



# Shropshire Parent Carer Council Newsletter.

## Winter Special

Welcome to PACC's monthly newsletter.

If you have any questions or require any further information,  
please email:

[info@paccshropshire.org.uk](mailto:info@paccshropshire.org.uk)



From all of the team at PACC we wish you  
a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



The PACC team will be out of office from Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December, returning on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January. Please note emails will not be monitored during this time.

# PACC 2024 Highlights

We asked the PACC team what their personal highlights have been in 2024



**My highlight was leading the conga at the HLP celebration event—dancing with all the amazing kids in our community is definitely the high point of the year!**

**Zara—Information Provision  
Strategic Lead**

**My highlight is liking my job and feeling like I can make a difference. Sounds simple but having spent my previous career not feeling that way it's actually a very big deal.**

**Simone—Parent Carer  
Liaison Lead**



**My PACC highlight was the 'Seeing You Seeing Me Photographic Exhibition & Trail', speaking to so many varied people from far and wide about the Shropshire SEND Community and what is possible. We spend so much time having to focus on the challenges it was wonderful to celebrate the joy our young people find in each other.**

**Sarah—Influence & Change  
Strategic Lead**

**My PACC highlight was 'PACCFest'. It was so lovely to see families come together and have a lovely relaxing time listening or dancing to the music, sharing food and playing games, in a beautiful setting and there was a Donkey!**

**Ruth—Community  
Support Volunteer**



**My highlight was the PACC grotto- the day felt magical! Seeing the joy on children's faces when they saw Santa! We spend so much time discussing challenges and difficult times, days filled with joy, smiles and Christmas are just the best!**

**Abi- Community Support  
Strategic Lead**



**Highlight of the year for me (apart from welcoming everyone to the exclusive screening of Red last weekend!) has been having so much fun and laughter with parent carers and young people at activities.....Joyous**

**Annie- Community  
Support Volunteer**



**My highlight has been seeing the extended impact that PACC is having - not just by extending activities so more carers and young people can benefit but also the wider societal impact through the photographic exhibition in driving a positive change in public perception of our community.**

**Lucy- Trustee**



**Louise- Administrator**

**My highlight was the HLP celebration event- so many pockets of joy that evening. From the excited faces seeing Brad arrive as the pantomime dame, seeing themselves and their friends on the screen, to Benjamin singing with Johnny and then Zara's fabulous dance off and conga around the room. A joyous evening**



# Community Stories

## A spotlight on Young People in the SEND community

**If your young person has accessed community support activities through Buddies Social Network, then you may recognise Jack! A young man who is passionate about supporting others. Jack has attended Buddies for a number of years and supports Buddies Junior activities too.**

**Jack is an advocate for children and young people with autism and his writing was recently featured in "Stretton Focus". A huge well done Jack- we are very proud of you!**

### My life with Autism



Hello, dear reader. I am Jack Garner, a student and prefect at Church Stretton School. I am originally from Goole, East Yorkshire! It is with great pleasure I have the privilege of writing for all you to read.

I am going to disclose with you a topic which is a very personal to me: life with Autism. I was officially diagnosed when I was just 3 years old and having ASD has had a massive impact on my

life. For those who don't know, ASD is a developmental disability affecting how people interact with the world. I always use the analogy of my brain being wired differently, and this is true! ASD is based on a spectrum, with things

ranging from mild side effects to more severe issues. I have High-Functioning autism myself, meaning I have no intellectual difficulties, and can generally complete tasks neuro-typicals can, but I do struggle socially.

For me, ASD has had its greatest impact socially. Academically I have always been excellent, but not when interacting with others and the world around me. A lot of situations you as a reader will not have a second thought over doing, such as shopping/going to a cafe, can be quite overwhelming environments for me, be it noise or brightness of light. It makes life very difficult having to leave the house just to be met with immediate anxiety about the possible risks I am taking in leaving the house, and how best to be prepared to deal with them. It has led to me being socially behind in development, despite my wisdom expanding far beyond my 15 years on earth! I struggle to hold friendship groups and find I am often an outcast and

a problem, an exploited laughing stock if you will, and that is a tough pill to swallow having a significant effect on my mental health!

