



# Newsletter

## Welcome to the February/March issue of Surrey News

### In this issue:

- **NAS Surrey Branch Conference in Guildford, October – p3**
- **Ice Skating 'save the date' – p4**
- **Workshops by Surrey's NAS Family Support Worker – p4**
- **Meeting Report – Surrey Parent Partnership on the new EHCPs p6 - 9**

### NAS Surrey Branch talks – page 5

- **Redhill 12<sup>th</sup> February – Mark Brown on supporting teens with ASDs and teenage siblings**
- **Woking 25<sup>th</sup> March – Kim Foster on transition to adult social services**
- **News and information for adults with ASDs – pages 10 & 11**

If your young person is one of those currently going through the transfer from a statement to an Education, Health & Care plan (EHCP), or you are just embarking on assessing for an EHCP, there is a lot of information in this issue for you. Our speakers in January were from the Independent Advice and Support Service Surrey Parent Partnership and Core Assets, a contractor which is providing specific help around EHCP transfers which has been available since September, but which was news to all of us at the meeting.

Our Redhill meeting this month will be of interest to those who have children (on and off the autism spectrum) who are either entering their teens or already there.

If you're a bit further down the track and are looking at the process for the transfer to adult services then our March talk is for you.

We're experimenting with some new style meetings over the next couple of months with a pizza evening for teens and social evening meetings for parents in Weybridge and Guildford. If you would like to organise similar events in your area, please do get in touch and we can publicise them on our online forum to enable you or your young people to meet up with others in your area.

*Emma*

Emma Whitfield  
Branch Officer (volunteer)

NAS Surrey Branch  
Tel: 07423 435 413  
Email: [emma@mugsy.org](mailto:emma@mugsy.org)  
Web site: [www.mugsy.org](http://www.mugsy.org)  
Twitter: @NASSurreyBranch

## **NAS Surrey Branch Contacts**

### **Branch officer:**

Emma Whitfield 07423 435413  
[emma@mugsy.org](mailto:emma@mugsy.org)

### **Treasurer:**

Haywood Drake 01483 457646  
[bobdrake357@btinternet.com](mailto:bobdrake357@btinternet.com)

### **Information officer/web site:**

John Muggleton 01483 872683  
[john@mugsy.org](mailto:john@mugsy.org)

### **Branch Membership:**

Nancy Rowell 01252 514708  
[membership@mugsy.org](mailto:membership@mugsy.org)

### **Events:**

Sarah Mead 01483 454245  
[sarah\\_mead@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sarah_mead@hotmail.co.uk)  
Emma Searle 07816 127630.  
[ephillpotts@gmail.com](mailto:ephillpotts@gmail.com)

### **Deputy Branch Officer / Adults:**

Sara Truman 01483 822630  
[nas@mugsy.org](mailto:nas@mugsy.org)

### **Branch libraries:**

West: Haywood Drake 01483 457646  
[bobdrake357@btinternet.com](mailto:bobdrake357@btinternet.com)  
East: Jenny Lawson 01342 314801  
[jenny.lawson73@gmail.com](mailto:jenny.lawson73@gmail.com)

### **North Surrey**

Eileen Bruce 01932 225379  
[evbruce@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:evbruce@hotmail.co.uk)

### **South East Surrey:**

Helen Trenaman 01737 360069  
[trenamans@talktalk.net](mailto:trenamans@talktalk.net)

### **Parents of Girls' Group**

Rachel Pearson 01483 727378  
[racheldpearson@gmail.com](mailto:racheldpearson@gmail.com)

### **Fathers' Group:**

Martin Trenaman 01737 360069  
[trenamans@talktalk.net](mailto:trenamans@talktalk.net)

### **Parents of Adults' Group**

Hilary Dyce 01276 66032  
[hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk)

### **Fundraising**

Sarah Mason 07973 379131  
[slmason78@gmail.com](mailto:slmason78@gmail.com)

## **Other Useful Contacts**

*Unless stated, organisations not endorsed by the NAS Surrey Branch or the NAS*

**NAS web site:** [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk). For personalised information go to [www.autism.org.uk/signpost.aspx](http://www.autism.org.uk/signpost.aspx)

**NAS Helpline:** Tel: 0808 800 4104 (10am – 4pm), or email [autismhelpline@nas.org.uk](mailto:autismhelpline@nas.org.uk) (replies within 14 working days)

**NAS national membership:** 020 7903 3563. Email [membership@nas.org.uk](mailto:membership@nas.org.uk)

### **Education Support**

**NAS Education Rights:** 0808 800 4102  
**Surrey Parent Partnership:** 01737 737300  
<http://www.surreyparentpartnership.org.uk/>  
**SOS!SEN** charity to support statementing, tel: 020 8538 3731, Web: [www.sossen.org.uk](http://www.sossen.org.uk)

### **Family Support & Representation**

**NAS Family Support worker** - for families with at least one child in mainstream education  
[Tessa.emery@nas.org.uk](mailto:Tessa.emery@nas.org.uk), tel: 07436 261163.

