

# Social Communication Team (SCT) Newsletter, Winter 2025

Welcome to our Seasonal Newsletter, for children known to the Social Communication Team (SCT) or on our waiting list for an assessment.

Winter impacts the way we live in lots of small ways, but for some children, these small changes can have a big impact.



## Waiting for your child's assessment?

There are many strategies which can help all children, whether or not they receive a diagnosis.

**Using strategies early will not impact the outcome of your child's assessment.**

The **Right from the Start** toolkit can guide you through your journey: [click here](#)

Pre-school children, can also come along to our Therapy & play Sessions (see pg4)



## Seasonal wardrobe changes

The clothes we wear change during the winter as we wrap up warmer. Some children may find layers uncomfortable or certain fabrics scratchy or distracting. Some children find they actually really love wearing outdoor clothing, and want to keep them on indoors!

- Offering your child choices between clothes to wear can give them a sense of control and help you understand their preferences. Do they like tighter or looser clothes? What type of fabrics?,
- Is there anything you can adjust to make your child more comfortable like cutting out labels?
- Give your child time to get used to any new clothes.



If your child is experiencing sensory needs and difficulty wearing clothes, visit our [sensory needs page](#) and/or speak to our team at the SCT Therapy and Play (see details on page 4).

## Supporting your child to manage changes

There are many changes to our routines and the environment during the festive season. Schools and nurseries get ready for Christmas, families attend events and gather together. Decorations and bright lights are everywhere. Your child might find these changes distressing and may not be able to tell you if they are feeling overwhelmed.

**Try to spot potential triggers and prepare ahead where possible. Some of these strategies can help.**

**Through trial and error you will find what works best for you and your child. Don't be too hard on yourself if you do not see progress at first. Repetition and consistency is important when introducing a new strategy.**

For more advice on preparing your child for changes, [click here](#).



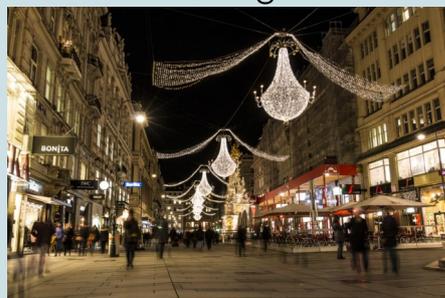
## Show Pictures

Show your child pictures to help them understand what's happening next, for example a photo of how you are travelling and of the activity:

"now bus"



"next lights"



For more information [click here](#)



## Supporting your child in noisy/ busy environments

### Find a quiet space

If your child gets upset or overwhelmed find a quiet space you can share together, to help them feel calm, safe and secure. Visit our website for more sensory regulation strategies. [Click here](#)



### Ear Defenders

If your child is affected by noisy environments, you can try using ear defenders.



Have these handy when you go out.



# Advice and support for parents and carers

## SENDIAS

SENDIAS provide SEND advice for parents and carers. This can include help with applications and support during meetings.



SENDIAS also run **coffee mornings and themed workshops** for parents/ carers to connect and receive practical advice.

## Growing Together:

Growing together offer support around mental health and wellbeing for families with children aged 0-5years in Islington

Click [here](#)

Look out for free workshops which can be booked via Eventbrite by clicking [here](#)



## Useful websites to learn about Autism

- Ambitious About Autism: [click here](#) 
- National Autistic Society: [click here](#) 



## Applying for schools for 2026

Applications for school places must be made **online by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026**. Visit this website to complete an application: [Guide Section | Islington Council](#) .

For help filling in this application, call 020 7527 5515.

## ASC for Tea

Centre 404 run this group to support parents and carers of children who have received a diagnosis of autism, to connect and receive practical advice.

Click [here](#)



## Islington Family Information Service (FIS)

This service offers information and advice about free early learning and childcare, activities and support services for families with children 0-25.



## Bright Start family support

The service is for all parents-to-be and parents and carers of children under 5 years in Islington. They can support you with any question by providing advice and/or signposting to other services.



# Activities you can take your child to

## SCT Therapy and Play

The group offers an inclusive environment for children not yet in school (aged 0-5) who are awaiting an assessment or received a diagnosis by the SCT., **You will be able to get advice from the SCT therapy assistant, Speech and language therapist or Occupational therapist and Bright Start practitioners.**

Drop in with your child term time 10:00 -11:30am at the following locations:

- Tuesdays: Bemerton Children's Centre
- Thursdays: Hornsey Road Children's Centre



For further information, contact: brightstart-south@islington.gov.uk/ 0207527 4089. Please note, this session is not listed on the Bright Start timetable.

## Bright Start activities

Bright Start run various stay and play groups across Islington.



Look out for a group called 'Extra Boost': a specialist group for under 5s with additional needs, who benefit from a quieter spaces

Click [here](#)

## Sensory drop in with free lending library

St Georges Church in Tufnell park run fortnightly sessions on Saturdays where you can explore sensory equipment for movement and regulation (such as therapy balls, mini trampolines, scooter boards and tents).



Click [here](#)

## Many venues offer quieter visits

For many autistic people, shopping and visiting attractions can be a very overwhelming experience . Many venues offer quieter times with reduced noise and lighting

### Cinemas and theatres:

Ask your cinema/ theatre if they offer "relaxed performances"

### Museums:

Some museums offer quieter visits such as Dawnosaurus at the National History Museum.

### Supermarket quiet hours:

Morisons, Asda and Tesco offer quieter visits. Visit their websites for more information.



## Newsletter feedback

If you have any feedback about this newsletter and/or suggestions, we would love to hear from you. Please click [here](#) or use the QR code. Use this too if you wish to share any of the advice/strategies you have tried so far and how you have got on!

