

School Term dates for 2023 – 2024 school year

Autumn Term 2023

- Term starts Friday 1st September 2023
- Half term Monday 30th October – Friday 3rd November
- Term ends Friday 22nd December 2023

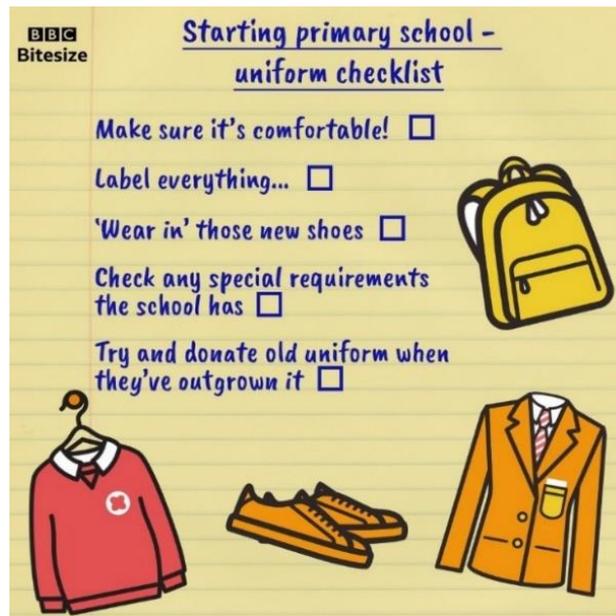
Spring Term 2024

- Term starts Monday 8th January 2024
- Half term Monday 12th February – Friday 16th February
- Term Ends Friday 22nd March 2024

Summer Term

- Term starts Monday 8th April 2024
- Half Term Monday 27th May – Friday 31st May
- Term ends Friday 19th July 2024

(Your school will inform you of planned inset day)



This grant provides £125 (except for year 7 which is £200) to buy school uniform, equipment, sports kit, and kit for activities outside of school for your child.

The scheme for the 2023/24 academic year will begin on 1 July 2023 and end on 31 May 2024.

This grant applies to all eligible pupils of compulsory year groups (Reception – Year 11), Looked After Children, and those who are classed as No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF).

Learners currently eligible for free school meals can receive this grant if they are:

- entering reception, year 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 in primary school in September 2023
- entering year 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 in secondary school in September 2023
- aged 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 or 15 in special schools, special needs resource bases or pupil referral units (year groups as detailed above)

For Year 7 learners the grant is £200, recognising the increased costs associated with starting secondary school.

This funding is for pupils currently eligible for free school meals and does not extend to pupils who receive free school meals under the transitional protection or universal primary free school meal scheme.

It is anticipated that letters for eligible pupils will be received by Monday 17th July 2023.

[School uniform: What you need to know - BBC Bitesize](#)

Adapted Uniform



M&S
 EST. 1884

[Adaptive Clothing for Kids | Assisted Dressing | M&S \(marksandspencer.com\)](#)

Our specially made Easy Dressing range includes hip dysplasia clothes, feeding tube clothing and zip-up bodysuits. With thoughtfully placed poppers and super-

soft materials, our collection is all about comfort. Find sizes starting from new-born, going up to 16 years. There are pretty patterns and a variety of colours on offer, as well as handy multi-packs too.

If you are looking for shoes that would be suitable for children with AFO's or children who find laces difficult Marks and Spencer's are now doing footwear as part of their adaptive clothing range.

ASDA
George.

Asda George Clothing [Easy On Easy Wear | School | George at ASDA](#)



George at Asda has launched a clothing range for children with additional needs, at the moment the clothes are available in a school uniform range only.

Discover our easy-on-easy wear kids' school uniform for comfortable essentials for boys and girls. Helping with independent dressing and made from sensory-kind fabric for extra comfort, our boys' school uniform and girls' school uniform will have them covered day-in, day-out. From pull-on polo shirts and school jumpers to easy fastenings, our range has been specially designed to help kids with independent dressing. Our easy-on-easy wear school uniform range also includes soft threads, non-bulky seams and label-free separates for maximum comfort.