**NAS Parent-to-Parent line** 0808 800 4106  
**Portage** – support for children with additional needs under 3.5 years 0300 200 1004

**Family Voice Surrey**  
[www.familyvoicesurrey.org](http://www.familyvoicesurrey.org)

### **Activities for children and young people**

**NAS Resource Centre, Godalming** Tel: 01483 521743

[SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk](mailto:SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk)

**interAKtive**, Epsom-based charity for children with ASDs and other communication difficulties 07876 762178, [www.interaktive.org.uk](http://www.interaktive.org.uk)

**SID (Social Information on Disability)** useful information site [www.asksid.org.uk/fab](http://www.asksid.org.uk/fab)

### **Local parent support / classes**

**Redhill CAMHS** group for parents of children with ASDs, tel: 01737-287002

**Early Bird (under 5) / Early Bird plus (5-8yrs)** developed by NAS, delivered by trained staff from Surrey CC. Tel: 0300 200 1004

### **Adult Services**

**Surrey Adult social svcs:** 0300 200 1005  
**NAS Surrey Service** Tel: 01483 861600, email: [surrey.service@nas.org.uk](mailto:surrey.service@nas.org.uk)

### **Employment Support**

**Employability** for people with learning disabilities/ASDs tel: 01483-519690, email: [employability@surreychoices.com](mailto:employability@surreychoices.com)

### **Benefits advice**

**Carers Support** <http://www.carers.org/carers-services/find-your-local-service>

**NAS Tips page** – via [autism.org.uk](http://autism.org.uk)

**Cerebra DLA guide:** 0800 328 1159

## About the NAS Surrey Branch

*The Surrey Branch of the NAS is a volunteer-run parent-to-parent support group for families in Surrey affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders. It's FREE to join (although a small donation is appreciated) and we have around 1,400 members. The branch holds regular meetings to which non-members are also welcome. It also organises social events, local coffee mornings and special interest groups, and represents parents in meetings with health, education and social services. We host an active Yahoo! online forum, and produce this newsletter every two months. To join, email [emma@mugsy.org](mailto:emma@mugsy.org) for a membership form or go to [www.mugsy.org/membership](http://www.mugsy.org/membership).*

*If you are a member of the NAS at national level, you can nominate us as your branch by emailing [membership@nas.org.uk](mailto:membership@nas.org.uk), which means we receive a percentage of your annual subscription.*

*We're part of **The National Autistic Society**, a national charity founded by parents in 1962 which runs a wide range of services such as schools, clubs and adult centres. It has over 20,000 members, 100 branches and works in partnership with more than 50 local autism societies. The NAS exists to champion the rights and interests of all people with autistic spectrum disorders and to ensure that they and their families receive quality services appropriate to their needs.*

**National Autistic Society,  
393 City Rd, London EC1V 1NG  
[www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk). The National Autistic Society is a registered charity, number 269425. Company limited by guarantee number 1205298.**

*The views expressed in Surrey News are not necessarily those of the National Autistic Society, and reference to specific services or approaches to autism does not imply endorsement. All material is copyright Surrey NAS and cannot be reproduced without permission.*

## NAS Surrey Branch conference 3<sup>rd</sup> October

The next NAS Surrey Branch conference will be held on **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2015 at the University of Surrey in Guildford**. The theme for this year will be *Anxiety and Anger in Autism – causes, consequences and how to reduce them*.

We are delighted that Dr Wenn Lawson (formerly Wendy Lawson) will be our keynote speaker. Wenn is a psychologist and writer with high-functioning autism who has a son and two grandchildren on the autism spectrum. As a child he was believed to be learning disabled, but he is now a highly respected autism expert with a PhD and five university degrees who works around the world speaking and writing about autism.

