you want/need more you may consider getting some private help.

Use <https://www.asltip.com/find-a-speech-therapist/>

Make sure the therapist includes autism in their list of special needs covered and is registered with The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) by doing a search here: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/>

Palace for All

Brickworks, 42 Crouch Hill, London N4 4BY

An Islington centre that provides very good value speech and language therapy and one to one teaching at much lower rates. Tel: 020 7561 1689 <http://palaceforall.org.uk>

Haringey Children's Community Occupational Therapy (OT) Service

The Children's Community Occupational Therapy (OT) Service in Haringey provides assessment, advice and intervention for babies, children and young people with a range of difficulties or complex special needs. The team of OT's work to support children and young people develop their independence in performing activities of daily living where there is a clinical need. Referrals can be made by any health professional involved with your child or your school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO). Tel: 0203 224 4655 or 0203 224 4770.

For more information on this service please visit the Haringey Children's Occupational Therapy team page on the Whittington Health website.

Where the parent/ carer feels the need to instruct an independent OT they can search for one at the <https://www.rcot.co.uk/about-occupational-therapy/find-occupational-therapist> and ensure they are registered with The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) on: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/check-the-register/>

Caudwell Children have a wonderful autism sensory pack/equipment which you can apply for online, ask for help at the Friday Parents Group at Markfield to do so.

Parent information session – sensory differences:



The Haringey children's Occupational Therapy team offer a free morning information session at the Markfield Centre (term time) for parents and carers of children who exhibit sensory differences where they discuss with attendees' sensory differences in children, why it occurs and what can be done to help a child with sensory differences. Your child does not need a referral to our service for you to access this parent information session.

Please visit the Markfield Centre calendar of events on their website or contact Markfield directly to find out when the next session is being run.

An information leaflet about this service and a booklet on understanding sensory differences in children can be collected from the St Ann's Child Development Centre or downloaded from the Haringey Children's Occupational Therapy team page on the Whittington Health website

Specialist health visiting team

The Specialist Health Visiting team provide a wide range of support to families of children who have a child with identified additional needs that may or may not have a diagnosis. They can help with onward referrals to relevant services that can provide support to meet a child's needs. They also provide the following:

Bladder and Bowel assessment

Many autistic children find the transition from nappies to toilet training difficult and require considerably more time than typically developing children to learn this essential skill. If your child is over the age of four years old, has an ASD diagnosis, and still needs nappies for day and/or night-times, you can request an assessment to access nappies free through your specialist health visitor, your special school nurse, your health centre or GP.

You can contact the specialist health visiting team on 020 3224 4655.

The Huddle



The specialist health visiting team have paired up with the Haringey Portage service to provide a free drop-in play group for parents of preschool children with additional needs. Here you can access informal support from the professionals running the group and your child will be able to access a range of play materials. Expect to receive practical tips on supporting your child's early play and communication development, advice on nursery's and children's centres and lots of other information about services in the borough when you attend.

The Huddle meet every Tuesday 10am-12noon at the Pembury Children's Centre. For enquiries about this services contact.

Sue Davies - susan.davies29@nhs.net

Sarah Geismar - sarah.geismar@nhs.net

The Portage Team - 020 8489 5039

Haringey Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service

The Haringey Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) service provides and assessment and intervention for a wide range of children across early years, mainstream and special school settings with language and communication needs. Depending on the level of need this service provides assessment and where needed group and/ or one to one therapy.

This team runs an open referral service with an advice line where a message can be left and a SLT will then contact you.

SLT advice Line: 020 3224 4399

Haringey Social Communication Team

The Haringey Social Communication Team (SCT) are made up of Paediatricians, Speech and Language Therapists (SLT) and an Occupational Therapist (OT). The SCT works very closely with the Haringey Language and Autism service and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service in the borough.

Parent seminars after autism diagnosis

After your child receives diagnosis, parents are invited to attend seminars held with the Haringey Language and Autism Team. These seminars are a space where parents can talk about the recent diagnosis, learn about autism and receive practical advice from parents and professionals running the seminar. For more information about when the seminars are running you can contact the Haringey Language and Autism Team - last@haringey.gov.uk

Functional skills workshops



The Haringey SCT offers specialist workshops for parents of children with autism during term time. These are delivered over two mornings for parents of autistic children who would like to support their child in learning how to develop their self-care skills.

These workshops are designed to provide you with an opportunity to share your skills and knowledge with other parents and equally gain advice and practical tips from their experiences as well as from our team.

Your child must be known to the Haringey SCT or OT teams to access this workshop. An information flyer about SCT parent workshops is available to download on the SCT page in the Whittington Health Website.

Specialist children's dentistry

The specialist children's dental service is based at the Tynemouth Road Health Centre. This service provides dental check-ups for children with additional needs that will not comply with a traditional dentist. You can request that your child is referred to this service from your own dentist, GP or any other health care professional involved with your child.

You can contact the specialist dentist service via the Whittington Health website or telephone 020 3316 8353.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

The Haringey Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) is based at the St Ann's Hospital, Tel: 020 8702 3400 and at Burgoyne Rd, N8.

The CAMHS LD team at St Ann's Hospital provides assessments and treatments for children and young people aged 0-17 who are experiencing serious mental health problems or marked emotional and behavioural problems which are complex and enduring and have a significant impact on the child or young person's functioning. Depending on your child's need Haringey CAMHS offer a post autism diagnosis support service for the young person/family dependent upon their need.

More information about the Haringey CAMHS team can be found on their [web page](https://www.haringey.gov.uk/children-and-families/local-offer/health-services/children-and-adolescent-mental-health-service-camhs) <https://www.haringey.gov.uk/children-and-families/local-offer/health-services/children-and-adolescent-mental-health-service-camhs>

The Tavistock Centre in North London provide a psycho-therapeutic service. Tavistock Centre, 120 Belsize Lane, London, NW3 5BA. Tel: 020 7435 7111

Open Door Therapies for young adults and parents of teenagers. tel: 020 8348 5947 or email appointments@opendooronline.org or <https://opendooronline.org>

The CHOICES team offer support to children and young people in Haringey who are facing issues that can impact them emotionally. This may include bullying, anxiety or family problems. For the full list of conditions, the team is able to assist with see web page: <http://www.beh-mht.nhs.uk/services/choices/172> Tel: 020 8702 3405



Suggested reading, from NAS publications 'Mental health in people with autism and Asperger Syndrome: a guide for health professionals' £1.50.

Dietician

Dieticians are based at the CDC and also see children at the special schools and units and may be able to advise upon supplements and eating habits for children who restrict their diets or have faddy eating habits. You can ask any health professional working with your child to make a referral to the dietetics service if you are worried about your child's eating.

Your paediatrician or dietician may suggest softening medications such as Lactulose or medications to encourage bowel contractions such as Movicol.

Free nappies.

