

SEN newsletter

Issue 1,
October 2023

Welcome to our very first Lanterns SEN newsletter! The aim of these are to share a variety of tips and information with our parents. It is important to note that we have a wide range of children with SEND at lanterns and not all of the information provided may be applicable to your child. However we do aim to provide information that will be beneficial for parents of a range of different needs, so hope you find this useful!

Share Our Strategies (SOS)

Does your pre-school child struggle with social situations, social communication or Autism? Come and join us at **Lanterns Nursery** for the opportunity to meet other parents and professionals and explore strategies which may help. This group is run by Leanne Burton (TOP worker) and Ellie Jennings (Assistant SENCO).

Dates for this year:

Friday 3 rd Nov	1pm
Monday 4 th Dec	9am
Wednesday 17 th Jan	1pm
Tuesday 5 th March	9am
Tuesday 30 th April	1pm
Friday 28 th June	9am



Please email l.burton@lanterns.hants.sch.uk to book on!

Parent Wellbeing quote:

“You can’t pour from an empty cup”



Introducing our SEND team at Lanterns



Helen Woodhall
SENCO/Teacher



Ellie Jennings
Assistant
SENCO/SEYP

Behaviours out and about

In this section we are going to discuss challenging behaviours and some simple tips on how you can manage these out and about. Parents like yourselves will often raise concerns about how they can manage their child's challenging behaviours out and about in public. To define challenging behaviour in this sense we are referring to any behaviour that may not be deemed as 'socially appropriate' e.g. big meltdowns, physical behaviours towards others and inappropriate language. Parents often express that they feel embarrassed about these behaviours when they are out in public, with a fear that other parents will be judging their child or their parenting abilities.

- To begin tackling this, the hardest part is **letting go of what people think**. This of course is so much easier said than done. But try to start telling yourself things like 'Why does it matter what they think', 'Their opinion won't change anything' and 'They don't know our story'.
- In the moment the best things you can do is **keep calm**. Again easier said than done but the more heightened you get, the more they will mirror this.
- Try and **redirect**, distractions may not always work but if you can redirect their attention to another thing you may be able to stop it reaching boiling point. This could be redirecting them to a quieter area.
- **Give them space**, if they need to roll about on the floor of Tesco kicking and screaming then if you can, allow this. This can sometimes be easier than scooping them up and moving them. Sometimes the child needs to be left to self-regulate and you can assist this by managing what you can of the environment, keeping the area as clear as possible, ensuring that other people aren't at risk of tripping etc. If people ask what is going on you do not need to explain if you do not feel comfortable instead you can say things like 'He/She just needs space right now' or 'He/She is just regulating. People will just move on and get on with their day.
- **Reduce your language**. When your child is in a heightened state and feeling dysregulated they are not going to be able to process lots of words, try to keep language simple and consistent.
- **Give them a choice**. Naturally throughout the course of everyday we make so many decisions on behalf of our children but sometimes when our children are feeling dysregulated they may be communicating a lack of control. E.g. if they are upset that they have to leave the park offer them something that they ARE able to control such as whether they walk to the car or whether they jump like a bunny to the car. Keep this to two choices and be consistent e.g. 'It is time to leave the park, would you like to walk or jump to the car?'

Behaviour as a communication

Remember that all behaviour is a communication. As children develop they begin to learn ways to communicate their wants, needs and feelings. This can sometimes be delayed in our children with SEND. They may have difficulties with social communication skills and may not yet have the language to express how they are feeling and what they need.

Because they cannot express this verbally we may see these thoughts and feelings reflected in their behaviours. We may see children lashing out, we may see children screaming or we may see children destroying property. It is important for us as adults to interpret these communications and unpick the message they may be trying to communicate through this behaviour. E.g.

Behaviour	Possible communication
Pushed another child	They wanted a turn but did not have the words to express this. They were craving the sensory feedback of pushing and would benefit from redirecting to a physical activity such as throwing a ball.

As a result of this approach it is really important that we keep language positive. Try and avoid unhelpful labels like: naughty, silly, hyperactive and attention seeking. If you have noticed your child displaying challenging behaviours, write these down along with possible explanations as to what possible explanations there could be for this and see if there are any patterns.



Check out sensorydirect.com for a fantastic range of sensory products such as chewies, weighted products and sensory toys.

If you would like to feedback on how you found this newsletter or if there is anything else you would like to see in future issues please email Ellie at e.jennings@lanterns.hants.sch.uk