AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR BRANCH’S INFORMATION PACK

This Pack is produced by the Richmond Branch of the National Autistic Society. If you would like to receive a printed copy of this pack or find out more about our Branch’s activities, please use the contact details listed below.

The Richmond Branch of The National Autistic Society is a friendly parent-led group aiming to support families and individuals in the borough living with autism and/or Asperger Syndrome. We hold coffee mornings, liaise with other groups and provide regular updates through emails and our Branch website. We are also working with professionals to improve access to health, social services and educational provision.

Our core objectives are: Awareness, Support, Information

Our present activities:

**Awareness and liaison.** Networking and partnering with other local organisations (eg: Richmond Mencap, Marble Hill, RPCAG); to share expertise and improve services. Raising awareness and representing families and individuals affected by autism by involvement in the local authority’s implementation of the Autism Strategy, SEND plus other autism interest/pan-disability rights groups.

**Family and individual support.** This is offered via telephone and email support, our coffee mornings and family events.

**Information.** We aim to help and inform families and individuals affected by autism and Asperger Syndrome, and do so via:

- Our Branch website. This gives details of our Branch and NAS Head Office’s activities, other groups, general activities and events, plus the online Information Pack.

- The NAS Richmond Branch Information Pack. An essential guide to autism services and support. Written by local parents, the Information Pack aims to help anyone affected by autism or Asperger syndrome, including parents, carers and anyone else who provides support. Our first Information Pack was produced in 2004; the second edition being published in 2010. The online version is updated frequently to reflected changes and include new information as it becomes available.

The members of NAS Richmond Branch’s committee, all of whom are parent volunteers, provide the above activities and services. We are not in a position to provide respite care, therapeutic input or counselling, but having said that, we will do our best to signpost you to the appropriate services. We extend a very warm welcome to all newcomers — people who would like to contribute to our group with their experiences and ideas, as well as those who would just like to meet up. We look forward to hearing from you soon...

NAS Richmond Branch contact details:
Branch Officer: Laura Lennuyeux-Connene
Tel: 07810 505982     Email: richmond@nas.org.uk     Website: www.richmondnas.org

The National Autistic Society’s Head Office holds details of Richmond Branch, plus those of all other local Branches of the NAS throughout the country. Contact NAS Head Office at:
Tel: 020 7833 2299     Website: www.autism.org.uk
## CONTENTS

**AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR BRANCH’S INFORMATION PACK**  
Our present activities and contact details.  

**THE AUTISM SPECTRUM**  
What is an autism spectrum disorder?  
‘Describing Autism’ diagram  
Myths about autism spectrum disorders + positive traits of autism and Asperger syndrome  
You are not alone  
So, you think the person you care for may have an ASD  
Who can help (children and adults)?  

**WHY A DIAGNOSIS?**  
Children’s diagnosis  
Adults’ diagnosis  
NAS Autism Seminars for Families  
Talking to your child about ASDs  
Provision for adults with ASD – the Autism Act  

**AN INTRODUCTION TO IN-BOROUGH SERVICES**  
Children - Health, Education and Social Services  
Children’s Disability Register  

**CHILD HEALTH CARE**  
Health Visitors  
Specialist Health Visitors  
Community Nursery Nurses  
School Nurses  
Community Paediatricians  
Child and Family Consultation Centre (CAMHS)  
Portage  
Speech and Language Therapy  
Occupational Therapy  
Physiotherapy  
Dental Care  
Behavioural Workshops  
Dietitian  
Toilet Training and Promotion of Continence  

**EDUCATION**  
Educational Psychology  
What kind of education should I be considering?  
Pre-School and Reception  
Primary School  
Secondary School  
College  
Higher Education/Universities and Disabled Students’ Allowance  
Autism resource to support schools  
Children, Schools and Families Act 2010  
Preparing for Adulthood/Transition  
The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act  
Learning Difficulty Assessment/EHC Plan
**EDUCATION (continued)**
Disability discrimination .................................................. 38
Further Suggestions ......................................................... 38
Home Education .............................................................. 39
Information, Advice and Support Services for families and young people .................................................. 39
Education, Health and Care Plans ...................................... 40
More about the changes to SEND provision ............... 42
The Local Offer ............................................................. 43
Disagreeing with a decision ................................................ 43

**SOCIAL SERVICES (for children, young people and families)** .................................................. 45
The Disabled Children’s Service: asking for an assessment .......... 45
Short Breaks .................................................................. 46
Other Services .............................................................. 47
Preparing for Adulthood/Transition support (14 to 25 years) .... 47
Social Services 16+ ......................................................... 47

**SOCIAL SERVICES (for people aged 18 and over)** .................................................. 48
Autism Services + Richmond Community Learning Disability Team .................................................. 48
Self Directed Support ....................................................... 49
Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities available in this Borough .................................................. 50

**SUPPORT, HEALTH AND WORK** .................................................. 52
Support .......................................................................... 52
Health ........................................................................... 54
Work ............................................................................. 55

**LIVING INDEPENDENTLY AND HOUSING OPTIONS** .................................................. 57

**LEISURE** .................................................. 61
General tourism and holiday information ...................... 61
Children and Young People ............................................. 62
Adults ............................................................................. 65

**MONEY, BENEFITS, ALLOWANCES & CONCESSIONS** .................................................. 68
Organisations offering advice ........................................ 68
Disability Living Allowance (DLA) .................................... 69
Personal Independence Payment (PIP) ...................... 69
Carer’s Allowance .......................................................... 71
Benefits and Allowances 16+ .......................................... 71
Being an Appointee .......................................................... 71
16 to 19 Bursary Fund ...................................................... 72
Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) ................. 72
Universal Credit (UC) ....................................................... 78
NAS Welfare Rights Service ........................................... 79
Other Benefits Advice Services ..................................... 80
Disabled Facilities Grant .................................................. 80
Additional Concessions, etc. ............................................. 81

**SELF-HELP: WHAT PARENTS AND CARERS CAN DO** .................................................. 84
Diets and Supplements ................................................... 84
Complementary Therapies .............................................. 85
Other Resources – music therapy, play sessions, Intensive Interaction .................................................. 86
Immunisation ................................................................. 87
PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE – WILLS AND TRUSTS

PARENT SUPPORT AND INFORMATION FOR CARERS

CONTACT LIST

EDUCATION – USEFUL CONTACTS

SUGGESTED READING
Where to begin
Parenting
Personal Accounts
Education and Learning
Employment
Relationships
Explaining ASD/AS
    Health and biomedical interventions
General
NAS leaflets, booklets and DVDs

USEFUL WEBSITES
General (ASD)
Education
Teaching Materials
Preparing for Adulthood/Transition
Literature
Health, therapies and biomedical intervention
Immunisation
Social networking and forums
Games, toys & sensory needs
Legal professionals
Miscellaneous

USEFUL APPS
Communication
Social skills and expressing emotions
Social Stories
Out and About
Miscellaneous Apps

ABBREVIATIONS LIST

THANK YOU....

The inclusion of services and links to websites in this Information Pack does not imply that NAS Richmond supports or endorses them; nor does the absence of any such service imply that NAS Richmond does not support them.

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393, City Road, London EC1V 1NG
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Email: nas@nas.org.uk Website: www.autism.org.uk
THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

Do you have concerns about a child or adult, or feel that they are different from their peer group in some way? Maybe you've observed that they have difficulties in some of the following areas:

• Making friends and/or disinterest in communicating with others
• Speech is delayed and/or disordered, or the opposite — a child uses verbose, pedantic adult language at an early age, delivering monologues on their topics of special interest
• In the case of children, their playing seems odd
• Displays repetitive behaviour or obsessional interests
• Little or unusual eye-contact
• General social interaction is absent or stilted, or largely limited to interaction with adults
• Seems to avoid contact — physical or otherwise
• Reacts poorly to change
• Does not point to attract your attention

Could it be that the child or adult has a social and communication disorder? Could this be an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

What is an autism spectrum disorder (ASD)?

ASD is a lifelong developmental disability affecting the way a person relates and communicates with others (some people use the phrase ‘autism spectrum condition’ instead of ASD). The term spectrum implies that the condition of autism varies in severity, depending on the individual, from:

• Classic autism — which is more pronounced and where accompanying learning disabilities are more likely, through to:
• High functioning autism (HFA) and Asperger Syndrome (AS) — where children often speak fluently while nevertheless still having difficulties with social relationships and interaction.

ASD is often diagnosed during a child’s pre-school or early school years, based on symptoms which professionals may refer to as a ‘triad of impairment’. This means there are three areas of difficulty, which together form the basis of a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder.

These are:
1. Difficulty with social interaction and relationships
2. Difficulty with social communication
3. Difficulty with social imagination, reflected in a lack of flexibility of thinking and behaviour, often noted as obsessive and/or repetitive behaviour
These pin people illustrate some ways in which autism is displayed:

- Echolalic — copies words like a parrot (adult)
- Talks incessantly about special interests (adult)
- Variety is not the spice of life (adult)
- No eye contact (adult)
- Bizarre behavior (adult)
- Inappropriate laughing or giggling (adult)
- Literal answers to questions (adult)
- Agitated behavior (adult)
- Echolalia interview (adult)
- May be influenced by others (adult)
- May copy others (adult)
- Repeats the same question (adult)

Produced with the permission of the National Autistic Society.
Myths about autism spectrum disorders

While in some cases these may be accurate to a certain extent, they are by no means always symptoms of an ASD:

- **People with an ASD are not affectionate.** Not true. Some are very affectionate indeed and often very demonstrative with it.

- **People with an ASD have outstanding skills in one particular area** — such as remembering everyone’s birthday, have extraordinary drawing abilities, or are very gifted musically. Although it may be true that some people display skills in a certain area that belie their apparent disabilities in most other areas, this is still relatively rare.

- **People with an ASD (especially children) are badly behaved or are hyperactive.** Badly behaved implies that they know and ought to be able to do something about it. This is not always the case, particularly for those who suffer from sensory defensiveness (See Occupational Therapy). Hyperactivity is a different disorder, which may or may not affect your child. In other words, there are those with an ASD who have tantrums and are hyperactive but others who may be very passive and gentle.

- **No language and/or poor communication skills.** There is more to language than being able to speak fluently. A lot of the problems are related to understanding the social or unwritten rules of conversation: for example eye contact, turn taking and appropriate topics of conversation, as well as taking things literally (for example, the term ‘pull your socks up’).

- **No imagination.** This is often confused with the terms: lack of imaginative play or lack of social imagination. Many children with an ASD, especially those who are high functioning, may play imaginative games with favoured objects, or quote (often at length) from stories read to them or from the television. However, they may not role-play (e.g. Mums and Dads, policemen, nurses etc) nor use objects for a use other than what it was intended for (e.g. using a banana as a telephone). People with an ASD have difficulty with social imagination, which means they have problems understanding and interpreting other people’s thoughts, feelings and actions, predicting what’s likely to happen next, preparing and planning for the future, coping with changes to their routine.

Positive traits of autism and Asperger syndrome

There is a tendency to focus on negative aspects and use such words as impairment, disorder and difficulties. Many of those with autism or Asperger syndrome have positive traits and talents that should not be forgotten. However there are significant variations among these people, both in their abilities and the challenges they face.

Positive characteristics can include trustworthiness, reliability, honesty, dependability, being genuine, accuracy, a good work ethic, observing details others may miss, a good memory, conscientiousness, an enjoyment of routine and repetition, hard working, dedication, punctuality, being unlikely to manipulate or to discriminate against others, being forthright and having a strong sense of justice.

The range of intellectual capability is as varied as in the general population, ranging from those with extreme learning disabilities to individuals with high intellectual capacity. Only about 10% of those on the autism spectrum display extraordinary skills (savant abilities). The most common forms of these involve mathematical calculations, memory feats, artistic abilities, and musical abilities.
You are not alone

In the borough of Richmond, there are a large number of parents caring for children, young people and adults who have similar problems.

This Information Pack has been designed, written and put together by parents who care for children, young people or adults on the autism spectrum. Although the contents of this Pack is aimed primarily at parents and carers, it should also be of interest to people who have been newly diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder/Asperger syndrome, those who suspect that they might have such a condition, plus others who take an interest in or work with individuals who are on the autism spectrum.

We hope that the contents of this Pack will enable the people who read it to:

• Regain their confidence.

• Find information they need to make informed choices.

• Get in touch with each other and understand a little more about what they can do and who can do what for them.

Autism and Asperger Syndrome affects over half a million people in the UK; that’s around 1 in every 100. Early intervention and special support can help people with an ASD achieve their full potential. We hope this pack will help you find what you need to know to get things moving.

To the best of our knowledge, the information in this pack is correct and reflects the experiences of the group of parents who compiled it. However we cannot take responsibility for any errors or omissions. The autism spectrum is a spectrum of needs, requiring a spectrum of resources that we hope is represented here. The information reflects our experiences as parents, so it is possible that we may be sketchy in certain areas. If your experience has taught you anything different, or any of our information is incorrect, we would welcome your input (see page 2 for our Branch’s contact details). This will ensure that this Information Pack can be kept up to date and as accurate as possible.

For the purposes of this pack we have tended to use the terms ‘children with an ASD’ or ‘adults with an ASD’—and unless we have specified otherwise, this refers to those with an autism spectrum disorder (which includes classic autism, high functioning autism as well as Asperger Syndrome).

When directing readers to other sections within the pack for further information, we have put the relevant section in italics. For example (See Suggested Reading). For page numbers, refer to the Contents list.

Towards the end of this pack are four sections worth mentioning here:

Useful Websites.
Abbreviations (e.g., NAS, SALT etc).
Parent Support and Information for Carers.
Contact Lists (organisations, specialist centres, etc., listed throughout this pack).
So, you think the person you care for may have an ASD.

You may be feeling scared, lonely or isolated. You may want answers but a part of you would rather not, or perhaps you are feeling relieved that you may have found a reason for their difficulties, a name for all your doubts.

Who can help?

**Children:** For children, your first port of call may be your health visitor or your GP. There you can voice your concerns and request a referral to see a specialist. Don’t be put off if you feel your GP or health visitor does not share your concerns to the same degree as yourself. You are entitled to ask for a referral and request that a specialist should see your child. The waiting lists are often long and if you find that this is not required after all, you can always cancel. Trust your instincts, you know your own child best and are often the first person to notice that something is not quite right with your child.

**Adults – Late Diagnosis:** The NAS Autism Helpline frequently receives calls from adults who suspect they may have Asperger syndrome (AS) or high-functioning autism (HFA) and are looking for a diagnosis. Here, the term Asperger syndrome is used to include all forms of high-functioning autism.

Gaining a diagnosis as an adult isn’t easy, especially as Asperger syndrome isn’t widely heard of among GPs. The typical route for getting diagnosed is to visit your GP and ask for a referral to a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist, preferably one with experience of diagnosing autism. If the person concerned is already seeing a specialist for other reasons, for example, a psychologist because they suffer from depression, then they might wish to ask that specialist about a referral instead.

It can be a very worrying and uncertain experience to be given a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Many individuals and families find that very little guidance is given as to where to go for more information and what to do next after being given the diagnosis, so they can feel frightened, isolated and confused.

The NAS Autism Helpline offers confidential information, advice and support to people in this situation. It can be contacted by phoning 0808 800 4104 (Monday to Friday, 10.00am to 4.00pm), emailing autismhelpline@nas.org.uk or online at www.autism.org.uk/helpline. The NAS also offers an online service called Signpost that aims to give personally relevant information about ASDs, services and entitlements for people living in the UK. Visit www.autism.org.uk/signpost where you will be asked to submit some basic personal data about the person concerned, which is then used to provide appropriate information.

Talking to, and being given support by others living locally who have been through similar experiences can be very beneficial. One way to do this is to contact your local NAS Branch - Richmond Branch can be contacted at 07810 505982 or by email at Richmond@nas.org.uk. Details of the NAS Branches nationwide are given here www.autism.org.uk/our-services/find-nas-services-in-your-area/local-branches.aspx.

Some of the common areas of concern are education, health, social care, benefits, leisure activities, therapies and interventions. Within this Information Pack are sections relating to all of these areas and more, and it is hoped that it will act as a guide to tell you about and help find the services you need.
WHY A DIAGNOSIS?

Children’s diagnosis

If you suspect your child has an autism spectrum disorder (ASD), a diagnosis will give you clarification of the nature of their needs, the ways in which those needs affect your child and consequently the problems they can have interacting with the world around them.

Having a diagnosis can save a lot of frustration and make caring for your child less stressful by knowing the nature of their difficulties and therefore not attempting to try things for which they are not ready. On the other hand, a diagnosis can also be helpful if you are searching for ways to help your child in that you will know to look for approaches that are autism specific.

A diagnosis can help when explaining your child’s condition to other people. It can also make it easier when you are stating your case to obtain appropriate support and access to services, eg: home care support, obtaining an Education, Health and Care Plan, plus getting help from the medical services and social services.

Often it is the parent or carer who notices something different about the child in the first instance (they may have read books or explored various websites where they have discovered that the diagnostic criteria for an ASD seem to describe their child’s differences), although a healthcare professional or the school may also have concerns they wish to share with the parent or carer. Importantly, a diagnosis may also highlight other problems as well as ruling some out. Do remember, there are also conditions that may have the appearance of an ASD but not actually be so.

A diagnosis can be a great relief, but it can also be very hard, worrying and painful to come to terms with its implications. It is important that you consider calling on support at this time from friends, family, the NAS or other parent support groups.

Generally the first step towards getting a diagnosis is through your GP or health visitor, who can refer you to a NHS specialist — often a paediatrician or psychiatrist. The waiting lists are usually long, so if you prefer, do ask for the names and points of contact for paediatricians and psychiatrists who see private patients. However if these professionals are out of the Richmond borough, they may not have knowledge of local services. Contact numbers for those wishing to go private are available from: The National Autistic Society Autism Helpline: 0808 800 4104

Autism London, which is now part of the mcch group, supply factsheets (including one about early diagnosis) that you may find useful. This can be requested via email from ethney@autismlondon.org.uk
Since October 2014, Richmond’s Single Point of Access (SPA) is the point of contact for diagnostic referrals. A specialist clinician will be an integral part of the SPA team and part of their role will be to ensure that the referrals received are properly considered by all concerned and sent to the right place. Please note that even though SPA appears to refer to child protection issues only, this is the correct department to contact!
Tel: 020 8891 7969     Email: spa@richmond.gov.uk     Webpage: www.richmond.gov.uk/child_protection

These establishments will take referrals for diagnosis and second opinions:

**Michael Rutter Centre for Children and Young People**
The Maudsley Hospital  
De Crespigny Park, (off) Denmark Hill, London SE5 8AZ.  
Tel: 020 3228 2535  
Will take referrals from the consultant psychiatrist who is seeing your child, and give a second opinion. They do a comprehensive two-day diagnosis, and make recommendations regarding management of your child’s difficulties.

**UCL Institute of Child Health (National Centre for High Functioning Autism)**
**Social Communication Disorders Clinic**
Department of Child and Adolescent Mental Health  
Level 4, Frontage Building,  
Great Ormond Street Hospital,  
Great Ormond Street  
London WC1N 3JH  
Tel: 020 7405 9200 (main switchboard)  
Webpage: [www.gosh.nhs.uk/gosh/clinicalservices/autism_services/Homepage](http://www.gosh.nhs.uk/gosh/clinicalservices/autism_services/Homepage)
Accepts referrals from health professionals such as GPs, child psychiatrists and consultants for children aged between four and seventeen years of age.

**Croydon Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service**
Christopher Wren House.  
113, High Street,  
Croydon CR0 1QG  
Tel: 020 3228 0000   Fax: 020 3228 0059  
Webpage: [www.croydon.gov.uk/healthsocial/families/camhs](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/healthsocial/families/camhs)
Will take written referrals from medical practitioners, social workers, paediatricians, education and any other professional who has made an assessment. For children and young people up to eighteen years of age.

**Wolfson Neurodevelopmental Service (Autism & Social Communication Disorder Service)**
Great Ormond Street Hospital.  
Great Ormond Street,  
London WC1N 3JH  
Tel: 020 7405 9200 ext. 1143  
The children referred to this service are those who are thought to have complex autistic spectrum and language disorders, especially where there is a need for a second opinion or uncertainty about the diagnosis. Referrals should be made through the child’s secondary level services, i.e.: not via the child’s GP but through their paediatric consultant.
Paediatric Neurodevelopment, Neurodisability and Epilepsy Service
2nd Floor, Clare House,
St. George's Hospital,
Blackshaw Road,
London SW17 0QT
Tel: 020 8725 2214   Fax: 020 8725 2251
Website: www.stgeorges.nhs.uk/service/childrens-services-2/childrens-medicine/nne/
Accepts referrals from GPs by letter, fax or online.

Dr Claire Scott
Dr Scott is a consultant community paediatrician who as well as working at Kingston Hospital has a private practice. She is able to assess and diagnose those children who may have autism and Asperger syndrome and sees her private patients at Parkside Hospital in Wimbledon, Coombe Wing at Kingston Hospital, the Children’s and Young People Development Centre in Chessington and The Guildford Clinic in Guildford. For more information, please contact:
Tel: 07796 783007   Website: http://drclairescott.com

Dr Gemma Casey
Dr Casey is a clinical psychologist who works with adults with learning disabilities and autism in the NHS and is based in Wimbledon. She also works privately where she offers autistic spectrum disorder diagnostic assessments and is also able to offer therapy sessions with those who have a diagnosis (including those who may have recently received one) to think about what this means for them. Dr Casey able to assess both adults and children for a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorders and is also able to offer assessment and recommendations for behavioural difficulties which may be associated with autistic spectrum disorder. For more information, please contact:
Tel: 07912 577610   Website: www.drgemmacasey.com   Email: drgemmacasey@gmail.com

Whichever route you take, it would be useful for you to ask for some indication as to how long you'll have to wait before seeing a specialist. Do come prepared with notes about your pregnancy, child’s very early years, your concerns about their development and when/how first noted, including written observations of their behaviour (giving specific examples, eg: events, language, etc). THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT. You may also want to ask questions about how your child’s condition and/or degree of learning disability could affect their academic capabilities. Naturally, it is important to share the information gained from the diagnosis with your child’s school/LA as this will help them to provide the most appropriate educational input/provision.
Adults’ diagnosis

As the following section concerns adults, it is aimed primarily at adults who suspect that they might have an autism spectrum disorder, in particular Asperger syndrome (AS), and are considering being assessed and diagnosed. However, it will also be relevant to parents and carers of adults who are interested in the assessment and diagnosis process, plus those people who take an interest in or work with adults who could possibly be on the autism spectrum.

It can be very hard to convince your doctor that a diagnosis (or asking for a referral to a specialist for an assessment and diagnosis) would be either relevant or necessary. Remember, it’s OK to invite someone you trust to accompany you to your doctor’s appointments to give you support and reassurance. The following are just some tips on how to present your case so that they can see both why you might have an autism spectrum disorder/AS and why having a diagnosis could be helpful.

Ways to bring up the subject with your doctor

Make sure the diagnosis is the only thing you are seeing your doctor about. If you try and drop it into a consultation about another subject they may not address it fully. A good way to bring up the subject is to mention that you have been reading about autism/Asperger syndrome and/or you have been in touch with The National Autistic Society.

Describing the triad of impairments

You should then explain why this is relevant to you. AS is characterised by something known as the triad of impairments. People with AS will be affected in some way by each of these impairments. Below are some suggestions for ways in which you could describe how the triad of impairments relates to you. The autistic spectrum is very broad and two people with the condition may present very differently. No one person will have all the traits but by and large most people with AS will have problems in the following three areas:

Social communication

People with AS may be very good at basic communication and letting people know what they think and feel. Their difficulties lie in the social aspects of communication. For example, they may have difficulty understanding gestures, body language and facial expressions, they may not be aware of what is socially appropriate and have difficulty choosing topics to talk about, they may not be socially motivated because they find communication difficult, so they may not have many friends and they may choose not to socialise very much.

Some of these problems can be seen in the way people with AS present themselves. For example classic traits include difficulty making eye contact, repetitive speech, difficulties expressing themselves especially when talking about emotions, anxiety in social situations and resultant nervous tics.

Social understanding

Typical examples of difficulties with social understanding include difficulties in group situations, such as going to the pub with a group of friends, finding small talk and chatting very difficult, problems understanding double meanings, for example not knowing when people are teasing you, not choosing appropriate topics to talk about, taking what people say very literally. You might want to back this up with specific examples of the kind of social situations you find difficult.

Imagination

This can be a slightly confusing term. People often assume it means that people with AS are not imaginative in the conventional use of the word, for example, they lack creative abilities. This is not the case and many people with AS are extremely able writers, artists and musicians. Instead, lack of imagination in AS can include difficulty imagining alternative outcomes and finding it hard to predict what will happen next. This frequently leads to anxiety. This can present as an obsession with rigid routines and severe distress if routines are disrupted, problems with making plans for the future, and having difficulties organising your life, problems with sequencing tasks, so that preparing to go out can be difficult because you can’t always remember what to take with you. Some people with AS over-compensate for this by being extremely meticulous in their planning, and having extensive written or mental checklists.
**Secondary traits of Asperger syndrome**

Besides the triad of impairments, people with AS tend to have difficulties which relate to the triad but are not included within it. These can include obsessive compulsive behaviours, often severe enough to be diagnosed as obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). These can also be linked to obsessive interests in just one topic, for example they might have one subject about which they are extremely knowledgeable which they want to talk about with everyone they meet. Sometimes people with AS are described as having a social phobia but they may also be affected by other common fears such as claustrophobia and agoraphobia. They can also have acute anxiety, which can lead to panic attacks and a rigid following of routines, depression and social isolation (this is especially common among adults) and clumsiness often linked to a condition known as dyspraxia. This includes issues with fine motor co-ordination such as difficulties writing neatly as well as problems with gross motor co-ordination such as ungainly movements, tripping, falling a lot and sometimes appearing drunk as a result.

Not having these associated problems does not mean you do not have AS, but if you have any of them you might want to describe it in order to back up your case. You don't need to go and describe every single one of these features. Your doctor may be more likely to respond if you give one good example from each area of the triad.

**What if the doctor disagrees?**

If your doctor disagrees with your argument, ask for the reason why. If you don't feel comfortable discussing their decision then and there you can ask for a second appointment to talk it through.

**Reasons why you might need a diagnosis**

Diagnosis in adulthood can be a mixed blessing. Some people decide that they are happy with self diagnosis and decide not to ask for a formal diagnosis; for those who do ask, there are a variety of benefits. Many people have suffered from mental health problems and/or have been misdiagnosed as having mental health problems such as schizophrenia. They have known that they have specific difficulties for a long time without being able to explain them. A firm diagnosis can be a relief because it allows them to learn about their condition and understand where and why they have difficulties for the first time.

Many people suffer the consequences of being constantly misunderstood. Often the fact that someone has AS can lead to teasing, bullying and social isolation. When the people close to you are able to understand that there is a reason for your difficulties, it is much easier for them to empathise with your position.

Adults with AS may need support with day to day living (this is only the case for some people and many others have no support needs). If they are having these needs met it may be by people who do not understand Asperger syndrome and the specific difficulties associated with it. With a diagnosis, you will be able to access autism-specific services. It can be helpful to meet up with other people who have the condition in order to learn about their experiences and share your own. There are some support groups available for this and the NAS also supports a group called Asperger United who publish a newsletter written by people with AS for people with AS. If you are interested in subscribing to this newsletter, visit the NAS website, and use the ‘Search’ option to find the Asperger United links. Another good way of contacting people with AS is through the internet. You do not have to have a diagnosis of AS in order to access this support.

Gaining a diagnosis can be difficult and very few adults find it easy. You are the only person who can decide if this is the best choice for you.

The NAS Autism Helpline can supply you with the details of independent diagnosticians, should you wish to do so. Please contact: NAS Autism Helpline Tel: 0808 800 4104 (10.00am — 4.00pm, Monday to Friday).
The establishments listed below are known to provide assessment and diagnostic services to adults who suspect they may have an ASD:

**Specialist Assessment and Intervention Service**
Sheridan House, 26, Upper Teddington Road, Hampton Wick, Middlesex. KT1 4DY
Tel: 020 8274 7601    Website: [www.yourhealthcare.org/Services/Sheridan-House-Specialist-Assessment-and-Intervention-Service.htm](http://www.yourhealthcare.org/Services/Sheridan-House-Specialist-Assessment-and-Intervention-Service.htm)
Your Healthcare offers a specialist diagnostic service for adults living within Richmond Borough who are also registered with an in-borough GP. Following a diagnosis, specialist counselling and support may be available, depending on funding. Should you think you might be on the autism spectrum and would like a diagnosis, or know someone who does, please contact the GP and ask them for a referral to this service. Sheridan House is open between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday with the exception of bank holidays.

**The NAS Lorna Wing Centre for Autism**
(formerly The Centre for Social and Communication Disorders).
Elliot House, 113, Masons Hill, Bromley, Kent. BR2 9HT
Tel: 020 8466 0098   Fax: 020 8466 0118
Email: lornawingcentre@nas.org.uk
Provides a specialist diagnostic and assessment service for both children and adults. Referrals are made via the NHS (only through a consultant, not a GP), although referrals from Social Services also may be accepted.

**Leading Edge Psychology**
Dr. Amitta Shah (Consultant Clinical Psychologist)
1, The Close, Dale Road, Purley, Surrey. CR8 2EA
Tel: 020 8763 9383   Fax: 020 8645 0664   Email: amittashah@onetel.com
Can provide a diagnostic assessment for both adults and children at the centre or where the person lives. Referrals can be either through the NHS or privately. It is possible to self-refer if going privately, but Dr. Shah prefers referral through a GP (the secretary should be able to explain the procedure).

**Dr Gemma Casey**
Dr Casey is a clinical psychologist who works with adults with learning disabilities and autism in the NHS and is based in Wimbledon. She also works privately where she offers autistic spectrum disorder diagnostic assessments and is also able to offer therapy sessions with those who have a diagnosis (including those who may have recently received one) to think about what this means for them. Dr Casey able to assess both adults and children for a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorders and is also able to offer assessment and recommendations for behavioural difficulties which may be associated with autistic spectrum disorder. For more information, please contact:
Tel: 07912 577610   Website: [www.drgemmacasey.com](http://www.drgemmacasey.com)   Email: drgemmacasey@gmail.com

**Autism Assessment and Behavioural Genetics Clinic**
Maudsley Hospital (Outpatients). Denmark Hill, London. SE5 8AZ
Tel: 020 3228 4653/4879     Fax: 020 3228 4141
The clinic accepts ASD referrals for people 18 years of age and older, and are taken on an individual basis. Referrals are accepted from consultant psychiatrists, GPs or GP consortia and private patients (self referred or insurance funded).

The National Autistic Society has produced a booklet called ‘What Next?’ for adults who have a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder, or those who are considering getting a diagnosis. It contains information about services, support and benefits that adults having an ASD may be able to access and also covers such issues as housing, community support, education and employment. The booklet also contains advice for parents and carers of adults who have an ASD. To download a copy of ‘What Next?’ please visit the following webpage: [http://www.autism.org.uk/Products/Leaflets/What-next.aspx](http://www.autism.org.uk/Products/Leaflets/What-next.aspx)
NAS autism seminars for families

Autism Seminars for Families (previously known as the help! programme) are a series of one-day family support seminars providing information and advice to families of children and young people affected by autism. The seminars include:

Understanding Autism
Understanding Autism aims to provide support to families by helping them to develop an understanding of autism, discussing experiences of getting a diagnosis, identifying how autism affects families, exploring practical ideas for developing communication strategies, plus clarifying support that families may be entitled to (and ways to access this).

Managing Anger
Managing Anger supports families by discussing why children with autism often have challenges with anger, identifying a low arousal approach for support through stressful situations, exploring the cycle of anger and possible support strategies, plus examining strategies for managing feelings.

Sensory Needs
Sensory Needs supports families by considering sensory systems and how they work together, examining how sensory information may be processed differently, discussing how people with autism may have different sensory experiences, and sharing strategies and approaches to help with sensory needs.

Understanding Behaviour
Understanding behaviour supports families by looking at some of the different behaviours that children with autism may display, discussing reasons why they might be doing so, considering ways of trying to begin to understand behaviours, plus suggesting approaches to take in managing these behaviours.

Common Toileting Difficulties
Common Toileting Difficulties supports families by considering how having autism can lead to various toileting difficulties, discussing the general process of toilet training, looking at difficulties children with autism may experience regarding toileting including constipation, smearing, fear of using the toilet and sensory issues, plus exploring tips and strategies to help minimise the problems.

Supporting Siblings
Supporting Siblings supports families by looking at sibling relationships and the impact of these within the family, exploring ways to increase the children’s understanding of their sibling with autism, sharing strategies and approaches which may have a positive effect on sibling relationships, plus looking at sources of support for siblings.

For details of seminars, fees and to book a place, contact:
The Family Support Seminars
Tel: 07425 624 592   Email: familyseminars@nas.org.uk
Talking to your Child about ASDs

Parents often worry about whether they should talk to their child about having an ASD, and if so, when would be a good time and how to approach the subject. Obviously a great deal depends on personal circumstances and you may wish to speak to healthcare professionals about this. Parents at your local branch of the NAS (See Parent Support and Information for Carers page for contact details) or other support groups may also be able to share their experiences with you.

There are a number of books you may find helpful for use with your child and specific books that can help you explain ASD to siblings and other family members. (See Suggested Reading: Explaining ASD/AS) If your child has recently been diagnosed as having autism, the NAS has produced a booklet entitled ‘After Diagnosis’ which will help explain about autism and the support that’s available. You can order or download a copy of the booklet via this webpage: www.autism.org.uk/products/leaflets/after-diagnosis.aspx

The NAS also produces worksheets and lesson plans for explaining ASD to a class at school, and these you may also find useful when talking to your child about having an autism spectrum disorder. Contact NAS Head Office for further information.

Provision for adults with ASDs – The Autism Act

This first ever disability-specific law in England entitles adults with an ASD to the support and provision they badly need.

Basically, the law ensures that the Secretary of State has to prepare an ‘Autism Strategy’ document in order to improve the provision of services to those adults who have an ASD.

The ‘Autism Strategy’ sets a clear framework for all mainstream public sector services to support adults with autism, and will include:

• The setting up of a new National Autism Programme to lead change in public services set out in the strategy.

• A programme to develop training with health and social care professional bodies.

• Autism awareness training for all Jobcentre Plus employment advisers.

• Guidance on making public services accessible to adults with autism, eg: improving buildings, public transport and communication.

• A clear, consistent pathway for diagnosis.

In order to secure implementation of this ‘Autism Strategy’ the Secretary of State has to issue Guidance to the local authorities that will be delivering the services, i.e.: all local councils in England, plus local and national NHS services. This Guidance will be kept under review and may be revised by the Secretary of State, depending on how effective the Guidance has been in securing implementation of the ‘Strategy’. The Guidance must in particular include guidance about:

• Provision of relevant ASD diagnostic services for adults.

• The identification of adults with ASDs.

• Assessment of those adult’s needs in order to plan service provision.

• Planning service provision for young people with ASDs making the transition from child to adult services.
• Other planning relating to the provision of relevant services for adults who have ASDs.

• Training staff who will be providing those services to adults with ASDs.

• Local arrangements for leadership relating to the provision of relevant services to adults with ASDs.

The NAS has stated that the final statutory guidance is now much clearer, stating categorically that local authorities and the NHS:

• Should provide autism training for all staff.

• Must provide specialist autism training for key staff such as community care assessors.

• Cannot refuse a community care assessment for adults with autism based solely on IQ.

• Must appoint an autism ‘lead’ in their area.

• Have to develop a clear pathway to diagnosis and assessment for adults who have autism.

• Need to commission services based on adequate population data.

In April 2014, the Government issued an update to the 2010 Autism Strategy entitled ‘Think Autism - Fulfilling and rewarding lives: the strategy for adults with autism in England: an update’. According to the NAS, within this update are three new key proposals:

• Autism Aware Communities - ‘Think Autism’ community awareness projects will be established in local communities and there will be pledges/awards for local organisations to work towards.

• Autism Innovation Fund - funding for projects that promote innovative local services and projects, particularly for lower-level preventative support.

• Better data collection and more joined up advice and information services, including a new way of social care staff recording someone’s condition as autism, and a commitment to make it easier for people with autism to find information online about how their local authority is performing.

If the Secretary of State needs to issue further guidance or revise the Autism Strategy significantly, the local authorities, NHS bodies and NHS Foundation Trusts must be consulted and their participation sought.

Further information about the Autism Act (including detailed frequently asked questions) and the Autism Strategy is available through the NAS at: www.autism.org.uk/working-with/autism-strategy/the-autism-strategy-an-overview/faqs.aspx


Additional information about implementation of the Autism Strategy plus what it means to adults who have autism can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/implementing-fulfilling-and-rewarding-lives
The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames has developed its own local Autism Strategy. This is being implemented by a joint initiative between adult social care, children’s services and health services, and includes working in partnership with local voluntary groups (including NAS Richmond Branch), parents, carers and people who are on the autism spectrum.

The Borough’s website also has a section specifically for anyone affected by an autism spectrum condition, where you can find out more about locally available services, carers support, news, training, social groups and work, as well as reading more about the national and local autism strategy mentioned above.

Richmond’s Autism Spectrum Condition webpage: www.richmond.gov.uk/autism

For more information, please contact Rebecca Swist, the Borough’s Autism Specialist Worker at: 2nd Floor, Civic Centre. 44, York Street, Twickenham. TW1 3BZ
Email: autism@richmond.gov.uk
AN INTRODUCTION TO IN-BOROUGH SERVICES

Children – Health, Education and Social Services

The main areas of state-funded provision and responsibility are shared between Health, Education and Social Services. Since April 2014, children’s services for Richmond and Kingston-upon-Thames have been delivered by Achieving for Children (AfC). AfC is a community interest company that is entirely owned by the two councils, the vision of AfC being to ensure the best possible outcomes for children and their families by delivering the services they need to live safe, happy, healthy successful lives.

The services delivered by Achieving for Children include:

• Prevention and early help. Providing specialist support for children and young people who have special educational needs. Targeted support to ensure good school attendance by children and young people, the promotion of family wellbeing plus the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour.

• Child protection. A single point of access for both referral and assessment, plus developing interventions and support for those children who do need protection.

• Health integration. Ensuring integrated services for all children and young people by working with GPs, public health and other health care providers.

• Education. Managing school admissions, planning sufficient school places, supporting and challenging early year providers (eg: nurseries), schools and governing bodies so they are enabled to carry out their statutory duties.

• Social Care. Offering high quality provision to children receiving social care services, including fostering and adoption plus services for those leaving social care.

By combining their professional expertise, knowledge and skills, and involving the child or young person and family throughout, professionals can identify needs earlier, deliver a co-ordinated package of support that is centred around the child or young person, and help to secure better outcomes for them.

