

CHILDHOOD NEURODIVERSITY

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION

Psychology in Schools Team NSFT

With thanks to - Psychological and Therapeutic Services, Particip8!, Mental Health Support Team, Sophie Martin Send Co-production Lead, Suffolk Parent Carer Forum, Specialist Teachers

CONFIDENTIALITY
AND PERSONAL
INFORMATION

Slido will be used as our main interaction tool

When answering questions please do **not** include personal or sensitive information such as names or anything that can identify you or your child

Slido is anonymous, but other users will be able to see what you have written

Our workshops are recorded and uploaded to YouTube, please be aware that anything said on Slido may be included in a publicly accessible recording

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How would you rate your knowledge of support in education for neurodiverse children?

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How would you rate your confidence in supporting your child's education?

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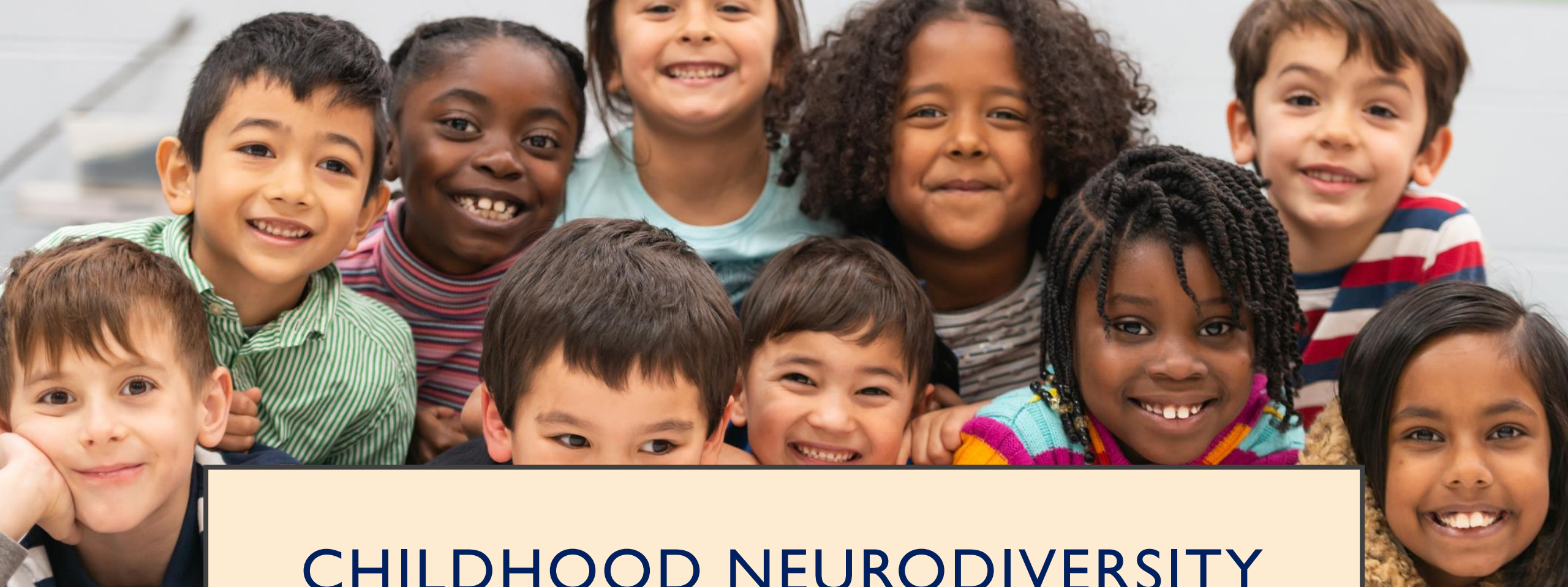
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What education setting does your child attend?

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SESSION OVERVIEW

What are Special Educational Needs?

