

Welcome

Welcome to the Summer Term DSPL Newsletter!

Dacorum Delivering Special Provision Locally (DSPL) is set up to support children and young people aged 0-25, with special educational needs and disabilities, in mainstream education. We also run training and events for parents, carers and educational professionals. We have had a busy term of events, and have more planned for the Autumn.

New Lead Head for Dacorum DSPL

From September 2017, the lead school for DSPL8 will be Kings Langley School, and Gary Lewis will take over as Lead Head. The role of the lead school is to act as banker and as a champion for the area. We would like to thank Paula Harris, Head of Kings Langley Primary School, for the work she has done in leading Dacorum DSPL so far. We are delighted that Paula is remaining a board member so she can continue to have input in future developments, and be a strong voice for children with SEND and their families.

"Congratulations, and welcome to the tribe" – An evening with Dean Beadle

Dean Beadle's talk on the 18th May was a joyful celebration of his life as an autistic person. He asserted that "Everything I've achieved in life has been because of my autism, not in spite of it", and explained how his memory, his attention to detail and his ability to think of several things at once have helped him in his careers as a journalist and international speaker. Dean asked the audience of parents, carers, educators and young people to see autism as a strength, and not as a barrier to achievement. This is why when Dean meets a family of a young person who has recently received an autism diagnosis, he says "Congratulations, and welcome to the tribe". Dean explained how he refers to himself as an 'autistic person' rather than a 'person with autism', as he feels that autism is a core part of him and not something separate that can be taken off at the end of the day.



As well as talking about his own experiences, Dean took questions from the audience on subjects such as teaching where it is acceptable to touch another person (and when, and under what circumstances, and other unspoken social rules); teaching the consequences of perceived rudeness (one possible example being that if someone is offended by something you've said they may not be willing to engage in discussions about your special interests); and whether it's OK to tell an autistic person that 'everyone is a bit autistic.'

We've received overwhelmingly positive feedback, including the following comments:

"DB was a fantastic speaker who offered an insight to parents and a greater understanding to young people with autism. He was entertaining and most of all positive about being autistic, which is refreshing as so many view it as an obstacle to life. My son found it informative and I would definitely take him to see DB again."

"Thank you for continuing to spread the positive messages and things people need to understand about autism"

"I would be very interested in hearing Dean speak again and would recommend other parents to attend."

"I recommended a parent to the talk, she came along with her 17 year old son and they both felt it was invaluable in supporting them to understand his needs better in an entertaining and positive way."

"As a professional working with children and young people with autism Dean's talk provided an invaluable person centred insight into both the strengths and the challenges of autism. Dean's presentation was accessible to all in the audience and his emphasis on the positive aspects of the condition and celebration of difference and diversity was refreshing and empowering.. Thank you Dean."

DSPL Conference 2017

The Third Dacorum DSPL Conference will take place on Wednesday 18 October, from 10am to 2pm at the South Hill Centre, Hemel Hempstead.

With information stands from local organisations and a chance to have your say on future priorities, if you are a parent, carer or professional supporting children and young people with SEND in Dacorum, this event is not to be missed!

To be added to the mailing list email Ashley on fabraya@kls.herts.sch.uk

Early Years, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) review

HCC are running a survey to gather the views of the families of children with special educational needs and disabilities about the support they receive during the early years. The purpose of the survey is to understand how families currently access support, and to understand how we can make our offer to parents better. Surveys can be accessed at the link below:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/news/early-years-send-review.aspx>



Best Practice – Sensory Profiles

AET (Autism Education Trust) have a very useful sensory assessment

<http://www.aettraininghubs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/37.2-Sensory-assessment-checklist.pdf>



The purpose of the sensory checklist is to help teachers and parents to become more aware of specific sensory issues which affect the individual child and heighten their anxieties. Teachers are therefore able to make a more specific response and make the necessary adaptations to the environment which will alleviate anxieties. This checklist is easy to use and if at all possible should be completed with the child and parent/carer. Mary McCrystal, Autism Lead at Roman Fields School uses this alongside the pupil passport when students start school as part of their transition. Mary added that as it is a checklist it is easy to adapt and evolve as they get to know the student more and they become more confident.

