

SCHOOL TRIPS

The SEN & Disability Act 2001 states that it is unlawful to discriminate against a disabled pupil. This includes all teaching during school hours, other teaching activities such as after school clubs, **school trips** and school orchestras.

No distinction is made in the legislation between a school trip in term time and a school trip outside of term time. The Disability Discrimination Act applies equally to both.

Any potential Tribunal case could be considered if it was shown that the school failed in its duties:

- 1 Not to treat a disabled pupil less favourably; and
- 2 To make reasonable adjustments

A refusal to take a child would need to be justified with regard to less favourable treatment, reasonable adjustments, material and substantial factors (e.g. transport/resort/ equipment etc chosen by the school)

So... What can be done to include all pupils?

When you hear of a potential trip:-

- Plan well ahead.
 - Speak with the Special Needs Coordinator at school.
 - Ask about an individual Risk Assessment for your child.
 - Request a special meeting to discuss every aspect of the trip in relation to your child's SEN/Disability.
 - Whilst still at home, try to encourage your child to be as independent as possible to prepare them for residential trips..
- Work in partnership with school to overcome any potential difficulties.



ROTHERHAM PARENT PARTNERSHIP SERVICE

Summer 2009 Newsletter

Our aim is to provide flexible services for parents and carers whose children have learning difficulties, disabilities and/or special educational needs (SEN) in order to empower them to play an active and informed role in their child's education. Our target is to help parents, carers, professionals and schools work together to raise the achievement of these children.

For more copies of this newsletter, ring 01709 823627. Audio copies on tape are also available on this number.

www.rotherhamparentpartnership.com

This issue includes information on:

- Do you care for a disabled child
- News for Dads
- Holiday Activities
- Parent Library
- Aiming High for Disabled Children
- Pupil Participation
- Rotherham ASD parent training
- Rotherham Parent Carers Forum
- School Trips



Children and Young People Affected by Neurological Conditions

Cerebra is a charity set up to help improve the lives of children with brain related conditions. If you have a child aged 16 or under who would benefit from equipment or resources not available from statutory agencies, such as social care or the NHS, then contact their Grants Co-ordinator, Debbie Godsave on 01267 244 216 or e-mail: debbieg@cerebra.org.uk

They are also running a speech and language therapy (SALT) voucher scheme to help children who need therapy but are not getting it. The voucher is worth up to £500 of speech and language therapy. For an application or more information contact Alex Elsaesser on Tel: 0800 328 1159, e-mail: alex@cerebra.org.uk

NHS Website merged

NHS Choices and NHS Direct have been combined into NHS Choices. The site will include popular features such as the self help guide, a health encyclopaedia and the online enquiry service.

There will be directories of services, comparative hospital performance data and guides to common long-term conditions, with translations available. The new site is available at www.nhs.uk



Do you care for a disabled child aged between 0-18 years?

Registering with the Children's Disabilities Register entitles you to receive a newsletter twice a year which tells you about changes in the law and informs you about local services and support agencies.

The Register also helps the Local Authority to record the needs of disabled children living in Rotherham. The information will be kept confidentially, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. For further information please contact:- Linda Adcock, Children's Health & Disabilities Information Officer on Freephone 0800 0730230 or linda.adcock@rotherham.gov.uk.

Protection from Discrimination for working parents who care for a disabled child

A new ruling by the Employment Tribunal protects parents who combine work with caring for a disabled child against harassment and discrimination in the workplace. The ruling means that parents/carers have the right to claim against employers who treat them unfairly "by association with disability". Working parents of disabled children are now protected in law against discrimination such as a refusal to offer flexible working. The ruling paves the way for parents with disabled children in England and Wales to make immediate claims against their employers if they are treated unfairly.

Mortgage interest - new rules

If you claim Income Support, Income based Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit (Guarantee credit) or income-related Employment and Support Allowance, it is possible to get help towards your mortgage interest payments.

