

**CHILDREN WITH  
AUTISM SPECTRUM  
DISORDER**

**INFORMATION FOR  
FAMILIES IN  
DARTFORD, GRAVESHAM  
&  
SWANLEY**



Produced by Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley  
Multi-agency ASD Group  
If you have any queries or if you have some further  
information which you think could be included in this  
booklet please telephone: 01322 428240

August 2013

## INTRODUCTION

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a range of developmental disorders which affect around 1 in every 100 children. Children with ASD all have difficulties in these three areas:

- *Social interaction*
- *Language and communication*
- *Imagination and Flexible thought*

Children with these difficulties are often said to have an *autism spectrum disorder*. This is because there is a wide spectrum of ability among children with autism, ranging from children with severe needs to those with high ability. Children at the more able end of the spectrum may be diagnosed as having Asperger Syndrome or High Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder.

All children with ASD have complex needs and they and their families need help and support.

This booklet contains information for parents on some of the services which are currently available. It is not meant to replace personal contact. If you would like to talk to someone please contact the Family Adviser at the Parents Consortium (Tel: 01322 668501) who can link you to other professionals or other local parents if you would find that helpful.

**Range of adapted bikes** <http://www.cyclopark.com>

Gravesend Tel 01474 567145

**Disability Sportslink** - Age range 8-14yrs. Trampolining plus activity sessions for children with a disability and their friends. Tuesday Club 5.15-6.30pm at Cygnet Leisure Centre

Activities: Football, goalball, table tennis etc Games  
Price: £2.00 per sportslink person. Friends and siblings welcome. Contact Sonya Sims - 01474 536254. [sonya.sims@gccl.co.uk](mailto:sonya.sims@gccl.co.uk)

**Dance Classes for adults and children with learning disabilities** at Cascades Leisure Centre. Contact Chloe 07837 871 049 or [Bounceandbeatzdanceacademy@gmail.com](mailto:Bounceandbeatzdanceacademy@gmail.com)

**The Bridge Youth Arts Centre**

Dartford Bridge Learning & Community Campus  
Birdwood Avenue  
Dartford  
DA1 5GB

**Contact:** Caroline McNally-Johnson - 01322 424012

Organisation that gives independent advice on special educational matters, law, appeals etc

<http://www.ipsea.org.uk/>

Educational toys, games and resources for emotional awareness, traffic light timers, and motor skills etc

[www.learningresources.co.uk](http://www.learningresources.co.uk)

Free social story templates, printable home visual supports, home routines, emotion flash cards etc

[www.resourcesforinclusion.co.uk](http://www.resourcesforinclusion.co.uk)

Ready laminated social stories, reward charts, PECs support- eBay shop 'extra-special-friends'

Useful daily tips for parents Page on Facebook

'Autism Sparks'

#### **Leisure Activities and Contacts:**

Gail's coffee meet up and play for parents and their kids with special needs and their siblings at Mad Play (Formerly Whale of a Time), Charles St, Greenhithe - First Thursday of every month 4-6pm

Inclusive football team [http://](http://www.swanscombetigers.com/)

[www.swanscombetigers.com/](http://www.swanscombetigers.com/)

**Northfleet Youth Centre-** inclusive youth club

Wednesday 7-9 Tel 01474 351451

**Be Our Buddy-** Buddying for those with mild to moderate disability to access mainstream activities-

Dartford and Gravesham Tel 01322 294524 email [es-](mailto:es-ther.dawson@vawk.co.uk)

[ther.dawson@vawk.co.uk](mailto:es-ther.dawson@vawk.co.uk) or [\[pert.garrett@vawk.co.uk\]\(mailto:ru-pert.garrett@vawk.co.uk\)](mailto:ru-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

**Walk Tall: Drama group for building self esteem 5**

**-18 year olds:** Telephone: 0845 270 8130

Sevenoaks and Swanley Tel 01732 454785 email [\[ard.webb@vawk.co.uk\]\(mailto:rich-ard.webb@vawk.co.uk\)](mailto:rich-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

## Assessment and Diagnosis

Children may be referred for assessment by the family doctor, health visitor, a therapist or other health professional.