Schools that have used sensory profiles have found this to be beneficial as part of a strategy in increasing attendance, avoiding meltdowns and allowing students to become more engaged and comfortable in lessons. Mary gave an example of a young person, who when he started school “his anxiety was tangible when he walked in the room. Using the sensory checklist, alongside carefully listening to his voice, gave an insight into the daily issues he faced and the things that were causing him anxiety. We were then able to make small adaptations which had a big effect and helped him to succeed”. Interestingly Mary also commented that when a young person becomes less anxious they become more resilient and therefore more tolerant of sensory issues as they are no longer in sensory overloaded.

Yo'tism

During the summer term there have been two “Yo'tism” (Yoga for Autism) sessions, one held in Hemel Hempstead and the other in Northchurch. Yo'tism is a specialised sensory Yoga method for children and young people with Autism. The aim of the 4 hour course was to teach parents exercises that can reset the nervous system and parents can then practice the techniques at home with their children/young people.

One parent stated that she “particularly enjoyed how Nicole (Yoga instructor) was able to explain the theory really succinctly and linked this to the practical exercises, this helped me understand the relevance of the yoga exercises and deepened my understanding”. For example Nicole spoke about how the proprioceptive sense can be disorganised and explained this in detail, this was then supported by exercises that increase body awareness and a sense of self. Other topics were also covered for instance, sensory integration, calming and regulating as well as stimulating and grounding. The importance of relaxation was also discussed and supported again with practical techniques.

If you're interested in attending a Yo'tism workshop funded by DSPL, please contact

Vicky McKirgan on mckirganv@kls.herts.sch.uk

You can find out more about Yo'tism at www.yotism.com



Siblings Groups in Dacorum



Families in Focus Siblings First Group

Families in Focus are running a Siblings Group funded by Children in Need. The group is for siblings aged 4-10 years of brothers and sisters of children with additional needs and their Parents. Families in Focus Siblings First project will improve the emotional well-being of siblings who have brothers or sisters with additional needs. Children will learn how to understand, express, and make others understand, their feelings. Siblings will build stronger and more positive relationships with their parents and brothers and sisters and feel more empowered. Sessions in Hemel Hempstead will take place on the following dates in 2018 (Venue to be confirmed) Wednesday afternoons 4-5.30: January 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st, and February 7th. Find out more at: <http://www.familiesinfocus.co.uk/parent-centred-parenting/>

DSPL Siblings Group

The group is aimed for children between the ages 5-11 with a brother or sister with special needs who also attends a Dacorum school. "Fit For fun" attended the first session and they played lots of team games such as dodge ball, football, stuck in the mud etc and this enabled the group to get to know each other and form friendships. The second session was visited by "Jungle Jo" who brought with her a host of reptiles that included among others a giant snake, lizard and salamander. The children all enjoyed the sessions and loved the experience of learning about the different animals and but also it gave them the opportunity to also share their knowledge and talk about different habitats. Future sessions include Fit Herts Inclusive Theatre and Yoga. The purpose of the group is for children to make friends, try new things and most importantly have fun.

The third session is on Wednesday 19th July from 4-6pm at Hobbs Hill Wood School. For more information please contact Ashley Fabray fabraya@kls.herts.sch.uk



M-ASK

Stressed, anxious or depressed?

M-ASK is a new 12-week programme for young people funded by Dacorum Borough Council and Hertfordshire Public Health. M-ASK uses theatre techniques to help those suffering from stress, anxiety, depression and other conditions affecting mental wellbeing. You don't need any experience to take part; everyone is welcome, from absolute beginners to the more experienced.