In the afternoon there will be a choice of workshops looking at:

- Anxiety and anger in the classroom
- Sensory issues
- Medication
- Anxiety and anger in adults

Workshop speakers will be Vanessa Oldham – leader of Outreach and Inclusion at Freemantles School, occupational therapist Caroline Winfield, psychiatrist Dr Raja Mukherjee and Bettina Stott, specialist practitioner at the Autism Spectrum Conditions Service in Sussex and co-ordinator of the NAS ASSIST service in Surrey.

Places for parents and people with ASDs are £30, and for professionals £60, with a discount for early booking. We are grateful to Lloyds Bank Community Fund for a grant to help reduce the cost of places for parents and people with ASDs.

Full details and booking forms are available on the NAS Surrey Branch website [www.mugsy.org/2015conference](http://www.mugsy.org/2015conference).

## Save the date – annual ice skating event 6<sup>th</sup> June

Our annual ice-skating event, in conjunction with interAKtive ([www.interaktive.org.uk](http://www.interaktive.org.uk)), will be on the afternoon of Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June this year, when we will have dedicated use of the ice rink at The Spectrum in Guildford for an hour. The session is designed to suit families that include someone with an ASD and adults on the spectrum. Please look out for a booking form in the April newsletter and via our online forum.

## NAS Family Support Worker parent workshops

Family Support worker Tessa Emery is holding two 2-hour workshops for parents during March:

### Supporting Educational Needs

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 6:30 - 8:30pm, Godalming. This workshop will look at the support children with autism may need in their educational setting and how they can access it. There will be information on the current system in place for children to get additional support to meet their special educational needs.

### Supporting Social Interaction

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March 10:30 am – 12:30 noon, Redhill. This workshop will look at the difficulties autistic people have with social interaction and strategies for supporting them. The presentation will include the 5-step approach developed for the NAS SocialEyes framework to support the learning of social skills, suggestions for activities that will help the child you care for and DVD clips of autistic people sharing their experiences.

There will be a charge of £3 per attendee payable in advance. Cancellations can be made up to 24 hours before the workshop starts.

To request a booking form please contact Tessa Emery, Family Support Worker, The National Autistic Society Surrey Autism Resource Centre  
Tel: 01483 521 744 Mob: 07436 261 163 Email: [tessa.emery@nas.org.uk](mailto:tessa.emery@nas.org.uk).

## NAS Surrey Branch evening get-togethers

We are experimenting with holding two evening get-togethers for parents who can't get along to daytime meetings. The first one will be on **Weds 25<sup>th</sup>**

**February in Weybridge** from 8.30pm.

We will meet in a pub where you can choose to just have a drink or a coffee, or order a light meal if you prefer. We will work on the basis that everyone just buys their own drinks or food to save any issues with divvying up the bill.

Please contact Emma Whitfield [emma@mugsy.org](mailto:emma@mugsy.org) for details.

Sara Truman is also hosting a similar event in **Guildford in April**. Please email her at [nas@mugsy.org](mailto:nas@mugsy.org) for details.

## Two College transition days

The NAS is hosting a free transition information day for families seeking to understand what options and support are available beyond School on the **26<sup>th</sup> February in Acton, West London**. The event is largely focussed on the London area. Colleges confirmed so far are:

- Oaklands College, Hertfordshire
- Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College
- Orchard Hill College, Surrey
- Mid Kent College, Kent
- West London Community College, Middlesex
- Ambitious College, London
- St. Piers FE College, Lingfield, Surrey
- Haringey, Enfield and North East London College
- College of North West London

To book a place or for queries email: [transitiondevelopment@nas.org.uk](mailto:transitiondevelopment@nas.org.uk)

## Brooklands College in Weybridge

is holding a transition information day on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February for young people with SEN or a disability aged 16 – 25 For more information please contact Anne Hubble, Parent Carer Support Worker at Carer Support Elmbridge: 0203 757 7234 or

[ahubble@carersupportelmbridge.org.uk](mailto:ahubble@carersupportelmbridge.org.uk)

## Forthcoming Talks & meetings

*Our meetings start with coffee at 7.45pm and the talks begin at 8.00pm, lasting around one and a half hours including Q&As. There is no charge to attend, but we welcome a small donation - meetings are open to non-members. Please contact Emma Whitfield if you are planning to come along to give us an idea of numbers [emma@mugsy.org](mailto:emma@mugsy.org).*

Thurs 12<sup>th</sup> February REDHILL  
St Joseph's Church, 122 Ladbroke Road RH1 1JX  
Map: <http://bit.ly/1Bv5YbP>

