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SEND Local Offer Newsletter Winter 2025 - Issue 39

(https://www.readingsendlocaloffer.org)

Welcome to the 39th issue of the SEND (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=dJ7_CUV9SRo) Local Offer newsletter. We have packed this edition with lots of information based on parent carers and young people feedback.



Introduction



With the Christmas holiday approaching we have some fantastic short breaks, activities and support services included in issue 39 of the SEND (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=eVfSpFqLhOs) Local Offer newsletter, it's a bumper issue! We have taken on feedback from parent carers, on how much they enjoy reading the 'blogs' therefore we have included more in this edition covering topics raised by parent carers and young people, and blogs from local services supporting families in Reading.

The team have also been out and about, taking the SEND (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=eVfSpFqLhOs) Local Offer in to the community, attending the Special United (Me2) events, Reading Families Forum AGM, school transition events and the Living well with Autism course run by Jackie Perrin. Young people and families have really valued our attendance in sharing information about key support and services available in Reading. Taking the service to the heart of the community where it's most needed is vital. The team is planning more outreach work during 2026, so look out for us at community events, and please do 'follow' us on Facebook where we post lots of information for parent carers.

Engagement and working in partnership with parent carers are an important part of delivering the SEND () Local Offer, and we continue to work with parent carers through Reading Families Forum, Parenting Special Children, Autism Berkshire other local SEND () organisations in Reading to develop and maintain high quality information for local families. We ran the SEND Local Offer annual survey during October, and have had 130 completed forms, huge thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the survey. Outcomes and actions taken from the survey will be published on the feedback and consultation page in January 2026 - Reading Directory | Local Offer Feedback & Consultations (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=pTV5YgqMfbQ)

We would really welcome feedback on the newsletter, to help us improve the content, look and feel etc. please feel free to email us any suggestions localoffer@reading.gov.uk (mailto:localoffer@reading.gov.uk)

Maryam Makki, Family Information Service Manager (including the SEND Local Offer)

Reading's Local Offer provides children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and their families, information about what support is available in the local area. It helps parents, carers and young people clearly see and access the range of services that they may need. Visit www.readingsendlocaloffer.org (http://www.readingsendlocaloffer.org) Email localoffer@reading.gov.uk (mailto:localoffer@reading.gov.uk) Call on 0118 9373777 (option 2), Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm

Latest News



Early Years Childcare Sufficiency and Wraparound Parental Surveys 2025

As a parent we would like to know your views on childcare availability in Reading. We are currently running two surveys. One to collect information on early years childcare use and the other for parents of primary school age children regarding wraparound childcare. If you have children who fall into either of these categories, we would appreciate you taking part in one or both of our online surveys. Parents who take part in the surveys will be entered into a prize draw to win a £20 High Street voucher.

Click the following link for more details: Reading Directory | Early Years Childcare Sufficiency and Wraparound Parental Surveys 2025 (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/site.page?id=bU5vVPd0n74)

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Bite Size Learning: Online Harm

Learn how to keep children safe online!

Reading Directory | Child Exploitation and Missing Children (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=9WDfy6W51LU)

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toothPASTE, Autism Toothcare.

toothPASTE is a website that supports parents and carers in looking after their child's teeth. It offers simple advice tailored for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), with a particular focus on autistic children. The website was co-designed by parents, early-years professionals, and researchers from the Universities of Leeds, Manchester, and Sheffield**.**

Reading Directory | toothPASTE, Autism Toothcare. (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=Ued6VQSjGxg)

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Elective Home Education Flu Clinic

Is your child home educated or currently not attending school?

Come along to our Flu Clinic!

Click following link for more details: Reading Directory | Elective Home Education Flu Clinic (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/site.page?id=34ILPXbBYCs)

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Reading Families' Forum - PINS Project

Are you a parent or carer of a primary schoolchild with additional needs?

Find out more about parent to parent support.

Your roadmap for getting support from other parent/carers

To find out more about the Reading Families Forum (RFF) - Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) project please use the following link Reading Directory | Partnerships for inclusion of neurodiversity in schools (PINS) (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/site.page?id=kIz90NKHBAs)

For more information please contact fran@readingfamiliesforum.co.uk (mailto:fran@readingfamiliesforum.co.uk)

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Reading Local Area - Ordinarily Available Provision & Graduated Response

This guide is to help everyone better understand what is available in Reading for children and young people (CYP) with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who do not need an Education, Health and Care (ECH) plan but still need specialist support.

We call this support the Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) and it covers everything you can expect to be available for children and young people with SEND (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=NboCPuxKWWs) in Reading schools and educational settings.

It includes a wide range of support and resources to help CYP with SEND (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=NboCPuxKWWs) get the support they need to succeed academically, socially and emotionally.

With this guide, we aim to make the OAP statement more accessible and understandable, helping you – and us –support your child's education more effectively.

It will, hopefully, go a long way to answering the 'when, what, where, why, who and how' types of questions you may have about support for SEND () that should be available.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Reading Local Area - Ordinarily Available Provision & Graduated Response (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=NboCPuxKWWs)

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About the Household Support Fund

The Household Support Fund is a government grant allocated by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to councils in England.

Reading received £1,992,735 to help residents in need, including low-income families, care leavers, and pensioners. The grant helps families and vulnerable individuals who may struggle to pay for basic living costs, such as:

- energy and water
- food
- wider essentials – such as clothing
- housing costs

Find out more - Household Support Fund - Reading Borough Council (https://www.reading.gov.uk/benefits-and-financial-support/household-support-fund/)

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Autism Berkshire – extra support for autistic adults (18+) in Reading

Autism Berkshire is launching new activities to support and empower autistic adults in Reading to live independently and improve their wellbeing for the next three years.

These activities are supported by Reading Borough Council's Closing the Gap project to improve residents' health and wellbeing, reduce loneliness and inequalities, and provide support for carers and those facing poverty and debt.

Autistic adults, aged 18 and above, who live in the town can benefit from:

- Individual advice delivered online, by telephone or face-to-face at a venue in central Reading
- A group for young autistic adults, aged under 30, meeting in central Reading
- A group for autistic women, meeting in central Reading
- A monthly Lunch Club, meeting at the Toby Carvery Caversham Bridge
- Chop & Chat life and social skills courses
- Volunteering courses
- Travel training with rail and bus operators

Please note that you must be registered in advance to attend these activities.

For more information, go to https://www.autismberkshire.org.uk/ (https://www.autismberkshire.org.uk/) then open the Adult Support menu and scroll down to find details of the activities that you are interested in. You can also find information there about Autism Berkshire's other services for autistic adults.

If you have any questions or would like to register an interest in attending any of these activities or getting in-depth advice, contact the Autism Berkshire adult support team by email at adult.support@autismberkshire.org.uk (mailto:adult.support@autismberkshire.org.uk) or call 01189 594 594 (option 2) and leave a voicemail and an adult autism support mentor will get in touch.

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Sleep Intervention Study at the University of Reading

We are conducting a study in partnership with the Dingley Child Development Centre to explore how different types of sleep interventions affect children with autism or other neurodevelopmental conditions (NDCs), as well as their impact on parents' mental wellbeing.

