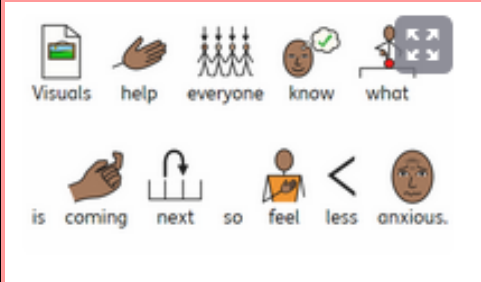




St. Mary's Priory Catholic Schools  
Half-termly SEND Newsletter



Merry Christmas from Mrs Neli –  
St Mary's Inclusion lead.



**SEND updates at St. Mary's**

Our play therapist Gloria has been seeing children individually as well as running various friendship groups in Year 5 and Year 6.

Alice from GEMHs has been delivering Brain Buddies sessions to Year 3 this term, as well as starting a group with Year 5 children around conflict resolution and problem solving.

- Key Dates**
- IEPS to go out the week of the **09/02/26**
  - The LAST team will be delivering more training on speech, language and communication needs, as well as observing how we support our children across the school.
  - LAST team (Language and autism support team) will host a coffee morning for parents at 9am on **Thursday 15th January**
  - Parent workshop on **Thursday 12th Feb at 2.45pm** on The Zones of regulation
  - Parent workshop on **Thursday 19th March at 2.45pm**
  - Parent workshop for reception-year 2 parents Delivered by GEMHs. For parents who think that their child is displaying signs of ADHD. Date to be confirmed.





# Upcoming parent workshops

## Zones of regulation parent workshop

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February at 2.45pm

The ZONES of Regulation® Reproducible E The Zones of Regulation Visual

### The ZONES of Regulation®

			
<p><b>BLUE ZONE</b></p> <p>Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly</p>	<p><b>GREEN ZONE</b></p> <p>Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn</p>	<p><b>YELLOW ZONE</b></p> <p>Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control</p>	<p><b>RED ZONE</b></p> <p>Mad/Angry Terrified Yelling/Hitting Elated Out of Control</p>

This workshop will outline ways of understanding why, when and how we need to emotionally regulate. We use this approach across the school.

## Well-being and mental health reminders



### **GUIDED EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT (GEMHS) Team**

A reminder that we are a GEMHS school, previously known as Trailblazers. Alice, who is an Education Mental Health Practitioner, works for the Haringey Mental Health Support Team. Alice is trained to work with children aged 4-18 years, as well as with parents of primary and secondary school-aged children, on a range of wellbeing topics, with the aim to improve access to mental health services and support young people's well-being.

Throughout the year, Alice will be delivering 'Brain buddies' in order to support children with their emotional wellbeing, enabling them to learn coping and calming strategies, to manage their big emotions and support them in regulating their emotions.

If you would like to work with Alice, please contact Mrs Neli to make the referral.

### A reminder



### **Our Play Therapist - Gloria**

Gloria runs our Parent and Toddler group every Friday morning from 9 - 10.30am. Come and join us on a Friday morning during term time. There is a network of support for children and parents.

# SEND

## HAVE YOUR SAY

### Haringey's SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy 2026-2029



We're refreshing our strategy to improve outcomes and experiences for children and young people with **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** and those educated in **Alternative Provision (AP)**

Complete our survey to have your say by Friday, 30 January 2026



[haringeysend.commonplace.is/](https://haringeysend.commonplace.is/)

**Haringey**  
LONDON



# Walk and Talk

JOIN US

Our monthly Walk and Talk usually the first Monday of the month—whatever the weather!

Meet fellow mums, dads & carers of children & young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)  
We'll go to a cafe afterwards

Please let us know if you have any access requirements:  
**hello@sendpowerinharingey.org**

## JANUARY: CHESTNUTS PARK



**Meeting Point: Chestnuts Community Centre**  
(N15 4BN)



Monday 12th January 2026  
**Time:** 11.30am to 12.30pm

**Walk leaders:**

Lizzy and Grace



Grace's number: **07549 023 657**





## Christmas Messages for Parents

### Top tips: Christmas routines for children with SEND

The run-up to Christmas can be a busy and hectic time for everyone and a time when children are very excited!