Support Available in Education

Challenges Education May Bring for
Neurodivergent Children and Young People

Strategies and Sharing Information with
Schools

Signposting to further support and resources

**WHAT ARE
SPECIAL
EDUCATIONAL
NEEDS?**



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

Special educational needs are when a child requires additional support which is different to the needs/support given to same aged peers (including whole school/class interventions)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practise 2015:

- A child does not need a medical diagnosis to be recognised as having special educational needs
- SEND Code of Practise 6.2

- 6.2** Every school is required to identify and address the SEN of the pupils that they support. Mainstream schools, which in this chapter includes maintained schools and academies that are not special schools, maintained nursery schools, 16 to 19 academies, alternative provision academies and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), **must**:
- use their best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEN gets the support they need – this means doing everything they can to meet children and young people's SEN

BROAD AREAS OF NEED

Communication and interaction

May include:

Speech and Language Needs
Situational Mutism
Dysgraphia
Difficulty with Social Situations
Autism

Cognition and learning

May include:

Dyslexia
Dyscalculia
Dyspraxia/Developmental Movement Disorder

Social emotional and mental health difficulties

May include:

Anxiety/Depression
Depression
ADHD
Eating Disorders

Sensory/physical needs

May include:

Vision Impairment
Hearing Impairment
Physical Disability

**SUPPORT
AVAILABLE
IN
EDUCATION**





Suffolk Mainstream Inclusion Framework

A best practice guide for education settings

EDUCATION SUPPORT IS **NEEDS-LED** NOT DIAGNOSIS-LED

Suffolk Mainstream Inclusion Framework

[Suffolk Mainstream Integration Framework Sep 24](#)
(suffolklearning.com)

- A document outlining best practise in mainstream education settings for children with SEND.
- Non-negotiable universal menu of classroom support

Inclusion Guidance:

- A document which outlines Statutory guidance for schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities on how to support children to attend school

[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

GRADUATED APPROACH TO SEN SUPPORT

Assess, plan, do, review (APDR) [graduated-response-a4](#)

In education settings, needs are assessed, SEN Support plans should be created, put into place and then reviewed to see if they are effectively meeting need.

Both parent and child should be involved in 3 stages – assess, plan and review



REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Reasonable adjustments are...

Adjustments that a service must make if someone's physical or mental disability places them at a disadvantage when compared with students who are not disabled.

- Education provisions must consider what reasonable adjustments can be made
- Speak to your provision's exam lead or SENCO
- Must meet the threshold for disability under the equality act – what does this look like? [SENDIASS:What is a disability according to the equality act?](#)
- You do not need an EHC plan to have reasonable adjustments

[Reasonable adjustments - Suffolk SENDIASS](#)

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What adjustments has your child found helpful?

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ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS


Access arrangements are adjustments for students based on evidence of need to support them. Some access arrangements may need formal testing.

- They should reflect the young person's normal way of working

Access arrangements your child may qualify for include:

- A reading pen or reader
- A scribe
- Supervised Rest breaks
- Extra time
- Coloured paper

| Exam series | Request deadline |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| November 2024 GCSE | 20 September 2024 |
| January 2025 All | 4 October 2024 |
| March 2025 Other | 28 November 2024 |
| June 2025 All | 31 January 2025 |

 AQA
<https://www.aqa.org.uk/special-requirements/access-...>

- **Schools must apply for modified exam papers before the published deadline which is 31st January for June examinations in 2025 and some access arrangements by 21st March 2025.**

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

If you feel your young person is not having their needs met, it may be helpful for schools to contact specialist education services.

Specialist Education services offer support children and schools across Suffolk

There are Five Specialist Educational Services in Suffolk:

[Cognition and Learning](#)

[Communication and Interaction](#)

[Sensory and Physical](#)

[Social, Emotional and Mental Health](#)

[Whole School Inclusion Services](#)

Click the links to learn more about each service!

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND THERAPEUTIC SERVICES



- Provide evidence-based interventions and support for children, young people and families
- Use tools to increase understanding of the child and how they can better be supported in school, considering both strengths and learning needs
- Consultation
- Deliver specialist training to education staff

[Graduated-Response-Live-Links-24.09.pdf](#)

Inclusion Facilitation Service

- Help to put meeting needs into practise
- Does not require EHCP
- Accessible through SENCO

[The Suffolk Inclusion Facilitation Service](#)

EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE (EHC) PLAN/ NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- Your young person may need an Education Health and Care (EHC) assessment.
- EHC plan is a legal document written by the local authority which is used to support children with the most complex needs in educational settings.
- It describes a young person's SEND needs and adjustments.
- Diagnosis is not required to secure an EHCP
- Parents/carers have the right to challenge the outcome of an EHCP assessment.

Parent/School apply
for EHC needs
assessment

Deciding whether to
assess

If assessed, evidence
gathering assessing
and writing

If a plan is proposed
parent given
opportunity to
comment on draft
plan and choose
preferred provision

Provision must
respond to
consultation

**CHALLENGES
EDUCATION
MAY BRING FOR
YOUR CHILD**



PARTICIP8!