SMOOTH TOE SEAM SOCKS FOR KIDS

Do your little ones complain at the thought of putting on their socks because of bulky or uncomfortable toe seams? Discover our range of smooth toe seam socks and tights for kids. Our kids' smooth toe seam socks range features a variety of plain and patterned styles whose toes have been linked using one single seam, making them smoother and practically seamless! Make putting on their socks a seamless experience with SOCKSHOP's smooth toe seam socks for kids.

[Seamless Socks for Kids](#) | [Kids' Seamless Socks](#) | [SOCKSHOP](#)



Shoe shopping

Shoe shopping can be overwhelming for some children. Clarks are happy to do all they can to help, during shoe shopping with your child.

Clarks Caerphilly The store does not play music, although it can get rather busy but quieter times are 9 am and after 4:30pm. If you need to book a slot you can contact the store On 02920 883453

Clarks Cwmbran If you would like to visit us during a time with fewer crowds, less noise, and bright lights, then we offer Quiet Time appointments. To arrange the appointment, we advise you call ahead on 01633 483472

Clarks Merthyr Tydfil If you would like to visit us during a time with fewer crowds, less noise, and bright lights, then we offer Quiet Time appointments. To arrange the appointment, we advise you call ahead on 01685 377689

Clarks Cardiff Queen Street If you would like to visit us during a time with fewer crowds, less noise, and bright lights, then we offer Quiet Time appointments. To arrange the appointment, we advise you call ahead on 02920 390619

Friendly Shoes

Friendly Shoes were created by an occupational therapist, after having so many patients that had difficulties finding appropriate footwear. Whether it would be slipping on shoes that lack support or being forced to wear shoes that just don't look good.

The goal is to create comfortable, functional, and stylish shoes allowing anyone to put on and take off easily. That's Friendly!

[Friendly Shoes - friendlyshoes.co.uk](http://friendlyshoes.co.uk)



BILLY Footwear, is the brainchild of two Seattle locals: Darin Donaldson and Billy Price. Our focus is on shoes that embody universal design, meaning they both appeal to and work for everyone.

The term, "universal design" is used all the time in the construction of homes and city buildings, referring to environments that accommodate all parties. Universal design has even appeared right under our noses with the advancements and popularity of smart phones, which incorporate features that are not only convenient for the masses, but also allow individuals with vision, hearing, and mobility impairments to access all the same information. The designs of these structures and gadgets are universal, so why not apply the same term to fashion?

Smashing fashion with function, BILLY Footwear incorporates zippers that go along the side of the shoes and around the toe, allowing the upper of each shoe to open and fold over completely. Thus the wearer can place his or her foot onto the shoe footbed unobstructed. Then with a tug on the zipper-pull the shoe closes and secures overtop the user's foot. It's simple. It's easy.

You might be wondering why universal design is so important to us. Well, after breaking his neck from a three-story fall in October of 1996, our co-founder, Billy, became paralyzed from the chest down and lost the ability to move much of his body, including his fingers. Not only did he suddenly face mobility challenges, but daily tasks that he took for granted, such as putting on clothes, became much more difficult. Throughout the years he learned tricks for getting dressed more easily. But that said, the one piece of clothing that always eluded him was shoes—he never found a pair of shoes that he felt were both attractive and that he could put on independently

Billy Footwear is also available through [Styles for Kids | BILLY Footwear](#)

Caerphilly Uniform Exchange



We stock new and pre loved school uniform for both primary and comprehensive schools in Caerphilly.
Saving clothing from landfill and saving families money.

SUMMER OPENING HOURS:
Open Tuesdays and Thursdays
10.00am to 5.00pm

find us at:

**43 Attlee Court
Caerphilly
CF83 1QU**

Caerphillyuniformexchange@gmail.com

Haircuts

Haircuts, can be a very stressful procedure for a number of children and parents.



Bens Barbers Newbridge is offering appointment only now so it'll only be you and Ben in the shop. To book an appointment use the link below. Ben was really understanding and was more than happy to help parents with haircuts

[Bensbarbershopnewbridge.booksy.com](https://bensbarbershopnewbridge.booksy.com)



ASD Sundays ARE BACK and our next session will take place on Sunday 25th June 🙌🏻🌈

Payment of £20 will be required in advance. As our sessions are run by volunteers, all monies will be donated to a nominated ASD support charity.

📧 Bookings will be taken via email only so please email janine@spirithairteam.co.uk.

