



Send



Bulletin:



Autumn



term

2

Two

Each half term, this bulletin will highlight what we are doing to make St Mary's even more inclusive for our children with SEND. It will also signpost you to resources and information that can support you and your family at home.



Bulletin Highlights

In our '[Frequently Asked Questions](#)' section, we look at anxiety and how to help your child to manage their anxiety.

In our '[Resources and Support](#)' section, we share the following:

- New Well-being drop in sessions from Barnado's
- 'You are not alone' drop in
- FACE Online training January timetable
- Autism parent programmes
- Freemantles Christmas resources

For more useful resources and information, please visit the [SEND Provision](#) page of our website.



New section!

Parent request – ask me something you would like advice on. You can drop me an email or catch me on the gate! Today's is how to not upset your neurodiverse child with Elf on The Shelf!



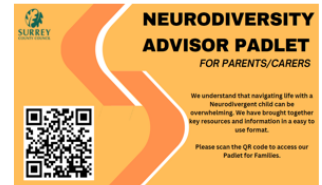
In our '[SEND Spotlight](#)' section, meet our lovely SEND Support TA Miss Allen!





Supporting Neurodiversity At Home and Introduction to ND Padlet Coffee Afternoon

Thursday 22nd January 2026 at 2pm in DT room



All parents and carers are welcome!

This session is a chance to hear about the ND Padlet for Parents and Carers and chat with a SEND Support or Neurodiversity Advisor from Surrey County Council's Team Around the School Support Hub

The informal presentation will include:

- An introduction to the ND Padlet – a free online hub for printable resources for home use
- Helpful strategies to for managing daily routines and transitions between home and school
- Signposting to local and nationwide support services for families



Please RSVP to register your interest to attend, so we can gauge numbers: senco@stmarys-byfleet.surrey.sch.uk

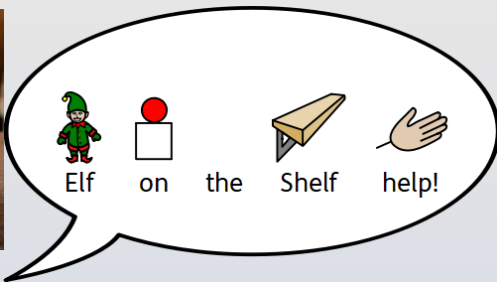
SARS TARGETS

Teachers have been busy reviewing the SARS targets for children on SEND Support/with EHCPs and setting new targets for next term. Please login online to see your child's new and reviewed targets (you will receive an invitation with your child's report if you haven't accessed Edukey before)

<https://edukeyapp.com/parent/login>

SURREY SEND CONFERENCE: RETHINKING INCLUSION

Miss O'Brien attended this informative conference on 27th November to ensure St Mary's is up-to-date on the many changes to the local offer for SEND pupils and families, as well as the latest innovations in inclusive practice.










A cheeky Elf coming in to your home causing havoc is fun & exciting for kids BUT for children with Autistic Spectrum Condition, it can be quite dysregulating! One mum gave the example of her son getting very upset because the Elf drew on their photos. Google wasn't much help so here are my thoughts...!

- Bit late for this year but you could prepare your children for the Elves arrival with a little social story (see next page for example)
- It is a hard lesson to learn that some things are unpredictable and out of our control, like these cheeky elves! As if we would if someone had upset us, the children could tell the elves that what they did made them feel sad. They could write a letter to the elves telling them how they are feeling and maybe why. The elves could write a sorry card/note back. A lesson in forgiveness!
- Your elves could start by doing kind things and gradually introduce cheeky things. You could pre-warn your children that the elves are planning something cheeky in the morning & think together what that might be. You can explain the elves are trying to make us laugh not upset us.
- You can explain the elves are still learning how to make us laugh so they might make some mistakes. This reinforces the message that its ok to make mistakes, something children with ASC can find particularly hard.
- They might prefer the elves only mess with the adults' things and not theirs. That's fine, you have years to build up!
- You could take photos of them all to talk about after and prepare for next year (make a book or your child might prefer to make a powerpoint about it!)