Your health visitor should be your first port of call re toilet training. However, this is no easy area for many autistic children and the NAS produce some good books and a free online factsheet on the subject filled with ideas that have worked for different families. If your child is over the age of three (this may soon change to four), has an ASD diagnosis, and still needs nappies for day or night-times, (and for the majority will for some years still, at least at nights), you can get them free through your specialist health visitor. Generally, you are given nappies, but request pull-ups if your child is averse to nappies. Nappies and pull-ups become very expensive in the larger sizes, so for older children especially this can be a sizeable saving. If you meet a problem getting free nappies, call the ever helpful **Sue Davies** or **Sarah Geismar** specialist health visitor & nurse at the CDC on **0203 224 4776**.

Health - Going private

Private health care in haringey for special needs:

Sensory integration therapy

- Maximum Potential – 020 7486 4747 <http://www.maximumpotential.eu>

- Hopscotch childrens therapy centre – 0207 486 8168. <http://www.hopscotchtherapy.co.uk>

Haringey Social Services/Respite Care



Haringey Social Services - Disabled Children's Team – duty line - Tel: 020 8489 3671.
(New cases call mornings and Wednesday pm) dctduty@haringey.gov.uk

You can self-refer here if you need help and respite, or are not coping, though most referrals come through health workers, schools, the CDC at St Ann's Hospital or the new CAF/Early Help form from the educational statementing process. The team will meet the family and child, make an assessment, discuss needs, offer advice and in some cases offer residential provision or after-school, holiday or home-based respite care.

Some children get an allocated disability social worker, but most do not. For most children, you will just ask for the duty manager.

What respite can they offer?

If your child is assessed for and then granted respite known as Short Breaks, it can come in a number of ways.

1. Direct Payments or Short Breaks and Respite

Children and their families can be eligible for funded short breaks - including direct payments - through the Disabled Children's Social Work Team.

You may be allocated a certain amount per week. This is then paid monthly into a bank account you set up specially for the purpose. You can then either

- 1) find and hire a support worker yourself and Direct Payments can put you in touch with someone who can do the payroll service side of things for you for a small fee.
- 2) Find your own playscheme and book the times you want and pay them directly, keeping all receipts.
- 3) Book a support worker via an independent agency and pay the agency directly, keeping all receipts.

DCTPersonalBudgets@haringey.gov.uk

Contact Donna 020 8 489 3003/4545

2. After school, holiday or weekend/overnight respite

You may find it easier to have respite in the form of a regular after school or holiday playscheme with transport provided. The Disabled Children's Team uses after school provision with the Brook and Team Spirit at Riverside, the Markfield Project.

Other carers/respice possibilities:-



FREE Voluntary befriending help with your child at home – a couple of hours a week support from volunteer befriending teams at:

Markfield, Lisa or Rakhat. 020 88004134.

Resources for Autism Tel 020 8458 3259, and at

Kith and Kids. Tel 020 8801 7432. There is a waiting list for all of these. It is worth signing up though as your name will come to the top of the lists eventually! (The NAS no longer run their befriending service)

And also free for Under 5s – Homestart volunteers. A volunteer to help with your child for a few hours a week for 6 months or more. You could self refer or ask a professional who knows your child to refer you to this service. Tel 020 8352 4151. www.home-start-haringey.org. Based at 100 Tower Gardens Road, N17 7QA

For a Fee, Some special needs care agencies provide trained support workers for a few hours per week (usually between 3 and 15 hours per week) on a regular not one off basis. We can't recommend any at present, but know of Dimensions, Resources for Autism, Rocksolid247 and Special People.

Under 5s may be invited to join a social communication group offered by the speech and language therapy service to help assess their educational needs and select a pathway to a suitable nursery provision or reception class.

Financial Help

On top of any normal welfare benefits, you are eligible to apply for Disability Living Allowance for under 16s (which is paid for the child), and is divided into Care components and Mobility components (if your child receives the Higher Rate Mobility award, you can use this to obtain a motor vehicle instead of receiving the money), and you can apply for Carers Allowance (which is around £67.25/wk and is paid to any carer who looks after a child more than 35 hours a week and earns less than approx £128 a week through other taxable payments).

(DLA is non means tested and does not count towards your taxable income. Carers Allowance does count towards your income and if you receive this, you will receive less Income Support if you are claiming IS)

Call 0800 121 4600 and ask for both forms if required. They will come quickly in the post. At the same time, we suggest you call Markfield and ask the family support team for an appointment to help complete the form. There is often at least a month wait for a Markfield DLA appointment so book one early. (cal 020 8800 4134 x 1, or email familyadmin@markfield.org.uk) You have six weeks to fill in the DLA form from the day you order one. Try CAB or CDC (Sarah or Sue) if Markfield not available.

Carers Allowance is easy to apply for, but the DLA forms are an absolute nightmare to fill in and seem designed to put you off completing them by making them so complex and repetitive, so do not underestimate the benefit of getting this free professional help to complete your form.



For under 5s, you may need to fill the DLA in each year. You can apply for the care component from birth. From age 3, you can apply for the higher rate of mobility though it is extremely difficult to get for autistic children as it relies upon claiming 'severe mental impairment' and the necessary amounts of paperwork are not often available until the child is some years older.

When the child approaches 5, you have to re-fill in your Disability Living Allowance form and you can then apply for the lower rate of mobility if you were not awarded the higher rate of mobility. But once they grant you an allowance you agree with, this should then remain unchanged for the next 5 or 6 years.

If Markfield cannot help you complete your form for any reason, then try:

Citizens Advice Bureaus can help when resources allow. 20e Waltheof Gardens, NI7 7DN
<http://www.haringeycabx.org.uk/> or email: admin@haringeycabx.org.uk
Adviceline: 0300 330 1187 (Weekdays 10am-1pm & 2pm-4pm)
Office: 020 3872 5840 (General enquiries only. No advice given on this number)

Specialist Health Visitor at the CDC, St Ann's Hospital Sue Davies or Sarah Geismar may be able to give support or advice. Tel: 020 3224 4776

Essentially both Disability Living Allowance and Mobility Allowance are paid at different rates depending upon the severity of the child's needs. Documenting (in detail) your child's every daytime and night-time problem, and every issue you face getting your child about outside the home is a fairly depressing task. Do NOT understate the problems your child is faced with and you endure, be particularly very clear about night-time problems - incontinence, difficulty going to sleep, many awakenings, tantrums, fits, lack of sleep (needed by child) etc. etc. Higher benefit rates for Disability Living Allowance is normally only paid for those with night-time problems, so if your nights are disturbed regularly, spell it out very clearly. The NAS and Contact a Family have extensive factsheets on their websites suggesting how to fill in these forms - www.autism.org.uk and www.contact.org.uk. If your child has sleep issues, try to get professionals to write this in their reports as this helps with the DLA enormously.