To find out more about Achieving for Children, please visit their website: www.achievingforchildren.org.uk

Achieving for Children. 44, York Street, Twickenham. TW1 3BZ
Tel: 020 8891 7500    Email: info@achievingforchildren.org.uk
Here is a brief description of what is provided by which service:

1. **Health** - Providing portage (pre-school practical help), diagnosis, on-going health care, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, specialist health visitors, school nurses and help with other health related matters.

2. **Education** - Including a nursery unit for children with social communication disorders, in-borough ASD units attached to mainstream schools, schools for pupils who have SENs and the borough’s primary and secondary schools (with support where appropriate).

3. **Social Services** – The Disabled Children’s Service may provide help, advice and support to families with a child or young person who has significant and permanent special needs. Do not feel embarrassed or upset about approaching Social Services; they’re there to help and support you and your child. It is made up of two teams; the Social Work Team for Disabled Children and the Short Break Care Team (which includes the Befriending Service, Family Link Service and Crofters Outreach Programme).

**Children’s Disability Register**

It is worth mentioning here about including your child on the Richmond upon Thames Children’s Disability Register (children are only eligible for registration if their needs are significant and permanent, but they don’t have to be eligible for care from the Disabled Children’s Service). Registration benefits include an identity card confirming registration, which may be used as evidence for reduced entry to some activities. Families of children who are registered will also receive twice yearly information about the options available to disabled children relating to short breaks and fun activities. Another benefit is that children eligible to be registered will have access to the grants programme and support from Aiming High for Disabled Children.

Registration is voluntary. It is necessary to complete an application form for your child to be considered for the register. This form will request information about your child’s disability or additional needs, the services that he or she will most probably need on the future, plus the details of a relevant doctor who can verify your child’s needs. Once the application has been received, the details given on the form will be sent for confirmation by health services. When the details have been confirmed, the Disabled Children’s Panel will consider the registration request against an eligibility criteria matrix.

Registration forms are available through your child’s school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), at your local health centre or through your social worker.

It is worth mentioning that another advantage of registering your child is that as a family you should find it easier to get support at different stages of your lives. For example you may have difficulty accessing adult services if your child is not registered. It will also enable the Social Services Department to plan for future service provision.

For more information, please contact:
Tel: 020 8831 6052 or email t.florentine@richmond.gov.uk

For more information about Richmond upon Thames policy on eligibility for the Disability Register, plus a link to the disability matrix of eligible needs, please visit: [www.richmond.gov.uk/home/health_and_social_care/children_and_family_care/disabled_childrens_service/disabled_childrens_register.htm](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/home/health_and_social_care/children_and_family_care/disabled_childrens_service/disabled_childrens_register.htm)
CHILD HEALTH CARE

The Health department services include diagnosis, on-going health care, portage, speech and language, therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and specialist health visitors.

Health Visitors

Health visitors give support and advice about health issues to parents. They also ensure child health reviews are offered and may help with detecting any difficulties your child may have. They can provide extra help for those who have a child with special needs, in conjunction with other healthcare professionals.

Specialist Health Visitors

There are two specialist health visitors in the borough. They provide a service in addition to the routine health visiting service, which is provided by Hounslow and Richmond Community Healthcare.

They are based at St John's Health Centre. Oak Lane, Twickenham.TW1 3PA

The specialist health visitor's contact details are given below:
Lynne Watson - Specialist Health Visitor                  Paula Roper-Hall - Specialist Health Visitor.
(Children's Continence & Special Needs)                  Tel: 020 8891 8130
Tel: 0208 614 5300   Email: lwatson10@nhs.net          Email: paularoper-hall@nhs.net

Alternatively, the specialist health visitors can be reached via your named family health visitor, whom you should continue to contact for any routine enquiries about the development of your child. The specialist health visitors also regularly attend the toy libraries, enabling them to keep in contact with those parents and carers who need their help. They can help with such issues as behavioural problems, feeding and toilet training

Community Nursery Nurses

Community nursery nurses work in conjunction with the health visitors, and they can offer additional support to families concerning such issues as toddler tantrums, sleep management and giving advice about play and stimulation. They also can offer clinic appointments once a child is two and a half years old to discuss that child's general development and to generally offer advice on a variety of parenting issues. Health visitors can make a referral to the community nursery nurses, should they feel that the family concerned needs extra support.
School Nurses

Once your child reaches primary school age, health reviews are carried out by the nurse who is allocated to your child’s school. Health concerns can be discussed with them, as they can offer advice and liaise with other healthcare professionals as well as the SENCO/INCO at your child’s school.

Community Paediatricians

You can be referred to your community paediatrician by your health visitor, GP or any other healthcare professional working with you or your child. Alternatively, you can contact the Community Child Health Department directly.

If your GP is based in Richmond Borough, please contact the team based at St. Johns Health Centre, Oak Lane, Twickenham TW1 3PA   Tel: 020 8891 8188   Email: hrch.richmondcommunity@nhs.net

However, if your GP is based in Hounslow Borough, you will need to contact the team based at Heart of Hounslow Centre for Health, 92 Bath Road, Hounslow TW3 3EL   Tel: 020 8630 3185

Child and Family Consultation Centre (CAMHS)

The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) one of the services offered by the Child and Family Consultation Centre. The service includes child and adolescent psychiatry, assessments for ASD, clinical psychology, psychotherapy and family therapy. Referral is through your GP, community paediatrician, health visitor or school nurse plus self referral via the Single Point of Access (SPA). Contact the Child and Family Consultation Centre at:
Richmond Royal Hospital, Kew Foot Road, Richmond, Surrey. TW9 2TE
Tel: 020 3513 3238   Webpage: www.swlstg-tr.nhs.uk/our-services/camhs-richmond/
Single Point of Access (SPA)
Tel: 020 8891 7969   Email: spa@richmond.gov.uk   Webpage: www.richmond.gov.uk/child_protection

Portage

Richmond’s Portage Service is free joint service provided by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and Hounslow and Richmond Community Healthcare (HRCH) for pre-school children aged 0-5 years who have significant learning disabilities (including ASD). A trained Portage Home Visitor calls regularly to discuss learning activities for your child. These tasks (e.g. getting dressed) are broken down into easily taught steps and practiced and recorded at home. As learning is often easier for the child in familiar surroundings, this takes place at home. Portage also runs groups in conjunction with SLT and OT, which some people have found very beneficial. The Portage team also has a small number of portage nursery nurses who can support your child within the nursery setting and help with the integration of children into mainstream nurseries. Referral is via the Child Development Team (CDT). Referrals to the CDT can be from your health visitor, GP or paediatrician. In practice, referrals from the health visitor and GP are first seen by the community paediatrician, who performs a developmental assessment. For additional information, contact the Portage Team Manager. Tel: 020 8831 6111
Speech and Language Therapy

Communication is undoubtedly one of the key areas where your child may need support. Indeed, his or her language and communication impairment may be one of the first things you notice which really point the finger to there being a problem in the development of your child.

Should you have concerns about your child’s language and communication development, do share them with a speech and language therapist (see Advice Line number below). The therapist can provide information and advise whether they think a referral may be necessary.

If your child is under five years old and has been referred to the Speech and Language Therapy Service, a time will be arranged for a therapist to meet them. This initial meeting may take place at a nursery, school, children’s centre or clinic, depending on your child’s age and their needs (sometimes, a home visit may be arranged).

Referrals for children over five years of age to the Speech and Language Therapy service are mostly made via schools (with the parents’ consent). A therapist will contact both the parents and school to arrange an initial appointment in school to assess the child’s difficulties and how they are affecting his or her learning through working with them both individually and in a classroom setting.

The Speech and Language Therapy Service accepts referrals from parents (via the Advice Line), health visitors, school nurses, GPs, nurseries, schools and children’s centres, plus from young people as well if they are at least 14 years old.

The speech and language therapist may refer to other professionals for advice or further assessment, e.g: for an assessment of dyspraxia (where a child shows evidence of significant difficulties with the production of speech sounds). However, there is evidence that children who have autism may appear dyspraxic in the early stages of communication development, but that these difficulties may resolve themselves as those children learn to listen more to the speech of others around them.

Speech and Language Therapy:
Speech and Language Therapy Department.
Teddington Health and Social Care Centre,
18, Queens Road, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 0LR
Tel: 020 8614 5330 (Administrator) Services Manager: 020 8614 5331 Advice Line: 020 8973 3512

Pre-school SEN speech and language therapists are based at the St. John’s Health Centre in Twickenham, the contact details being as follows:
St John’s Health Centre. Oak Lane, Twickenham. TW1 2PH
Tel: 020 8891 8140 (pre-school SEN Speech and language therapists)
Tel: 020 8614 5331 (general speech and language therapy queries)

Before seeing the speech and language therapist, it is advisable that a child/young person should have a hearing test to check for any hearing impairment. A referral will be needed from a health care professional (health visitors, school nurses, speech and language therapists, GPs, paediatricians, for example). Should you have any concerns about your child’s hearing, you can contact the Richmond Paediatric Community Audiology service direct. It will provide advice and make an appointment for an assessment if required.

Paediatric Community Audiology
First Floor Outpatients
Teddington Memorial Hospital,
Hampton Road,
Teddington, Middlesex. TW11 0JL
Tel: 020 8714 4108 Fax: 020 8714 4165 Email: hrch.audiology@nhs.net
Other clinics are based in Sheen, Chiswick, Ealing and Feltham. Please use the contact details above for more information.
The following speech and language therapists will see your child privately:

**Jackie Harland**  
The London Children's Practice  
18, Wimpole Street, London W1G 8GD.  
Tel: 020 7467 9520    Fax: 020 7467 9521  
Website: [www.londonchildrenspractice.com](http://www.londonchildrenspractice.com)    Email: clinic@londonchildrenspractice.com

**Janet Farrugia**  
Speech and Language Therapy Practice Ltd  
Edenside Clinic. 33, Edenside Road, Great Bookham, Surrey. KT23 3JB  
Telephone and Fax: 01372 450472  
Website: [www.speechandlanguage-therapy.com](http://www.speechandlanguage-therapy.com)    Email: janet@speechandlanguage-therapy.com

**The Association of Speech and Language Therapists** (ASLTIP) can help people who want to find a speech and language therapist in their area. It is also possible to search on the ASLTIP website for therapists who have knowledge and experience of ASDs.  
The Association of Speech and Language Therapists in Independent Practice.  
Coleheath Bottom, Speen, Princes Risborough, Bucks HP27 0SZ  
Tel: 01494 488306    Fax: 01494 488590    Website: [www.helpwithtalking.com](http://www.helpwithtalking.com)

The 'Talking Point' website is a useful source of information and ways to seek help.  
Website: [www.talkingpoint.org.uk](http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk)

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You may have thought that speech therapy was for children with speech impediments or hearing impairments. This is only partly true, as their work is all about 'communication'. A speech and language therapist will be able to help with communication difficulties in a number of ways. After assessing your child's needs, the SLT may help you find ways of enhancing communication, for example by helping your child find more meaningful ways of expressing him/herself and his/her needs and wants.

The therapist can also help with lack of appropriate social skills as well as more complex language problems. Social skills courses can be very useful for people who have good language skills but need help with listening skills, awareness of others, inappropriate responses and misunderstandings, and taking things literally.

Social skills groups are frequently run in schools, or the school may run a Circle of Friends group. The speech and language therapist frequently advises on the content of these groups so that they meet the child's particular social communication difficulties.

Some private courses may operate in your area, and these may be advertised through the Croft Centre. (See Useful Contacts page).

SLTs also visit children with EHC Plans/Statements in mainstream schools. Their input is mainly consultative. They work directly with the staff to promote functional communication skills in everyday situations, and advise on creating an optimum communication environment. In nurseries, the SLT input may also include setting up small work groups and modelling strategies to use in individual and group situations. The therapist sets targets with staff and contributes to the child's Individual Education Plan (IEP).
The Children’s OT Service is based at St. John’s Health Centre, Oak Lane, Twickenham. This service provides comprehensive assessments and recommendations to solve practical problems encountered by disabled children and young people (0 to 18 years) and their families to maintain independence at home. The service aims to improve the quality of life and assist the daily management of disability at home, taking into account the need for a normal family life (see ‘What Can Be Done’ section). This service is part of the pre-school multi-disciplinary communications clinic, and can also be accessed through the child development team – typically your health visitor, paediatrician, SENCO/INCO or GP. Your GP or paediatrician may also be able to suggest therapists.

The OT service has an open referral system, so anyone can refer a child or young person for assessment. The child or young person being referred must have a Richmond GP, and written consent from the main care giver is required before the child or young person can be seen.

Please contact the Occupational Therapy Service at:
St John’s Health Centre. Oak Lane, Twickenham. TW1 3PA
Tel: 020 8891 8136

Every school in the borough has had an allocated OT since 2007. Every primary school is offered a school-based clinic once a term. To access this or to register your need, contact your SENCO/INCO. If the need is great, it may be more appropriate for the SENCO/INCO or any health professional to refer your child for a comprehensive assessment. Training modules are also offered to educational staff in ASDs, including the ‘Jump Ahead’ motor skills programme, which is designed to address difficulties with attention, balance and co-ordination.

An OT may be able to help your child with:

- Improving gross and fine motor skills – difficulties with posture, balancing, stamina and body awareness, as well as problems with ‘smaller’ movements such as holding a pencil, cutlery, getting dressed and generally dealing with ‘fiddly’ things.

- Sensory defensiveness. Some children may appear to be visibly uncomfortable with loud sounds or certain types of sounds, excessive stimulation, movement, touch or smell. This seemingly excessive sensitivity or ‘sensory defensiveness’ can be helped by an OT.

- Some people have also found that Auditory Integration Training or Sensory Integration has been helpful in dealing with a number of issues from co-ordination and balance to hyperactivity and anxiety. You may be able to get a referral through the OT.

- Repeatedly hurting themselves, for example head banging or hand biting.

- Can also help with the problems listed under Physiotherapy.

Some occupational therapists work in private practice, for example:

**The Sensory Smart Child Ltd**
Unit 30, Walton Business Centre, 44 - 46, Terrace Road, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey. KT12 2SD
Tel: 01932 259831 Website: [www.thesensorysmartchild.com](http://www.thesensorysmartchild.com) Email: info@thesensorysmartchild.com

**Sensational Kids Therapy**
Unit 2, Iron Gate Mews. 93 - 97 Brighton Road, Surbiton. KT6 5NF
Tel: 020 8399 6565 Website: [www.sensationalkids.co.uk/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.sensationalkids.co.uk/Pages/default.aspx)
If you are looking for an occupational therapist to give you independent advice or provide private treatment, it is possible to find one through The College of Occupational Therapists. Their website’s specialist section can be found at: www.cotss-ip.org.uk and the College of Occupational Therapists may also be contacted via a helpline: 020 7989 0681 or emailed at: enquiries@cotss-ip.org.uk

Physiotherapy

Referrals to this Service, which is also based at St. John’s Health Centre, are made through a GP (who must be based in Richmond Borough), paediatrician or health visitor. Physiotherapists can advise parents and help children who have movement disorders or delays. The contact details for this service are the same as for the Occupational Therapy service (see above). A physiotherapist may be able to help with:

- Gross motor skills — big movements such as walking, climbing, jumping, pedalling.
- Poor muscle tone.
- Balance and co-ordination.

You may hear the term dyspraxia — once known as Clumsy Child Syndrome. This is, amongst others, a problem with planning and an inability to make skilled movements with accuracy, which may affect some children with an ASD. An OT or physiotherapist should be able to help your child.

Phone the Therapies Team at 020 8614 7465 for more information.

It is also possible to make use of physiotherapists who work privately. For example:

Catherine George
53, Elm Grove Road, Barnes, London SW13 0BX
Tel: 079 00 454796

Kiki’s Children’s Clinic.
124, Thurleigh Road, London SW12 8TU
Appointments: 020 7450 1708  Office: 020 7207 4234
Website: www.kikisclinic.com  Email: info@kikisclinic.com

Dental Care

Dental care can be provided for children with special needs at the St Johns Health Centre, Oak Lane, Twickenham. TW1 3PA  Tel: 020 8891 8130. If your dentist is unable to treat your child, the dentist (or other health care professionals) can refer you to the Community Dental Service at Kingston Hospital. Tel: 020 8546 7711 Ext: 2349.

There is also a specialist dentistry service available for people with learning disabilities of all ages. For more information, contact:
Teddington Health and Social Care Centre
18, Queens Road, Teddington, Middlesex. TW11 0LR
Tel: 020 8614 5300 or 020 8714 4210

Behavioural workshops

Gina Davies Autism Centre
The Gina Davies Autism Centre has run workshops for many years, providing parents with practical support in areas that make home life difficult. For further information, contact:
Gina Davies Autism Centre. 5, Agraria Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4LE
Tel: 07704 606907  Website: www.ginadavies.co.uk  Email: contact@ginadavies.co.uk
Dietitian

Dietitians provide advice and support on food and nutritional issues. When working with children who have complex eating and nutritional issues (which can range from texture sensitivity, difficulties in chewing and/or swallowing through to a refusal to vary the diet in any way), the paediatric community dietitian may work with a team of people. These include doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, speech and language therapists and occupational therapists. Referrals are through primary healthcare workers (eg: your GP).

It is also possible to use the services of a freelance dietitian. Should you consider doing this, take a look at the following website: www.freelancedietitians.org

Many parents have tried putting their children on special diets – for example the gluten and/or casein free diet. If you are considering putting your child on any specific diet, it is a good idea to contact your GP or other healthcare professional and ask to be referred to a dietitian for advice and support. Amongst other things they can advise on ways to ensure that your child is receiving an adequate supply of vitamins and minerals. (See Self-Help – What Parents/Carers Can Do: Diet and Supplements).

Toilet Training and Promotion of Continence

Within Richmond Borough, Hounslow and Richmond Community Healthcare (HRCH) continence services provide nurse-led services to meet the needs of children with a wide range of bowel and bladder problems, including problems associated with toilet training and bed wetting. The service sees children between the ages of 0 to 18, referred through a GP or a relevant professional (eg: from health, social care or education).

The main services provided are: clinics for children with night time wetting problems (nocturnal enuresis), provision of NHS incontinence products for children unsuitable for active treatment or that have failed to respond to treatment, telephone advice, education and support for the local community and healthcare/social care services, educational group sessions within HRCH's community services, schools or other venues as indicated, plus clinics for children with daytime wetting problems or bowel problems such as constipation (these outpatient clinics are run weekly throughout the year offering a combination of the interventions as above).

For specialist clinics for children with disabilities: Lynne Watson (specialist Health Visitor) St John’s Health Centre. Oak Lane Twickenham TW1 3PA Tel: 020 8891 8130 Email: lwatson10@nhs.net

For nocturnal enuresis (bedwetting) Teddington Health and Social Care Centre. 8 Queens Road, Teddington, TW11 0LR Tel: 020 8614 5300 Fax: 020 8614 5450

Should your child's toileting problems persist, by all means ask your GP to make a referral for your child to be seen by a paediatric consultant who specialises in bowel and bladder disorders.

Education and Resources for Improving Childhood continence (ERIC) is a charity that aims to improve the quality of life of children, young people and their families who suffer from the consequences of childhood continence problems. ERIC is a source of information and resources surrounding continence issues, which can be found in their website.

For more information, please contact:
ERIC (Education and Resources for Improving Childhood Continence) 36, Old School House, Britannia Road, Kingswood, Bristol BS15 8DB Helpline and information: 0845 370 8008 Website: www.eric.org.uk Helpline email: info@eric.org.uk
EDUCATION

In this borough the state funded education system and state funding for education in general is represented by Education and Children's Services and delivered by Achieving for Children.

Richmond Upon Thames - Education and Children's Services
London Borough of Richmond-Upon-Thames
Civic Centre. 44, York Street, Twickenham TW1 3BZ
Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) department. Tel: 020 8891 7529

Useful web links:
Schools: www.richmond.gov.uk/home/services/children_and_family_care/schools_and_colleges.htm
SEND: www.richmond.gov.uk/education_special_educational_needs
Achieving for Children: www.achievingforchildren.org.uk

This provides for inclusion into mainstream nursery care, pre-schools (Early Years), primary and secondary education and also placements in specialist in-borough and out of borough schools. In some cases it also provides funding for home-schooling programmes.

Educational Psychology

As a rule, referrals to the LA educational psychologists for a consultation are requested by the child's nursery (pre-school children), school's headteacher or SENCO/INCO, subject to parental consent. If your child is pre-school aged, your GP or health visitor can refer him/her to the Child Development Team. This team of healthcare professionals includes paediatricians, psychologists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, etc who meet together to discuss individual cases and can arrange for an assessment of your child by an educational psychologist (or may suggest a referral to the pre-school communication clinic, which is the team that usually discusses diagnoses). A psychological report is compiled from the assessment, which includes information about language and communication skills and abilities (i.e.: an individual's capacity to understand and cope with learning situations), and special educational needs (suggested educational provision). Your child may be helped in the school environment with the teaching staff already available, or you may need to ask to have your child assessed for an EHC Plan if you feel their needs are not being adequately provided for within the resources available to the school. (See Education, Health and Care Plans).

The Local Authority Educational Psychology Service can be contacted at:
The Educational Psychology Service. 42, York Street, Twickenham TW1 3BW
Tel: 020 8487 5464    Webpage: www.richmond.gov.uk/educational_psychology_service
Some parents use the services of private psychologists (to avoid long waiting lists). It is possible to search for a private psychologist through the following association:

**Association of Child Psychologists in Private Practice (AChiPPP).**
15, Hermitage Road, St John’s, Woking, Surrey GU21 8TE
Tel: 07563 955808 or find them online at [www.achipp.org.uk](http://www.achipp.org.uk)

**What kind of Education should I be considering?**

The following are listed by age of child. For contact names and addresses for schools that are state funded, contact the LA directly; for details of other schools and education systems, see below.

**Pre-School and Reception**

**ABA (Applied Behavioural Analysis) Home Programme.** The best known is LOVAAS; another form is VERBAL BEHAVIOUR (which is much more language based). Both are parent-led home education programmes involving lots of one-to-one teaching (up to 40 hours a week). For more information contact:

PEACH (Parents for the Early Intervention of Autism in Children)
The Brackens, London Road, Ascot, Berkshire SL5 8BE
Tel: 01344 882248    Fax: 01344 882391
Website: [www.peach.org.uk](http://www.peach.org.uk)    Email: info@peach.org.uk

Information about ABA can be found at the following websites:
The Lovaas Institute: [www.lovaas.com](http://www.lovaas.com)    UK Young Autism Project: [www.ukyap.org/default.aspx](http://www.ukyap.org/default.aspx)
Autism Partnership: [www.autismpartnership.co.uk](http://www.autismpartnership.co.uk)

**Son-rise.** A parent-led home education programme that can be started at any time, and also involves many hours of one-to-one teaching with the help of volunteers. The teaching is done in a playroom that minimises any outside distractions. See the book: Son-rise – The Miracle Continues (for further details see Suggested Reading: Education/Learning). More information about Son-Rise can be found by visiting [www.autismtreatmentcenter.org](http://www.autismtreatmentcenter.org) or [www.embrace-autism.org.uk/home.htm](http://www.embrace-autism.org.uk/home.htm)

**Hanen "More than Words"** programme for parents, which emphasises the child’s everyday activities as a context for learning to communicate. Visit [www.hanen.org](http://www.hanen.org) or [www.childrenstherapies.co.uk](http://www.childrenstherapies.co.uk) for further information

**Jigsaw.** A Unit for up to eight pre-school children with social and communication disorders including ASD attached to the Windham Nursery in Kew (see Contact List). Applications to Jigsaw are made through the SEN panel (an EHC Plan is not required, but supporting evidence from a speech and language therapist is).

**Mainstream nursery** with one-to-one support full or part-time depending on requirements. This is usually done via the LA (Local Authority) or within school.

**Children's Centres** The services offered by the Children’s Centres in this Borough include early years provision, family support and parental outreach, child and family health services, information and advice to parents/carers on a range of subjects, drop-in sessions and other activities for children, parents and carers plus special services such as speech and language therapy and child and adolescent mental health support. For more information, please contact the Family Information Service (FIS):
Tel: 020 8831 6298    Email: fis@richmond.gov.uk (9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday)
Webpage: [www.richmond.gov.uk/childrens_centres](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/childrens_centres)
**EarlyBird and EarlyBird Plus** These are NAS licensed programmes for parents offering them training in behaviour management and facilitating the development of their child’s social skills and communication through group and individual work. EarlyBird and EarlyBird Plus programmes are already being running in Kingston-upon-Thames; the programmes are going to be introduced into Richmond as well.

EarlyBird is for parents whose child has received a diagnosis of an autism spectrum condition (ASC) and is of pre-school age (not yet of statutory school age). It is also for to those children who are “on the Pathway” to a diagnosis of an ASC. EarlyBird Plus is for parents whose child has received a later diagnosis of an ASC, is aged 4 to 8 and in Early Years (nursery/reception classes) or Key Stage 1 provision (reception and infant classes).

Parents need to be aware that both programmes are ASC specific and that they have reached the stage where they have come to terms with and accepted their child’s condition. Both of the programmes need commitment to complete – they are not for those who just want to dip in and out of the programmes.

Visit these NAS webpages for more information:

**Primary school**

There is one primary autism-specific unit within the borough; catering for children between the ages of 5 and 11. This is the George Tancred Centre; it forms part of St. James’s Primary School, Twickenham, and your child will need an EHC Plan/ Statement and a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder to be eligible for admission. Children in this unit would be expected to be capable of integrating into mainstream classes.

There are also two special schools within the borough; these being Clarendon School, which takes children having moderate learning disabilities, and Strathmore School, whose pupils have severe learning disabilities. Neither of these schools is autism-specific, but they certainly do accept children who are on the autism spectrum. All prospective pupils will need to have a EHC Plan/Statement to attend either of these schools.

**Secondary school**

Both Clarendon and Strathmore schools have secondary as well as primary provision. There is an autism-specific unit for secondary aged pupils (the Gateway Centre), which is based at Twickenham Academy and has the potential to accept twenty students. Prospective pupils will need to have an EHC Plan/Statement, a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder and be capable of integrating into the mainstream classes.

For more detailed information about the specialist educational provision available within Richmond Borough, please visit the following webpage:
[www.richmond.gov.uk/home/education_and_learning/schools_and_colleges/education_special_educational_needs/specialist_provision_for_special_education_needs.htm](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/home/education_and_learning/schools_and_colleges/education_special_educational_needs/specialist_provision_for_special_education_needs.htm)

The other option within this borough is for your child to attend mainstream school, probably with support depending on what is considered to be his or her degree of need. Some parents feel that mainstream provision is not suitable due to the severity and/or complexity of their child’s needs, and that he or she needs a very specialised educational environment. They should be forewarned that finding a suitable out-of-borough place is often a lengthy process, and that they need to start thinking about their child’s next educational establishment as soon as possible. See Further Suggestions within this section for more advice.
Education

College

There are two in-borough colleges that offer courses and support to young people who have SEN and disabilities. These are Richmond upon Thames College (RuTC) and Richmond Adult Community College (RACC). Other colleges in neighbouring boroughs that can offer similar provision include Esher College, Kingston College, South Thames College and West Thames College.

Higher education/Universities and Disabled Students’ Allowance (DSA)

This section is written for students to read themselves, although parents and carers are encouraged to read it as well. It is intended for young people with autism/Asperger syndrome, as well as those who have other disabilities and learning difficulties such as dyslexia, who may be considering higher education.

In September 2014, the government was still in discussion about the changes to DSA support that are due to take place shortly. Where the needs of the student are complex, support will still be provided via DSA but some support will now be provided by the universities. Some of the changes will take place from the academic year 2015/6 and other changes, the following year. The way to apply for DSA will remain the same, but it is suggested that you look for the most up-to-date advice available when you wish to apply.

Please do not be alarmed at what looks like a complicated process. Take things one step at a time and do remember there is a lot of information and advice online for students with disabilities and for those applying for DSA. The following websites may be useful:

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)
www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/explore-your-options/individual-needs/students-disabilities

Gov.UK Disabled Students’ Allowance
www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/how-to-claim

Disability Rights UK – Applying for Disabled Students’ Allowances
www.disabilityrightsuk.org/applying-disabled-students-allowances-dsas

Should you be considering higher education (eg: university), think very carefully where would be the best place to study. This includes looking at the degree content, the campus, distance from home and talking to the University Learning Support Office. Universities and colleges often have ‘open days’ where you can take the opportunity to meet the staff, ask questions and see what facilities are available. Open day details for universities and colleges across the UK can be found in the online directory www.opendays.com.

Many prospective university students are anxious about disclosing that they have a disability, but please do remember that under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful for universities or colleges to discriminate against students who have disabilities by treating them less favourably when offering places and providing services. The following webpages may be useful:

Disability Rights UK - Adjustments for disabled students
www.disabilityrightsuk.org/adjustments-disabled-students

Disability Rights UK - Understanding the Equality Act: information for disabled students
www.disabilityrightsuk.org/understanding-equality-act-information-disabled-students

Disability Rights UK - Disabled Students Helpline
http://disabilityrightsuk.org/how-we-can-help/helplines/disabled-students-helpline

Student Finance England (SFE) provides financial support on behalf of the government to English nationals entering higher education. You apply for student finance from the February before you start your course in September/October. Student Finance England is also where you apply for your DSA, which is not means tested so does not depend on your income or the income of your family.
Applications for university are made online through UCAS, completing a form and listing your five choices of universities. Each university will let you know (via UCAS online) if your application has been successful. Once you have heard back from all your universities, you have to decide which two you will keep - your favoured university (first choice) and your back up (insurance choice). If you tick the box on the UCAS form to say you have a disability, you will be sent a Disabled Student’s Allowance (DSA) application form to complete. The application form can also be downloaded from www.yourdsa.com/dsa/application/form/.

DSA will pay for any extra costs you may have as a direct result of your disability, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty. There are four allowances to cover the four different areas:

- Specialist equipment allowance, (eg: software, such as voice recognition or screen reading software).
- Non-medical helper's allowance: (eg: sign language interpreters, note takers and other human support).
- General and other expenditure allowance (extra books and photocopying).
- Travel costs. (Additional costs related to your disability. You may get the difference between the costs you would pay if you didn’t have a disability and your actual travel costs).

There is not a set amount that you get for each of these areas since it depends on what you need, but there is a maximum for each allowance. DSA is not for the disability related costs that you would incur whether you are a student or not (eg: personal care) or the costs for studying which every student will have. DSA is intended to support you to study, so you need to send evidence to SFE with your DSA application, of your diagnosis of disability and how it affects your ability to study, and evidence of need for extra time in exams. This evidence will be in the form of educational psychologist reports, letters from health care professionals etc.

If you have a learning difficulty such as dyslexia, you will need a diagnostic assessment that includes your educational difficulties (usually an educational psychologist’s report). If the report was carried out before your 16th birthday, you will have to get a new one and this assessment must be carried out by a chartered psychologist or specialist teacher who holds a current Assessment Practising Certificate. If you do have to get a new report/assessment, it is worth telling the educational psychologist that you want this for a DSA assessment and he/she can include information about the types of support that might help you (eg: a note taker who can come to lectures with you, voice recorder etc). You do not need a new report if you were diagnosed with autism/Asperger syndrome before your 16th birthday.

Once SFE have considered your completed DSA form and looked at the supporting evidence, they will write to you and let you know if you are eligible for DSA and for which particular reasons (there may be more than one (for example if you have both Asperger Syndrome and dyslexia). If you are eligible, you will need to have a Needs Assessment at an assessment centre. They will let you know where the centres are and you can choose one closest to where you live. You can then contact the Disability Advisor at your top choice university to ask for advice about this.

You need to go to the assessment well prepared, having thought about the previous study strategies you have used and how effective they are, what you think you will find difficult and what you will need to support your studies (the Needs Assessment can take about two hours). If you have a social and communication difficulty you may be able to request that you have a supporter with you (some prospective students have taken along a parent) but it is up to the assessor, so it is worth talking to the assessment centre when you are booking the assessment. The assessment centre will probably ask you to complete a form about yourself ahead of the assessment which will include questions about how you would describe your disability, how it affects you and your ability to study and how your course is going to be structured, etc. The following are good ideas to think about prior to the assessment (some people may find it useful to bring notes as a memory prompt):

- Investigate your university course and what activities you expect to participate in. This information will be in the university prospectus or you can contact the head of the relevant department.
• How will the course be delivered and what support will you need for this?

• Do you need to go on field trips or placements?

• Your diagnosis - how that impacts on your ability to study and what would help enable you to complete that element of your studies?

• If you have extra time in exams. Why?

• What does the in-class support/learning support department do for you at school/college?

Speak to your tutors at school/college who may have some suggestions about what they do extra for you to help you with your studies, and consider bringing along some examples of your written work.

Once the assessment is completed and report written, SFE will write to you to confirm your entitlement and advise you how to order any recommended equipment. The companies who provide the equipment are used to students who have difficulties getting in touch with them and are usually very helpful. It is advisable to order your equipment and arrange any training as soon as possible so that it is in place by the start of the term. Do also talk to your first choice university (and insurance choice) to ask what support is available, including what has been agreed in the report (peer mentors etc) and for any other queries. Some prospective students will visit the university to discuss this in person either at this point or once they have their A level results and their place is confirmed and accepted.

Three important points to bear in mind:

• Keep copies of all correspondence, reports and forms you have sent, whether by post, online or email. It may be useful to ‘bcc’ your parents/carers when you are sending emails about your support or in the early days of university so they can be on hand if difficulties occur.

• Do remember to order your equipment and arrange other support as soon as possible.

• Once you are at university, do be prepared to chase up support if it has been agreed but you are not receiving it (eg: if you are having difficulty meeting your peer support).

You need to reapply for your student finance in advance of each year of your course. At the time of going to press, if you apply for DSA along with your main application for student finance you won’t have to reapply each year of your course as long as you state on your main application that you want to continue receiving them. Postgraduates, part-time and DSA-only students need to reapply each year. Please ensure that when you are at this stage of your education you have checked to make sure this is still the case.

**Autism resource to support schools**

Schools across England can now apply for the Autism Education Trust (AET) three-tier autism training programme. The programme aims to raise the level of autism knowledge and improve practice among all education professionals and school staff working with pupils aged 5 to 16 years. Level 1 delivers basic autism awareness training and is for teaching and non-teaching staff who need an understanding of autism in their role, for example lunchtime supervisors, caretakers, office staff and school governors. Level 2 is for teaching staff working directly and frequently with children with autism, and Level 3 is for staff who need more in depth knowledge of autism or those in a leadership role. Do visit [www.aetraininghubs.org.uk/](http://www.aetraininghubs.org.uk/) to find out more about the AET training programme.

The Autism Education Trust has also developed an invaluable resource for teachers working with pupils who have ASDs entitled ‘Tools For Teachers’. This can be bought by phoning the AET at 020 7903 3650 or emailing info@autismeducationtrust.org.uk
Children, Schools and Families Act 2010

This Act includes amendments to the education system; some of the issues covered being children with special educational needs. The key areas include:

• Requiring local authorities to provide full time education for children and young people who for medical, social or emotional reasons are not in school, but in alternative provision.

• Requiring school inspectors to take into account the needs of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, and to report explicitly on those pupils’ provision.

• Giving parents a new right to appeal if their child’s EHC Plan/Statement is not amended at an annual review.

To read the Act, visit HM Government’s Legislation website [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) then search all legislation by typing Children, Schools and Families Act into the title box, and 2010 into the year box. Please note that some changes have been made to the Children, Schools and Family Act 2010. To view these, please visit [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/26/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/26/contents) where those changes will be listed when you open the webpage’s Table of Contents (they will appear in the content and will be referenced with annotations).

Preparing for Adulthood/Transition

As your child progresses through the education system, when they reach Y9 (the academic year in which they reach their 14th birthday), the process of Preparing for Adulthood (otherwise known as Transition) begins. This is the time when a young person and their family think about and start to prepare for what that young person would like to do once they leave school. There are a variety of choices to be made regarding what your son or daughter would prefer to do when they finish Y11 of education. These include local sector mainstream college, specialist college (ISP), university, apprenticeships, training and employment.

Young people aged between 16 and 25 are given support to identify the paths they wish to follow. This is not just focused on further education but routes into employment, training opportunities, independent living, staying healthy, plus friendship, relationships and inclusion in their local community as well. Young people over 16 years of age will be able to have the final say as to what they would like to see in their Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans (see Education, Health and Care Plans for more details).

Whichever choice that is ultimately made should be planned for well in advance of the end of Year 11. During the summer term of Year 9 is a good time to start the search for post 16 provision, as some colleges have two-year waiting lists. You will need to get a final decision about the young person’s placement from the local authority by Christmas of Year 11 (and at the latest by the following February 15th).

As with choosing primary and secondary provision, it is equally important to visit post 16 establishments and to go prepared with a check list of the provision that should be in place. Again, as when searching for primary or secondary provision, it is important to be able to supply information about the young person to the school/college being considered as a possible placement. It is suggested that you submit reports from your son or daughter’s school, social services and health, careers and any other specialist involved in their care (particularly therapists). It is important to ensure the reports you submit are up-to-date, relevant, and to-the-point.

The following points have come into effect due to the implementation of the Children and Families Act 2014:

• Mainstream colleges and specialist colleges (ISPs) will be able to request an assessment of education, health and care needs by drawing the attention of their local authority to the needs of a young person.

• Young people will be able to express a preference for a particular mainstream college or ISP.
• Mainstream colleges and ISPs will be required to admit a young person if they are named in a young person’s EHC plan. The local authority consults the provider and sends them a copy of the EHC plan before the placement is made.

• Young people will have right to appeal decisions of the local authority to the First-tier Tribunal.

• Mainstream colleges and ISPs will have to work with the local authority and carry out annual reviews for those students who have EHC plans.

• Annual reviews have to focus on next steps for students and the support they will require to prepare for adulthood. This includes getting a job, living independently, and participating in society.

**The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act**

This Act aims to create a more efficient, integrated, locally accountable post-16 education system. The Education Funding Agency (EFA) supports local authorities to commission provision to all young people while ensuring budgetary control. Local authorities have the responsibility for funding education and training for young people over compulsory school age but under 19. They also take on the responsibility for the education and training of certain learners with learning difficulties or disabilities up to the age of 25. The Act’s range of measures covering apprenticeships, educational provision and learning and skills includes the following key areas listed below:

• Providing a statutory framework for apprenticeships and creating rights to apprenticeships for suitably qualified 16-18 year olds.

• Employees to have the right to ask for time away from their duties to undertake training, and for employers to have a duty to consider such requests seriously; refusing them only for specified business reasons.

• Dissolving the Learning and Skills Council and transferring the responsibility for funding education and training for 16-18-year-olds to local authorities.

• Making provision with respect to the education of offenders.

• Creating the Young Person’s Learning Agency, the Skills Funding Agency, a new regulatory body for qualifications (Ofqual), as well as another new agency to carry out the non-regulatory functions currently performed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

• Strengthening the accountability of children’s services.