### **Mark Brown from Special Help 4 Special Needs**

The onset of teenage years is a rollercoaster of emotions and needs for all involved, but add autism into the mix and this ride becomes far from plain sailing. This is not just for the individual with autism, but also teenage siblings who are having to contend with their own issues of fitting in whilst 'coping' with the extra struggle of a sibling with autism. As such, there is a need for both sets of teenagers to have their own individual support in looking at this situation. Mark Brown will use his extensive experience of working with families that include a teen on the spectrum to help start that journey for the teenagers and their families

\*\*\*\*\*

Weds 25<sup>th</sup> March WOKING  
Christ Church, Church Street East (night entrance) GU21 6YG  
Map: <http://bit.ly/1z95WcR>

### **Kim Foster from the Surrey County Transition Team on transition from children's to adult social services**

With the new Care Act due to come into force in April 2015, Kim Foster will talk about what this means for young people who are transitioning from

children's services to adult social care. The new Care Act sets out what Local Authorities should or must provide in social care and is the legislation which enforces some of the recommendations from the Autism Strategy.

\*\*\*\*\*

Our talk in Guildford in May will be by Dr Alex Carlisle on the subject of Managing Behaviour – details in the next newsletter.

*Please note, there will be no talk in April.*

## Thank You

We have once again been lucky enough to receive some very kind donations recently. Our particular thanks go to:

**Squires Garden Centre in Cobham** which chose us as its charity of the year for the second year running and allowed us to collect money from customers who visited their Santa's Grotto. We collected an absolutely amazing £740.20 during weekends in December from generous Squires customers.

Particular thanks go to Squires staff Anne Dedman (manager), Jane Arnold who nominated us and to Katie, Santa's very friendly 'Elf'. Thanks too to volunteers Mandy Elton, Jill Goulding, Sara Truman, Helen Wilson, Sarah Mead, Gary Lowe, Taj Gilligan, Lesley Mason, Tessa Patel and Elizabeth Griffiths who braved the cold to collect the money.

**Mr Alex Jameson** for a donation of £200 given to the branch to mark his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Treetops Chartered Accountants in Farnborough** for a donation of £160 + Gift Aid which they raised for the branch from proceeds from their Christmas Raffle.

## Meeting Report

### *SEN Reform – Guildford, January*

Helen Fox and Becky Shore-Nye from Surrey Parent Partnership gave a talk on changes to statements and SEN delivery in Surrey, following the introduction of the new Code of Practice last autumn. They were joined by Wendy Jenkins, Independent Support Service Manager from Core Assets which is contracted to provide independent supporters in Surrey, Merton and East Hampshire on Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

The speakers reiterated many times that the processes are new to everyone, and that many answers had to be prefixed with “as far as we know”.

#### **Support up to 25**

Surrey Parent Partnership (SPP) covers the whole of Surrey and have recently changed their remit to include children and young people up to the age of 25. They are funded by Surrey CC to offer impartial, free confidential advice to parents of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Consultants from SPP now sit as observers on Partnership Resource Forums which have largely replaced the old panels and sit fortnightly.

The purpose of EHCPs is to focus on the needs of the family and child / young person, providing a more rounded picture of both strengths and difficulties. EHCPs have been brought in as a result of the introduction of the new Children & Families Act 2014 [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/pdfs/ukpga\\_20140006\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/pdfs/ukpga_20140006_en.pdf) and a new Code of Practice (CoP): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

As with statements, they are only for children who have educational special needs that require significant additional help. They also include details of health and social care support, which in the

case of those with autism can include services such as speech and language and/or occupational therapy and short breaks.

#### **Focus on outcomes**

The emphasis is now on supporting a child or young person’s aspirations and outcomes which must be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) and personal to the child. Identifying these outcomes is particularly important from Year 9 when planning adult services.

Helen Fox stressed that under the new SEN Code of Practice, anyone who has or is eligible for a statement is eligible for an EHCP. No-one should have their support changed just because the law has changed. If a child or young person in Surrey has SEND and doesn’t already have a statement they are put on a ‘Pathways Plan’, which is how the Local Authority collects the information necessary to assess for an EHCP – see <http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send/changes-to-send-support-in-2014>

The speakers highlighted that parents/carers, professionals and the local authority should continue to be mindful of the language used in the new EHCP (for example, EHCPs should specify if a service “must” be delivered, rather than saying it “may or should” be offered as the latter are not enforceable).

Children no longer have Individual Education Plans (IEPs), as outcomes should be encapsulated in the EHCP.

