

SOUTH WEST HERTS PARTNERSHIP - FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE

NEWSLETTER



Please scan QR codes to follow us on Instagram and to access our website ensuring you stay informed, inspired and connected to a wider network of family focused support



Scan to follow us on Instagram for the latest updates on what's happening or SWHP and other local services



Scan to access our website for local events, parenting courses and signposting to other support services



www.swhp.org.uk

Be part of our growing community, committed to strengthening families and your local school partnership



Please refer to our 'Parenting Course Calendar' detailing local parenting courses attached to the newsletter and available on our website.

Remember!

Remember to look out for our 'Summer Planner' with our next newsletter to send on to your families with lots of ideas/events over the holiday period.

NEW SERVICE YEAR

Thank you to all our schools that have now paid their invoice for our new service year 'April 2026 to March 2027' and for your continued support.

Our family workers have been busy taking new referrals and continuing with existing casework.

To ensure you get the best out of our service this year, please refer to our 'Expectations of our schools' document attached with this newsletter and detailed on [page 8](#).

Reviewing our last service year data we can already see that our amazing team:

- Provided a direct family support service to **62** schools.
- Provided signposting to **84** schools within our Partnership Area.
- Received **472** School Referrals.
- Carried out more than **700** home visits/parent meetings.

Outstanding School Payments

Work will have to be placed on hold for any schools that have not yet made payment for this years service (payment deadline was the 17th April). Please let us know as soon as possible if payment is on its way.



Join the
SWHP Executive Board

We are looking to recruit new members to join our Executive Board due to several of our long standing members leaving their schools.

This is a valuable opportunity to help shape and influence the future direction of our service, ensuring the voices and experiences of schools, children and their families remain at the heart of our work.

We value the insight and expertise that our members bring to our board.

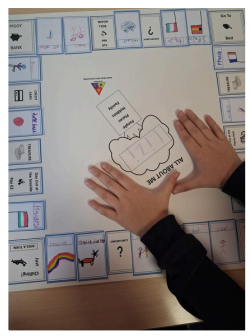
All we ask is that you can commit to one termly meeting (dates set in advance) and that you are a member of your school Senior Leadership Team.

If you are interested please get in touch
admin@swhp.org.uk

SOUTH WEST HERTS PARTNERSHIP - FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE

WHAT THE TEAM HAVE BEEN UP TO

ALL ABOUT ME GAME



One of our family workers, Caroline Vine-Lott introduced us to a new resource game - **'All About Me'** a few years ago to use with children after she undertook some voluntary work in a school outside of our area.

We digitally recreated the design so that any child playing the game was able to take home a pack that allowed them to continue to play with their family and friends.

The game is specifically designed to help a child or young person explore their identity and understand who they are, and where they fit in the world. It encourages meaningful conversations about the people that are around to help and support them.

The game is personalised by the child or young person and developed over three weekly sessions. During the first two sessions 16 cards are created around people they know or aspire to be, places that are meaningful to them, their hobbies and interests, and family and friends. Throughout these sessions, we provide a safe and supportive environment where children can have open, easy, and non-threatening conversations while creating their cards.

These sessions are proving very popular in many of our schools and our family workers have seen real value in it promoting self-esteem, helping relationships and supporting young people's sense of self-worth.



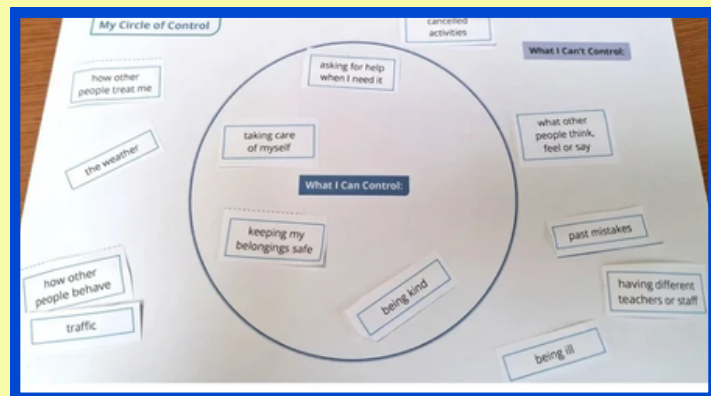
PUPIL 1:1 DROP-IN SESSION



Young people can hold onto a lot of worries and anxious thoughts. I conducted an activity with a year 3 student who spends a lot of time worrying. It was good for her to have a think about the things she **CAN** control and the things she **CAN'T**.

