

SEND News – Term 4 2021



Hello everyone,

Once again, it has been amazing this week to welcome all children and young people back to school. Huge thanks to families who have supported their children at home over the last couple of months and to all the staff in schools who have worked so tirelessly as well. Teachers will be busy diagnosing now where any gaps in learning have opened and making plans to address those now that we are back in the classroom. We will also be keeping a close eye on well-being. Please contact your school if you feel that your child needs some additional support. Take care all, Sue Fulbrook (Head of SEND)

Hints and tips from Acorn Education Trust's Behaviour Support Assistant/Thrive Practitioner, Mrs Whitehouse, for supporting children with ASD with their emotions

Children can easily become overwhelmed by their emotions. Their brains continue to grow and develop throughout childhood before accelerating that growth again into adolescence. Sometimes as a child loses control of their emotions, the thinking part of the brain goes "offline" and the child experiences a strong emotional response where rational thinking has disappeared. The "fight, flight, freeze" response may be triggered. We need to try to keep the thinking brain "online".

Here are a few ways to try to keep the brain thinking. The more these are practised, the stronger connections in the brain are formed.

- The best surprise is no surprise! Prepare your child for what will happen during a day.
- Use count downs or sand timers to show when an activity will end. For computer games, it's better to refer to "at the end of the level/game/life".
- Use the concept of "now and next".
- Maintain a sense of structure.
- Be clear about an ending and what will come next.
- If needed, structure your weekend too so a child can see what is happening.
- Validate and attune to feelings – "I wonder if it's because you've been at home a long time that you don't want to go to school. I think I would be feeling that way too, it's OK."
- Label the feelings.
- Use visual supports – pictures and words help to process what is being asked. Even if it is thrown or ripped up, the child has seen it and it is real. Visuals allow time for processing and help a child to see what we mean. They can support transitions and building independence. There is no tone to a visual – no repetition of our voice! Visuals help to reduce anxiety.

All of the advice above is relevant to all children and teenagers, not just those with ASD.

Acorn virtual lego club

Keep joining in with Acorn virtual lego club. It's open to any age child or young person in any of the schools.

There is a weekly theme which is sent to schools or can be found by emailing Mrs Griffiths or Miss Allman on vhg@kingdown.wilt.sch.uk or ema@kingdown.wilt.sch.uk.



The Family Fund is the UK's largest charity providing grants or services to families raising disabled or seriously ill children. They have been allocated further funding by the government to support families. Go to <https://www.familyfund.org.uk/> to find out more and see if your family may qualify.

We are on twitter!

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Look out for tweets about achievements for children and young people with SEND as well as links to useful information.