



Headteacher

NEWSLETTER



Update from Ms. Parkhouse

This week marks Neurodiversity Celebration Week, an initiative that challenges stereotypes and celebrates the many ways in which different brains work. At our school, this is something we hold particularly close to our hearts. It is a time to reflect on our PRIDE values—specifically the 'I' for Inclusion. Year group assemblies leading up to this week have been dedicated to stories that our children can relate to and for them to see how celebrating differences can look in every day situations at school.

We are incredibly passionate about our SEND provision at Sandy Lane. For us, inclusion is not just about a seat in a classroom; it is about ensuring that every single child, regardless of their neurological profile, feels that they truly belong in our school. "A child's sense of belonging is the greatest predictor of their success."

We are committed to the implementation of our Behaviour Curriculum to support the cognitive load of all children and create an environment where everything is predictable and safe. We have a whole school approach to Zones of Regulation, supported by calming areas and 'regulation stations' in corridors. We have 'Core 10 Teaching Habits' taught and monitored through Instructional Coaching for our teachers to ensure that we are providing Adaptive Teaching in all classrooms. We have our impressive 'Cubbie', dedicated sensory room, internal alternative provisions, ELSA interventions, Lego Therapy, Anxiety and Anger Gremlin interventions, all in addition to nurture and forest social group support and academic and SALT interventions.

Studies show that when a child feels a strong sense of belonging, their attendance, emotional wellbeing, and academic motivation all thrive. We don't just want our pupils to 'get by' at Sandy Lane, we want them to feel happy, safe, and valued for exactly who they are. Whether a child is neurotypical or neurodivergent, they bring a unique set of strengths to our community, from creative problem-solving and hyper-focus to deep empathy and original thinking.

To our families of neurodivergent children: we see you, and we care. We know that navigating the education system can sometimes feel like an uphill battle. Please find on the next page a list of charities and organisations we regularly signpost to.

Thank you for being part of our inclusive community. Together, we are building a school where everyone has a place and every mind matters.



OUR PRIDE, LIMITLESS TOGETHER



SEND Support for Parents

To support our families, we have compiled a list of essential national and local organisations. These groups offer everything from legal advice on education to community-led support sessions for parents and carers.

Local Support (Bracknell Forest)

Bracknell Forest IASS (Information, Advice and Support Service): A free, impartial, and confidential service for parents of children with SEND. They offer a helpline, support at meetings, and help navigating the EHCP process.

Contact: 01344 354011 | iass@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

The Local Offer (Additional Needs Info Hub): The definitive directory for Bracknell Forest. It lists all local services, from health and social care to leisure activities designed for children with additional needs.

Website: bracknell-forest.gov.uk/localoffer

Autism Berkshire (Bracknell Support Group): They host regular, informal meet-ups at the Forest Park Community Centre for parents to share experiences and hear from guest speakers (such as SENDIASS).

Contact: contact@autismberkshire.org.uk

The Rowans and Sycamores Family Hub: A central point in Bracknell for early help, parenting courses, and community support for families with children of all ages.

National Organisations

IPSEA (Independent Provider of Special Education Advice): A leading charity providing free, legally-based advice to help families get the right education for children with SEND.

Website: ipsea.org.uk

Contact (For Families with Disabled Children): Provides a wealth of information on benefits, education, and social care, including a freephone helpline and a "Listening Ear" service for emotional support.

Website: contact.org.uk

SOS! SEN: A national charity offering a helpline and workshops specifically focused on helping parents navigate the legal and bureaucratic maze of SEN provision.

Website: sossen.org.uk

Family Lives: Offers a 24/7 helpline and online forums for any parenting challenges, with dedicated resources for raising neurodivergent children.

Website: familylives.org.uk





Key Dates



Term 4 Key Dates

Whilst we endeavour to ensure that you get as much notice as possible for all school key dates, there might be times when this isn't possible. Thank you in advance for your understanding when this does happen!

