



## **Family Action's Norfolk & Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service**

## April is World Autism Acceptance Month



Head to the [National Autistic Society](#)'s website for information about this year's campaign and free downloadable resources for use in workplaces and schools to promote autism awareness and acceptance. There are lots of activities and fundraising opportunities to get involved in.

Check out this promotional video entitled ['It's How You Show Up.'](#)

And carry on reading our newsletter to learn about an inspiring autistic young person in our region who is only 11-years-old and already making a difference.

### **This month's newsletter includes:**

- **Welcome**
- **Online Workshop for April**
- **Drop-In Groups in April**
- **Meet the NWAASS Team**
- **Amaya's Story**
- **Neurodivergence and the Seasons**
- **Plan Bee Courses**
- **Puffins Courses**
- **Norfolk & Waveney NHS Integrated Care**
- **Family Action Website and FamilyLine**
- **About our Service - contact details**

Just as every child is unique, every family's situation is different. We in the Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service are not health professionals but we do speak to many families with children of differing needs. Some of the information contained in this newsletter is anecdotal and some from respected websites. We hope you find the following interesting and helpful.

## Online Workshop in April - A Low Demand Approach

No need to book - note the joining details and we will see you there. Click to enlarge.



### The Low Demand Approach Workshop

Join us for this **free online session**, which aims to help families to reduce the demands placed on the child and provide an environment that helps to minimise stress and anxiety.



Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2026  
10:00am – 11:30am



**No need to book.**


Just join us on the day via Zoom using the following details:

**Meeting ID: 966 4447 9930**

**Passcode: 400275**

**For more information you can contact us Monday to Friday 9-5pm on:**

 01603 972589

 [NorfolkandWaveney@family-action.org.uk](mailto:NorfolkandWaveney@family-action.org.uk)

 Family Action Norfolk & Waveney  
Autism/ADHD Support Service.

[www.family-action.org.uk](http://www.family-action.org.uk)

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## Our Drop In Support Groups

Please note that our drop in groups have been affected in April by the school holidays.

Our regular Gorleston, Lowestoft and Swaffham drop ins will NOT be happening in April.

Our drop-in groups are friendly and informal. No need to book. Come along, have a tea or coffee, meet other parents in your area. And members of our team will be there to offer advice, support and signposting.

See below the drop-ins which are still happening in April. Click to enlarge flyers.

# BRECKLAND FAMILIES



## Dereham SEND Parent & Carer Cafe Monday 13<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2026

Join Amira and Dawn for a monthly Drop-In.

FREE, friendly and open to all SEND parents and carers.

Monthly themed discussions and support. (Check our Facebook group!)

Keep an eye on our Facebook Group for any updates – Use the QR code below.

For more details email us at: [communityfocusbreckland@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:communityfocusbreckland@norfolk.gov.uk)

Hosted by: Breckland Family Hub and Family Action – Norfolk & Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service.

 Dereham Library  
59 High Street  
Dereham  
NR19 1DZ

 1:30pm – 2:30pm



Please note that all children remain the responsibility of their parent/carer and must be supervised at all times.



# SEND Café




Join Danii from SEN Socials and Early Help Community Worker Georgie, and Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service each month for a cuppa and an informal chat about all things SEND parenting. No diagnosis needed!

Children welcome, and there will be an activity each session provided by Voices Through Art!

Please contact [sensocialsdownham@gmail.com](mailto:sensocialsdownham@gmail.com) for further information or to request a social story and venue walk through.

12th January  
9th February  
9th March  
13th April  
11th May  
8th June  
13th July  
10:30AM-12:30PM

 Family Hub, St Augustines  
Healthy Living Centre  
Columbia Way, King's Lynn PE30 2LB





## Costessey Drop-In Group APRIL 2026

Come and join us at our new support group, in association with Costessey Library.

Family Action Norfolk & Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service supports families of children with neurodevelopmental differences.