You and your child may be able to take part if:

- Your child has sleep difficulties, and
- You are attending (or interested in) a Parenting Special Children (PSC) Sleep Workshop, or
- Your child is under a Dingley consultant (with or without melatonin)

The study includes up to three short visits, sensory play activities, sleep-tracking watches, and parent questionnaires. Families receive £20 at the final visit.

To find out more, please email Rhea at r.varghese@reading.ac.uk (mailto:r.varghese@reading.ac.uk).

This study has been approved by the South Yorkshire Research Ethics Committee.

Study ends 30th May 2026

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Reading Families Forum - 16+ Transitions event - Saturday 31st January 2025

We are organising our annual 16+ Transition Event which will be held at The Avenue School, Conwy Close, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 4BZ. It will be on Saturday, 31st January, 2026. It will be open to families from 2.30 pm - 5 pm.

There will be entertainment for the young people. Free teas and coffees will be available in the afternoon. Contact Fran Morgan fran@readingfamiliesforum.co.uk (mailto:fran@readingfamiliesforum.co.uk) for further information.

Reading Directory | Reading Families' Forum - Preparing for Adulthood Event 31/01/2026 (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=zRtd_z8g2Mw&familychannel=3)

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Winter Book Bingo at Reading Libraries 1st December to 31st January

Following on from the success of this summer's Reading loves reading campaign which saw nearly 2,400 people take part, Reading Libraries are launching Winter Book Bingo. It will run Monday 1 December to Saturday 31 January and is open to children, teens, and adults. There will be 2 prize draws – under 13s and teens/adults - to win a £20 book voucher. To enter, people will need to either complete a line (read 3 books) or if they want a harder challenge, complete the card (read 9 books) over at least 3 visits to the library.

People will be able to pick up Book Bingo cards from their local library from Monday 1st December. https://whatsonreading.com/venues/reading-libraries/whats-on-events (https://whatsonreading.com/venues/reading-libraries/whats-on-events)

Reading Directory | Winter Book Bingo, Win a £20 book voucher at Reading Libraries (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=6LufTMFbELk)

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Blog – Lara Patel - Executive Director Children's Services



Where has the summer gone?! I can't believe that when I last shared my reflections with you we just about to hold our Berkshire Neuro Divergent Event, so much has happened since then. It was a privilege to stand alongside our Inclusion Ambassadors to welcome parents, carers and colleagues from across health, education and children's services to formally launch our work to develop a tool to identify strengths and needs of our neuro divergent children and young people. Our Inclusion Ambassadors showed such courage standing up in front of so many people and sharing their experiences and hopes and expectations with us all. Since then we have worked in partnership across Berkshire to respond to everyone's feedback and move us closer to a tool that works for our children locally – you can find out more in Andrea's post....

I always get to have a lot of fun when I meet up with our children – especially at Cressingham's summer party, which had a Circus theme this year! They fitted me out with a bow tie and clown glasses and I danced to 70's disco music with our children who had some seriously good moves! Lots of raffle prizes were won, cake was eaten and games played. I hope that all of the children and families enjoyed themselves as much as I did, I left with an achy jaw from smiling so much!

Of course one of the major events that has happened recently is the transfer of children's services (Brighter Futures for Children) back into Reading Borough Council on 1st October. A huge amount of preparation went into the transfer, which included nearly 600 staff moving into the Council. It has all gone very smoothly and we have received a warm welcome from colleagues in the Council, who we already worked with closely. Hopefully the only difference you will notice now is that we all have much shorter email addresses!

Looking ahead we have been busy responding to the government's national Families First Partnership Reforms, which includes the development of family hubs. We are so lucky in Reading to have retained our brilliant Children's Centres which are now providing us with the strong foundations to develop four Best Start in Life Family Hubs which will go live in March 2026, providing preventative support for 0-25yr olds, You can find out more by visiting www.beststartinlife.gov.uk (http://www.beststartinlife.gov.uk) and https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/reading-family-hubs/ (https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/reading-family-hubs/) We are also on track to open three new children's homes in 2026 so that children who do need to come into care can live locally. Our work to expand local special school places continues to be a priority for the Council and whilst work on the project progresses as planned this is a longer-term project with planned places for 2027.

More on our future plans next time. In the meantime I hope you can take some time to enjoy the final weeks of autumn as the russet leaves fall - whether it be from your window or marching through piles of rustling leaves, one of my favourite childhood memories that I've enjoyed recreating with my own children!

Lara Patel

Executive Director Children's Services

Blog - Andrea King, Berkshire Neurodiverse System Transformation Lead Strategic Transformation Lead for Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing & Families First Strategic Lead



This period over the summer has been a really exciting time of new developments in Children's Services in Reading.

We have been working with local children and families, and with our voluntary sector and statutory partners, to co-design Family Hubs for Reading; to help each family access the right help at the right time, locally. Family Hubs will bring a range of help and support together for families with children from pre-birth to the age of 18 or up to 25 (for our young people with special educational needs, or disabilities, or who been Cared For (CLA) children.

We are planning to establish four Family Hubs in the areas where this help is most needed including in Whitley in the South; to Sun Street in Cemetery Junction in the East (reaching to Amersham Road and Dee Road in the North); to Southcote and Ranikhet in the West too. If you live in Reading you can attend any Family Hub, whichever is easiest and most comfortable for you. All of our Family Hubs will offer a warm welcome and will work hard to create a feeling of belonging.

Reading's young people and parents/caregivers have asked for Family Hubs to prioritise more help with everything from an increased youth support offer; help with emotional health; to advice on work, benefits and training; housing advice; conflict at home or help with addiction; through to advice and support for neurodivergent children. We want to launch these Family Hubs in Reading quickly, recognising that in Reading, like the rest of the country, we have an increasing number of families struggling with the cost of living and needing other forms of support. We'll make best use of specialist skills across our partnership, working as a team, and will offer specific times and specific places where advice and support will be available across Reading. We expect to launch our Family Hubs mid-March 2026 and will provide more information in the new year.

Alongside help and support from professionals in our Family Hub buildings, we'll also have a new online information and advice Family Hub channel (linked to the Local Offer and our Family Information Service). All of our Family Hubs will be Best Start in Life centres, providing specialist advice for families with under 5s; and this will include outreach to families with three and four year olds to help every child learn and develop well at home, and be ready for school. Information and support available will include everything from health visiting, midwifery and maternity advice to nutrition and weight management, healthy teeth, stopping smoking and building relationships with your baby or child under the age or five, which will include specialist mental health advice for parents or caregivers with babies. Again, we'll let you know when that is ready.