 **GIG Cymru NHS WALES** | Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

Occupational Therapy Advice for Hair Cutting

Whether it be a hair cut in the house or a hair-cut at a salon, it is important to prepare your child for the task. Think about the time of day you pick, for example after school may not be a good idea because they may be tired from school and need to burn off some energy or have downtime after concentrating for the day. Also a time when you're not too rushed in case you need to take breaks.

When discussing the routine of having a haircut, if the word cut is a real trigger for your child, then avoid using this terminology and maybe try talking about getting hair tidied up, or smartened up or getting their hair done. This can help reduce the fear and encourage them to be more accepting of the task.

Talk them through the routine before-hand, use social stories (examples of these are available on www.andnextcomes1.com , even has a video which you can watch together.) Use photos, pictures, to discuss what happens first, next and then etc. If going to a salon then this is even more important, so that they know what the venue looks like on arrival, what is involved, what will they have to do. Photos of the reception area, the waiting room, the hairdresser chair, will all help to familiarise them, along with the smells and the sounds to expect.

Get them familiar with the tools, comb, scissors, clippers, gown, towel etc. in order to reduce some anxiety.

De-sensitisation is a good technique, hearing the clippers just switched on to begin with can help to introduce the tool without the sensation and the sound together, which can be overwhelming. Calm clippers or noise reducing clippers can be good for these situation, a variety are available online.

To block out sounds if your child still gets very distressed then using earplugs can help, as these won't interfere with the haircut. Also allowing your child to wear headphones can be good for distracting and using an iPad or tablet, at the same time as having their hair cut can help to take their mind off what's going, on can relax them too. There are even noise cancelling headphones that block out background noise very well.

If cutting your child's hair yourself, try using a gown or cape that s full length so will catch any hair that falls, or stop it falling on to your child's skin, as this sensation alone can be distressing for some children. Also planning a haircut and then getting them to shower or bath after so they can get rid of any loose hair off them, if this is something they enjoy and don't find stressful in itself. Dusting off hair frequently through the task can help with this too, using a soft towel instead of a brush might also work.

Supporting your child's independence and self confidence in readiness for school

One of the main questions parents ask when their child starts school is 'Will they be able to manage?' You can support your child to develop independence and skills in preparation for school as well as supporting your child to explore their emotions and discuss with them how they are feeling about starting school. There are many activities you can do at home to help prepare your child for the transition to primary school.

Many schools use visual timetables to help children get used to their new routines. Using a visual timetable at home can also be a great way to support their independence.

In the early years children learn best when they are excited and motivated about what they are learning. The types of play where children have to think for themselves, solve problems and use their ideas and imagination help children develop their thinking skills ready for school.

Many adults have the idea of ready for school as being ready to sit down and listen to learn but reception classes are full of opportunities for children to play and explore and follow their own ideas and not just the teacher's instructions.

<https://youtu.be/kyUQrmlGabY> <https://youtu.be/OTpOG7D8R1U> <https://youtu.be/tkWP8ZpTKXg>

The You tube links are useful tips on how to get your little one ready for school.

How to help your child transition from home to school

Transitioning from home or nursery to the primary school classroom can be challenging, even upsetting, for some children. Here, early years specialist Helen Stroudley offers her advice to help you make the switch as smooth as possible for your child.

Helen's tips for before they start school

- Walk or travel to school regularly with your child - this will get them used to the buildings and their new surroundings.
- Keep a consistent routine - especially around waking up, bed time, and meal times.
- Check out your schools settling in policies, such as taster days or home visits.
- Talk to friends and family members, especially if they have children of a similar age, and share experiences.