If you have personal experiences with a child who is neurodivergent or have a child still awaiting assessment, come along to our 'drop in' session.

Come and meet our Family Support Workers who are happy to give you the time and space to bring any concerns you may have and can offer advice and support.

**No diagnosis or booking required.**

[norfolkandwaveney@family-action.org.uk](mailto:norfolkandwaveney@family-action.org.uk)

01603 972589

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### New Group in Norwich:

Costessey Library  
Breckland Road  
Costessey  
Norwich  
NR5 0RW

Monday  
27<sup>th</sup> April 2026

9:30am - 11:00am



[family-action.org.uk](http://family-action.org.uk)



## Swan Youth Project Drop-In Group APRIL 2026

Come and join Family Action at Swan Youth Project's Drop-In Group.

Whether you are a parent, carer or grandparent, all are welcome to come along to this friendly and welcoming group for tea/coffee/biscuits. With the opportunity to chat to other parents and our Family Support Workers, who are on hand to offer advice and support on anything relating to neurodivergence.

Swan Youth Project  
Paradise Road  
Downham Market  
Norfolk  
PE38 9JE

Tuesday  
28<sup>th</sup> April 2026

9:30am to 11am  
(Group starts at 9am, but we will be there from 9:30am)

01603 972589

[norfolkandwaveney@family-action.org.uk](mailto:norfolkandwaveney@family-action.org.uk)

Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service

[www.family-action.org.uk](http://www.family-action.org.uk)

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**family hubs** **BRECKLAND FAMILIES** **family action**

**Norfolk SENDIASS**  
Information, Advice and Support Service

**Join our Monthly SEND Parent Café**  
Looking for a warm, welcoming space to connect and unwind  
**Come along to our FREE Drop-in session on the LAST Wednesday of every month at**  
**Thetford Library Raymond St, Thetford IP24 2EA**  
**1:30PM -2:30PM**  
Chat with other families, we will have activities for children, young people and you!!  
Pop in when you can, no need to book, we would love to see you, for more details you can e-mail us  
[communityfocusbreckland@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:communityfocusbreckland@norfolk.gov.uk)

**Breckland Family Hubs**  
**Norfolk SENDIASS**  
**Family Action -Norfolk and Waveney Autism /ADHD Support Service**

\*please check facebook for any updates to sessions

**Norfolk County Council**

## Meet the Family Action NWAASS Team



### Meet Becky

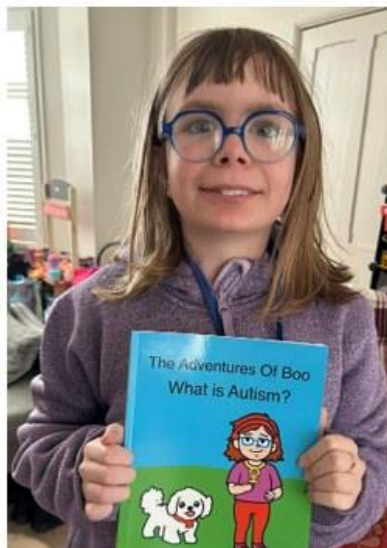
Hi, my name is Becky and I have been working within the Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service for 2 years now. Before this role I was a Montessori Teacher for 16 years! I have two roles within Family Action; I am a Family Support Worker, supporting and advising parents and carers of children with neurodivergence in West Norfolk and I also work with my colleague Sue to deliver the post-diagnosis Puffins Autism

Programme more widely in the county. You may have spoken to me on the phone, or met me at an event. I also run Plan Bee courses, online workshops and regularly attend the drop-in sessions in Downham Market and Kings Lynn. I am also the proud owner of our office dog, Pippa, who you may have spotted on our social media!

As a parent of a child with autism, I think I bring professional knowledge as well as lived experience to my role and have experienced first-hand the emotional journey which families can go through. I love working for NWAASS especially working directly with families and hearing all about your wonderful children and young people. It is so important for families to feel supported and empowered; I love making a difference!