Lastly, we promised an update on our Berkshire wide work on Neurodivergent Transformation. This has been a really exciting time for this work, and we now have over 1500 co-design partners across Berkshire, which includes over 500 members with lived experience and 459 Headteachers helping us with the co-design. All partners have agreed to changing the system in Berkshire to introduce a neuro-divergent needs and strengths tool for our children, to be able to understand neurodivergent

attributes within about an hour and know what adjustments will help a child at home, in a school or setting, or in the community. Children that need a diagnosis will still be able to see a clinician for a diagnostic assessment, but this approach will ensure help and support much earlier in the community – recognising that lots of children wait too long to understand their neurodivergence in Berkshire. Having reviewed the national evidence together, and looked at the best practice from around the county, we have now completed an options appraisal and will agree the preferred tool (written by clinical and educational psychologists) in November 25. It's likely we'll need to procure this needs/strengths tool, which will take a few months, but we're on track to be implementing the new tool in 2026 as planned. Right now, partners and families are co-designing a specific plan for each Local Authority area in Berkshire to tailor the roll-out of the tool and train our workforce; this allows the different needs and strengths of each area, in our case Reading, to be planned for. We held this first co-design event for Reading's plan on 13th October and will have a plan in place by the early new year. Again, we'll be in touch in 2026 with an update for you all.

Thank you all and wishing you a really good return to the new school term and some quality time with those you most want to be with over the holiday season,

Andrea King

Blog -ACRE/Alafia Family Support Service

ACRE/Alafia Family Support Service

Alafia supports Ethnic Minority families caring for children and young people (0-25) on a wide spectrum of disabilities or additional needs. We aim to ensure that familie from statutory and voluntary sector service providers.

We also provide a range of activities including trips & outings, mild group exercise and social gatherings in order to reduce isolation and help improve the health & wellbeing of

Information, Advice, and Guidance
We will provide you with information and advice that is relevant to your circumstances, signpost / refer you to appropriate agencies where necessary.

Health and Wellbeing Activities
We run regular family support groups meetings and short-breaks activities to reduce social isolation and promote physical and mental wellbeing.

Advocacy and Empowerment
We advise and enable you to access support services to which you are entitled, support you to resolve problems with schools, housing, health and social care providers.
We will also speak up and ensure service providers recognise the needs of ethnic minority families.

Currently we are based at:

Middle Building
344 Oxford Road, Reading RG30 1AF
Open Monday - Thursday (9 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

info@acre-reading.org
www.facebook.com/acre.reading.org@AlafiaAcre
www.acre-reading.org.
Charity No: 1149491
Phone Number: 0118 951 0279



Shagufta Ali

Alafia Family Support Worker

Workdays Monday and Tuesday 9.00 to 5.00pm and Friday 9.00am to 1.00pm

Families who fit the criteria may self-refer to the service

Overview of our service:

Face to face Monthly Parents Support Group Sessions:

Monthly Coffee/Tea morning Sessions at the Community Hub based at ORCC

Bingo on sight and A Cognitive Behavioural Therapist for Support.

- Aim of these sessions is for families to network, form friendship, support each other, reduce isolation and improve their mental physical wellbeing
- Carers also have an opportunity to have Mini Health Checks

Shortbreaks for families:

Facilitated day out for families at Camp Mohawk (A multi -functional day centre for children with special needs children and their families)

- This provided opportunity for families to have quality time together, network with other families and form friendship

Family Day out at Caversham Lakes attended by 65 carers and children - Attended by 12 families

Enjoyable day out for the families and opportunity to enjoy number of activities on site including Aqua Park, Family Beach and a safe playground set on a stunning lake in the he

Family Day Out at Legoland Windsor Resort - Attended by 61 carers and children

End of the year Lunch at Cosmo Restaurant, Reading mark the End of year and enjoy festive lunch together. Attended by 60 Carers & children. Famili countries

Christmas Pantomime and live performance at Reading Rep Theatre enjoying live performances and entertainment. Attended by 18 families.

Soft Play Sessions at Junglemania Reading

Soft play sessions resumed for children with special needs and their siblings. These take place once a month term time only, average of 20 people attending each session whic in a safe environment and parents can network and relax

ACRE/Alafia information stall at the Childrens Festival in Forbury Park. Free activities were provided for the children!

Feedback from families:

- SH- my daughter had a wonderful day particularly loved the paddling pool.
- Thanks for arranging the outing for us!
- RZ -thanks for the lovely day out, kids jab a fab time!
- MM- thank you Alafia/Reading Family aid for your support and the trip was wonderful.
- We had a great time and enjoyed all the activities. Children liked spending day on the

beach

- SM-it was a lovely day out for me and the children. Really appreciate your effort.
- SH- thank you for your support and trip was very nice and enjoyable
- Enjoyed a very productive day out with the family. Thankyou
- Everyone really enjoyed the food, thank you for bringing a smile to Childrens face!
- AM- thanks Alafia and RFA for providing such a fantastic opportunity for isolated families.
- The Reading Rep Performance was great, we appreciate your help and support!

Further Information on: Reading Directory | ACRE Family Support Team (Alafia) (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=tgHL8hTvLzw)

Blog – Sarah Bamford, IASS Team Manager



It's been a busy old start to the academic year – and I've seen a few! This is my eleventh year as a member of the IASS () team and my second as team leader. We are a small team of four, and despite notching up over 30 years IASS experience between us, we are still encountering new situations and learning new things every day.

At IASS, we have the privilege of working closely with families as well as schools and other professionals, always with the end goal of ensuring that parents and carers of children with SEND () are fully informed about options around their children's education.

Whilst the wait for the government to share its proposals for SEND () reform drags on, it seems to me on the other hand as if nothing stands still! Every day I hear of a new school or provision, or a new service or solution designed to help ensure that all children, whatever their SEND, can access their entitlement to education. At IASS we try and stay on top of emerging provision and practice so that we can provide up-to-date information to parents about their options. One of the joys of the job is visiting schools – mainstream, special, state-maintained and independent – and learning about the creative ways that they are employing every day to engage and educate young people.

As I write we have just delivered our second batch of online training on SEN () support in schools and EHCPs. Our mission (which comes directly from the Department from Education) is to ensure that parents have ready access to impartial information, advice and support. We deliver tailored support on the phone and via email, and also support in school or other meetings (online, via MS Teams). Parents and carers can also find information on our website. Our online training is designed to add an additional dimension to our offer – to walk parents through the SEND legal framework, and to provide a safe space to discuss some of the more complex situations that parents can find themselves struggling with, such as emotional-based school avoidance, masking, anxiety, part-time timetables or suspension. Keep an eye out for our future online training offer which is likely to be in January 2026.

Impartiality is fundamental to our service. It means that the information we provide is based on that all-important legal framework. Parents must be made aware of their rights to challenge decisions about their children's education and have access to the support they need to do that. Our job is to ensure that this is available to them – for free. Like the rest of Brighter Futures for Children, we are now back within Reading Borough Council, but we remain an "arms-length" organisation, hosted by the Council, but separate and distinct, with our own branding and standalone website. We have been warmly welcomed by the Customer Fulfilment Centre (CFC), where we now sit, separate from education and children's services, and alongside colleagues in the Family Information Service (FIS) and Local Offer (LO). It has been a smooth transition and we look forward to working more closely with the FIS () and LO teams and the CFC team.