It however doesn't waiver my ever-going commitment to help others, with me recently taking up volunteering in the cafe at Mayfair, if you visited over the summer, there is a good chance you may have spotted me. I also volunteer at disability events wherever possible.

On the topic of wisdom beyond my years, typically you will hear harmful stereotypes suggesting Autistic people are forever children and have the mental capacities of such, which are very wrong. I myself have been the victim of rapid psychological development, (which mainly I attribute to early life events I shall not explain here) and this has led to many a frustration with my peers not being interested or knowledgeable in the more mature subjects I take an interest in (such as railways and driving trains, design etc.)

Whilst my peers gush about the latest TikTok trends or fancy clothing item, I genuinely couldn't care less. This has led to a large social barrier and a stigmatism I am simply "weird" with no attempt to understand my differences, and as such Isolation is a normality and reality to me, despite how wrong this is. With regards to the stereotype, I passionately believe the complete opposite to be true, with neuro-divergent people being forced, if possible, to mature, to adapt, to mask into a neuro-typical world. The Autists brain is very organized and methodical too, and as such to a neuro-typical this can give off the perception a person is more matured than in reality they are.

Thank you for reading, and I implore you to do your own research into the topic!

Jack Garner



## Stakeholder Briefing

**Date:** 16 December 2025

### **Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Children and Young People's Mental Health Services – Update on BeeU Contract**

We are writing to provide an update regarding the continuation of the BeeU service for children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing in Shropshire, Telford, and Wrekin. The BeeU service, delivered by Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT), provides vital mental health support for children and young people up to the age of 25, including neurodevelopmental assessments for autism and ADHD.

Following careful consideration, the decision has been made to extend the current BeeU contract until the **end of September 2025**. This additional extension will provide the necessary time to further develop and commission a new and improved Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). The ongoing extension will also enable MPFT to continue its partnerships with Healios and Kooth to deliver psychological therapies and online emotional support, ensuring continuity of care during this transitional period.

This decision reflects our commitment to delivering a high-quality, sustainable mental health service for children and young people. It also allows us to build upon the transformation work underway, which includes addressing key areas such as expanding capacity, reducing waiting times, enhancing preventative support in schools and communities, and ensuring services are responsive to the needs of children, young people, and families.

We remain committed to engaging with stakeholders, including service users, families, professionals, and voluntary sector organisations, as we shape the future of CAMHS. Feedback gathered through engagement activities has been instrumental in informing both the immediate extension and the vision for the recommissioned service.

For further information or to provide feedback on the BeeU / CAMHS service, please contact: [stw.getinvolved@nhs.net](mailto:stw.getinvolved@nhs.net).

To access emotional wellbeing and mental health services, please contact the BeeU Access Team on **0300 124 0093** or visit the [BeeU website](#).

We thank you for your continued partnership and support as we work together to ensure that every child and young person in our area can receive the right support at the right time in the right place.



## Seeing You Seeing Me



This photographic exhibition and trail capture the experience of SEND families who participated in this year's Health Lives Summer Programme and shares their voices about why the opportunities offered were so important.

For the PACC team it has been a privilege to share this experience with these young people and their parent carers. We have seen friendships blossom, confidence grow and self-belief increase, as these young people have made the most of the opportunities offered. They have showed us what they can do given the chance.

[READ MORE](#)

## Healthy Lives Programme Celebration Event



On Friday 1st Nov PACC hosted the annual Celebration event for 14-25 year old's who accessed this year's Healthy Lives Summer Programme. This event is one of the highlights of the year for the PACC team and families- where young people celebrate their achievements with their friends. This year we had kept a secret from attendees and had a very special guest to present young people with their Awards!!



**We would like to say a huge thank you to Brad Fitt for joining us to celebrate young people's achievements this year!**

## SEND Santa Experience



We would like to say a huge thank you to Father Christmas for coming along to PACC's 3<sup>rd</sup> SEND Santa Experience. This year over 50 children, young people and siblings joined us for Crafts, Christmas music, games and of course a visit to Santa in his magical grotto!

Santa was very happy that all children and young people (and parent carers) are on the good list this year!

## School Refusal & Anxiety- Resources



**Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)** is when a child is regularly absent from school or cannot attend due to anxiety or other emotional distress. Previously this has been referred to as school refusal.