We strongly suggest you read through these factsheets before attempting to fill in the forms if you are determined to tackle them yourself (but please don't!!!).

Most children with autism will qualify for low rate mobility but you can apply under the 'severe mental impairment' criteria for higher rate mobility if you qualify for high rate care and can prove severe learning difficulties, and severe behavioural problems requiring frequent physical restraint.

Make sure you photocopy the forms before sending them off, so that you are clear about what you wrote. If they do not award you the level you expect, you can then challenge them, and also it will help you fill the forms in the following year - much of it will be the same. Do not be afraid to challenge them via a mandatory reconsideration then a tribunal hearing – they will warn you that you may be offered less if you challenge to put you off – this is extremely unlikely (and in our experience) many if not most challenges, backed up by a letter from a GP or a professional who knows your child are successful.



(note from Julia – we are finding that generally most families with a child with autism who has night-time sleep problems are getting high rate care and low rate mobility at present. If (as your child gets older) you have huge difficulties getting about with them, don't be scared to go back and contest the mobility part – you may want to get professionals to back you up on the difficulties involved).

Tax credits – Child Tax credits and Working Tax credits are available for those working but earning less than £16,000 per year per household. There is extra allowance made also in the Child Tax Credit for a disabled child, and more for a severely disabled child. **WHEN YOU GET YOUR DLA, TELL THE TAX CREDITS PEOPLE – YOU MAY THEN GET £200 TO £300 A MONTH MORE FROM TAX CREDITS IN ADDITION TO THE DLA!!** Lots of people forget to do this step and miss out. Tax credit helpline is 0845 300 3900. If you are working less than 16 hours a week, you can still qualify for Child Tax Credits, but not Working Tax Credits. New applicants to the benefits system will get Universal Credits instead.

Helplines

Benefits Advice Line – 0800 882200

Contact-a-Family and Citizens Advice Bureau specialist money advice project – face to face or in the home for families with disabled children – 0808 808 3555

Citizens Advice Bureau Benefits Advice Line 0300 330 1187

Getting about by taxi

If you have a disabled child whose disability or challenging behaviour makes taking public transport difficult, you can apply for a Taxicard www.taxicard.org.uk to allow you to take taxis at greatly reduced rates. Tel 0207 934 9791. (note – not sure at time of writing how the recent cuts will affect this service) See the Haringey website www.haringey.gov.uk and search Taxicard for latest info. Many families now find Uber cheaper and easier to use.

Suggestions for finding additional funding

3

The Family Fund

Financed by government and administered by the Rowntree Memorial Trust for children with a severe handicap (and they include autism in this category). Grants are for families receiving benefits or on a low income.

You can apply once a year every year. Things you might apply for could include:

A holiday

Clothing and bedding

Fridges/freezers/ washing machines etc

Beds

Computers, laptops, ipads

Specialist play and leisure equipment

Contact them for a form, or ask a Family support worker at Markfield for one - they will require your name and address and the child's GP. Someone from the Fund will visit to follow their guidelines. From application for funding to a decision is now around 3 – 4 months.

The Family Fund

PO Box 50

York

YO1 1UY

Tel: 0845 130 4542

Cerebra – www.cerebra.org.uk. Tel 01267 244216. This is a small grant scheme offering practical assistance to improve the quality of life of children and young people to age 16 affected by neurological conditions. Examples of grants made are:

touch screen computers/holidays(up to £500)/specialist car seats/approved therapies/trampoline/sensory toys/specialist cycles.

CARIS Haringey, Helps with Clothing, food parcels, play schemes, housing crisis (ie temp accommodation) St Philip's Church, Philip Lane, N15 4HJ

Tel: +44 020 8801 3004 Email: info@carisharingey.org.uk

Frank Buttle <https://www.buttleuk.org>

Turn2us is online grant search, you can apply through the website.

The website can also help with what benefits you are entitled to. <https://www.turn2us.org.uk>

Tottenham Grammar School Foundation

A local fund which can help with anything educational provided the school/group or individual lives in the Haringey area. Things you might apply for could be:-

A computer, Play equipment, Toys, a laptop, classes, (or even maybe an Ipad with special software such as Proloquo2go or TapSpeak.)



You can download a Special Somerset Award form from the Tottenham Grammar School Foundation website or get a form from Markfield – you will need to get your school to sign it and a health professional to agree in writing that your child would benefit from the equipment. You will also need someone at the school to fill in the form showing that the child has used and is seen to benefit from the equipment and software. This is a new part of the form and a tricky one as schools often do not have the time to do this, or are mystified as to what is needed, check with your school SENCO or Speech and language therapist first? After signing the form, the school will need to send it directly to: Mr G Chappell, Tottenham Grammar School Foundation, P O Box 30498, London N13 5XU. Tel: 020 8 882 2999.

Disabled Parking – Blue Badges

c/o Haringey Council x Disabled Parking. Tel: 020 8489 0000 or download one from the council website (www.haringey.gov.uk and search Blue badge.) These are a godsend to many parents of autistic children with severe behavioural problems, allowing them to park closer to shopping, schools, doctors, etc. You will need to fill in a Blue Badge application form. For children above 5, you automatically qualify if you receive Disability Living Allowance Mobility Allowance at the highest level. For those at lower levels of Mobility Allowance, you will need a letter of support from a professional such as your GP or health worker to obtain one. Within Haringey, you need to apply to the Disabled Parking/Blue Badge dept and send off your documents. They will then send a letter of approval for the badge which you have to take to a Customer Service centre such as the one in Station Road, Wood Green. The NAS provide a detailed factsheet on 'Blue Badges' telling you how to apply for one which is available on their website www.autism.org.uk

You can also apply for a companion badge for £30 per year this entitles you to park without using blue badge. This is a scheme to tackle the theft of blue badges from disabled drivers' vehicles when parked outside their home. The Companion Badge cannot be used anywhere outside the borough.

<https://www.haringey.gov.uk/parking-roads-and-travel/parking/parking-permits/companion-badge-parking-permit>

(No congestion charge also if you have a Blue Badge! You need to register though and there is a one off £10 charge for this. Write to Blue Badge Congestion Charge, Dept TR 121, FREEPOST, SWC 1539 PO Box 35, Leominster HR6 0ZZ, or e-mail: information@ccbluebadge.com quoting code DN08 and the serial number of your badge)

Also, no road tax (you can get the form at the post office) if you have a Blue Badge – check online!

Drop into Markfield Parents Group on Friday mornings, 10 – 12, term times, if you need further information or help applying for grants. They have most of the forms at hand.

Leisure provision for children with autism and aspergers in and around Haringey.