• Intervention powers to be amended in respect of schools that are causing concern.

• Establishing a new parental complaints service.

• Changing school inspection arrangements.

• Creating a new negotiating body for pay and conditions for school support staff.

• Making provisions in respect of pupil and student behaviour.

**Education Funding Agency webpage:**
[www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/armslengthbodies/b00199952/the-education-funding-agency-efa](http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/armslengthbodies/b00199952/the-education-funding-agency-efa)

**Skills Funding Agency website:**
[http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/](http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/)
Apprenticeships
The Act entitles all suitably qualified 16 to 18 year olds to an apprenticeship, an amendment being passed allowing ‘suitably qualified’ to include alternative ways of showing competence. This should give those people with disabilities who have the competencies but not the qualifications an opportunity to take up their entitlement.

Transport
Local Authorities (LAs) must consider the transport needs of young people aged 18 to 25 who have disabilities when providing education and training, and will have to adhere to statutory guidance. This means that LAs will need to fund transport where it is necessary to meet the student’s educational needs.

Learning Difficulty Assessment/EHC Plans
The 139A Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA) has been replaced by Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans, since the legislation introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014 covers children and young people from birth to the end of the academic year in which they have their 25th birthday. LDAs will gradually be phased out (the current thinking is that this will have happened by the end of August 2016).

The Department for Education will publish the guidance for local authorities concerning the arrangements for the transfer of LDAs to EHC Plans, and those young people who might be undergoing an assessment as the new legislation comes into effect.

Disability Discrimination
Under the Disability Discrimination Act (which came into force in September 2002), it is unlawful for schools to discriminate against disabled pupils in terms of admission, education services and exclusions. Therefore most children will be encouraged to attend mainstream/special units or mainstream with support (but this doesn’t preclude a pupil attending a special school or college if mainstream provision cannot meet their needs).

Further suggestions
You may be concerned about which route to take for your son or daughter, and have:

• Reservations about your child attending a ‘special school’.

• Feel mainstream school offers a better option with peer role models.

• Be considering home education.

Ultimately the route you wish to take is your choice. You may however, find it helpful to contact other parents who are in a similar position for advice and support, or phone the NAS Parent to Parent line on 0808 800 4106.

If your child is at the more able end of the autism spectrum and is either at or due to go to a mainstream school, you should still be entitled to additional support. For mainstream provision, you could contact the member of staff at school called either the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) or INCO (Inclusion Co-ordinator). If your child is about to start primary or secondary school, it is worth discussing with the SENCO/INCO the difficulties you think your child may face and how the school can help.

If you feel that the in-borough schools and provision do not meet your child’s needs, the following resource from Gabbitas Educational Consultants may interest you: www.schoolsforspecialneeds.co.uk
The education of children with SEND in Richmond Borough is guided by these principles: that children with SEND have their needs met in mainstream schools whenever possible, if provision in a special setting is necessary it should be as local as possible, and there should be as much choice for parents as possible. Don’t hesitate to go and visit educational establishments, make enquiries, request a list of schools and units from the LA, as well as using resources such as the NAS Autism Services Directory to help you make an informed choice (see Useful Websites section).

For children with EHC Plans/Statements, getting a place at the school of your choice (including out of borough schools) depends on, among other things:

- The LA being unable to provide what they feel is suitable provision within the borough.
- If, from the LA’s point of view, the school you like gives best 'value for money' or represents the best 'management of resources'.
- Whether the provision offered by the school will enable your child to achieve outcomes stated in their EHC Plan (or fulfills part 3 of their Statement - the part that specifies the SEN provision considered necessary to meet the child’s special educational needs).

**Home Education**

If you are considering home education, there are a number of very useful websites, including Education Otherwise: [www.educationotherwise.net](http://www.educationotherwise.net). See also the sections Parent Support and Information for Carers and Useful Websites. We also suggest you contact your local NAS group or alternatively, phone the NAS Parent to Parent (P2P) line on 0808 800 4106 as there may be other parents home educating their children.

**Information, Advice and Support Services for families and young people**

**Special Education Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)**

This service, which was formerly the Parent Partnership Service, is offered by Enhanceable and provides local parents, carers and young people aged 0 to 24 advice about a wide range of disability, health and education issues. It works to put them in touch with relevant professionals and support services through their referral service and extensive information database. The support offered within Richmond Borough includes:

- School provision and placement
- SEND Information, Advice and Support Service
- Applications for Education, Health and Care Plans (ECHP), formerly Statements
- Interim and Annual Reviews
- Support at meetings
- General advice on a wide range of issues relating to education
- Signposting to other services serving the London Borough of Richmond

Croft Centre. Windham Road, Kew. TW9 2HP and Moor Lane Centre, Moor Lane, Chessington. KT9 2AA
Tel: 020 8831 6179   Email: children@enhanceable.org   Webpage: [www.enhanceable.org/SENDIASS.htm](http://www.enhanceable.org/SENDIASS.htm)

Please state which borough you live in when contacting this service as Enhanceable covers both Kingston and Richmond boroughs.
**Independent Support Partnership (ISP)**

The Independent Support Partnership offers support to parents, children and young people living in the boroughs of Richmond, Kingston and Hounslow through the process of applying for a new Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) or the conversion from an existing Statement to an EHC plan.

This service is provided by Richmond AID working with a number of partners, and it is the first point of contact for new EHC Plans or conversions from Statements.

The Independent Supporters can help young people, children and families by;

- Supporting them in understanding the legal framework that underpins the changes.
- Preparing for and thinking through with parents, children and young people what the changes mean for their situation.
- Preparing for meetings with schools and/or the Local Authority.
- Attending meetings with schools and/or the Local Authority to support parents, children and young people in ensuring that their voice is heard.

For more information, please contact the Independent Support Service at:
Tel: 020 831 6076    Email: independent.support@richmondaid.org.uk

**Education, Health and Care Plans**

Until 1st September 2014, a Statement of Special Educational Needs (often just called a Statement) was normally issued by a LA only when it concluded that the special educational provision necessary to meet a pupil’s needs could not be reasonably provided within the resources available to the school.

From September 1st 2014, Statements of Special Educational Need and Learning Disability Assessments were replaced by EHC plans. Existing Statements will be transformed into EHC Plans at transition points within a child or young person’s academic life, eg: going from primary to secondary provision. Local authorities have been given three years to morph Statements into EHC Plans, although Richmond is going to try and complete this process within a shorter time frame. Like Statements of Special Educational Need, EHC Plans are legally binding documents, and you also are entitled to request a referral for an assessment.

**What are the differences between Statements and EHC plans?**

A Statement just covers a child or young person’s educational needs and is somewhat prescriptive in its approach in that it says what extra provision will be required to meet their educational needs. However, an EHC plan will include not just educational needs but health and social care needs as well; being ‘person-centred’ in its approach and involving the parents and child/young person in its production.

EHC Plans also describe the outcomes to be achieved by a child or young person, instead of being needs led like a Statement. As is stated in the SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years, “EHC plans should be forward looking documents that help raise aspirations and outline the provision required to meet assessed needs to support the child or young person in achieving their ambitions. EHC plans should specify how services will be delivered as part of a whole package and explain how best to achieve the outcomes sought across education, health and social care for the child or young person”.

Another difference is that an EHC Plan is more personalised; parents, carers, young people and children are involved in contributing to and writing the Plan with the people who have assessed that individual.

Unlike Statements, the resources available through an EHC Plan are not given to the school to buy in the provision required, but can be used flexibly. This gives families more choice about the provision that their child or young person receives.
It will take less time to produce an EHC Plan. Instead of the twenty six weeks given to issuing a Statement, an EHC Plan should have a production time of twenty weeks.

There is also a difference in the age ranges covered by Statements and EHC Plans. Statements usually are rescinded at 16 years of age (for young people attending specialist colleges, their Statements are rescinded at the end of the academic year in which they turn 19). However, an EHC Plan extends the age range by nine years, covering children and young people aged from 0 to the end of the academic year in which they turn 25. Young people over 16 years of age will also be able to have the final say as to what they would like to see in their EHC Plans (see Preparing for Adulthood section).

**EHC Plans and Personal Budgets**

There will be a new way of funding the support a child or young person’s needs – a personal budget. A personal budget is an amount of money or resources available in order to deliver the outcomes set out in an EHC plan. The total personal budget should be made clear to parents and carers so they can be involved in all decision making in order to choose the right provision to best meet the outcomes identified in the young person’s or child's EHC plan.

There is now an option for parents and carers to manage the services themselves so that the outcomes stated in their child or young person’s EHC plan can be met via direct payment. Alternatively, parents and carers can ask for a nominated person or organisation to look after the funds, help them decide the best way to spend them and then to purchase the provision and services of choice. A third way is for parent and carers to ask the local authority to arrange the provision and services for their child or young person after finding out how much money will be available and with support, to identify different ways to use the funds in order to meet those outcomes stated in the EHC Plan.

The aim of this way of working is to give parents, carers, children and young people more choice and control, to promote joined-up working between all agencies involved, transparency as to the available resources and services, as well as using those resources and services to best achieve the child or young person’s EHC Plan outcomes.

**What if my child isn’t eligible for an EHC Plan?**

School Action and School Action Plus will be replaced by Additional SEN Support (also known as the “Single Category”), the new school-based category for additional support for children with SEN.

If your child is extremely high functioning, it is quite possible that the LA will not agree to an assessment for an EHC Plan. Therefore, do be prepared to work with the SEN department of your child's school, to outline his or her difficulties and what can be done to help. Working closely with your child’s school and maintaining a good relationship with them is always important — whether you have an EHC Plan or not.

Whatever the SENCO/INCO and educational psychologist say, if at any time you feel that the support the school is giving is not adequate, you have the right to request an assessment for an EHC Plan. It may be that the school does not recognise the associated needs (acute sensory problems and behavioural difficulties) as ASD related, and so are not providing extra help or responding appropriately. If you do feel that the school is not in favour of you applying for an EHC Plan, you may decide to pay for a second opinion from an independent specialist who will not need to worry about budgetary constraints, etc. It is also possible to get some second opinions on the NHS, and therefore avoid having to pay a fee.

If you feel that any of the main reports made on your child are inaccurate, or understate the problems, you can ask for changes to be made to that report because understating problems could well result in lesser provision being offered. If you get nowhere with changes, you might consider having your own evaluation made by an independent expert to back up your point. Remember, getting an EHC Plan will ensure that you secure provision from the relevant professionals.

For organisations that may be able to help, please see Education – Useful Contacts.
School exclusions and changes to the law
Under the Education Act 2011, changes in the law and government guidance on exclusions came into force. From 1st September 2012, independent appeal panels have been replaced by independent review panels to determine appeals against exclusions.

Under the old system, if an appeal to the school’s governing body against a permanent exclusion was unsuccessful, parents could appeal to an independent appeal panel, whose decision was binding on both the school and the parent. However, under the new rules, the decision of an independent review panel will not be binding, and although the panel can direct the governing body to reconsider the decision it will not be able to order a school to reinstate a student.

The National Autistic Society had specific concerns about this change when the Bill was being debated and along with colleagues in the Special Education Consortium, they put significant pressure on the Government to add in additional protections for children with special educational needs.

As a result of that work, the Bill was amended so that parents will have a right to request an SEN expert to advise a review panel if their child is permanently excluded. The expert will be able to advise a review panel on whether the actions taken by a school to identify or address a pupil’s SEN might be considered reasonable, and whether a school might reasonably have been expected to intervene earlier in order to prevent the exclusion. If it is believed that disability discrimination has led to a permanent exclusion, the case can be heard by the SEN Tribunal and re-instatement will be a possible remedy in these cases.

Should you have any concerns about your child in relation to behaviour and exclusion, you can contact the NAS Education Rights Service for advice in the following ways:
Tel: 0808 800 4102    Email educationrights@nas.org.uk

More about the changes to SEND provision
The Government has introduced new legislation - the Children and Families Act 2014. The Act includes sweeping measures to improve provision for those children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities, the intention being to reduce the number of bureaucratic hurdles faced by families and to empower them by giving them greater control over the services they receive. The changes include:

- A new single assessment process for education, health and social care with an integrated, multi-agency approach. This is intended to reduce the number of assessments that children, young people and their families have to undergo. The idea for this is to make the assessment process much less stressful for all involved by only having to ‘tell your story once’ rather than having to contact numerous professionals and repeatedly tell them about the child or young person’s needs. The single assessment process aims to promote more efficient use of the professionals’ resources and time, as well as improving communication between everyone involved in the process.

- Statements and Learning Disability Assessments will be superceded by Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans, which will continue until the end of the academic year in which the young person turns 25 (subject to annual review). EHC plans are intended to include not just educational provision as Statements do, but health and social care provision as well. The new EHC system will cover eligible children and young people from birth up until the age of 25.

- Local authorities and health services will be required to jointly plan and commission the services needed by those children, young people and their families in their care.

- For those children and young people who are eligible for an EHC plan, local authorities must prepare a personal budget if asked to do so by the child’s parents or the young person. This is intended to give the recipients more control and choice over the provision they would like to purchase to cater for the child or young person’s needs, but operating a personal budget will not be compulsory.
• Local authorities must publish information about the provision it expects to have available both inside and outside of its area for the children and young people for whom it is responsible. This is called the Local Offer; more details of which are given next.

The Local Offer

Each Local Authority has to produce its own Local Offer. A Local Offer provides clear, comprehensive, accessible, up-to-date information about the services and resources both inside and outside of its area available to all children and young people with SENDs for whom the Local Authority has responsibility.

A Local Offer includes educational provision, health services, social care provision, travel arrangements to early years provision, schools and colleges for children and young people, preparing for adulthood (including housing, training opportunities, employment, and leisure opportunities), arrangements for assessing children and young people, how to request an Education, Health and Care plan, plus information, advice and guidance concerning funding and financial support.

The Local Offer will be available both online and in printed format and as well as providing the information listed above, families will be better informed as to what they can expect from local services, as well as being able to discover the eligibility criteria/thresholds for accessing those services. Parents, children and young people will be able to feed back their views as to how well (or not, as the case may be) the new system works, which will make services and provision more flexible and responsive to local needs.

Disagreeing with a decision

The Children and Families Act has introduced a new aspect to the process of resolving disagreements, and that is to make it compulsory to consider mediation before bringing a case before the SEND Tribunal. To do this, you will need to contact a mediation advisor, and the local authority must tell you how to do so. Prior to September 2014, dispute resolution services were already in place but using them was on a voluntary basis only and was not necessarily in the form of mediation.

Young people as well as parents now have the right to register an appeal within two months of the local authority’s decision concerning:

• Refusing to secure an EHC assessment.
• Refusing to issue an EHC Plan.
• Refusing to re-assess the educational, health care and social care needs of a child or young person when this has been requested by either the parents, young person or school/college being attended.
• Refusing to amend an EHC Plan after a review or re-assessment.
• Ceasing to maintain an EHC Plan.
• The contents of an EHC Plan’s education or training section.

Consideration of mediation is not compulsory when an appeal is being made about aspects of a child or young person’s placement.

Social care and health issues are not however subjects of appeal to a SEND Tribunal, although young people and parents can still go to mediation concerning those disputes. If mediation does not resolve the issues, the next step is to use the relevant provider’s complaints procedures process. If the dispute has still not been resolved after making a complaint, it may be necessary to contact the health or social care ombudsman.
Although it is compulsory to consider mediation, it is not however mandatory to take it up. If after speaking with a mediation advisor the young person or parents still do not think mediation will work, the advisor issues a certificate that states they have been told about mediation but do not wish use the service. Having said that, it is still possible to reach an agreement any time before going to a Tribunal, so it is advisable to maintain some contact with all concerned for this reason.

Should a young person or parent decide to go through the mediation process and still not be able to resolve their dispute, the mediation advisor will issue a certificate that states that they have been through this process before they take further action.

Those decisions where there is no right to appeal to the Tribunal can be challenged, but this has to be done through a judicial review. It is strongly advised that anyone considering going down this route seek legal advice (legal aid may be available to pay the fees).

For more information, please visit the following websites:

Children and Families Act (Part 3):

Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice: 0 to 25 (Chapter 11):

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames SEND webpage:
www.richmond.gov.uk/send

Preparing for Adulthood Children & Families Act/Care Act fact sheet:
www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/media/349183/pfa_factsheet_-_care_act_-_royal_assent.pdf

Council for Disabled Children resources:
www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/resources/cdcs-resources

Kids - Making it Personal:
www.kids.org.uk/mip2

IPSEA Tribunal and mediation:
www.ipsea.org.uk/what-you-need-to-know/send-tribunal-and-mediation

Justice SEND Tribunal information:
www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/send

Gov.UK SEND Tribunal information:
www.gov.uk/special-educational-needs-disability-tribunal/overview
SOCIAL SERVICES (for children, young people and families)

The Disabled Children’s Service: asking for an assessment

The Disabled Children’s Service consists of two teams; the Social Work Team for Disabled Children and the Short Break Care Team (the latter being responsible for the Family Link Service, the Befriending Service and the Crofters Outreach Programme).

Children being referred to Social Services are assessed first of all by the Initial Response Team. Any parent can ask Social Services for an assessment of theirs and their child’s needs. The Team’s social workers carry out an initial assessment of the child’s needs, using an assessment framework to identify that child’s developmental needs, the parents or carers’ capacity to respond to those needs, plus any environmental factors that might affect the family. If indicated, a more detailed core assessment may be carried out, which should be completed within thirty five working days.

In order to determine the specific needs of a child or young person and how those needs could best be met, the social worker’s assessment takes into account all relevant circumstances relating to that individual. The social worker visits the child; the assessment involving the child, parents and other agencies involved with the child or young person to gain a fuller understanding of their issues and needs.

This assessment framework also allows for the parents or carers of disabled children to have their needs assessed as required under the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000, this being known as a Carer’s Assessment (which is carried out at the same time the child is being assessed). For children who are thought to have very complex needs, it is highly probable that a Joint Assessment involving a variety of professionals from different agencies will be offered to the family.

For further information about the assessment process, please call: The Initial Response Team: 020 8891 7969 Email: spa@richmond.gov.uk

Children who are deemed to have lower level needs (and who do not therefore require an allocated social work service) may be referred to appropriate agencies and services, or voluntary organisations. Those children at the higher end of the autism spectrum may be classed as having lower level needs, and if this is the case with your child, other organisations may be able to provide information and assistance instead. (See Parent Support and Information for Carers page for contact details)
For those children who are assessed as having a substantial and permanent disability, a referral will be made to the Disabled Children’s Team. This specialised, multi-disciplinary team provides advice, assistance and support to families with a child or young person who has a significant and permanent disability, as stated above. The team can be contacted by telephone, email, and letter or in person. Advice is available 9.00am to 5.15pm Monday to Thursday and 9.00am to 5.00pm on Friday. There is a duty social worker and full-time administrative support available to answer any queries. GPs, health visitors, school staff as well as families can make a referral to the service. Full contact details are below:

Disabled Children’s Service. Windham Croft Centre for Children, 16, Windham Road, Kew. TW9 2HP
Tel: 020 8831 6470       Textphone: 020 8831 6049
Duty Social Worker: 020 8831 6048       Duty email: dct@richmond.gov.uk

Short Breaks

The Short Break Team is a small team of social workers who recruit, approve and support befrienders and Family Link carers. When a care plan has been completed, a referral is made to the Short Break Care Team. They visit parents or carers at home to talk about the short break care schemes and help to introduce suitable carers to the children. A range of resources is used to provide short breaks to disabled children, young people and their families. These include day, overnight and domiciliary care and family organised personalised support through the use of direct payments.

In order to access the Short Breaks service, an assessment of your child’s or young person’s and family’s needs will have to be completed by a Disabled Children’s Team social worker prior to making a referral. Examples of what the Short Breaks team provides are given below:

**Richmond Family Link** – provides overnight short breaks in the Family Link carer’s home. The child or young person visits the same carer each time they stay overnight, so this enables them to develop a relationship with the Link carer and their family. As well as giving the child or young person the opportunity to make new friends and have fun, it gives their parents and siblings a break from their caring role and some time for themselves.

**Croft Cottage Overnight Breaks** - will provide overnight stays in a purpose built facility. It will be able to support up to five children or young people, but three will most probably be staying at the Cottage most nights (single gender groups). Support at the Cottage will be provided both day and night - at first, the Cottage will be open at weekends only and during school holidays. Ofsted is still in the process of registering Croft Cottage and once the process has been completed, will inspect it regularly.

**Richmond Befriender Scheme** – The Befriender Scheme offers children and young people opportunities to access activities out in the community with someone other than their family. Befrienders are recruited by the short break care social workers and receive regular supervision and training, working in partnership with families. The interests and experience of the proposed befriender are taken into account to make sure as far as possible that the child or young person will enjoy being with them, and a meeting is next arranged at home so that the family, befriender and scheme co-ordinator can talk about the practical issues and get a full picture of the child’s or young person’s needs. Befrienders are also given training that is appropriate to the needs of the individual they are befriending.

Contact the Short Break Care Team at:
Tel: 020 8831 6047       Textphone: 020 8831 6049   Email: shortbreakcareteam@richmond.gov.uk

Croft Cottage. 20, Windham Road, Kew. TW9 2HP
Tel: 020 8831 6011   Email: steven.gisanrin@richmond.gov.uk

Should you not have a social worker or aren’t sure, please contact the Single Point of Access for advice.
Single Point of Access (SPA) Tel: 020 8891 7969
Other Services

The services listed below do not need a social worker’s assessment before you access them:

**Crossroads Care** – This is an independent agency providing domiciliary care which can be used flexibly for child care or other support in the child’s home. Crossroads Care also runs Saturday Clubs in Barnes and Hampton during term times for children with special needs. For more information, contact: Crossroads Care Richmond & Kingston upon Thames.  
1, Beverley Court, 26, Elmtree Road, Teddington TW11 8ST  
Tel: 020 8943 9421  
Website: [www.carers.org/local-service/richmond-and-kingston](http://www.carers.org/local-service/richmond-and-kingston)

**Family Information Service (FIS)** – FIS offers a free telephone and online service that offers up to date information for parents, carers, and professionals to assist with supporting children and young people up to 20 years of age (up to 25 years for young people who have a disability). The staff also run free impartial information, guidance and advice sessions at the Borough’s Children’s Centres about the following: registered childcare options (eg: childminders, day nurseries, sessional care), brokerage service for parents who are looking for childcare places, out of school and holiday care, activities for children and young people from birth upwards, support groups, plus career opportunities in childcare and play work.  
Tel: 020 8831 6298  
Email: fis@richmond.gov.uk  
Webpage: [www.richmond.gov.uk/fis](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/fis)

**Preparing for Adulthood/Transition Support (14 to 25 years)**

Transition refers to the time when young people move into adulthood and during this time, many changes occur for the young person and their family (including education, work, benefits and support services). The Borough employs a Transitions Development Officer who can provide support to the young person and their families.

The following webpage gives more information about support offered to young people who have disabilities going through this time of change living in the Borough:
[www.richmond.gov.uk/home/services/children_and_family_care/transition.htm](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/home/services/children_and_family_care/transition.htm)

The NAS has an online Transition Toolkit to help you through this stage. It can be found on the following webpage:

For further information and contact details, see *Education – Useful Contacts*.

**Social Services 16+**

It is strongly suggested that you make sure your child is known to Social Services well before the age of 16. It can be extremely difficult to access Adult Services if your child is not already known to Social Services, and their needs assessed well in advance.

When a young person turns 18, as part of the transfer from the Disabled Children’s Team to the Richmond Community Learning Disability Team (Adult Services), an assessment of that young person’s needs will again be made. This is to assess that the young person meets the Adult Services eligibility criteria, to determine their degree of need, the support they will require and the outcomes they want to achieve. If the young person is helped already by the Disabled Children’s Team, their needs should be supported and you should be able to get suitable provision from Adult Services. It really does pay to be prepared.
SOCIAL SERVICES (for people aged 18 and above)

Our borough can offer support to adults who have an autism spectrum disorder via its Social Services department. There are a number of support options — through Richmond's Autism Services and for those who are assessed as being eligible for the service, the Richmond Community Learning Disability Team.

Autism Services

Richmond’s Autism Service offers support to people who have an autism spectrum disorder, their families, carers and friends. This includes a quarterly Newsletter which can be emailed or posted to those who ask to be placed on a mailing list. If you would like to receive this Newsletter, please visit this webpage [https://richmond.firmstep.com/popup.aspx/RenderForm/?F.Name=JwPEbCieg4w](https://richmond.firmstep.com/popup.aspx/RenderForm/?F.Name=JwPEbCieg4w) or contact the Autism Specialist Worker using the contact details given below. This service also offers autism specific training to staff working within our borough to enable them to have a better understanding of autism and how to communicate more effectively with individuals who are on the spectrum.

For further details, please contact Rebecca Swist (Autism Specialist Worker) at:
2nd Floor, Civic Centre, 44 York Street, Twickenham. TW1 3BZ
Telephone: 020 8487 5391 Email: [autism@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:autism@richmond.gov.uk)
Webpage:

Richmond Community Learning Disability Team

This service provides care, help and support for adults with learning disabilities and their carers living within the London Borough of Richmond. People accessing this service have the choice of either receiving Direct Payments to fund their choice of support (Self Directed Support) or having their services managed and provided by the borough.

Contact this service via the Richmond Specialist Healthcare Team at:
2nd Floor, Civic Centre, 44, York Street, Twickenham. TW1 3BZ
Tel: 020 8487 5315 Webpage: [www.richmond.gov.uk/learning_disability_community_teams](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/learning_disability_community_teams)
Open Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm with the exception of Bank Holidays.

For adults who haven’t used Social Services at all before, the first point of contact is via the Adult Social Care Access Team. This team can be contacted at:
Tel: 020 8891 7971 (prefix 18001 for Textphone Users) Email: [adultssocialservices@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:adultssocialservices@richmond.gov.uk)
Webpage: [www.richmond.gov.uk/adult_access_team](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/adult_access_team)
Open between: 9.00am to 5.15pm Monday to Thursday, 9.00am to 5.00pm Friday
Self Directed Support

Since 2008, our borough has introduced a different way of providing support for people who access this service; it is called Self Directed Support and gives the person concerned choice and support over how their support needs are met. This mode of support provision is based on the Person Centred Planning approach. Person Centred Planning (PCP) is a fundamentally different way of seeing and working with people with disabilities. Being ‘person centred’ or using a ‘person centred approach’ means ensuring that everything that is done is based upon what is important to a person from their own perspective. Person centred planning discovers and acts on what is important to a person. Direct Payments can be given to adults, carers, and young disabled people aged 16 or 17 and are intended to help more people take control of the help they need to live the life they choose.

What is Self Directed Support?
Self Directed Support is a new way to give social care to people who need it. Adult and Community Services make an initial assessment to determine whether the individual concerned qualifies for support, and after this, the individual, and their family and/or carer can choose how those support needs can be met. The council can and will help with this support planning as well.

How does Self Directed Support Work?
Under Self Directed Support, everybody who qualifies for support from Adult and Community Services will be allocated a sum of money (a Personal Budget). The recipient can choose how and when to spend it on things needed to meet their support needs (with assistance where appropriate from their family and/or carer and the council).

How will Adult and Community Services decide how much money the person gets?
Adult and Community Services will ask what support is necessary for the person concerned to live their life. It will be necessary to fill in a simple form called the Self Assessment Questionnaire, which is completed by ticking a series of boxes that best describes the person and their level of support needs. A Care Manager will arrange a visit to help do this and talk over what support is needed. The Self Assessment Questionnaire will help Adult and Community Services to work out the amount of money that may be required to meet the person’s needs.

Will Self Directed Support cost anything?
A ‘contribution’ towards your support may be requested, but a financial assessment will be needed to see if and how much will need to be paid. After completing the Self Assessment and the financial assessment, a letter will be sent stating how much money has been allocated to meet an individual’s support needs. It is also necessary to write a Support Plan before any money will be made available for the person’s use. There will be help to do this if needed.

What is a Support Plan?
A Support Plan shows how the Personal Budget will be spent, and must show how it will meet the identified needs of the individual in a way that suits them best. There are criteria to follow in writing a Support Plan. The individual’s Care Manager will help them to do this if needed.

Who will help the person decide how to spend the money?
The recipient may already know how they want to use the money. If not, they could take advice from family, friends, the Care Manager or trusted organisations (e.g., Mencap, RUILS, Hestia). It is also possible to use a brokerage service to help an individual find the support they require.

What can the money be spent on?
Once Adult and Community Services have agreed the Support Plan, the Personal Budget money can be taken as a Direct Payment, or Adult and Community Services can manage the money on the individual’s behalf. Alternatively, a combination of these methods can be used. The recipient can take as much control as they want over their Personal Budget. If they choose to manage the money themselves, they will have complete control over how the money is used, as long as they spend it on things that are legal, within budget, represent good value for money, and that meet their support needs (it will be necessary to keep account of how the money has been spent).
If an individual asks Adult and Community Services to manage the money, they will only be able to choose from care services such as care and support at home, respite care (short breaks), and community support services (the council has a framework contract of preferred providers who have experience of supporting individuals in a Person Centred way).

**Is it possible to switch to Direct Payments instead of receiving services?**
If the person is already receiving services from the Learning Disability Service (see Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities section for more details), please contact the care manager (who will explain everything in greater detail, or put you in touch with other organisations).

**What if things don't work out?**
Ask the Care Manager to help, advise or even organise the person’s support.

**Help managing Direct Payment paperwork**
Direct Payments are public money, and it is necessary to keep financial records of how your funds are spent. Should you need help dealing with the paperwork or are due for a financial review, Hestia Housing and Support can assist you with this. See the Support, Health and Work section for more information and contact details.

For a more detailed explanation and answers to frequently asked questions, please contact the People with Learning Disabilities Duty Service. The office hours are 9.00am to 5.15pm Monday to Thursday and 9.00am to 5.00pm Fridays. Telephone: 020 8487 5315  Email: richmondctpld@richmond.gov.uk

Direct Payments webpage: [www.richmond.gov.uk/direct_payments](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/direct_payments)

For more information on Self Directed Support: [www.in-control.org.uk](http://www.in-control.org.uk) and [www.supportplanning.org](http://www.supportplanning.org)

[www.vodg.org.uk/publications/vodg-publications.html](http://www.vodg.org.uk/publications/vodg-publications.html) - Voluntary Organisations Disability Group’s guide for people needing to buy social care support. It can be downloaded by scrolling down to the “Further Reports” part of this webpage and clicking the link “Top Ten Tips When Choosing a Support Provider”.

**Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities available in this Borough**

**Local Housing Options**
Registered Residential Care Homes cater for people who need a high degree of support, and are houses which several people share, and where staff support them (who are available 24 hours of the day). Residential homes are registered by the Care Quality Commission, are inspected regularly and reports written about them to ensure they meet CQC’s standards. Care managers will only recommend residential care for individuals who have substantial care needs.

Supported Living options enable the person concerned to live more independently. This does not necessarily mean living alone, but could involve sharing with other people; the support being tailored to the individual needs of the person concerned.

There are a number of supported living schemes in the borough, and some people choose to rent homes from either the private sector or registered social landlords.

See Living Independently and Housing Options section for more details about the Care Quality Commission and organisations that offer a variety of support and housing.
Shared Life Scheme (Adult Placement)
This is where an adult (18 years old and over) with a learning disability shares their carer’s home within the community. A Shared Life Carer provides support, and the person with a learning disability shares daily life with them. There are different types of placement, ranging from offering a home, taking a short respite break or providing support with an activity.
To access the Shared Life Scheme, please contact:
Shared Lives Scheme, Care Provision, Civic Centre, 44 York Street, Twickenham. TW1 3BZ
Tel: 020 8487 5396   Email: sharedlives@richmond.gov.uk

Egerton Road Home
Short term respite is offered at Egerton Road Home, Twickenham, which is a guest house that offers short breaks for people who have learning disabilities aged 16 and over. There is also provision for emergency respite when needed. Egerton Road also holds evenings for carers where they can meet and socialise. People who use this respite service may have to contribute towards the cost of staying at Egerton Road Home, but this depends on their financial situation.

Egerton Road Home. 26, Egerton Road, Twickenham. TW2 7SP
Tel: 020 8891 6308

To access both the Shared Life Scheme and Egerton Road Home, the person wanting to use either service will need to have had a social worker’s referral following an assessment of their needs.
SUPPORT, HEALTH AND WORK

Support

Adult Social Care Access Team
This team is the first point of contact for all general enquiries and referrals about adult social care. They can be contacted between 9.00am to 5.15pm Monday to Thursday, and 9.00am to 5.00pm Fridays.
Tel: 020 8891 7971   Textphone: 18001 020 8891 7971
Website: www.richmond.gov.uk/adult_access_team   Email: adultsocialservices@richmond.gov.uk

POhWER Advocacy
POhWER delivers information, advice, support and advocacy services throughout England. They aim to support people who face difficult issues and want to make their voice heard. Advocacy supports people to have more control over their lives, make decisions, be treated fairly and participate fully in community life.
Contact POhWER for more information:
Tel: 0300 200 0022   Fax: 0300 456 2365   Text: 81025 (send ‘pohwer’ with your name and number)
Website: www.pohwer.net/in-your-area/where-you-live/richmond-upon-thames
Email: Richmond@pohwer.net   Skype: pohwer.advocacy (8.00am to 6.00pm Monday – Friday)

Richmond AID (Advice and Information on Disability)
This is a charity run by and for people with disabilities in the borough of Richmond upon Thames. It supports people with disabilities, their families, carers, friends and professionals by providing a variety of services that include an advice service helpline, a benefits service, an employment project (job club), plus downloadable publications and factsheets and a Disability Information Handbook.
Richmond AID. Disability & Advice Centre (DAAC). 4, Waldegrave Road, Teddington. TW11 8HT
DAAC reception: 0208 831 6080   Richmond AID mobile/SMS: 07894 215835
Advice Service Helpline (Mon – Fri 11.00am to 4.00pm): 020 8831 6070   Email: advice@richmondaid.org.uk
Benefits Service: 020 8831 6080/6072   Email: benefits@richmondaid.org.uk
Job Club: 020 8831 6072   Email: j.cutler@richmondaid.org.uk
Website: www.richmondaid.org.uk
General enquiries email: info@richmondaid.org.uk

Richmond Users Independent Living Scheme (RUILS)
RUILS is a service-user group providing support to disabled and elderly people living in this borough. Their services include advocacy, YourSay (a monthly consultation and community group), the recruitment and employment guide (www.employ-a-pa.co.uk), a personal assistant finder (www.find-a-pa.co.uk), person centred planning for young people, personal assistant training, pooling direct payments (pooling your money with others to get better value for money) and New Horizons (activities bringing people together). They are also working with other local organisations to enable people to get more for their Personal Budget by providing them with a range of excellent information on local services through a new Support Directory.
RUILS. Disability & Advice Centre. 4, Waldegrave Road, Teddington. TW11 8HT
Website: www.ruils.co.uk   Email: info@ruils.co.uk   Tel: 020 8831 6083
Hestia Housing and Support
Hestia provides services for adults who receive self directed support in this borough and need assistance with support planning and brokerage (identifying and setting up the services you need), direct payment management support (helping you to manage your direct payment money by yourself), personal assistant and employment service (helping you to find and employ a personal assistant(s) of your choice), plus a payroll service (helping you with your personal assistant’s wages payments).
Hestia Housing and Support. Mortlake Business Centre, 20, Mortlake High Street, London SW14 8JN
Webpage:  www.hestia.org/self-directed-support/richmond-personalisation-support-service/
Website:  www.hestia.org Email:  richmondsds@hestia.org Tel: 020 3642 4630

NAS Self Directed Support webpage
This webpage describes what self directed support (SDS) is, how to apply for a personal budget, plus further information and contacts. An information sheet about SDS has been created by a focus group of people who have autism and it aims to help others understand the process. If you wish to download the information sheet, visit the NAS Self Directed Support webpage above and use the appropriate link.

Skills for Care - Toolkit for people employing paid support workers
Skills for Care, together with Association for Real Change (ARC), has developed a toolkit to support people who want to employ their own personal assistants (PAs). It helps small employers deal with the basic issues and legalities of employing their own staff, such as getting started, employing a PA, being a good employer, keeping your PA and sorting out problems. The toolkit plus sample letters can be downloaded here: www.skillsforcare.org.uk/entry_to_social_care/recruitment/employingpersonalassistants.aspx

CarePair
CarePair is a free online service that aims to help carers and employers find each other as quickly and easily as possible, suggesting the most appropriate pairings based on things you both have in common. If you need a carer, sign up, tell CarePair about what you need, your lifestyle preferences, and they will find a list of people ready to work, but most importantly, people who are exactly what you require.
Website:  www.carepair.co.uk/index.php

Balance
Balance aims to supports people over 18 years of age who have Asperger syndrome or high functioning autism to live more independently, and offers a number of services. Those living outside the borough of Kingston can use their personal budget to fund the services, but do contact Balance to discuss this and other ways to access their services. There are a number of short training courses (including Personal Development, Keeping Safe, Communication Skills), social groups and individual appointments (including support around employment and academic studying etc). Balance also provide some services for young people aged 13 to 18 years of age.
Tel: 020 3468 3070 Email: info@balance-cic.com
Website:  http://balance-cic.com/balance_asperger_syndrome_team.html

Richmond Travel Buddy
Young people with additional needs or disabilities who would like to be involved in activities in their community can be put off by anxieties around using public transport. This project gives young people and young adults the confidence and opportunity to access activities, to participate in their community, and to develop friendships along the way. Richmond Travel Buddy matches young people aged 14 to 25 who live in Richmond Borough with a Travel Buddy who will support them in accessing services and opportunities using public transport. This project aims to give young people with additional needs and/or disabilities the confidence to plan routes, travel to and from activities, and attend activities independently. For more information, please contact:
Lewis Garland, Richmond Travel Buddy Co-ordinator at Richmond AID
Tel: 020 8831 6079 Email l.garland@richmondaid.org.uk
Health

Dental Care
There is a specialist dentistry service available in-borough for people with learning disabilities of all ages. For more information, contact:
Teddington Health and Social Care Centre. 18, Queens Road, Teddington, Middlesex. TW11 0LR
Tel: 020 8614 5300
Alternatively, your dentist (or other health care professionals) can refer you to the Community Dental Service at Kingston Hospital. Tel: 020 8546 7711 Ext: 2349

Richmond Community Learning Disability Team (RCLDT)
Your Healthcare provides this multidisciplinary, specialist healthcare service within Richmond Borough. The RCLDT offers speech and language therapy, a psychology and challenging needs team, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, psychiatry, nursing and dietetics. The teams directly provide specialist services and also assist people with learning disabilities to use mainstream health and social care services. Please note that this service is only available to those persons who fulfil the criteria for access to services provided by the People with Learning Disabilities Team.