Christmas is on the horizon and we know that the combination of darker days, coughs and sneezes and all the excitement of the holiday system can bring added challenges for our SEND learners and their families. If you're worried, don't hesitate to reach out to us. Have a look on our website at www.readingiass.org (http://www.readingiass.org/), leave a message on our callback service: 0118 937 3421 or email us at iass@reading.gov.uk (mailto:iass@reading.gov.uk)

Sarah Bamford

IASS team manager

Blog- Home-Start Reading, Kelly Dadd

Since 1984 Home-Start Reading has been an early intervention charity, providing practical and emotional support and guidance to vulnerable families with children under 5.

Home-Start Reading is one of around 180 local and independent Home-Start schemes in the UK. Home-Start was founded over 50 years ago by Margaret Harrison who was, in many ways, ahead of her time, recognising the impact of stresses and challenges on family life, the key roles of volunteers in local communities, the vital link between the early years and life chances and the benefits of providing support within a family's home environment.

Celebrating our 40th Anniversary last year, Home-Start Reading became part of this movement in 1984, and I joined the small but mighty team in 2020 after a career break to care for a family member. My passion for family support and the early years made this appointment a mutually perfect opportunity. I was employed previously by the local authority and worked extensively across Reading's children's centres for over 13 years after joining the Sure Start local programme set up in Whitley as a family engagement coordinator.

To this day we hold the values and principals of Margaret's passion and dedication at the forefront of our delivery. Although, some aspects of the work we do may look different as we adapt and change with the times, volunteers supporting families remains our core focus and strength.

The very nature of our work lends itself to the concept of inclusion. While our services are not exclusively aimed at families with SEN (), we recognise that we are built to offer support to everyone which, importantly includes families with additional needs. Our home-based family support is delivered through weekly visits from volunteers, working alongside parents in their homes to strengthen parenting skills, build confidence, and reduce stress amongst many other outcomes.

Families are typically supported for 6 months, with volunteers visiting for around 2 hours every week. We identify areas of need in partnership with the families; we have a strength based approach and recognise that each one is unique and we are led by the families themselves to tailor our support to their individual needs. Volunteers encourage healthy lifestyles, early learning activities, getting outdoors, and engagement with local services.

Volunteers complete comprehensive training before being linked with a family. Once matched and linked, they receive regular one-to-one supervision from experienced Family Support Coordinators.

By bringing support into the home, we reach parents who may be isolated, mistrustful of statutory services, or unable to access group provision. The sustained, trusted relationship between volunteer, co-ordinator and family is central to our approach and can be life-changing for both parents and children.

We gather information on health and social issues for parents and children. To identify how many children with additional needs we are reaching, we have approx.16 areas of need which we place into broader areas of classification. We know that most will have a number of challenges within these areas, so our overall numbers are based on unique children regardless of the number of interrelated issues. Of the 95 families we supported last year, 15 identified children with physical disabilities (including for example, visual and hearing impairments and 3 with life limiting illnesses) and 18 with learning disabilities (including for example 13 children with either diagnosed or emerging neurodivergent conditions). With emotional needs, over a third of the families we supported identified concerns around their child's emotional wellbeing and/or mental health.

It is a constant challenge to meet the growing demand for our service. As with many other charities, with no statutory funding we are constantly competing with a growing number of worthy organisations for a decreasing number of funding opportunities. We are heartened and motivated by the value placed on us by our referrers and families and we remain hopeful that we can be around to celebrate our next milestone anniversary and beyond.



Handing out certificates at the end of one of our Volunteer Preparation courses.



With Sue Biggs (Co chair of Trustees) celebrating 40 years of Home-Start Reading



Speaking at Springs Golf Club who have chosen Home-Start Reading to be their 'charity of the year'

Blog – RISE Service- Winter Edition

Reading Borough Council
Working better with you
Brighter Futures for Children
Reading RISE
Inclusion Support in Education



Winter Edition: RISE ()

As 2025 ends, we look back on our RISE journey. It is hard to believe that as of January 4th, 2026, we will have been operating for two years. We are thrilled with how far we have come – and excited for what lies ahead – but there is always room for growth and development, and we welcome all feedback on how we can improve. Please feel free to share your thoughts with RISE@reading.gov.uk (mailto:RISE@reading.gov.uk).



We have been warmly welcomed into the extended Reading Borough Council Department of Children's Services, as you will see from our updated branding and email addresses. We have also developed and rolled out our new referrals process and we are enjoying the opportunities to work with schools to support individual children, as well as supporting whole-school approaches. We hope that this new approach will support us to better monitor impact for CYP. As part of this process, termly planning meetings have been introduced with schools to ensure we are meeting the needs of all children with SEND () at the right time, and at the right level. We will work closely with schools to give them the tools they need to support children through the Ordinarily Available Provision. Referrals are triaged every week, and cases are allocated to the most appropriate practitioner, whether that be support with Good Autism Practice, Preparation for Secondary, Regulation, SLCN, Curriculum, SEMH () or any other need – we're here to help.

We couldn't do it without the dedicated support of our newly welcomed Business Support Officer, Kya Bartley, who, alongside a close-knit team, ensures all our processes are effective and our responses timely – amongst her many other duties!

Thank you to all readers, for their contributions to the lives of CYP with SEND ().



RISE at the Family Information Day



Sophie Webster, Amy-Jo Davis and Eve Garrett had a great time at the Family Information Day!

The RISE Team, MSIT Service and Autism Advisory Service joined forces to run a fun and welcoming stall, sharing information, advice and resources with families. It was lovely to chat with parents, carers and young people, and to raise awareness about the support available through our services. Some even had the opportunity to receive a hand massage! We really enjoyed connecting with the community, answering questions and learning about other services available in Reading.

Thanks to everyone who stopped by to say hello – we hope you found it helpful! For information on future events, please visit Reading Directory | Reading Family Information Service (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/family.page?familychannel=0).



Welcome – Emma Sanigar, Consultant, SEND in Mainstream

Since joining the RISE team at the end of the summer as a SEND Consultant covering Gurpreet's maternity leave, I have been completing various training courses and familiarising myself with the schools I am working with. I have also joined the One Reading Hub meetings, where you may see me on a Wednesday morning.

Prior to this role, I spent 19 years teaching in mainstream primary schools across Reading and Oxfordshire, where I held various positions including Phase Leader and Literacy Lead. In addition to this, I have experienced SEND from a parental perspective supporting my two, now secondary aged children.

I am looking forward to working with my colleagues at RBC () as well as supporting teachers, SENCOs, children and young people across Reading to achieve positive outcomes and I feel very excited to have this opportunity to help continue to develop the RISE service.



Transition to Secondary – Eve Garrett, Specialist SCERTS/ Transition Offer

Our pilot Transition Offer took place over 10 weeks during the summer term last academic year. In collaboration with schools, and the wider BFfC team, we were able to offer individualised support to a small number of children in year 6 who were already known to the RISE service. This has continued into their first term at secondary school, and we have seen some significant successes by those young people. Their hard work and determination have given them a greater range of tools to not only cope but thrive in their start at secondary school. For those children, we will continue to monitor outcomes and offer support tailored to their needs.