We can now begin to address the worries we can't control and consider how to reframe them. For instance, you might say, "I can't control the weather, but I can change my plans," or support resilience by acknowledging, "You handled that disappointment well", or "I understand why you felt sad, but you managed it." Additionally, we can offer coping strategies, such as breathing techniques or calming activities.

Ella Deanus, Family Support Manager



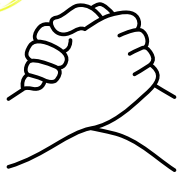
**Please see further details on our
1:1 Drop-in Sessions on page 6**

SOUTH WEST HERTS PARTNERSHIP - FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE

WORKING TOGETHER



Delivering Special Provision Locally



DSPL 9 SEND INFORMATION FAIR

We were delighted to be a part of the DSPL 9 SEND Information Fair on the 27th April at the Stanborough Centre. It gave us the opportunity to meet with lots of parents and schools and pass on information of how our service can offer support to families with SEND. It also gave us the chance to network with lots of other local support services and we are already inviting some of these as Guest Speakers at our team meeting so we can learn more.

Thank you to Gemma and her team for hosting and inviting us along.



EBSA SUPPORT

As a family support worker for South West Herts Partnership, I have been working collaboratively with DSPL9 and Nessie to provide targeted support for children, young people and their families facing challenges of EBSA.

This partnership approach enables the delivery of parent coffee mornings, solution circles for schools, parent consultations and direct family support.

The key focus of this work is supporting families experiencing EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance), helping parents and schools better understand the underlying emotional needs of children and develop supportive, child-centred strategies that promote engagement, wellbeing, and positive outcomes.

Through strong multi-agency collaboration, we aim to build confidence, strengthen communication between home and school and ensure families are supported throughout the journey.

Rebecca Lathwell, Family Support Worker

Delivering Special Provision Locally

DSPL 9

Summer Term: Transition Support



DSPL 9 are pleased to invite parents to attend transition support coffee mornings during the summer term.

The purpose of these meetings will be to:

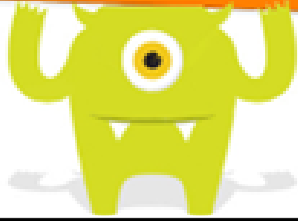
- Consider how best to support your child as they transition from year group or school.
- Meet with other parents in similar situations and network/build connections.

To access a session please use the link below:

Monday 15 th June	9.30-11am	Asda Community Room	BOOK HERE
Monday 29 th June	9.30-11am	Asda Community Room	

If you have any queries or questions about these sessions please contact gemmahall@dsplare9.org.uk

INTERNET SAFETY FOR FAMILIES



South West Herts Partnership

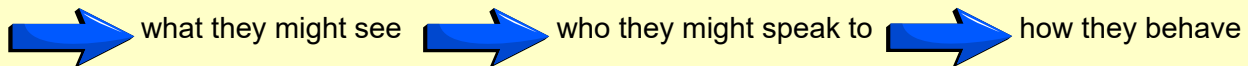
Tips & Advice:

E- Safety & Screen Time

INTRODUCTION

It's a virtual minefield! How can we keep our children safe online?

What are the potential risks for children online? Consider these things when you talk to your child;



TOP TIPS/TOOLS

- Make sure devices are switched off at night, charged away from bedrooms and turned off at least half an hour before bedtime.
- Have a regular family digital detox and find non-technological activities to enjoy.
- Put in place screentime agreement/contract. Work out some rules together and respect the rules yourself.
- Talking regularly with your child can help keep them safe online. Making it part of daily conversation, like you would about their day at school, will help your child feel relaxed.
- Parental controls: there are apps you can download to help manage and monitor screentime (Family ILik, Microsoft Family Safety, Apple Screentime).

IMPORTANT FACTS

Younger children may need more support and guidance. Be aware extra support maybe needed at certain ages such as 10-13, peer pressure, social media and outside influences may start to play a part.

Parental supervision is important - Quality screen time is possible, but we need to take a look at what our children are doing with the devices.

Stay alert and monitor devices for signs of inappropriate use of the digital world.

Be aware of the positives and negative side of technology

Positives	Vs	Negatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhances Learning• Fosters problem solving skills• Improves hand eye co-ordination• Prepares children for future technology• Social engagement		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sedentary Life style• Safety risks• Rduces imagination• Family arguments• Obesity• Loss of social skills• Aggression• Aches / Pains• Sleep deprivation

And remember, model the behaviour you want from your child (i.e.no phones in bedrooms, at mealtimes, screen free time). Screens can be addictive for us all!