The aim is to support people with learning disabilities to live as healthy, valued members of society by arranging and providing specialist healthcare. Referrals to the team are accepted from any source (including self referral). All referrals are discussed at the team’s weekly meetings and appropriate action determined. If a referral is being made on behalf of someone who has a learning disability, it is necessary to obtain their consent first. For more information, please contact:
Richmond Specialist Health Care Team (RSHCT).
2nd Floor, Civic Centre. 44, York Street, Twickenham. TW1 3BZ
Tel: 020 8487 5315 (Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm)

Psychology & Challenging Needs Service
The role of this service is to use specialist knowledge and skills to promote psychological and physical well-being, reduce the effects of a person’s disability and to maximise the functioning and competence of those with complex needs. It also aims to promote and support good practice in existing services for people with learning disabilities.

The Psychology and Challenging Needs Services includes clinical and counselling psychologists, specialist counsellors, challenging needs practitioners, behavioural analysts, assistant psychologists, specialist nurses and senior support workers. For more information, please contact:
Psychology & Challenging Needs Service for People With Learning Disabilities.
Roselands Clinic. 163, Kingston Road, New Malden, Surrey. KT3 3NN
Tel: 020 8949 9968
Webpage: www.yourhealthcare.org/Services/psychology-and-challenging-needs-service.htm

Sheridan House Specialist Assessment & Intervention Service
Sheridan House forms part of the Psychology and Challenging Needs Service. It also operates as a day centre for those with additional health care needs including challenging behaviour. This service is used both by clients from the Royal Borough of Kingston and London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames.

People using its services can access a range of activities, including a computer room and sensory room for their use. Access to Sheridan House is by means of referrals through the Community Learning Disability teams in both Kingston and Richmond. For more information, please contact:
Sheridan House. 26 Upper Teddington Road, Hampton Wick, Middlesex. KT1 4DY
Tel: 020 8274 7601
**Patient Passports for people with learning disabilities**

Patients who have learning disabilities can be given a Learning Disability Passport by their GP or through their learning disability social services team, just in case they have to be admitted to hospital. These passports can be used to list such important information as personal details, capacity plus level and type of support required, best ways to communicate, behavioural issues (and how to deal with them) past medical interventions, allergies, etc, etc.

It is possible to download a Patient Passport by visiting [www.easyhealth.org.uk](http://www.easyhealth.org.uk) then clicking on ‘H’ in the search bar at the base of the webpage, and selecting the ‘Hospital Passports (leaflets)’ link. The South West London Hospital Passport can be found at the top of this webpage.

**Work**

**Work Choice/Ingeus**

Work Choice is a Government funded programme that aims to support people with disabilities whose needs cannot be met through other work programmes, Access or workplace adjustments. It is tailored to each person’s circumstances so that they receive support to find the right job, make the move into work and eventually become more independent once they have started working. Ingeus (in partnership with The Shaw Trust, Mencap and Action for Blind People) offers people with disabilities living in South London, Lambeth, Southwark and Wandsworth support through the Work Choice programme. This is delivered in partnership with Jobcentre Plus as part of the Government’s aim to help more people into work. Visit [www.ingeus.co.uk/about/about-us](http://www.ingeus.co.uk/about/about-us) for more information about Ingeus.

**Jobcentre Plus, Twickenham**

There is a small team of Disability Employment Advisors based at this office, led by Chrissie Stanton. The advisors are able to give some help to people who have disabilities to support them into work, and they can also refer people to specialist employment agencies with whom Jobcentre Plus has contacts. Benefits advice is also available at Jobcentre Plus, although it may be helpful to get independent advice from an organisation such as Richmond AID about benefit entitlement (see below and Contact List section for more details). For more information, contact:

Jobcentre Plus. 59 - 63, London Road, Twickenham TW1 3SZ
Tel: 00845 604 3719   Chrissie Stanton can be contacted at: 020 8250 4684

**Work Choice**

Work Choice is aimed at people with disabilities whose needs cannot be met by other work programmes, and consists of three modules. The first, Work Entry Support, lasts up to six months and provides help with personal skills and work-related advice to get the individual into supported or unsupported work. The second, In-Work Support, lasts up to two years and provides help to start work and stay employed. The last module, Longer-term In-Work Support, helps individuals to progress in their job and where appropriate, help them move into unsupported work. For more information, please visit: [www.gov.uk/work-choice](http://www.gov.uk/work-choice)

Alternatively, contact Karl Burgess (Transition Development Officer)
Tel: 020 8891 7285 or 07958 701260   Email: karl.burgess@achievingforchildren.org.uk

**Volunteering Richmond**

Volunteering can be a way of taking part in your local community. It can also be a route to employment or a chance to try something new which may lead to a career change. Volunteering Richmond provides people with information, placements that meet their needs, direct links with organisations needing volunteers plus tailored support every step of the way.

To register and for more information, please contact Volunteering Richmond at:
Tel: 0300 365 9940   Twitter: [www.twitter.com/volrichmond](http://www.twitter.com/volrichmond)
Email: enquiry@volunteeringrichmond.org.uk   Website: [www.volunteeringrichmond.org.uk](http://www.volunteeringrichmond.org.uk)
Richmond AID Stepping Stones
Stepping Stones offers help to young people aged 14 to 17 with disabilities living in Richmond Borough to get into work. It is run by Jamie Cutler (Employment and Community Involvement Manager) to help young people with disabilities gain work experience, training and increase their confidence. For more information, please contact:
Richmond AID. Disability, Action and Advice Centre (DAAC), 4, Waldegrave Road, Teddington TW11 8HT
Jamie Cutler (Employment and Community Involvement Manager)
Tel: 020 8831 6072  Email: j.cutler@richmondaid.org.uk

Richmond AID Job Club
This club offers weekly sessions providing advice and guidance to support disabled people in Richmond Borough to find employment. The services include support with CV writing, help accessing volunteering opportunities, help with job searches and applications, preparing for interviews, help accessing guidance about in-work benefits, legal resources and assistance as well as a monthly jobs bulletin. To find out more, please contact:
Richmond AID. Disability, Action and Advice Centre (DAAC), 4, Waldegrave Road, Teddington TW11 8HT
Job Club - Jamie Cutler (Employment and Community Involvement Manager)
Tel: 020 8831 6072  Email: j.cutler@richmondaid.org.uk

Working Model
Working Model is a supported employment scheme based at Richmond Adult Community College (RACC) that offers a new employment opportunity for adults who have learning disabilities. As partners in the scheme, participants pay to attend the work sessions, make products to sell as well as getting a share in the profits! For more information, please contact the scheme’s co-ordinator at:
RACC. Tel: 020 8891 5907 ext 4054  Email: working.model@racc.ac.uk

Specialisterne
Specialisterne (which translates from Danish as “The Specialists”) is an innovative social business concept originally founded in Denmark in 2004. Specialisterne is internationally recognised as the first and foremost example of how high functioning people with autism (primarily Asperger syndrome) can become effectively included in society, and provide valuable, high quality services to their employers. Specialisterne assesses, trains and employ individuals with autism as consultants in IT and other sectors with technically oriented tasks and jobs, such as data management, software testing and quality control.
For more information about Specialisterne, please contact:
Specialisterne United Kingdom. 21, Holborn Viaduct, London. ECIA 2DY
Tel: 07870 383286  Email: kontakt@specialisterne.com  Website: http://uk.specialisterne.com

Project Search
Project Search is a combination of work experience and college based at West Thames College. It is aimed at more independent young people aged between 18 and 24 years of age; the students meeting with a tutor and job coach for part of the day, and working in a variety of roles for the rest of the day. The Hilton Hotel at Heathrow Airport and GlaxoSmithKline are two organisations that offer opportunities to the Project Search students. For more information, please contact Beverly McGuire at:
Tel: 020 8818 6850  Email: beverley.mcguire@west-thames.ac.uk

Richmond Works (Remploy)
Richmond Works offers support to adults who have a range of support needs and disabilities living in the this Borough who are wanting to work for at least 8 hours a week. Using a person centred approach, Richmond Works aims to help people gain the skills and expertise needed to prepare them for work and to get a job. To find out more, please contact Cristina Pascual at:
Tel: 0300 456 8102  Email: cristina.pascual@remploy.co.uk
Webpage: www.remploy.co.uk/en/partners/Who-we-work-with/richmond-works/
LIVING INDEPENDENTLY AND HOUSING OPTIONS

There are a number of organisations that offer individuals who have learning disabilities, physical disabilities and mental health needs help to live as independently as possible and be part of their local communities. The services offered can include accommodation, respite care and day services, as well as supporting people to live independently.

Such organisations in England are registered, licensed and monitored by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to ensure the services being offered are of a sufficiently high standard. The Care Quality Commission can be contacted at:
CQC National Customer Care Centre, Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA
Tel: 03000 616161 Fax: 03000 616171 (Monday to Friday: 8.30 to 5.30pm)
Website: www.cqc.org.uk Contact webpage: www.cqc.org.uk/content/contact-us-using-our-online-form

Richmond Homes and Lifestyle Trust
Richmond Homes and Lifestyle Trust provides long-term residential provision for adults with learning disabilities living in Richmond Borough. It also provides activities where small groups of people are supported by staff to experience an overnight stay away from the family home, plus leisure and daytime services as well as offering individual and general support and information.
5 - 7, Cedars Road, Hampton Wick, Kingston-upon-Thames. KT1 4BG
Tel: 020 8977 5447 Website: http://rhlt.org.uk Email: info@rhlt.org.uk

United Response
United Response is a national charity that supports people with learning disabilities, mental health needs and physical disabilities to take control of their lives. The charity believes that people with disabilities are equal participants in society and should have the same opportunities and rights as everybody else. As well as providing support, United Response runs campaigns on the latest social care issues, organises fundraising schemes and events, as well as providing guidance and information via their website.
For general enquiries, contact:
United Response. Vantage House. 1, Weir Road, Wimbledon Park, London SW19 8UX
Tel: 020 8246 5200
Website: www.unitedresponse.org.uk Email: info@unitedresponse.org.uk
Welmede
Welmede is a person centred housing and support organisation passionate about supporting people with disabilities to pursue their chosen lifestyle. This organisation supports people living in Surrey, Croydon, Kingston, Richmond and West Sussex; the support offered including supported living, domiciliary care, residential care and numerous leisure activities (including holidays).
For more information, contact:
Welmede. Byfleet House, 2, Guildford Road, Chertsey, Surrey KT16 9BJ
Tel: 01932 571666   Website: www.welmede.org.uk   Email: enquiries@welmede.org.uk

Certitude Group
The Certitude Group’s services include support for adults with a range of learning disabilities who may also have additional support needs including autism, challenging behaviour, communication issues, dual diagnosis, physical disability, sensory impairments and complex needs. Service users develop through their own person centred plan and the staff are trained in person centred thinking. The Certitude Group offers accommodation based services, community support, accredited or informal training, volunteering and work opportunities, amongst other things. Individuals are supported to engage with their communities and to participate in social and leisure activities of all kinds.
For more information, contact:
Certitude Group. 31 – 33, Lumiere Court, 209, Balham High Road, London SW17 7BQ
Tel: 020 8772 6222   Fax: 020 8772 6223    Website: www.certitude.org.uk

Dimensions
Dimensions behaviour support team aims to support people to live the life they want. They provide support for more than 2,500 young people and adults who have learning disabilities and/or ASD; their services including individualised support packages for people living in their own homes, support for people living in shared housing, registered residential care, transition support services, support for people to find and maintain housing and short breaks.
For more information, contact:
Dimensions. 9 – 10, Commerce Park, Brunel Road, Theale, Reading. RG7 4AB
Tel: 0300 303 9001   Website: www.dimensions-uk.org

Yarrow
Yarrow works with people with learning disabilities and acquired brain injuries, ranging from those who need 24-hour support to those who only want one or two hours help per week. The services provided include Yarrow’s own small care homes, supporting people to live independently and interact with their community, helping with the employment and training of personal support workers/carers as well as short breaks.
For more information, contact:
Yarrow Housing. 216, Goldhawk Road, London W12 9NX
Tel: 020 8735 4600  Fax: 020 8735 4601
Website: www.yarrowhousing.org.uk   Email: info@yarrowhousing.org.uk

Voyage Care
Voyage Care offers flexible individual support to enable people to live the lives they choose. Individuals to whom Voyage Options can offer support include those with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, ASDs, acquired brain injuries and other complex needs. The support offered includes lifestyle support, outreach services and employment support.
For more information, contact:
Voyage Care, Wall Island, Birmingham Road, Lichfield WS14 0QP
Tel: 0800 328 6091   Website: www.voyagecare.com   Email: referrals@voyagecare.com

SweetTree
SweetTree offers home care services to people who have dementia, physical disabilities, brain injuries, learning disabilities, and neurological conditions. Care and support can be provided on either a live-in or live-out basis. For more information, please contact:
SweetTree Home Care Services. Coleridge House. 1, Coleridge Gardens, London NW6 3QH
Tel: 020 7624 9944   Fax: 020 7624 9955   Website: www.sweettree.co.uk   Email: info@sweettree.co.uk
Walsingham
Walsingham offers a broad spectrum of support services to people who have learning disabilities, physical disabilities, mental illness and impaired sight or hearing. The services include supported living, residential care, outreach and day services; Walsingham’s aim being to support people to have a full life and make them feel valued. For more information, contact:
Walsingham. Walsingham House. 1331 - 1337, High Road, Whetstone, London N20 9HR
Tel: 020 8343 5600  Fax: 020 8446 9156
Website: www.walsingham.com  Email: enquiries@walsingham.com

The Regard Partnership
The Regard Partnership provides flexible and personalised support for people with learning disabilities, mental health needs or acquired brain injuries across over 120 supported living services and residential care homes in England and Wales. They also operate services for children who have learning disabilities and emotional and behavioural issues, which include specialist educational provision. Their aim is to empower the service users to shape their own lives and the services they receive in all care settings, whether it be supported living, domiciliary care or residential care.
For more information, contact the Regard Partnership Head Office at:
Units 6 - 7, Princeton Mews, 167 – 169, London Road, Kingston, Surrey. KT2 6PT
Tel: 020 8255 4433   Website: www.regard.co.uk
For referrals, please ring the Referrals Hotline on 0800 840 0313 or email: info@regard.co.uk

Golden Lane Housing (GLH)
Established by Mencap in 1998, Golden Lane Housing provides high quality homes that suit the needs of individuals who have learning disabilities. GLH believes that everyone with a learning disability has the right to achieve his or her potential, and having somewhere decent to live and the chance to contribute to the wider community is what they support their tenants to achieve. People using GLH are offered the chance to live in rented accommodation and the opportunity to share in the ownership of their own home; being enabled to choose where and with whom they live. Some examples of the types of housing GLH provide are individual and shared housing, supported living, shared ownership with individuals and families, respite accommodation, and also wheelchair accessible accommodation. GLH understands that everyone is an individual and they take a person centred approach to each person to get the best quality home for their needs. For more information, please contact:
Golden Lane Housing. West Point. Ground Floor, 501, Chester Road, Old Trafford, Manchester. M16 9HU
Tel: 0845 604 0046   Website: www.glh.org.uk  Email: enquiries@glh.org.uk
Mencap's housing webpage: www.mencap.org.uk/page.asp?id=10637

Kingwood
Kingwood is a provider of specialist services for people who have autism or Asperger syndrome. It aims to support people by enabling them to make choices, live life to the full and reach their potential. Some of the people supported by Kingwood live in their own home, while others live with family members or in shared accommodation; the support given being tailored to each individual.
For more information, contact:
Kingwood Trust. 2, Chalfont Court, Chalfont Close, Lower Earley, Reading. RG6 5SY
Tel: 0118 931 0143    Fax: 0118 931 1937
Website: www.kingwood.org.uk  Email: info@kingwood.org.uk

London Care Partnership (LCP)
London Care Partnership provides specialist residential support for people up to the age of 35. Through LCP’s programmes of education and activity, both at home and in the community, individuals are lead on a journey to greater independence, preparing them for the transition to supported living.
For more information, please contact:
London Care Partnership. 6, Park Road, Hampton Hill. TW12 1HB
Tel: 020 8255 5166      Fax: 020 8973 3932
Website: www.lcpcare.com  Email: info@lcpcare.com
HFT
HFT (formerly known as Home Farm Trust) is a national charity that provides local support services for people who have learning disabilities throughout England. The local teams can provide help with healthcare, finding a job or a new home, and can also assist people to make new friends, take up a hobby or have a holiday. For more information, please contact:
HFT. 5/6, Brook Office Park. Folly Brook Road, Emersons Green, Bristol. BS16 7FL
Tel: 0117 906 1700
Website: www.hft.org.uk   Email: info@hft.org.uk

Elizabeth FitzRoy Support
This national charity provides practical, tailored support for adults who have learning and physical disabilities, their aim being to allow the people they support to live the lives they choose, make their own decisions and to enjoy a full and independent life. They offer a flexible range of support services, providing people with a tailored support package based on their specific needs, wants and hopes.
For more information, contact:
Elizabeth FitzRoy Support (Central Support). FitzRoy House. 8, Hylton Road, Petersfield. GU32 3JY
Tel (general enquiries): 01730 711 111   Fax: 01730 710 566   Email: info@fitzroy.org
Elizabeth FitzRoy Support (Southern Region Office)
Passfield Business Centre, Lynchborough Road, Passfield, Liphook GU30 7SB
Tel: 01428 752 260   Email: info.sro@fitzroy.org
Website: www.efitzroy.org.uk

Brookdale Care
Brookdale Care is a leading independent provider of hospital, residential and supported living care for people who have ASDs. Apart from providing accommodation, care and support, Brookdale Care also can provide diagnostic assessments. Brookdale Care believes that individuals who have an ASD are unique in their needs and abilities; their innovative approach specialising in providing a structured, therapeutic environment that centres upon personalised care pathways towards a more independent style of living.
For more information, contact:
Brookdale Care. 14, Parkway, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire. AL8 6HG
Referral process enquiries Tel: 01707 646 646    Website: www.brookdalecare.co.uk

Excel Support Services
Excel Support Services provides supported living for people with learning disabilities living in their own homes. They offer a viable alternative to some of the larger organisations; the most important component of their support service being highly trained and motivated staff. For more information, please contact:
Choice Care Group. PO Box 2101, Kirtons Farm Road, Pingewood, Reading, Berks. RG30 3ZR
Telephone: 0845 815 9860   Fax: 0118 958 1951   Email: info@excelsupportservices.com
Operations Manager. Suite 2, Unit B, Waterside Park, Cookham Road, Bracknell. RG12 1RB
Tel: 0203 195 0145    Fax: 01344 305602   Email: sarah.faulkner@excelsupportservices.com
Website: www.excelsupportservices.com

Hoffmann Foundation for Autism
Hoffmann Foundation for Autism is a registered charity with sixty years experience of providing a range of specialist services to adults with an autistic spectrum condition. They ensure that all individuals on the autism spectrum receive an individualised service, which will improve their lives enabling them to live a life that is meaningful for them. For more information, contact the Hoffmann Foundation For Autism at:
Fanz House. Basement Office, 99-101, Gray’s Inn Road, London WC1X 8TY
Tel: 020 7269 6930   Fax: 020 7269 6940
Website: www.hoffmannfoundation.org.uk   Email: info@hoffmannfoundation.org.uk

Consensus
Consensus has been opening services specifically for people with autism spectrum conditions since 2007 as they recognise the very specific needs of individuals with autism and related conditions.
Tel: 0808 166 1420   Email: enquiries@consensussupport.com
Website: www.consensussupport.com/support/autism-spectrum-condition/
**LEISURE**

**General tourism and holiday information:**

Going on holiday is usually thought to be exciting, something to look forward to and a change from the everyday routines and environment. However, an individual with an ASD is very likely to find this experience extremely stressful, but with preparation, it is possible for that child or adult to accept the changes in their daily routine, reduce their anxiety levels and enjoy their holiday too.

When booking a holiday, find out as much as possible how your prospective destination will suit the person who has an ASD. Will it be noisy or crowded, for example (this could be problematic for a person who has sensitivities to loud sounds)?

Once the booking has been made, tell the person concerned about the holiday and if possible, what will be happening and when. Ways of helping reduce anxiety include visual support, for example, preparing a booklet of pictures of the holiday destination and the means of travel to get there and back. Another way is to make a detailed timetable listing what will be happening each day of the holiday. Yet another is to use the internet to show the person images or movie clips of the destination and anything else to do with the holiday (eg: what it’s like being in a plane when it takes off and lands).

If travelling by public transport, it can be helpful to take the individual with an ASD on a visit to the departure venue (eg: train station, coach station, airport) so they have a better idea what to expect when they actually go on holiday. It is possible to arrange familiarisation tours of airports, should the person concerned have not flown before or is flying from a new airport (you will be asked to give the passport details of everyone going on that familiarisation tour prior to the visit if they are going to be taken air-side).

It may be possible to apply for direct payment to assist those families who wish to employ their own befriender, carer, etc. It is also possible to apply for contributions towards the cost of either a family holiday or a specialist holiday for the child or adult with an ASD.

It also pays to ask for a carer’s or disabled person’s discount at those venues where an entry fee is charged. You may be asked for proof that the person you are accompanying has a disability, eg: Freedom Pass, Disabled Person’s Railcard, paperwork relating to that person’s disability. Children who are registered with the Disabled Children’s Team can be issued with a proof of disability card, which saves having to carry confidential documents around as proof to gain concessions (see *Additional Concessions* for further details). However, this card does not state the nature of the child’s disability, and some places may also ask to see additional evidence that your child has an ASD.
National Autistic Society: The NAS has a very useful webpage listing ideas for holidays and days out at autism friendly venues, plus tips for taking a child who has an ASD to different leisure venues. To find out more, visit: www.autism.org.uk/living-with-autism/out-and-about/holidays-and-days-out.aspx


Manchester Airport: Manchester Airport has produced a guide called “Airport Awareness” to help children with ASD and their parents/carers cope with the challenges associated with air travel. To download a copy of this guide, visit www.manchesterairport.co.uk/manweb.nsf and type “Airport Awareness” into the ‘Search’ box. At the top of the next webpage, click the first link on the list to download this invaluable guide.

This airport also offers autism awareness YouTube videos for each of its terminals which can be found at:
- Terminal 1: www.youtube.com/watch?v=nbQiX7sYiCs
- Terminal 2: www.youtube.com/watch?v=bORInK7PF-4
- Terminal 3: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iwz-znTso-8

Gatwick Airport: Gatwick Airport offers familiarisation tours (which includes going air-side). Please contact Gatwick Airport at www.gatwickairport.com/contact-us/make-an-enquiry/ if you would like to arrange a tour.

Tourism For All: This national charity states that it is a central source of holiday and travel information and support for people with disabilities and their carers.

Tourism For All, 7a, Pixel Mill, 44, Appleby Road, Kendal, Cumbria. LA9 6ES
Tel: 0845 124 9971 Website: www.tourismforall.org.uk Email: info@tourismforall.org.uk

Children and Young People:

The Family Information Service (FIS) can provide a complete list of childcare providers in the area, including those registered with Ofsted. The FIS provides a free telephone and internet service dedicated to providing up to date information for parents, parents to be, carers and professionals to help support children up to their 20th birthday or 25th birthday if a child has a disability. FIS staff also run free, regular information and advice sessions at all the borough's Children's Centres. For more information, contact the FIS at:
Tel: 020 8831 6298 Web address: www.richmond.gov.uk/fis Email: fis@richmond.gov.uk

Aiming High Short Break Grants: If a child or young person (under 18 years old) is eligible for inclusion on the Richmond upon Thames Disability Register and living within Richmond Borough, then they or their family can apply for a one-off short break grant for their disabled child. Deadlines apply to the applications, and evidence that the grant has been used as agreed has to be submitted.
Tel: 020 8831 6076 Email: info@accessinfoservice.com

Crofters Summer Scheme: This scheme is available to children and young people assessed as needing and receiving support from the Disabled Children’s Service and aged between 4 and 17 years of age. Crofters’ activity service provides a variety of activities and works carefully to make sure the activities and friendship groups are suitable for all children and young people to have a safe and fun day.
Tel: 0208 831 6044 Email: h.mansfield@richmond.gov.uk

Club 47: This is a new club for 12 to 17 year olds with additional needs run by Richmond Mencap. Activities include pool, table football, art, creative art activities, indoor sports and team games. Outdoor activities will be available as the weather permits and options available will be driven by the young people themselves. Travel support from school to the club is available, please let Richmond Mencap know if this is required. The club meets every Friday between 4.00pm and 7.00pm. For more information, please contact:
Club 47. Whitton Youth Centre. 1 Britannia Lane, Twickenham. TW2 7JX
Tel: 020 8744 1923 (ask to speak to Laura or Teresa) Email: rmoffice342@gmail.com
**Happy Kids Holidays:** This is a non-profit making organisation that aims to support families with children and teenagers with autism spectrum disorders who want to take a holiday in France.  
Website: [www.happykidsholidays.com](http://www.happykidsholidays.com)

**Summer Fun:** ‘Summer Fun’ is an annual interactive summer scheme that provides three weeks of activities for local children with learning disabilities (8 to 17+). The participants are divided into three age groups, and each group has activities provided that are relevant to their needs and age. For further information, contact:  
Richmond Mencap on 020 8744 1923  
Website: [www.richmondmencap.org.uk](http://www.richmondmencap.org.uk)  
Email: laura@richmondmencap.org.uk

**Resources for Autism**  
Resources for Autism provides practical services for children and adults with an autism spectrum disorder and for their families and carers. The staff and volunteers are all ASD trained and the services are designed to be welcoming and accepting, whatever the person’s level of need and support. For more information, contact:  
Resources for Autism. 858, Finchley Road, London NW11 6AB  
Tel: 020 8454 3259  
Website: [www.resourcesforautism.org.uk](http://www.resourcesforautism.org.uk)  
Email: admin@resourcesforautism.org.uk

**Special Needs Swimming Club:** Wendy Dorgan runs a swimming club for children and young people with special needs, and this is based at Teddington Pool. Wendy’s club meets every Wednesday evening (plus Friday evenings for adults) during term time, and the young people improve their swimming skills in a fun, enjoyable, supervised environment.  
For further information about her swimming club, contact Wendy Dorgan:  
Tel: 020 8943 0796  
Email: wendydorgan@hotmail.co.uk

**Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA):** Although RDA was set up to work mainly with people with physical disabilities, RDA Groups now work across the spectrum of disabilities, age range, social status and urban and rural environments. The focus of their work is to ensure that each individual has the chance to derive a direct therapeutic benefit and the opportunity to achieve their personal goal (whether that be learning a very simple skill or winning a major competition). For general information and enquiries about local groups, contact the RDA National Office at:  
Norfolk House, 1a, Tournament Court, Edgehill Drive, Warwick. CV34 6LG  
Tel: 0845 658 1082  
Website: [www.rda.org.uk](http://www.rda.org.uk)  
Email: info@rda.org.uk

**The Thomas Centre:** This holiday park caters specifically for families and groups with social and Communication impairments (for example, autism and Asperger syndrome). It is sited within 25 acres of Private parkland close to the Lincolnshire coast. For more information and to make a booking, contact:  
The Thomas Centre. Westfield House, Covenham St Bartholomew, Louth, Lincolnshire LN11 0PB  
Tel: 01507 363463  
Website: [www.thethomascentre.co.uk](http://www.thethomascentre.co.uk)  
Email: enquiries@thethomascentre.co.uk

**Richmond Crossroads Saturday Club:** Richmond Crossroads Care is a local provider of respite and care support for carers and the people they care for. They run a Saturday Club in Hampton during term time to provide respite for parent/carers of children with additional needs aged between 8 and 15 years of age. All of the staff are fully trained, enhanced DBS checked care support workers. The club is a safe, secure environment where children can develop and enjoy social, creative and sporting activities. If you would like your child to attend this club, please contact your school SENCO, school nurse or teacher.  
Day and time: Saturday afternoon (during term time), 1.30 pm to 5.00pm  
Venue: Hampton Youth Project, Hampton TW12 3YH  
Cost: Free, but donations are welcome  
Tel: 020 8943 9421  
Email: vwisdom@richmondcrossroads.org.uk

**Knots Arts:** Knots Arts runs drama and youth group sessions on Saturdays in Mortlake for children and young people who have social and communication needs. They believe in creating a creative space with a clear structure for their participants to have the opportunity and support to untangle social knots. The sessions are run by drama facilitators and playguides, with support from a speech and language therapist. For more information, please contact Knots Arts at helloknots@gmail.com
The Performing Arts Children's Charity: The Performing Arts Children's Charity provides performing arts classes for children and young people with special needs. Through drama, movement, music and performing together in a supported environment the children learn new skills, grow their self-confidence and become more independent. For more information, please contact: Tel: 020 8819 8187 Email: admin@paChildrensCharity.org.uk Website: www.paChildrensCharity.org.uk

Companion Cycling: Companion Cycling is a scheme that enables people who are unable to ride "solo" cycles for whatever reason, to enjoy the pleasure of cycling with a companion in the traffic free surroundings of Bushy Park. Anyone, whatever their ability or mobility, can become a cyclist using one of Companion Cycling’s special cycles, and with the aid of a “pilot” who might be a carer, a friend, a family member or one of Companion Cycling's volunteers. The scheme operates in Bushy Park out of “The Stockyard” Environmental Education Centre. For more information, please contact: General enquiries and bookings Tel: 07961 344545 General enquiries email: info@companioncycling.org.uk Online bookings email: bookings@companioncycling.org.uk Website: www.companioncycling.org.uk

The Harriet Davis Seaside Holiday Trust for Disabled Children: The Trust provides four self-catering holiday homes in Pembrokeshire, one of which has been specially adapted and equipped for families with children who have autism and other learning disabilities (the other three houses have been adapted to cater for children with physical disabilities). Its main features are a low stimulus environment, four bedrooms, a soft playroom, lockable internal doors and cupboards plus a secure fenced garden with no immediate neighbours. For bookings, please contact: Helen Lees-Griffiths. Harriet Davis Trust. Tenby Observer Offices, Warren Street, Tenby. Pembs. SA70 7JY Booking Enquiries - Tel: 01834 845197 Email: helen@harriet-davis-trust.org.uk General Enquiries - Tel: 01834 814645 Email: admin@harriet-davis-trust.org.uk Website: www.harriet-davis-trust.org.uk

Mohawk: Camp Mohawk is a multi-functional day centre for special needs children, set in 5 acres of beautiful countryside, just outside Wargrave, Berkshire. Throughout the year the centre provides a range of activities, facilities and natural space to encourage children with a variety of special needs to play, socialise and learn in a secure and caring environment. It offers a swimming pool, adventure playground, picnic areas, a sensory garden, sensory rooms and indoor lounge and dining area for wet weather periods. There is a membership scheme for support groups and families. Camp Mohawk, Highfield Lane, Crazies Hill, Wargrave, Berkshire. RG10 8PU Website: www.campmohawk.org.uk General Enquiries: Luke Jansen (Centre Manager) Booking Enquiries: Kate Kent (Project Coordinator) Tel: 0118 940 4045 Email: info@campmohawk.org.uk Tel: 0118 940 4045 Email: kate.kent@campmohawk.org.uk

Big Blue Surf School: This surf school is based in Bude and has coaches who are trained to provide surf tuition to children with disabilities plus children who have autism. The subsidised one-to-one surf sessions are offered to any young person under 25 years old who has a recognised disability. For more information, please contact: Big Blue Surf School (office). 35, Victoria Road, Bude, Cornwall. EX23 8RJ Tel: 01288 331764 Email: info@bigbluesurfschool.co.uk Website: www.bigbluesurfschool.co.uk

Through The Roof: Christian disability charity ‘Through the Roof’ offers short annual holidays to families with children aged between 4 and 16 who are on the autism spectrum at the Dalesdown centre in West Sussex. The unique feature of this holiday is the one-to-one helper provided for each child with an ASD from breakfast to bedtime, coupled with an exciting programme of activities which means that parents can relax and themselves too. Through The Roof. Dalesdown, Honeybridge Lane, Dial Post, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 8NX For more information and tariff details, please contact: Margaret Bale (Administration Manager) on 01372 737045 or email margaret@throughtheroof.org
Well Farm Cottages: Well Farm Cottages are situated on the Cornwall/Devon border in the village of North Tamerton. This is a self-catering family holiday venue where guests who have learning disabilities and/or autism are welcome. Well Farm Cottages are listed by the NAS as being autism friendly. For more information, please contact: Clare Horn, Well Farm Cottages, North Tamerton, Holsworthy, Devon. EX22 6RX Tel: 01288 341482 Mobile: 07724 195709 Email: clare@wellfarmcottages.com Website: www.wellfarmcottages.com/index.htm

Moor Lane Centre: Moor Lane Centre hires out a variety of facilities to parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities aged between 0 and 18 years (and also to organisations who work with the same children and young people). The facilities include two activity rooms (the first equipped for sensory and soft play plus a ball pool, the second of which can be used for art and music activities or games) and an accessible playground and outdoor area that has a lot of fun equipment plus a separate area full of soft play equipment. There is a kitchen available to use (although those hiring the facilities will have to provide their own refreshments), and in the outdoor area, there are tables and chairs to enjoy a picnic in a section that is partially covered by a canopy. Up to a maximum of 30 people can attend at any one time; Moor Lane being open to hire on Saturdays from 3.00pm to 6.00pm and 1.00pm to 6.00pm on Sundays throughout the year (bookings on weekdays between 10.00am and 6.00pm during school holidays may be made by mutual agreement. For more information (including how to book plus costs), please contact: The Event Administrator. The Moor Lane Centre, Moor Lane, Chessington, Surrey. KT9 2AA Tel: 020 8547 5754

St John's Handicapped Children's Trust: St John's Handicapped Children's Trust (SJHCT) is a small charity that runs two annual holidays for children with special needs (each including a day at Alton Towers). The children come mainly from within the Thames Valley region and the holidays are fun for the children, as well as giving their parents a break. Parents, social workers and schools can apply for a child to go on the holidays. The Trust aims to choose children who will reap the most direct benefits from the trip to Alton Towers, and they are generally aged between eight to sixteen years old. Although SJHCT was founded by Roman Catholics, holidays are open to all children irrespective of their religion. Both the children and helpers come from a wide variety of religious, racial and social backgrounds and all take a full part in theses activities. For more information about SJHCT, please contact: St Johns Handicapped Children's Trust. Hudnall Lane, Little Gaddesden, Hertfordshire. HP4 1QE Website: www.sjhct.org.uk

Adults:

Richmond Mencap Holidays and Holiday Opportunities Project: Richmond Mencap organises the Holiday Opportunity Project, which is a series of days out for adults with learning disabilities for three weeks over the summer holidays. They also provide holidays specifically for adults with learning disabilities, whether they live with their families or independently. For people who live independently, this should be their only holiday of the year (this does not apply to people still living with their families). For more information, phone 020 8744 1923 (see Contact List section for all email addresses) Web address: www.richmondmencap.org.uk

Special Needs Swimming Club: Please see Children and Young People's section for further information and contact details.

Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA): Please see Children and Young People's Leisure section for further information and contact details.

Companion Cycling: Please see Children and Young People's Leisure section for further information and contact details.

The Thomas Centre: Please see Children and Young People's Leisure section for further information and contact details.
Leisure Break Scheme: This is run by Richmond Homes and Lifestyle Trust. They organise supported weekend trips away for adults with learning disabilities living at home with parents or carers within the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. Please contact Richmond Homes and Lifestyle Trust at: Tel:020 8977 5447  Email: susie@rhlt.org.uk  Webpage: www.rhlt.org.uk/36901.html

The Scuba Trust: The Scuba Trust is one of the UK’s leading dive organisations that help individuals with disabilities (and their friends) learn to scuba dive. The Trust aims to provide a level playing field by arranging training and obtaining funding to subsidise applicants who due to disability, encounter difficulty in finding suitable instruction and who may face a greater outlay for training and recreational diving after certification. For general enquiries about the Scuba Trust (including Try-Dives), please contact them at: Tel: 07922 557155  General enquiries: scubatrust@hotmail.co.uk  Website: www.scubatrust.org.uk  Try-Dive enquiries: sttrydives@btinternet.com

Welmede Leisure activities and holidays: Welmede offer a variety of activities, day trips and holidays to people who have learning disabilities. Support is available for all trips and holidays at extra cost should this be required. For more information, please use the contacts given below: Bookings: Tel: 01932 571444 (ask to speak to Andrew)  Email: yourtime@welmede.org.uk  Webpage: www.welmede.org.uk/YourTime/default.aspx

JollyDays Supported Holidays: JollyDays provides supported holidays for adults with mild to moderate learning disabilities. Their team is carefully chosen to provide their clients with the best practical support, supporting and valuing the individual’s right of choice regarding their own ability to achieve their goals. For more information, contact: JollyDays Supported Holidays Ltd. PO Box 10948, High Street, Ingatestone, Essex. CM4 0XB Tel: 01277 355 565  Email: enquiries@jollydaysholidays.co.uk  Website: www.jollydaysholidays.co.uk

Options Holidays: Options Holidays is a not-for-profit organisation running escorted, traditional style holidays for adults who have mild learning disabilities. They run holidays throughout the year to destinations in the UK, the Mediterranean and far away places; all these holidays being different and aiming to meet their clients’ desires. For more information, contact: Options Holidays, Greyhound Farm House, Barnsley, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 5EF Tel: 01285 740491  Fax: 01285 740434  Email: office@optionsholidays.co.uk  Website: www.optionsholidays.co.uk

Bond Holidays: Bond Hotels and Bond Holiday Homes are based in Blackpool and Lytham St. Annes, offering a range of holidays for people who have disabilities and special needs, including autism. They strive to provide affordable, comfortable, quality holidays for people living with disability so that they can feel safe in the knowledge that their needs will be catered for. For more information: Bond Hotels. 120, Bond Street, Blackpool. FY4 1HG Tel: 01253 341218  Fax: 01253 349452  Email: sales@bondhotel.co.uk

Calvert Trust: The Calvert Trust enables people with disabilities, together with their families and friends, to achieve their potential through the challenge of outdoor adventure at three countryside locations. By focusing on challenging disability through outdoor adventure, a visit to the Calvert Trust isn’t just fun, but also helps develop personal skills that can be taken into everyday life. Each visit provides the opportunity to try something new in a safe and caring environment. By pushing these boundaries with the support of the instructors, visitors feel more comfortable about trying new things at home. For more information, please contact the location that interests you (office hours are 9.00 am to 5.00 pm, seven days a week): Calvert Trust Exmoor  Calvert Trust Kielder.  The Lake District Calvert Trust. Wistlandpound, Kielder Water & Forest Park, Haxey, Little Cresswhaite, Kentisbury Barnstaple, Devon. EX31 4SJ Northumberland. NE48 1BS Cumbria. CA12 4QD Tel: 01598 763221 Tel: 01434 250232 Tel: 017687 72255 Fax: 01598 763063 Fax: 01434 250015 Fax: 017687 71920 Website: www.calvert-trust.org.uk/home/home
**Go Provence supported holidays:** This project offers supported holidays to people who have learning disabilities and is based in Provence, South of France. It can support people in travelling from their nearest airport or train station down to the holiday venue in Provence, as well as on their way back home. Go Provence runs a full week of activities such as kayaking in the Gorges du Verdon, mini cruise in St Tropez, a trip exploring the spectacular Gorges du Verdon, swimming in the nearby lakes, a meal at a Provencal restaurant, wine tasting, land art, barbecues, visiting the L’Occitane perfume museum and Olive museum, and more. All the meals are cooked from scratch and all food is sourced locally. Care plans and risk assessments are devised from a detailed questionnaire to ensure that that everyone’s holiday is as comfortable as possible. For more information, please contact: Go Provence. Rue de Lavois, Esparron de Verdon, 04800 Provence, France. Tel: 00 33 (0) 4 86 56 65 61 Mobile: 00 33 (0)6 83 86 22 25 Website: [www.goprovence.co.uk](http://www.goprovence.co.uk) Email: ian@goprovence.co.uk

**Dramatize:** Dramatize runs fun theatrical workshops in Ashford Park that provides adults aged 16 - 40 years of all abilities with the opportunity to develop valuable core skills through a wide range of activities, whilst gaining in confidence and ability. Using a variety of methods, Dramatize workshops aim to bring out the potential in everyone by supporting and encouraging each individual to use their creativity to help shape the work, making the sessions their own. For more information, please contact: Dramatize (office). 76, Nursery Road, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex. TW16 6NE Tel: 07912 183 085 Email: info@dramatizeTC.com Website: [www.dramatize.co.uk](http://www.dramatize.co.uk)

**Snowbility:** Snowbility was established in October 2011 to make a difference through snow sports to those individuals with additional needs, such as autism and dyspraxia, plus all forms of rehabilitation challenges. Their coaches are fully qualified and experienced in both the indoor and alpine environments. They are trained to fulfil Snowbility’s ethos of ‘achieving potential through sport’ and are flexible in adapting their coaching methods to an individual’s abilities and goals. Within Snowbility, there is a discrimination free-zone, respecting the individuality of each person’s specific needs and their natural abilities. Snowbility works with its students, to not only develop their ability on the slopes, but to also help them with their self-esteem, social communication skills and confidence. By working closely with everyone involved, such as professional and family carers, Snowbility creates tailor-made, one-to-one programmes to ensure that each of its students feels special by creating a unique personal experience for them. In addition to one-to-one coaching, Snowbility has seen positive results where family and friends have joined the student for coaching sessions. For more information, please contact: Snowbility. The Snow Centre, St. Alban's Hill, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. HP3 9NH Tel: 07713 888199 Website: [www.snowbility.co.uk](http://www.snowbility.co.uk) Email: richard@snowbility.co.uk

**Meeting Place**
This is organised by Richmond Mencap and is an informal social club set up specifically for adults with learning disabilities living independently in this Borough. It also includes adults with learning disabilities who are still living with their families but are preparing to live independently, and offers a safe place to chat, socialise and meet with peers. For more information, contact Laura Turner at: Tel: 020 8744 1923 Email: laura@richmondmencap.org.uk

**Autism Drop-In Group (AutenRichmond)**
Richmond’s Autism Service works with Resources for Autism to run a social group for adults who are on the autism spectrum. It enables those who come along to make friends, take part in fun activities, learn new skills and also offers them support and advice.