We have evaluated the outcomes of this pilot offer and are working towards next steps – we hope to expand our reach to a higher number of year 6 children this summer term.

If you have any questions, comments or feedback on the current approach to transition to secondary in Reading, please do contact Eve at eve.garrett@reading.gov.uk (mailto:eve.garrett@reading.gov.uk).



Supporting Language and Communication in Secondary Schools – Amy Jo Davis, Specialist, SaLT

We recognise that strong language and communication skills are the foundation for literacy, academic achievement, and meaningful engagement with both learning and peers. However, difficulties in these areas can often go unnoticed, sometimes masked by emotional or behavioural challenges or low attainment, and may only emerge when academic demands increase. These difficulties, if unidentified, can impact a young person's ability to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically.

To help address this, Reading Secondary Schools have been provided with a subscription to Secondary Language Link for the current academic year. This standardised assessment and intervention package is designed to support students aged 11–14, by identifying and addressing language and communication needs early.

Secondary Language Link Offers:

- A quick, online screening tool - standardised for Key Stage 3 students
- Individual student profiles and class-wide reports highlighting strengths and challenges, which can be easily shared with teachers and parents/carers
- Practical resources and strategies for teachers and school staff to support students in class or small group settings

By equipping schools with Secondary Language Link, we aim to identify any hidden challenges with understanding spoken language or communication needs to ensure every young person receives the right support. More information about Secondary Language Link can be found here: Secondary Language Link - SLCN support for Secondary students (https://speechandlanguage.link/whole-school-approach/secondary-language-link/) or you can contact me at: amyjo.davis@reading.gov.uk (mailto:amyjo.davis@reading.gov.uk)



Occupational Therapy in RISE – Emma Patey, Specialist, Occupational Therapist

Occupational Therapy is an important part of supporting students to participate fully in school life. An Occupational Therapist will identify barriers to learning and engagement, and will focus on helping children with physical, sensory, or cognitive challenges develop the skills they need to thrive in the educational environment.

Occupational therapists in schools support students by:

- Addressing sensory processing needs that impact attention, behaviour, and emotional regulation.
- Developing fine and gross motor skills to support tasks like handwriting, cutting, and movement around the school.
- Promoting independence in daily routines such as dressing for PE, toileting, and managing personal belongings.
- Adapting classroom environments to meet individual needs and enhance access to learning.
- Collaborating with staff to deliver practical strategies and inclusive practices.
- Supporting emotional regulation and social development through targeted interventions.

By working in close partnership with school staff, I aim to create inclusive and accessible learning environments that empower every child to thrive – academically, socially, and emotionally. If you have any questions about OT through RISE in schools, please feel free to contact me at emma.patey@reading.gov.uk (mailto:emma.patey@reading.gov.uk).



Intensive Interaction – Jenna Redmond, Consultant, Neurodiversity

We have seen a greater uptake in Intensive Interaction training this term, and staff have been enthusiastically reporting back to us the impact it has had on relationships with individual children.

Intensive Interaction is an evidence-based approach designed to support the development of communication and social interaction for people at the early stages of communication. It focuses on building meaningful connections through shared attention, body language, and responsive interaction, helping individuals develop the fundamentals of communication in a natural and respectful way.

We're pleased to offer free introductory training in Intensive Interaction to all settings across Reading. Schools, to access this offer, please contact jenna.redmond@reading.gov.uk (mailto:jenna.redmond@reading.gov.uk).

We will also be delivering the Intensive Interaction Skilled Practitioner 3-day course for those that have completed the induction training. All sessions will be held in Committee Room 1 at the Civic Centre, running from 9:30am to 3:30pm on the following dates:

- Day 1: Thursday 29th January
- Day 2: Monday 23rd February
- Day 3: Thursday 27th March

The cost for the 3-day course is £350 per person. If you would like further information, please feel free to contact jenna.redmond@readin.gov.uk (mailto:jenna.redmond@readin.gov.uk)



Massage Therapy - Sophie Webster, Massage Therapist

Hello all! My name is Sophie Webster, and I would like to introduce myself as a fully qualified and trained Massage Therapist, offering a unique and valued service to Reading Settings, working with children and young people, parents and carers and professionals in education. I have worked in this job role for over 12 years. As well as being a trained Massage Therapist, I have also completed a Sensory Inclusion Facilitator course, accredited by Sensory Integration Education.

Massage Therapy sessions aim to provide a relaxing experience for children and young people to support and regulate their emotional and sensory needs. Sessions are tailored to each child's individual needs, and all sessions are delivered on a one-to-one basis.

I also offer staff training sessions to working professionals on Sensory Needs in Children and Young People and offer Story Massage and Hand Massage training workshops. Where availability allows, I also offer Family Coffee Sessions where families can learn about sensory needs and learn calming techniques to support their child/children at home.

If you would like to learn more about the service I offer, please contact me on sophie.webster@reading.gov.uk (mailto:sophie.webster@reading.gov.uk) or visit the SLA Website where you will find prices and more information: https://www.readingeducationservices.co.uk/Page/5458 (https://www.readingeducationservices.co.uk/Page/5458)




Support for the Festive Season – Jackie Perrin, Autism Advisor

As we near the end of the autumn term, we know many families in Reading are looking forward to festive events, special time together, and hopefully a chance to rest and recharge.

For neurodivergent children, this can be exciting —but also disruptive. The changes in the usual school timetable due to end-of-term activities, trips, early school closures, and the long holiday itself, can be unsettling.

Here are some possible strategies to help to make things easier for our children:

- Prepare for changes: Use visual timetables or countdown calendars to show when school finishes and when it will restart. Include any special events like school plays or non-uniform days.
- Social stories: Create or use social stories to explain what will happen during the break, including who the children might see, where they might go, and what will stay the same.
- Support sensory needs: Holiday environments can be louder, brighter, and busier. Pack sensory kits (ear defenders, fidget toys, sunglasses) for trips out and create a calm space at home.
- Flexible routines: While some structure is helpful, allow for flexibility. Build in quiet time – alternate quiet/busy days perhaps - and familiar activities to balance out new situations.

Whether your family celebrates Christmas, another tradition, or none at all, focus on what feels safe and what works well to help restore your child's energy levels.

Please reach out if you'd like help creating personalised resources or strategies. Wishing you a peaceful, joyful and calm rest of 2025, and a Happy New Year. Jackie.Perrin@reading.gov.uk (https://readinggovuk-my.sharepoint.com/personal/jackie_perrin_reading_gov_uk/Documents/Desktop/Jackie.Perrin@reading.gov.uk)

Blog – Louise Mole - Team Manager Learning Disabilities and Neurodiversity Team (LDN) Team

Supporting Lives, Building Futures: Inside the Learning Disability and Neurodiversity Team

At the heart of our work is a simple but powerful belief: **everyone deserves the opportunity to live a fulfilling, independent, and meaningful life**. The Learning Disability and Neurodiversity (LDA) Team is committed to making that a reality for people with learning disabilities, autism, and other neurodivergent profiles.

Who We Are

We are a dedicated team of social workers, social care coordinators and occupational therapists. working across social care. Our role is to support individuals aged 18 and over who have a diagnosed learning disability and/or neurodiversity, helping them to live as independently and safely as possible in their communities.