Monday 23rd February 2026	INSET Day - School Closed for pupils
Tuesday 24th February 2026	School reopens for all pupils - First Day of Term 4
Wednesday 25th February	KS2 Choir attending the O2 - All Day
Thursday 26th February	Year 5 Parent Drop In /Coffee Morning
Tuesday 3rd March	Pupil Parliament Trip
Thursday 5th March	World Book Day (Pupils are invited to 'Dress for Reading': either as a favourite character or in their 'comfies')
	World Book Day Special Lunch Menu
	Nursery Parents are invited to come and read to children at: 8:35am - 9.00am and 2:50pm - 3:15pm
	Book Sale and Golden Lucky Dip (Middle Playground) - SLSA Event
Thursday 5th March	KS2 Choir attending Whitegrove for Hexagon rehearsal - Afternoon (details sent out)
Tuesday 10th March	Year 5 German <i>Karneval</i> Celebration - Assembly for parents 2.40pm - upper school hall
Thursday 12th March	Year 6 Parent SATs meeting 3:30
Friday 13th March	Wonderful Women Cake and Flower Sale (Middle Playground) - SLSA Event
Thursday 19th March	Year 1 Parent Drop In / Coffee Morning
Friday 20th March	Red Nose Day (Pupils are invited to wear Red Nose Day Accessories alongside their usual school uniform)
Tuesday 24th March	School Nurse Drop In Sessions 9:30am - 11:30am (only by prior arrangement with school office for children aged 5 & over)
Friday 27th March 2026	Last day of Term 4
Easter Half Term: Monday 30th March 2026 - Friday 10th April 2026 School reopens on Monday 13th April 2026	

[Click here](#) for a handy printable for the fridge.





SENCO
Mr Walsh

Spotlight on SEND



Bracknell Forest Educational Psychology Support Line

Bracknell Forest Educational Psychology have launched a Parent/ Carer Contact Line. This service offers parents a short consultation with an Educational Psychologist providing quick answers, solutions and signposting.

A 30-minute consultation can be requested directly with Bracknell Forest EP service by completing their online form **here**.

Bracknell Forest IASS

Bracknell Forest Information, Advice and Support Service (IASS).offers free, impartial and confidential information, advice and support to parents, carers and young people in relation to SEND.This includes EHCP processes, school-based support and understanding rights and responsibilities as well as support at mediation and tribunal. A short video to introduce Bracknell Forest Council's IASS can be found **here**.

Managing Anxiety Workshop

The Autism Support Group will be hosting a free online workshop on Managing Anxiety. It designed for parents and carers of primary and secondary children and will focus on strategies for when worries take over It will cover what causes anxiety and share tried and tested support strategies. It will take place on Wednesday 10th June 10am - 12pm and can be booked using the link **here**.

**Bracknell Forest Educational Psychology Service
Parent Carer Contact Line**

- 30 minute conversation with an Educational Psychologist -
- Available to all Bracknell Forest parent carers -
- Wednesday mornings during term time -
- By phone or MS Teams --

Would you like advice on how to support your child at home?
Are you worried about your child's social skills?
Do you need some suggestions for your child's wellbeing?
Are you concerned about your child's learning?

An Educational Psychologist has training and experience in supporting children and their adults to overcome barriers so that they can access their learning.

In these short sessions we can provide advice and signposting to help you support your child.

Discussions are confidential.

Booking information:
[EPS Parent Carer Contact Line - Request for appointment - Fill out form](#)

Bracknell Forest Information, Advice & Support Service

Impartial information, advice and support for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities (SEND) and their parents or carers.

What is the Information, Advice & Support Service?

- We provide advice, information and support on all matters relating to SEND, including health, education and social care issues.
- Our service is impartial, confidential, free, arms-length and accessible.
- We are available face to face, by telephone and by email.

How can the Information, Advice & Support Service help you?

We will listen to your views, explain your options, rights and responsibilities and provide tailored information, advice and support to enable you to make the best decisions for your circumstances.

We will provide information and advice on:

- The Law - education, health & social care law relating to SEND
- Applying for an Education Health & Care needs assessment
- Annual review of Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP)
- SEN support in mainstream schools
- Home to school transport queries
- Queries about Exclusions from school
- Personal Budgets - how to take up and manage personal budgets
- Local Offer - support groups and activities that are available locally www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/localoffer

We will support you by:

- Offering to meet to discuss your individual circumstances
- Supporting you in writing letters and filling in forms
- Helping you to prepare for meetings and support during and after meetings as required

Impartial • Free • Confidential

What parents say about the service...

Fantastic service, I'm glad I found out about you through a friend.

Thank you so much for this service - it is invaluable.

I can't thank you enough for the great support I have received from you. As a result I was able to understand the SEND process.

Who is the Information, Advice & Support Service for?

Parents & carers
If you are a parent or carer of a child or young person, who has or may have SEND, we will work in partnership with you to explore your options in order to help you make the best decisions for your child.

Children
Although in many cases, your child will access information, advice and support via you, some children, especially older children, may want to have it separately and we can help with this.