The Drop-In Group meets every other Thursday between 6.00pm and 8.00pm at:
The Crossway Centre, 306, Richmond Road, East Twickenham. TW1 2PD For more information about the Drop-In Group, please contact: Tel: 020 8487 5391 Email: autism@richmond.gov.uk Website: [www.richmond.gov.uk/autism_dropin](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/autism_dropin) For more information about Resources for Autism, please visit: [www.resourcesforautism.org.uk](http://www.resourcesforautism.org.uk)
MONEY, BENEFITS, ALLOWANCES & CONCESSIONS

It is useful to know there are a number of benefits available for eligible children, young people and adults, as well as the family members who provide care for them.

Organisations offering advice

Your son or daughter could be eligible to receive financial support in the form of certain state benefits (which are described later in this section) and you may be entitled to claim Carer’s Allowance. You can ask for forms directly online, by telephone (details of web pages and phone numbers are given at the end of each benefit’s entry), or contact your local Citizens’ Advice Bureau (See Contact List). The forms are quite lengthy, but help is at hand from the following:

Your local Citizens’ Advice Bureau (see Contact List).

The Disability Action and Advice Centre (DAAC - managed by Richmond AID).
4 Waldegrave Road, Teddington, TW11 8HT
Tel: 020 8831 6070     Webpage: www.richmondaid.org.uk/contact-us/daac/

Richmond AID’s Benefit Service can help people living in the Borough of Richmond upon Thames who have a disability claim the benefits to which they may be entitled. Their advisors assist people by helping with form filling and benefits reviews, providing information, supplying details of how to challenge a decision as well as lending a sympathetic and listening ear.
Tel: 020 8831 6080/6070 or email: benefits@richmondaid.org.uk

Cerebra’s parental support section of the their website contains information and guidance to claiming DLA for children under 16 with brain related conditions, and other useful advice. Cerebra also runs a parent support line.
Helpline: 0800 328 1159   Website: www.cerebra.org.uk   Email: info@cerebra.org.uk
Finance webpage: www.cerebra.org.uk/English/getinformation/finance/Pages/default.aspx

The NAS website also has a very useful Benefits and Community Care section: www.autism.org.uk/benefits
Parents who have been there themselves are also an excellent resource, and are often willing and very well equipped to help.
Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

DLA is meant to help with the extra cost of caring for an eligible child, that is, a child under 16 years of age needing extra looking after and/or having walking difficulties, and having had these difficulties for at least three months.

This benefit comes in two parts: mobility and care components. These are paid at different rates, depending on the severity of the disability. The care component has three rating levels — the lowest rate is for children who need help for some of the day or night, the middle rate is for those children who need frequent or constant supervision during the day, supervision at night or someone to help them when they’re having dialysis, and the highest rate is for those who need help and supervision twenty-four hours a day, or who are terminally ill.

The mobility component has two rating levels — a low rate for children who can walk but need help and/or supervision outdoors, plus a high rate for those children who cannot walk or can only walk a short distance without severe discomfort (or could become very ill if they try to do so), or if they have a severe sight impairment, are blind or deaf.

When completing a DLA claim form, don’t feel guilty or ashamed; just describe the child you care for on his/her worst day, as that is what you are expected to do. Do not understate the problems that you and the child you care for are faced with, and particularly be very clear about night-time problems — incontinence, difficulty going to sleep, waking up all the time, tantrums, fits, lack of sleep, etc. This is because the higher benefit care rate for DLA is only paid for those with night time problems, so if your nights are disturbed regularly, spell it out very clearly. Documenting in detail your child’s daytime and night-time problems, and every issue you face getting them out and about can be a depressing task. It is strongly suggested that you photocopy or scan the forms before you send them, just in case you need to query their decision, and to help you fill in subsequent forms. You might be sent a letter asking you to take your child for an eligibility assessment. If this is so, you will be told when and why they must be assessed, plus the details of any documentation you will need to take with you.

DLA can either be claimed by post or online. To download a claim form or to claim online, please go to www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/how-to-claim

Alternatively, you can order a printed claim pack by calling the DLA Helpline:
Tel: 0845 712 3456 Textphone: 0845 722 4433 (Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 6.00pm)

Please visit www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/overview should you wish to find out more about Disabled Living Allowance.

The NAS also gives information about DLA, which can be found on this webpage: www.autism.org.uk/11808

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is replacing DLA for people aged between 16 and 64 years of age (there are no current plans to replace DLA for children aged under 16). It consists of daily living and mobility components, both of which are paid at two rates — standard and enhanced.

There is a three month qualifying period for new applicants and the needs arising from their health condition/disability must be expected to last for a further nine months as well for them to qualify for PIP. This qualifying period dates from the time the individual’s needs arose, not from the time the claim is made.
People already receiving DLA will not be automatically transferred to PIP, but will have to make a claim for the new benefit when invited to do so (those concerned will be sent a letter telling them when and how to make a claim for PIP).

They will have to complete the PIP claim forms and be assessed under the PIP criteria, which will probably involve a face-to-face assessment with an independent healthcare professional.

In order to qualify for PIP, individuals will have to score a certain number of points relating to twelve activities; these being preparing food, taking nutrition, managing therapies or monitoring a health condition, washing and bathing, managing toilet needs or incontinence, dressing and undressing, communicating verbally, reading and understanding signs, symbols and words, engaging with people face-to-face, making budgeting decisions, planning and following journeys (used in the mobility component test), plus moving around (again used in the mobility component test).

Each activity is allotted a number of descriptors that carry various points. See a detailed breakdown of how points are awarded at [www.benefitsandwork.co.uk/personal-independence-payment-pip/pip-points-system](http://www.benefitsandwork.co.uk/personal-independence-payment-pip/pip-points-system).

To be awarded the PIP daily living component, individuals will need to score at least 8 points for the standard rate and at least 12 points for the enhanced rate from the daily living activities list. This also applies to the PIP mobility component — at least 8 points for the standard rate and at least 12 points for the enhanced rate from the two mobility activities tests. Most awards of PIP will be for a fixed period, after which time it will be necessary to re-apply. This is to ensure that recipients are given the correct amount of benefit as their needs may increase or decrease over time.

To claim PIP if you are claiming for the first time, you will need to contact the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and ask to be sent a ‘How your condition affects you’ form. This form includes notes to help applicants fill it in, and once the claim has been processed, an assessment will be needed to complete the application.

The address to contact is: Personal Independence Payment New Claims.
  Post Handling Site B, Wolverhampton. WV99 1AH

New claimants can also contact the DWP by telephone. You will be asked for your contact details and date of birth, National Insurance number, bank or building society details, doctor’s name, plus details of any time you might have spent abroad, in a care home or a hospital. Someone can call on your behalf, but you will need to be with them to speak to the DWP staff if asked when the phone call is made.
Tel: 0800 917 2222    Textphone: 0800 917 7777  (Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 6.00pm)

For those people aged between 16 and 64 years who are at present are claiming DLA, you should be sent a letter explaining what will happen to your DLA and how to claim PIP. This will most likely start happening in 2015, but if there’s been a change in your condition or your DLA is due to end and you’ve not been sent a renewal letter, you will be asked to send in a claim for PIP.

If your child is receiving DLA, you should be sent a letter shortly before their 16th birthday detailing what will happen to their DLA and how they can apply for PIP.

For general information about these changes, please contact the PIP Helpline:
Tel: 0845 850 3322    Textphone: 0845 601 6677 (Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 6.00pm)

Details about claiming Personal Independence Payment can be found here: [www.gov.uk/pip/how-to-claim](http://www.gov.uk/pip/how-to-claim)

For an overview of Personal Independence Payment, please visit this web page: [www.gov.uk/pip](http://www.gov.uk/pip)
Carer's Allowance (CA)

This taxable benefit is paid to a carer who looks after a child or adult more than 35 hours a week and earns under a certain threshold. There are certain conditions that the person for whom you are caring must meet before you can claim CA: they must receive DLA at the middle or highest care rate if they are under 16 years old, and for those aged 16 to 64, they have to be in receipt of the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment. You will not be able to receive Carer's Allowance if you are claiming the State Pension or certain other benefits.

For more information about the eligibility criteria for CA claimants and the conditions the people for whom they care must meet, please visit: [www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/eligibility](http://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/eligibility)

You can claim CA online or by post. It is possible to download a claim form or to complete your application online through this webpage: [www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/how-to-claim](http://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/how-to-claim)

For further information, contact:
Carer's Allowance Unit. Palatine House, Lancaster Road, Preston, Lancashire PR1 1HB
Tel: 0845 608 4321   Textphone: 0845 604 5312   Email: cau.customer-services@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
(Monday to Thursday, 8.30am to 5.00pm; Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm)
Webpage: [www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/overview](http://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/overview)

Benefits and Allowances 16+

Being an Appointee

Once a young person reaches the age of 16, the various benefits will be given to them in their own right. This will mean they have the responsibility of filling in the forms and corresponding with the Benefits Agency. If your son or daughter is unable to do this at 16 because they are mentally incapable of handling their affairs, you can continue to take on the responsibility of acting on their behalf. This is what is meant by being an appointee.

Certainly if your son or daughter receives Disabled Living Allowance, you should be sent a form to complete from the Benefits Agency asking if they will be capable of handling their own financial affairs after the age of 16. If you state that they will not be capable of doing so, the Benefits Agency will contact you again to make an appointment to interview you (the appointee) and speak to your son or daughter (the claimant). The person conducting the interview will need to see various proofs of identity; the following being itemised by the Benefits Agency:

- Passport/Birth Certificate/Evidence for yourself and anyone else included in your claim.
- Evidence of any Bank/Building Society/Post Office account statement held by yourself or anyone else included in your claim.
- Evidence of ANY Income/Savings/Shares etc, held by yourself or anyone else included in your claim.
- Your Tenancy Agreement (with details of any ‘service charges’) if you are in privately rented or Housing Association property.

In practice, the inspector doesn’t necessarily need to see all of the documentation listed above, but will certainly ask to have details of the bank or building society dealing with your child’s money, plus your National Insurance number. Visit [www.gov.uk/become-appointee-for-someone-claiming-benefits](http://www.gov.uk/become-appointee-for-someone-claiming-benefits) for more information and also visit the following NAS webpage if you are thinking of becoming an appointee: [www.autism.org.uk/living-with-autism/benefits-and-community-care/benefits-for-young-people-with-autism.aspx](http://www.autism.org.uk/living-with-autism/benefits-and-community-care/benefits-for-young-people-with-autism.aspx)
**16 to 19 Bursary Fund**

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund is designed to help those students aged between 16 and 19 years old in full time education who are most financially disadvantaged (those who do not have parental support, plus students receiving certain state benefits in their own right).

It is made up of two parts; the first being a guaranteed payment of £1200 per year to those students who are considered to be most vulnerable (those in care, care leavers, those claiming Income Support/Universal Credit, plus young people with disabilities who receive both ESA and DLA/PIP).

The second is a discretionary fund for schools and colleges to distribute to those students who face genuine financial barriers to participation (eg: transport, food and equipment costs). Institutions will be able to determine the eligibility criteria plus the frequency and conditions of payments.


**Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)**

Employment and Support Allowance assists people with an illness or disability to make the transition from receiving benefits to working, and for new claimants, it has replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support. During the time people receive ESA, personalised support and financial help is offered and there should also be access to a specially trained personal adviser (through Jobcentre Plus), as well as access to a wide range of other services designed to help people move into suitable work. If someone’s illness or disability severely affects their ability to work, ESA can provide extra financial support.

Initial claims can be made by phoning Jobcentre Plus or through Richmond AID’s Benefit Service (See Contact List page). It will be necessary to get a doctor’s medical certificate to support the claim.

ESA is divided into two phases. The initial assessment phase is paid for the first 13 weeks of a person’s claim, during which time a decision will be made about their capacity to complete a Work Capability Assessment (which involves filling out a questionnaire and having a medical assessment). The second main phase starts from week 14 of a person’s claim if the Work Capability Assessment shows that their illness or disability does limit their ability to work.

This second main phase is divided into two groups; Work Related Activity Group and Support Group. People placed in the Work Related Activity Group are expected to take part in work focused interviews with their personal adviser, and they should get support to help them prepare for suitable work. In return, they receive a work related activity component on top their basic ESA rate.

People placed in the Support Group (because their illness or disability has a severe effect on their ability to work) are not expected to take part in any work, although they can do so on a voluntary basis if they wish. These people will receive a support component in addition to their basic ESA rate.

Remember, anyone applying for ESA can ask for an advocate to support him or her through the process. Jobcentre Plus guidance states that people applying for benefits have the right to an advocate; their staff should be aware of and comply with this guidance; offering people an independent advocate’s support if that is what they want and need. The NAS provides a Welfare Rights Service; details of which can be found at the end of the section about ESA. It is strongly suggested that you contact them for advice and guidance, should you have to apply for any benefit.

**The Employment Support (ESA) Assessment**

When called for an ESA Work Capability Assessment, it is strongly suggested that the person being interviewed has someone to support them at the meeting. Prior to the interview, a medical questionnaire will be sent to the person concerned; again the suggestion is that help is given to that person to complete it. It can be requested that the assessment is recorded, but in order to do so, it is necessary to ask for this in writing prior to the interview.
There are three possible outcomes to the assessment, and they are:

- The person is not entitled to ESA (they will be offered Jobseekers Allowance instead).
- The person can work with support (they will be placed in ESA’s Work Related Activity Group).
- The person is unable to work (they will be placed in ESA’s Support Group).

If you do not agree with the decision, it is strongly suggested that you do not accepted and to state that the decision will be sent to appeal (that way, the person trying to claim ESA will stay on their benefits, albeit at a basic rate). You have twenty eight days from the date of a decision to lodge an appeal. First of all, the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) re-examine the case (along with any additional evidence that may have been sent) to see if the decision should be changed. If the DWP decide that the original decision should stand, or you are unhappy with the new decision, you are entitled to have your appeal heard by a Tribunal.

Below is a general guide from Jobcentre Plus about ESA. The information is neither age nor autism-specific, but gives an overview of a lot of the questions asked about this Allowance. However, in some parts, the wording has been modified to make it more ASD appropriate. Jobcentre Plus information can be found on the Gov.UK website. Contact details and links to various services can be found on the following webpage: www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus

**Can I get Employment and Support Allowance?**
You may be able to get Employment and Support Allowance if you have an illness or disability that affects your ability to work, and:

- you are off work or out of work
- you are self-employed
- you work for an employer but can’t get Statutory Sick Pay, or
- you have been getting Statutory Sick Pay but it has now stopped.

Employment and Support Allowance may be:

- contribution-based if you have paid enough National Insurance contributions, or
- income-related if you don’t have enough money or savings, or you have not paid enough National Insurance contributions.

An adviser from Jobcentre Plus (see Contact List page) will be able to tell you about your National Insurance contributions. For the first 7 days off work because of an illness or disability, you may only have to tell Jobcentre Plus why it prevents you working. After that, you will have to get a certificate (sick note) from your doctor. You must then send it to the Department for Work and Pensions office.

**Can I get Employment and Support Allowance if I go abroad?**
In some circumstances you may be able to continue getting Employment and Support Allowance for up to 4 weeks during temporary absences abroad. This may apply:

- for some short trips
- if you have to go abroad to get medical treatment, or
- if you live with a member of the armed forces and accompany them overseas.

If you think this may apply to you, contact Jobcentre Plus.

**State Pension Age**
You can’t get Employment and Support Allowance if you have reached State Pension age (from April 2010, the age at which you can start to claim your State Pension has been revised). At the time of going to print, men aged 60 to 65 may be entitled to Pension Credit and receive contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance, but not income related Employment and Support Allowance. For more information and advice, visit Gov.UK’s webpage: www.gov.uk/browse/working/state-pension
Money, benefits, allowances and concessions

How is my allowance worked out?
Most people will get a basic rate of Employment and Support Allowance during the first 13 weeks of their claim. This is called the ‘assessment phase’. During this time, it is decided whether you will continue to qualify for the allowance. It may be possible to assess this based on your illness or disability, or you may need to complete a questionnaire or attend a medical assessment. If you refuse to have the medical assessment, or if you don’t take part fully, your entitlement to Employment and Support Allowance may be affected. You will also be assessed as to whether you will be able to take steps to find work or whether your illness or disability so severely affects your ability to work that to take these steps would not be reasonable. After 13 weeks, as long as you still qualify for Employment and Support Allowance, you will move to the ‘main phase’ and get a higher rate of allowance.

How much will I get?
You won’t get any money for the first 3 days of your claim. These are called ‘waiting days’. In some cases, waiting days may not apply, for example if you have already had waiting days as part of an earlier benefit claim or a period of Statutory Sick Pay. After this you will get a fixed rate for the first 13 weeks of your claim. A different rate may apply if you have a partner; this is called the ‘couples rate’. The amounts change in April each year. To find out more, visit Gov.UK’s Employment and Support Allowance webpage: www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance

What if I can’t get Employment and Support Allowance?
If you can’t get Employment and Support Allowance, you may still be able to get National Insurance credits for each full week you are off work. The credits are important as they count towards future benefit claims, including State Pension.

Does my age affect how much I get?
During the assessment phase, the single person’s rate of Employment and Support Allowance is higher if you are aged 25 or over. During the main phase, the single person’s rate is the same regardless of age.

What if I had previously claimed Incapacity Benefit?
If you stop getting Incapacity Benefit for a while, and then need to claim it again, there are some circumstances where you may get this benefit instead of Employment and Support Allowance. This depends on how long ago you last got Incapacity Benefit. Ask an adviser to explain this to you.

Will I have to pay tax on my Employment and Support Allowance?
Contribution based Employment and Support Allowance counts towards your taxable income. You can find out more about tax from your local tax office or from a Job Centre Plus adviser.

How is my Employment and Support Allowance paid?
Employment and Support Allowance is paid straight into your bank or building society account. This is the best way to receive your benefit because you can choose how and when to take your money out of your account.

What if I want someone to collect my Employment and Support Allowance for me?
You may be able to get someone to collect your benefit for you. For help with this, speak to the bank or building society where you have your account. If you need to appoint someone to deal with Jobcentre Plus for you, speak to a Jobcentre Plus adviser (or contact the NAS Welfare Rights Service).

Must I have an interview about work?
Most people must have an interview with a personal adviser to consider future work prospects. Also, if the medical assessment shows that you could start preparing for work while claiming Employment and Support Allowance, Jobcentre Plus will arrange a series of work-focused interviews to help you find work.

How am I assessed to see what work I can do?
When you apply for Employment and Support Allowance, you will enter a 13-week assessment phase and get a basic rate of benefit. During this phase, you will need to send in doctor’s certificates (sick notes). As part of this phase you may be asked to take part in a ‘work capability assessment’, which means filling in and returning a questionnaire and going to a medical assessment.
What happens in my medical assessment?
A health care professional, such as a doctor or registered nurse, will assess how well you can do things like walk, sit and stand up, use your hands, see and hear. If you have a mental-health condition, they will assess how it affects things like your mood, the way you behave, the way you relate to the world around you, and how you cope with things from day to day. They will complete a medical report. This will go to the office dealing with your claim. It will help decide how your illness or disability limits the amount and type of work you can do, and whether you qualify for Employment and Support Allowance. Jobcentre Plus will pay your bus fare, train fare or petrol costs for attending the medical centre and returning home. You must go to the assessment and take part fully, or your benefit will be affected. If you can’t attend the appointment stated in the letter sent to you, contact the medical centre immediately.

It is suggested that you contact the NAS Welfare Rights service and ask for assistance on how best to present your case, should you be asked to have a Work Capability Assessment.

What happens after my medical assessment?
If it is found that your illness or disability limits your ability to work beyond a certain level, you will move into the main phase of Employment and Support Allowance from week 14 of your claim. In this main phase, you will get a higher rate of Employment and Support Allowance and go into one of two groups:

- For most people, where it is thought you may be able to return to work, you will get a higher rate of the allowance. But you have to take part fully in any interviews you are invited to.
- If you have a condition that severely limits what you can do, you won’t be expected to take part in any work focused interviews to get the higher rate of the allowance.

However, you can still take part in them if you want. The medical assessment may find that you would have no difficulty working. If so, you won’t be paid Employment and Support Allowance or given National Insurance credits. If this happens, you may be able to get a different benefit. You can find out more by contacting your local Jobcentre Plus office or visiting the following Gov.UK webpage: www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/disability

Is a medical assessment always needed?
Some illnesses and disabilities are so severe that it can be decided whether you can get Employment and Support Allowance without you having a medical assessment. If this applies to you, you’ll be informed.

What if I don’t agree with the decision?
If you think the decision is wrong, please get in touch with Jobcentre Plus within one month of the date of the decision letter. If you make contact later, they may not be able to help you. You, or someone else who has the authority to act on your behalf, can:

- ask them to explain the decision.
- ask them to write to you with the reasons for the decision.
- ask them to look at the decision again (you may think that some facts have been overlooked, or you may have more information to provide which affects the decision)
- appeal against the decision to an independent tribunal (but this must be in writing)

You can do any of the actions listed above, or you can do all of them.

See Jobcentre Plus’s entry in the phone book for contact details or visit: www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus

What if I have a mental health condition?
If you have a mental health condition, you may be asked to fill in a questionnaire about how this affects you. Jobcentre Plus will want to know if you have other health problems as well. They may talk to your doctor, and you may have to see one of their healthcare professionals. A mental health condition could affect your mood, the way you behave, the way you relate to the world around you, or how you cope with things from day to day. These are the things they’ll look at when they decide if you can get Employment and Support Allowance. Ask an adviser for help with your claim if you have a mental health condition (and contact the NAS Welfare Rights Service).
What happens if my physical or mental condition gets better or worse?
You must tell Jobcentre Plus as soon as your condition improves and you:

• are able to do more, or
• start to feel a little better over a longer period of time.

You may start to feel better because you:

• use something to help you with your illness or disability
• start taking new medicine (if it’s being used to help the condition that prevents you working).

You must also tell Jobcentre Plus as soon as your disability or illness changes or if it gets worse.

Making work pay
One of the aims of Employment and Support Allowance is to help you be better off in work than on benefit. Your personal adviser will help you work out how much you need to earn from a job so that you don’t lose out. There are also some schemes to help you get back to work and be better off than on benefit. Ask an adviser to tell you about:

• Job grant
• Return to work credit
• Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit extended payments
• Training, and
• Working Tax Credit.

Can I get Employment and Support Allowance if I am aged 16 to 19?
You may be able to get contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance if you are 16 to 19. You must have been unable to work because of illness or disability for at least 28 weeks. It does not matter if you have not paid enough National Insurance contributions. These rules are called the ‘youth provisions’ of Employment and Support Allowance. In some cases, you may be able to get income-related Employment and Support Allowance, even if you have not been ill for 28 weeks.
Can I get Employment and Support Allowance if I am aged 20 to 24?
If you are aged 20 to 24, you may be able to get Employment and Support Allowance if you were in education or training during the last three months before your 20th birthday and are now not able to work because of illness or disability.

What happens if I go abroad?
If you get Employment and Support Allowance and you are planning to go abroad, you must tell Jobcentre Plus immediately to check if your allowance will be affected. If it is possible for you to get Employment and Support Allowance while you are abroad, you can arrange for someone else to get your payment for you while you are away. Alternatively, you can be paid on your return or, in some circumstances, have it paid abroad.

Will my other benefits affect my Employment and Support Allowance?
If you are getting Employment and Support Allowance, depending on whether this is contribution-based or income-related, you may still be able to get some benefits, for example:

- Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance
- Carer’s Allowance
- Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit or gratuity, or
- Payments from your employer (this could include wages, company sick pay or a benefit from your union).

You can’t get Employment and Support Allowance if you get one or more of the following:

- Jobseekers’ Allowance
- State Pension
- Money because you can’t get work
- Money for training
- Statutory Sick Pay
- Income Support, or
- Incapacity Benefit.

You should speak to an adviser if you were getting Incapacity Benefit within the last two years.

What happens when I reach State Pension age?
You can’t get Employment and Support Allowance after you reach State Pension Age. This is the earliest age at which you can claim your State Pension (the age at which you can start to claim your State Pension is being revised). To find more information about pension reform and the age at which you can begin to claim your State Pension, visit the following webpage:
www.direct.gov.uk/en/Pensionsandretirementplanning/StatePension/index.htm

Do other pensions affect my Employment and Support Allowance?
Money from other pensions or health insurance schemes could affect the amount of Employment and Support Allowance you may get. This will depend on how much money your pension or scheme gives you. Ask a Jobcentre Plus adviser if you think this may apply (see Contact List page).

Can I get National Insurance credits while I am sick?
For each full week (Sunday to Saturday) of your Employment and Support Allowance, you may be able to get National Insurance credits. These credits can help you get other money in future, such as State Pension.

Help with health costs
You may be able to get help with some health costs including NHS prescriptions, NHS dental treatment and some travel costs if you are on a low income or are getting:

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance
- Income Support or Pension Credit
Money, benefits, allowances and concessions

To find out more about help with health costs from the NHS, visit the following websites:
Help With Health Costs (England) — [www.nhs.uk/healthcosts](http://www.nhs.uk/healthcosts)
Alternatively, phone the NHS Customer Contact Team on 0845 850 1166

**How do I apply for ESA?**
You can apply for ESA by telephone at the numbers below (Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 6.00pm):
Tel: 0800 055 6688   Textphone: 0800 023 4888
You can also complete an interactive claim form on your computer. Should you wish to do this, please visit this webpage: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/employment-and-support-allowance-claim-form](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employment-and-support-allowance-claim-form)

**How do I find out more?**
To find out more about ESA, visit [www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/overview](http://www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/overview) or you can find the address and numbers of your local Jobcentre Plus office in your local phonebook.

**What if I have claimed compensation?**
If you win compensation for your disability and also get Employment and Support Allowance, the allowance may be taken off your compensation. To find out more about claiming compensation, you can contact the Compensation Recovery Unit. Website: [www.dwp.gov.uk/cru](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/cru)

**Universal Credit (UC)**
Universal Credit is a means-tested benefit for people of working age, regardless of their employment status. The thinking behind the introduction of Universal Credit is simplification of the benefits system and making it easier for people to move to and from employment without having to change to different benefits as their circumstances change.

Universal Credit replaces Income Support, income based Job Seeker’s Allowance, income related Employment Support Allowance, Housing Benefit, Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit.

Benefits that aren’t affected by Universal Credit are Attendance Allowance, Carer’s Allowance, Child Benefit, Personal Independence Payments, Industrial Injuries Benefit, local Council Tax support schemes, local Welfare provision, Pension Credit, State Retirement Pension, contributory Jobseeker's Allowance, contributory Employment Support Allowance, Bereavement Benefits and Maternity Allowance. Also included in this category are the following statutory benefits: Sick Pay, Maternity Pay, Paternity Pay and Adoption Pay.

Universal Credit has been designed to encourage people towards having a job. Anyone who claims Universal Credit will be placed into one of four groups to which certain conditions are attached. These are described below:

**1. No work-related requirements**
If you are earning above your earnings threshold, you will be placed in this group. Your earnings threshold is based on what you would earn if you worked for 35 hours a week at the national minimum wage. If you have caring responsibilities your threshold may be lower than this. Other people placed in this group will be those that have limited capacity for work related activities, are caring for a severely disabled person at least 35 hours a week (or receive the carer’s element), have responsibility for a child less than one year of age, are more than 25 weeks pregnant, have adopted a child and it is less than one year old, or are a young person who has no parental support and is in full-time non-advanced education.

**2. Work-focused interview requirement only**
If you are in this group, you will be required to attend work-focused interviews to keep in contact with the jobs market. These are regular interviews to discuss plans and opportunities for returning to work in the future. You will not be required to apply for, take up a job or engage in work preparation activity. You will be placed in this group if you are responsible for a child aged between one and five years of age, or if you are a foster carer for a child under 16 (or under 18 if that young person has extra care needs).
3. Work preparation requirement
People placed in this group will be expected to prepare to start working, take on additional work, or better paid work. These preparations could include attending training courses, preparing a CV or taking part in the Work Programme. You will not be required to take steps to apply for or take up work as a condition of your claim, and people assessed as having limited capability for work (LCW) at the present time will also be placed in this group.

4. All work-related requirements
If you are in this group, you will be required to look for and be available for work. It is expected that you will usually be looking for full-time work of 35 hours a week but this can be less in certain circumstances, for example if you have caring responsibilities or have physical or mental health problems.

Should you be claiming Universal Credit, you might face further conditions that you are required to fulfil, even though you are already in work. This will be the case if your income is below your earnings threshold, which is based on what you would earn if you worked for 35 hours a week at the national minimum wage (people having caring responsibilities may have a lower threshold than this). These requirements may include increasing the number of hours you work, finding an additional job or finding a job with a higher income.

Universal Credit is claimed online, and after the claim has been submitted, you’ll be asked to attend an interview (you will be told when and where you have to go).

Please go to https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit where you can make your claim and where you will also be told what information is needed before you start.

Should you need help making an online claim, please contact the following helplines for assistance:
Tel: 0845 600 0723   Textphone: 0845 600 0743

Please visit https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/overview for more information about Universal Credit.

NAS Welfare Rights Service

The NAS provides a Welfare Rights Service, which offers advice and support covering all aspects of social security entitlement (including advice about the benefits to which you may be entitled, form filling general advice, and what to do if you think the wrong decision has been made; including appealing at a tribunal).

If you are interested in using this service, you can phone the NAS Helpline, which is open Monday to Friday, 10.00am to 4.00pm. The person who answers the phone will take some details of your enquiry, and arrange a telephone appointment with an NAS Welfare Rights Adviser, who will call you back and talk with you about your concerns in greater depth.

Alternatively, you can email your enquiry. If you choose to send an email, please enclose the name of the benefit and as much detail as possible about the nature of your enquiry.

The NAS also provides online general information about benefits (details below):
NAS Autism Helpline. Tel: 0808 800 4104
Welfare Rights Service email: welfarerights@nas.org
General benefits information: www.autism.org.uk/benefits
Other Benefits Advice Services

If you think you may be eligible for any of these benefits, talk to your health visitor, Richmond AID at the Disability Action and Advice Centre (DAAC) or the Citizens’ Advice Bureau. You can also look at the Gov.UK website: www.gov.uk/benefits-adviser or phone the NAS Autism Helpline on 0808 800 4104.

Welfare Rights
This website, which is based in Scotland, provides useful information (mostly relevant to the UK) about benefit entitlements and services: www.welfarerights.net

The Free Representation Unit
The Free Representation Unit can provide legal advice, case preparation, and advocacy in tribunal cases for those who could not otherwise obtain legal support, for want of personal means or public funding. It has been known to help people contesting decisions made by the benefits agencies. For more information, please see their website: http://www.thefru.net/

Please note that although the information about Benefits and Allowances was correct at the time this Information Pack was produced, legislation and entitlements can change. For the most up-to-date information, please contact the NAS Autism Helpline (details above), where you can be referred to a Welfare Rights Advisor.

Disabled Facilities Grant

Disabled Facilities Grants are available for work that is needed to support a disabled person to live more independently in their own home. The grant can be awarded to pay for essential adaptations to enable better freedom of movement in and around the house, and is also available for essential household facilities.

This could include work to make it easier to get in and out of your home, creating easier access to the living room, bedroom, kitchen or bathroom, providing suitable bathroom and kitchen facilities, improving or providing a heating system in your house, adapting heating and/or lighting controls to make them easier to use, as well as improving access and movement around your home so that you can care for someone who lives with you.

The people who can apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant are:

• A disabled person if they are an owner-occupier or tenant (including housing association tenants).

• Anyone who is an owner-occupier or tenant, and who has a disabled person living in their home, can apply on behalf of the disabled person.

• A parent or guardian of a child with a disability (under 18) can apply.

• A landlord may apply on behalf of a disabled tenant.

• In all cases, the disabled person should be registered, or eligible to be registered as disabled with Social Services through a care manager.

What are the first steps in applying for a Grant?
1. You should contact a Social Services care manager or social worker (for young people under 18), who will arrange for an occupational therapist (OT) to assess what work is necessary and appropriate to meet your needs.
2. If the Occupational Therapist thinks that you are eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant to help you pay for the adaptations to your home, they will refer your case to the Home Improvement Agency. The Home Improvement Agency caseworker will contact you to arrange a home visit and help you complete a financial resources test, which will decide if you are eligible for a grant.
3. If you are eligible, you will be told in writing. You then decide if you want the Home Improvement Agency to carry out the adaptations to your home, or whether you want to appoint your own architect or surveyor. You can also be provided with lists of contractors and architects who can help you if you do not want to use the Home Improvement Agency, along with a Grants Officer if that is what you want.

**How much grant will I receive?**
The aim of the grant is to help people who cannot afford to pay for work to adapt their homes. So in all cases, the amount of grant is decided by a test of your financial resources. This test is in line with government rules, and is carried out by you and your caseworker, using information about your income, savings, etc.

Using this information you can assess whether you qualify for a grant, or if you can get a full grant or a partial grant where you would need to make a contribution. Where applicants who own their own homes are unable to afford their contributions, they may be referred to the Home Improvement Trust for consideration under the Houseproud Equity Release scheme. The Home Improvement Agency caseworker will also be able to give advice on seeking other funding sources (for example charities).

It should be noted that if you are a tenant, your landlord must give permission for the work to be done.

For further information, the care managers can be contacted on 020 8891 7971
Further advice is available on the Borough’s website: [www.richmond.gov.uk/disabled_facilities_grants](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/disabled_facilities_grants)
Or email: [adultsocialservices@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:adultsocialservices@richmond.gov.uk)

**Additional Concessions, etc.**

**Disability Register Identity Card (for children)**
Children whose details are held by the Disabled Children’s Team on their Register can be issued with an identity card. This card has been introduced to help parents and carers prove that the child is registered with their local authority as disabled. When a parent registers their child, they will be asked for a passport-type photo to be used in the card. The card can then be used to gain concessions on entrance fees to places where disability concessions apply. For further information, contact the Register Co-ordinator at: 020 8831 6048

**Disabled Parking Badges (Blue Badges)**
These are a godsend to many parents of children with an ASD, especially those with behavioural problems. These parking badges allow one to park closer to shops, schools and surgeries, etc. Due to abuse of the system, these ‘blue badges’ are much harder to get.

Children under three, who due to a specific medical condition need to travel with bulky medical equipment or be close to a vehicle, should be eligible to receive a ‘blue badge’. However, these badges expire on the day after the child’s third birthday and you will have to apply again for another one.

For children who are five years and above, they will need to be receiving DLA mobility allowance at the highest rate, plus you will probably also need a letter of support from a professional such as your GP or healthcare worker to obtain a badge. Please note that the ‘blue badge’ scheme does not fully apply in the City of Westminster, City of London, Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and part of the Borough of Camden. It also does not apply to off-street car parks, private roads and at most airports.

For more information and to download an application form, visit the following Richmond Borough webpage: [www.richmond.gov.uk/applying_for_a_blue_badge.htm](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/applying_for_a_blue_badge.htm)

Free Road Tax
It is possible to get a free road tax disc if the person applying receives DLA higher rate mobility or the enhanced mobility element of PIP. If that person is not a driver or does not own a vehicle, it is possible to name someone else to drive on their behalf (a nominee). The vehicle must be registered in their name or in the name of their nominee. For further information please visit the following webpage:

National Key Scheme public toilet keys
If the child or adult for whom you care is registered with Social Services you should be entitled to a free National Key Scheme (NKS) public toilet key from the Disability Action and Advice Centre. These are sometimes also called RADAR keys and enable the user to access disabled toilets throughout the country. It is also possible to buy an NKS key plus a guide to the location of accessible toilets for people with disabilities from Disability Rights UK. For more information, contact:

The Disability Action and Advice Centre (DAAC), 4 Waldegrave Road, Teddington. TW11 8HT
Tel: 020 8831 6080. For further information contact Richmond Aid (RAID) Tel: 020 8831 6070.
RAID will also provide general information on disabilities including benefits and is part of DAAC.
For further details about RAID, see Support, Health and Work or Contact List sections.