What We Do

Our work is person-centred and strengths-based. We focus on:

- **Assessment and Support Planning**: We complete Care Act assessments to understand people's needs, strengths, and aspirations, and co-produce support plans that promote independence and wellbeing.
- **Safeguarding**: We work to protect adults at risk from abuse or neglect, ensuring their voices are heard and their rights upheld.
- **Crisis Intervention**: We respond to urgent situations, working with partners to reduce risk and support recovery.
- **Mental Capacity Assessments**: We assess whether individuals can make specific decisions for themselves, in line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Where someone lacks capacity, we ensure decisions are made in their best interests, involving families, advocates, and professionals.
- **Advocacy**: We work closely with independent advocates to ensure people's rights are upheld, especially when they may struggle to express their views or are facing significant decisions about their care, accommodation, or treatment.
- **Partnership Working**: We collaborate with health professionals, housing providers, education, and voluntary sector organisations to deliver joined-up care.

Enablement: Focusing on What People *Can* Do

Enablement is at the core of our practice. Rather than focusing solely on what someone can't do, we work alongside individuals to **build on their strengths**, develop new skills, and increase confidence in everyday life.

Our enablement approach includes:

- **Short-term, goal-focused support** to help people regain or develop skills after a change in circumstances.
- **Promoting independence** in areas like cooking, travel, managing money, and accessing the community.
- **Working collaboratively** with occupational therapists, support providers, and families to create tailored plans that empower individuals to take control of their lives.

We believe that with the right support, people can achieve more than they—or others—might expect. Whether it's learning to use public transport, preparing meals independently, or managing appointments, these everyday wins are the building blocks of a more independent and fulfilling life.

Preparing for Adulthood (PfA)

A key part of our work is supporting young people as they transition from children to adult services. The **Preparing for Adulthood** agenda is about more than just services—it's about **aspiration, opportunity, and empowerment**.

We support young people and their families to plan early, explore options, and build the skills and confidence needed for adult life. This includes:

- **Education and Employment**: Supporting access to college, training, or work opportunities.
- **Independent Living**: Helping young people move into supported accommodation or live at home with the right support.
- **Community Inclusion**: Encouraging participation in social and leisure activities.
- **Health and Wellbeing**: Ensuring continuity of care and access to appropriate health services.

Why It Matters

People with learning disabilities and neurodivergent conditions often face barriers to inclusion, independence, and choice. Our team works to break down those barriers—through advocacy, creativity, and compassion.

We are proud to walk alongside individuals and families on their journeys, celebrating every step forward—whether it's a first job, a new home, or simply feeling heard and understood.

Louise Mole

Team Manager Learning Disabilities and Neurodiversity Team (LDN) Team / Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP)

Adult Social Care / /DACHS

Early Years - Under 5's information & activities



Reading Children's Centres Activities

To access information on what is going on at our children's centre's & hubs around Reading please click on the link **Children's centres - Brighter Futures For Children (https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/for-parents-carers/under-5/childrens-centres/)**

Time for Twos

A six week course delivered in Reading Children's Centres, to help children aged two years with the first steps in getting ready for nursery.

A great opportunity for your child to meet other children and learn through play.

These sessions have a prompt start and require booking term time only.

Reading Directory | Time for Twos - Ranikhet CC (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=ENkfHQNa9NE&familychannel=0)

Reading Directory | Time for Twos - Southcote CC (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=niwuxJakQGY&familychannel=0)

Reading Directory | Time for Twos - Whitley CC (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=RAj14jwBR-M&familychannel=0)

Reading Directory | Time for Twos - Sun Street CC (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=Luye0ZJunTk&familychannel=0)

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Christmas Farmyard Fun is coming to your local Children's Centre



Get ready for a festive experience as the farm visits our centres this December!

Meet adorable animals and make memories with your little ones.

Dates & Locations:

- Sun Street Children's Centre: 15th December
- Ranikhet Children's Centre: 17th December
- Southcote Children's Centre: 22nd December
- Whitley Children's Centre: 23rd December

Time: 10am – 12pm

Please wear suitable clothing as visits will likely be outdoors.

For more information or any other updates please be sure to follow us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/Readingchildrenscentres (https://www.facebook.com/Readingchildrenscentres) or email reading.childrencentres@reading.gov.uk (mailto:reading.childrencentres@reading.gov.uk)

Reading Directory | Christmas Farmyard Fun is coming to your local Children's Centre (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=SsV0wBKDzX4)

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The Best Start in Life parent hub

Reading Directory | Best Start in Life, Reading Family Hubs (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=wo3Ddr4QZQ0)

From pregnancy to childcare right through to starting school, get advice and support for your child's development.

- Childcare & Early Years Education support
- Free breakfast clubs and wraparound childcare
- Childcare support checker
- Week-by-week guide to pregnancy
- Breastfeeding support
- Introducing solid foods
- Baby and toddler teeth care
- Learning to talk
- School readiness

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Little Engines Early Years Engine Shed Group

Forthnightly early years group for pre-school children who are on the autistic pathway or who would benefit from attending the group.

No need to book. Just turn up.

Free refreshmets. Parking on nearby streets 2 hours for free.

Reading Directory | Little Engines Early Years Engine Shed Group (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=Yyixm_sVr_o&familychannel=3)

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Childcare for Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities in Reading

OFSTED registered childcare, is available in Reading for children with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND).

Reading Directory | Childcare for Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities in Reading (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=P9_o6iTtDy8)

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Butterfly Buddies, Intergenerational Baby and Toddler group.

By bringing generations together we provide a safe, fun environment where both children and older people can thrive. This is more than a children's activity, it's a positive way to make a difference in your local community!

Reading Directory | Butterfly Buddies, Intergenerational Baby and Toddler group. (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=ZUu7hvCzKiE)

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Wild City Collective - Forest School Groups

We create connections with nature and people through our inspiring and inclusive outdoor spaces

Discover Our Forest School Communities

Welcome to our forest school, where every day is an adventure in nature.

Wild & Free SEND - Saturday morning each month specifically for families living with special needs, so that you can come and enjoy the woods.

Little Robins - We meet to play, explore nature, grow, read a story, sing and share food by the fireside (optional at the end).

Wondrous Wrens - For families, Home Educating, Flexi-schooling and deferring school start.

Go to website for further information and booking details Groups | Wild City Collective (https://wildcitycollective.org/groups/)

Information also available here Reading Directory | Wild City Collective - Forest School Groups (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=sf1ptXq2p0Y&familychannel=3)

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Wizzybug - FREE Wizzybug powered mobility Loan Scheme for the under 5s

About the Wizzybug Loan Scheme

We provide Wizzybugs free of charge to families in the UK. They are fully funded by donations which enables us to give them to young children to use until they outgrow it.

Further information can be found here Reading Directory | Wizzybug - FREE Wizzybug powered mobility Loan Scheme for the under 5s (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=rWOvwOuGvFs&familychannel=3-12-1)

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Ladybird Playgroup at Our House



Ladybirds is a playgroup for children under 5 with additional needs and their siblings.