Young people
If you are a young person aged between 16 to 25 years old with SEND, we will work in partnership with you to help you be fully involved in decisions affecting you and your future.

We can work separately with parents and young people where there is a difference of opinion on any issue related to SEND.

Impartial • Free • Confidential

**For more information contact
Bracknell Forest Information, Advice & Support Service**

Confidential Helpline: 01344 354011
Email: IASS@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Visit our website <https://www.bracknellforestiass.co.uk/> for downloadable factsheets and up to date SEND information.

If you need this in an alternative format please contact Bracknell Forest Information, Advice & Support Service on 01344 354011.





FSW

Mrs Hurley

Safeguarding at Sandy Lane



Mobile Phones and Online Safety



Our Safeguarding Team would like to share some guidance on a topic many of you are currently grappling with: mobile phones. Choosing when to give a child their first device is a significant milestone, and research shows it is often considered one of the most challenging decisions a parent faces.

While there is no "perfect age," the transition from primary to secondary school is a common turning point. However, the decision should always be based on your child's individual emotional maturity. Before handing over a device, it is worth considering if they are ready to follow boundaries and, most importantly, if they feel comfortable coming to you if they see something that worries them.

If you decide your child is ready for a phone, parental settings and supervision are everything. The internet was not built with children in mind, and it is our responsibility to create a digital space that is safe for them to explore.

We strongly recommend the following steps:

- Configure all parental controls before the phone is even handed over. Use settings to filter inappropriate content, disable in-app purchases, and turn off location sharing.
- Especially for younger users, we encourage keeping tech use in shared family areas rather than behind closed bedroom doors.
- Children often mirror our own habits. Establishing "tech-free zones" like the dinner table helps promote a healthy balance.
- For primary-aged children, screen time is best treated as a shared experience. Sit with them, ask about the games they are playing, and stay involved in their digital world.

You may have seen in the news that the government is currently holding a national consultation, "Growing Up in the Online World," which is looking at potential new rules for social media and phone use for under-16s. At school, we continue to follow the latest DfE guidance, ensuring our environment remains a "phone-free" space to protect our pupils' focus and wellbeing.

The most powerful safety tool remains communication. By having regular, calm conversations about what they do online, you ensure that if a challenge arises, you are the first person they turn to.



OUR PRIDE, LIMITLESS TOGETHER





Representing Sandy Lane

Great wins for both girls and boys football teams vs Jennett's Park last week! On a cold, wet and windy afternoon in Bracknell, both teams showed a mixture of good teamwork and individual excellence. The boys won 3-0, and the girls won 4-0. It's hard to believe that some of the girls hadn't played football before this year.

Amazing effort from all!



Koalas Class Setting the Sandy Lane Standard

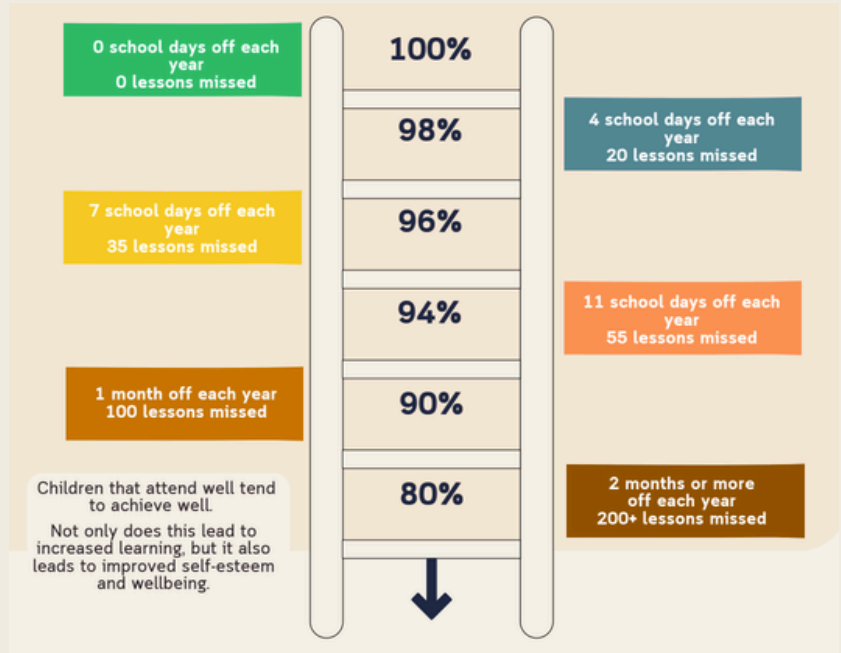
Our newest class, the Koalas, have been having an absolutely stellar Term 4 so far. Their dedication to excellence hasn't gone unnoticed, as they were recently highlighted by the Senior Leadership Team as an exemplary model for the entire school. In fact, their fantastic walking routine to and from the classroom was so impressive that it is being recorded as a model video to demonstrate the behaviour routines across the entire Trust!

