**Autism in Schools - Parents Supporting Parents Forum**

**Tuesday 4th of July 2023 – Grimsby Town Hall**

The Forum was led Abi Fleming, Nicola Chappel and facilitated by Maureen Morris OBE from CONTACT, other practitioners that attended included:

* Sarah Allen, Peer Participation Worker (PPW) from Compass Go!
* Lauren King Commissioning Lead (Families Mental Health Disabilities) NELC
* Rebecca Taylor Head of SEND and Inclusion, Education and Inclusion NELC
* Gemma Baker, Commissioning Manager
* Amy Chilvers, Project Officer for Public Health
* Lauren Thompson, SEND Local Offer Coordinator
* Muriel Charrot, Business Support from Compass Go!
* Jayne Parish, Manager of SENDIASS
* Carol Batchelor, Kids

At today’s End of year celebration event, we discussed the following subjects.

* A presentation was shown and the leads for the individual areas discussed the achievements of the project so far. (attached is a copy of the presentation).
* During the presentation a video was shown of two school champions discussing the impact Autism in School has had on their individual schools and how they have found this experience. This will be published on the Local Offer in the future.
* Future planning and ideas were shared for the academic year 23-24.
* An agreement of dates, times, venues, and topics were achieved by using Menti Meter.
* 9 parents/carers attended, 2 school champions attended and 6 apologies sent.
* Open discussion throughout the Forum
* Questions were encouraged during the session.
	+ Parents/carers and school champions were given the opportunity to share their own experiences to date and new challenges they face. With the whole forum able to contribute to each other’s individual needs and circumstances.
	+ Parent carers and school champions each received a copy of CONTACTS “The Helpful Guide For Families With Disabled Children” copies will also be given to the four libraries we have in NELC.
	+ A Baseline questionnaire was completed by all parent carers and school champions that were present, this will allow the team to see the comparisons from the initial baseline to now. This reinforces and clearly shows the impact this project has had in NELC.
	+ A buffet lunch was provided and during lunch everybody was able to network with additional services.
	+ We were able to set the agenda for the first two sessions for the academic year 23-24, we will also discuss the agenda for all forums in September.

On behalf of the Autism in Schools team, thank you to all parent carers, school champions and practitioners for your support so far. Without your passion and dedication to improve the outcomes of children and young people with neurodiverse conditions in North East Lincolnshire the project would not have been as successful. We look forward to continuing our partnership and working together.



Below is an excerpt case study about Autism in Schools, from this document produced by the government.

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**Excerpt from: HM Government: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan Right Support, Right Place, Right Time - March 2023**

Case Study- NHS England Autism in Schools Project

The Autism in Schools project was co-produced by NHS England, parent carer forums and local authorities in North Cumbria and the North East to support autistic children and young people by creating positive environments that support mental health. The project was rolled out in over 300 schools across 26 ICBs in England between 2021/22 and 22/23, following a successful pilot in North Cumbria and the North East, and continues to have positive outcomes for children and young people, families and schools. Projects were based on bringing education, health and social care services together, providing learning opportunities for school staff, and developing the support available to autistic children and young people. As part of this, most of the schools undertook environmental assessments, also referred to as a sensory audit or learning walk. These explored the sensory aspects of the school environment and were led by occupational therapists, educational psychologists, mental health support teams and local charities. School staff reported that engagement with the project has made them more open to change, helped them feel empowered to better support the needs of autistic children and young people and supported them to develop stronger relationships with parents, carers and other professionals within the system. Schools also reported finding the whole school training on neurodiversity delivered through the projects especially helpful in allowing them to make reasonable adjustments that support young people to engage in learning, such as low stimulus areas in classrooms, time out passes and individual resource boxes. Alongside these practical adjustments, schools also reviewed policies and made changes to behavioural and uniform policies to meet the needs of neurodiverse learners.

Below are the dates for the next academic year Parent Supporting Parents forums which we have opened up to all schools in North East Lincolnshire, they will be held as agreed at Grimsby Town Hall.

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| September 19th 2023 | Discussing the final audits with parent carers and school champions for the AiS project |
| October 17th 2023 | Understanding Myself training (to showcase the programme and make amendments through collaboration with our parent carers) |
| November 21st 2023 | TBC |
| January 16/1/24 | TBC |
| February 9/2/24 | TBC |
| March 19/3/24 | TBC |
| April 23/4/24 | TBC |
| June 11/6/24 | TBC |
| July 9/7/24 | TBC |
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Below is an online national evaluation form, please complete the survey as this will evidence the projects impact.

NHS England has commissioned North of England Commissioning Support (NECS) Research and Evidence team to carry out an independent national evaluation of Autism Schools projects. The national evaluation aims to bring together information about all projects in England to understand project outcomes and how these are being achieved.

So, I’m emailing you to ask if you would complete the testimonial form (see the link below) for us please? We would really appreciate if the form could be completed by any of the following people:

* Head Teacher
* Teaching Assistant
* Mental Health in Schools Practitioner
* Parent carer
* Teacher

Testimonial form link:[**https://necs.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/autism-in-schools-testimonial-form**](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fnecs.onlinesurveys.ac.uk%2Fautism-in-schools-testimonial-form&data=05%7C01%7CAbi.Fleming%40nelincs.gov.uk%7Ca3a0f8b0b4134c5cd5d008db879ac0fc%7C2000653ac2c64009ac5a2455bfbfb61d%7C0%7C0%7C638252871037369441%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Yc1Zt6ZKGjF8GQroCXWgtLVBGfrWPWW9fMC3JRaVfoI%3D&reserved=0)

The form needs to be completed by **Monday 31st July 2023** please.

The form consists of 9 questions and the answer to the first question (*Please select your Autism in Schools project area)*  is **North East & Yorkshire - Humber, Coast & Vale.**

**We would like to thank you, in advance, and appreciate you taking the time to complete this form. Could I ask if you would you drop us a quick email us to let us know if you have completed the form please?**

Feedback from parent carers, school champions and practitioners.

“I felt like I was drowning now I feel like I’m swimming and its all thanks to the Autism in Schools project. This project has given me the confidence and knowledge to know what my child is entitled too” *Parent carer*

like that parent carers and SENDCos can get together to talk and collaborate.” *Parent carer* like that parent carers and SENDCos can get together to talk and collaborate.” “I like that parent carers and SENDCos can get together to talk and collaborate.” *Parent carer*

“I’m looking forward to the future forums and gaining more knowledge, advice and support, *School Champion*

“I like to be involved as much as possible for new parent carers starting their SEND journey.” *Parent carer*

Liked: “I now have the confidence to tell other parents how they can help their child and where to go for support,” *Parent carer*

“The biggest strength from NELINCS Autism in Schools forum is the collaboration of parent carers and school champions no other local authorities do this” *Practitioner*

“I like that parent carers and SENDCos can get together to talk and collaborate.” *Parent carer*

Liked: “Thanks to all of the Autism in School team for a fantastic experience, the project has helped increase our knowledge on neurodiverse conditions and how best we can support not only the child but the parent carers.” *School Champion*

The next Parents Supporting Parents Forum is **open to all parent carers and schools in North East Lincolnshire.**

**Grimsby Town Hall**

**Parent Supporting Parents Forum**

**Tuesday 19th of September 2023**:

**Infants, Primary and Secondary schools**

**9.30am – 11.30**

 Any further questions please get in touch.

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