Disability Rights UK. Ground Floor. CAN Mezzanine, 49-51, East Road, London. N1 6AH
General Enquiries: Tel: 020 7250 8181 Email: enquiries@disabilityrightsuk.org
Website: http://disabilityrightsuk.org
Disability Rights UK shop (NKS key page): https://crm.disabilityrightsuk.org/feature-disability Key

Concessionary Fares (Freedom Pass)
Disabled Persons Freedom Passes are available to anyone over the age of 5 who is a permanent resident in the borough and meets the eligibility criteria. The Freedom Pass entitles the holder to free travel on all London transport buses, London Underground, Docklands Light Railway, Croydon Tramlink and train services in the London area (not the Heathrow Express), plus concessionary fares on some of the Thames riverboats. Freedom Passes are also accepted by English local bus companies outside London (9.30am to 11.00pm Monday to Friday, all day weekends and public holidays).

Application forms are available from the Accessible Transport Unit (ATU).
Tel: 020 8831 6312/6191/6097 Fax: 020 8831 6099 Email: accessibletransport@richmond.gov.uk
ATU is part of the Disability Action and Advice Centre (for address, see above).
For further information and to download application forms, visit the Council website:
www.richmond.gov.uk/disabled_persons_freedom_pass_scheme.htm

Disabled Person's Railcard
A Disabled Person's Railcard is valid for one or three years and entitles the holder to discounts of up to one third off the price of a range of tickets; the same discount also covers tickets purchased by the accompanying adult. Children aged 5 to 16 may also be eligible to hold a Disabled Person’s Railcard; in such cases, they should be charged a child’s fare; the accompanying parent/carer travelling at the discounted rate mentioned above.

To qualify for a Disabled Person's Railcard, the person concerned has to receive DLA/PIP at the higher rate for getting around OR receive DLA/PIP at the higher or middle rate for personal care.

Contact details: Disabled Persons Railcard Office. PO Box 11631, Laurencekirk, AB30 9AA
Tel: 0345 605 0525 (Monday – Sunday, 7.00am to 10.00pm) Minicom/textphone: 0345 601 0132
Website: www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk Email: disability@atoc.org
Richmond Card
The Richmond Card is an ‘all in one’ card that gives resident parking discounts, in-borough library membership, plus exclusive offers and discounts from local independent businesses. It is also possible to buy membership to sports and fitness centres within Richmond Borough. Anyone who is 17 years of age and above can apply, and the application form will advise you which services and discounts you are eligible for. The easiest way to apply for a Richmond Card is online (alternatively, you can apply at your local sports and fitness centre or library). For more information, please visit: [www.richmond.gov.uk/richmondcard](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/richmondcard)

The Kiloran Trust
Provides respite breaks in a large house situated in west London for full time carers, and can sometimes offer short breaks to “carer families” whilst the person for whom they care is in respite.
For more information, please contact:
The Kiloran Trust, 157, Blythe Road, London, W14 0HL
Tel: 020 7602 7404    Fax: 020 7602 3303    Website: [www.kilorantrust.org.uk](http://www.kilorantrust.org.uk)

Autism Friendly Cinema Screenings
Dimensions offer autism friendly screenings at over 250 cinemas in partnership with Cineworld, Odeon, Vue and Showcase cinemas. Each month, each participating cinema shows a different film from a selection of new releases and classics including Pixar animations, Disney adventures and many more films suitable for all age ranges. Picturehouse Cinema (in partnership with the NAS) also hold autism friendly screenings at their sites around the UK. These special showings are designed not just for people with an ASD, but also for their families, friends and carers. During the film, low lights are left on inside the auditorium and the soundtrack’s volume is reduced. If they wish, the cinemagoers are free to move around, make a noise or take a break…not activities usually encouraged at regular screenings. For more information about these screenings, please visit:


Free Cinema Tickets for Carers
The Cinema Exhibitor’s Association (CEA) has launched a card scheme that entitles a disabled person’s companion to a free cinema ticket. The card costs £5.50, is valid for one year and is accepted by almost every UK cinema. To apply for the card, a person must meet at least one of the following criteria - be in receipt of DLA/PIP or Attendance Allowance, or be a registered blind person. Please contact the CEA at:
Tel: 0845 123 1292    Minicom/text phone 0845 123 1297
Email info@ceacard.co.uk    Website: [www.ceacard.co.uk](http://www.ceacard.co.uk)

Application forms can be downloaded from CEA’s website and sent to:
The Card Network, PO Box 199, Deeside CH5 9BW

Application forms are also available from all participating cinemas. A list of participating cinemas and further information can be found at the website (details above). If you have any difficulty, contact the CEA at:
CEA Card, PO Box 212, Waterlooville, PO7 6ZN
Tel: 0845 123 1292    Contact form webpage: [www.ceacard.co.uk/ContactForm.aspx](http://www.ceacard.co.uk/ContactForm.aspx)

Normansfield and Richmond Foundation
This charity was originally established to provide a wide range of additional support for residents when Normansfield was a hospital for people with learning disabilities. The main functions of this charity are now to manage a trust fund and to provide grants. Applications for grants may be from people with learning disabilities or their carers who are Richmond Borough residents (or who have strong Borough contacts), and local voluntary organisations supporting people with learning disabilities. Contact: Deborah Carr-Hill (Administrator)    Email: deborah.carrhill@btinternet.com
Website: [http://e-voice.org.uk/friendsofnormansfield/](http://e-voice.org.uk/friendsofnormansfield/)
SELF-HELP: WHAT PARENTS AND CARERS CAN DO

There are so many different approaches and opinions that this may be overwhelming. Don’t feel you have to try everything at the same time. If this is an avenue you wish to explore, we suggest you decide which area you wish to tackle (be it behaviour, education, speech and language or toilet training etc) and concentrate on the therapy you think will suit the person you care for best, or you feel able to follow. Make a plan of action and monitor any changes you see, keeping a diary, etc. Do contact other parents who may have tried similar approaches.

There are many resources available which you may find useful. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has published a guideline for the management and support of children and young people with autism. This includes recommendations about best practice interventions, plus those that should not be used at all. Please visit http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG/Wave25/4/Consultation/Latest to find out more.

Research Autism’s website: www.researchautism.net/pages/welcome/home is a good starting point for anyone wishing to consider many of the varied interventions. Others can be found in Suggested Reading.

Diet and Supplements

Some parents have found that special diets (eg: a gluten and/or casein free diet) and dietary additives, (eg: fish oils, evening primrose oil, Acidophilus) may prove to be beneficial in dealing with their sons and daughters’ digestive and behavioural problems. It is advisable to talk to your GP/dietician before beginning any dietary intervention. Other sources of information include parents in a similar situation, checking out websites or reading books on the subject. (See Suggested Reading and Useful Websites).

The Autism Food Club
The Autism Food Club is an innovative website that helps turn global scientific research into affordable, simple and healthy family meals. It aims to provide people with an autism spectrum condition, teachers professionals, parents and caregivers of people with autism embarking on a gluten and casein free (GFCF) dietary intervention a complete and readable overview of the science behind the GFCF diet and how that science can practically be translated into tasty recipes suitable for all the family.
The Autism Food Club, The Business & Innovation Centre, Enterprise Park East, Wearfield, Sunderland. SR5 2TA
Website: www.theautismfoodclub.co.uk Email: info@theautismfoodclub.com

Research Autism
Research Autism has a section entitled Diets, Supplements and Autism that offers a guide to some of the many dietary approaches plus the use of supplements. The relevant webpage can be found at: www.researchautism.net/autism-interventions/types/diets-and-supplements/special-diets
ESPA Research (Autism Research Unit)
The unit's aim is to improve the quality of life for people with ASD through high quality publishable research and the provision of analytical services.
ESPA Research. The Robert Luff Laboratory. Unit 133i, North East Business and Innovation Centre (BIC), Sunderland Enterprise Park, Wearfield, Sunderland SR5 2TA
Tel: 0191 549 9300  Website: www.espa-research.org.uk  Email: info@espa-research.org.uk

Complementary Therapies

Osteopathy (including cranial osteopathy)
There are specially accredited osteopaths who advocate gentle manipulation of the head that may relieve certain problems, including stress and digestion difficulties. Contact:
The General Osteopathic Council, 176, Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 3LU
Tel: 020 7357 6655  Web address: www.osteopathy.org.uk  Email: contactus@osteopathy.org.uk

Me Too & Co (see Contact list) holds an osteopathy clinic on Tuesday afternoons, where children can be treated for a donation. If you are interested, phone 07946 646033 or email info@metooandco.org.uk

The osteopaths who hold the Me Too & Co osteopathy clinic accept both children and adults and are based at the Maris Practice. 13, Baylis Mews, Amyand Park Road, Twickenham. TW1 3HQ
Tel: 020 8891 3400  Website: www.themarispractice.com  Email: mail@themarispractice.com

Another local osteopath offering treatments is Nargis Ahmad. She practices in Teddington from Tuesdays to Saturdays at the Ivy Clinic. 190, Kingston Road, Teddington. TW11 9JD.
Bookings (Ivy Tree Clinic): 020 8977 8700
Website: www.NargisAhmad.co.uk

Herbal Medicine
Herbal medicine is a traditional holistic form of medicine, which may offer benefits for people with an ASD, for example in the areas of stress, sleep problems, and bowel disorders. It is possible to find local medical herbalists through:
The National Institute of Medical Herbalists. Clover House. James Court, South Street, Exeter. EX1 1EE
Tel: 01392 426022  Web address: www.nimh.org.uk  Email: info@nimh.org.uk

Homeopathy
Some parents have suggested that conditions such as dietary and sleep problems for example, might be helped by homeopathy. Ask your GP or other healthcare professional for a name or go on a personal recommendation. Alternatively, it is possible to search for a local homeopath through:
The Alliance of Registered Homeopaths Millbrook, Millbrook Hill, Nutley, East Sussex. TN22 3PJ
Tel: 01825 714506  Website: www.a-r-h.org  Email: info@a-r-h.org

The Reve Pavilion in Guildford offers a unique integrated natural health system, including Sunflower Therapy that encompasses many natural remedies and which may benefit children with learning and behavioural difficulties. For further details, please contact:
The Reve Pavilion. 2a, Guildford Park Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 7ER
Tel: 01483 579500
Website: http://reve-pavilion.co.uk  Email: info@reve-pavilion.co.uk
Other Resources - music therapy, play sessions, Intensive Interaction

Otakar Kraus Music Trust
The Otakar Kraus Music Trust offers music therapy to children with special needs, regardless of ability. These fun sessions encourage children to experience different ways to explore their imagination in a musical context and to develop their communication and listening skills. For information, please contact: The Otakar Kraus Music Trust, 3 Twining Avenue, Twickenham. TW2 5LL
Tel: 020 8894 2007 Fax: 020 8898 5084 Email: okmtrust@aol.com
Website: www.okmtrust.co.uk

Music Club
Music Club has been uniquely developed by one of Otakar Kraus Music Trust’s music therapists. These fun workshops, aimed at children between the ages of 2 and 12 regardless of their abilities, involve the creative exploration of sound and movement. Using torches, lights, silhouettes, percussion instruments and the piano, children are given the opportunity to explore their imagination in a musical context; the sessions being accompanied by music and multisensory equipment. Apart from developing positive expectations from music, the aim of the Music Club sessions is to encourage a child’s ability to listen and develop their communication skills, as well as an increase in self-awareness, motivation and confidence.
For more information, phone 020 8894 2007 or email okmtrust@aol.com

Club OK
The Club OK project for teenagers and young adults with special needs is also run by the Otakar Kraus Music Trust. It aims to help members to interact with each other, gain self-confidence, focus and to explore their own creativity. By combining different creative elements, the members come together to draw, play music and have fun, which in turn gives them the encouragement and confidence to explore teamwork and social interaction.
For additional information, phone 020 8894 2007 or email okmtrust@aol.com

Richmond Music Trust
Richmond Music Trust offers music therapy to both children and adults who have an ASD, and aims to provide a high quality, accessible service to the local community. Music therapists use the unique qualities of music as a means of establishing a relationship with their clients in order to support positive change, and enable people to reach their full potential.
For more information, contact: Richmond Music Trust. 7, Briar Road, Twickenham TW2 6RB
Tel: 020 8538 3866 Website: www.richmondmusictrust.org.uk Email: admin@richmondmusictrust.org.uk

Me Too & Co Play Sessions
Me Too & Co provides play sessions for children with additional needs and their siblings. These fun and vibrant sessions are facilitated by trained volunteers, all of whom have direct personal or professional experience of children who have additional needs. The children can make friends and have fun playing with a variety of toys, plus enjoying art activities, story telling and music activities. The play sessions run during term time on Tuesdays and Fridays, and are based at the Crossway Centre, 306, Richmond Road, Twickenham. For more information, contact Me Too & Co at 07946 646033 or visit their webpage: www.metooandco.org.uk/activities/playsessions

Intensive Interaction
Intensive interaction is an approach to teaching the pre-speech fundamentals of communication to those who have severe learning disabilities and/or autism and who are still at an early stage of communication development. The techniques used are based on the ways that babies learn how to communicate through their interactions with adults.

Fernando Teixido-Infante is an Intensive Interaction Co-ordinator who works in the Richmond area. For more information, please phone 07837 739436 or email him at fousofi@hotmail.com
For more information about Intensive Interaction, please visit: www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk
**Immunisation**

Following the controversy surrounding childhood immunisation, the sources below may help you to make an informed choice about vaccinations.

**NHS Choices (MMR):** [www.nhs.uk/conditions/mmr/Pages/Introduction.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/mmr/Pages/Introduction.aspx)

**Netdoctor:** [www.netdoctor.co.uk/health_advice/facts/childhoodvaccinations.htm](http://www.netdoctor.co.uk/health_advice/facts/childhoodvaccinations.htm)

**JABS (Justice Awareness and Basic Support)** This group aims to promote understanding about immunisations and offers basic support to any parent whose child has health problems after vaccinations. Tel: 01942 713565  Website: [www.jabs.org.uk](http://www.jabs.org.uk)

**The Informed Parent** This organisation aims to help parents make an informed choice about vaccination. Tel: 01903 212969  Website: [www.informedparent.co.uk](http://www.informedparent.co.uk)
PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE – WILLS AND TRUSTS

A common concern of parents is ‘What will happen to my child/the person for whom I care when I’m no longer around? How can I ensure that they are properly and securely provided for?’ A way of ensuring that your wishes are fulfilled and the right financial support and protection are put into place when you have died is to make a will and set up a trust.

Why you should write a Will
Writing a will is important, especially if there is a family member who is vulnerable, with a reduced capacity to manage their finances and probably also in receipt of state benefits and social care. If you don’t make a will, your estate will be distributed according to the laws of intestacy. This law governs how your money and possessions will be passed to your next of kin if you don’t make a will, without consideration of your wishes. Should a vulnerable person without the capacity to handle their own affairs inherit under the intestacy rules, it would be necessary to apply to the Court of Protection for a Receiver to manage their inheritance. Apart from this, if such a person was to inherit a sum of money, this could adversely affect their entitlement to means tested benefits and social care (as well as potentially making them a target for financial abuse).

What is a Trust?
A trust is a legal arrangement that allows a number of people called trustees (at least two, but no more than four) to look after the assets (money, possessions and property, for example) for the benefit of a specific person. The advantage of setting up a trust fund is that it can safeguard that person’s assets and avoid loss of means tested benefits and possibly having to entirely pay for their social care as well. There are a number of different types of trust (life interest trusts, discretionary trusts and private charitable trusts), and it is very important to seek professional advice so that the trust you select is best suited to your circumstances and situation.

Where can I find a solicitor?
It is extremely important to seek legal advice from a solicitor who has expertise in preparing wills and trusts. The NAS webpage ‘Your Free Guide to Wills and Trusts’ contains a link from where you can download a list of specialist solicitors who have expertise in this area (see below).

From the same webpage, you can download the NAS Guide to Wills and Trusts, which is for parents, carers and families of people on the autism spectrum who want to make provision in their will for their dependents. Within it is information about the various options available and some of the things to take into consideration when planning for the future.

You can also order the Guide to Wills and Trusts by contacting the NAS at:
NAS Supported Care: 0808 800 1050 Email: georgina@nas.org.uk
Please provide your full name, address and postcode when placing an order.
It isn't always easy to find resources that might be able to support, inform and guide you, especially when you are fully occupied with the day to day challenges of supporting and caring for someone who has an ASD. We hope that the following may be helpful...

Richmond Carers Centre
5, Briar Road, Twickenham, Middx. TW2 6RB.
Carers Support Line: Tel: 020 8867 2380 (Mon to Fri, 9.30am — 4.00pm with 24 hour answerphone)
1 to 1 support service available by appointment.
Email: info@richmondcarers.org.uk Website: www.richmondcarers.org
Our local branch of the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, Richmond Carers Centre offers information and support through a helpline and workshops, runs a Young Carers Project that organises trips out for siblings, produces a newsletter, offers complementary therapies and help carers to apply for grants, etc.

The National Autistic Society (NAS)
393 City Road, London EC1V ING.
Tel: 020 7833 2299 Fax: 020 7833 9666
NAS Website: www.autism.org.uk Email: nas@nas.org.uk
NAS Autism Helpline: 0808 800 4104 (Monday – Friday, 10.00am to 4.00pm, excluding Bank Holidays)
NAS Education Rights Service. Tel: 0808 800 4102 Email: educationrights@nas.org.uk
NAS Parent to Parent (P2P) Service. Tel: 0808 800 4106
NAS online Community: http://community.autism.org.uk
The NAS provides a wealth of information including fact sheets, publications, lists of local branches etc, and can offer help with a wide range of issues. The NAS has local branches throughout the country. These can be invaluable in offering support, information (especially local information), and friendship.

The Richmond Branch of the NAS
A friendly parent-led group aiming to support families in the borough living with autism and/or Asperger syndrome. Our activities include liaising with other local organisations to share expertise and improve services, sign posting activities and events of related interest in the area, as well as providing family and individual support through our coffee mornings and family events. We also have our own website that gives details of our Branch’s news, NAS HQ and other local groups’ news plus our Information Pack (which is regularly updated and can be downloaded). Our coffee mornings are held at:
The Crossway Centre. St Stephens Church, 306, Richmond Road, East Twickenham, Middlesex. TW1 2PD
Branch Officer: Laura Lennuyeux-Comnene Tel: 07810 505982
Website: www.richmondnas.org Email: richmond@nas.org.uk
Me Too & Co
Me Too & Co is a parent-led charity which helps children and young people with additional needs, and their families, in the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames and surrounding areas. They offer opportunities for children to play and develop in a friendly and welcoming environment and provide information and emotional support for their families and carers.

For children they provide:

- Two structured play sessions per week for children with additional needs and their siblings, facilitated by trained volunteers; the children play with specially adapted toys, enjoy art activities, sensory play and singing sessions with Makaton signing and percussion instruments.
- A music club with multi-sensory equipment.
- Communication groups for 1 to 3 year olds with a qualified therapist.
- An osteopathy clinic for babies and children run by specialised paediatric osteopaths
- Sibling workshops with qualified counsellors.
- Bubbles, support for children with multi-sensory impairments.

For parents/carers, they provide:

- Talks and workshops on health, early intervention programmes and maths approaches.
- Advice on dietary needs, continence, sleep, etc., by specialist Health Visitors.
- Benefits Advice Surgery and help to complete the Disability Living Allowance form.
- Special Educational Needs Advocacy Service: to help parents obtain the best possible support for their children at school.
- Individual and group counselling and complementary therapies
- 6 week courses for parents/carers to help them deal with the behavioural issues of their children with ‘Families Helping Families’

Me Too & Co. The Crossway Centre. 306, Richmond Road, East Twickenham. TW1 2PD
Telephone: 07946 646033  Website: www.metooandco.org.uk  Email: info@metooandco.org.uk
Me Too & Co helped to establish the Richmond Parent Carers Action Group, which ensures parent parent participation in the development of services within Richmond (see below).

Richmond Parents Carers Action Group (RPCAG)
The RPCAG is an independent forum set up by parents of children (from birth to 19) with additional needs living in Richmond upon Thames. Me Too and Co helped to establish the RPCAG; its aims being to provide parents and carers with opportunities to support each other and generate new ideas around improving services for their children, and to help influence the development of services provided by the Local Authority Local Authority for children with disabilities. RPCAG holds meetings which are also held at the St Stephen’s Crossway Centre. For further information, contact RPCAG at:
Tel: 07946 646033  Website: www.rpcag.org.uk  Email: info@rpcag.org.uk

Richmond SEND FAMILY VOICE (RSFV)
RSFV is a local community group, formed in response to the opportunities offered by the Special Education Needs Disability (SEND) reform. It works independently from but in partnership with Achieving for Children and other public services to develop measureable changes and improvements for children and young people with additional needs. For more information, please contact RSFV at:
Tel: 07758 305472  Email: richmondsendfamilyvoice@outlook.com
Website: www.richmondsendfamilyvoice.org  Facebook: www.facebook.com/richmondsendfamilyvoice

The Kingston Branch of the NAS (SWAPS)
Branch Officer: Sian Palin
Tel: 07917 271350  Website: www.nasbranch.org.uk/kingston  Email: kingston@nas.org.uk

The Surrey Branch of the NAS
Branch Officer: Emma Whitfield
Website: www.mugsy.org  Email: surreybranch@nas.org.uk

Resources for Autism
A very useful resource providing a lot of information about autism-related issues.
858 Finchley Road, London NW11 6AB.
Tel: 020 8458 3259  Website: www.resourcesforautism.org.uk  Email: admin@resourcesforautism.org.uk
**Sparkle Time**
If you have a child or children up to five years of age and are having concerns about their language, concentration, behaviour or physical skills, then Sparkle Time may be able to help you. Their Stay and Play sessions are fun and interactive, using signing and movement with sensory equipment to learn and play. They host visits from local support services such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and health visitors, etc, to give parents ideas to help both them and their child at home. Sparkle Time listens to parents to find the best support for their individual needs and links with local Early Years childcare providers for outreach and support. Sparkle Time sessions are offered in term time only at the Croft Centre, Kew, Ham Children’s Centre, Stanley Children and Family Centre, Teddington, Heathfield Children’s Centre, Whitton, Ham Children’s Centre and at the Tangle Park Family Centre in Hampton.

For more information about sessions in Ham, Teddington and Kew, please contact:
Helen Montgomery-Smith  
Tel: 07738 764 076  
Email: helen@eelpieboatyard.co.uk

For more information about sessions in Hampton and Whitton, please contact:
Sissy Lykou  
Tel: 07944 878003  
Email: sissylykou@gmail.com

**InterAKtive**
Originally set up under the name of GASP, this Surrey based independent charity was founded by parents to aid and support others with children who have communication problems/autism spectrum disorders. Activities include social outings, parent conferences, play-schemes and music groups for children.

Contact InterAKtive at PO Box 55, Banstead, Surrey. SM7 1WW
Tel: 07876 762178  
Website: [www.interaktive.org.uk](http://www.interaktive.org.uk)  
Email: info@interaktive.org.uk

**The School & Family Works – Families Helping Families**
The primary purpose of The School and Family Works is to advance the education and promote the well being of children and other members of families who are often labelled ‘hard to reach’.

Amongst the services offered is ‘Families Helping Families’ which aims to offer reflective and analytical tools to parents of children who have additional needs. In a group facilitated by a therapist, families work together to generate insight into what behaviour means, resourcing each other with new ideas and strategies. Families benefit from new tools, a new perspective of what they are experiencing, plus a shared sense of community. For more information, please contact Mark Griffiths at:
Tel: 07540 806248  
Email: mark@theschoolandfamilyworks.co.uk
Website: [www.theschoolandfamilyworks.co.uk](http://www.theschoolandfamilyworks.co.uk)

Courses have been organised by Me Too and Co; please watch their website [www.metooandco.org.uk](http://www.metooandco.org.uk) for future events.

**Richmond Crossroads Saturday Club**
Richmond Crossroads Care is a local provider of respite and care support for carers and the people they care for. They run a Saturday Club in Hampton during term time to provide respite for parent/carers of children with additional needs aged between 8 and 15 years of age. All staff are fully trained, enhanced DBS checked care support workers. The club is a safe and secure environment for children to develop and enjoy social, creative and sporting activities.

Day and time: Saturday afternoon (during term time), 1.30 pm to 5.00pm
Venue: Hampton Youth Project, Hampton TW12 3YH
Cost: Free, but donations are welcome.

If you would like your child to attend this, club please contact your school SENCO, school nurse or teacher.
Tel: 020 8943 9421  
Fax: 020 8943 8320  
Email: richmonduponthames@crossroads.org.uk

**NHS Choices Carers Direct**
Helpline: 0300 123 1053 (9.00am to 8.00pm Mon – Fri, 11.00am to 4.00pm weekends. Not Bank Holidays)
Carers UK
Carers UK. 20, Great Dover Street, London SE1 4LX
Advice Line: 0808 808 7777 (Monday to Friday 10.00am — 4.00pm)
Website: www.carersuk.org   Email: advice@carersuk.org

Carers Hub Service
Led and managed by the Richmond Carers Centre, the Carers Hub Service is delivered by a group of nine charities working together and provides a gateway to direct support, information and access to services for unpaid carers in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.
Website: www.richmondchs.org

The Autism Trust, Polly's Place, The Autism Media Channel/File
The Autism Trust's objectives are to create a future with purpose for young adults with autism everywhere.
Tel: 01344 873030   Website: www.theautismtrust.org.uk   Email: info@theautismtrust.org.uk

The Autism Trust has developed Polly's Place, which is a social enterprise shop in Sunninghill that provides young people having an ASD with vocational opportunities to prepare them for the world of work.
Polly's Place. 76, High Street, Sunninghill, Berkshire. SL5 9NN
Webpage: www.theautismtrust.org.uk/collections/all

The Autism Media Channel / The Autism File (a quarterly journal)
Website: www.autismmediachannel.com

IPSEA (Independent Parental Special Education Advice)
Offers advice on educational issues, EHC Plans/Statements, tribunals, etc.
General advice line: Tel: 0800 018 4016   Tribunal help line: Tel: 0845 602 9579
Website: www.ipsea.org.uk

AFASIC
A national parent-led organisation that aims to help children and young people with speech and language impairments and their families. Advice on autism, speech disorders, education, EHC Plans/Statements, etc.
1st Floor, 20 Bowling Green Lane, London EC1R 0BD
Website: www.afasicengland.org.uk   Helpline: 0845 355 5577 (Mon - Fri, 10.30am to 2.30pm)

Gabbitas
Gabbitas produces “Schools For Special Needs” a very useful and comprehensive list of special schools. It is possible to order this guide direct from the Gabbitas website.
Norfolk House. 30, Charles II Street, London SW1Y 4AE
Tel: 020 7734 0161   Fax: 020 7437 1764
Email: info@gabbitas.co.uk   Website: www.gabbitas.co.uk

Gabbitas also has an on-line search facility dedicated special needs schools and colleges or mainstream independent schools offering special education needs (SEN) provision should you be looking for this sort of provision. Please visit: www.schoolsforspecialneeds.co.uk

PEACH (Parents for Early intervention of Autism in Children)
Parent-led charity for those interested in Early Intensive Behavioural Intervention (an Lovaas/ABA-based intervention) for young children who have autism. It provides information and support for parents, one of its main services being a helpline.
The Brackens, London Road, Ascot, Berkshire. SL5 8BE
Tel: 01344 882248   Fax: 01344 882391   Website: www.peach.org.uk   Email: info@peach.org.uk

UK Young Autism Project
A research based centre that specialises in teaching young children with autism plus those having other disorders using the principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA).
UK Young Autism Project. 89, Tilehurst Road, Earlsfield, London SW18 3EX
Tel: 020 3369 9630   Website: www.ukyap.org
Network '81
Provides support and advice for parents working towards properly resourced inclusive education.
10, Boleyn Way, West Clacton, Essex. CO15 2NJ
Helpline: 0845 077 4055   Email: Network81@hotmail.co.uk   Website: www.network81.org
Network 81 SEN training   Email: training@network81.org.uk   Website: www.sen-training.co.uk

Ladbroke Grove Autism Centre
At Ladbroke Grove Autism Centre, the NAS supports people of all ages on the autism spectrum to help them achieve their full potential. The centre offers a safe and supportive environment in which children, young people and adults can meet other people, try new activities, explore interests and develop their confidence and independence. Support and training is also offered to families, carers and professionals.

Anyone who has a diagnosis on the autism spectrum or who is in the process of obtaining one can apply to use these services. The centre takes self-referrals and referrals made by professionals, families and carers, from any London borough. Please contact the NAS for more information about any of the support projects or training programmes, or to apply to use the services.
Ladbroke Grove Autism Centre. 73c, St Charles Square, London W10 6EJ
Tel: 020 8962 3018   Email: se.services@nas.org.uk

ACCESS
The ACCESS service provides information and advice from other local non-profit making organisations. Richmond AID currently runs this service, working closely with other local charities, organisations and local authorities to offer a wealth of experience and knowledge on a wide range of subjects related to the support of children and young people with additional needs, their siblings and family members.
Tel: 020 8831 6076 (Mon - Fri, 10am to 4pm)   Email: info@accessinfoservice.com
Website: www.accessinfoservice.com

Family Planning Association (FPA)
The FPA shop contains quite a number of resources aimed at children and young people with learning disabilities, as well as their parents and school staff. You can contact the FPA at:
Family Planning Association. 50, Featherstone Street, London EC1Y 8QU
Website: www.fpa.org.uk
SEN resources: www.fpa.org.uk/professionals/publicationsandresources/peoplewithlearningdisabilities

Ambitious About Autism (Treehouse)
Ambitious About Autism (formerly Treehouse) is a national charity dedicated to improving opportunities for people with autism. The charity works to improve the services available for children and young people with autism and increase awareness and understanding of the condition. It offers training and consultancy on autism education and is committed to influencing policy to ensure it meets the needs of people with autism.
The Pears National Centre for Autism Education. Woodside Avenue, London N10 3JA
Tel: 020 8815 5444   Email: info@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk   Website: www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation
Offers support, information and advice to parents, carers and professionals caring for individuals with severe learning disabilities and challenging behaviour.
c/o The Old Courthouse, New Road Avenue, Chatham, Kent. ME4 6BE
Family Support Line: 0845 602 7885   General Enquiries: 01634 838739 or email: info@thecbf.org.uk
Website: www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk   Information & Support: support@thecbf.org.uk

Asperger’s Syndrome Foundation
This is London based, and is primarily dedicated to providing training seminars for parents and professionals professionals, helping people with AS, as well as promoting awareness and understanding of AS. Asperger’s Syndrome Foundation asks that all enquiries to be made by email or post.
The Asperger’s Syndrome Foundation. c/o Littlestone Golding
Eden House, Reynolds Road, Beaconsfield. HP9 2FL
Website: www.aspergerfoundation.org.uk   Email: info@aspergerfoundation.org.uk
Cambian Group - Parental Resources
The Cambian Group can supply a lot of information that aims to support parents’ knowledge covering many issues relating to ASDs. This can be downloaded and printed off through the following webpage: www.cambiangroup.com/Ourservices/EducationServices/ParentalResources.aspx

Autism Eye
Autism Eye is a quarterly magazine for parents and carers of children with autism. It is written and published by national award winning journalists Gillian Loughran and Mark Hayes who also happen to be parents of a child who has autism. Their mission is to offer an affordable way for parents and carers to keep informed about ways to improve their children’s lives through in-depth and unbiased coverage. For more information and subscription details, please contact:
Autism Eye. 25A, Hillbury Road, London SW17 8JT
Tel: 020 8673 8496 Website: www.autismeye.com

PAWS
PAWS (Parents Autism Workshops and Support) was set up by Dogs for the Disabled, and has developed the training of assistance dogs to work effectively with children who have autism. It has been observed that although for some there will always be a need for a fully trained assistance dog, a well-trained family pet can also have a massively beneficial effect. For more information and details of PAWS workshop locations, please contact:
Dogs for the Disabled. The Frances Hay Centre. Blacklocks Hill, Banbury, Oxfordshire. OX17 2BS
Tel: 01295 759836 Website: http://paws.dogsforthedisabled.org Email: paws@dogsforthedisabled.org

Living Autism
Living Autism is a service for individuals who have autism and their families, providing them with information and options. This is the only independent service not affiliated to any service providers that provides resources, directories and a comprehensive list of service providers all in one place. The members included in this website have been checked for accreditation, qualifications, references and testimonials, key members of staff interviewed and business premises visited where applicable. For those services where people are housed or spend significant time, Living Autism provides an in-depth visit report that is visible on that service's profile. For more information, contact:
Living Autism Ltd. The Raylor Centre. James Street, York. YO10 3DW
Tel: 0113 815 0210 Tel: 0207 097 1789 (for London and South East England)
Website: www.livingautism.co.uk Email: info@livingautism.co.uk

Communication Matters
Communication Matters is committed to supporting people who find communication difficult because they have little or no clear speech. This organisation supplies information about methods of communication which can be used to supplement the more usual methods of speech and writing; these methods being called Augmentive and Alternative Communication (AAC). The information provided includes an introduction to AAC, training and events, news, publications, research and resources (including suppliers of AAC products). For more information, contact:
Communication Matters. Catchpell House. Carpet Lane, Edinburgh. EH6 6SP
Tel & Fax: 0845 456 8211
Website: www.communicationmatters.org.uk Email: admin@communicationmatters.org.uk

Family Fund
The Family Fund helps low income families with severely ill and disabled children to have choices and the opportunity to enjoy ordinary life. They give grants for things that make life easier and more enjoyable for the disabled child and their family, such as washing machines, driving lessons, hospital visiting costs, computers and holidays.
Family Fund. Unit 4, Alpha Court, Monks Cross Drive, York. YO32 9WN
Tel: 01904 621115 Textphone: 01904 658085 Fax: 01904 652625
Website: www.familyfund.org.uk Email: info@familyfund.org.uk
Action - Attainment
Action-Attainment’s aim is about enabling children with speech, language, communication and sensory needs to achieve and have active lives. Led by Samantha Silver, the organisation builds on Sam’s personal and professional experience of supporting children, and their families, to have fun and learn in and out of school. Action-Attainment works directly with families, professionals, schools and with community groups to provide understanding, strategies and opportunities for learning, play and friendships.
Tel: 020 8392 9946   Email: info@action-attainment.com   Website: www.action-attainment.com

Off The Record
This drop-in and after school service offers free information, advice and guidance plus appointment based counselling to children and young people aged 11 to 24 years of age. Donations may be requested from those who are over 18 and have a job.
Off the Record. 2, Church Street, Twickenham. TW1 3NJ
Tel: 020 8744 1644       Email: info@otrtwickenham.com
Website: http://otrtwickenham.com       YouTube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=rSpvQjhi7WE

Children’s Centres
There are nine Children’s Centres within the Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames. Each Centre has Family Support Workers and Children’s and Family Workers, who apart from offering general extra help, are also able to help families access specialist support should they need it. For more information, please visit:
www.richmond.gov.uk/home/services/children_and_family_care/childrens_centres/about_childrens_centres.htm

Barnes Children’s Centre. Lowther Primary School, Stillingfleet Road, Barnes. SW13 9AE
Tel: 020 3021 1990       Email: barnescc@richmond.gov.uk

Ham Children’s Centre, Ashburnham Road, Ham. TW10 7NL
Tel: 020 8734 3400 or 020 8734 3428       Email: hamcc@richmond.gov.uk

Heathfield Children’s Centre. Powder Mill Lane, Whitton. TW2 6EX
Tel: 020 8734 3405       Email: heathfieldcc@richmond.gov.uk

Mortlake Children and Family Centre. Mullins Path, North Worple Way, Mortlake. SW14 8EZ
Tel: 020 3021 1990       Email: northbarnescc@richmond.gov.uk

Mortlake Powerstation. 121a, Mortlake High Street, Mortlake. SW14 8SN
Tel: 020 3021 1990       Email: northbarnescc@richmond.gov.uk

Norman Jackson Children’s Centre. 50 Windmill Road, Hampton Hill. TW12 1QU
Tel: 020 8941 6843       Email: normanjacksoncc@richmond.gov.uk

Stanley Children and Family Centre. Strathmore Road, Teddington, Middlesex. TW11 8UH
Tel: 0208 734 3372       Email: stanleyccinfo@richmond.gov.uk

Tangley Park Children’s Centre. 1, Bramble Lane, Hampton. TW12 3XB
Tel: 020 8481 9420       Email: tangleyparkcc@richmond.gov.uk

Windham Croft Centre for Children. 20, Windham Road, Kew. TW9 2HP
Tel: 020 3021 1990       Email: northbarnescc@richmond.gov.uk
CONTACT LIST

See also section entitled: PARENT SUPPORT AND INFORMATION FOR CARERS

Child and Family Consultation Centre
Richmond Royal Hospital, Kew Foot Road, Richmond, Surrey TW9 2TE.
Tel: 020 3513 3238  Webpage: www.swlstg-tr.nhs.uk/our-services/camhs-richmond/

Community Paediatricians
St. Johns Health Centre, Oak Lane, Twickenham TW1 3PA
Tel: 020 8891 8188  Email: hrch.richmondcommunity@nhs.net

The Disabled Children’s Service
Windham Croft Centre for Children. 16, Windham Road, Kew. TW9 2HP
Tel: 020 8831 6470  Text: 020 8831 6049  Email: dct@richmond.gov.uk

The Windham Croft Centre for Children
16, Windham Road, Kew. TW9 2HP.
Tel: 020 8831 6048 or 020 8831 6063  Fax: 020 8831 6050
The following are based at The Croft Centre:
Disabled Children’s Team, Short Break Care Team, Children’s Centre Activities (0 to 5 years)
Crofters leisure activities.