“it can be very hard to socially integrate when you have support to manage a disability in the typical world... I found that constantly being with adults teaches you right from wrong very quickly and can make you appear boring to your peers. This is made worse when you are not interested in typical things like dating in high school or what the latest TikTok trends might be... it can leave you feeling frustrated and wondering what is wrong with you.”



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What challenges does education bring to your child?

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**how do these challenges
make you feel?**

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“Schools say that it’s the gp and gp say it’s the school. Its like our children are a hot potato. That no one ever wants to look at them holistically or support in the best way.”

YOUR YOUNG PERSON MAY BE EXPERIENCING...

Executive
function
differences

Difficulty
concentrating

Emotion
Based School
Avoidance

Sensory
Differences

Emotion
Dysregulation

Difficulty
Attending

Difficulties in
Social
Relationships

Anxiety

Exam Stress



MASKING

- • Neurodivergent children may feel pressured to 'fit in', be accepted by peers or to not be criticised or humiliated
- • They may try to 'hide', 'camouflage' or 'mask' their differences
- • In autistic children, it is thought girls in particular try to mask their differences
- • Masking is exhausting and can have a negative impact on emotional wellbeing and self-esteem
- Create inclusive environments

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How does your child present differently outside of the home e.g., at school, doing other activities

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ATTENDANCE

Education settings can feel very overwhelming and this can lead to school avoidance.

EBSA – Emotion Based School Avoidance

- Consider some of the emotions/underlying factors underneath school avoidance



SCHOOL EXCLUSION

A disproportionate amount of children and young people with SEN are excluded.

Behaviour is communication

- Consider what your child may be trying to communicate
- Exclusion may indicate an unmet need
- Parents can ask school whether further assessment is needed to identify child needs and what support is available

[Autism Education Trust: Exclusions a Guide for Parents](#)

STRATEGIES AND SUPPORT
TO COMMUNICATE WITH
SCHOOLS



ADVOCATING FOR YOUR CHILD IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

Top tips for communicating with schools

Share your young person's strengths and interests

Consider what is going well, whether current support is meeting need and what may need to change

Incorporate your young person's experiences and voice

Share resources or strategies that you and your young person find helpful

What support can you offer for...?

“How can I support you to best support my child?”

“I've noticed at home that Ellie responds well to...”

[The EPIC Strategy Booklet: a guide for teachers \(adhd.foundation.org.uk\)](https://adhd.foundation.org.uk)

Build a supportive relationship with your SENCO

Acknowledge what the school are trying to do

Strike when the iron is cold

Use Collaborative Language e.g., we

[SENDIASS offer for Schools](#)

Psychology in Schools -Professional Development
Training for Staff

WORKING
WITH
SCHOOLS

[Working with school - Suffolk SENDIASS](#)

[Schools development programme
| Norfolk and Suffolk NHS](#)

YOUR CHILD'S VOICE IN EDUCATION

Education settings must ensure this by

- Helping children to participate in discussions around education and share views
- Consider young person's goals
- Consider child's view when planning and reviewing support