#### **School Action, School Action+**

The previous ways of supporting children with SEND who aren’t eligible or don’t need an EHCP (who would previously have been supported through School Action or School Action Plus) are now supported through a package of help simply called ‘SEN support’ delivered by the school.

## Meeting Report cont'd

### Role of the SENCO

The role of the school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) has changed and they must now usually have qualified teacher status and achieve a National Award in SEN Co-ordination within three years of appointment.

### SEN Local Offer

All local authorities have to provide information on their website about their 'local offer' which provides information for children and young people with SEN and their parents or carers in a single place. PWP asked people who had viewed the site to give their feedback online as it was a work in progress <https://www.surreysendlo.co.uk/>

### Health and Social Care

Health & Social care have responsibility for funding services named in sections C & D of the EHCP respectively, but SPP said that in practice there has been little involvement of these services to date.

### Advice and Support Service

Wendy Jenkins explained about the support offered by a company called Core Assets. The company has been commissioned by the Council for Disabled Children to deliver independent support to young people and their families in partnership with local Parent Partnership Services (such as SPP) and Parent Carer Forums – which in Surrey is Family Voice. *See p10 for more details.*

### Questions from parents:

**Q: What can I do if school won't co-operate in putting in a request for assessment?**

A: It was suggested that parents/carers should ask the school "how are they recording provision that is in place", when gathering information. Parents should also keep notes of dates and content of meetings. When requesting an EHCP needs assessment, you should try to involve the school beforehand as they will need to gather

data to provide information to the LA and schools need time to collate this.

**Q: Do we have to wait for annual review if support is not working?**

A: With an EHCP you can still call for an interim or emergency annual review if there is a learning need.

**Q: Are reports from independent professionals (e.g. Educational Psychologists) considered in assessment for an EHCP?**

A: In gathering data, the LA has a duty to seek advice from any professional or person where reasonable

**Q: Does an EHCP have the same legal standing as a statement?**

A: The parts of an EHCP that are enforceable by law are: Section B (equivalent to the old Part 2 – need), Section F (the old Part3 – provision) and Section I (placement) <http://www.lmbbs.org.uk/LMBBS/file/IP/SEA%20EHC%20plan%20checklist%2081%29.pdf>. These are the only sections you can appeal against to SENDIST. Outcomes should be in Section E and revised at annual review.

**Q: How do I find out who my case officer is?**

A: Case officers are now allocated by school and not alphabetically, children and young people at out of county or non-maintained schools will be allocated a case officer closest to their home address. If you do not know who your case officer is, you should contact the relevant area special needs manager who are:

**South East:** Mole Valley, Tandridge, Reigate & Banstead **Gavin Spiller**  
Tel: 01737 737990

**South West** - Guildford, Waverley  
**David Griffiths** Tel: 01483 517890

**North East:** Epsom & Ewell, Elmbridge, Spelthorne  
**Amanda Hitchcock** Tel: 01737 737940

**North West** - Runnymede, Woking, Surrey Heath  
**Carole Gill** Tel: 01483 518110

## Meeting Report cont'd

### **Q: When will my child be transferred to an EHCP?**

A: Each LA has their own timetable for transferring from statements to EHCPs. Surrey are aiming for each individual plan to take 14 weeks, although they can take less if there is agreement. Young people in year 11 are being transferred first.

### **Q: What is the process for young people transferring into further education or training post-16?**

A: Transition from school should involve the Pathways Team from Year 9, especially if the young person is likely to need adult social care. The CoP emphasises that school and colleges should be sharing / jointly planning from Year 9 onwards. It says "the college must use its best endeavours to put appropriate support in place". At this stage parents / carers may need to have more input to ensure the lines of communication are working and that the young person does not drop off the radar. Learning Disability Assessments, which previously were undertaken for young people in Year 11, have now been abandoned, as EHCPs are valid to age 25. Children have the right to attend EHCP meetings.

### **Q: What about young people who are not able to make judgements about their aspirations?**

A: The right of young people to make a decision is subject to their capacity to do so as set out in the Mental Capacity Act 2005. The goal is to ensure that those who lack capacity are empowered to make as many decisions for themselves as possible and that any decision made or action taken on their behalf is done so in their best interests. Decisions about mental capacity are made on an individual basis. Someone who may lack capacity to make a decision in one area of his or her life may be able to do so in another. See Annex 1 of the SEN Code of Practice.

Appointeeship (where a parent or guardian takes over financial responsibility for their child) only applies to financial matters.