Bridge Renewal Trust - The Community Hut offers a wide range of activities from group gardening sessions, healthy cooking and eating, Saturday cafe, social events, language classes and a wide range of other activities. Laurels Healthy Living Centre, 256 St Ann's Road, London N15 5AZ. Telephone: 020 8442 7640

The Challenge Group – under 5s special needs drop in play in termtimes on Friday mornings at St James church, Muswell Hill. www.wave-for-change.org.uk
 WAVE CHURCH - 2nd Sunday of the month at The Methodist Church, North Bank, Pages Lane
 THE WAVE CAFE - a pop up cafe currently running art workshops 7:30pm on Thursdays at The Birchwood Centre, N10 3BG.

Markfield Project – all ages, a big building in the middle of Markfield park, adventure play, soft play and a great play space, meeting rooms for parents and a family support team. A hugely welcoming centre for families with autism.

- Quality holiday and after school playschemes for autism and Aspergers and siblings for which there is a fee and places must be booked in advance.
- Free family club - Termtimes second Saturday of the month adventure playground 11 - 3.
- Free - Open Access to adventure playground on most Saturdays.
- Under 5s – stay and play group on Thursdays.
- Free - Friday Parent support group, termtimes 10 – 12, and also a weekly (Wednesday morning) Turkish parent's group.

Free Individual advice sessions for parents. Book these in advance

Free Training courses for parents. Tel: 020 8800 4134. (call Mon to Fri 10.30 to 3)

Resources for Autism fantastic autism specific holiday playschemes and after school clubs.

Ages 8 – 19. (in Temple Fortune.), there is a charge and yes, you guessed it, a waiting list.

Tel 020 8458 3259

Keen London – All their sessions are free of charge. They take place during term-time on Saturdays in Dalston, East London and Vauxhall, South London, and on Sundays in Finsbury Park, North London. They also run residential trips. Get on their waiting list – well worth it!

Tel: 020 7686 3172 www.keenlondon.org

Team Spirit – at Riverside School. Ages 11 – 16 approx. After school and holiday club. Joanne Ferry 07950 930708

Palace for All, Brickworks, 42 Crouch Hill, Finsbury Park, London N4 4BY. Drop in days in holidays and half terms, term time youth club and activities and therapies for young children with disabilities. Tel: 020 7561 1689.

Enfield NAS Run SEN trampoline sessions every Sunday 9am-10am at Jump In, Enfield. They also run adult social group. Natasha Rajamahendra, Co-Branch Officer. 07757 120777 email: branchofficer@enfieldnas.org.uk

Muswell Hillbillies – social club for Haringey mainstream secondary school attending children with autism/aspergers. Wednesdays termtime after school. Muswell Hill Youth Centre (behind M and S car park). Run by autism team 020 8489 5084/1408. Esther.joseph@haringey.gov.uk

My AFK (formally Action for Kids) – an amazing centre close to Hornsey overground station providing short breaks, holiday programmes and more for children with physical disabilities, learning difficulties and autism ages 14 – 25. Cost £96 per day including transport. My AFK also run independent living skills and employability skills courses. Tel: 020 8347 8111.

Kith and Kids – Kith & Kids supports families who have a son or daughter with autism or a learning disability (many also have a physical or sensory disability) to overcome their social isolation. Tel: 0208 801 7432. Email: projects@kithandkids.org.uk

Autism friendly sports and activities

Football

Special needs football group run with the Tottenham Hotspur inclusion team. Venues and times vary, call Spurs, James Isaac or disability inclusion for more info.

Swimming

Archway Pool, Macdonald Road, London N19. Special needs session Thursday, 5-6pm and Saturdays 4.30 - 6pm, fun pool with waves, flume, etc. Loads of children with autism having a lot of fun. Carer free, children £1.50 each, or get an lzz card at reception and then get in for £1.

Gateway seekers swimming club – a fun session for children with special needs and their parents/carers – every other Sunday at Albany Pool, Hertford Road in Enfield. Tel: 020 8360 9453

Halliwick Penguins – Swimming club for people with disabilities with volunteer helpers. Good at helping children learn to swim in an informal way. Southgate Leisure Centre. Saturdays. Website for more info: <http://www.halliwickpenguins.org/contact-us/4570332192>

Tottenham Green Leisure Centre Pool – sometimes have special needs swim, and Special needs swimming lessons. At present, their disabled swim appears to be on Sundays 12 to 1. Call 020 8885 7300. for details.

Park Road Pools and Fitness Park Road Leisure Centre, Park Road, N8
£1.75 Sundays from 6pm Email: haringey-scd@fusion-lifestyle.com - Tel: 020 8341 3567



Kentish Town's pool also runs special needs swims with lessons. Sorry – no details.

Enfield Academy of Swimming – holiday swimming courses suitable for children with asd
Tel: 020 8216 3796 / 07866 198594

Adventure Playgrounds

Several playgrounds have sessions for children with autism – best way to find out when these are on is to make sure you are getting the Haringey Autism newsletter which always lists the dates.

Markfield has an adventure playground often with open access on Saturdays, and with a family club for disabled children and their families on the second Saturday of the month termtimes. Markfield, Markfield Park, reached via Markfield Road or Crowland Road, N15 4RB.
Tel: 020 8800 4134

Somerford Grove Adventure Playground is tucked behind the Spurs football ground and reached via Park Lane Close, off Park Lane, N17. Enfield NAS sometimes have sessions here.

Drama and Puppet making

Haringey Shed – the local branch of the Chicken Shed theatre. Very successful and Inclusive drama groups for primary and secondary children age 7 – 16. run at Northumberland Park School, Highgate Primary and Crouch End library. Haringey Shed are based at the Haringey Irish Centre, Pretoria Road, N17. email info@haringeyshed.org Call 020 8801 7209

Turtle Key Arts – run Turtle Key Opera, Key Club and Musical portraits courses held at the Royal Opera House children and adults age 10 to 30 with Autism. tel 020 8964 5060.
<https://www.turtlekeyarts.org.uk/projects>

Little Angel Theatre run Spectrum Youth Theatre for 11 to 18 year olds see website:
<https://littleangeltheatre.com/creativelearning/young-people/spectrum-youth-theatre/>

Art:

ActionSpace run Art Award through their Young Peoples Programme <https://actionspace.org>

Turtle Key Art run art course aimed at 16 + <https://www.turtlekeyarts.org.uk/projects>

Artbox in Islington. For young adults.

Art classes and art therapy at Resources for Autism.

Music Therapy

Nordoff Robbins Music Therapy Centre, 2 Lissenden Gardens, NW5. Tel: 7267 4496



Music therapy one to one at Resources for Autism. Tel: 020 8458 3259

Dance for children with autism

I Can Dance – Dance for Special Needs ages 3 plus. Recommended by lots of parents! Call Juliet: 020 8444 1707 www.icandance.org.uk

Cycling

Pedal Power - Cycling for adults and teenagers with learning disabilities, Finsbury Park, N4 (by the basketball courts) Emirates Stadium, Hornsey Road, N7 7AJ

Every two weeks on Saturdays from 10am to 4pm

Contact: Jo Roach - Email: info@pedalpowercc.org | Tel: 020 8809 7718

Special Needs Trampolining

Enfield NAS Branch run every Sunday morning 9 – 10 am Venue: Jump In, 22, Lumina Park, Lumina Way, Enfield, EN1 1FS

Cost £8.50 per child (siblings welcome at same price) plus £1 Transaction fee. Carers go free.