 On the  1st  December, the  Elf  will be  staying at  our











 house. The  Elf  moves  around the  house while  I

 sleep  and  sometimes  can be a bit  cheeky. The  elf  likes

to  make  us  laugh. The  elf  might  make a mess  in




 the  house  but it's  ok,  we  can  clean it  up. If the

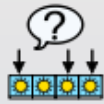
 Elf  makes  me  sad,  I can  write  to them  to  tell them.

 The  Elf  is  always  learning  and  will  listen  to me!  It

 will  be  fun  having  the  elf  stay  with  us. The  Elf

 goes  home  again  on  Christmas  eve  but  will  come  back

 again  next  year!



Frequently Asked Questions



My child is really anxious about school/separating from me – what can we do to help?

Check out Laura Merrick's brilliant 'Quick Guide to Anxiety' or 'Separation Anxiety' which you can download on the Parenting Support section of the home-school Link Worker Page on our school website. This contains tips, tools, signposting and useful books.

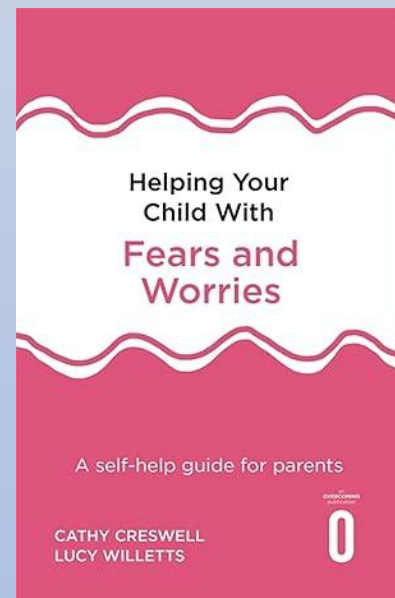
I personally highly recommend the book 'Helping Your Child with Fears and Worries'. I am currently reading this and sometimes we do need to rethink our responses to our children to support them to overcome their fears and worries.

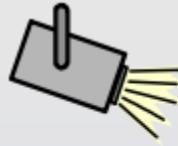
Sign up to the free online 'Anxiety Explained' course by Face Family Advice on 19th January; details on how to book are on page 9 of the Bulletin.

Be curious and speak to your child about what is worrying them. They may find it easier to talk when occupied in another activity like in the car or when going for a walk. Acknowledge their fear, show empathy but do challenge with "What is the worst that might happen?"

Once you've tried to put some changes in to place at home, do talk to your class teacher. They may be able to have some exploratory conversations with your child and make some reasonable adjustments to support your child in school.

If things do not improve, the DSL team at school may explore referrals for further mental health support. You would be asked for consent if a referral for external support is required.





SEND Spotlight

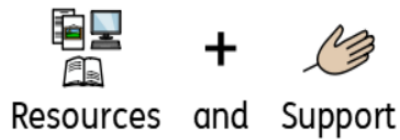
As well as our lovely teachers and teaching assistants, we employ some SEND Support Staff. Usually, these staff work with a number of children rather than as a 1:1 but this can vary according to EHC plans and pupil needs/risk assessments. I will focus on a different SEND Support TA each half term this year so you can learn a bit about them!



Miss Jodie Allen

Hi, I'm Jodie!

- I have worked at St Mary's for almost 4 years now as a SEND Support TA.
- I have two children who also attend the school, they are in year 4 and 1.
- I have previously worked in a special needs school for children who have autism. I was there for nearly 9 years before moving over to St Mary's.
- Whilst there, I was trained by Gina Davis on how to do 'Attention Autism' (Bucket group).
- I also have PECS, PODD and other various communication experience which I try to use daily with the students I support.
- I work in the Hive too!
- I love working at St Mary's and enjoy putting my previous experiences into practice on a daily basis.



We are excited to be able to share our new offer of Wellbeing Drop-In Sessions to schools across Surrey!

Our Wellbeing Drop-in sessions are designed to support your parents/carers with advice, guidance and signposting around their child(ren)s mental health and wellbeing.

For example:

- Anxiety
- Emotional regulation
- Challenging behaviour
- Friendship difficulties
- Bullying
- Difficulties with food
- Difficulties with sleep

Our experienced parenting wellbeing practitioners can provide a safe space for parents/carers to share any current difficulties they are facing, get on the spot support, and find out what other support is available across Surrey.

If you are interested in finding out more information, please contact us on PWS@barnardos.org.uk

Please be advised our sessions are offered on a first come first serve basis.