[READ MORE](#)

**BBC Bitesize** - Parents' Toolkit teamed up with educational psychologist, Dr Amanda Furness and SEN advisory teacher Sarah Barton to get their advice on how to handle 'school refusal' and where you can go for help

[READ MORE](#)

**IPSEA** – IPSEA advise and support parents and carers whose children are not accessing education due to anxiety or other difficulties.

[READ MORE](#)

**Not Fine in School** was created as a resource for the growing numbers of families with children experiencing school attendance barriers.

[READ MORE](#)





## **PFA Navigator Termly Feedback**

### **This Term our PFA Navigator has met with:**

- **Designated Social Care Officer,**
- **Health SEND Leads from across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin**
- **Adult Social Care Manager**
- **Attended the PFA Workstream, Post-16 Shropshire Ordinarily Available Provision**

### **Themes raised this term:**

- **Concerns with an increased number of illegally implemented reduced timetables**
- **A lack of mental health support (for children/ young people and parent carers)**
- **Lack of communication around changes to case officers within the SEN team**
- **EHCP's going beyond legal timescales, poor quality EHCP's, PFA not being a focus in annual reviews**
- **Difficulties accessing PA's**
- **Lack of information available about supported/ independent living options**
- **Confusion over application process for education provision applications**
- **Lack of understanding from practitioners about the life of a parent carer**



# Find out more about Autism support in Shropshire

**Autism Awareness event for all ages**

**Wem**

**Thursday 23rd January**

**10am - 12.30pm**

**Wem Library, High St, Wem, SY4 5AA**

**We will be available to offer information, advice & guidance for adults & parent carers of children & young people - at any stage of diagnosis.**

**Come & join us for an informal chat.  
We look forward to seeing you!**

**The event will be hosted by Autism West Midlands  
& the Shropshire Adult Autism Hub**

**If you have any questions, please email:  
[Pip.Long@Shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Pip.Long@Shropshire.gov.uk)**





# Oswestry Parent & Carers Training



**autism**  
west midlands

**Training:**  
**10am - 11am**

**Coffee and chat:**  
**11am - 12pm**

## **How Autistic People Process Information.**

**This in-person event is a great opportunity for parents and carers to learn new skills and strategies to support their families. Connect with other parents, share experiences, and gain valuable insights.**

**You are also welcome to join us for an informal chat and a hot drink. Please feel free to attend either or both.**

**Friday 31st January**  
**10am - 12pm**

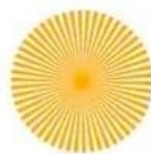
**Book a space online!**

**Oswestry Memorial Hall**  
**Smithfield street, SY1 2EG**



**Shropshire**  
Council





4 All  
FOUNDATION

# Winter

HAF 24/25

THE HOLIDAY PROVISION IS FOR SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN FROM RECEPTION TO YEAR 11 WHO RECEIVE BENEFIT RELATED FREE SCHOOL MEALS.

## FREE PROGRAMMES!

*Multi Sports, Dance, Drama, Outdoor Fun, Arts & Crafts, Games and more!*

LONGLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL (Market Drayton)

21st Dec | 30th Dec

ST. LAURENCE'S CHURCH PARISH CENTRE (Church Stretton)

1st Jan | 2nd Jan

THE ZONE COMMUNITY HUB (Market Drayton)

31st Dec | 3rd Jan

HUB ON THE HILL (Sutton Hill, Telford)

21st Dec | 2nd Jan | 3rd Jan | 4th Jan

SELATTYN C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

31st Dec | 2nd Jan

SIR JOHN TALBOT'S SCHOOL (Whitchurch)

2nd Jan | 3rd Jan

GRANGE PRIMARY SCHOOL (Shrewsbury)

30th Dec | 3rd Jan

ABRAHAM DARBY SCHOOL

2nd Jan | 3rd Jan

TILSTOCK VILLAGE HALL

23rd Dec | 3rd Jan

LOWER HEATH C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

30th Dec | 31st Dec



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR TO BOOK SPACES, PLEASE CONTACT  
info@4all.foundation 0800 321 3617 www.4all.foundation



Charity No: 1203479



Winter Holiday Fun and Food in Shropshire

# ***Book Now!***

Spaces are available on the Winter HAF programme.