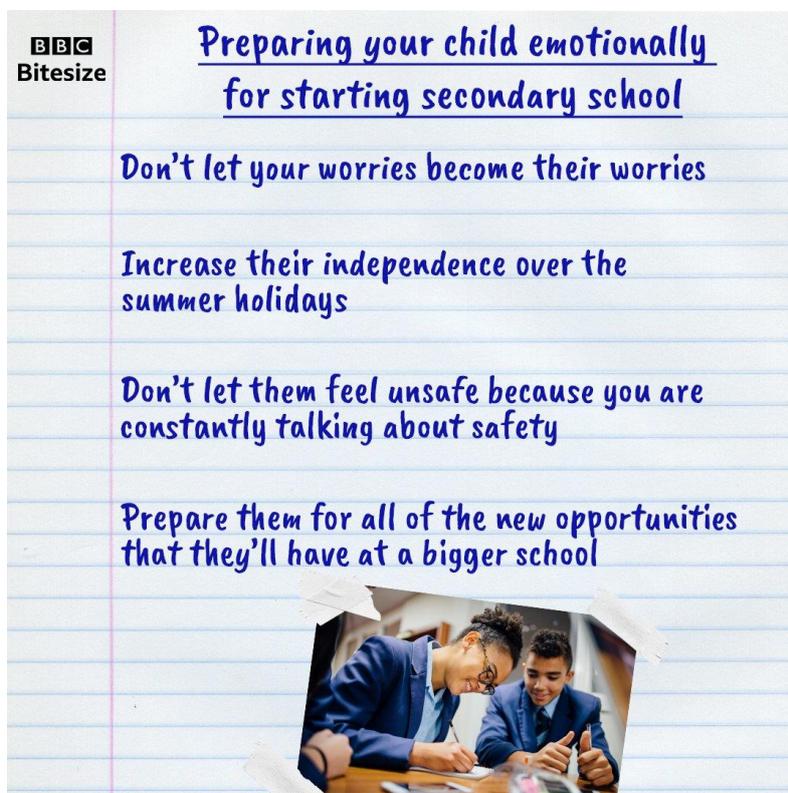
For more tips visit the BBC Bitesize website on the links below

[How to help your child transition from home to school - BBC Bitesize](#)

[Starting primary school - BBC Bitesize](#)

[Seven tips for the first term of primary school - BBC Bitesize](#)

Getting organised for Secondary school can be difficult here are some helpful tips



BBC
Bitesize

Preparing your child emotionally
for starting secondary school

Don't let your worries become their worries

Increase their independence over the
summer holidays

Don't let them feel unsafe because you are
constantly talking about safety

Prepare them for all of the new opportunities
that they'll have at a bigger school



Transitioning to secondary or high school can feel like a huge leap for children and their families.

Our expert advice will help you prepare together and manage the transition from primary to secondary school.

What's different about secondary and high school?

Children have to:

Travel by themselves, wear uniforms and get used to an unfamiliar building.

Meet lots of different people, make new friends and find where they 'fit in'.

Be independent and responsible for their learning, including giving in homework on time.

Go through some big changes in their brains and bodies as they become teenagers, which can make this even more tricky.

The pressure to 'keep up' academically and socially can feel overwhelming – but there are simple ways you can get ready together and develop skills for coping on an ongoing basis.

Preparing my child

Check in with them regularly and remind them that:

It's normal to feel both excited and scared – nerves actually help us prepare for challenges.

It may take time for them to feel settled, and that's OK.

They might get things wrong as they get used to a new situation.

They've coped with big changes in the past and can do it again.

Not everything is going to change – some routines will stay the same.

They can talk to you or someone at school if they're worried.

Are you worried about them? Find out how you can support your child.

How Can I Get Ready for Secondary School?

There are lots of things that I can do to get ready for secondary school.

We sometimes have to travel further to secondary school than we are used to. We might have to use different types of transport, like a bus or train, to get to school. I can practice the route that I will follow so I know how to get to school on the first day.

I should try on my new uniform – to make sure that it fits and to know how it feels.

I can have a look at the school's website. I can see what the school is like, what clubs I can do and the menu for my food choices.

I can speak to my parents, careers, family members about my fears. They can help me to understand that it is not really that scary!

The week before I go back to school, I can get up at school time. This will help me to get into a routine before my first day.

I can get excited! Secondary school is a place where I can try lots of new things. It is an exciting step for me.



Preparing myself

The first years of secondary or high school can be difficult for families.

Young people may explore their identity by trying new things, taking risks, breaking rules and putting their friends first.

Keep talking – young people like to hear that you are interested in their world and if you know what's going on in their lives, you might worry less.

Check in while you're doing everyday things, like cooking or driving somewhere, so that they don't feel pressured.

Remember that your child still relies on you and (any) boundaries are needed to keep them safe look after yourself. Self-care can be as simple as having a cup of tea, going for a walk or getting enough sleep. All of this helps you to be there for them.