New rules have been introduced allowing many claimants to get all of their eligible interest taken into account after 13 weeks. In addition the government has increased the maximum amount of loan that they will meet from £100,000 to £200,000. These new rules apply to most new claims and some claims made before 5th January. The government has described these new rules as a "temporary measure" without giving an end date. You can check whether you now qualify for help by calling the free Contact a Family Helpline - 0808 8083555

Turn2us is a new charity founded to help the millions of people in financial need across the UK. This is a groundbreaking online service to help people access all the benefits and grants available to them from both statutory and voluntary agencies. Go to www.turn2us.org.uk

Getting out and about for age 16+

South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive has a Travel Adviser who can be contacted on 0114 221 1221. The Adviser can give information about student entitlement beyond 16.

There is also on-line support via www.travelsouthyorkshire.com

The Travel Line 01709 515151

The Information Centre at Rotherham Interchange

Include Me TOO have a handbook supporting the National Charter of Rights for Disabled Children and Young People entitled 'Championing the Rights of Disabled Children & Young People' You can see/listen to this on: www.includemetoo.org.uk

Together we Can Make a Difference

Rotherham Parent Carers Forum is a new group run by Parents of children with additional needs. The group is working to 'enable disabled children' and their families in Rotherham to lead full lives, through seeking to improve services and by providing informal social support'.



The group aims to:

- Encourage and promote inclusive attitudes and practice
- Promote disability equality and challenge discrimination
- Work in partnership with service providers
- Gather information from parents/carers and highlight common problems/priorities
- Provide examples of good practice
- Be accessible and supportive to all our families
- Be a voice for as many parents as possible

Members will be at the **Carers Rights Day on 12th June at the Rain Building** and at **Rotherham Show in September**.

To find out more ring 07906462573, or surf the website www.rotherhamparentsforum.co.uk or look out for them at the Carer's Rights Day.

Family Fund increases age limit in England

The Family Fund is a national charity giving grants to families with disabled children. They have recently increased the age limit of children they can help in England to include 17 year olds, providing the application is received before the young person's 18th birthday. For further information see www.familyfund.org.uk



Many children and adults have plenty to say, but are unable to control their mouth muscles to speak clearly. They can use aids such as pictures, written words and technology to communicate.

1 Voice offers a network and support for children and families using communication aids.

1 Voice is holding a National Network and Family Fun Day on Sunday the 21st June from 10am at the Hayes Conference Centre, Derby. For more information visit www.1voice.info

ROTHERHAM EMERGENCY CARERS SCHEME CARING FOR THE CARERS

Carers often worry what would happen to the person they care for if they were involved in an accident or had to deal with an emergency.

Neighbourhood and Adult Services have a **free Carers' Emergency Scheme** which helps the carer plan for an emergency before it happens. This emergency plan is accessible by RotherCare, a service that is available 24 hours a day and contains details about:

- Themselves
- The person they care for
- Two people who could be contacted
- Any respite arrangements.

When an emergency happens the carer or someone on their behalf contacts the scheme and RotherCare staff will check the plan and immediately action the arrangements that have been put in place. This may involve contacting other nominated people listed to make sure the cared for person is safe and well, providing an immediate home-based care service through Crossroads or arranging for appropriate respite care.

This will be provided for up to 48 hrs giving social care staff and those involved in the welfare of the cared for person time to plan and make alternative, longer term arrangements should they be needed.

If you would like to know more or perhaps know someone who would benefit from joining the scheme, please ring Lisa Thistlwood on 01709 823653.

WINTHROP PARK - AWARD WINNING NATURE THERAPY GARDENS

Second Lane, off Newhall Avenue, Wickersley, Rotherham, S66 1EE

Tel: 01709 709335

Opening times: April 1st to October 31st

Mon - Fri 11:00 am - 3:00 pm, Closed Sat,

Sun 10:30 am - 4:00 pm

Winthrop Park was created to provide facilities for the elderly and disabled. It demonstrates the positive impact of Nature Therapy on well-being and healthcare. Recently hailed as a blueprint and world class example of bio-diversity and Nature Therapy, Winthrop Park daily provides visitors with practical support and interactive demonstration of the power of nature to change lives. Refreshments are available.



News for the Dads out there!

Dads-Space .com is a website with loads of information for Dads from finding out she is pregnant to tips for entertaining the kids.