Over the holidays, eligible children and young people aged 4 (reception class age) to 16, are invited to attend free holiday clubs happening across the county.

To find out more please go to:  
[www.shropshire.gov.uk/haf](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/haf)



## Countdown to Calm - A Child-Centred Approach to Sleep Support

Free webinar for parents and professionals.

22nd January 2025  
12.30 - 1.30





Starting school in September 2025?

Apply now!



Children can start school in reception at the beginning of the academic year following their fourth birthday. Therefore, children born between 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2021 can start primary school from September 2025.

You can apply online now- the closing date is Sunday 15 January 2025.

Find out more and apply online here:

<https://orlo.uk/vSdwu>

## Christmas tips for SEND families!

- ☒ **Put presents in one big box** and let your child open them at their own pace over the following days
- ☒ **Avoid surprises** by picking gifts from their list and wrapping them in clear cellophane (or not at all)
- ☒ **Add batteries** to toys before wrapping
- ☒ **No food rules.** Who says pizza and pot noodles can't be Christmas dinner?
- ☒ **You do you!** Don't feel guilty telling friends or relatives if something doesn't work for you
- ☒ **Don't put unrealistic pressures on yourself.** The holidays can be overwhelming for everyone, so stick to your regular routine if you want to

contact For families with disabled children



## PROJECT SEARCH & SUPPORTED INTERNSHIP RECRUITMENT EVENTS

Find out about our brilliant courses!

**Supported Internship**  
(scan for the web fact sheet)



**Project Search SaTH**  
(scan for the web fact sheet)



**Project Search Cosford**  
(scan for the web fact sheet)



You are invited to our **Project Search SaTH and Cosford / Supported Internship Interest & Recruitment Events!**

**Initial Online Interest Event** - Tuesday 28 January, 5.00-6.30pm

Please book your place via the [shrews.co](https://shrews.co) links below. These sessions will give you the opportunity to hear and ask questions about our Supported Internship offer.

To find out more about the programme or to apply please scan the QR codes.

You can check out the FAQ on the next page and if you have any further questions please don't hesitate to contact me, [benko@shrewsbury.ac.uk](mailto:benko@shrewsbury.ac.uk), or if you would like to arrange a time to speak to me about this further please let me know.

*Ben Kovacs*  
Head of Additional Learning Support  
Shrewsbury Colleges Group



book at [shrews.co/ProjectSearch25](https://shrews.co/ProjectSearch25)

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**Q: What is Project Search?**

A: It is a Supported Internship programme exclusively working at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital or RAF Cosford working in partnership with SaTH or ESS, Compass Group, supported by *Enable Supported Employment Services*.

**Q: Who is it for?**

A: Open to students aged 18-24 with an EHCP who wish to move into employment.

**Q: Where is it based?**

Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital Trust: Royal Shrewsbury Hospital or RAF Cosford.

**Q: Who runs it?**

*Shrewsbury Colleges Group* are responsible for all of the interns.

**Q: How long is the course for?**

The course will run 5-days a week over a normal 38-week academic year.

**Q: What will I do next?**

You will go into employment either with SaTH, ESS or access the follow-on support offered into employment in a similar field (and your EHCP will cease).



# Join the Super 1s

**FUN, FREE & INCLUSIVE**

Disability cricket sessions for ages 12-25



Shelton Cricket Club is excited to announce its 2025/2026 Super 1's Disability Cricket Programme, from February 2025 at Shrewsbury School. The sessions, running from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM, aim to empower young people with disabilities to enjoy the game of cricket in a fun and inclusive environment.

Super 1's, part of the wider ECB Disability Cricket initiative, provides an opportunity for participants to develop new skills, build confidence, and make friends. Inspired by the recent Paralympic Games, the programme promises a high-energy atmosphere, encouraging teamwork, inclusion, and a love for cricket.

**READ MORE**



# EXPERIENCES FOR EVERYONE

**Join our museum work placement programme to help develop skills and grow in confidence in a supportive and creative environment.**

Experiences for Everyone is our work placement programme for individuals with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Placements are designed to help individuals feel prepared for the world of work, build confidence and develop skills in a friendly and creative environment.

If you would like further information, please contact Jessica Bromley

[jessica.bromley@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:jessica.bromley@shropshire.gov.uk)