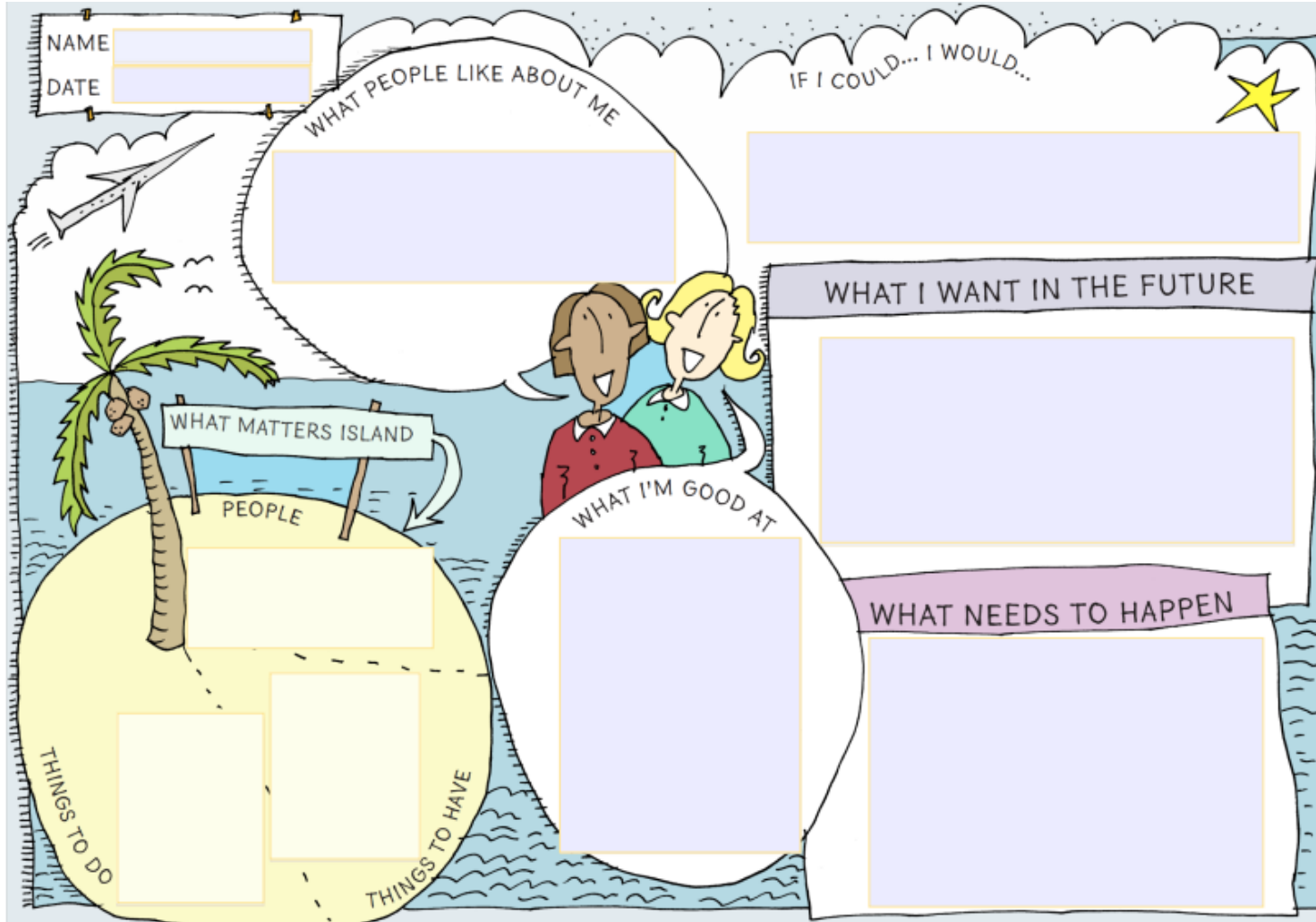


[My Views –
Suffolk SENDIASS](#)

Your Child's support in Education should be person-centred.

Alternative ways children can share views:

- All about me booklet
- Opportunities to draw
- One-page profiles



[Psychological and Therapeutic Services: Resources for gathering CYP voice pack](#)



SUPPORTING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE/EBSA

WHAT DID YOU FIND HELPFUL IN SUPPORTING YOUR EDUCATION?

“One thing that really helped me to adjust to the environment and the constant change was a mentor who was also my maths teacher. I found I was able to open up to her and add coping mechanisms to toolkit for managing in the school environment and when needed homework.”



BUILDING YOUR CHILD'S PASSPORT OF SUPPORT

Clocks/timers

Extra Time

Ear Defenders

Pencil/Pen Grips

Incorporate
areas of child
interest

Fidget Toys

Rest breaks

Written
instructions

Communication
cards

The form is a vertical document with a light blue border. It contains four main sections, each with a teal header and a large white text area with a teal border:

- My One-Page Profile:** Includes a teal header, a teal-bordered text box, and a dashed rectangular box to the right.
- What people appreciate about me:** Includes a teal header and a teal-bordered text box.
- What is important to me:** Includes a teal header and a teal-bordered text box.
- How to support me:** Includes a teal header and a teal-bordered text box.

SUPPORTING TRANSITIONS



Transition workbooks – addressing differences between settings



Phased transition – can I have additional visits?
Notice new sounds, smells; speak to SENCO



Meet key members of staff



Photos of school and staff

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What have you found helpful in supporting your child's education?

