



Issue no. 8

SEND Newsletter

Your termly newsletter about our school!
Christmas Edition

Happy Holidays

We would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

A piece of Inspiration

“Some of the most wonderful people are the ones who don't fit into boxes.”

In this term's newsletter

- Surviving Christmas with a SEND family
- Gift ideas
- Local SEND activities
- Dates for the diary

Dates for the diary

- Last Day of Term Friday 20th Dec Back to School 6th January
- Last Day of Term 14th Feb
- Half term 17th Feb - 21st Feb
- Back to School 24th Feb

Contact our SEND team



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Local Activities

Discover Stockwood like you've never seen it before, as you weave your way on a self-guided tour through the illuminated pathways, set against the backdrop of the beautiful gardens. Each year the trail promises something fresh and new, with some old favourite installations kept along the way. Fantastic opportunity for friends or families to come together and enjoy an evening out, capture some beautiful moments and make festive memories

<https://www.culturetrust.com/>





Surviving Christmas

The festive season is now upon us. It can be both the most magical time of year and the most stressful at the same time. For some SEND families Christmas brings change to routines and large family gatherings which can often be very difficult for our children. So we wanted to share some great advice and activities to get us through the holidays.

Be flexible - this one has to go to the top of the list - without this main adjustment our families will inevitably struggle over the festive period.

Stagger activities - food, presents, social events and visitors are all demands so we should try to keep things as level and balanced as possible.

Decorations can be overloading and often they can be up for a long time, adding to the waiting time for a restless child. They can also be difficult for sensory reasons, some families opt to not decorate at all.

Use the option of giving presents early if needed to reduce anxiety. It really is important to remember that the demand of waiting, coupled with the excitement of the Christmas hype, plus the intolerance to uncertainty of the surprises that lay ahead, may all send the child into shutdown.

Include rest days if you have a busy schedule ahead.

Ensure preparations are made to help the day run smoother. It's a good idea to put batteries in toys or build them in advance (if waiting is difficult for the child) and to also think of doing as much prior to the big day.

Keep normal routines where possible e.g. food, sleep, daily structures - try to retain some sense of 'normality' over the period so that the changes that need to happen are limited and therefore have more chance of success.

Avoid banning screen time for your children or youngsters, if they are feeling more content in a virtual world, there is probably a reason for that. Down time when festive times are highly arousing and sensory overloading is essential for survival.

It's ok to have your own version of a 'special' Christmas - there is no such thing as a perfect Christmas so find what works for you and your own unique family.

Most importantly be kind to yourself! Reward yourself for getting through it - whether this be a treat to look forward to or simply a deep breath in as you relish your success. Remember this is no easy feat and to survive this period, with our own family dynamics and needs, is an accomplishment in itself.

SEND Christmas Present Ideas

- Mini Trampoline

With the cold and wet days we have in the UK at this time of year, this indoor version is the perfect replacement. It gives them the feedback that they crave and it's good exercise too.

- Kinetic Sand

Just scrunching it together and letting it drop through their fingers will bring hours of sensory joy, and it's relatively easy to clear up!

- Toniebox

For those who enjoy listening to stories, a Toniebox could be the perfect present. With no screens, it's a portable audiobook and music player, with lots of different character and content options. Could be a great for bed time and those long car journeys.

- Exercise/Yoga Ball

Another present with sensory feedback in mind. Many of our children are constantly craving vestibular feedback, bouncing on an exercise ball is a great way of them learning to help themselves to self-regulate. There's so many different ways the ball can be used, and also different options of type of ball too.

- LED Projector

If your child like lights and music then this could be the perfect gift for them. They have a number of different settings and colours, and can transform a dark room into a sensory haven. Perfect for a playroom, sensory tent, or bedroom.

- Bean Bag

A beanbag gives that feeling of pressure when you sink into it that so many of our children crave. Again, there's all kinds of shapes, colours, materials and sizes you can get, so have a think about what would suit your child best.

- Mermaid Cushion

The way the colours change, combined with the sensory feel they'll get from moving the sequins, looks like a lot of fun. There's lots of options to choose from in all kinds of colours and sizes too. You can even get personalised ones with your own photo beneath the sequins.

- Sensory Tent

We used to have one of these when the boys were much younger. For kids who enjoy/need a quiet and calming space, a black out tent can be a great buy. Combining it with some soft furnishings, and fibre optic lights or an LED projector could make the perfect chill out area

- Weighted Blanket

Getting a good night's sleep can be a real issue for our autistic kids. Often it can be caused by anxiety and sensory processing difficulties. A weighted blanket tries to relieve some of that stress and calm a restless body. If your child responds well to deep pressure, then a weighted blanket might help the whole family get some more rest! This is definitely on this year's list.

**Please make sure you check to get the correct weight of blanket for your child



WE WISH YOU

a very

MERRY

CHRISTMAS

AND

Happy New Year

From Everyone here at