Barnardo's Parenting Wellbeing Service

PWS@barnardos.org.uk



**Changing childhoods.
Changing lives.**

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

You are the expert of your child

You Are Not Alone - Every 1st Tuesday of the month - 7.00pm - 8.30pm

A free monthly online drop-in for parents & carers

The **You Are Not Alone** community is a friendly and safe space run by Erik & Sally Wagter where you can come and learn about autism & PDA, ask questions, connect with like-minded people or simply hang back and listen in.



In this community we talk about all sorts of things such as:

- helping your child regulate their emotions & feelings
- understanding autism and PDA
- navigating school and EHCPs
- Supporting your child with friendships
- understanding and managing challenging behaviour
- managing sensory needs
- developing a positive relationship with your child (family dynamics)
- exploring EOTAS or home education
- looking after your wellbeing
- and so much more



Here's what parents said:

'My husband Jamie was saying that in the last few sessions, he has learned so much more about autism and PDA than he has over the last year'

Jo (parent)

'Thank you so much for the group this evening. I can't tell you how grateful I feel and I really do feel less alone and more validated. My hope is back'

Louise (parent)

'Thank you so much for your support. I nearly chicken out in speaking but I'm glad I did. These sessions have been really helpful and I don't feel so alone'

Emma (parent)

If you would like to join the **next drop-in on Tuesday 6th January**, please send an email to sallywagter@gmail.com and we will send you the **Zoom** link.



Resources and Support

Funded by St Mary's, please make the most of this free parent training!

Visit the **PARENTS** page of the FACE website (facefamilyadvice.co.uk) to view the 16 regular talks for parents.

Choose a topic and click through the booking calendar to find a date and time that suits you.

At the payment stage of booking, enter the code **SM010725** where it says **ADD PROMO CODE**. This will reduce the price from £24 to £0.

 January 2026 Timetable <small>All sessions delivered live online via zoom, 90 minutes long</small> £24 each or FREE with School Membership <small>Book online at facefamilyadvice.co.uk</small> <small>Recordings available for 48 hours (excluding Free Talk)</small>	
Autism - Improving Communication	5 Jan 10am
Improving Family Communication	5 Jan 7pm
Supporting A Child with ADHD	6 Jan 10am
Understanding Addictive Behaviour	6 Jan 7pm
Anxiety Based School Avoidance	12 Jan 10am
Understanding Anger	12 Jan 7pm
Supporting Healthy Screen Use	13 Jan 10am
Facing Defiance	13 Jan 7pm
Cannabis and Ketamine Awareness	19 Jan 10am
Anxiety Explained	19 Jan 7pm
Introduction to OCD	20 Jan 10am
What Is ACT	20 Jan 7pm
FREE Responding to Angry Behaviour	22 Jan 7-8pm
Raising Self-Esteem	26 Jan 10am
Decreasing Depression	26 Jan 7pm
Supporting Healthy Sleep	27 Jan 10am
Understanding the Teenage Brain	27 Jan 7pm



Resources and Support

Support programmes for parents & carers of children with autism

A variety of 6-part support programmes for parents and carers of children with autism (or suspected autism) are available online and in-person around Surrey. Your child must live in Surrey or attend a Surrey education setting.



Early bird programme for parents of children aged 5 years and under

- Understanding autism
- Communication
- Understanding autistic experiences
- Supporting daily living
- Health and wellbeing
- Connections

Cygnets programme for parents of children aged 5-18 years old

- Introductory session
- Overview of autism with parent and carer experience
- Thinking & sensory
- Social interaction & communication
- Understanding & supporting behaviour
- Analysing behaviour

Teen life for parents of children aged 10-16 years old

- Understanding autism
- Understanding autistic identity
- Stress, anxiety and understanding behaviour
- Health and wellbeing
- Puberty
- Education and transitioning into adulthood

Can I ask some questions?

Email us on parenttraining@freemantles.surrey.sch.uk

How do I join a course?

Please scan the QR code to register your interest & be part of our mailing list. We will email you each time a new set of courses are available for booking.

Surrey Parent Training Programmes



Freemantles have lots of great resources on their website to help you get through the Christmas period/holidays:

<https://www.autismoutreachforschools.uk/Resources/Christmas-Resources/>