## Shining a Light on Amaya- Turning Passion Into Purpose

In this World Autism Acceptance Month we wanted to share Amaya's story with you.



Amaya is 11-years-old and her determination and compassion are making a remarkable difference.

Amaya is home educated following school difficulties. She is autistic and also living with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS) and mobility challenges. Despite this, she has turned her lifelong passion for the ocean into meaningful action.

Six years ago, Amaya decided she wanted to be a marine biologist. Living in Norfolk, she now cleans the beach every single day she is there and helps run monthly beach cleans. She has helped save a seal, 535 jellyfish and two seagulls so far. When she found a seal in distress, she contacted a local sea life rescue team and it was rehabilitated and released.

After finding a seal that had died due to pollution, she created a poster encouraging people to put rubbish in the bin. The Mayor of Hunstanton turned it into a postcard, raising £500 for sealife rescue. Her dedication has since been recognised with the BBC Norfolk “Make a Difference” Green Award.

Amaya says she struggles to communicate with the world around her but wanted people to understand how harmful litter can be. She found her voice through creativity. She has now written and illustrated nine books — many featuring her support dog — focusing on protecting sea life, upcycling, and educating others about jellyfish and seals and most recently about autism. Her books are available internationally, and she donates a percentage of profits to charities including Sealife Trust, Caudwell Children, Ocean Conservation Trust and RNLI.



Her compassion doesn't stop there. Noticing how difficult it is to find toys that reflect neurodivergent children, Amaya began transforming unwanted charity shop teddies into “neurodiverse bears.” Each bear may include pretend ear defenders, a chew necklace or a fidget toy, helping children feel seen and represented. She donates part of the profits to autism charities.

Amaya continues to navigate autism, EDS and mobility challenges, but she is already promoting change — for marine life, for neurodivergent children, and for her community.

She dreams of becoming a marine biologist, and is already making waves.

Thank you to Amaya's very proud mum who told us all about her and who was happy for us to share Amaya's picture and story with you.

## Changing Seasons and Neurodivergent Children



### Spring is on its way...

As the seasons begin to change, many of us welcome the longer days and warmer weather. Spring can feel refreshing and full of possibility however, for some neurodivergent children (and adults), seasonal transitions can bring unexpected challenges.

While winter often means quieter days at home, soft pyjamas, familiar routines, and the comfort of weighted blankets on cold, rainy afternoons, spring introduces change. With that change can come increased sensory input, social expectations, and disruptions to established routines.

### Sensory Changes in Spring

Seasonal transitions can significantly affect children with sensory sensitivities.

- **Clothing changes** – Moving from thick, soft winter clothes to lighter fabrics or different school uniforms can feel uncomfortable or irritating.
- **Temperature shifts** – Warmer weather can cause discomfort, especially for children sensitive to heat or changes in how clothing feels against their skin.
- **Hay-fever and allergies** – Spring pollen can bring itchy skin, watery eyes, congestion, and general discomfort. For a child already managing sensory sensitivities, these symptoms can quickly add to sensory overload.

If hay-fever is an issue, it may be helpful to speak with a healthcare professional about appropriate treatment options. Practical steps such as keeping windows closed during high pollen times, changing clothes after outdoor play, washing hands and faces on returning indoors, and wearing sunglasses (if tolerated) can also help reduce exposure.

### **Increased Social Expectations**

Spring and summer often bring school events, sports days, BBQs, and family gatherings. While these can be enjoyable, they may also increase social demands and reduce downtime. After the relative predictability of winter, this shift can feel overwhelming.

### **Supporting a Gradual Transition**

Preparation and predictability can make a big difference. Some helpful strategies include:

- **Start conversations early** – Talk about the upcoming season in advance.
- **Use visual supports or social stories** – Show pictures and explain how and why the seasons change.
- **Introduce seasonal clothing gradually** – Try on lighter clothes or new uniforms at home before they are required at school.
- **Layer clothing** – This allows children to adjust to temperature changes more comfortably.
- **Increase outdoor time gently** – Begin with short periods in the garden or brief local walks before planning longer outings.