The Jigsaw at Windham
Nursery for children with social and communication disorders including ASD.
16 Windham Road, Richmond, Surrey TW9 2HP.
Tel: 020 8831 6309  Fax: 020 8831 6305  Please phone weekdays before 9.00am or after 11.30am.
Email: info@windham.richmond.sch.uk

The Windham Nursery
This nursery is on the same site as The Croft Centre (and Jigsaw). Although it is not SN/ASD specific they
do have experience of children with SN.
Tel: 020 8831 6060  Fax: 020 8831 6305  Email: info@windham.sch.uk

Richmond Upon Thames - Education, Children’s and Cultural Services
London Borough of Richmond-Upon-Thames
Civic Centre. 44, York Street, Twickenham TW1 3BZ
SEND department. Tel: 020 8891 7529
Website: www.richmond.gov.uk/sen
Achieving for Children (AfC)
Achieving for Children is a social enterprise created by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames through which the boroughs deliver their children’s services. It includes the Integrated Service for Disabled Children and Young People, and this provides services to the local special schools as well as to children and young people in mainstream schools and in the community who have significant additional needs.
Civic Centre. 44, York Street, Twickenham TW1 3BZ
Tel: 020 8891 1411      Website: www.achievingforchildren.org.uk

Social Services
Disabled Children’s Team Tel: 020 8831 6470  Text: 020 8831 6049   Email: dct@richmond.gov.uk
Learning Disability Team (adults) Tel: 020 8487 5315
Autism Specialist Worker (adults) Tel: 020 8487 5391   Email: autism@richmond.gov.uk

Single Point of Access (SPA)
The Single Point of Access acts as a single gateway for all incoming contacts into the Borough’s Children’s Services, providing telephone and web-based support to professionals, children, young people and parents. The SPA acts as a central hub that co-ordinates information from a range of sources relevant to children with additional needs, including enquiries about CAMHS services. Even though SPA appears to deal with child protection issues only, please note this is the correct service to contact!
Tel: 020 8891 7969  Email: spa@richmond.gov.uk   Webpage: www.richmond.gov.uk/child_protection

Richmond Carers Centre
5, Briar Road, Twickenham, Middlesex TW2 6RB.
Carers Support Line: Tel: 020 8867 2380
Website: www.richmondcarers.org     Email: info@richmondcarers.org.uk

Crossroads Care
A charity providing ongoing support and respite for carers.
Crossroads Care Richmond & Kingston upon Thames.
1, Beverley Court, 26, Elmtree Road, Teddington. TW11 8ST
Tel: 020 8943 9421    Fax: 020 8943 8320     Email: richmonduponthames@crossroads.org.uk
Website: www.carers.org/local-service/richmond-and-kingston

Balance
Aims to supports people over 18 years of age who have Asperger syndrome or high functioning autism. Mainly for people living in the borough of Kingston, but those in other boroughs should use the contact details given below to find out how to access the services (people with a personal budget may be able to use them to fund the services).
Tel: 020 3468 3070     Email: info@balance-cic.com
Website: http://balance-cic.com/balance_asperger_syndrome_team.html

The National Autistic Society (NAS)
393 City Road, London EC1V ING.
Tel: 020 7833 2299 Fax: 0207 833 9666
Website: www.autism.org.uk     Email: nas@nas.org.uk
Autism helpline: 0808 800 4104    Parent to Parent (P2P) Tel: 0808 800 4106

Benefits and Allowances:
Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Tel: 0800 917 2222   Textphone: 0800 917 7777
Webpage: www.gov.uk/pip/overview
(Monday - Friday, 8.00am to 6.00pm)

Disabled Living Allowance for Children (DLA) Tel: 0345 712 3456   Textphone: 0345 722 4433
(Monday - Friday, 8.00am to 6.00pm)

Contact list
Carer’s Allowance (CA) Tel: 0345 608 4321  Textphone: 0345 604 5312
Webpage: www.gov.uk/carers-allowance-unit
(Monday - Thursday 8:30am to 5.00pm, Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm)

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) Tel: 0800 055 6688  Textphone: 0800 023 4888
Web page: www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance
(Monday - Friday, 8.00am to 6.00pm)

Online Benefits Adviser: www.gov.uk/benefits-adviser

Help with Health Costs (England) webpage: www.nhs.uk/nhsengland/Healthcosts
Contact Help with Health Costs webpage: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/1884.aspx

Prescription Prepayment (PPC) order line: 0300 330 1341
PPC website: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/1127.aspx

Child Benefit Helpline: 0300 200 3100  Textphone: 0300 200 3103
Webpage: www.gov.uk/child-benefit/overview
(Monday – Friday 8.00am to 8.00pm, Saturday 8.00am to 4.00pm)

National Insurance enquiries: 0300 200 3500  Textphone 0300 200 3519
Visit this webpage www.gov.uk/browse/tax/national-insurance for more information
(Monday - Friday, 8.00am to 5.00pm)

Gov.UK website (for general information including the above): www.gov.uk

Gov.UK/Jobcentre Plus:
Website: www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus
Tel: 0800 055 6688  Textphone: 0800 023 4888 (benefit claims, Mon – Fri, 8.00am to 6.00pm)
Tel: 0845 606 0234  Textphone: 0345 605 5255 (job seeking, Mon – Fri, 8.00am to 6.00pm)

Jobcentre Plus, Twickenham
Chatsworth House, 59 - 63, London Road, Twickenham TW1 3SZ
Tel: 0845 604 3719  Disability Advisor: 020 8250 4684

Richmond Legal Advice Service
Free legal advice service. Weekly sessions between 8.00pm and 9.00pm each Wednesday at
Duke Street Church, Duke Street, Richmond, TW9 1DH.
Tel: 020 8891 2105  Website: www.rlas.org.uk  Email: rlas@rlas.org.uk

Richmond Works
Remploy, in partnership with Twining Enterprise and Richmond Council deliver employment support to
adults with specialist needs (including ASDs) who are residents of Richmond upon Thames. To find out
more about this service, please contact Richmond Works at:
Tel: 0300 456 8102  Email: richmond@remploy.co.uk
Website: www.remploy.co.uk/en/partners/Who-we-work-with/richmond-works/

Accessible Transport Unit (ATU)
Disability and Advice Centre (DAAC). 4, Waldegrave Road, Teddington. TW11 8HT
Tel: 020 8831 6191 or 020 6191 6097 (general enquiries)
Email: accessibletransport@richmond.gov.uk  Webpage: www.richmond.gov.uk/accessible_transport_unit

Richmond Aid (RAID)
Disability, Action and Advice Centre (DAAC). 4, Waldegrave Road, Teddington. TW11 8HT
Reception: 020 8831 6080  Advice Line: 020 8831 6070
Website: www.richmondaid.org.uk  General enquiries email: info@richmondaid.org.uk
Advice and information on disability email: advice@richmondaid.org.uk
Richmond AID’s Benefits Service
This Benefits Service is a free service for people receiving or applying for disability benefits in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. It is funded by our local Council and offers assistance with form filling and benefit reviews, so that people receive all the benefits to which they are entitled.

The advisors, who have received extensive training, can either meet people face to face or arrange telephone consultations. They not only offer accurate, honest advice, but also check eligibility and entitlement, provide information on how to make applications, give assistance filling in benefits forms, supply details and information on how to challenge a decision, plus offering a sympathetic and listening ear.

The Service also offers help to people who are applying for social care and support from the Council and need to complete a Financial Assessment form.

Richmond AID’s advisors work mainly from the Disability Action and Advice Centre (DAAC) in Teddington. However, they also offer this Service from other locations in the Borough through outreach, and are able to visit clients at their homes.

To make an appointment or arrange a chat by telephone, please call the advisors on 020 8831 6080 or 020 8831 6070. You can email them at: benefits@richmondaid.org.uk or y.baxtrem@richmondaid.org.uk

Richmond Users Independent Living Scheme (RUuLS)
RUuLS is a service user group providing support to disabled and elderly people living in this borough. Their services include advocacy, person centred planning for young people, employment advice and information about benefits.
Disability and Advice Centre (DAAC), 4, Waldegrave Road, Teddington, TW11 8HT
Tel: 020 8831 6083  Website: www.ruulis.co.uk  Email: info@ruulis.co.uk

RUuLS Personal Assistant (PA) Finder
RUuLS has launched an online Personal Assistant finder service for individuals using Self Directed Support who wish to employ a PA (it also helps PAs searching for available jobs). It will be necessary to register and complete a series of questions to create a comprehensive personal profile before using the website.
Website: www.find-a-pa.co.uk

RUuLS Recruitment and Employment Guide
RUuLS has developed a comprehensive recruitment handbook which provides a step-by-step guide to being a Personal Assistant employer. It provides all the information you need in one place, presenting it in an easy to read format without compromising content.
Website: www.employ-a-pa.co.uk

POWHER Advocacy
POWHER delivers information, advice, support and advocacy services throughout England. They aim to support people who face difficult issues and want to make their voice heard. Advocacy supports people to have more control over their lives, make decisions, be treated fairly and participate fully in community life.
Contact POWHER for more information:
Tel (Local area): 0300 200 0022  Tel (National): 0300 456 2370
Fax: 0300 456 2365  Text: 81025 (send ‘pohwer’ with your name and number)
Website: www.pohwer.net/in-your-area/where-you-live/richmond-upon-thames
Email: Richmond@pohwer.net  Skype: pohwer.advocacy (8.00am to 6.00pm Monday – Friday)

Disability Rights UK
This is a national organisation run by and working for disabled people; its vision being a just and equal society whose strength is human difference and its mission being to enable individuals, networks and policy makers to do things differently. It is possible to purchase a National Key Scheme (NKS) public toilet key through the following webpage: https://crm.disabilityrightsuk.org/radar-nks-key
Disability Rights UK. Ground Floor, CAN Mezzanine, 49 -51, East Road, London N1 6AH
Tel: 020 7250 8181 (general enquiries)  Fax: 020 7247 8765
Website: http://disabilityrightsuk.org  Email: enquiries@disabilityrightsuk.org
Local Citizens Advice Bureau:
Twickenham: 5th Floor, Regal House. 70, London Road, Twickenham. TW1 3QS
Tel: 0844 826 9700
Sheen: Sheen Lane Centre, Sheen Lane, SW14 8LP
Tel: 0844 826 9700
Hampton: White House Community Centre, 45 The Avenue, Hampton. TW12 3RN
Tel: 0844 826 9700
Ham: The Health Centre. Ashburnham Road, Ham. TW10 7NF
Tel: 020 8939 6950
North Barnes: Castelnau Community Centre, Stillingfleet Road, Barnes SW13 9AQ
Tel: 0844 826 9700
Local website: www.rcabs.org.uk  National website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Richmond Mencap
Richmond Mencap’s aims are to improve the lives of children and adults with learning disabilities and their family carers, provide services and support, represent their interests and campaign on their behalf, raise awareness and understanding, plus promoting social inclusion in the community.
342, Richmond Road, East Twickenham.TW1 2DU
Tel: 020 8744 1923
Contact: Laura Turner (Senior Development Officer)  Email: laura@richmondmencap.org.uk
Web address: www.richmondmencap.org.uk

Richmond Homes and Lifestyle Trust
Richmond Homes and Lifestyle Trust provides long-term residential provision for adults with learning disabilities living in Richmond Borough. It also provides activities where small groups of people are supported by staff to experience an overnight stay away from the family home, leisure and daytime services as well as offering individual and general support and information. For more information, contact:
Richmond Homes and Lifestyle Trust. 5 - 7, Cedars Road, Hampton Wick, KT1 4BG
Tel: 020 8977 5447  Website: http://rhlt.org.uk  Email: info@rhlt.org.uk

Department for Education
Tel: 0370 000 2288  Fax: 0161 600 1332
Website: www.education.gov.uk

Local MPs
Vincent Cable – Twickenham Constituency
Constituency office (appointments): 020 8892 0215
Website: www.vincentcable.com  Email: cablev@parliament.uk
Zac Goldsmith – Richmond Park Constituency
Constituency office: 020 8939 0321
Website: www.zacgoldsmith.com  Email: zac@zacgoldsmith.com

Local Councillor Details
Details of Richmond Borough’s Councillors can be found in the ‘Council and Democracy’ section of the Borough’s website. The webpage details are below:
http://www.richmond.gov.uk/home/council_government_and_democracy/democratic_processes_and_events/who_are_my_councillors.htm
EDUCATION – USEFUL CONTACTS

SEND Information, Advice and Support Service
Croft Centre, Windham Road, Kew, TW9 2HP and Moor Lane Centre, Moor Lane, Chessington. KT9 2AA
Tel: 020 8831 6179    Email: children@enhancable.org    Webpage: www.enhancable.org/SENDIASS.htm
Please state which borough you live in when contacting this service as Enhanceable covers both Kingston and Richmond.

Independent Support Partnership
Support applying for an EHC Plan or converting from a Statement to an EHC Plan.
Tel: 020 8831 6076      Email: independent.support@richmondaid.org.uk

London SEN Mediation Service
KIDS London. 7 - 9, Elliott’s Place, London. N1 8HX
Tel: 020 7359 3635      Email: audrey.dorival@kids.org.uk    Website: www.kids.org.uk/mediation

IPSEA (Independent Parental Special Education Advice)
Hunters Court, Debden Road, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4AA
General advice line: Tel: 0800 018 4016    Tribunal help line: 0845 602 9579    Website: www.ipsea.org.uk

ACE (Advisory Centre for Education)
Online advice and guidance of all aspects of state education.
72, Durnsford Road, London. N11 2EJ
Advice line Tel: 0300 0115 142    Webpage: www.ace-ed.org.uk/advice-about-education-for-parents/
ACE offers a range of booklets and briefings for parents and carers to download from this webpage: www.ace-ed.org.uk/advice-about-education-for-parents/advice-booklets-and-briefings

NAS Education Rights Service
Tel: 0808 800 4102 or visit the following NAS webpage for more information:

SEN Legal Ltd
3 - 4, Forbes Business Centre. Kempson Way, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP32 7AR
Tel: 01284 723952    Fax: 01284 702008    Website: www.senlegal.co.uk    Email: manager@senlegal.co.uk
Specialise in representing clients having SEN provision problems and disability discrimination equality issues.

Moore Blatch Solicitors
2, The Green, Richmond, TW9 1PL (Richmond Branch)
Tel: 020 8744 0766    Fax: 020 8332 8630    Website: www.educationlawsolutions.co.uk
Moore Blatch’s solicitors specialise in the evolving legal area of education law, and have vast experience of representing parents and children in situations covering a wide range of education related issues.
The Children's Legal Practice Ltd
Unit E4, Eefore House. Fareham Heights, Fareham, Hampshire. PO16 8XT
Tel: 01329 823322 Fax: 01329 822234
Website: www.childrenslegalpractice.com Email: info@childrenslegalpractice.com
Provide legal representation/assistance with all education issues.

MG Law
Maxwell Gillott Solicitors. 150, The Broadway, Wimbledon. SW19 1RX (Wimbledon branch)
Tel: 01524 596080 Fax: 020 8545 8179 Website: www.maxwellgillott.com Email: office@mglaw.co.uk
MG Law is a specialist firm of solicitors that provides services to clients facing difficulties with education, health and social care services.

NAS Tribunal Support Line
The National Autistic Society runs a Tribunal Support Line which provides ongoing support and advice to parents who have lodged or are thinking of lodging an appeal to an SEN tribunal. It provides support to parents of children with a diagnosis of autism (or who are in the process of getting a diagnosis) via experienced volunteer caseworkers who can support parents via e-mail and telephone to submit the appeal form and offer on-going advice in all aspects of tribunal preparation up to and including the hearing. The staff are experts in both autism and SEN tribunals, and in some instances can also provide pro-bono representation at hearings. They cannot provide face-to-face support but can work in conjunction with other services such as local branches where a parent requires specialist tribunal advice alongside some face-to-face support. The service aims to get back to callers within six days of a parent leaving a message, although if the query is urgent it can usually respond sooner. Any parent wishing to accessing the service should contact the Tribunal Support Line where they will be invited to leave their contact details. It can also take direct referrals from local branches on the above number. Again, the service will ask for parental details and a contact number.

NAS Tribunal Support Line: 0808 800 4102

SOS!SEN:
An independent resource for special educational needs. SOS!SEN offers a free, independent and confidential telephone helpline for parents and others looking for information and advice about special educational needs. They aim to offer help with preparing EHC Plans/statements, interpreting the SEN Code of Practice and official letters, locating independent professional experts, advising how to prepare tribunal appeals and helping with complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman. There is a ‘walk-in’ advice centre in Hampton available between 10.15am and 12.15pm on the third Wednesday of each month; please see the website for more details.
Telephone helpline: 020 8538 3731 (Monday to Friday 9.30am — 12.30pm and 2.00pm — 5.00pm)
Email: admin@sossen.org.uk Website: www.sossen.org.uk

Preparing for Adulthood Programme
Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) brings together a wide range of expertise and experience, working with young people and families to support young people into adulthood with paid employment, good health, independent living and friends, relationships and community inclusion.
For more information, please contact the PfA at First Floor, 30 - 32, Westgate Buildings, Bath. BA1 1EF
Tel: 020 7843 6348 Email: info@preparingforadulthood.org.uk Web: www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/

Transition Information Network (TIN)
The aim of TIN is to provide information about the transition process that is useful to professionals and parents/carers. There is also a young people’s section containing information, news and events.
Transition Information Network (c/o Council for Disabled Children). 8, Wakley Street, London. EC1V 7QE
Tel: 020 7843 6006 Email: tin@ncb.org.uk Website: www.transitioninfonetwork.org.uk

Transition – Supporting Young People with Disabilities
Karl Burgess (Transitions Development Officer)
2nd Floor, Civic Centre, 44, York Street, Twickenham TW1 3BZ
Tel: 020 8891 7285 or 0795 8701260 Email: karl.burgess@achievingforchildren.org.uk
Autism Education Trust
The Autism Education Trust (AET) was launched in 2007 with funding from the Department for Children, Schools & Families (now the Department of Education). The AET is dedicated to co-ordinating and improving educational support for all children on the autism spectrum in England.
Tel: 020 7903 3650 Email: info@autismeducationtrust.org.uk Website: www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk

National Association of Independent Schools and Non-Maintained Special Schools (NASS)
The NASS is a membership organisation working with and for special schools in the voluntary and private sectors. The website has a school location link from where it is possible to specify particular SENs and areas within England and Wales before making a search (it only details schools that are NASS members).
Contact the National Association of Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools at:
PO Box 705, York, YO30 6WW Tel/Fax: 01904 624446 Website: www.nasschools.org.uk
Karen Rippon (Executive Officer) Mobile: 07824 612273 Email: krippon@nasschools.org.uk
Claire Dorer (Chief Executive) Mobile: 07917 451812 Email: cdorer@nasschools.org.uk

The Association of National Specialist Colleges (Natspec)
This is a membership association for independent specialist colleges that provide education or training for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Natspec website contains an on-line directory with links to individual colleges, and it also possible to search for colleges according to their areas of expertise. It is also possible to order a printed directory from Natspec (see the link given below).
Registered office: Derwen College, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 3JA
Directory orders: www.natspec.org.uk/directory/ Website: www.natspec.org.uk

Which School? for Special Needs
This is a comprehensive guide to SEN education in the UK. It contains a directory of independent and non-maintained schools and colleges providing for children and young people with sensory or physical impairment; learning difficulties; social, emotional and behavioural difficulties; and autism spectrum disorders. It can be downloaded from www.specialneedsguide.co.uk/WSSN-eBook/downloads.htm.

Disability Rights UK - Disabled Students Helpline
The advisors can advise and support disabled people who are studying or wish to study at any level on full or part-time education or training courses if the course is in England and they are over 16 years old.
Tel: 0800 328 5050 Email: students@disabilityrightsuk.org
(Tuesdays 11.30am to 1.30pm and Thursdays 1.30pm to 3.30pm)
Webpage: http://disabilityrightsuk.org/how-we-can-help/helplines/disabled-students-helpline

National Careers Service
Information, advice and support to 13-19 year olds between 8.00am and 10.00pm seven days a week.
Tel: 0800 100 900 Text: 07766 413219 Webpage: https://www2.cxdirect.com/home.htm

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted)
Ofsted reports directly to Parliament and is independent and impartial. It inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people, and those providing education and skills for learners of all ages. The reports of their inspections (which include those about such providers as childminding services, primary and secondary schools plus colleges) are published on their website.
Ofsted. Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester. M1 2WD
General helpline: 0300 123 1231 (Monday – Friday, 8.00am to 6.45pm)
Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Inspection report webpage: www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report
SUGGESTED READING

There are many helpful books and publications available, and we have listed just a selection which parents have told us they have found particularly useful.

The NAS has an extremely comprehensive publications catalogue, which details their stock of books, DVDs and other resources relating to autism and Asperger syndrome.

It is possible to order a free publications catalogue from the NAS Online Shop or alternatively, to download it as a pdf. The NAS Online Shop stocks a wide range of its own publications and resources, with sections covering a wide range of subjects. Website: www.autism.org.uk/pubs. The NAS also has an Amazon affiliate website, where you can buy a selection of tried, tested and trusted recommendations produced by some of the world’s leading publishers specialising in autism and Asperger syndrome. Website: www.autism.org.uk/shop/amazon-store.aspx

Jessica Kingsley Publishers (JKP) also have a very good range of books about ASD. JKP produces a catalogue and also has mailing list. Should you wish to join JKP’s mailing list, they can either email or post information. If you let them know your areas of interest, JKP sends information that is most relevant to you. JKP, 73, Collier Street, London N1 9BE. Tel: 020 7833 2307  Email: hello@jkp.com  Website: www.jkp.com

AAPC publishes books on autism spectrum disorders based on the latest research on autism, Asperger syndrome and other pervasive developmental disorders. The books provide practical solutions for those who have an autism spectrum disorder as well as parents, teachers or others working or living with an individual with an autism spectrum disorder, and can be ordered from www.eurospanbookstore.com/AAPC

SEN Books is a specialist bookshop offering a wide range of books about dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD, autism, Asperger syndrome and other learning difficulties. Parents, students and teachers should find both the books and other resources available from SEN Books very useful. SEN Marketing. 618, Leeds Road, Outwood, Wakefield. WF1 2LT. Tel/Fax: 01924 871697 (Mon - Fri, 9.00am to 5.00pm)  Email: sales@senbooks.co.uk  Website: www.senbooks.co.uk
Where to Begin

Approaches to Autism
Good starting point to gain insight into strategies, interventions and therapies.

Autism and Asperger Syndrome (The Facts)
By Dr Simon Baron-Cohen
A useful introduction to autism for people who are new to the world of ASD. Informative without being too technical.

The Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome
By Tony Attwood
Pub: JKP (2008)
An excellent place to start for those wishing to find out more about Asperger Syndrome and high functioning autism.

Ten Things Every Child with Autism Wishes You Knew
By Ellen Notbohm
This succinct and informative book, framed with both humour and compassion, describes ten characteristics that help illuminate but not define children who have autism.

Our Journey Through High Functioning Autism and Asperger Syndrome – A Roadmap
Edited Linda Andron
Pub: JKP (2001)
An excellent book with contributions from parents. Full of useful stories and successful strategies, with children’s own writing at the end.

Autism spectrum disorders: the complete guide
By C. Sicile-Kira
A comprehensive, accessible guide to autism, Asperger syndrome, pervasive developmental disorder and other ASDs for parents, carers and teachers.

Autism: A Very Short Introduction
By Uta Frith
What causes autism? Is it a genetic disorder, or due to some unknown environmental hazard? Are we facing an epidemic, what are the main symptoms, how does it relate to Asperger syndrome? The book answers key questions, offering a clear statement on what is currently known about autism and Asperger syndrome.

A Beginner’s Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders: Essential Information for Parents and Professionals
By Paul G. Taylor
Pub: JKP (2011)
This short introduction is an ideal starting point for anyone encountering ASD for the first time, ensuring that parents, carers, teachers and other professionals feel confident, informed and able to cope with the road ahead.

Explaining Autism Spectrum Disorder
By Clare Lawrence
What is an autism spectrum disorder? The book provides a clear and concise introduction to this fascinating and perplexing subject. Written in accessible, non-specialist language, the book provides an ideal basis for parents, carers, teachers and employers to understand what the autism spectrum is.
**Parenting**

**Hints and Tips for Helping Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders**
By Dion E. Betts, Nancy J. Patrick
Pub: JKP (2008)
Offers ideas for tackling everyday difficulties, such as bathing, bedtime, school trips, and selecting the right child minder for children with autism. This book provides practical strategies to enable children to develop the social skills needed to manage and enjoy daily life to the fullest.

**Sleep Difficulties and Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Guide for Parents and Professionals**
By Kenneth J Aitken
Pub: JKP (2012)
A comprehensive guide to the management of sleep difficulties. It introduces various remedies and focuses on the problems that are commonly found in autism spectrum disorders and related conditions. It examines why some sleep problems are more common among people with an ASD than others, and how sleep problems evolve over time.

**Plan B: Empowering the Single Parent!...to Benefit their Child with Autism**
By Karra Barber-Wada
If, like many parents of children with autism, you are tackling the job of raising your child on your own, this book could be the resource you need. It aims to help you to make your own road map towards thriving while you solo parent.

**The Red Beast: Controlling Anger in Children with Asperger's Syndrome**
By Brenda Smith Myles and Jack Southwick
Pub: JKP (2008)
This illustrated story book presents an accessible, fun way to talk about anger, with useful tips about how to ‘tame the red beast’ and guidance for parents on how anger affects children with Asperger’s Syndrome. Aimed at children aged 5 to 9 years old.

**Adults on the Autism Spectrum leave the nest: Achieving Supported Independence**
By Nancy Perry
Pub: JKP (2009)
This book provides a guide for parents on how to prepare their children for adulthood and details the kinds of services people with an ASD need in order to live independently.

**Destination Friendship**
By Mary Benton, Carol Hollis, Kelly Mahler, Alice Womer
This book provides easy-to-use, research-based strategies and activities that support the development of friendship skills in children with ASD within an active and fun learning environment.

**A Practical Guide to Autism: What Every Parent, Family Member and Teacher Needs to Know**
By Fred R. Volkmar and Lisa A. Wiesner
Pub: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. (2009)
This American book presents an accessible overview of all aspects of ASDs; its definition, possible causes, diagnosis, etc. The guide includes case examples, answers to parents’ questions, drawings and narratives by children with autism, reading lists and other resources.

**Families of Adults With Autism: Stories and Advice for the Next Generation**
Edited by Jane Johnson and Anne Van Renselaer
Pub: JKP (2008)
This book offers practical advice to families who are affected by autism spectrum disorders, and provides insights for professionals working with people with ASDs.
The Autism Sourcebook
By Karen Siff Exkorn
When Karen's son Jake was diagnosed as having autism, she struggled to pull together comprehensive information about the disorder. As a direct result of her own experiences, Karen offers other parents the knowledge she wishes she had at the beginning.

Asperkids: An Insiders Guide to Loving, Understanding and Teaching Children with Asperger Syndrome
By Jennifer Cook O'Toole
Pub: JKP (2012)
Asperkids is an insider’s guide that is full of effective and fun methods for engaging with children who have Asperger syndrome. The author discusses theory of mind, communication, sensory difficulties, and how to use a child’s special interests to encourage academic, social and emotional growth.

Overcoming Your Child's Fears and Worries
By Cathy Creswell and Lucy Willetts
Pub: Robinson (2007)
Around 15 per cent of children are thought to suffer from anxiety disorders; the most commonly identified emotional or behavioural problems among children. Based on techniques developed and practised by the authors, this book teaches parents how to use cognitive behavioural techniques with their children, helping them to overcome any fears, worries and phobias. This book is based on the authors’ experience at their anxiety disorders clinic at the University of Reading and developed from a programme based on working almost exclusively with parents.

Overcoming Your Child’s Shyness and Social Anxiety
By Cathy Creswell and Lucy Willetts
Many children are naturally shy but extreme shyness and social anxiety can become a major childhood problem, leading to avoidance of school, difficulty in making friends and even developing into social anxiety in adulthood. In this book, the authors explain how parents can help a shy child learn to challenge their thoughts and behaviour patterns and learn to participate confidently in every aspect of their lives. Based on clinically proven cognitive behavioural principles, the book explains what causes shyness, how to identify social anxiety in your child (sometimes masked by anger or stubbornness) and how to gradually help your child face their anxieties and develop problem-solving strategies.

Helping Parents with Challenging Children
By V Mark Durand and Meme Hieneman
Having a child with challenging behaviour can be frustrating and affect the entire family. This workbook aims to help you take a more positive attitude toward your child and carry out effective steps to improve behaviour.

Achieving Best Behavior for Children with Developmental Disabilities
By Pamela Lewis
Pub: JKP (2005)
This workbook is designed for parents of children with developmental disabilities. It offers step-by-step instructions for drawing up and implementing behaviour plans that successfully address and improve challenging behaviours. The book is full of checklists and activities to monitor and assess behaviours and track a child’s development.

Parenting a Teen or Young Adult with Asperger Syndrome
By Brenda Boyd
Pub: JKP (2013)
This book contains 325 astute and practical ideas, tips and strategies to address the complex issues parents face during this crucial period of transition for their children with Asperger syndrome.
Personal Accounts

Freaks, Geeks, and Asperger Syndrome
By Luke Jackson
Written by Luke when he was 13 this honest and witty book covers a host of tricky teenage issues such as bullying and dating.

Pretending to be Normal: Living with Asperger Syndrome (expanded edition)
By Liane Holliday Willey
Pub: JKP (2014)
The author has AS, and chronicles her successful life as a lecturer, writer, wife and mother. Includes coping strategies and guidance based on her own experiences.

The Journal of Best Practices
By David Finch
Pub: Scribner (2012)
The warm and hilarious bestselling memoir by a man diagnosed with Asperger syndrome who sets out to save his marriage. Filled with humour and surprising wisdom, this is a candid story of ruthless self-improvement, a unique window into living with an autism spectrum condition, and proof that a true heart can conquer all.

Martian in the Playground
By Clare Sainsbury
Written by a young woman with AS about her time at school. Easy to read and quite an insight into the problems faced by a young person with AS during their school days. Still very relevant today, and a useful book to give to teachers.

George and Sam
By Charlotte Moore
Journalist Charlotte Moore describes life with her two boys who have autism and their younger brother (who doesn’t). This is a fascinating observation of their behaviour, routines, language and interests, and gives an insight into their world. It’s a book written with appreciation, acceptance and love.

Travels With My Teddy Bear
By Debra Schiman
This book is the fascinating record of the author’s journeys undertaken with her beloved teddy Bearsac, through the familiar cities of Europe and regions as remote as China and Mongolia. As well as documenting the author’s travels, the book also illustrates the highs and lows of Asperger Syndrome.

The Horse Boy
By Rupert Isaacson
An account by the parents of a three year old boy who has autism and an affinity with horses. In their search for healing for their son, they leave home and travel to Mongolia, the spiritual home of the horse, risking everything to help him. Astonishing, brave and uplifting.

Tortured Soul Part 1: A female Aspie’s Story
By Emma Thomson
Pub: Lulu (2011)
Emma describes her childhood, explaining how she always thought she was different and what it felt like to be bullied. She also talks about her experience of secondary education and explains why she was excluded. The final part of her book covers some sensitive issues, including being arrested because of the way she communicated and also being sectioned (she explains how the section was revoked and her discharge from psychiatric hospital).
Education and Learning

Asperger Syndrome Pocketbook
By Ronnie Young
Pub: Teachers’ Pocketbooks (2009)
The author explains what Asperger syndrome is and offers a range of helpful strategies for overcoming the challenges it poses in the classroom. The book covers social impairment, obsessive interests; repetition and change, verbal and non-verbal communication, anger, sensory problems, study skills and exams, and also considers whole school implications. A very useful resource for teachers and support staff in particular.

Asperger Syndrome: a practical guide for teachers
By Val Cumine, Julia Dunlop and Gill Stevenson
A clear and concise guide for effective classroom teaching. Informs and equips professionals not familiar with AS, with educational and behavioural strategies.

100 Ideas for Supporting Pupils on the Autistic Spectrum
By Francine Brower
Pub: Bloomsbury (2007)
This book provides those working with autistic children one hundred ideas of how to support and develop their learning. This book presents ideas ranging from developing pupils’ understanding and communication skills to ensuring they are comfortable within their learning environment.

How to Succeed with Specific Learning Difficulties at College and University
By Amanda Kirby
For any adult with specific learning difficulties going to college or university can be a challenge. These can present in the work and home setting, learning new skills, meeting new people, and coping with a new environment. From study skills to budgeting, from cooking to relationships, the author identifies routes to success in both educational and social contexts.

From Home to School with Autism: How to Make Inclusion a Success
By K I Al-Ghani
Pub: JKP (2011)
Beginning primary school is a challenging time most children. For those with an autistic spectrum disorder, the significant changes involved can be overwhelming. This book arms schools information, easy-to- implement strategies and photocopiable resources that can help to make early schooldays an enjoyable experience for those on the spectrum.

Schools for Special Needs
By Gabbitas Educational Consultants
Pub: Kogan Page Ltd
An invaluable guide to special schools and colleges. The directory is very detailed; listing not only the contact details of the schools/colleges, but the type of SN catered for and whether the provision is residential or day only. It also provides an extensive guide to many aspects of assessment, the Statement process and provision, and other useful information for parents of children with SN.

The NATSPEC Directory of Colleges
Useful information provided by colleges that are members of the National Association of Specialist Colleges. You can order a NATSPEC directory from: www.natspec.org.uk/directory/

COPE – The Directory of Post 16 Residential Education and Training for Young People with Special Needs
By Helen Evans, Tessa Doe, Debbie Steel and Hilary Jones
Pub: Lifetime Publishing
A directory of post-16 residential education and training for young people with special needs.
Top Tips for Asperger Students: How to Get the Most Out of University and College
By Rosemary Martin
Pub: JKP (2010)
Going to university is undoubtedly a difficult, challenging time for anyone. The book is an informative account of what to expect when you leave the home for the first time and enter this strange environment.

Surviving the Special Educational Needs System: How to be a ‘Velvet Bulldozer’
By Sandy Row
This is an invaluable book for parents who are facing the daunting task of securing appropriate special educational provision for their children, and it can help them plot a course through the complicated SEN maze. It is written by someone who has first hand knowledge of the system, and as well as describing the author's strategies in securing appropriate provision for her four children.

Home Educating Our Autistic Spectrum Children
Edited by Terri Dowty and Kitt Cowlishaw
Pub: JKP (2008)
Parents who have chosen to home educate their children with autism or Asperger's syndrome candidly relate their experiences in this book. Following these accounts, the final chapters offer practical information on the law, social contact and resources, and getting started.

Son-rise: The Miracle continues
Available online through Amazon
Account of the development of a lifeless, non-communicative little boy into an active loving engaging one — this is the basis of the Son-rise programme.

Understanding Applied Behaviour Analysis
By Albert J Kearney
Pub: JKP (2007)
This book explains the learning and reinforcement processes that form the basis of ABA programmes. It also describes how the science of behavior analysis can be applied to real life problems, looks at how behaviour is assessed and various intervention techniques that are often employed with children who have special needs.

Small Steps Forward
By Sarah Newman (2nd edition 2008)
Pub: JKP
This book provides information and ideas to parents of pre-school children with SENs to encourage their child's development, using games and materials that most children will already have. Topics such as behaviour management, toilet training and the support parents should expect from health, education and social services are also covered.

Stepping Out
By Sarah Newman
The follow-on book to “Small Steps Forward” (see above). The book provides practical advice, games and activities to encourage the development of a child's skills; this time being applicable to children in the 3 to 11 age range.

Asperger Syndrome in the inclusive classroom: Advice and Strategies for Teachers.
By Stacey W. Betts (et al)
Pub: JKP (2007)
Written from a teacher's perspective, this book provides a variety of strategies to support and encourage mainstream pupils who have AS. The book's contents covers every part of the school day, including playtime and lunch breaks.
Martian in the Playground (see Personal Accounts section)
By Clare Sainsbury

Employment

AutoPower! Successful Living and Working with an Autism Spectrum Disorder
By Herman Jansen and Betty Rombout
Pub: JKP (2013)
This book presents a series of candid interviews with adults on the autism spectrum that offers a unique insight into their work and life experiences. Through these accounts are heard the many ways that people with an ASD have overcome challenges and used their autism traits for employment success. From software engineers to company directors, to those who work in autism advocacy, the interviewees openly discuss the pitfalls and the positives of working life with autism.

The Wonderful World of Work
By Jeanette Purkiss
Pub: JKP (2014)
This hands-on workbook demystifies the world of work in order to help teenagers with Asperger syndrome feel confident in their ability to be successful at their studies and get a job. Full of practical information, engaging activities, funny illustrations and inspiring personal stories, this book gives these teenagers a positive image of what people on the autism spectrum can achieve.

The Complete Guide to Getting a Job for People with Asperger's Syndrome
By Barbara Bissonette
Pub: JKP (2012)
The author (who is an Asperger's syndrome employment expert) describes exactly what it takes to get a job in the neurotypical workplace. Every aspect of finding employment is covered, from defining strengths and researching occupations, to marketing oneself and projecting confidence and enthusiasm in interviews. Job hunters are taught how to develop a personal profile of their talents and skills, their ideal work environment and important work criteria. They are then showed how to set realistic goals and develop an effective job search plan. Accompanying the text is a wealth of checklists, templates, sample scripts and written communications.

Helping Adults with Asperger's Syndrome Get & Stay Hired
By Barbara Bissonette
Pub: JKP (2014)
Written for professionals and parents, this book offers employment strategies to support individuals with Asperger's Syndrome into fulfilling and long-lasting careers. It provides a primer on how people with AS think and teaches coaching techniques to help with job-hunting and workplace challenges.

Employment for Individuals with Asperger Syndrome or Non-Verbal Learning Disability
By Yvona Fast
Most people with non-verbal learning disorder or autism spectrum disorders are underemployed. This book aims to change this. With practical advice on everything from job hunting to interview techniques, from 'fitting in' in the workplace to whether or not to disclose a diagnosis, this book guides those people successfully through the employment minefield.
Relationships

The Other Half of Asperger Syndrome
By Maxine Aston
Pub: JKP (2014)
Does your other half have Asperger syndrome or do you suspect that he or she is on the autism spectrum? This quick and helpful relationships guide provides all the information needed for relationship success with such a partner.

Exploring Friendships, Puberty and Relationships
By Kate Ripley
Pub: JKP (2014)
This is an evidence-based programme that is designed to help young people on the autism spectrum to cope with the many challenges of the adolescent years. It encourages them to explore their identity, develop their friendships and to begin to think about adult relationships, tackling the important related issues of puberty, sexuality, gender identity, body image, dress codes, self-care, safety and conventions for touching along the way. Designed to be used either as a 30 consecutive session programme or to be dipped into as particular issues arise, it contains engaging lesson plans, supplementary activities plus a number of other resources.

Talking Together (book series)
By Lorna Scott and Lesley Kerr Edwards
Pub: Family Planning Association. 50, Featherstone Street, London EC1Y 8QU
A series of books for parents of children/young people with learning disabilities: Talking together...about growing up, Talking together...about sex and relationships, Talking together...about contraception.
Orders accepted in writing only. Write to the above address, or alternatively place orders by faxing the following number: 0845 123 2349 or emailing the FPA at fpadirect@fpa.org.uk
FPA's learning disabilities resources webpage: www.fpa.org.uk/professionals/publicationsandresources/peoplewithlearningdisabilities

Troubleshooting Relationships on the Autism Spectrum
By Ashley Stanford
Pub: JKP (2013)
Don’t you wish relationships came with a manual? Ashley Stanford has written a user’s guide to relationships that adopts a practical troubleshooting approach to resolving difficulties that should appeal to the logical minds of individuals on the autism spectrum, as well as offering valuable guidance to their partners.