You must pre-book your place. Book at www.gojumpin.com – go to 'Book Now' and select 'Enfield' and 'Relaxed SEN session'

Soft play

Kidz Adventure Zone Unit C, 2 Coburg Road, Wood Green, 0208 8819737

Clowntown - Behind Tesco on Colney Hatch Lane, N10

Markfield – at under 5s stay and play on Thursdays 11 - 2, or at the Family Club, second Saturday of the month, 11 – 3. Markfield Park, N15 4RB. 020 8800 4134

Park Road Leisure centre – for 0 – 6 years Mon to Fri 9 – 11am, 11.30 – to 1.30pm, 2- 4pm, and 4.30 – 6.30pm, Sat and sun 9 – 11am, 11.30 – 1.30pm and 2 – 4pm. Contact to book at busy times and check a private party hasn't booked the space Tel: 020 8341 3567

Tottenham Green leisure centre – Multi storey soft play. 0 – 4years in baby and toddler area, and 4 – 12 years in junior area. Call to check the soft play is not booked first by a private party.

Tel: 020 8885 7300

Youth clubs

Markfield Project- a variety of clubs and activities throughout the week for all ages. Fees apply. 020 8800 4134.

Team Spirit. After school activities for children at Riverside School.

Muswell Hillbillies. Social skills group for ASD children in mainstream secondary schools. Thursdays in term times after school at Muswell Hill Community Centre. Contact Letecia Knight or Esther Joseph on 020 8489 5084.

Resources for Autism. 858 Finchley Rd, NW11. Sat am and pm. 8 - 12 year olds. Wednesday eve - 13 plus. For details, tel: 020 8458 3259.

Turtle Key Arts also run The Key Club, held on Saturday mornings monthly 10 to 1, from September to June, for anyone over 16 with autism. The club holds workshops and discussions based on performance and visual arts and other creative disciplines. Contact 020 8964 5060.

Exposure – Media club – journalism, film making and desk top publishing skills (may be suitable for high functioning/Asperger secondary age children). Bigger Shoe Box, Muswell Hill Youth Club, Hillfield Park, N10. Tel: 020 8883 0260

Cool Cats Club, for 18+ with learning difficulties – run 5 times a year at St Joseph's Pastoral centre, St Josephs Grove, The burroughs, hendon NW4 4TY. Call 07843253599 email thecoolcatsclub@live.co.uk

Martial arts – Sanjuro

At Bruce Grove Community Centre. Alan 07870 157613 or Glenn Delikan Sanjuro's Chief Instructor m. 07779 249 469 e. glenn@sanjuromartialarts.com www.sanjuromartialarts.com

Skiing & Snowboarding

Snowability – Snowbility is the brainchild of Ski Development Coach, Richard Fetherston, who discovered the incredible benefits that could be achieved for people with additional needs and mental health challenges through ski and snowboard coaching.

Snowbility, The Snow Centre, St Albans Hill, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP3 9NH
Tel: 01442 773 007 or Email: kathy@snowbility.co.uk

You can get funding to pay for lessons from the Snow Sports Foundation
<https://www.snowsportsfoundation.org.uk> Tel: 01442 213 324

Sailing/Canoeing

Sailability <https://www.sailability.org/?p=19>

Saturdays Canoeing at West Reservoir at the Castle Climbing centre at Manor House. Amazing place which may suit some children.

For over 18s, try the Castle canoeing club on Sundays 10 – 1. Amazing bargain!

Riding

- The Stables Horse Activity Centre, Barnet Lane, Totteridge. 07958 919437
email: info@thestableshorseactivitycentre.org.uk
- Penniwells RDA Centre, Edgwarebury Lane, Elstree, Herts. WD6 3RG Tel: 020 8207 4525
- Chigwell Riding Trust Group Tel: 020 8500 6051
- Kentish Town City Farm Tel: 020 7916 5421

Cinema

Lots of cinemas hold Saturday or Sunday morning showings of non-current films for around £1 to £2, often called Movies for Juniors. Get to see old favourites again and not have lost lots of money if it didn't work out!

Also, lots of cinemas have monthly autism friendly screenings, usually without adverts and trailers, with lights still on and less sound, and you can bring your own food and drinks in – all helpful for children with autism who can find cinemas an overwhelming experience at first. Both Wood Green cinemas, and the Phoenix in Wood Green have autism screenings.

East Finchley – Phoenix cinema - Kids Club – 10am, starts with an Activity Workshop on a first come first served basis for a maximum of 30 children aged 5 – 8 and must be pre-booked, followed by the film at 11am which is also open to older children. Ticket £3 each. Tel 020 8444 6789 for further information.

Get a **CEA card**. A nationally accepted cinema card that gives free entry to the carer. £6, lasts 1 year: tel 0845 1231295 or www.ceacard.co.uk to download an application form.

Religious groups

Jewish Autism Trust – is a Jewish group for families who have a member with autism or Aspergers. For more information email info@jewishautism.org Tel: 0845 385 0300

Norwood – fantastic jewish run charity for lots of provision including under 5s special needs drop ins. <https://www.norwood.org.uk> Tel: 020 8809 8809

Catholic pastoral care

for children with Special Needs who find it difficult to attend church – A range of pastoral services for people with all forms of SEN and their families available at St Joseph's Pastoral Centre in Hendon, north London. 020 8202 3999.

C of E – try St James Church in Muswell Hill who at time of writing are offering help for children with special needs to be able to attend Sunday school.

Contact Celia at Wave, info@wave-for-change.org.uk

Wave run Wave Church, The Challenge Group and Wave Café see website: <https://www.wave-for-change.org.uk>

SEEDs at St. Peter-in-Chains Parish 12 Womersley Road, London, N8 9AE
(next door to the church) tel: 020 8340 3394

Cubs and Scouts – Special Needs cubs/scout group meets on Tuesday evenings at the Scout Park in Gordon Road, Bounds Green, N11 (amazing venue of 11 acres of green space with lakes, climbing wall, archery, greenhouses, etc).

Contact via website: <https://www.scouts.org.uk/groups/24th-tottenham-vale-road-school>

Drumming Art and performance group

Bright star, Saturdays 11 – 1. Middle lane Methodist church N8. For young people and adults with autism and learning difficulties, ages 11 – 50. Carer stays. Contact Vida Black 07999 592 580.