### **Maintain Structure Where Possible**

While the environment changes, keeping daily routines as consistent as possible can provide a sense of stability. Visual schedules, timers, and clear expectations can help children feel secure during periods of transition.

### **Approach with Empathy**

Perhaps most importantly, approach this season with empathy. What may seem like a small change to adults can feel significant and overwhelming to a neurodivergent child. Their experience is real. Acknowledging their discomfort or anxiety helps them feel understood and supported. When children feel safe and validated, they are far more able to adapt and build resilience.

Seasonal change is a natural part of life. With understanding, preparation, and compassion, we can help our neurodivergent children navigate these transitions with greater confidence and comfort.

## PLAN BEE COURSES



### **PLAN BEE – Understanding and Supporting your Child or Young Person with Additional Needs.**

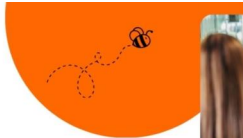
'Plan Bee' is a FREE 3 week course (2hrs per week) and is aimed at parents or carers of children or young people with additional needs including those with traits of autism or ADHD.

If your child or young person already has a formal diagnosis of autism, please see the information later in the newsletter about the PUFFINS AUTISM PROGRAMME.

You can still access the online videos of our Positive Behaviour Strategies course (now Plan Bee) on the NHS for Norfolk website, Just One Norfolk. Just click here:

**As ever our Plan Bee course is proving very popular and our central area courses in Attleborough and New Costessey in April and June are already fully booked. Keep an eye on the newsletter each month for details of further courses which have been arranged.**

**See flyers below for Plan Bee courses in the next few months still available to book. Click to enlarge.**



Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service

## Plan Bee LOWESTOFT - April 2026

Understanding and supporting your neurodivergent child or young person's needs.

**A FREE course for parents & carers (booking essential)**

Plan Bee is a 3 week course (2 hours per week) written by two Clinical Psychologists working in Norfolk Community Health and Care. We have been commissioned by Norfolk ICB to deliver this course for parents and carers of children who have suspected or diagnosed neurodevelopmental conditions.

All behaviour is a form of communication. Our course supports parents to understand their child's individual needs and how to best support them.

### The aim of this course is to help parents and carers:

- Understand why their child or young person might become overwhelmed.
- Reflect on what might trigger certain distressed behaviours and how to implement pro-active and re-active strategies.
- Develop a support plan which they can share with other family members and schools to ensure a consistent approach.
- Meet with other parents/carers for peer support.

Please use the contact details below for enquiries or booking:

01493 650220

[norfolkandwaveney@family-action.org.uk](mailto:norfolkandwaveney@family-action.org.uk)

Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service

🕒 **Wednesdays 15<sup>th</sup>  
22<sup>nd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> April**

10.00-12.00 noon

📍 **Disability Advice –  
(Northeast Suffolk)  
161 Rotterdam Road  
LOWESTOFT  
Suffolk  
NR32 2EZ**

To book a place, please provide the following:

Your name  
Child's name and DOB  
Address  
Telephone number  
Email address

Please note that we cannot book places for children on this course.

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Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service

## CONDENSED Plan Bee - Online MAY 2026

Understanding and supporting your neurodivergent child or young person's needs.

**A free online session for parents & carers (booking essential)**

If you have been interested in attending our Plan Bee course but have found it difficult to find the time, we are now offering a condensed version of our Plan Bee course. This will be one three hour session only, on Zoom.

We hope this will be more suitable for working parents or for those with preschool children who find it difficult to attend a face to face course.

