

# SEND NEWSLETTER

FOUR ELMS PRIMARY SCHOOL

2024

## Signposting for parents and carers

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy new year!

I hope you find this annual SEND newsletter helpful. It aims to collate a range of valuable resources, materials, websites, help and support that is available to parents and carers. All information shared should be linked so you should be able to click on the text and it will take you through to the resource or website.

## Introduction

Hello, my name is Adele Solomides and I am the SENCO and Inclusion Manager at Four Elms Primary School. I have been working at Four Elms for just under two years now and love getting to know all the children!

I have worked in education for over 15 years, previously working in safeguarding and SEND as an Assistant Principal for a large trust of schools. I am also a mum to four young children, one of whom has significant additional educational needs. I am in school every Wednesday and available via email during the week.



[asolomides@inspiream.org.uk](mailto:asolomides@inspiream.org.uk)

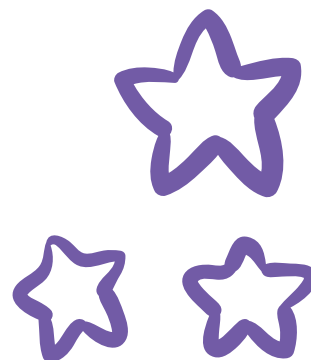
## Can you help us?

We are hoping for a few nimble fingered parents/carers who may be able to make us a few weighted blankets!

Weighted blankets are a wonderful way of offering sensory and calming support to children. The cost of these blankets online are ever increasing.

These can be made really easily by filling material (the size for a child's lap blanket) with dried rice. You can even add a little lavender to add a calming scent!

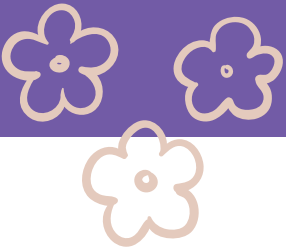
The stitching will need to be very sturdy and durable for the young children to use safely.



# Well-being

We have a wide range of resources and links available on our website in our SEND and well-being section.

[CLICK HERE](#)



At Four Elms Primary we use a number of strategies to support children's mental health and wellbeing. A key element we focus on is helping children to understand their feelings and emotions and looking at strategies to support these feelings.

Some of the resources we have found helpful are:

[\*\*zones of regulation\*\*](#)

[\*\*The anxiety gremlin\*\*](#)

[\*\*My hidden chimp\*\*](#)

## EBSA

Emotional based school avoidance can be difficult for parents and carers to manage. There is a range of support and information available if your child becomes anxious about coming in to school. [\*\*This document\*\*](#) shared by the kent resilience hub is particularly helpful. Please do speak to school if you are worried or need further support with this.

Support and resources available to support the mental health and wellbeing for children in Kent.

[\*\*i-THRIVE\*\*](#) is a new mental health support tool for young people which helps them find extra emotional wellbeing and mental health support they need when facing difficult situations.

[\*\*KCHFT\*\*](#) offers a range of resources, information, advice, and guidance including how to access counselling support.

Visit [\*\*Kent Resilience Hub\*\*](#) where you can increase your understanding, find approaches and tools or navigate your way to support and services relating to resilience and emotional wellbeing.

[\*\*Mindup\*\*](#)

[\*\*MOODSPARK\*\*](#)

[\*\*Booksbeyondwords\*\*](#)



**Family Fund**  
Helping disabled children

### **ADHD support**

Find Kent's handbook including sections on where to go for help with health, education, rights and benefits and tip's to manage behaviour at home for those with ADHD.

#### **ADHD handbook**

The school health service in Kent offers support and advice to parents and carers on a variety of issues including behaviour, well-being and sleep  
0300 123 4496

[kchft.schoolhealth@nhs.net](mailto:kchft.schoolhealth@nhs.net)

[Online referral form](#)

Grants are available for families on a low income who are raising a child or young person with a long-term disability, disabling condition or life-limiting illness.

**[Check eligibility here](#)**



The SENCO can also offer support for anyone needing to complete DLA forms.

## **Children's therapies - The pod**

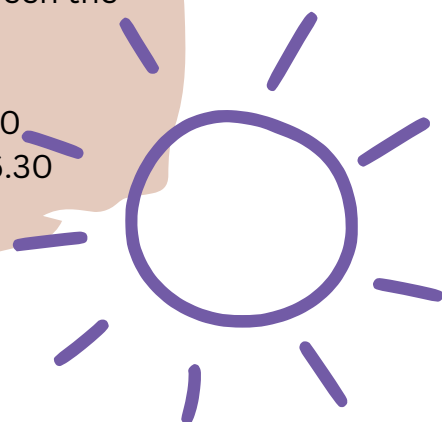
The pod is a wonderful resource and website for both parents/carers and professionals. It offers a wealth of information and resources for children with speech and language, occupational therapy and physio needs.

To access the website [click here](#)

They have also set up a free advice line for children not already known to their service.

The Advice Line is open on 0300 123 7004, Monday to Friday, between the following hours:

Speech and Language Therapy – 10.00-12.30 AND 13.30-15.30  
Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy– 9.30-12.00 OR 14.00-16.30





## Speech and language support

The children's therapies pod (shared on page 3) contains a huge amount of information and support for children with speech and language difficulties. Another very informative and helpful website for parents and carers is:

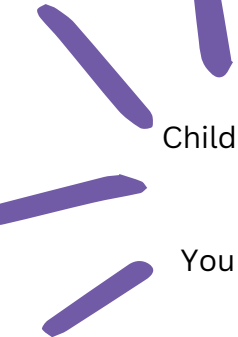
### The speech and language academy.