Back-to-School: Managing Parent Anxiety

- 1 Accept Uncertainty**
No one can give you a guarantee that your child won't be exposed to someone who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID. The days just aren't these yet, and the search for certainty can cause parents a lot of distress. The goal should be to make a realistic plan that will keep teachers, families, and children as safe as possible.
- 2 Productive Worries**
Spending time considering how you will navigate the logistics of blended or even fully-virtual learning this year is useful if you are using active problem-solving skills and making concrete decisions. Worrying for worry's sake is a waste of mental and physical energy, and it won't change the outcome.
- 3 Stop Fighting Feelings**
Parents will ALWAYS have the nagging feeling that they aren't making the right decision for their kids. All you can do is make the best decision with the information you currently have at-hand. If data changes in 3 or 6 months, don't criticize yourself for what may seem to have been a "bad" decision based on information you can't yet know.
- 4 Cultivate Compassion**
Be an advocate for yourself as a parent navigating uncharted territory. Monitor your self-talk and be kind to yourself, your partner, and those involved in your child's education. Let go of self-judgment, support other parents who are also making difficult choices. This can help bring communities together and foster a positive start to a challenging school year.

Azlen Theobald, PsyD Neuropsychology Post-Doctoral Fellow
NeurAbilities Healthcare

For more support visit

[School Resources to Help With Transitions | Mental Health | YoungMinds](#)

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/our-services/parents-and-carers/getting-ready-to-start-secondary-or-high-school/>

[Starting secondary school - BBC Parents' Toolkit - BBC Bitesize](#)

Transition Support - Helping you get ready for college



Learning Support – Colege Gwent [Transition Support - Coleg Gwent](#)

Transition means a process of change, like changing from school to college. Most people feel a bit nervous about change and moving from school to college is a big change. But remember you're not alone and there's lots of support at Coleg Gwent.

We work with young people, their families, schools, Career Wales and any other people who support you, to understand your needs and how best to support you. To ensure you get the best support we'll request evidence of your learning support needs and/or medical/physical needs.

Individual Development Plans

If you have an Individual Development Plan (IDP), we will attend your last review at school. It is a good idea to ask your school ALN Co-ordinator to invite us. At your review, you can tell us what is important to you (now and in the future) and we can start planning your transition.

We can plan transition activities to help you get-to-know the college, so you know what to expect before you start, helping to make you feel safe and happy. We will make sure the staff who work with you know about your support needs to help you achieve positive outcomes.

Learning Support – Coleg Y Cymoedd <https://www.cymoedd.ac.uk/learner-support/>

Starting college is one of the most exciting things you can do. Making new friends, studying something new, and making your own decisions are all positive experiences, but if you feel you need some advice or information, we're here to help.

The College's Universal Learning Provision includes lots of different support available to all learners. There is support with literacy, numeracy and digital skills; Welfare and Wellbeing support to help with personal issues as well as tutor support and guidance Learning Support

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Additional Learning Support

Universal Learning provision is likely to meet the needs of most learners, but some learners may require Additional Learning Provision.

If you have a disability, sensory impairment or additional learning need such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD or ASD; had a Statement (SEN) or support in school and think you need extra help in College, then please let us know.

You can tell us on your application form, speak to someone from support at interview or ask someone to contact you. Telling us as early as possible helps make sure the right support for you is in place.

Our friendly, experienced and qualified Additional Learning Provision team meet a range of individual needs. Learning Support Assistants provide close support and work with small groups in and out of class. Specialist assessors arrange access arrangements in exams and provide specific support. Learning Coaches provide extra support through the I2A project and help make settling into college easier. We understand that college is not just about taking a course – it is about preparing for work or further study, meeting new people and enjoying what you do and you can be confident that there is support available.

Useful resources

Follow the link below for animations and videos to help young people and their parents/carers prepare for college.