### The aim of this course is to help parents and carers:

- Understand why their child or young person might become overwhelmed.
- Reflect on what might trigger certain distressed behaviours and how to implement pro-active and re-active strategies.
- Develop a support plan which they can share with other family members and schools to ensure a consistent approach.
- All behaviour is a form of communication. Our course supports parents to understand their child's individual needs and how to best support them.

01603 972589

[norfolkandwaveney@family-action.org.uk](mailto:norfolkandwaveney@family-action.org.uk)

Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service

🕒 **Tuesday  
12th May**

9:30 to 12:30

📍 **Online – ZOOM**

To book please provide the following details:

Your name  
Child's name & DOB  
Postcode  
Telephone number  
Email address

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[www.family-action.org.uk](http://www.family-action.org.uk)



zoom



Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service

# Plan Bee Course SWAFFHAM JULY 2026

Understanding and supporting your neurodivergent child or young person's needs.

**A FREE course for parents & carers (booking essential)**

Plan Bee is a 3 week course (2 hours per week) written by two Clinical Psychologists working in Norfolk Community Health and Care. We have been commissioned by Norfolk & Waveney NHS Integrated Care Board to deliver this course for parents and carers of children who have suspected or diagnosed neurodevelopmental conditions.

All behaviour is a form of communication. Our course supports parents to understand their child's individual needs and how to best support them.

### The aim of this course is to help parents and carers:

- Understand why their child or young person might become overwhelmed.
- Reflect on what might trigger certain distressed behaviours and how to implement pro-active and re-active strategies.
- Develop a support plan which they can share with other family members and schools to ensure a consistent approach.
- Meet with other parents/carers for peer support.

**Wednesday 1st, 8th & 15th July 2026**

10am - 12noon

**Community Centre  
Campingland  
Swaffham  
PE37 7RB**

To book a place, please provide the following:

- Your name
- Child's name and DOB
- Address
- Telephone number
- Email address

Please note that we cannot book places for children on this course.

Please use the contact details below for enquiries or booking:

01603 972589

[norfolkandwaveney@family-action.org.uk](mailto:norfolkandwaveney@family-action.org.uk)

Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service

[www.family-action.org.uk](http://www.family-action.org.uk)

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## Puffins Autism Programme - for parents or carers of children or young people with a *diagnosis* of autism



**Family Action has now been re-commissioned by Norfolk Community Health and Care to continue to run the comprehensive, free, four-week Puffins Autism Programme for Parents/Carers in *West and Central Norfolk* until end of March 2027.**

**This is a strictly post-diagnosis autism course and includes sessions delivered by Family Action, by Speech & Language and Occupational Therapists from NCH&C clinical teams and by Autism Specialists from within NCC's Educational Psychology & Specialist Services. Do not miss your chance, if you have a child or young person with a formal diagnosis of autism, to attend this well regarded programme.**



**Educational Psychology  
& Specialist Support**

THE PUFFINS AUTISM PROGRAMME FOR PARENTS AND CARERS IS VERY POPULAR and our online course in April is already full.

**See below information for courses which are available to book now.**

KEEP AN EYE ON THE NEWSLETTER FOR FURTHER ADVERTISING OF COURSES OR CONTACT [Puffins@family-action.org.uk](mailto:Puffins@family-action.org.uk)

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT BOOKING A PLACE.



## Puffins Autism Programme THETFORD - MAY 2026

The Puffins Programme is a FREE, four week programme designed by Norfolk Community Health and Care's Neurodevelopmental Service for parents and carers of children and young people with a diagnosis of Autism.

Family Action are working in partnership with NCHC and EPSS and are currently commissioned to deliver the Puffins course to parents/carers in west and central Norfolk.