If you have an EHCP you can request a personal budget which would be a sum of money specified in the plan and, whilst not yet in place, SPP believed this could be for specific purchases e.g. IT or therapy. It could not be used to pay for a particular provision.

### **Q: Under the new EHC plans, can young adults with learning disabilities and autism access continual further education up to the age of 25?**

A: If there is an EHCP in place and the learning outcomes have not been achieved, the Plan can continue beyond age 19 up to 25. It is recognised that children and young people with SEND may need additional time to complete their studies.

An exception would be if a young person goes on to HE/university as SEND in universities is funded from a different source. If the young person doesn't have an EHCP, has been out of education for some reason and needs to get back in, they can apply for an EHCP.

### **Q: What happens with a Statement when a child moves out of specialist education to a mainstream sixth form college?**

If the young person needs an EHCP in mainstream sixth form college, they should get one. The Pathways Team will be involved in a Y11 transfer review from a statement and will write the new EHCP and a young person or parents can request an Independent Supporter to support them through this transfer process. Pathways will also be involved in transition reviews from school to college (usually from Y9 annual reviews onwards.)

Partnership Resource Forums (Panels) are currently looking at all transfers.



## Meeting Report cont'd

Our experience is that, if the young person's needs haven't changed, the transfer from statement to EHCP is straightforward and existing reports and information may continue to be used. Make clear at annual reviews (from Y9 onwards) and at the transfer review that the young person will be staying on in education.

Colleges should be involved in transitional planning between school and college – guidance on how this should occur can be found in the SEND Code of Practice at 8.22 – 8.28.

**Q: Who are the people on the transition panel who consider post-16 placements – it doesn't seem to be as transparent as transitions to secondary**

A: Representatives from schools (Head Teacher or Deputy), Educational Psychologists, Speech & Language and other health therapists and practitioners, Pathways. Parents should make clear the young person's / their preference for placement, if you have one. FE colleges, 6<sup>th</sup> form colleges, 16-19 academies and S41 approved independent specialist colleges have a duty to admit young people if the institution is named in the EHCP.

**Q: My child's SENCO has told me that unless a child has a statement/EHCP then they "aren't getting anything" in terms of Personal Budgets. Is this correct?**

A: Personal Budgets will be available to a child or young person with EHCP if it is requested plus if the Local Authority agrees. If the provision were to be required at school, the Head Teacher would also need to agree. Schools are expected to fund SEN support from their existing budgets. Parents should look on the school website for their SEN policy.

**Q: How is a parent supposed to track an individual teacher's performance management or that**

**of a school SENCO – my child has regressed?**

A: Schools track employee performance and will implement management strategies for improvement where necessary. This would be internal data and confidential in any organisation. You should have a discussion with the class teacher and SENCO to try and identify reasons why the child has regressed. Discuss with school how they can support your child, monitor this and keep you informed.

**Q: If a school submits a Request for Assessment, do you have the right of Appeal as a parent?**

A: The parents can appeal, the school cannot.

### Further information

SEN support

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/348842/Parents\\_letter\\_Aug\\_2014\\_final.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/348842/Parents_letter_Aug_2014_final.pdf)

### Council for Disabled Children

<http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/resources/cdcs-resources/a-step-by-step-guide-to-ehc-plans>

### Surrey Parent Partnership

[www.surreyparentpartnership.org.uk/](http://www.surreyparentpartnership.org.uk/)  
Helpline: 01737 737300

### IPSEA the independent parental special education advice

<https://www.ipsea.org.uk> (note SPP cannot offer support for SEN Tribunal, but will signpost you to IPSEA)

**NAS Tribunal Support Line** – this is run by experienced volunteers and provides support and advice to parents who have lodged or are thinking of lodging a SEN tribunal. Tel: 0808 8004102 (answerphone, reply within 6 days or usually less if urgent).

**SOS!SEN**, an independent charity which offers help, advice and training for parents <http://www.sossen.org.uk/>

## Independent Support Service for EHCPs

Core Assets have been commissioned by the Council for Disabled Children to recruit and train Independent Supporters, who offer free, impartial advice to children and young people with SEND and their families in relation to the EHCPs. The project has been funded until March 2016.

Wendy Jenkins, Independent Support Service Manager for Core Assets for the South East who spoke at our January meeting on SEN (see page 6) explains more about what Core Assets can offer Surrey families: "Our Independent Supporters can provide support and guidance throughout the entire process, from just wanting to know more about what's involved through to support with completing forms, attending transfer review meetings and checking draft plans. We can offer support via telephone, email and can also meet with you at home or in the community.