Animations - [Young Person - ALN Pathfinder](#)

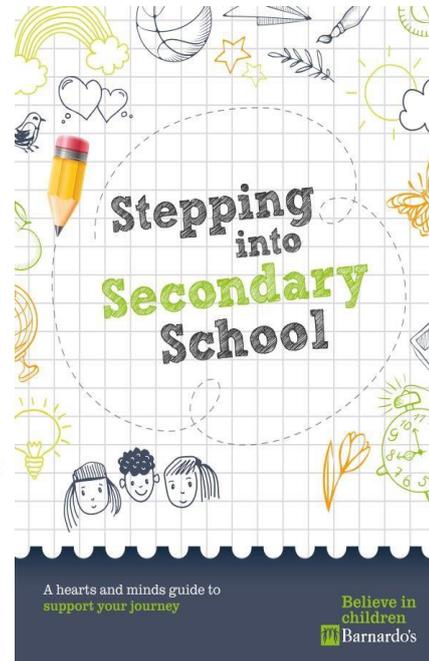
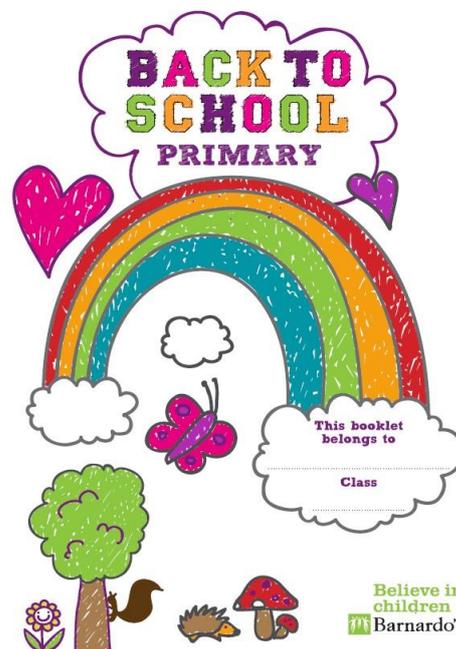
Videos - [Parent or Carer - ALN Pathfinder](#)

[Other back to school toolkits available](#)

Barnardo's have also got back to school booklets that are available to be downloaded.

Primary age: [primary-workbook-loss.pdf \(educators-barnardos.org.uk\)](#)

Secondary age [barnardo s y6 transition guide - stepping into secondary school final version pdf.pdf \(educators-barnardos.org.uk\)](#)





Children's Centre Psychology Service

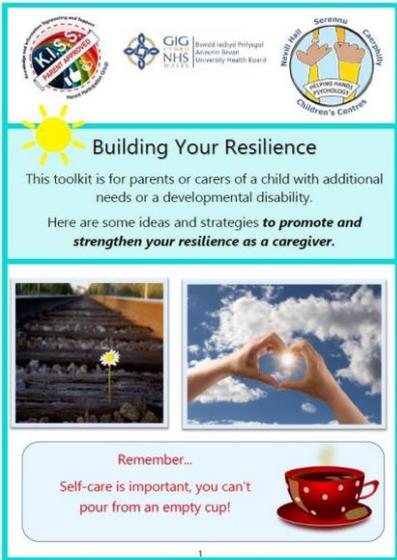
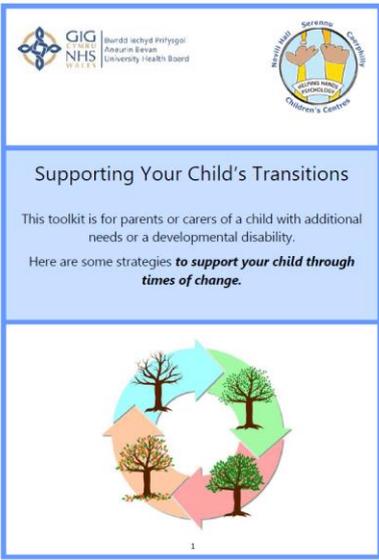
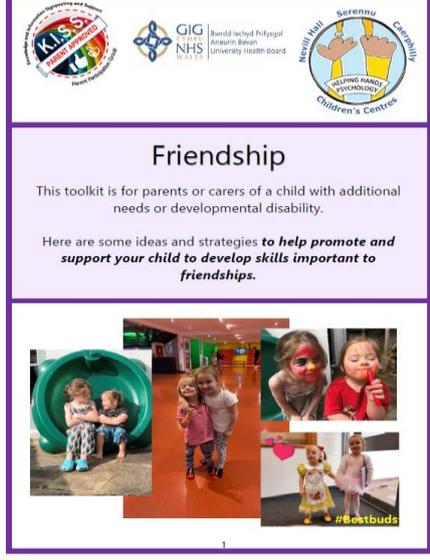
Children's Centre Psychology Service provide up to date and factual information that is specific to supporting children and young people with disabilities, developmental delay or undergoing assessment. There are a number of toolkits available and throughout the year certain workshops are run by the service. To access any of these workshops and toolkits you can email: ABB.HelpingHandsTeam@wales.nhs.uk for more information.