Come and join us for activities, chat and support. No need to book

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Building for the Future - Ladybirds Playgroup at Our House (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=vK1_HuUtM_4&familychannel=3)

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Friday Fledglings at The MERL (The Museum of English Rural Life)

An Inclusive Weekly Outdoor Session for Toddlers

Discover the benefits of outdoor learning and child-led play! Come and join in with activities inspired by the themes and collections of the museum, enjoy exploring nature, our mud kitchen, water play, sand-pit and more.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Friday Fledglings at The MERL (The Museum of English Rural Life) (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=DiUVTcYd5fc&familychannel=0)

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Links to useful online resources

Speech and Language Therapy | Children Young People and Families Online Resource (berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk) (https://cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/children-and-young-peoples-integrated-therapies/speech-and-language-therapy/)

Health and Development | Children Young People and Families Online Resource (berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk) (https://cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/health-and-development/)

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Portage Service - Reading

The Reading Portage service helps families in Reading with young children (0-4 years old) who need extra help with their development. Portage support can happen at home with family or at a venue in a group. Families who are referred to the Portage service will receive an initial visit to determine which criteria they meet and will be offered either targeted Portage or specialist Portage. Referrals for Portage support can be by parents or professionals and can be made via the Children's Single Point of Access.

Reading Directory | Portage Service - Reading (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=lx8h-EyypcI&familychannel=3-14-3)

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Early Years SEND Settings and Resources

In Reading we have four specialist early years settings in Reading you may wish to consider for your child

- Snowflakes at New Bridge Nursery (A specialist resource base for children with ASD)
- Dingley's Promise (A Specialist Nursery for children with additional needs)
- Orchard Resource Base at Blagdon Nursery School (a specialist resource base for children with speech, language and communication delays, learning needs, sensory needs and social communication needs)
- Butterfly Resource Base at Norcot Early Years Centre (a specialist resource base for children with speech, language and communication delays, learning needs, sensory needs and social communication needs).

Snowflakes at Newbridge Nursery School in Caversham offers 15-hour morning or afternoon term-time only places for children with autism or social communication needs and learning needs.

The specialist bases at Blagdon and Norcot offer 15 or 30 hour places term-time only for children who have speech, language and communication delays, social communication needs, sensory needs and additional learning needs. These bases are for children who require an individualised curriculum delivered in a low arousal and calming environment. There is a higher staffing ratio and access to high quality interventions as recommended by speech and language therapy and occupational therapy.

Dingley's Promise offer sessional places term-time only for children with complex, multiple and/or significant learning needs, physical and medical and social communication needs. It supports a dual placement for a child to attend a mainstream setting, assisting the setting as well as the family.

Snowflakes @ Newbridge (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=ayLqe0LEJ20)

Dingley's Promise - Reading (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=JYyxN0_C82c&familychannel=0)

Norcot Years Centre (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=hkYUSIiy1Ko)

Blagdon Nursery School (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=2FaTKfMgD8g)

Please email earlyyears@reading.gov.uk to request the expression of interest forms for the specialist centre or mainstream bases or speak to professionals that are supporting your child.

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Healthy Start Scheme



Healthy Start helps you give your family the very best start in life

If you are at least 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under four years old you could get help through the Healthy Start Scheme to help buy healthy food and milk. You will also need to be in receipt of certain benefits for more details visit NHS Healthy Start - How to apply (https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply/)

Further information can be found here Reading Directory | Healthy Start Scheme (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=YOBne0X76QE&familychannel=0)

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Early Years Advisory Service

Supporting Early Years Settings in supporting children with SEND

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Early Years Advisory Service for SEND (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=Yi9x8mKB4q0&familychannel=3)

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Early Language Development Workshops - Berkshire Health Foundation NHS Trust - CYPF services

Our Early Years team are pleased to offer monthly online workshops covering early language development. They are designed for parents and carers and those working within early years settings. Please see link below for more information on the sessions and how to register.

Click on the following link - Early Language Development Workshops (https://cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/children-and-young-peoples-integrated-therapies/early-language-development-workshops/)

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Parent & Toddler Groups in Reading

Parent and toddler groups are informal sessions where parents, carers, childminders and their children can go to have fun and meet new people. Parents and carers stay with and are responsible for their children, throughout the session. Most groups meet once a week for between one and two hours and welcome children from birth to 3 or up to school age.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Listings in Parent &Toddler groups (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/results.page?familychannel=8-3)

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Reading Toy Library

The Toy Library is open for two hours on a Thursday morning, 10am to 12noon. Our toy library offers a fantastic selection of toys and games, catering for all ages, from babies to teens.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Reading Toy Library (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=5HnY79tez4o)**

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Family Information Service - Dads Section

There is a dedicated page providing information and support for male carers - click **here (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=PoDrbl6PSUI)** to view the information

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Early Years Expanded Childcare Funding Information for Working Parents

From **September 2025**, eligible working parents in England with children between 9 months up to school age will have access to 30 hours childcare.

This comes alongside the existing government childcare support, including **30 hours for 3- and 4-year-olds**, **Tax-Free Childcare** and **Universal Credit Childcare**. Parents might be able to use more than one offer to help with their childcare costs.

Childcare is also expanding for primary-school children – from September 2024, parents in England are expected to see an expansion in the availability of childcare in their local area before and after school, that runs from 8am until 6pm or later, also known as 'wraparound childcare'. If you are eligible for Tax-Free Childcare or Universal Credit Childcare, you can use the support to help pay for wraparound childcare.

Visit Best Start In Life (BSIL) to see what support you might be eligible for, now and in the future, so you can juggle work and life: **www.beststartinlife.gov.uk (http://www.beststartinlife.gov.uk)**



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Targeted Two Year Old funding

Parents of two-year-olds may be eligible to apply for 15 hours per week term time (38 weeks) – that's 570 hours per year - free early education and childcare, if they are in receipt of certain benefits and a low income, or meet other criteria. visit our advice and guidance page for more details Reading Directory | Targeted 2-Year-Old Education & Childcare funding (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=24_JrgkoQLA)

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Universal Three and Four Year Old Funding

All three and four-year-old children are eligible for 15 hours funded childcare a week term time (38 weeks).

For further information, please contact the Family Information Service on **0118 937 3777** (option 2) or email **fis@reading.gov.uk (mailto:fis@reading.gov.uk)** visit our advice and guidance page Reading Directory | 3 & 4 Year Old Universal 15 hours (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=e7FzsCULNcs)

What's On – Short breaks, holiday Clubs & Childcare



Information on holiday clubs can be found on the Family Information Service - www.readingfis.org/childcare (http://www.readingfis.org/childcare)

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Reading Play SEND (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/localoffer.page?familychannel=3-7) December Holiday Short Break Sessions

Reading Play SEND (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/localoffer.page?familychannel=3-7) December Holiday Short Break Sessions: 29th December 2025 - Session one 10am – 12pm Age 5 to 7 years; Session two 2pm to 4pm – Age 8 to 12 years. Please use the following link for more details Reading Directory | SEND December Holiday Short Breaks Sessions - Reading Play (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=YdsjKY4vh4s&familychannel=0)

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SEND Short Breaks -Chance to Dance Stars CIC - Dance and Multi Activity Program (includes half terms & holidays)

SEND Short Breaks -Chance to Dance Stars CIC - Dance and Multi Activity Program (includes half terms & holidays) for more details on dates and times please use the following link Reading Directory | SEND Short Breaks -Chance to Dance Stars CIC - Dance and Multi Activity Program (includes half terms & holidays) (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=mqi7k57FEOc&familychannel=0)

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Make Sense Theatre - December SEND (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/localoffer.page?familychannel=3-7) Short Breaks Holiday Clubs

SEND specific holiday clubs rooted in creativity and play.