Beyond their impeccable transitions, we are incredibly proud of their consistent manners, their supportive teamwork, and their focused attitude toward learning. The Koalas have truly made us super proud this term by embodying our school PRIDE values in everything they do. Keep up the brilliant work!



Attendance Matters

- Absence should only occur when your child is far too ill to attend.
- If your child is suffering from Colds, Headaches, Tiredness or Sore throat we would suggest that you administer paracetamol or ibuprofen and bring them into school.
- If their condition deteriorates, we will always call you.
- Family holidays and day trips must be arranged outside of school hours.
- Medical or dental appointments should be arranged outside of school hours, if this is not possible supporting evidence should be provided please.

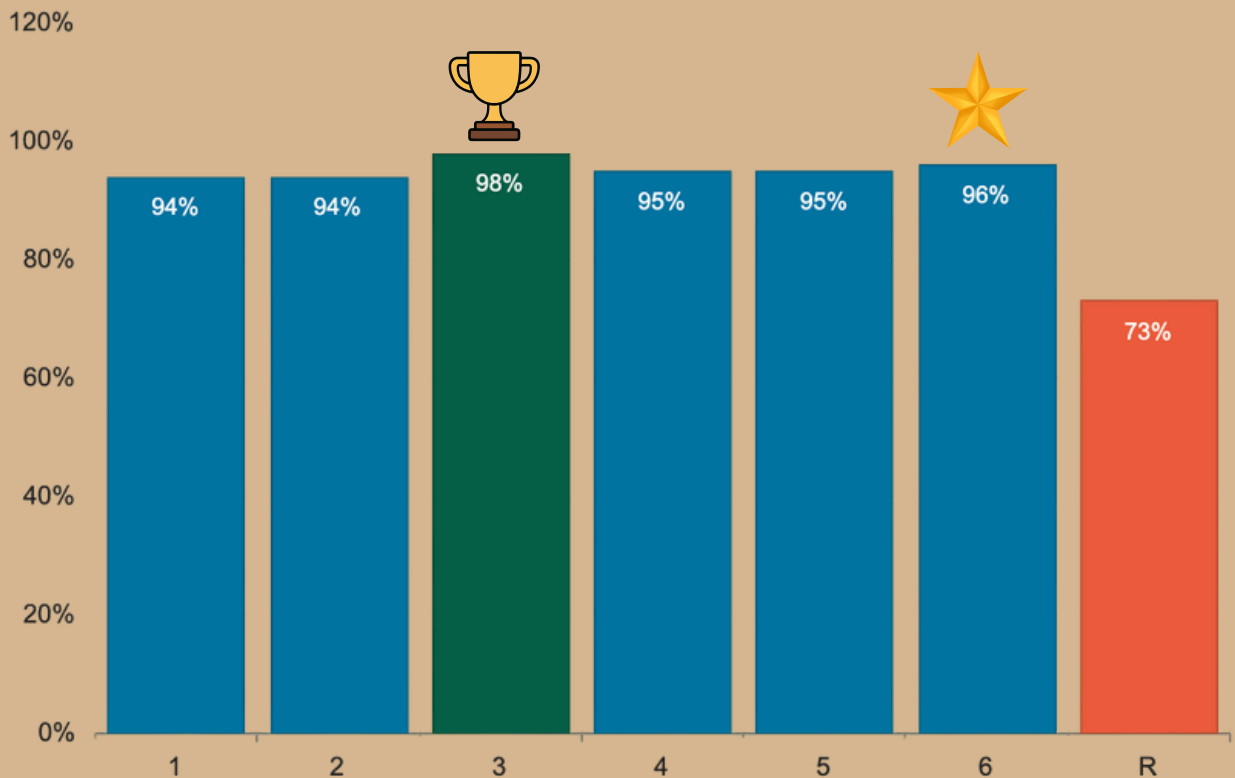


This Fortnight in Figures...