To take part in the programme you must be aged 11 or over and live within Dacorum borough. The 12-week programme runs every Thursday between 14th September – 7th December 2017 (Term time only) A taster session will take place on 7th September 2017

Time: 5.30pm – 7.30pm

Location: The Old Town Hall, High Street, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 3AE

Each session will explore theatre techniques using masks and you will also have the opportunity to complete a Bronze Level Arts Award qualification.

To express an interest, please email Active Communities Youth Officer Tracey Basnett at neighbourhood.action@dacorum.gov.uk with the subject 'M-ASK' or telephone 01442 228181

Herts Inclusive Theatre for young people with Autism, Year 6 and above



A STAGE FOR EVERYONE

www.hit-theatre.org.uk

Would you like to attend a drama group? Do you have Autism, in year 6 and above and attend a school in Dacorum? Come and practice communication skills and learn through drama about making friends, maintaining friendships and managing peer conflicts.

Venue: The Swan Youth Centre 137-139 High Street, Berkhamstead, HP4 3HH

Dates: Monday 11th & 25th Sept, 9th & 30th Oct, 13th & 27th Nov, 11th Dec

Time: 6.00pm-7.30pm

For more information contact DSPL 8 Administrator, Ashley Fabray on: 07525917125 or fabraya@kls.herts.sch.uk

Autism Advice Leaflet



Dacorum DSPL has produced a leaflet aimed at parents and carers of children and young people who have autism, or who are awaiting a diagnosis. It lists local organisations, answers frequently asked questions and suggests what can be done to support a child or young person in a mainstream school. Copies of the leaflet are available in all Dacorum schools, Children's Centres, School Family Services, ADD-Vance and Families in Focus. The leaflet was written in consultation with local professionals and parents.

We are now working with Hertfordshire County Council and paediatricians to develop the leaflet into a Hertfordshire-wide publication.

If you would like to receive copies of the leaflet, please contact Ashley on fabraya@kls.herts.sch.uk



Please come and joining Mary McCrystal, Autism Lead, Roman Fields school and Vicky Mckirgan, DSPL Send Lead on 20th September 1.30pm at Roman Fields School. We are holding a parents of girl's focus group and would like to hear your views. We would like to raise awareness of how girls with Autism can present differently.

Courses, Workshops and Support Groups:



Lesley and Francine at Families in Focus will run Parent Network support, guidance & learning drop in sessions for parents caring for children with any additional need/disability/chronic health condition including Autism, ADHD, Down's Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, PDA, Diabetes, Crohn's and Colitis etc. in Hemel Hempstead.

The group meets on Monday mornings at the South Hill Centre, Cemetery Hill, Hempstead HP1 1JF. Check the website for dates at <http://www.familiesinfoocus.co.uk/big-news/>

ADD-vance Workshops

We are currently organising more workshops for Parent/Carers for the Autumn 2017 Term.

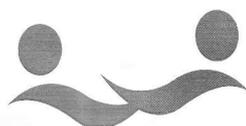
More details coming soon! For more information contact Ashley on fabraya@kls.herts.sch.uk



Special Needs Parents Support Tring:

For parents and carers of children with special needs in the Tring Area.

Visit our website at www.snpst.org.uk or contact Hildy Mason at hildymason@hotmail.com



Courses, Workshops and Support Groups:

PARENTS ON THE AUTISTIC SPECTRUM SUPPORT GROUP (PASS Group)

Next session: Friday 28th July 2017, drop in between 12:30 and 2:30pm
South Hill Centre, Hemel Hempstead, Herts

This will be our 2nd drop-in session for parents who are on the Autistic Spectrum themselves with children of any age.

The group aims to provide a safe, supportive, understanding and friendly environment for those adults in Herts who are seeking:

- Friendship and networking with other Autistic parents
- Understanding and information around their diagnosis and sensory processing challenges
- Advice, signposting, support and information about an array of services in Hertfordshire and nationally
- Guest professionals from different agencies, charities and local organisations for specialist advice
- A place to bring their children who will have access to a crèche worker to provide activities whilst parents can access support and chat
- Baby changing facilities and refreshments included free of charge

Please email Hannah at hannah.bridle@hertfordshire.gov.uk for



Are you a parent of a child with ASD/ Communication Disorder or with Sensory Processing needs?