SIGNPOSTING LINKS

- www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety
- www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/
- www.childnet.com
- www.saferinternet.org.uk
- www.smartphonefreechildhood.org



<https://www.southwesthertspartnership.org.uk/>

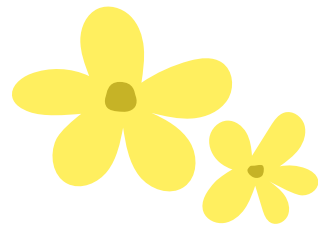


[swhp_familysupportservice](https://www.instagram.com/swhp_familysupportservice)





WHATS ON May



watersmeet **THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL**



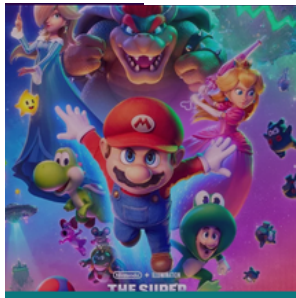


WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

WildPlay



FREE WildPlay sessions in partnership with Groundwork!



 The Super Mario Galaxy Movie 26 May 2026	 DINOSAURS LIVE! National History Museum Dinosaurs Live ★ 27 May 2026	 UNICORN LIVE! Darling Productions Unicorn Live! 29 May 2026
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<https://www.watersmeet.co.uk/may-family-events>

Using natural arts and crafts and taking part in activities like scavenger hunts and bug hunting.

Ideal for children aged 3 - 9 years
Children must be accompanied by adults.

Tuesday 26 May, 12.30pm-2pm at Carpenters Wood, Whitelands Ave, Chorleywood, WD3 5RQ

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/wild-play-carpenters-wood-tickets-1987615262756?aff=erelexpmlt>

Wednesday 27 May, 10:30am -12pm & 1 - 2.30pm at Oxhey Park Bridge (oxhey activity park side), Watford, WD18 0HZ.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/wild-play-watford-tickets-1988101798999>



BEST START FAMILY HUB: FAMILY FUN* AND INFORMATION EVENT WITH THE BETTER HEALTH BUS

Do you have a child starting school or nursery? Join us for a FREE fun event to help prepare you.

ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Family Fun session
- ✓ Active Rhyme Time
- ✓ Workshops and practical advice from partners on: oral health, toilet training, SEND and healthy eating

EVENT DATE

**THURSDAY
28TH MAY
10AM – 1PM**

WESTFIELD & LITTLEBURY FAMILY CENTRE
WATFORD, WD18 6NS



23rd May - Cassiobury Park

<https://www.watfordactually.com/event/steven-s-funfair>

Natural History Museum, Tring - SENDsational morning

Sunday 24 May, 10am - 12pm

Children with neurodiverse conditions including autism and other sensory processing difficulties can enjoy the Museum with their families and siblings, free from the hustle and bustle of the general public.

https://www.nhm.ac.uk/events/sendsational-mornings-at-tring.html?dm_i=5ESZ,1ELUT,6NSPLG,5SSK6,1,0,0,0

CLICK ON LINK BELOW FOR LOTS MORE IDEAS FROM HERTS COUNTY COUNCIL



[HTTPS://WWW.HERTFORDSHIRE.GOV.UK/ABOUT-THE-COUNCIL/NEWS/NEWS-ARCHIVE/FIFTYTHIRTY-MAY26](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/news/news-archive/fiftythirty-may26)



Commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council





1:1 Drop-In Support Sessions

For Children & Parents in Your School

Did you know? We can offer 1:1 drop-in support sessions for children in schools. These sessions provide a safe, supportive space for children to talk about anything on their mind. We can see a rolling number of children each week to ensure more children have access to our support.

Children's 1:1 Sessions

- Emotional well-being
- Anxiety or worries
- Friendships and relationships
- Protective behaviours and feeling safe
- Any concerns they may be experiencing



We can see a rolling number of children each week

Parent Drop-In Support

We can also offer 1:1 drop-in support for parents to:

- Talk through any concerns about your child and family
- Gain advice, guidance and signposting
- Explore practical parenting strategies
- Receive support in a friendly, non-judgemental environment



Let's be proactive not reactive!

Early support helps prevent bigger issues later

What We Need From Your School

- A suitable room for weekly sessions
- A minimum buy-in of 2 hours per week
- We can run these sessions alongside your normal referrals to our service dependent on the amount of hours you buy into our service.

One of our Family Workers describes how she provides these sessions:

"I have a mix of both secondary and primary schools. One of the reasons I love this role is how different each school community is. As a service we recognise that schools need different things from SWHP and we constantly evolve to ensure the needs of families and young people are being met.