If you're looking to support your child's speech development at home give some of these tips a try:

- ✓ blowing bubbles
- ✓ drinking through a straw
- ✓ repeating the word back to them accurately without pointing out that their errors
- ✓ lots of nursery rhymes and stories together
- ✓ Using a mirror together so the child can see the way in which the mouth and tongue move for different sounds.
- ✓ Try not to correct them but rephrase something they have said, for example if they say 'ice cream pink' you can repeat back 'yes, the ice cream is pink'
- ✓ Provide lots of conversational opportunities.
- ✓ Playing turn taking games and enjoying puzzles together.
- ✓ Use of images in your home especially for things like morning routines can be really helpful!
- ✓ Use of gestures and single step instructions can be helpful for those with language needs.



**Autism Apprentice CIC currently have free appointments available in their advice clinics for families across Kent and Medway. These are for children and young people with or without a diagnosis.**



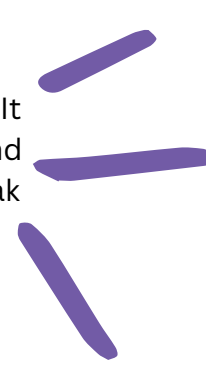
Children's needs and behaviours change as they get older and they start to form their own views on the world.

You can sign up for a free 'understanding your child' course using password INVICTA [here](#)

Kent also offers a free parent helpline on 0808 800 2222

The **NSPCC** guide to positive parenting sets out strategies for rewards, setting boundaries and building positive relationships.

Kent's service, **Early Help** can also be a valuable support to some parents and carers struggling with a child's behaviour.. It is a voluntary service you can opt in and out of at any time and may mean you can get access to further support. Please speak to school about this and we can support you in a referral.



## Behaviour



## Sensory processing


Sensory processing is the way our brain sorts out sensory information so we understand the world and can manage our everyday life. We all have some sensory processing differences. Some children's sensory development is delayed or disordered, and they may struggle to take part in everyday childhood activities.

Kent offer a parent sensory workshop, broken down into three sections - introduction to sensory processing, the senses, strategies.

### **Parent sensory workshop**

Understanding sensory needs and how to best support them is really important and the following booklet provides a huge range of practical strategies for supporting children's sensory needs in the best possible way.

### **Making sense of sensory behaviour**



## General parent/carer concerns



Sleep



Eating



Toileting

### SLEEP!

The [GOSH website](#) provides some really valuable advice, resources and support for parents and carers looking for help with sleep hygiene.

[Click here to download there sleep hygiene help resource](#)

Routine can be really valuable when it comes to supporting children with their sleep. Stories and calm time before bed each night and stopping screen time at least an hour before bed is proven to support children with sleep.

For lots of information on sleep, bed times and support click below

#### **Sleep support**

[If you have further concerns it is important to consult your GP.](#)

### EATING!

The Kent dietetics website is packed with support around healthy eating, child nutrition and children's diet.

#### **dietetics website**

Parents and carers can often have concerns regarding restrictive eating in children. There is lots of support available for this. Click the link below for further information:

#### **restrictive eating support**

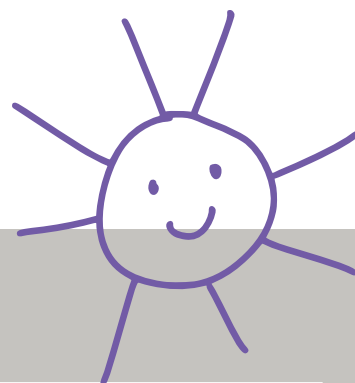
If you have further concerns around your child's eating, please speak to your GP about a possible referral to paediatrics dietetics team.

### TOILETING!

Most children will be potty trained by the time they start school, but some children can have ongoing issues or bladder or bowel conditions which might make things a bit trickier. [ERIC's guide to potty training](#) is a great resource if you're not quite there yet or if you're thinking of night-time training. [ERIC](#) have useful information for carers supporting children with additional needs in potty training.

ERIC has a freephone [helpline](#) 0808 169 9949 Monday to Thursday, 10am to 2pm.

If you have further concerns then the GP or Health visitor may be able to support with a possible referral to Kent's bladder and bowel nursing team.



**NEW**

## Kent's new EP phone consultation service

The Kent Educational Psychology Service Parent Consultation Line - gives a free 30 minute phone or video consultation with an educational psychologist

email: [kepscommunitysupport@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kepscommunitysupport@kent.gov.uk)

## Solihull parenting online courses

Kent offer a number of online courses for parents and carers including modules on sleep, behaviour, emotional regulation and different parenting styles.

The password to access these courses for free is:

**INVICTA**

If your child has or is going through an **EHC assessment**, the whole process can be confusing at times. There are a number of ways parent/carers can be supported in this process:

The Inclusion Manager (SENCO) can offer lots of support and some additional support may be available from:

[SENDIAS](#)

[IASK](#)

[KCC](#)

[WE ARE BEAMS](#)



## Further support

Hopefully having lots of links and sign posting in one place is helpful and this newsletter will be available on our website too.

We are always here to help and support so please do come and speak to us with any concerns or questions you may have. For further support please consider:

Four Elms Inclusion Manager

The Four Elms safeguarding team

Kent Early help

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Your GP