Support Groups and Helplines



Haringey Autism (NAS Haringey) An email and signposting and advice service, parent to parent. Email to be added to mailing list on haringeyautism@gmail.com

Markfield Project and SENDIASS (information, Advice and Support Service) – Friday parents drop in group 10 – 12 in termtimes, and Turkish parents drop in group on Wednesdays 10 – 12 Termtimes, plus booked individual advice sessions to help parents with education and parenting advice. Call 020 8800 4134 and ask for the Family Support team.
Or email familyadmin@markfield.org.uk

National Autistic Society Huge and very good website. www.autism.org.uk

NAS Helpline with language help in 55 languages if required. 0845 070 4004

NAS Advocacy for Education Service: 0845 070 4002

NAS Parent to Parent Service: 0800 952 052

Autism BAME Community

Stella Sutherland 07534 723969. Email abamecproject@gmail.com

Ambitious About Autism

The charity Ambitions about Autism have developed a parent toolkit called 'Right from the start'. This practical toolkit contains a wealth of straightforward information in one place to guide parents and carers through their child's journey in the early years.

From the autism assessment process to the first day of school, this toolkit is packed with practical tips and checklists to support parents during the earliest years of their child's life. It also provides signposts to sources of support or additional information. If you have a pre-school child, you can download the free toolkit by visiting the 'Ambitious about autism' website - <https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/information-about-autism/early-years/parent-toolkit>

Kith and Kids

For families with a member with a physical or learning disability. Family support, information on educational, medical and social issues, weekend and evening activities and holiday projects for members, development of 'friendship' schemes, supporting of members' social integration. (presently Kith and Kids autistic members are aged 8 - 35 years). There is a waiting list to join. Tel: 020 8801 7432.

Resources for Autism

Based in Finchley running frequent training courses for parents of children with autism, with advice on education and EHCPlans etc. They have extensive library of books about autism. They have **behavioural advice and support in the home**. Plus 3 adult evening groups. (For the children there are art and music therapy classes, summer play schemes, a Saturday club for children with autism and Aspergers Syndrome aged 8 - 11, and a Wednesday youth club for teenagers on the spectrum). They regularly run holiday playschemes in Haringey. Tel: 020 8458 3259.



CARIS

Fantastic advice team based behind St Philips Church near St Ann's Road.N15. Housing advice and help for families who are in temporary accommodation. They also run summer play schemes for children and their parents, special needs children welcome. Food bank and free clothing also. Gloria Saffey on Tel 020 8800 5300

Contact-a-Family. 0808 808 3555. General special needs legal and education advice.

IPSEA – (education advice) – 0800 018 4016

ACE – (Advisory Centre for Education) – 0808 800 5793

And last but not least.....The amazing NAS website

You can find most things on the NAS website (www.autism.org.uk) – check out their factsheets A-Z section – great sheets on toileting problems, eating problems, sensory problems, transport, education and everything imaginable on autism and Aspergers.

How can you help your child at home?

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I'm going to split this most important of all sections into the following few issues - Behaviour, Sensory Difficulties and Communication and Everyday problems. A whole book could be written on each of them, and as you will find out if you haven't already, whole books already have! You could fill libraries with book on autism and communication and there are literally hundreds of books on behaviour by both professionals and parents. But these are the issues that I hear again and again from parents that concern them at home, and some starting ideas that I feel can help.

Behaviour, Sensory Difficulties and Communication

Firstly 'behaviour'

By this we mean behaviour by the autistic child that is angry, upset, aggressive or 'challenging' to others in some way. This can include meltdowns, shouting, crying, cursing, hitting, pushing, biting, throwing objects, deliberately breaking things, running away, refusing to walk, lying down in the middle of shops and UTTERLY refusing to move on, insisting on watching the same film endlessly, loathing having to play with other children except close family members...any of this sound familiar?

I'm going to say he rather than he/she or it from now on, as it's easier. Apologies if you have a girl!

What can you do?

Inevitably this is much too simple ...but try to work out:

1) Has the child learned that the behaviour will achieve something for him?

That is, does he either **get to avoid something** he does not like eg. noise/smell/crowd/touch/ demands to do something he fears, as he knows from experience he will be removed from the situation, or does he know he will get something he wants eg a drink or sweet, a hug, extra attention. Either outcome could cause more of that particular behaviour and you may want to change your own response to his behaviour to see if it lessens the tantrums. For a few weeks, try to be absolutely consistent and not rewarding the tantrum with hugs or sweets or foods, or not allowing the tantrum to result in the removal from a situation to see if the child then finds a better way to cope.

2) Did something cause the behaviour?

Is this an inevitable overload from too much sensory or information overload? Is he too stressed by too many demands and too much language that he does not understand? Is he in pain? Could he be constipated? Or is he so hyperactive and short of sleep and overloaded that he is completely worn out?

a. Educate yourself about common sensory problems for children with autism. If you start to understand how they are experiencing the world, often experiencing everyday sounds, even light touch or a kiss, flickering light, the feel of clothes and especially socks and seams and labels as sheer pain, then you may feel less exasperated at their fearful reaction to some of these things. If you knew how distressing a drop of water on their clothes feels, you

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would be less surprised that they may try to remove them several times a day... If you knew how unbalanced their world felt and how spinning and rocking and jumping made it feel less so, you might invest in a mini-trampoline rather than getting furious that they keep breaking the sofa and the beds... Make their lives easier – soft clothes, easy to remove, if you find something they like to wear - buy a whole load in one go! Invest in a good set of headphone or ear defenders if they often put their fingers in their ears – it may make going outside much more bearable for them, do you have fluorescent lighting that flickers and affects him? Recognise that heavy pressure, big slow hugs, rolling up tightly in a duvet, etc may be hugely relaxing for your child. Weighted blankets can calm hyperactive systems and induce better sleep.

My first suggestion – go to the website www.sensory-processing-difficulty.com and start with their checklist. I think you will immediately recognise many sensory difficulties you had no idea that your child suffered from.

Sometimes you can distract them slightly from their discomfort with food, music or a game on your mobile phone for example on a noisy bus, but very often knowing what to avoid is just as important.

Investigate the amazing autism sensory pack which you apply for online from Caudwell children.

b. Understand that anxiety is a huge factor for our children and not knowing what is going to happen is the worst thing for most, but not all, of our children (perversely a few get more anxious if they know what is going to happen).

Make life predictable and easier to understand with the use of visual supports. You can find examples of visual symbols on websites about PECS. You can use a digital camera and print off real pictures of his school, pool, playground, home etc. Google Image is a great source of symbols nowadays. If you want flexible systems, then a strip of Velcro on the fridge and laminated and velcro'd symbols that you can put up in various orders are very helpful.

If you have a visual schedule on your wall or fridge that shows what will happen that day in a row of easy to understand pictures or signs, he will feel much better.