Week 1 – Introducing Autism and Understanding Behaviour (Family Action)

Week 2 – Communication – (NCHC Speech and Language Therapy Team)

Week 3 – Understanding Sensory Processing (NCHC Occupational Therapy Team)

Week 4 – Autism in Education (NCC EP & Specialist Support: Autism Support Team)

### Thetford May 2026

Charles Burrell Centre  
Staniforth Road  
Thetford  
IP24 3LH

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> &  
Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May

9:30am - 12:30pm

**Please note: This course is not suitable for children to attend and no childcare is provided.**

To find out more or book a place, please contact Family Action on:

01603 972589

Puffins@family-action.org.uk



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## Puffins Autism Programme DOWNHAM MARKET - JUNE 2026

The Puffins Programme is a FREE, four week programme designed by Norfolk Community Health and Care's Neurodevelopmental Service for parents and carers of children and young people with a diagnosis of Autism.

Family Action are working in partnership with NCHC and EPSS and are currently commissioned to deliver the Puffins course to parents/carers in west and central Norfolk.

Week 1 – Introducing Autism and Understanding Behaviour (Family Action)

Week 2 – Communication – (NCHC Speech and Language Therapy Team)

Week 3 – Understanding Sensory Processing (NCHC Occupational Therapy Team)

Week 4 – Autism in Education (NCC EP & Specialist Support: Autism Support Team)

### Downham Market June 2026

Swan Youth Project  
Paradise Road  
Downham Market  
PE38 9JE

Thursdays  
4th, 11th, 18th, 25th June

9:30am - 12:30pm

**Please note: This course is not suitable for children to attend and no childcare is provided.**

To find out more or book a place, please contact Family Action on:

01603 972589

Puffins@family-action.org.uk



family-action.org.uk

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## **Our Commissioners - Norfolk and NHS Integrated Care Board**

Family Action's Norfolk and Waveney Autism/ADHD Support Service is commissioned by the newly formed Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Integrated Care Board to provide support and advice, learning, resources and signposting to parents/carers of children or young people either awaiting a neurodevelopmental assessment or newly diagnosed.

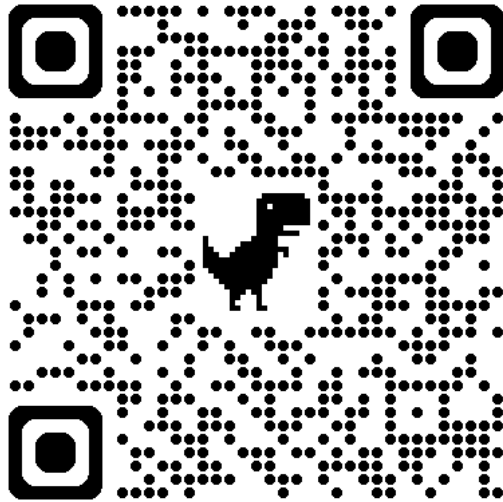


**Norfolk and Suffolk**  
Integrated Care Board

## Family Action Website



Family Action is a national charity, supporting families up and down the country and has recently updated and relaunched its [website](#).



In addition to being able to search for Family Action services and projects in your locality, you can also now access lots of information and resources on a wide range of topics affecting families today.

See also the QR code below which will take you to the home page.

**Family Action FamilyLine - for any parenting concerns or crises. We can listen, support, inform and refer to a relevant service.**



**Family Line**

-  0808 802 6666
-  07537 404 282
-  [familyline@family-action.org.uk](mailto:familyline@family-action.org.uk)
-  Online Chat



**Family Line**

☎ 0808 802 6666

💬 07537 404 282

✉ familyline@family-action.org.uk

💬 Online Chat

## About our Service - Contact Details



For West and Central Norfolk **01603 972589** or email [NorfolkAndWaveney@family-action.org.uk](mailto:NorfolkAndWaveney@family-action.org.uk)

For East Norfolk and Waveney **01493 650220** or email [gorleston@family-action.org.uk](mailto:gorleston@family-action.org.uk)

Unsure which area to contact? Use any of the above – we are all here to help you.

*If you wish to join our closed Facebook group, go to Facebook and to the Family Action page and then search for Norfolk and Waveney Autism and ADHD Support Service.*

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