Date Range: 02/03/2026 - 13/03/2026

95%

WHOLE SCHOOL



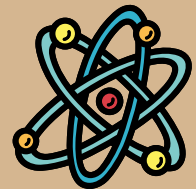
British Science Week in Dolphins Class

To celebrate British Science Week, the young scientists in Dolphin Class have been busy growing their very own cress. The children turned their classroom into a mini-lab, carefully watching how seeds transform into sprouts with just a little water and light. By recording daily changes and measuring how tall their plants grow, the children are learning exactly what living things need to stay healthy and strong. It has been a fun, hands-on way to see biology in action!



British Science Week in Elephants Class

It was fantastic to see lots of teachers and children investigating theories and taking part in practical work this week. Science Week is an amazing opportunity and event - which has been demonstrated again here at Sandy Lane. In year 5 we were able to see if toast (really does!) always land 'butter side down': A comment that was used to start our experiments!



Eco-Warriors

We are bursting with pride to share the incredible environmental efforts of one of our pupils, Phoebe, over the February half-term. While many were taking a well-earned rest, Phoebe was busy out in our community on a massive "rubbish collection journey."

In total, Phoebe collected a staggering 14 bags of rubbish! She wasn't alone in her mission either; on one of the days, she was joined by her friends Poppy, Parker, and Perry, who helped her clear an additional four bags from our local streets.

Phoebe's dedication to the planet doesn't stop at the bin bag. She has shared her inspiring journey with Blue Peter, and we are all crossing our fingers that she receives a well-deserved Green Badge for her hard work. Phoebe has also expressed how much she loves caring for the environment, and we are delighted to have her expertise helping our Eco Council in the future.

A huge thank you to Phoebe, Poppy, Parker, and Perry for being such fantastic role models. You have truly shown us what it means to take pride in our community!



RED NOSE DAY! COMIC RELIEF

At SANDY LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

FRIDAY 20th MARCH

GET INVOLVED!
ADD A SPLASH OF COLOUR!
Wear your favourite **RED NOSE DAY ACCESSORIES** (e.g. Red Nose, Headbands, Red Socks) alongside standard **SCHOOL UNIFORM!**

REMEMINDERS FOR THE DAY

- UNIFORM:** Wear standard school uniform as usual (apart from accessories!).
- PRACTICALITY:** Please ensure accessories are safe for class and playtime.
- LABEL YOUR NOSE!** Mark your name inside or on your official Red Nose!

COLLECTING VOLUNTARY DONATIONS!
Please bring a voluntary contribution to support the vital work of Comic Relief.

SUPPORTING COMIC RELIEF.
Thank you for your support!

Red Nose Day

We are pleased to support the upcoming Comic Relief's Red Nose Day on Friday 20th March. This is a wonderful opportunity for our pupils to join in the fun and support the vital work that Comic Relief does across the UK and around the world.

To mark the occasion, children are invited to wear Red Nose Day accessories alongside their usual school uniform. Whether it is a classic Red Nose, a themed headband, or even a pair of red socks, we look forward to seeing the children add a splash of colour to their school day! We will also be collecting voluntary donations on the day to send to Comic Relief.

Uniform: Aside from their accessories, children should wear their standard school uniform as usual.

Practicality: Please ensure that any accessories are safe for the classroom and won't get in the way during lessons or playtime.

Please note: If your child chooses to wear an official Red Nose, please make sure their name is tucked inside or marked on it so it doesn't get mixed up with friends' noses!

We are really looking forward to seeing the Red Nose Day accessories on the 20th March.

Nursery Sensory Room

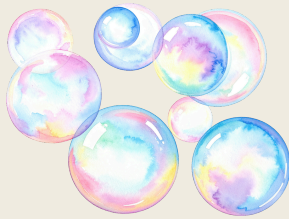
We are excited to share our vision for introducing a Nursery Sensory Room at Sandy Lane Primary! This dedicated space is designed to be a calm and safe environment where our youngest learners can explore the world through touch, sight, sound, and movement.

A sensory room is more than just a place to play; it is a vital resource for child development. By providing a controlled environment, it helps our children find calm in a soothing space for when they feel upset or tired; it provides a safe space if they are feeling worried; it helps improve focus and attention while building overall confidence. It also benefits communication and encourages the development of senses and language skills.

While we already have some wonderful resources, we are looking to expand the room to make it even more impactful. We are currently looking for donations of: Bubble Machines and Bubble Tubes, Lava Lamps, Light Up Toys and Light Curtains.