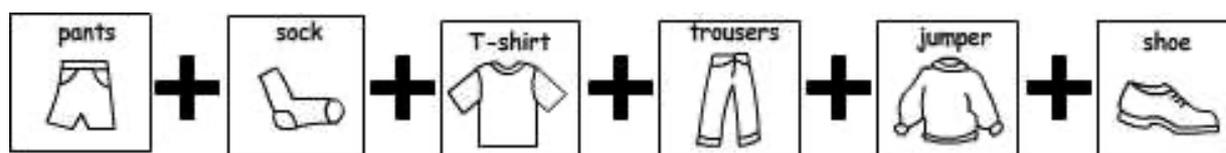
For example, your signs might read from left to right:

Clothes on, Breakfast, Bus stop, School, Swimming, Home.

In the bedroom, you could have a row of signs that show how to get dressed:

Old clothes off

Then pants – socks – T-shirt – trousers – jumper – shoes



You could lay the clothes out in this same order, left to right, on the bed so that he knows what is happening, and can eventually get the hang of it himself.

In the bathroom, you could have a set of visual signs that show for example:

Seat up, trousers and pants down, pee in toilet, pants and trousers up, flush toilet, wash hands. (you may then need a set of signs to show how to wash hands above the basin)

You can use visual symbols to explain situations where he is going to have to wait a bit.

For example

First Egg Then Ice cream

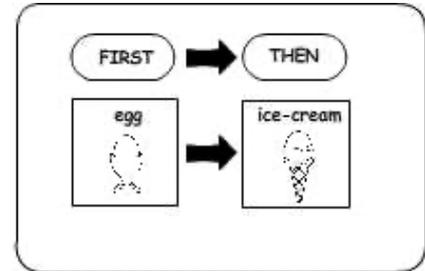
Or

First Bath Then Storytime

Or

First Shopping Then Playground slide

Symbols on the move –



If you have an Iphone or an Ipad, these are great devices for having stored pictures or symbols that you can use either to show your child what you are planning, or for child to indicate to you if he is non-verbal, what he has in mind! There are lots of apps available for this.

Sensory overload and the final straw

We've talked already about sensory overload so you will understand this one by now.

But remember a child might be able to tolerate a few minutes of a noise they detest but not half an hour. They may be able to stand water one day but not the next. Coping with having to touch something sticky might be just tolerable when calm but utterly impossible after being in a room with a flickering light for 20 minutes. Standing in a bus queue with other people bumping into him may be an overload of unthinkable levels.

The other massive overload – and this is the big one – is language and communication.

Our children find it extremely hard to decipher language. When they are stressed, they find even the simplest language hard to follow, **So make your language SIMPLE!**

Use one step sentences. Not 'Come on hurry up we're going to be late you need to put your coat on right now or we'll miss that bus won't we, and you don't want that do you?'

Just 'Jack, coat on.' When he's got that part, 'Coat on, then bus' might be acceptable for a child that can cope with a 2 part instruction. But keep it simple - It makes an amazing difference.

Keep your tone of voice light, encouraging and never blaming or exasperated (well, not never, you're not a saint, but as little as you can, it makes life so much worse for your child). Try to remove all sentences that start with 'Why do you.....?' It's not helpful, he has no way of knowing or explaining just will feel vastly discouraged and upset by your disapproval. Remember - You are the calm sea that makes your child's life safe and tolerable – if your anxiety levels are out of control, he will not be able to progress. Someone has to appear to be completely calm and unfazed by what is happening and giving off the air of being able to cheerfully make it all fine again.

Find a mantra that works for you 'I am the calm sea'... or counting calmly in your head (not aloud!) up to five, rather than snapping out some irritated comment at a bad moment. Make sure you as the parent are the parent who de-escalates situations, not the one who escalates them out of your own frustration. You only get to pay the price later and you're not the only one.

Do not punish your child by smacking, shouting or violence. It does not work well with any child but especially not with children with autism and is incredibly unfair on a child who is generally behaving in a certain way because they do not understand, or because they have through no fault of their own, been overloaded.

Don't meet your autistic child from his stressful day at school or nursery with a long list of questions 'How was your day?' 'What did you do today?' 'Who did you play with?' 'Was it fun?' These are baffling and stressful questions for a child with autism, even the very most able ones detest this sort of questioning. I can guarantee you will never get a satisfactory or honest reply to this sort of question. Most will ignore you, get very angry or learn to grunt OK to get you to back off. Instead, just meet them calmly, with very little but reassuring language, just for example 'Hi there. Let's go home now'

School is hugely stressful for many autistic children and they generally need downtime afterwards – time alone with a computer or a favourite pet for example. They do not need playdates that they have not asked for or having to play with siblings forced upon them immediately after school. **Make sure they have time to calm down at intervals in the day so they can try to manage their stress loads.**

Keep the environment quiet and orderly. Do not tolerate your other children teasing and provoking your autistic child at home. They need a room or a space where they can get away completely if possible when they need quiet and no people.

Keep your rules and daily habits simple and consistent. Many tantrums are because something that was allowed one day by one person is now apparently not OK on another day with a different person. Autistic children put huge importance upon tiny details and changes in small things are vastly upsetting to them. If relatives undermine you all the time and constantly upset your child, or try to change your rules, try to explain his disability to them and why he needs certain things in a certain way. If they cannot respect this, you may have to consider how much they are needed in your life at this point, or how often they can be around. A supportive extended family is the best thing you and your child can have, but one that makes progress impossible can be unbearable and this is a decision I see our families having to make all the time.

Help your child with their language development. They are not interacting with other children much of the time – they are often actively avoiding being around any language. If they do not speak, people often do not speak to them much and then the language they could be understanding falls further and further behind. So even if they do not speak, make sure you are spending lots of time with them looking at picture books, saying the names of things out loud,

making sure they know the names too 'Touch the book' allows them to show you that they know the word even if they cannot say it. Books are expensive – get them from the library if your child is not going to rip them to bits.

LetMeTalk is a very useful free app you can download onto your android phones, ipads and iphone which has over 9000 images which you or the child can line up into short sentences. I want a juice/ I don't like ham etc. the phone can then speak out the sentence.

Try watching BBC TV and website 'Something Special' which is fun and also teaches basic Makaton signs. You and your child, if nonverbal, could learn simple Makaton signs such as home, pee, drink, eat, sleep, more, etc.

Another excellent but much more expensive piece of speech and language therapy software is a programme called 'Lexion' which you could use for years at home to really develop language and listening skills. Buy online.

Singing and music are great ways to develop language too.

If your child is at a very early stage of learning and you cannot get his attention at all for learning, try a very simple technique. Teach the words 'Do this!' Get someone to sit or stand behind the child. You say, 'Do this!' and then make one clear action such as clapping your hands or patting your head. The the person behind the child holds his hands and make him do the same action. You then act completely delighted and gives him tons of praise. Yes! You clever boy! Wow! Fantastic!

