

# C O S Y U P

A half termly newsletter for by the Autism Advisory Teacher Service for Peterborough's Autism community



## *Reflections in the Baubles*

**As we come together to celebrate the magic of Christmas, we begin to reflect on our unique experiences and the trials and tribulations of our journey through this past year. For those of us working within the field of Special Educational Needs, we aspire to create a brighter, more inclusive future for our children. In this issue, we shine a light on the current challenges and reflect on how we are making progress towards our goals.**

One of the challenges we face is the need for increased awareness and understanding within the education system. While good progress has been made, there's still a call for more comprehensive training for educators to better support neurodiverse students. As a service, we are providing free Autism Education Trust training to schools across the city, empowering teachers to create inclusive spaces that celebrate neurodiversity.



Many parents advocate for improved access to specialist support services and a more tailored approach to education. Addressing this issue requires collaborative efforts between policymakers, educators, and advocacy groups to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to meet the needs of neurodiverse learners. As a service we have expanded, and now have a bigger team than ever to meet the growing demand for specialist support.



Inclusivity extends beyond education, encompassing community engagement and understanding. Social isolation remains a concern for many families, with the need for increased awareness and acceptance within the broader community. What's more, the financial strain on families with autistic children is another significant challenge. While our service is primarily concerned with education, we recognise that we need to support children holistically in order to improve outcomes for children and families. We operate a free parent support line where families can book a phone consultation with one of our teachers by emailing [sen.inclusion@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:sen.inclusion@peterborough.gov.uk).

Inclusivity is not just a goal; it's a shared responsibility. Facilitating an education system that accommodates the unique strengths and challenges of every child requires continuous collaboration and open dialogue. As we exchange gifts and good wishes this Christmas, let's extend our support to those advocating for positive change in the realm of autism and education.

From everyone at the Autism Advisory Teacher Service, Merry Christmas.

# TOP TIPS FOR AN AUTISM FRIENDLY CHRISTMAS



1

**Be Predictable:** Create a visual holiday schedule and prepare your child for any upcoming events to reduce anxiety.

2

**Create a Sensory-Friendly Environment:** opt for soft lighting or gentle music and designate a quiet space, free of decorations where your child can retreat to.

3

**Giving Gifts:** Select gifts that align with your child's interests and sensory preferences and if your child doesn't like surprises, put a photo of what's inside on the wrapper.

4

**Christmas Dinner:** Consider an alternative Christmas dinner or allow them to have their preferred food. Avoid crackers or take out the snapper if loud noises are a problem

5

**New Traditions:** Don't feel as though you must stick to traditions, Christmas is a time for happiness and joy so do what works for you and your family

## Out & About

**Kids go Half Price at Sacrewell:**  
[Click here](#)

**Springfields Winter Wonderland Walk:**  
[Click here](#)

**Vivacity SEN Christmas Club**  
[Click here](#)

**SEN Friendly Sessions at Safari Softplay:**  
[Click here](#)

### Nene Park Winter Festival:

- Enchanted Forest
- Performances
- Fairground Stalls

[Click here](#)

### Angle Gaming Lounge:

A £5 wristband gives you access to the board game library and VR Headsets.

[Click here](#)

## Rainy Days

### Try these...

- Melted Snowman Biscuits...[Click here.](#)
- Christmas Chocolate Play Pudding... [Click here.](#)
- Edible Snowmen...[Click here.](#)

### Christmas Apps..

Crazy Santa Run...  
[Click here.](#)

Christmas Countdown Story...  
[Click here.](#)

### Crafty Christmas Tree...



## NOTICE BOARD

### Recognition award for TACPAC – December 2023

We are thrilled to announce that Donna was presented with the Susie Fuller award by TACPAC during our TACPAC training day on the 1st of December. This annual award is in recognition of anyone who has shown outstanding commitment to embedding TACPAC in their home or workplace, showing the benefits of this work in the progress and development with their children, young people, older people and families. Donna is very much a worthy winner of this award and it's great that her work and enthusiasm is widening the number of children who are enjoying TACPAC across Peterborough.

Thirty people attended the training session on the 1st of December to learn how to use TACPAC. Everyone was very keen to learn and use the resources they were given with their children already we are hearing how children are really enjoying it across Peterborough. It was lovely to see how committed people are to learn new ways to engage with our children and even better to hear how our children are enjoying it as part of their school day. For those people who have not heard of TACPAC it's a programme which draws together touch and music to create sensory communication between two people. TACPAC creates sensory alignment and helps people of any age who have sensory impairment, for example, visual impairment, developmental delay, complex learning difficulties, Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD) or limited or pre-verbal levels of communication.