In 3 of my primary schools I spend an allocated period of time there a week. This allows me to see a rolling case load of pupils who have need for 'extra' support. This typically might be 1:1s focussing on emotional regulation, anxiety or protective behaviours. In secondary schools the 1:1s can encompass referring onto other support agencies such as counselling, being a 'safe person' for the pupil to talk to about worries and life, or helping through specific topics such as exam stress, attendance or risk taking behaviours.

I support my secondary schools at parent information workshops/evenings and have recently trialled a surgery style drop-in session for parents who want advice around worries pertaining to their children/family life - this covers a huge spectrum - behaviour management, support around relationship separation, SEND support and so on. These have been successful and will continue on a regular basis.

Alongside all of this I provide the casework we have always done; I receive a referral from a school and work with the family for an agreed amount of time, meeting needs and producing an outcome to support the young person.

The key in all of this is communication, I have an excellent relationship with my schools and importantly a named contact in bigger settings. All the work is agreed and discussed within the number of hours the school has bought in. Flexibility is necessary as the needs of families differ from one week to the next. The schools can be confident that they will receive value for money while, importantly, their communities get the support they individually need."

Schools are already loving these sessions! Don't just take our word for it though — turn over to read what Headteachers have to say about working with us.

What Headteachers Are Saying

"As a small school, with an ever-shrinking budget - every penny counts. When it comes to cutting services, we have looked at everything and had to stop so much but we have been clear that we will not stop the Family Support Workers. Without a doubt, they have changed the lives of children and families. As a small school, there is no capacity to provide the targeted work to our families that we want and they need.

Their approachable, compassionate and professional manner has made a real difference. They build trust quickly and provide consistent, practical support that helps address challenges before they escalate. We chose to introduce a variety of strategies including a drop-in service because we recognised that families often need flexible, immediate access to support without the barrier of formal referrals or long waiting times. The drop-in model allows parents and students to seek advice, guidance, or simply a listening ear at a time that suits them, which has significantly increased engagement.

Students are identified in a variety of ways, including pastoral staff referrals, safeguarding concerns, attendance monitoring and through direct requests from parents or the students themselves. This flexible approach ensures that support reaches those who need it most, without unnecessary delay.

The positives are clear: increased parental engagement, improved student confidence, reduced anxiety and a stronger sense of community within the school. The Family Support Workers are proactive, responsive, and genuinely care about making a difference. They feel like they are part of our staff team.

Feedback from both parents and staff has been overwhelmingly positive. Parents appreciate having someone who listens without judgement and offers practical advice, while staff value the additional layer of support for vulnerable students.

The service also aligns well with Ofsted expectations. It demonstrates a strong commitment to safeguarding, early help and promoting pupils' personal development and wellbeing. It evidences effective pastoral care, multi-agency working, and a proactive approach to supporting families - all key areas Ofsted considers during inspections.

When budgets are tight (we received an amber letter!) it can be easy to cut services that do not appear to directly impact but for us we have seen a positive impact and would recommend our family workers 100%."

— Hannah Trickett, Headteacher at Maple Cross

"After Covid, we realised we had a high number of families in need of support and decided to change the way we used our hours with the SWHP. We requested a meeting with the Business Manager and Family Support Manager and asked if we could transition to a 'drop-in' style service which we felt would meet the needs of our school so much better.

Our SENCO/INCO is responsible for liaising with families to set up the initial meetings with the Family Support Workers and she then triages the cases each week. This is incredibly flexible and allows us to respond to urgent cases and safeguarding concerns without any delay. Parents understand how the service works in our school and know that there may be times when their child is not seen for a few weeks because a new need has arisen which we need to prioritise. Teachers refer children all the time. This is sometimes based on concerns arising in school but often concerns come from the parents themselves.

The Family Support Workers are in huge demand. There is sometimes a waiting list for the less urgent cases but everyone does get seen in the end. We honestly find the service to be invaluable and cannot imagine the school without it. Both of our Family Support Workers are regarded as an extension of our school team and this strong relationship is the key to its success in our school.

One of the very best things about the 'drop in' approach is the responsiveness this enables. A new need might emerge on a Monday and by Tuesday the family can be allocated a Family Support Worker. Our Family Support Workers play a vital role in Child Protection cases, capturing the voice of the child and undertaking home visits. Sometimes, a parent will arrive at school in distress and one phone call from our Family Support Workers can signpost them to much needed help. In other cases, face to face support stays in place for the entire time the child is with us.