Staying Positive

YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORKSHOPS

The Staying Positive Workshops are a series of three one day workshops delivered for young people aged 12 - 18 who are living with a long term health condition. The workshops give the young people the skills to help to manage the condition

both from a health and social perspective. The workshops offer an opportunity to meet and get support from others with similar life experiences. The next workshops take place on 20th June and 4th July between 11am and 4pm. For more information contact Lucy Cooper on 07595020928

Does Your Child Find Lunch Time Difficult?

For some children, lunch time is a difficult time in the school day. It is often unstructured, noisy and can leave children feeling vulnerable. During these times, schools may feel that your child would find it less stressful if they were at home. However, if school inform you that your child **has** to be at home for the lunch time period, this should be recorded as a half day exclusion. Lunch time exclusions should be for a specified length of time. The Secretary of State does not expect a lunch time exclusion to be a long

their views.

4. Meetings and the manner in which they are run should be child centred.
5. They should be given an understanding of the remit of meetings and what decisions their views can change or have an impact on.
6. They should be given information about the outcome of any meeting in a way that is meaningful to them.

ROTHERHAM ASD PARENT TRAINING PROGRAMME

Do You Have a Child with Autism/Asperger's Syndrome?

This Programme has been developed by the Rotherham Autism Strategy Group. The Programme consists of 6 workshops each covering a different aspect of Autism/Asperger's Syndrome. Each workshop lasts approximately 2 hours and will be delivered once a fortnight. Topics covered include, **Understanding Autism, Communication and Interaction, Analysing Behaviour (Practical Strategies), The Social World (Social Skills/Social Stories), Problem Solving: Common Issue, Moving On (Support Services, Transition)**

It is delivered by professionals from a range of agencies including; Educational Psychology, S.T.E.P.S., C.A.M.H.S., Autism Communication Team, Speech and Language Therapy & Specialist Support Team.

No age restrictions—open referral system

Ring Bridget Dawson on 01709 336403 to book your place.

Wales/Dinnington Parents Group

Parents in the Wales/Dinnington areas who have a child with a diagnosis of autism can meet informally and share experiences at the Sue Walker Children's Centre, Kiveton Park. Staff from the Educational Psychology Service, Autism Communication Team, Portage Service, Children's Centre, Kiveton Park Meadows Junior School and Wales High School will be available to talk to parents and students and staff from the schools will be available to play with the children. The next meeting will be on Wednesday 24th June at the Sue Walker Children's Centre and will look at activities and clubs in the local area.

child with special needs and request a room in a quiet area, away from the main street. Ask if they can avoid busy areas like next to lifts or stairs and over the kitchens.

Taken from 1001 Great Ideas for Teaching and Raising Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders by Ellen Notbohm and Veronica Zysk. ISBN 1-932565-19-1. The book can be borrowed from Parent Partnership Service by ringing 01709 823627.

FERHAM DAD'S GROUP

Why not come and join this informal get together of local dads? Share support, advice, ideas etc. at The Ferham Centre, Masbrough.

Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Limited childcare is available and you are advised to pre-book this by ringing Ricky Marshall on 01709 336660

The dads get together to talk and sometimes arrange activities such as family walks.

FOOTY FAN?

What about joining **DAD'S FOOTBALL?**

Every Friday on Ferham Park Playing Field
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Limited childcare available but must be pre booked, as above with Ricky Marshall at The Ferham Centre.



Involving your child in making decisions - Pupil Participation

Parent Partnership has a Factsheet that offers ideas on how this can happen. Ring 01709 823627 for a copy or by downloading it from the website www.rotherhamparentpartnership.com - Information for Parents - Factsheets - Pupil Participation.

The 6 guiding principles are:-

1. Children should understand that their views are as important as everyone else's; in whatever way these views are expressed.
2. They should understand what the purpose and processes of meetings are.
3. They should be given choices about how to communicate

running thing eg for longer than a week. If your child is entitled to free school meals, they should still get something for lunch eg, a packed lunch.

How can you help? ask school what can be done to help your child be successful at lunch time. This may include letting all the School Meals Supervisory Assistants know your child may struggle; making sure your child knows where to go and who they can talk to if they need to; giving your child a responsibility at lunch time so they have a specific "job" to do; having access to lunch time clubs or activities.