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SCHOOL'S TOP TIPS FOR SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION

Routine

Encourage strengths

Set Goals

Redefine Success

Incorporate special interests

Create a sensory friendly, neuro-affirmative learning environment

Reduce Cognitive Load

SUPPORTING ATTENDANCE

Notice patterns in school avoidance behaviour

Identify factors beneath the surface for your child

Follow advice and guidance on attendance

Engage with Schools Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

At school, these things can make me feel upset:

My Key People are:



Until my return to school plan includes the following changes to my attendance:
(Identify any changes to days or times they come in)

| What? | When? | Who? | Where? |
|-------|-------|------|--------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Changes to my timetable include:
(Identify any changes needed)

Other people who have access to the plan are:

Any other changes include:
(Identify any changes to routines; break, lunch, changes between lessons etc. to classroom expectations; not expected to read aloud, work in pairs etc. and homework)

My signature:

School support

Parent signature:

person's signature:

This plan will be reviewed regularly so that it remains helpful. Review date:



[Psychological and Therapeutic Services: Resources for gathering CYP voice pack](#)

SUPPORTING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE/EBSA

ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

Alternative Provisions provide children with an alternative education setting which may help meet their current needs

[Alternative provision - Suffolk SEND Local Offer](#)

[A guide for parents and carers on alternative provision AP PC Guide](#)

Alternative tuition service

Deliver tuition online in 1-1 sessions or groups, using technology that enables children to access lessons in schools, workpacs and 1-1 face to face sessions.

YP has to meet referral criteria – referrals made by schools, Suffolk County Council

Supports young people who are medically unable to attend school for a period of time or young people who have been permanently excluded until an education setting has been found.

[Alternative Tuition Service](#)



POST 16 EDUCATION SUPPORT

Supported SEND learning courses

[Supported Learning \(SEND\) Courses | Bury St Edmunds | Suffolk \(wsc.ac.uk\)](#)

[Suffolk New college – inclusive learning courses](#)

[INVOLVE Active - Home - not for profit organisation](#)

- listen to and build on the needs and aspirations of children, young people and adults with SEND
- Enabling young people to achieve aspirations and to have opportunities to lead better lives
- Offer new opportunities and social experiences and deliver programmes to support in transition into independence, the world of work.


[Equip Mentoring – Volunteering Matters](#)

- EQUIP Mentoring programme in Ipswich for young people aged 16-24 who are not currently in education, employment or training.
- volunteer mentors share valuable lifetime skills and experiences with young people.
- Aims to empower young people to unlock their strengths and reach their full potential.

“I am a father to a 15-year-old with autism who has attended school part-time for a number of years. She has recently commenced a part-time job in a restaurant, and it has been truly amazing to see her grow in confidence and be recognised and appreciated for the amazing person she is. Perhaps attending full-time school is not for everyone, nor should it hinder their future opportunities.”



Keep being curious
Become the detective and stay resilient
Be your child's ambassador
Give them a voice
Everyday is a learning day
Talk to others and ask for support
Remember to take 5 minutes for yourself
Create a WOW board,
Take a photo of every achievement
Don't try and solve everything at once



'Every child is different. You've just got to find what works.'

'Embrace who your child is. Let them be them.'

'Ask for support. Do not try to do things alone.'

'you are not alone'

HOLDING HOPE

ADVICE AND GUIDANCE SERVICES

[Home - Suffolk SENDIASS](#)

SENDIASS is a statutory service offering free confidential and impartial information, advice and support about special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) for children, young people. Parents and carers.

Their aim is to empower families so that they can take a better part in discussions and decisions about their child's SEND.

[SENDIASS Video: Who are SENDIASS and what to they do](#)


IPSEA – Independent Provider of Special Education Advice

- Charity in the field of SEND law

[\(IPSEA\) Independent Provider of Special Education Advice](#)

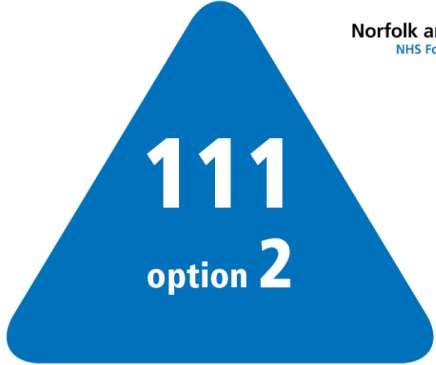
KEY RESOURCES IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR YOUNG PERSON