Children are always assessed by a specialist paediatrician and sometimes along with a speech and language therapist at:

*The Children's Resource Centre, Darent Valley  
Hospital Dartford*

OR:

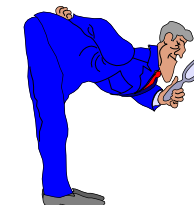
*The Oaks Clinic, Swanley,*

OR:

*Rochester Road Clinic, Gravesend*

*Enquiries about referral process: 01322 428240*

The paediatrician will liaise with other health professionals, education and social services where necessary.



## Assessment and Diagnosis

### Pre-School Children

Follow-up after diagnosis may be offered by a range of professionals.

Other services available are:

- Children's Centres may be able to offer advice and information about your local support.
- Teachers from the Specialist Teaching Service are available to visit you and your child to assess your child's needs.
- EarlyBird Programme, a 13 week course for parents of pre-school children devised by the National Autistic Society.  
*See page 8 for how to access.*
- If appropriate a Specialist Nursery may be accessed via the Specialist Teaching Service  
Tel 01622 749974.



### Useful Contacts:

National Autistic Society [www.autism.org.uk/](http://www.autism.org.uk/)

Kent Autistic Trust [www.kentautistic.com/](http://www.kentautistic.com/)

For parents of children: [jo@kentautistic.com](mailto:jo@kentautistic.com)

Carers First: [www.carersfirst.org.uk](http://www.carersfirst.org.uk)

Parents Consortium [www.parentsconsortium.co.uk/](http://www.parentsconsortium.co.uk/)

Fathers Club [john\\_e\\_franklin@hotmail.com](mailto:john_e_franklin@hotmail.com)

Contact a Family [helpline@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cafamily.org.uk)

AUTISM ALERT CARD useful no charge alert card for parents with children or young adults venturing out alone. For application form contact:

Des Walker at Kent Autistic Trust [dwalker@kentautistic.com](mailto:dwalker@kentautistic.com)

Cinema card (carers go free) <http://www.ceacard.co.uk/>

Merlin's Magic Wand [www.merlinsmagicwand.org/](http://www.merlinsmagicwand.org/)

Family fund [www.familyfund.org.uk/grants/how-to-apply](http://www.familyfund.org.uk/grants/how-to-apply)

Buspass: [www.kent.gov.uk/roads\\_and\\_transport/getting\\_around/travel\\_by\\_bus/bus\\_services/bus\\_passes\\_for\\_the\\_elderly.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads_and_transport/getting_around/travel_by_bus/bus_services/bus_passes_for_the_elderly.aspx)

NAS help on how to apply to Social Services for support, what you're entitled to, how to get an assessment and how to complain: [communitycare@nas.org.uk](mailto:communitycare@nas.org.uk)

Dartford Borough Council Concessions for Orchard Theatre and Fairfield Swimming Pool

Health Walks - meet Dartford Library 11.30 Thursday mornings

iPhone and iPad apps for communication

[www.mashley.net](http://www.mashley.net)

## **All Cats Have Asperger Syndrome**

Kathy Hoopman ISBN 978 1 84310 481 0

**Parents have found these books helpful:**

### **The Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome:**

a guide for parents and professionals

ISBN 1 978 1 84310 669 2 - Tony Attwood.

### **Autism: The Facts**

(Oxford University Press 1993 reprinted 1998) ISBN

0 192623 27 3 - P Bolton and Simon Baron-Cohen.