Toolkits include:-

- Supporting your Child's Transitions
- Building Your Resilience
- Friendship
- Supporting Anxious Children
- Separation Anxiety
- Book of Calm
- Promoting Sleep
- Understanding Behaviours that Challenge

Workshops include:-

- Supporting your Child's Transition
- Supporting Anxious Children
- Exploring Behaviours that Challenge
- Introduction to Sleep
- Introduction to Sensory Processing
- Social Communication

 <p>Building Your Resilience</p> <p>This toolkit is for parents or carers of a child with additional needs or a developmental disability. Here are some ideas and strategies to promote and strengthen your resilience as a caregiver.</p> <p>Remember... Self-care is important, you can't pour from an empty cup!</p>	 <p>Supporting Your Child's Transitions</p> <p>This toolkit is for parents or carers of a child with additional needs or a developmental disability. Here are some strategies to support your child through times of change.</p>	 <p>Friendship</p> <p>This toolkit is for parents or carers of a child with additional needs or developmental disability. Here are some ideas and strategies to help promote and support your child to develop skills important to friendships.</p>
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If you need to buy supplies ready for the new school year, why not help Sparkle at the same time?



easyfundraising

Turn your online shopping into everyday magic to help special children shine for



You shop, brands donate to us... it won't cost you any extra!

- 1 Create an **EasyFundraising** account via the website or download the app onto your smart phone
- 2 Search for **Sparkle** and select us as your chosen cause!
- 3 Then, next time you want to buy something online, log into **EasyFundraising** first and click on the retailer you want to shop with. You'll then be taken to their website where you can continue to make your purchase in the usual way.
- 4 Every time you shop online, brands give cashback as a thank-you for shopping with them. They will share this money with **Sparkle...** at no extra cost to you!

amazon.co.uk



Booking.com

ebay



M&S

Viking



Sainsbury's



sky

ASOS



Boden

Currys PC Works



And More...!

SNAP Services



SNAP Cymru offers free and independent information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with all kinds of special educational needs (SEN)/additional learning needs (ALN) and disabilities. We give advice and support on a range of issues including assessments, individual education plans, statements of special educational needs, bullying, school attendance, exclusion, health and social care provision and discrimination.

We can help all families, children and young people who live in Wales who have, or may have, Additional Learning Needs, including Special Educational Needs or Disabilities and other barriers to education. e.g. children in need, disaffection, poverty, deprivation or English or Welsh as a second language. We also can help carers, professionals and others who support children and young people including schools, colleges and other community education establishments.



Helpline : 0808 801 0608

We now operate a booking service to secure an appointment with one of our trained advisors.

You can book your helpline appointment here:

[Book a Telephone Helpline Appointment](#)



Opening Times

Monday – Friday | 9am – 5pm

Saturday – Sunday | Closed

Our offices are closed during public holidays.



Address

Head Office, SNAP Cymru

10 Coopers Yard

Curran Road

Cardiff

CF10 5NB

There will be drop-in sessions held across the Children's Centres that you can also make appointments to see SNAP.



The Orange Wallet is for anyone who would like support to communicate with staff when travelling by bus or train. It's particularly designed for passengers with an autism spectrum disorder.

However, it can be used by anyone with a hidden disability who may like to communicate to staff non-verbally.

We are also recommending passengers who are exempt from wearing a facemask to use the Orange Wallet scheme with the 'Face Covering Exemption' inserts.

Get your Orange Wallet

Contact us with your address and we'll post a wallet to you

Sian Matthews

asdservice.abb@wales.nhs.uk

01443 715044

You can also obtain an orange wallet directly from the National Autism Team by emailingASDinfo@WLGA.gov.uk with your name and postal address

Orange Wallet Collection Points

- Caerphilly Libraries
- Social Services Family Centres

For more information visit

<https://autismwales.org/en/i-am-autistic/resources-for-you/orange-wallet/>

[Orange Wallet Scheme | TfW](#)