Implementing these strategies can help create a supportive environment that allows young children to enjoy the festive season while minimising stress related to routine changes.



1. **Maintain a consistent routine:** Where possible, keep daily routines similar to those during 'normal' times. Familiarity helps children feel secure and reduces anxiety about changes
2. **Build in quiet time:** With increased excitement and stimulation in the lead up to Christmas, it's essential to incorporate quiet time into your daily schedule. Designate a calm space where children can retreat for a few minutes to relax, read, or engage in quiet play. See our 'Creating a cosy space for big emotions' activity
3. **Prepare for changes in advance:** Communicate any changes to the children's routines ahead of time. Discuss special events or activities related to Christmas, such as parties or visits from Santa, so children know what to expect
4. **Encourage expression of feelings:** Create opportunities for children to express their feelings about the upcoming holiday and any changes they may be experiencing
5. **Involve children in activities:** Engage children in Christmas preparations, such as decorating the nursery. Involvement can provide a sense of ownership and excitement while helping them adapt to the festive atmosphere
6. **Model calm behaviour:** Children often mirror the emotions of adults around them. By modelling calmness and positive coping strategies, you can help children manage their own feelings of excitement or stress during this busy time
7. **Offer reassurance and support:** Provide plenty of reassurance and acknowledge any fears or concerns children may have about changes in routine or events and offer support by being present and attentive to their needs.

## Some helpful tips for Christmas from the Autistic Society



### Why do autistic people have sensory differences?

Evidence suggests that differences in the activity and connections in the brain and nervous system of autistic people can lead to differences in processing sensory information.

Some research suggests having more activity and connections in some brain areas is linked to sensory hyper-sensitivity, and less activity and connectivity is linked to hypo-sensitivity. But this research often didn't include enough people to be sure.

### Common triggers of hyper-sensitivity

Although the triggers of sensory sensitivity are not the same for everyone, common examples include:

- **sight:** bright and/or fluorescent lighting, bright sunlight, visually crowded or cluttered environments, patterned wallpaper/carpets, eye contact
- **sound:** loud speech, music, electrical technology 'humming', unexpected noises (e.g. alarms, sirens), background noise (e.g. in a busy office)
- **touch:** crowded places, unexpected touch, wind/rain on skin, fabric textures (e.g. clothing, furniture coverings, bedding), some food textures (e.g. soft or slimy foods)
- **smell:** perfumes/deodorants, body odours, cooking odours
- **taste:** certain flavours
- **awareness of internal states (interoception):** feeling too hot or cold.

For more information about sensory triggers, see our [Autistic sensory experiences resource](#).

Some environments can be particularly challenging, especially where there is a lot of sensory input that you have little or no control over.

### Examples of challenging sensory environments

#### Shopping centres

Shopping centres can be overwhelming because they can:

- be very crowded and hot
- have bright, fluorescent lighting
- be visually chaotic, with different branding and displays from each shop
- play loud music, often clashing music from many different shops
- have busy food halls with many different smells
- be difficult to navigate, for example to find the exit or the toilets.



## Presents ☆ ☆

Presents can also be overwhelming: the number of them, the wrapping and unwrapping them; the [unclear expectations](#) about how to respond after receiving a present. You could try telling family and friends what your preference is in advance, including:

- The number of presents - make a list of presents you would like to receive and share this with your family and friends. This also removes any element of surprise, if you find that difficult.
- Explaining whether you want presents to be wrapped or not.

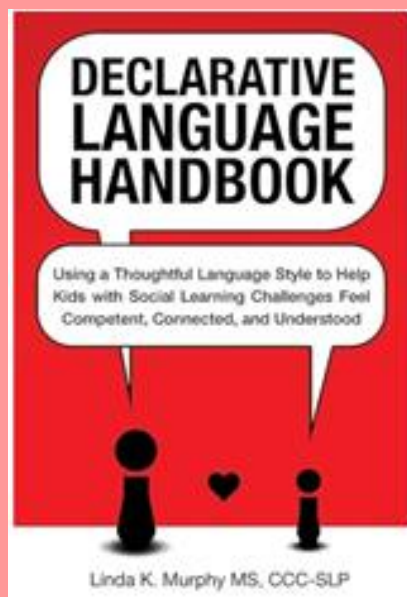
"Last year my son chose his own main present, and checked it was right when it arrived, then it was wrapped. He felt better knowing his present was right, and it wouldn't be a surprise, so started the day calm."