**The Autistic Spectrum:** a guide for parents and professionals ISBN 0 094751 60 9 - Lorna Wing.

**I am Special:** (Introducing Children and Young People to their Autistic Spectrum Disorder) ISBN 1 85302 916 5.

**The Parents Consortium** have a lending library of books about ASD to borrow free of charge. Please 'phone for details on 01322 668501

### **Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome**

A user guide to adolescence - Luke Jackson

ISBN 978 1 84310 098

## **School Age Children**

- 'Outreach' services are available to children in school depending on need: There is a range of other provisions in both mainstream school and special schools. Further information can be obtained from the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) at your child's school.
- An individual assessment of need may be carried out if your child requires further help in school.
- EARLYBIRD PLUS PROGRAMME - a course designed to meet the needs of families whose child has received a later diagnosis of autism (4- 8 years of age) and is in school.  
*See page 8 for how to access*

For advice and support regarding your child's education please contact:

Kent Parent Partnership Service: 01622 755515

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

Tel: 0808 800 5793 (10.00 - 5.00 pm)

[www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)

Parents Consortium - See Page 8

Kent Autistic Trust - See Page 8



## Support and Information

### Social Services

An individual assessment of need can be asked for, which may lead to a package of support; according to need and eligibility for services.

#### **Contact:**

Social Services Department  
Children with Disabilities Team  
The Willows  
Hilda May Avenue  
Swanley  
Kent BR8 7BT  
Tel: 01322 611000

### Speech and Language Therapist

Following referral the speech & language therapist will offer advice regarding your child's communication level, appropriate strategies, programmes and parent workshops. Available up to secondary school age subject to eligibility.

#### **Contact:**

The Children's Resource Centre  
Darent Valley Hospital  
Darent Wood Road  
Dartford, DA2 8DA Tel: 01322 428238

## Useful Books

A wide range of books on ASD and Asperger Syndrome are available from these publishers:

National Autistic Society Publications Lists:  
020 7903 3595 - see website on Page 13

Jessica Kingsley Publishers  
116 Pentonville Road  
London N1 9JB  
Tel: 020 7833 2307 Fax: 020 7837 2917  
Website: [www.jkp.com](http://www.jkp.com)

Three very good books available from this publisher and suitable for children around 10 years and above are:

**Blue Bottle Mystery**  
Kathy Hoopman ISBN 1 85302 987 5

**Of Mice and Aliens - An Asperger Adventure**

Kathy Hoopman ISBN 1 84310 007 X



## Useful Websites

The National Autistic Society (NAS)

[www.nas.org.uk](http://www.nas.org.uk)

For information sheets:

[www.nas.org.uk/infosheets](http://www.nas.org.uk/infosheets)

For publications:

[www.nas.org.uk/pubs](http://www.nas.org.uk/pubs)

OAASIS Information Sheet

Autism Spectrum Disorder and motivation for Advice,  
Assistance, Support and Information on Special needs

[www.oaasis.co.uk](http://www.oaasis.co.uk)

ACE - Advisory Centre for Education

[www.ace-ed-org.uk](http://www.ace-ed-org.uk) Tel: 0808 800 5793

Autism Independent UK

[www.autismuk.com](http://www.autismuk.com) Tel: 01536 523274

[www.info.autism.org.uk](http://www.info.autism.org.uk)

[www.kentautistic.com](http://www.kentautistic.com)

## Support and Information

**Kent Community Dental Service**

Provides dental care for children who experience difficulty in accessing treatment from dentists in general practice.

There are CDS dentists in Dartford and Gravesend. Your GP or other clinician who knows your child can make a referral for you.

**Contact:**

Kent Community Dental Service

Tel: 01634 382790

**The Family Fund**

For grants to help with expenses incurred as a result of caring for a disabled child. For further

information contact:

0845 130 45 42 [www.familyfund.org.uk](http://www.familyfund.org.uk)

Or telephone:

The Parents Consortium - 01322 668501



## Support and Information

### Information Service & Support

The Parents Consortium, Allsworth Court  
St David's Road. Hextable, Kent,  
Tel: 01322 668501

[admin@parentsconsortium.co.uk](mailto:admin@parentsconsortium.co.uk)

The Parents Consortium can provide a range of services to parents of children with ASD. These include an Information Service, parent led support groups and one to one support through a family adviser, providing free and confidential advice on a variety of subjects including education, benefits, funding and leisure opportunities. The Consortium also gives access to a range of supported leisure opportunities both term time and during the Easter and Summer holidays.

