



St Katherine's School and Nursery

Inclusion Newsletter

January 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. I hope you will find something useful or interesting in it whether your children have SEND or not.

If you have any concerns about your child please do get in touch with your child's teacher or with myself.

It is always good to share experiences and celebrate success, so why not come along to our next SEND coffee morning. Details are on the next page.

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Supporting Children at Home

Through these newsletters, I will try and offer some simple ideas and strategies you can try at home.

At St Katherine's we have many children who have a diagnosis of, or are on the pathway for, ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder) - also known as ASC (Autistic Spectrum Condition) or Autism.

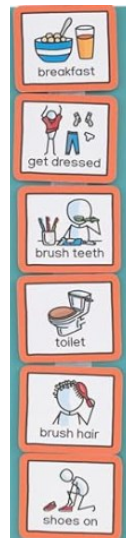
Although these children have diverse needs, there are some strategies that can be very useful, some of which I know many of you are already implementing. Many of them can be useful for all children.

Routine

Children often like knowing what to expect and what is happening when. In school, we use visual timetables in all classes so the children know the plan for the day. These are great to use at home too. All you need are images of the main activities you do throughout the day. These can then be sequenced with your child and stuck on a wall or board. The best time to do this is in the evening, in preparation for the next day. As each activity is completed, remove the picture and put it aside. This way your child always knows what is coming next.

Some children need detailed steps for parts of the day, for examples getting ready for school or getting ready for bed. These can help children become more independent overtime.

Additionally, some children find it hard to understand the sequence of the days of the week, term time and holiday time. Blank calendars, which mark the weekend and holidays, where children can cross off the days and count down towards the weekend, can be extremely helpful.



Count down

As adults, we often have a clear idea about what time things are going to happen. If children are suddenly told to stop an activity without warning, they can become frustrated. If we give children a warning, it is often easier for them to move from one activity to another. This warning is best if it is visual, for example, using a sand timer. Giving children 5 minutes warning and letting them see the time go by can remove some frustrations, especially for children who may have ASD or ADHD.

Contact reminders

- NHS Kent Community Health will direct families to support via their website..
<https://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/>
- NHS Children's Therapies, The Pod provides links and videos to support children
<https://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/childrens-therapies-the-pod/>
- National Autistic Society provide Early Bird courses for parents.
<https://www.autism.org.uk/>
- Barnardo's provide Cygnet parenting support programme.
<https://barnardos-parenting.org.uk/>
- Space to be me support children with disabilities and SEND in Kent.
<https://space2beme.org.uk/>
- Young Minds offers information and advice on wellbeing.
<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

SEND Coffee Morning

It has been lovely to chat to some of you at our previous SEND coffee mornings. We are holding another one on **Tuesday 30th January**, which will be held in the meeting room (next to Nursery).

The last coffee morning was a great opportunity for parents to meet other parents in a similar position and to share experiences. It was also a good opportunity to talk about useful resources and organisations.

Feedback from parents showed there was an interest in finding out about ways to support children at home. I will share some ideas at the next coffee morning to expand on what is included in this newsletter.

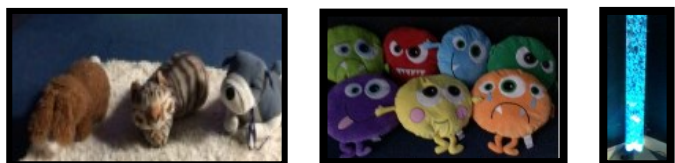
I look forward to seeing you next Tuesday!



Sensory Breaks

At St Katherine's, we are extremely lucky to have a number of bespoke rooms that the children can use for a range of interventions.

Our sensory room provides a calm place children can go to if the classroom environment becomes a little too over-stimulating. It is used by children from Reception to Year 6. The lights, cushions and weighted toys provide an environment where children can have a few minutes to relax and regulate. Some children use this space before coming home at the end of the day, while others may use it for a short period of time during the day.



Next door, we have our **sensory circuits room**. A few children complete sensory circuits before school with Mrs Hickling, others use it during the day. In this room, children can complete a range of activities to enable them to refocus and be 'ready to learn'. There are also short activities to help children who are feeling fidgety or tired.