A daytime support group has been set up for parents across Dacorum

The next two groups for Autumn term 2017 will be held on the following dates:

Wednesday 4th October
Wednesday 6th December
New Time 1:00-2:30pm

The group is facilitated by Lisa MacGovern (School Family Worker) with Special Guests on October 4th 2017, Vicky McKirgan, DSPL Dacorum Area Send Lead and introducing new Autism Teacher Louise Howe with Sally Glossop CAT Lead

At new location: Bridgewater School, Bridle Way Berkhamsted, HP4 1ES

Coffee and tea will be available. Small children are welcome!

If you would like further information and advice on ways to get support for your child please contact - Vicky McKirgan, DSPL Dacorum Area Send Lead @ 07809240858

Parent Support Group

Every Wednesday
10:30 am to 12 noon
(Term time only)

@ The Lodge, Woodfield School
Malmes Croft, Leverstock Green, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 8RL

Contact: vanessa.gregory@woodfield.herts.sch.uk
01442 253476

Do you have a child with additional needs? Need somebody to talk to?

Come and meet other parents for a coffee and a chat. Young children welcome



Whether your child is at mainstream school or a special school, You are welcome to meet other parents, talk to professionals, or simply drop in for a coffee and meet new friends who also have a child with special educational needs.

www.woodfield.herts.sch.uk
ALL WELCOME - JUST COME ALONG

Help, Support & Advice

Herts Local Offer

Information about services available in your local area for parents, children and young people aged 0-25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

directory.hertsdirect.org/kb5/hertfordshire/directory/localoffer.page



Hertfordshire Additional Needs Database

You are entitled to join HAND if you are the parent or carer of a child or young person with an additional need or disability aged 0-19. Benefits of joining include a leisure concession card, and subscription to the HAND newsletter. directory.hertsdirect.org/kb5/hertfordshire/directory/service.page?id=W-oM7uWKTro&familychannel=4

For a list of local support groups and voluntary organisations click here

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/docs/pdf/v/volorgs.pdf>

Dacorum School Family Worker Services

Dacorum has three School Family Services teams, who support families of children attending Dacorum Schools. Advice and support is available on a range of issues, including supporting families of children with additional needs. School Family Workers can also help with the facilitation of Education, Health and Care Plans. The teams also run parenting courses and advice sessions, for example with specialists in special educational needs.

Dacorum Family Services www.dacorumfamilyservices.org.uk

Gade Schools Family Support www.gadeschoolsfamilysupport.co.uk

Kings Langley Partnership of Schools 01923 271744

Hertfordshire SEND Information, Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS)

Formerly known as Parent Partnership Service, SENDIASS is an impartial information, advice and support service funded by Hertfordshire County Council for parents, carers, young people (0-25) and professionals. Phone 01992 555847 or email sendiass@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

Find out more at <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/healthsoc/childfam/specialneeds/educ/parpart/>



The KIDS East and West HUBs 01923 676549

The KIDS HUB offers information and support for parents and carers of disabled children / children with additional needs. aged 0-19 in Hertfordshire. KIDS Hub directory of SEND services has also now been published—take a look at what's going on in your area. www.kids.org.uk/hub



HARC (Hertfordshire Branch of the NAS)

Supporting families and people living with autism

<http://nasherts.org.uk/>



harc – the Hertfordshire branch of the National Autistic Society



DSPL - How can I get involved?

There are a number of ways in which parents can get involved in services. Herts Parent Carer Involvement is a forum for parents to get more involved in the shaping and improving of services for children with additional needs. For more information contact your local network at chair@hertsparentcarers.org or visit www.hertsparentcarers.org.uk



The DSPL Dacorum Team

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