The Aspie Girl's Guide to Being Safe With Men: The Unwritten Safety Rules No-one is Telling You
By Debi Brown
Pub: JKP (2013)
This book provides a frank and honest discussion that will certainly help Aspie females recognise and avoid unsafe relationships with men. But should disaster strike, it will also help the woman with ASD work out a plan of recovery for good physical and mental well-being.

The Independent Woman's Handbook for Super Safe Living on the Autistic Spectrum
By Robyn Steward
Pub: JKP (2013)
This honest and personal account is filled with practical tips and strategies for living a safe and independent life as a young woman on the autistic spectrum. It covers common areas of difficulty such as friendships, relationships and sex, alcohol and drugs, money and employment, and staying safe out and about, at home and online.
Explaining ASD/AS

**Blue Bottle Mystery, Of Mice and Aliens. Lisa and the Lacemaker. Haze**

4 books (sold individually). By Kathy Hoopmann

Four easy to read adventure stories, ideal for siblings to read or for a child with AS (especially if they are coming to terms with their diagnosis).
From age 7 upwards.

**Blue Bottle Mystery** is about two boys who find a bottle with a genie in it, in their playground. During the course of the story one of the boys is diagnosed with AS.

**Of Mice and Aliens** is about the same two boys — one learning to cope with his newly diagnosed AS. An alien crash lands in their back garden...

**Lisa and the Lacemaker.** Lisa (who also has AS) joins the two boys as they find out the mystery of the lacemaker — a gentle ghost story.
For teenagers.

**Haze.** An absorbing and intriguing story highlighting the strengths and difficulties facing a teenager with AS. Seb, who is brilliant with numbers, and his new friends are caught up in a web of computer fraud and lies.

**Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome** (see Personal Accounts section)
By Luke Jackson

**My Autism Book**
by Gloria Dura-Vila and Tamar Levi
Pub: JKP (2013)

When a child is diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder, parents often feel overwhelmed and uncertain about how to communicate the diagnosis to their child. This beautifully illustrated book helps parents to explain autism to their child in a sensitive, positive and accurate way using clear language that speaks directly to the child.

**My brother is different**
By Louise Gorrod.
Pub: NAS (1997)

Written by the mother of a child with autism, this book explains the behaviour of a child with an ASD in terms that young siblings will be able to understand, enabling them to deal more effectively both emotionally and practically with their brother/sister. Aimed at children aged between 4 and 7 years of age.

**Different Like Me**
By Jennifer Elder

This illustrated book helps inspire children who are different and shows them that they too can succeed. The book introduces famous and historical figures who all excelled in their own fields, but are united by the fact they too found it difficult to ‘fit in’.

**Children and Teenagers with Aspergers – The Journey of Parenting from Birth to Teens**
By Anna Van Der Post et al
Pub: chipmunkapublishing (2009)

Eleven stories written by parents of children and teenagers with Asperger syndrome. Affecting and extraordinary stories that tell it ‘as it is’ about the daily challenges faced by parents whose children and teenagers have Asperger syndrome. Available online from Amazon.

**What Is It Like to Be Me?**
By Alenka Klemenc
Pub: JKP (2013)

This illustrated book follows Greg, a young boy with Asperger syndrome, as he tells us all about the world as he sees and experiences it, from his love of batteries to the challenges he faces at school. With comprehensive sections for parents and professionals, the book helps increase awareness of Asperger syndrome.
Can I tell you about Asperger syndrome? A guide for friends and family
By Jude Welton
This book is written from the viewpoint of Adam, a nine year old boy with Asperger syndrome. Adam explains his talents and difficulties as if he were talking to school friends and family.

Health and biomedical interventions

Let's eat out with Celiac/Coeliac and Food Allergies
By Kim Koeller and Robert La France
Pub: R & R Publishing (2014)
This book is a great resource for anyone with coeliac disease and/or food allergies, and can help such people to travel, eat out and enjoy their food while staying safe.

Autism – Exploring the Benefits of a Gluten- and Casein-Free Diet
By Paul Whiteley, Mark Earnden and Eloise Robinson
Pub: Routledge (2013)
This book offers parents, teachers, and other education or health professionals with an easy-to-read alternative to sifting through the combined science. Written by leading experts in autism research, food, nutrition and dietetics, the book cuts through the jargon to offer readers a no-nonsense, accessible and authoritative overview of how diet might affect some characteristics of autism, and provides a range of recipes and handy hints for making mealtimes fun for children with autism and related conditions who are embarking on such a dietary change. To buy this book, visit www.theautismfoodclub.co.uk/thebook.html

Good Healthcare for All booklet
The Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities has launched a new easier-read resource about what to expect from the NHS. The booklet provides practical hints and tips for people with learning disabilities, family carers and anyone who supports a person with learning disabilities on how best to use the NHS, what to expect, real life examples of challenges and how they can be overcome as well as advice about how to get help and useful contacts to get more information. To download the booklet please visit: www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/publications/176171/

General

Exploring Feelings: Cognitive Behaviour Therapy to Manage Anger, and
Exploring Feelings: Cognitive Behaviour Therapy to Manage Anxiety
By Tony Attwood
Two books that are very practical and contain structured activities designed to help children recognise the physical manifestations of anger or anxiety, and develop managing strategies.

Autism’s False Prophets
By Paul A Offit MD
Parents are often overwhelmed by private practitioners’ theories that are often unproven, based on anecdotal evidence and not backed by research. This book clearly outlines the most common theories and the actual evidence for and against them. It also provides a good model for evaluating any new theories.

Appreciating Asperger Syndrome: Looking at the Upside with 300 Positive Points
By Brenda Boyde.
Pub: JKP (2009)
For every characteristic of AS that can be viewed negatively, there are many that can be developed and encouraged. This book shows that by adjusting our perception of what is ‘normal’ and embracing diversity, AS cannot only be understood and accepted, but also appreciated.
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time
By Mark Haddon
This is a detective story with a difference, and is written from the viewpoint of a 15 year old boy who has Asperger Syndrome. A sympathetic and insightful book, and a good introduction to how a person with Asperger syndrome might understand and react to events.

By Steve Hardy and Theresa Joyce
Pub: Pavilion Publishing Ltd (2011)
This handbook is a great resource which is essential in helping ensure that there is a competent workforce that has the capabilities to provide effective, ethical and high quality support to people whose behaviour is described as challenging.

Sensory Perceptual Issues in Autism and Asperger Syndrome
By Olga Bogdashina
This book describes the sensory and perceptual differences experienced by people with an ASD. It also points out possible patterns of sensory experiences in autism, and how these may produce differences in cognition. Assessment and intervention issues are also described, with guidance to choosing appropriate remedial methods and techniques.

Autism All-Stars: How We Use Our Autism and Asperger Traits to Shine in Life
Edited by Josie Santomauro
Pub: JKP (2012)
Looking at the positive influences, great talents and unique thought processes of individuals with autism spectrum disorders, this book is a celebration of those who have used their autism to shine in life. The autobiographical stories in this book are full of wisdom and humour, and will be an inspiration for anyone who has high-functioning autism or Asperger Syndrome, their family and friends, and the professionals who work alongside them.

No More Victims: Protecting Those with Autism from Cyber Bullying, Internet Predators & Scams
By Jed Baker
The digital world offers a wonderful way to communicate and socialise with others, but it is also rife with the dangers of being victimised emotionally, physically, and financially. Trusting individuals with autism spectrum disorders, who are often socially isolated, are especially vulnerable to online predators. This book aims to be a resource to help prepare them for the minefields they may encounter on the Internet.

Community Care and The Law
By Luke Clements & Pauline Thompson
Pub: Legal Action Group (2011)
If you are a lawyer, a policy worker, voluntary adviser, carer, or employed in relevant areas by a local authority, this meticulously footnoted book and the knowledge and research resources contained within its pages will be something you need. It includes extensive tables of cases, statutes and statutory instruments. Easy to navigate, the book provides a detailed index, at least thirteen flowcharts and three appendices containing extracts from legislation, plus regulations and directions as well as precedents.
NASDAQ leaflets, booklets and DVDs

Some very useful resources have been produced by the NAS, some of which are listed below.

**Leaflets/Booklets:**
- It can get better: Dealing with common behaviour problems in young autistic children
- Asperger’s syndrome: from diagnosis to solution
- After diagnosis: Information for parents and carers of children with an autism spectrum disorder
- Autism: Understanding and managing anger
- Autism: Understanding Behaviour
- Helping young children with autism to learn
- Talking together about an autism diagnosis
- Autism: supporting your teenager
- Going to the Hairdressers: A Guide for Parents of Children with ASDs
- Going to the Dentist: A Guide for Parents of Children with ASDs
- Sensory Strategies: Practical ways to help children and young people with autism learn and achieve
- Environment and surroundings: How to make them autism friendly
- My brother is different
- My sister is different
- My special brother Rory
- Everybody is different
- I’m a teenager…get me out of here!
- This is Me! - My Assessment Profile
- Local voices, local choices - A guide to consulting young people with autism on your Local Offer

**DVDs:**
- A Different Life
- An Asperger Life
- A is for Autism
- Being Me
- A to A
- Autism – Winning Through
- Connections
- Socialeyes
- Outside In
- Being Different
- Whichever way you look at it, it’s still autism
- Autism at School
- Asperger Syndrome – A Helping Hand
- The Transporters Home Pack
- Somewhere over the spectrum

The above are just a few of the many resources available from the NAS Online Shop; the main page for books and resources being [www.autism.org.uk/shop/books-and-resources-from-the-nas.aspx](http://www.autism.org.uk/shop/books-and-resources-from-the-nas.aspx)

If you be interested in ordering any of the NAS publications listed above, please visit the following page: [www.autism.org.uk/shop/books-and-resources-from-the-nas/family%20and%20carers.aspx](http://www.autism.org.uk/shop/books-and-resources-from-the-nas/family%20and%20carers.aspx)

If you are interested in ordering any of the DVDs, please visit this page for more information and to place orders: [www.autism.org.uk/shop/books-and-resources-from-the-nas/dvds.aspx](http://www.autism.org.uk/shop/books-and-resources-from-the-nas/dvds.aspx)
**USEFUL WEBSITES**

While every effort has been made to check the following websites, it is sensible to always use common sense when accessing the internet. Inclusion of these websites does not indicate an endorsement of this information by the Richmond Branch of the NAS.

**General (ASD)**

- [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk) – The National Autistic Society website. UK wide, general information on autism, and information on types of intervention, NAS-run schools and other services, etc.

- [www.info.autism.org.uk](http://www.info.autism.org.uk) – The NAS Autism Services Directory, the UK’s most comprehensive directory of services and events for people with autism, their families and people who work with them.

- [www.mcch.org.uk/autismlondon.aspx](http://www.mcch.org.uk/autismlondon.aspx) – Autism London. This charity is now part of the mcch group. It is possible to email requests for factsheets and discover what other services they provide via this webpage.

- [www.mugsy.org](http://www.mugsy.org) – Surrey NAS website.

- [www.aspergerfoundation.org.uk](http://www.aspergerfoundation.org.uk) – A very useful website giving lots of information about Asperger syndrome.

- [www.aspergersyndrome.me.uk](http://www.aspergersyndrome.me.uk) – An Asperger syndrome help and support website created by the father of a boy who has Asperger syndrome. A good place to look for information about AS.

- [http://autisticuk.org](http://autisticuk.org) - Autistic UK is run by and for people with autism. Autistic UK campaigns to advance the interests of all people who have an ASD and ensure they have the chance to represent themselves.

- [www.aspergerssyndrome.org](http://www.aspergerssyndrome.org) – OASIS@MAAP website. This American website contains a lot of information relating to not only Asperger syndrome, but also autism and pervasive developmental disorder.

- [www.theautismdirectory.com](http://www.theautismdirectory.com) - The Autism Directory is run by parents of children who have ASDs. It aims to pull together information and signpost families affected by autism to the help they need.

- [https://sites.google.com/site/thehiddenaspie/](https://sites.google.com/site/thehiddenaspie/) - A website offering recognition and support to people who think they might have Asperger's syndrome, but are so high functioning that their difficulties are not readily identified.

- [www.autismlinks.co.uk](http://www.autismlinks.co.uk) - A website that aims to provide information and links to useful resources relating to autism.
Useful websites

www.lifeonthespectrum.net - Life on the Spectrum is a UK-based charitable (non-profit) organisation, dedicated to raising awareness of autism and providing information and understanding to autistic people, particularly late-diagnosed adults, to identify their issues and develop coping strategies for dealing with life.

Education

www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk – Formerly known as Treehouse, Ambitious About Autism is one of the UK's leading autism campaign organisations.


www.ace-ed.org.uk – Advice Centre for Education.


www.he-special.org.uk – Home education for children with special needs.

www.educationotherwise.net – National organisation for parents educating their children out of school. They hold regular events and can put you in contact with local groups, etc. Being a member also entitles you to discounts at museums, etc.

www.richmond.gov.uk – Borough of Richmond Upon Thames website. Useful links to education and associated services.

www.sossen.org.uk – The website of SOSISEN

www.nasschools.org.uk – The National Association of Independent Schools and Non-Maintained Special Schools. Within this website is a schools location link through which it is possible to search for out-of-borough special schools.

www.natspec.org.uk – The Association of National Specialist Colleges. If the young person for whom you are caring is considering further education out-of-borough, this could be a useful source of information.

www.specialneedsuk.org – This dedicated website for special needs includes a ‘find a school’ option.

www.goodschoolsguide.co.uk – Independently and professionally written by parents for parents, this guide provides comprehensive information on over 1200 independent and state schools, including SEN provision. To gain access to all the data provided, it will be necessary to pay a subscription.

www.parentsforinclusion.org – Parents helping parents so that children with disabilities can learn, make friends and have a voice in ordinary school and throughout life.

www.specialneedsjungle.com - Blog created by author and former TV journalist Tania Tirraoro, whose two sons have Asperger syndrome. It aims to help parents negotiate the SEN education system in the UK and contains links and information to help parents find appropriate educational provision for their children.

www.schoolorspecialneeds.co.uk - Gabbitas's special needs schools and colleges website. It is possible to search for dedicated SEN schools and colleges or mainstream independent schools offering SEN provision via this website.

www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk - The Autism Education Trust is dedicated to coordinating, supporting and promoting effective education practice for all children and young people on the autism spectrum.
Teaching Materials

www.do2learn.com – Teaching resources to download from the internet. These resources are designed for children with learning disabilities, including lots of pictures for activity schedules.


www.hope-education.co.uk – HOPE catalogue (Educational Resources).

www.hanen.org – Canadian based website containing resources and information on Hanen programme ‘More than Words’.

www.autismteachingtools.com – American based website that is a practical source of information and teaching tips for working with learners who have ASDs.

www.icanyouknow.co.uk - I Can You Know is for children who need a learning boost. Everyone wants their children to be happy and achieve their full potential, and by providing each child with a specially designed profile of learning activities, I Can You Know aims to build their confidence and skills.

Preparing for Adulthood/Transition

www.transitioninfonetwork.org.uk – This is a website for parents, carers and people who work with and for disabled young people in transition to adulthood. The Transition Information Network (TIN) is an alliance of organisations and individuals who come together with a common aim: to improve disabled young people’s experience of transition to adulthood.

www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/ - Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) is funded by the Department for Education as part of the delivery support for the SEN and disability reforms. The PfA brings together a wide range of expertise and experience of working with young people and families, at a local and national level and across government, to support young people into adulthood with paid employment, good health, independent living and friends, relationships and community inclusion.

http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/ - Skills Funding Agency website

Literature


www.autism.org.uk/shop/amazon-store.aspx - NAS Amazon affiliate online shop. Tried, tested and trusted books and resources about ASDs.

www.eurospanbookstore.com/AAPC - Supplies AAPC Publishing’s books, which provide mainstream, hands-on advice and information to parents and professionals about topics relating to ASDs.

www.senbooks.co.uk - This is a specialist bookshop offering a wide range of books about dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD, autism, Asperger syndrome and other learning difficulties.
Health, therapies and biomedical intervention

www.glutafin.co.uk – Gluten free products.


www.treatingautism.co.uk – A website giving information about biomedical intervention.

www.espa-research.org.uk – Research centre — examining the biological aspects of ASD.

www.autismtreatment.org.uk – The website of Autism Treatment Plus, again examining the biological aspects of autism as well as behavioural assessments.

www.autismmediachannel.com – Site about biomedical intervention plus other treatments and therapies.

www.afasicengland.org.uk – Afasic seeks to raise awareness and to create better services and provision for children and young people with speech and language impairments.

www.talkingpoint.org.uk – ICAN website to help parents understand about speech and language difficulties and how to seek help.

www.ican.org.uk – ICAN works to support the development of speech, language and communication skills in all children with a special focus on those who find this hard; children with speech, language and communication needs.

www.makaton.org - Makaton is a language programme using signs and symbols to aid communication. It is used to support spoken language; the signs and symbols being used with speech in spoken word order.

www.researchautism.net – As stated on its website, Research Autism is the only UK charity exclusively dedicated to research into autism treatments and therapies.

www.nimh.org.uk – The National Institute of Medical Herbalists. Through this website, it is possible to search for herbalists in practice locally.

www.a-r-h.org – Alliance of Registered Homeopaths. A website through which you can search for locally based homeopaths.

www.freelancedietitians.org – This website can provide contact details of freelance dietitians that work independently in the broad areas of food, nutrition and dietetics. It is possible to search for dietitians according to their area of expertise and location.

www.helpwithtalking.com – Association of Speech & Language Therapists in Independent Practice.

www.ginadavies.co.uk – Gina Davies’s Autism Centre website. Provides services to families, carers and professionals who are dealing with the challenges of autism among children.

www.therapy-directory.org.uk - Therapy Directory offers a search option to find alternative and complementary therapists as well as providing information about the many therapies available.

www.networkinterventions.com - Verbal Behaviour Consultants dedicated to helping learners and their families achieve their maximum potential through personalised and in-depth behavioural therapy programmes (focussing on developing language skills).

www.pictologue.co.uk - Pictologue aims to help children and young people who struggle to enjoy interactions because they cannot understand or use speech appropriately. This is done by developing and enhancing communication skills by providing opportunities for successful interaction and positive learning.
Immunisation

www.nhs.uk/conditions/mmr/Pages/Introduction.aspx – NHS website about the MMR vaccine.

www.netdoctor.co.uk/health_advice/facts/childhoodvaccinations.htm - Netdoctor's vaccination webpage.

www.jabs.org.uk – General information as well as support for parents of vaccine damaged children.

www.informedparent.co.uk – Aims to promote awareness and understanding about vaccinations in order to preserve the freedom of an informed choice.

Social networking and forums

www.talkaboutautism.org.uk - Talk about Autism is an online community and discussion forum for everyone interested in autism, including parents, carers, family members, people on the spectrum, and professionals. It is provided by Ambitious about Autism.

http://community.autism.org.uk/ - The NAS Community is a discussion forum where you'll find people talking about autism and sharing their thoughts, questions and experiences. You will need to register with the website first and set up a Community profile before joining in with the discussions.

www.asd-forum.org.uk/ - The aim of this forum is to provide help, support and friendship to people whose life has been touched in one way or another by an autism spectrum disorder/Asperger syndrome.

www.apieceofthepuzzle.net - A social community website dedicated to people with special needs and disabilities. Within the website, there is a social wall, a chat area and a game room with over 200 games. There is also a parents’ forum, articles for parents, educators and organisations and much more.

Games, toys & sensory needs

www.sensorytoywarehouse.com – The Sensory Toy Warehouse sells a wide variety of exciting, affordable sensory toys designed to stimulate all the senses.

www.rompa.com - Meeting the sensory needs of all generations. Rompa supplies Snoezelen products, sensory integration equipment and many other items suitable for people with additional needs of all ages.

www.sensetoys.com - A leading independent supplier of sensory and tactile toys and educational resources for pre-school and primary school children, and particularly for children who have SEN.

www.sensorydirect.com - Designs, manufactures and distributes a range of therapy products for both children and adults with sensory needs. The products include weighted blankets, jackets and belts, sensory clothing and chewy tubes for those who have sensory integration difficulties.

www.playtoz.co.uk - Supplies a variety of sensory-rich resources that are designed to meet babies and children’s sensory needs. Also offers training courses to assist the development of sensory-rich play.

Legal professionals

www.rlas.org.uk - Richmond Legal Aid Service (RLAS). The aim of RLAS is to provide initial and basic legal advice free of charge by volunteers who are legally qualified to people living in the Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

www.lpld.org - This website can help members of the public who care for individuals with learning disabilities to locate solicitors who have the necessary expertise in the various areas of the law such as community care, benefits, disability discrimination and the question of capacity (under the Mental Capacity Act 2006).

www.childrenslegalcentre.com/index.php?page=home - Coram Legal Children’s Centre provides free legal information, advice and representation to children, young people, their families, carers and professionals, as well as international consultancy on child law and children’s rights.

www.sheridanlaw.co.uk - SheridanLaw Solicitors. Based in Kingston-upon-Thames, SheridanLaw Solicitors offers a range of services to support the needs of people with learning disabilities and their families. This includes expertise in preparing wills and trusts.

Miscellaneous

www.welfarerights.net – A Scottish-based site, though a lot of the information is relevant to the whole of the UK. Provides information about benefit entitlements and services and offers a welfare rights advice service.

www.familyfund.org.uk – Help for families with severely disabled children and young people who are on the lowest of incomes in order to help relieve the stress of everyday life.

www.fledglings.org.uk – A search and supply service for resources parents need to help their child’s development. The search service is free.

www.cerebra.org.uk – Information about seminars, workshops, etc., for carers of brain-injured children.

www.cafamily.org.uk – Contact a Family site. Provides advice, information and support to families who care for a child with a disability.

www.manchesterairport.co.uk/manweb.nsf - Type “Airport Awareness” into Manchester Airport’s website’s ‘Search’ box, then click the link at the top of the list on the next webpage to download an invaluable guide called Airport Awareness. This has been produced by Manchester Airport to help children with ASD and their parents/carers cope with the challenges associated with air travel. Although aimed at people using Manchester Airport, the information could very well be used by families flying from other venues. Also available are videos to use when preparing your child to fly from Manchester Airport - see below:
Terminal 1: www.youtube.com/watch?v=nbQjX7sYjCs
Terminal 2: www.youtube.com/watch?v=bORINk7PF-4
Terminal 3: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iwz-znTso-8


www.ceacard.co.uk – The Cinema Exhibitor’s Association. From this website, you can download an application form to apply for a cinema card that entitles a disabled person’s companion to free cinema tickets, as well as details of participating cinemas.

www.disabledgo.com - DisabledGo provides detailed information about disabled access to numerous locations throughout the UK.

www.cqc.org.uk – Care Quality Commission

www.richmondaid.org.uk – Richmond AID at the Disability Action and Advice Centre

www.gov.uk/browse/disabilities – The Government website’s section that gives general information about what it offers to people with disabilities and carers.

www.richmond.gov.uk/disabled_persons_freedom_pass_scheme and www.freedompass.org
Both these websites give information about Freedom Passes, the first being the local Council’s webpage, and the second being the London Freedom Pass website.

www.turn2us.org.uk – Are you missing out on benefits or tax credits? ‘Turn2us’ could very well tell you!

http://starthere.org.uk/ – StartHere is an information service that provides links to a wide range of services that could help if you have a problem. A wide range of issues is covered, including health, caring, families, education, employment, benefits, and welfare rights.

www.templegrandin.com – Dr. Temple Grandin’s website, which gives information about her books and DVDs, her work with animals as well as her thoughts about autism.


www.kithandkids.org.uk – Promoting empowerment and social inclusion for and with families with members who have a disability.

www.netbuddy.org.uk - Full of handy tips and bright ideas for parents, carers, teachers and therapists of people with learning disabilities. It is a ‘by you, for you’ resource, offering practical solutions to every day issues.

www.toughfurniture.com – This company supplies furniture that is designed to withstand challenging behaviour and is built with safety in mind. It is possible to download a brochure from the website.

www.whizz-kidz.org.uk – This charity aims to help give children and young people with disabilities (in particular mobility impairments) the independence to enjoy an active life.

www.autismgames.com.au – An Australian website containing a number of games to aid the development of social play in children who have ASD, plus a selection of strategies and concepts for parents or carers to utilise.

www.widgit.com - Widgit’s Symbol website. Symbols are images that are used to make meanings clearer and easier to understand by providing a visual representation of a single word or concept. They can help communicate ideas and information to people who for whatever reason have difficulties using text.

www.symbolworld.org - Website created by Widgit Software, dedicated to people who use symbols. It has material for all ages, including personal contributions, stories and learning materials.

www.widgit-health.com - Widgit’s medical communication aids for individuals, first aiders and medical professionals. Includes ICE cards, first aid booklets, first response books and patient communication sheets.

www.autistica.org.uk - Autistica is the largest UK charity raising funds for medical research that will improve diagnosis, advance new treatments and discover the causes of autism. Its key objectives are to discover what causes ASDs and how that knowledge can be used to ease the burden for families, to discover the specific characteristics of ASD that are amenable and relevant to treatment, and to find out how to improve early screening and diagnosis in order to achieve timely and effective intervention.

www.robynsteward.com - Robyn Steward has Asperger syndrome and is a specialist trainer for professionals, a mentor to people who have ASD and their families and is also a non-clinical consultant. She feels that the training and mentoring she offers is augmented by the insight gained from having Asperger syndrome herself.

www.embracethefuture.org.au – Australian website providing resources about emotions and coping.
Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) information supplied in the form of several videos by a parent whose son has the condition. PDA is now thought to be part of the autism spectrum.

NAS YouTube Channel from where videos relating to autism and Asperger syndrome can be viewed and uploaded.

NAS and Financial Services Authority website that aims to assist people who have autism to manage their money.

Personal Communication Passports are used to document and present information about children and adults who are unable to speak for themselves. They are a way of recording the important things about that person in an accessible, person-centred way and of supporting their transition between services.

Jigsaw Care Services Plus is an introductory care recruitment agency that places personal assistants with young people who have additional needs or disabilities. They also can place special needs nannies with families, the aim being in all cases to assist the individuals concerned to live a life as close as possible to that of their peer group.

Interesting and useful website covering issues to do with SEN and disabilities. It provides samples of content and an archive of selected articles from SEN Magazine, to which you can subscribe via this website.

Anna Kennedy Online. An invaluable website containing a lot of information covering numerous topics relating to living with an ASD.

Ability Net has a team that is able to offer free local computer assistance to disabled people. They can diagnose and fix most computer related problems; install and set up hardware, software, internet, email and accessibility settings.

Family Footings is a project for families of children with disabilities. They help families find a common language with professionals through person centred approaches.

KIDS is a national charity that works with disabled children, young people and their families across England. KIDS' vision is a world in which all disabled children and young people realise their aspirations and their right to an inclusive community that supports them and their families.

Alis Rowe has Asperger’s Syndrome. She has found life so far very challenging, has decided to embrace her condition and wants to drive social change and ultimately make life more pleasant for females with ASD. She does this through her alias and avatar, ‘the girl with the curly hair.’

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation is a charity for people with severe learning disabilities whose behaviour challenges. Their vision is for anyone with severe learning disabilities who displays challenging behaviour to have the same life opportunities as everyone else, and work to improve understanding of challenging behaviour, empower families with information and support, and help others to provide better services and more opportunities.

Special Help 4 Special Needs offers the practical support and advice that families need to understand and help their child with special needs, as well as providing the child/young adult who has those needs with the ability to explore their own situation.

A community interest company based in Surbiton that aims to help support young people on the autism spectrum and to raise autism awareness in the community.
USEFUL APPS

The invention of smartphones and tablet computers (like the iPad) has sparked the production of devices that can be potentially used as mainstream communication and learning aids for people who have ASDs. There are now a number of ASD friendly apps available, details of some being given below.

The apps listed below are available through iTunes (therefore being compatible with iPhones and/or iPads). It is possible to find many more by typing ‘autism’ into the iTunes Store’s ‘Search’ box.

Autism friendly apps for smartphones and tablet computers using the Android operating system can be downloaded from this webpage: https://play.google.com/store/search?q=autism+apps&so=1&c=apps
Blackberry App World also has some apps you may find useful. To download Blackberry App World, please use the link within the following webpage: http://uk.blackberry.com/services/appworld/

Please note that an app that is suitable to use with a smartphone may not necessarily be so with a tablet computer (and vice versa), so if more than one version is available, do check before downloading that the correct version of your chosen app has been selected! There is a wide range of apps available to download, with an equally wide price range to match. Many of the free and lower priced apps can be just as useful as those that cost a lot more, so do bear this in mind. Should you be considering purchasing one of the more expensive augmentative and alternative communication apps (AAC), it is suggested that you ask your speech and language therapy team for advice first about how to get an AAC needs assessment for the person for whom the app is being purchased.

Communication

**Proloquo2Go** – This app/augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) software assists people who may have difficulty speaking. It’s adjustable to suit the user’s needs and includes high resolutions symbols, expandability plus ease of use. Developer’s website: www.assistiveware.com/product/proloquo2go

**TapSpeak** (3 apps) – TapSpeak Choice enables people to use their iPad as a communication board and speech editor. TapSpeak Sequence creates and uses message sequences and timetabling. TapSpeak Button is an up-to-date version of a switch that can be used to record and play messages. Developer’s website: http://conleysolutions.com/wordpress

**iCommunicate** – This iPad app can be used to create pictures, flash cards, storyboards and visual schedules. It is also possible to personalise this app by making audio recordings and incorporating your own photos. Developer’s website: www.grembe.com
**Look2Learn** – This app allows individuals to use photos to communicate their wants and needs. Voice output is included with this app, and you can personalise this by recording your own audio messages and pairing them with the photos. Developer’s website: [www.look2learn.com](http://www.look2learn.com)

**TapToTalk** – This app for children allows your iPad or smartphone to be used as an AAC device. It contains an album of pictures, each of which speaks when tapped. Should you wish to create albums specific to your child’s needs, it is possible to do so by visiting the developer’s website: [www.taptotalk.com](http://www.taptotalk.com) (also available for Android-based devices, Nintendo and Blackberry Playbook)

**MyTalkTools Mobile** – This AAC app enables people who have communication difficulties to express their wants and needs to others by using sequences of words, sounds and images. This app’s purchase gives access to MyTalk Mobile and My Talk Workspace (the latter being used to back up this app’s information). Developer’s website: [www.mytalktools.com](http://www.mytalktools.com)

**iComm** – iComm provides a custom built, easy to use means of communication using pictures and words. It is aimed at children under three years of age and those who have communication difficulties. Most of the app’s files are left blank, enabling the user to add their own audio recordings and photos and customise it to their needs. Developer’s website: [www.miasapps.com](http://www.miasapps.com)

**EasySpeak** – This AAC app is easy to use, containing over 800 symbols allowing the user to express themselves through the use of pictures and sound. It is possible to tap on a series of pictures and build a sentence, enabling the app to speak to whoever the user wishes to communicate with. The app can be customised through the addition of your own words and phrases, plus photos (added by taking a photo using the device’s camera). Found in the Education section of iTunes’s App Store and developed by Pocket Apps Canada Inc.

**GoTalk Now** – A full-featured, customisable AAC tool that enables an iPad to be used as a GoTalk communication aid. Found in the Education section of iTunes’s App Store and developed by the Attainment Company.

**Show Me Where** - An app that helps enable children with autism and speech difficulties to communicate with parents and carers when they are in pain. Potentially useful for taking a child to see a doctor, visiting the dentist or for the times when children feel unwell but have difficulty explaining what is hurting. Found in the Medical section of iTunes App Store. Developed by Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. Available as an app for iPads or Android tablets (via Google Play).

**Social skills and expressing emotions**

**AutismXpress** – This app assists with the identification of facial expressions and the emotions that go with them, the aim being to encourage people with ASDs identify and express their emotions. This app has been designed to be fun and easy to use. Developer’s website: [http://autismxpress.com](http://autismxpress.com) (also available for Android-based devices)

**AutismXpress Pro** – Like AutismXpress, this app assists with the identification of facial expressions and the emotions that go with those expressions, and aims to help people with ASDs identify and express their emotions. It also includes two completely new games that are designed to help people who have ASDs to identify and express their emotions using a fun, easy to use interface. Developer’s website: [http://autismxpress.com](http://autismxpress.com) (also available for Android-based devices)

**First Then Visual Schedule** – This app is designed to augment positive behaviour support by creating visual schedules. The app can be customised by adding your own photos and recording your own voice. Developer’s website: [www.goodkarmaapplications.com](http://www.goodkarmaapplications.com)
Touch and Learn - Emotions - This Touch and Learn app focuses on helping children to read body language and understand emotions by looking at pictures and working out which person is expressing a given emotion. Found in the Education section of iTunes App Store and developed by Alligator Apps. Developer’s website: www.alligatorapps.com

Ther-Ad for Autism – This app reinforces appropriate behaviour in students with ASD. It does so by allowing a student to view a motivating movie, then showing short clips of that student engaging in behaviour that a teacher or parent wishes to encourage (previously filmed and uploaded), followed by the motivating movie again. Developer’s website: www.behaviortrackerpro.com

FindMe(Autism) – This iPad app is a simple game that challenges children to find an on-screen character in different scenarios. As the game progresses, children must contend with more distractions, making their task harder. The app has been designed to help children’s socialising skills. Developed by Interface3 and is found in the Education section of iTunes’s App Store.

Let’s Be Social: Social Skills Development - This iPad app is designed to assist parents and professionals teach social skills to those who have social communication difficulties. It can be personalised using your own pictures and text. Developed by www.myeverydayspeech.com and is found in the Education section of iTunes App store.

Social Stories

Stories2Learn – It is possible to produce personalised social stories with this app, incorporating text, photos and audio messages. Stories2Learn can also be used to support people with ASDs by providing visual schedules. Developer’s website: www.look2learn.com

Emotions and Feelings Autism Social Story – The app includes a social story about the different emotions and feelings someone may have each day, plus a simple visual support to help ask how someone else may be feeling. Developed by Touch Autism and is found in the Education section of iTunes App store.

Out and about

Loo Tube - This app is designed to let you know which London Underground Stations have toilets, and if they are for men, women or disabled people. The app will also show which stations charge to use their facilities. It can be found in the Lifestyle section of iTunes’s App Store.

Ldn Access – The Ldn Access app been designed for those whose needs have restricted the places they can visit in London (people with disabilities, families with young children and the elderly, for example) and is designed to be a source of information about entertainment, places to eat and much more. Developed by The App Studio, and is found in the Travel section of iTunes’ App Store.

Walk With Me...Bus Travel - This app offers users who have learning disabilities support to travel by public transport. It does so by using a series of images and audio to help the user take the bus step by step, and its aim is to help improve and encourage an independent lifestyle. This app can be found in the Education section of the iTunes App Store.
Miscellaneous Apps

CarePair
This app is designed to run alongside the CarePair website and enables existing CarePair users to log in and utilise the CarePair system on the go. People wanting to employ a personal assistant (PA) can post jobs or PAs looking for jobs can use this app, and are able to contact each other via the messaging system, phone or text. Please note that you can only access this app’s functions as a registered user of CarePair’s website. It can be downloaded free from the iTunes App Store, where it can be found in the Health and Fitness section. Compatible with iPhones, iPads and iPods.
For more details, visit CarePair at www.carepair.co.uk

Autism Apps
This app provides a comprehensive list of apps that are being used with and by people diagnosed with autism, Down syndrome and other special needs. It also includes links to any available information that can be found for each app. The apps are also separated into over 30 categories, and the descriptions are all searchable, so any type of app is easy to find and download. It links to extensive reviews of the apps written by parents, specialists, and other users usually from first-hand experience, and also has links to video demonstrations or video reviews of the apps when they are available. This can be downloaded free from the iTunes store and can be found in the Education section. Compatible with iPhones, iPads and iPod Touch.
Developer’s website: http://touchautism.com

Activity Timer
Many people with autism struggle to understand the concept of time passing, creating a problem that makes organisation and knowing when the next event will take place difficult to understand. Many people with autism struggle with phrases such as ‘soon’, and have difficulties understanding the difference between ‘now’ and ‘not now’ and time measurements such as ‘5 minutes’. Activity Timer is a visual representation of the intervals between activities. A timer can be set which resembles half of a traditional clock face, but without the number. When the timer finishes, it shows a photographic representation of the activity (the picture can be personalised and taken by parents and family members). This app can then be used set the length of time until the next activity as many times as is needed throughout the day. It can be downloaded from the iTunes Store and is found in the Utilities section.
Developer’s website: http://autismsupportapps.com

Brain In Hand
Brain In Hand is an assistive technology app for those who have difficulty responding to unplanned events, social situations and situations where immediate action needs to be taken. Brain in Hand helps users to identify potentially difficult situations, plan responses in advance and have instant access to these on a smartphone or tablet. Using a secure website, users can create and update their own schedules and add in lists of predicted problems and possible solutions. As well as enabling the user to manage their own anxiety levels, this app helps them to improve their independence. Users can also show their level of anxiety by using a red, amber or green “traffic light” button system on their smartphone. When a user experiences high anxiety, they can be given direct support from a mentor at times when they need it most. It can be downloaded from the iTunes store and is found in the health and Fitness section. Compatible with smartphones and tablets and with iOS, Android and Windows operating systems. Downloading the app is free, but users will need to pay for a Brain In Hand account to log in and use it.
Developer’s website: www.braininhand.co.uk
ABBREVIATIONS LIST

Some abbreviations you will frequently hear:

ABA – Applied Behavioural Analysis
ADD – Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD – Attention Deficit, Hyperactivity Disorder
ASC – Autism Spectrum Condition
ASD – Autism Spectrum Disorder
AS – Asperger Syndrome (Asperger’s Syndrome)
ATU – Accessible Transport Unit
CA – Carer’s Allowance
CAB – Citizens Advice Bureau
CDT – Child Development Team
DAAC – Disability Action and Advice Centre
DLA – Disability Living Allowance
DSA - Disabled Student Allowance
EHC - Education, Health and Care Plan
EMA – Education Maintenance Allowance
EP – Educational Psychologist
ESA – Employment and Support Allowance
GFCF – Gluten Free/Casein Free
HFA – High Functioning Autism
IEP – Individual Educational Plan
INCO – Inclusion Co-ordinator (see SENCO)
LA – Local Authority
LEA – Local Educational Authority
MLD – Moderate Learning Disabilities
NAS – The National Autistic Society
OT – Occupational Therapy
PDD/NOS – Pervasive Development Disorder Not Otherwise Specified
RAID – Richmond Aid
RUILS – Richmond Users Independent Living Scheme
SALT or SLT – Speech and Language Therapist
SCD – Socio-Communication Disorder
SEN – Special Educational Needs
SENCO – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (now often called INCO)
SEND - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SFE - Student Finance England
SLD – Severe Learning Disabilities
SN – Special Needs
STATEMENT – Statement of Special Educational Needs
VB – Verbal Behaviour
THANK YOU....

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