### [Autism Friendly Christmas Tips](#)

#### Recommendation from the LAST team in Haringey

Do you know a child that gets upset when their routine changes? They might also struggle to see the big picture, to make friends, to problem solve in real time, and to read nonverbal communication. Meltdowns, tantrums and other challenging behaviours might be common.

This book was written to teach you how making small shifts in your language and speaking style will produce important results. You will stop telling children what to do and instead thoughtfully give them information to help them make important discoveries in the moment. These moments build resilience, flexibility, and positive relationships over time.



### **Upcoming coffee morning on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January**

Join Elsa Mock - Language and Autism Support Teacher from the Inclusion Team – in school on 15<sup>th</sup> January.



A nice way to keep children (and adults!) calm over the festive period is with guided meditation.

[Mindfulness for parents: 5 tips to stress less and stay present](#)  
[— Calm Blog](#)

## Meditation script for parents

### **Guided Meditation Script for Parents:**

As you settle in, take a moment to check in with yourself. Notice how you're feeling in this present moment—physically, emotionally, and mentally. There's no need to change anything right now, just acknowledge what is.

Take a deep breath in through your nose. Hold it for a moment, and then slowly release it through your mouth. With each breath, feel yourself sinking deeper into a state of calm. Inhale... and exhale.


With each breath, allow your body to relax further. Let go of any tension in your forehead, your jaw, and your shoulders. With every exhale, imagine releasing the weight of the day, the worries, and the responsibilities. Allow yourself to be free of everything for this moment.

Imagine now that you are standing under a warm, golden light. This light is nurturing, soothing, and gentle. It's a light of self-care, love, and comfort. As this light begins to surround you, let it move down from the top of your head, gently covering your face, your neck, and your shoulders.

**Just breathe!**


Breathing exercises are helpful to alleviate feelings of stress, anxiety and anger.

THREE STEPS FOR  
**DEEP BREATHING**




**START HERE**

Look up to the sky and take three big breaths.



Breathe down to the bottom of your shoes.



Exhale all the way up to the top of your head.

**IF IT FEELS GOOD, REPEAT!**

Just Keep Breathing...  
**MINDFUL BREATHING**  
LET'S MAKE MINDFULNESS FUN!

**1. THE POWER OF BREATHING**

First, we need to teach our kids how to breathe deeply. Trace the figure 8 to the right, breathe in deeply while tracing the first half of the design, then exhale slowly while tracing the second half of the shape.



**2. 10 DEEP BREATHS**

Put your hands on your belly and fill it up with your biggest breath. Like this: inhale for one, and feel your belly fill and expand. Exhale for two, and feel your belly go down. Do this ten times. Can you feel your body sink into relaxation? You can try this exercise whenever you feel anxious or angry.



**3. SET A TIMER**

Set a timer for one minute. Sit cross-legged on the floor, in a chair, or outside in the grass and breathe in and out deeply (without talking) until the timer goes off. Pay close attention to any sounds you hear around you or any sensations felt in your body. Just notice. If your mind wanders, pull it back to the breath.



MINDFULMAZING

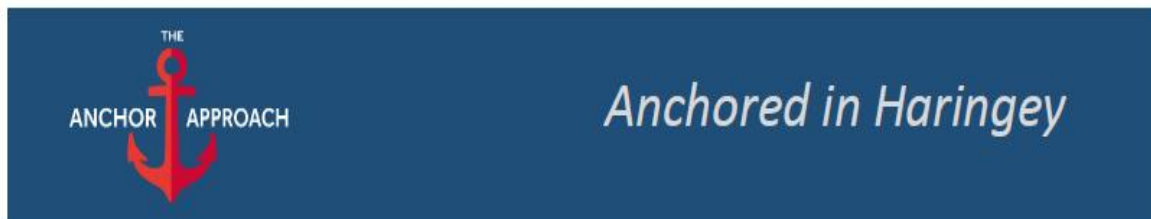
### Sensory activities for children



Click here for ideas on sensory activities for the Christmas season: [30 Christmas Sensory Activities](#)

## Anchor Approach

There will be a parent workshop on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March at 2.45pm.