Then another 'Do this!', and the same action a couple of times until he's got it, lots of praise each time. If he doesn't do it, then the person behind gets to hold his hands and clap them again, lots of praise again etc. Most children get this fairly quickly and are delighted to have found they've done something successfully. If it's not working, leave it cheerfully and try again another day.

Once the child has understood the Do This! Instruction, you can use it for lots of new copying skills and even for language eg. Do This!

Eye contact – Autistic children and adults can find eye contact highly stressful. Do not obsess over making your child look at you while you are talking to them. For many children with autism, they can look, or they can listen but not both at the same time. Your efforts to make them look at you may be making it impossible for the communication you are seeking to take place. Over emphasis on looking at you can cause a child to develop the habit of staring at people which can cause lots of issues later in life for them.

Try also to ask their teachers to call their name before talking to them but not to insist on eye contact.

For more able children, it is the **social situations** that they are unable to understand, the reading of other people's emotions and points of view, the point behind traffic lights that turn red, the need to share or wait, the coping with anger, the irritation of homework that should have stayed at school, etc.

Social stories can be a good way of tackling these issues – ask Julia for some examples via email or see the NAS factsheet on social stories.



Waiting and understanding about time are also difficult areas – teaching a child as early as possible to read a watch, understand a calendar etc are valuable tools in helping them understand when something will happen, when words like ‘in a few days’ or in a ‘while’ or ‘in a minute’ are driving them crazy.

For less able children, tools such as large sand timers can be helpful to indicate a 5 minute or 1 minute wait etc. (See how sensory difficulties and communication all got swallowed up in the behaviour section there?)

So now straight onto **Everyday Problems**.

Toileting – a big one this for most parents of young children with autism. Generally, our children are in nappies longer than most children – don’t stress too much, they generally get there in the end, often around 4 or 5 years. If they’re not ready for potty training, leave it for another few months and try again. They’ll probably be in night-time nappies for some years longer than day-time nappies. The NAS has a good factsheet on this that you may want to read.

Lots of boys don’t want to pee standing up – they see their mums sitting on the toilet so that’s what they think they should do. Brothers, dads and uncles need to be prepared to be seen peeing to get the message through sometimes! A bit of floating breakfast cereal like a cheerio in the loo becomes a good game. If you pee on it standing up, it goes jumpy jumpy etc. Make it fun. If the noise of the toilet flushing is off –putting and scares him, then leave the flush for another month. One skill at a time.

For potty training, the trick is just lots of repetition. These are children who don’t like any change much and having always pee’d and poo’d in a nappy, they aren’t going to choose to do it another way happily. You may have to pick a warm day, remove the nappy for the whole day and take the child to sit on the potty for a minute every 30 minutes and hope to catch all the pees and poos. Explain that the pees and poos like to go in the potty. Lots of praise, sweeties, whatever works any time a pee successfully ends up in the potty. Lots and lots of repetition. You may basically find it easier to put aside a couple of days just to do this if you can. Or if you are really busy, you’ll just put the nappy on to go out and that’s where all the pee will go immediately, and you’ll be feeling you’re back to square one. If they are really reluctant, you could try getting them to go and choose the potty in the shop with you or choose a special child’ s seat to go on the toilet instead.

Reluctant poo-ers - Lots of our children suffer from chronic constipation and gut issues.

Look up autism and gut disorders on the internet to learn more. A chronically constipated child is a child in pain who will really fear passing a bowel movement and the pain it will cause. If your child appears to sit awkwardly or strain abnormally or not poo for days at a time, or conversely only appear to have diarrhoea (this can be a sign of constipation where only the diarrhoea can get past the blockage), then you really should insist this is investigated by your GP/paediatrician. Some parents choose to remove gluten and milk protein (casein) from their child's diet and there is a lot of anecdotal evidence that this can help. Nowadays though, more parents are choosing to use laxatives such as Lactulose and Movicol (on prescription only) which make it easier to give a regular diet than removing gluten and casein.

Caudwell children can offer a grant towards more expert advice on gut and dietary issues. Apply online.

Faddy and restricted diets

Autistic children rarely eat a wide range of foods and some of them severely limit themselves to just three or four foods. This causes enormous anxiety in families. Why will he not eat except in that room, on that seat, with that particular plate, with foods not touching and not mixed up? Why are no 'bits' ever OK? Why does he only eat yoghurt, milk and white pasta? Why will he only eat chips and nothing else in a restaurant? Why does he only eat Kentucky Fried Chicken and nothing else ever – it's been four months now? And so on. I rarely ever meet a parent of an autistic child without fairly dramatic food likes and dislikes. The fact that many have difficulties holding cutlery and so are being spoon fed only makes their refusal to eat most foods all the more painfully noticeable.

There is no easy answer to this. Some children will eat more foods in a different setting particularly if they see other children eat them and school lunches can be a great help with widening their food tolerances. But for many the opposite is true – they would appear to far rather starve than try something new when it comes to food. Most children still look strangely healthy on the daftest of diets, but it is worth having a chat with a dietician and checking on whether a supplement might be needed.

Try to introduce new foods, if not to be eaten for some days, weeks or months, then at least to be touched, sniffed and licked. Gradually the tolerance does tend to increase. But it is really really gradual. Mostly I would say food fussiness to an extreme degree is pretty much part and parcel of having an autistic child. The person who suffers most is the stressing parent, so make a decision not to let it stress you. It is what it is.

And last, because this is really the hard one at the end of the day....

My child doesn't sleep

4

Some of our children really do only sleep 3 or 4 hours a day and this is utterly exhausting for a parent who has already chased them all day. You can do all the things you'd do for normally developing children – a fixed bedtime, a calming routine – bath, story time, bed, no excitement or games at this time, a clear message that getting up will not work etc etc. but it still has no effect – their system is in overdrive. Partly doing all the things above in the behaviour and communication sections will help by making them less anxious and hyper. Watch very carefully what they are eating and drinking – they can be hugely oversensitive to artificial colours, flavours and sweeteners. Cut processed foods out for a while, remove all fizzy drinks and squashes and Ribenas. See if there is a difference. Make sure they have a lot of exercise in the daytime but not in the evening – swimming, running, trampolining, can all wear them out. If nothing works, make another appointment with your GP or with your doctor at the CDC and ask whether a medication such as melatonin might be appropriate to help them fall asleep. Being chronically short of sleep is very bad for your child's health and being short of sleep makes it impossible for you to parent well, so don't tolerate it year after year.

Well, that's it. You got to the end of the pack. Must be time for bed.

Bring your remaining problems to the parents' groups, to the NAS helplines, the CDC, the autism team, your SENCO, or to the internet. Seek out behaviour courses at Markfield or help from Resoures for Autism or your specialist health visitors and therapists at the CDC. Keep searching for solutions. Love, enjoy and be endlessly fascinated by your amazing child.

Remember always, you are the calm sea. Your calm keeps your child afloat.

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