Remember! Working together with school staff is the best way to help your child succeed. If things don't improve talk to school again and make a different plan.

Further advice and information can be found at:-

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/exclusion/2008guidance

Advisory Centre for Education Exclusion Line 0808 800 0327 or

www.ace-ed.org.uk

Rotherham Parent Partnership Service 01709 823627 or

www.rotherhamparentpartnership.com

Holiday Activities

Don't forget to look on the Rotherham Metropolitan Council Website for holiday activities. From the Home Page, click onto 'Leisure' (on the list on the left hand side), then click onto 'Diary of Events'. You may be surprised. Look out for an **Underwater Safari** and an **Extreme Street Sports Day!**



New additions to parent library

The following NEW BOOKS are now available in Parent Partnership. Anyone wishing to borrow a book can ring 01709 823627. To see the full list of books available

visit www.rotherhamparentpartnership.com

- Girls Growing up on the Autism Spectrum
- How to help your autistic spectrum child
- Why do I have to?
- Revealing the Hidden Social Code
- Autism and Loss



Aiming High for Disabled Children

Short Breaks

On 17th March a large group of parents of children with additional needs met with 'service providers' (people who provide short break services) to talk about developing short breaks services in Rotherham.

The parents, who had children with a range of needs were able to talk about the needs of their child in relation to 'Short Breaks' as well as the needs of their family. Parents were given an update following the consultations with parents and children in August 2008 also an overview of Direct Payments was provided.

There was some confusion about what a short break is.

- Short breaks, as defined by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), usually provide opportunities for disabled children and young people to spend time away from their primary carers. These include day, evening, overnight or weekend activities and take place in the child's own home, the home of an approved carer, or a residential or community setting. Short breaks can however also be provided through a temporary carer relieving the primary carer of their caring responsibilities without them being separated from the disabled child or young person.
- Short breaks normally occur on a regular and planned basis and should be part of an integrated programme of support which is regularly reviewed. Short break provision can however, also be provided on an emergency basis. No short break should exceed 28 days continuous care and total provision over a year should not exceed 120 days.
- Short break services are specialist additional services required to support disabled children and their families; in other words, short breaks services are over and above the universal services available to all families.
- Short breaks range from supporting disabled children and young people to access universal leisure-time services, through to providing specialist services at a local and regional level.

During the event parents were able to spend some time with service providers listening to what they offered before exploring how this could be developed. Emphasis was placed on thinking about developing existing provision and designing new provision which reflects the needs and interests of children and their families.

It was fantastic to have so many parents together and it was a really

positive day. Parents gave a clear view of the enormous pressures they are under as well as some of the barriers their children face in accessing 'mainstream activities'.

There was considerable overlap with the comments from parents at the August 2008 Consultation Event with the majority asking for extra support and easy access to information. Other needs included more out of school activities both in the holidays and after school where all children can interact, more activities for teenage children and opportunities for parents to speak to other parents with similar issues.

Members of the Rotherham Parent Carer Forum attended the event and were able to introduce themselves and explain the work of the Forum. The Forum has received a grant from 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' to develop Parent Participation in Rotherham and is working to ensure the views and experiences of parents shape decision making and planning in Rotherham.

Rotherham has now met the readiness criteria demanded by 'Aiming Higher for Disabled Children', it has been confirmed that the Authority will be able to access the £345,100.00 grant to Extend and improve short breaks for children with disabilities and their families.

Going on holiday with an Autistic child

Going to sleep, especially in a place other than home, can be hard especially if your child has hyper-sensitive hearing and picks up all those sounds that others can push into the background and easily disregard. The uncertainty of not knowing when and how often an unfamiliar sound might arise, can be a source of constant anxiety for children with Autism. Talk to your child about what kind of sounds might be heard in this new place. For some children, making a game of listening to and identifying sounds might lessen the anxious feelings. Before going to bed try listening for the different sounds; just knowing what the sounds are and that they are OK can help a child to relax.

TIP: If booking a hotel room, tell them that you are travelling with a