The Anchor Approach works with schools to support children and their families to be resilient and to have high levels of wellbeing.

When we are resilient, we are more able to cope with life's challenges and recover if something happens that is difficult or upsetting.

Having high levels of wellbeing means that we are more able to enjoy our relationships with others, take part in activities in and outside school and to enjoy learning new things. We feel more confident to contribute to family, school and community and this can bring joy and a sense of purpose as we learn our place in the world and know that we are important. This helps us to live our best lives!



The Anchor Approach is a Public Health Approach, developed and run by Haringey teachers. We will soon be working with staff at your school to support your school community.

For more information visit: [anchor@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:anchor@haringey.gov.uk)



For educational settings, the Anchor Approach offers a 'whole school approach' to mental health. Helping schools and other educational settings fulfil their requirement to provide mental health support for pupils, in a way that's consistent with Department for Education (DfE) guidance. The independent evaluation by University College London reported that the Anchor Approach is "effective and meets DfE objectives".

HARINGEY CHILDREN'S  
SPEECH AND LANGUAGE  
THERAPY

# ADVICE LINE

For Parents, Carers  
and Early Years  
Professionals in  
Haringey



Whittington Health  
NHS Trust

Do you have a child aged 0-5?

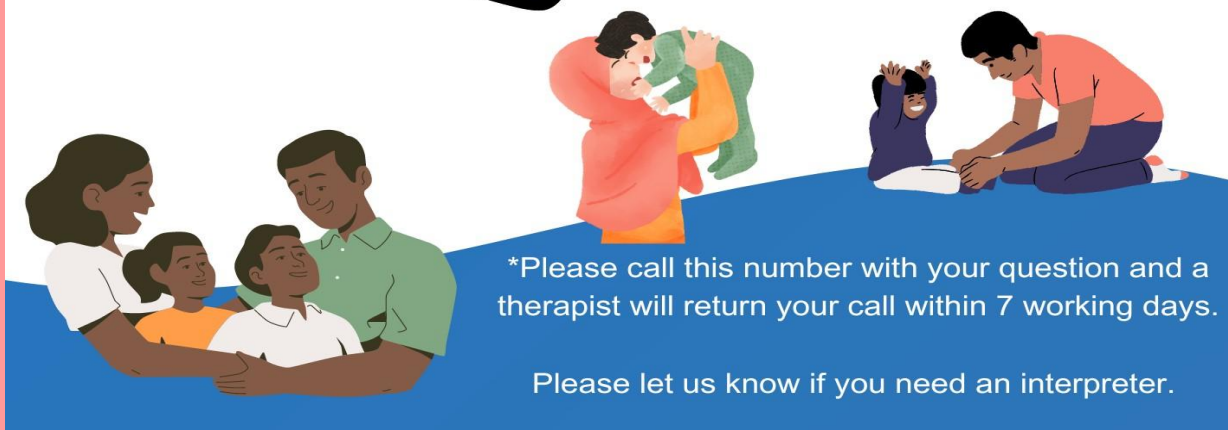
Do you have a question about  
their talking or communication?



Call **0203 224 4399**  
Monday-Friday  
9am-5pm



One of our Speech and  
Language Therapists  
will be able to speak to  
you and offer advice\*



\*Please call this number with your question and a therapist will return your call within 7 working days.

Please let us know if you need an interpreter.



Please check out Haringey's local offer page for SEND-related events and information

<https://www.haringey.gov.uk/children-and-families/local-offer/support/leisure-activities>



Also, visit SEND Power, A forum for parents and carers of children/young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

<https://www.sendpowerinharingey.org/>

*On behalf of everyone at St. Mary's Priory, have a restful Christmas.*