"We are arranging free Parent/Carer information events (*details in the next newsletter and on our online forum*) where we will provide an overview of what the Education, Health and Care Plan is and the timescales involved, as well as providing support on understanding each of the sections contained. There will also be some Independent Supporters at these events to offer some immediate guidance. All Independent Supporters have had four days training by the Council for Disabled Children and pass an exam before being able to offer this support, so you can be assured that they have been well informed about the processes involved. We also work closely with the local Information, Advice and Support Services / Parent Partnership so that if a matter arises that is outside our remit we can direct you to the right service".

To find out more or request a visit go to [www.coreassets.com/what-we-do/independent-support-service](http://www.coreassets.com/what-we-do/independent-support-service) or call 08000 288 455. To be invited to a Parent/Carer Information day email [Wendy.jenkins@coreassets.com](mailto:Wendy.jenkins@coreassets.com).

## Family Voice information day

On Tues 3rd Feb, Family Voice Surrey is hosting an information day (jointly run by Family Voice Surrey, the Hampshire Parent Carer Network & the West Sussex Parent Carer Forum) in Haslemere to explain what Parent Carer Forums do and how parents of children with SEN or disabilities can get involved. There will also be sessions on building confidence and speaking up for your child or young person and they will be asking you for your views so that we can feed these back to key decision-makers in Education, Health and Social Care. Please register here to attend <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ParticipationTraining>

## News for Adults

### ASpire forthcoming dates

The NAS Aspire social group for over-18s meets in Godalming on alternate Thursdays from 18.00 to 21.00. Contact Howard Childs for details 078 999 355 18, email: [howard.childs@nas.org.uk](mailto:howard.childs@nas.org.uk).

### ASSIST in Reigate

The NAS ASSIST service is now operating in Reigate as well as Godalming. ASSIST stands for *Asperger Support, Signposting and Information Services Team*. The team offers one-to-one appointments providing advice, support and information for adults with Aspergers/high functioning autism or their parents/carers.

The Reigate face-to-face appointments are currently held once a month on Wednesdays between 5.00 and 9.00 p.m.

Godalming appointments are fortnightly on Thursdays from 5.00 to 9.00 p.m. Appointments can be held by telephone or Skype for those who cannot get to Godalming or Reigate.

To contact ASSIST, call 078 999 35518 or email [Bettina.stott@nas.org.uk](mailto:Bettina.stott@nas.org.uk)

### Autism Strategy questions – please respond

As part of the government's Autism Strategy for adults, every local authority has to report on the progress it is making towards the goals of the strategy. The 2014 assessment for Surrey is currently being completed. To help with this, Surrey's Autism Partnership Board would like adults with ASDs or their parents/carers to answer a few questions – see below.

*NB People who have had a bad experience tend to be much more likely to respond to surveys like this than those who have had a good experience. To get an accurate picture of the current situation, we need to hear about ALL experiences, good, bad or in the middle, so please reply if you can.*

**Please note that your answers should only be about your experience of services in 2014, not about anything earlier.**

1. Are you aware of any reasonable adjustments that have made it easier for people with autism to use public services (i.e. doctors, dentists, hospitals, social services, job centres, buses, libraries, etc.) This might include things like:

- Arranging appointments for quiet times
- Allowing you to wait in a quiet area if you find noise difficult
- Allowing you to "jump the queue" or go ahead if you find waiting difficult
- Sending information to help you understand what will happen at an appointment or allowing you to visit the venue in advance
- Providing written communication that is easy to understand,
- Being flexible about communication methods (such as using email rather than telephone if that is easier for you)
- Avoiding ambiguous questions, making sure you understand questions and information or other things.

2. Do you know the main contact point for information about local services for people with autism? If so, can you give

the number / email address or say what you believe the contact point is?

3. Which sentence below do you think best describes the availability of information about support in Surrey for adults with ASDs:

A: Information about support services for people with autism is either seriously incomplete or not easily accessible.

B: There is a moderate level of information available about support services for people with autism which is either incomplete or not readily accessible to people with autism.

C: There is readily accessible information available on all relevant support services available for people with autism.

4. Sometimes people with autism need help to express their views in assessments, support planning, appeals, reviews or safeguarding processes. Help might be given by a family member or friend, but if this is not possible or the person with autism wants someone independent, an appropriately trained helper known as an "advocate" should be provided. If you needed an advocate, was one offered to you and if you used one, did they understand autism?