- **Young Minds parent helpline** 0808 802 5544 (9am -4.30pm M-F) and webchat service: <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-helpline-and-webchat/>
- School /school nurse
- [kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com) – free online counselling for 11-25 year olds (N&S)
- **111, option 2 crisis support**
- **Papyrus – Prevention of Young Suicide**
[Papyrus UK Suicide Prevention | Prevention of Young Suicide \(papyrus-uk.org\)](https://www.papyrus-uk.org)
- **Psychology in Schools Parent**
Workshop: Understanding Self Harm in Children/Adolescents
[Understanding Self-Harm in Children/Adolescents \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)



Norfolk and Suffolk
NHS Foundation Trust

If you need urgent mental health help, call 111 and choose option 2



Mental health crisis support 24/7 for people of all ages in Norfolk and Suffolk

CHILDHOOD NEURODIVERSITY WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

FUTURE WORKSHOPS

- **Supporting Your Child With Anxiety** – Tuesday 17th December 1pm

[Book your place](#)

- Other workshops dates TBC:

Sleep; Understanding and supporting sensory needs; planning ordering and remembering; low mood; eating difficulties; managing big feelings; supporting your neurodiverse teenager

www.nsft.uk/workshops Psychology in Schools Team Eventbrite page



OTHER FREE WORKSHOPS AND VIDEO RECORDINGS

Psychology in Schools Team

Upcoming LIVE Parent/Carer workshops on mental health:

- Supporting your child/adolescent to regulate their emotions
- Supporting your child/adolescent with anxiety
- Supporting your child/adolescent with low mood
- Supporting your child with anxiety and big feelings
- Building confidence and managing anxiety in younger children (under 12) part 1 and part 2
- Supporting children/adolescents with eating difficulties

Recorded previous workshops on NSFT YouTube:

- School Avoidance, Tics and Tourette's, Self-harm, Managing Behaviour, Social Media, OCD, Exam stress and more!
- Previous Neurodiversity workshops
- Supporting social relationships
- [What you need to know as a parent/carers](#)

www.nsft.uk/workshops Eventbrite page
<https://www.youtube.com/c/NsftNhsUk/videos>



SENDIASS

[SENDIASS EVENTS CALENDAR](#)

Parent videos on SEND including:

- What is a special educational need (SEN)?
- SEN support in schools
- EHC Needs Assessment
- Preparing for school transitions

Recorded previous workshops on YouTube

[Parent & carer information sessions - Suffolk SENDIASS](#)

[Suffolk Sendiass – YouTube](#)

RESOURCES

Local Support

- <http://www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk/>
- [PACT | Parents And Carers Together | Suffolk](#)
- [Suffolk Parent Carer Forum](#)
- [SUFFOLK SENDIASS https://suffolksendiass.co.uk/](https://suffolksendiass.co.uk/)
- [Recovery College | Norfolk and Suffolk NHS](#)
- [Suffolk InfoLink | Beans at Access Community Trust](#)
- [Suffolk Family Carers | Support for unpaid family carers](#)
- [Families Together Suffolk | Local Family Charity | Formerly Homestart Mid And West Suffolk](#)

Support is Needs-Led not Diagnosis-Led

- Suffolk Mainstream Integration Framework - [SMIF Sep 24 \(suffolklearning.com\)](#)
- Statutory Guidance for Schools on SEND support
[SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf](#)
- [Psychology and Therapeutic Services - Suffolk County Council](#)

School exclusions

- [Behaviour as communication - Suffolk SENDIASS](#)
- Sendiass document on school exclusion: [Layout 1 \(suffolksendiass.co.uk\)](#)
- Government School Exclusion Guidance -
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

Alternative provision/ Home education

- [Educating your child at home - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Educational Freedom](#)
- [Alternative Tuition Service](#)

Exams (reasonable adjustments, access arrangements, exam stress)

- Psychology in Schools team – past workshop on [Exam Stress](#)
- [Exam Stress | How To Deal with Exam Stress | YoungMinds](#)
- <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-access-arrangements>

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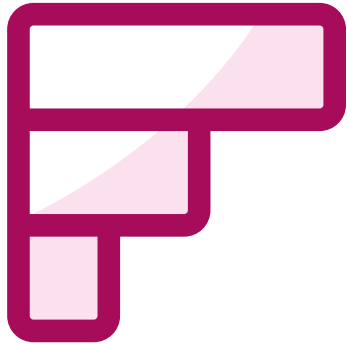


Two key things I will take away from the workshop are...

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I have found today's workshop helpful

① Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

Childhood Neurodiversity:
Supporting Your Child's Education
Feedback Survey (Live)