If you have any of these items at home that are no longer used and you would love to rehome them, we would be incredibly grateful for the donation. If you would like to support us with a new item, please visit our Amazon Wishlist here: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/1XK5OXEZHOL6N>

Thank you in advance for anything you can give to support this vision, we really appreciate it!



NURSERY SENSORY ROOM

What is it?
A sensory room is a calm and safe space where young children can explore using their senses — touch, sight, sound, and movement.

Our Vision

How it helps

- The sensory room helps children to:
- Feel calm when they are upset or tired
- Feel safe if they are worried
- Build confidence
- Improve focus and attention
- Develop their senses and language

What we already have

- Beanbags
- Tent
- Timers (sand and Oil)
- Different Textured material circles
- Ear Defenders
- Chew Tools
- Social Stories
- Poppets

What we'd like

- Light Projector
- Light up Fidget toys
- Sequin Wall
- Light Curtain
- Bubble Machine
- Bubble Tube
- Lava Lamp
- Light Curtain

How you can help

If you have any of these items at home that you no longer use and would love to rehome, we would gratefully take donations. Alternatively please visit our Amazon Wishlist https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/1XK5OXEZHOL6N?ref_=wl_share and either purchase directly from there or please feel free to make a cash donation to the team.

Connecting Our Community...



Easter Holiday Tennis Coaching at Bracknell Tennis Club

Tues 31 Mar to Thurs 2nd Apr
Tues 7th Apr to Thurs 9th Apr
9:30 - 12:00
5 Yrs Up
£22 Per Session

Free 1 hr Session for New Players
Email: coach@bracknelltennis.com for details
www.bracknelltennis.com




Bake for The Cowshed

HOST A BAKE SALE. RAISE FUNDS. CHANGE LIVES.

Fancy doing something simple, fun and meaningful?

Hold a **Bake for The Cowshed** bake sale and help raise vital funds to support people in our local community who are facing crisis.

Whether it's at work, school, in your community or at home, your bake sale will help The Cowshed continue providing essential items and practical support to those who need it most.

GET INVOLVED

Order your pack today and start baking for a great cause. Scan the QR code or visit: www.thecowshed.org/product/bake-sale-pack/
 The Cowshed, Rubra 2, Mulberry Business Park, Fishponds Road, Wokingham, RG41 2SY
 Tel: 0118 934 5120 | Email: info@thecowshed.org | Registered Charity Number: 1181550

Every bake sold helps The Cowshed continue to provide essential items and compassionate support to individuals and families in need. Thank you for being part of something special.

SCAN OR CODE TO ORDER YOUR FREE BAKE SALE PACK




TRY A CLASS FOR FREE



Now showing, **CONFIDENCE!**

Drama, dance & singing classes designed to help 4-12 year olds shine

“My son has adored his first term at Perform. He has blossomed and I've seen his confidence grow every week.”
 Pippa Wotton



Play is a **POWERFUL THING**

Perform classes help boost children's **confidence, concentration, coordination** and **communication** skills, as well as being lots of fun.

Our expertly designed drama, dance and singing sessions for 4-7s and 7-12s are run by experienced teachers, hand-picked for their warmth and approachability. They'll be with your child every step of the way – inspiring and encouraging them to develop vital life skills as they discover the joy of performing.

What does Perform offer?

- Performing arts-based games and exercises
- Focus on a different social skill each week
- Small classes and feedback on your child's progress
- Specially created scripts, videos and apps
- End of term presentation for family and friends

“Perform helps develop all key areas of a child in a fun, supportive and engaging way. It gives my daughter a brilliant sense of fun, community, purpose and pride in her achievements.”
 Begum Bari

Ready to try for free?

Your child's first class is free, so why not give it a go? Classes take place all over, have a look online or call us:



perform.org.uk/try 020 7255 9120



Empowering Calm Hosted by The Autism Group:

- Understanding and responding to distressed behaviour in autistic young people with the aims being; To understand physical responses to anxiety, distress and overwhelm.
- To explore what this might look like and think about who is challenging who!
- To learn some strategies to try to help.

Book here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/empowering-calm-tickets-1541216543169?aff=oddtcreator>

This course is for parents and carers of children who have or are suspected to have autism.

Happy weekend!

The GEMS team

www.gems4health.com



Email us at: secretary@sandylanebracknell.com with one page posters and we will endeavour to include it in our newsletter (please avoid emails with lots of text!)

OUR PRIDE, LIMITLESS TOGETHER