During our Ofsted Inspection last year, the Family Support Workers played a key role in securing our 'outstanding in all areas' judgement. Their role in our school was crucial in demonstrating the school's commitment to safeguarding, personal development and attendance improvement. Our Family Support Worker's are an invaluable part of our team - we call them our fourth emergency service."

— Jane Linch, Headteacher at Rickmansworth Park

To find out more about our Family Support Service and the services we can provide you with, please contact us at: admin@swhp.org.uk or via our website - complete the contact form at www.swhp.org.uk

EXPECTATIONS FROM OUR SCHOOLS TO ENSURE YOU'RE GETTING THE BEST OUT OF OUR SERVICE



To all our schools that have bought into our service this year and want to get the most out of the service, we recommend the following:

YOUR ALLOCATED HOURS / OUR STAFFING CAPACITY

- We strongly advise you to use the service evenly across the 3 terms – approx. 33% per term.
- We cannot guarantee worker capacity if this is not followed – especially in the last term if you 'save' hours until then.
- Hours cannot be carried over (remember: if you do not have cases for us, we offer Drop-Ins, Coffee Mornings or Workshops as another way to utilise our service).
- If you are referring more cases than outlined within your service level agreement amount —please discuss your priorities with your family worker to see, if possible to hold more by providing bi-weekly or telephone support etc.

REFERRALS

- Parents/carers should be contacted and agree to speaking with us before a referral form is sent.
- All referral forms should be signed by an appropriate member of staff with all the contact details filled in correctly with realistic outcomes identified.
- Where possible, a 3-way planning meeting should occur at school or via an online Teams meeting with school, parent/carer and your family worker present – this may not always be possible, e.g. due to parent working hours, disengagement with school etc. but should be aimed for in order to identify outcomes.
- A review meeting must be held on Teams or in school at the 6 – 9-week mark; this is to establish if successful work is happening and identify if work needs be continued or can be closed.
- Where possible, identify cases that fall into 'early help' or families that are actively seeking to make changes – we always endeavour to support families you refer to us but high-needs cases that may have had multiple services involved or entrenched long term issues may not achieve all the desired outcomes.

SCHOOL CONTACTS

- Provide 1 or 2 contacts at school for your allocated family worker – it can become confusing for school if there are a lot of people liaising with us. Please complete your Service Level Agreement and return to the Business Team with the required information.

HOURS TO ACCOMODATE NEED

- Staffing is planned around schools' requirements at the start of service year (April), please consider your schools' needs to ensure the required hours have been purchased for the year ahead.
- We can provide you with details of your historic usage to aid decisions on your level of need.
- You may be able to buy in additional hours if you reach your allocated amount (charged at higher rate per hour) but this will be dependent on our staffing capacity at the time.

MEET THE TEAM



Carly Maddison
Business Manager



Dave Bell
Family Support
Manager
Allocated schools:
Bushey Heath, Highwood,
Parkgate Infants, Parkgate
Junior, Queens', St Pauls



Ella Deanus
Family Support
Manager
Allocated Schools:
Eastbury Farm,
Rickmansworth Park,
Rickmansworth School, St.
Peters, WGGs, Yorke Mead



Ella Young
Partnership
Coordinator



Caroline Vine-Lott
Family Support Worker
for
Field Junior, Fairfield,
Greenfields, Newberries, St
John's (Radlett),
St. Meryl, The Grange, Watford
Field Infants, WBGs, Woodhall



Danielle Harman
Family Support Worker
for
Arnett Hills, Chorleywood,
Christchurch, Harvey Road,
Highwood, Maple Cross,
Rickmansworth Park, St. Mary's,
The Grove, WGGs



Debbie Greenfield
Family Support Worker
for
Breakspeare, Croxley Danes,
Little Green, Meadow Wood,
The Russell, The Reach,
St. Anthony's,
Watford - St. John's



Debbie Wingfield
Family Support Worker
for
Coates Way, Kingsway Infant,
Kingsway Primary, Malvern Way,
Parmiter's
Shepherd, St Clement Danes,
St Joan of Arc, St John's Catholic



Rebecca Lathwell
Family Support Worker
for
Central Primary, Knutsford,
Parmiters', The Grove,
Warren Dell,
DSPL 9 EBSA Project



Sam Ward
Family Support Worker
for
Ashfield, Bournehall, Bushey
Manor, Cassiobury Infant,
Cassiobury Junior, Chater Infants,
Chater Junior, Bushey & Oxhey,
Holy Rood, Merry Hill, Oxhey
Wood, The Orchard