### The Kent Autistic Trust

14 High St Brompton, Gillingham, ME7 5AE  
Tel: 01634 405168 Website:

[www.kentautistic.com](http://www.kentautistic.com)

A Family Support Officer provides telephone and email support, home visits, information and advice. The Support Officer can help parents to work with Education, Health and Social Services and can provide information about local support groups.

Children: [jo@kentautistic.com](mailto:jo@kentautistic.com)

Adults: [dwalker@kentautistic.com](mailto:dwalker@kentautistic.com)

## Benefits

### Disability Living Allowance:

This is a non means tested benefit for adults or children with an illness or disability who need:

- *Help with getting around*
- *Help with personal care, or*
- *Help with both of these*

Many children with ASD are entitled to Disability Living Allowance.

For more information contact:

The Benefit Enquiry Line 0800 882200

Carers First 01634 577340

D.I.A.L. North West Kent 01474 356962





## Support Groups

### Autism Spectrum Support Groups

For advice about local groups please contact:

Tracey Sams

The Parents Consortium

Allsworth Court

St David's Road

Hextable, Kent

Tel: 01322 668501

Email: [admin@parentsconsortium.co.uk](mailto:admin@parentsconsortium.co.uk)

### The Fathers' Club

This group was set up to enable fathers of children with ASD to meet and discuss with one another the many issues and problems they face. Very informal meetings are held across Kent. For further details contact The Parents Consortium as above or Kent Autistic Trust *see page 8*

### EarlyBird & EarlyBird Plus

Intervention programmes devised by the National Autistic Society for parents of children up to 8 years of age.

Contact: The Parents Consortium 01322 668501

### Cygnets Programme

This is a 6 week programme for parents/carers of children between the ages of 7 to 17 years with a diagnosis of Autism.

Parents of youngsters who have been newly diagnosed or who have not accessed other causes may apply.

Contact The Parents Consortium 01322 668501

### Useful Organisations/Contacts

#### Carers First

Medway Carers Centre

3 Canterbury Street

Gillingham, Kent ME7 5TP

Tel: 01634 577340

[Katherine.schryver@carersfirst.or.uk](mailto:Katherine.schryver@carersfirst.or.uk)

## Useful Information

### **The National Autistic Society**

**Tel: 020 7833 229**

[www.nas.org.uk](http://www.nas.org.uk)

U.K. charity which provides education, treatment, welfare and care to people with autism

All 0808 numbers below are free from landlines and most mobiles

**Autism Helpline: 0808 800 4104**

**Education Rights: 0808 800 4102**

**Parent to Parent: 0808 800 4106**

(Confidential listening service provided by parent volunteers)

**Information Centre: 0207903 3599**

### **D.I.A.L. North West Kent**

**Free confidential advice to include:**

Welfare Benefits, Leisure, Housing, Equipment, Motoring

**Tel: 01474 356962**

### **Contact a Family - CAF**

**Freephone Tel: 0808 808 3555**

Please telephone Monday - Friday between 09.30 am and 5.00 pm

Gives advice, support and information to local parents' groups and to individual parents anywhere in the UK

### **Autism Alert Card**

This plastic card, same size as a credit card, alerts the emergency services that the holder has an Autism Spectrum Condition. It is available free of charge from Kent Autistic Trust to anyone with ASD in Kent.

To receive an application form please contact

**Des Walker, Kent Autistic Trust**

**01634 405168 [dwalker@kentaautistic.com](mailto:dwalker@kentaautistic.com)**

### **MEDIC ALERT**

Autism wristbands have been designed by people affected by autism. They provide vital personal and medical details in an emergency or if a person with Autism wanders off or goes missing.

**Tel: 0800 581 420**

[www.medicalert.org.uk](http://www.medicalert.org.uk)

### **Access to Public Toilets**

A personal RADAR key for access to a toilet for the disabled can be purchased for a small charge. You will need proof of disability :

**Gravesend:** Box Office, Woodville Halls, Windmill Street, Gravesend DA12 1AU

**Dartford:** Cash Office, Main Reception, Civic Centre. Home Gardens, Dartford, DA1 1DR

**RADAR National Key Scheme:**

**Tel 020 7250 3222**