5. For parents/carers of adults with autism spectrum disorders: If the person you care for has had a social services assessment in 2014, were you also offered a Carers Assessment?

6. Is there an initiative or aspect of the Council's provision for adults with ASDs which you think has been particularly successful or helpful?

7. Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Please send your answers by 14th February to Sara Truman - email: [nas@mugsy.org](mailto:nas@mugsy.org) post: 4A West Meads, Onslow Village, Guildford, GU2 7ST. Tel: 07989 315609. Answers will be passed on without names.

## NAS Surrey Branch Calendar Feb - April 2015

Our local support group meetings, talks and activities are a great place to meet other people - please always phone/email ahead of time to make sure it's still on before you go. For up to date news and events, do join our online forum at <http://www.mugsy.org/contact.htm#Form>

### February 2015

Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Haslemere  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Fiona Bowring 07729 024040  
[timandfiona@btinternet.com](mailto:timandfiona@btinternet.com)

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Guildford  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Sara Truman  
01483 822630 [nas@mugsy.org](mailto:nas@mugsy.org)

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> 9.15am Frensham  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Christine Malik 07941 121395  
[christinemalik@btinternet.com](mailto:christinemalik@btinternet.com)

---

Thurs 12<sup>th</sup> 7.45 for 8.00pm Redhill  
Talk by Mark Brown, Special Help 4  
Special Needs on supporting teens  
with ASD and teenage siblings  
Emma Whitfield  
[emma@mugsy.org](mailto:emma@mugsy.org) 07423 435413

---

Weds 18<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Woking  
PIZZA EVENING FOR TEENS &  
PARENTS  
Booking essential Emma Whitfield  
[emma@mugsy.org](mailto:emma@mugsy.org) 07423 435413

---

Mon 23<sup>rd</sup> 10.00am Banstead  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Helen Trenaman 01737 360069  
[trenamans@talktalk.net](mailto:trenamans@talktalk.net)

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> 10.00am Dorking  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Sarah Mason 07973 379131  
[slmason78@gmail.com](mailto:slmason78@gmail.com)

Weds 25<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Redhill  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Helen Ruffhead 01737 212043  
[h.ruffhead@ntlworld.com](mailto:h.ruffhead@ntlworld.com)

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Cranleigh  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Lucy Tosh 07968 948513  
[lucy@lucytosh.co.uk](mailto:lucy@lucytosh.co.uk)

### March 2015

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> 11am Woking  
Social event for girls on the spectrum  
Cost approx £12. Booking essential.  
Rachel Pearson 01483 727378  
[racheldpearson@gmail.com](mailto:racheldpearson@gmail.com)

---

### March 2015

Mon 2<sup>nd</sup> 10am Woking  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Natalie Pattison 01483 850142  
[punkpin\\_pie@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:punkpin_pie@yahoo.co.uk)

Weds 4<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Oxted School  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Lisa Sawyer 01883 371090  
[lisamsawyer@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lisamsawyer@yahoo.co.uk)

Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Haslemere  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Fiona Bowring 07729 024040  
[timandfiona@btinternet.com](mailto:timandfiona@btinternet.com)

Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Guildford  
PARENTS OF ADULTS GROUP  
Sara Truman  
01483 822630 [nas@mugsy.org](mailto:nas@mugsy.org)

Thurs 12<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Woking  
PARENTS OF GIRLS GROUP  
Rachel Pearson 01483 727378  
[racheldpearson@gmail.com](mailto:racheldpearson@gmail.com)

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Guildford  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Sara Truman  
01483 822630 [nas@mugsy.org](mailto:nas@mugsy.org)

Mon 16<sup>th</sup> 9.15am Frensham  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Christine Malik 07941 121395  
[christinemalik@btinternet.com](mailto:christinemalik@btinternet.com)

Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> 9.15am Chertsey  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Emma Whitfield 07423 435413  
[emma@mugsy.org](mailto:emma@mugsy.org)

Weds 25<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Dorking  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Sarah Mason 07973 379131  
[slmason78@gmail.com](mailto:slmason78@gmail.com)

---

Wed 25<sup>th</sup> 7.45 for 8.00pm Woking  
Kim Foster from Surrey CC transition  
service on moving from children's to  
adult services  
Emma Whitfield [emma@mugsy.org](mailto:emma@mugsy.org)  
07423 435413

---

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Cranleigh  
SUPPORT GROUP  
Lucy Tosh 07968 948513  
[lucy@lucytosh.co.uk](mailto:lucy@lucytosh.co.uk)