Reading Directory | Make Sense Theatre - December (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=lJDUZkILJJY&familychannel=3-7)SEND () Short Breaks Holiday Clubs

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Help us help you Disabled Children and Young People's Register

To help us understand your family's needs and plan for future services that may be required, we'd really appreciate it if you could fill in your details on the Disabled Children and Young People's Register. This is a secure database, managed by Reading Family Information Service, to capture information about all children and young people, aged 0-25 years old, with special educational needs and/or disabilities. All details provided are used anonymously to show the use of, and demand for services in Reading. By registering, you will have the opportunity to sign up for the free MAX card, which gives discounts on major attractions across the country, as well as locally. You will also have the option to create a care passport. This can be completed by the parent/carer, to provide information about the young person, which can then be used when attending short breaks, activities etc. Plus, by having your up-to-date details, we will be able to keep you informed of all the relevant information for your child and developments to our service. To find out more, contact the Family Information Service on 0118 937 3777 (opt 2) or email: localoffer@reading.gov.uk (mailto:localoffer@reading.gov.uk)

To register, complete an online form here (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/dcr.page)



What's on - Clubs, Groups & General Activities

Sports



Flyerz Hockey, SEND (), 5-18 years old

Click following link- Reading Directory | Flyerz Hockey,
(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=GHo4fqRliLU)**SEND (), 5-18 years old**

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Inclusive Cycling, Palmer Park

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Inclusive Cycling, Palmer Park**
(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=X7_IEpPPpyU)

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Inclusive Gym Session - Palmer Park Stadium

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Inclusive Gym Session - Palmer Park Stadium**
(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=RrXKm8tQaDk)

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Reading Rockets

Junior Wheelchair Basketball Sessions for ages 11-17

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Reading Rockets - Wheelchair Basketball Club
(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=ZiX8r9qTafk&familychannel=3)

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SEND Swimming With Better Leisure

Swimming Lessons for Disabled Adults & Children

At Better, we believe that swimming is for everyone, no matter what your support and access needs are.

That's why we offer a range of SEND (https://www.swimming.org/learntoswim/disability-and-swimming-lessons) and SEN () swimming lessons at many of our pools and leisure centres.

Click on the following link - Disabled Swimming Near Me For Adults and Children | Better UK
(https://www.better.org.uk/what-we-offer/lessons-and-courses/swimming/disability)



Art, Music, Dance and Drama



South Street , Youth Theatre

Click the following link - **Reading Directory | South Street , Youth Theatre**
(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=l30iVQrZp6U)

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Dance Planet Studios

Dance classes for all ages and levels

It all starts with one step.....

At Dance Planet Studio, we believe in more than just movement—we believe in the power of expression, connection, and confidence through dance. Located in the heart of Reading,, our studio offers a dynamic range of classes for all ages and skill levels, including ballroom, latin, ballet, and more.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Dance Planet Studios - dance classes for all ages and levels**
(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=qNYc5TfLZTQ&familychannel=0)

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InteraKt Community!

Welcome to the InteraKt Community!

InteraKt is a local charity based in Newbury, West Berkshire. We support young people and adults with learning, physical and sensory challenges by providing a whole host of creative opportunities in dance, drama, arts & crafts, and life skills.

Our participants thrive in the safe, friendly and professional environment we provide, with regular access to creative classes enabling them to develop skills and maintain a strong sense of identity and purpose.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | InteraKt Community!
(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=g7pxztglQtg&familychannel=3)

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Buttons and Bubbles, Representation through Imagination & Play



Welcome to Buttons & Bubbles CIC

We are a Community Interest Company for children, families and organisations with disability and illness. Creating resources and services dedicated too bringing; Awareness: Education: Representation: Inclusion:

Find out how Buttons & Bubbles began Reading Directory | Buttons and Bubbles, Representation through Imagination & Play (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=rHKkNCWzkI8)

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The Hub - Weekly Social Drop in at Starting Point

Drop-in Social Club

U18's Weekly Social Drop-in

Play games, do some art, go on the Wii or just sit and chat.

A space to have some fun, spend time with others and chat to the Starting Point Team.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | The Hub - Weekly Social Drop in at Starting Point (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=NYWYG14ZAZU&familychannel=3)

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Me2 TeenW&RD Short Break Club

For teenagers with additional needs

Me2 Club have launched a new club for teenagers with additional needs in Reading and Wokingham.

The club is for teenagers aged 13 – 19 with any additional need. A diagnosis is not required.

Further information can be found here Reading Directory | Me2 TeenW&RD Short Break Club - for teenagers with additional needs (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=5jssIPS92Z4&familychannel=3)

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Include Me2

A Club for Young People with Additional Needs

NEW Opportunity for Young People with Additional Needs aged 10 - 25 years

Do you want to make a difference to Mental Health support in Wokingham & Reading?

Further information about Include Me2 Club can be found here Reading Directory | Include Me2 - New Club for Young People with Additional Needs (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=ktICg0LrCSQ&familychannel=3)

To find out more or book, email ramona@me2club.org.uk (mailto:ramona@me2club.org.uk)

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Grassrootz Youth Clubs

Grassrootz have drop in Youth Clubs in the Reading area:

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Grassrootz - Coley Park Youth Club (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=cpHbl2bQDJk&familychannel=0)

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Grassrootz - Girls Group @ Dee Space (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=zfB30XGlZdo&familychannel=0)

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Grassrootz - Friday Nights Under the Lights @ Prospect Park (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=XKbWXE29GJY&familychannel=0)

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Grassrootz Youth Club - Hexham Road Community Centre (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=dgK1s_jIzb0&familychannel=0)

Click on the following link - **Follow their Instagram to find out more! (https://www.instagram.com/grassrootz.ltd/)**



Relaxed Screenings



Click on the following link for autism friendly cinema screenings -

https://accessiblescreeningsuk.co.uk/autism-friendly-screenings/ (https://accessiblescreeningsuk.co.uk/autism-friendly-screenings/)

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Reading Biscuit Factory

Access Screenings for further information can be found here Reading Directory | Access Screenings at Reading Biscuit Factory (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=HG8TFroALGY&familychannel=3)



Stay Active!



OXYGEN READING ACTIVITY PARK -SEN () Sessions

It will be running regular SEN Peaceful Play sessions for children with additional needs, with trampolining and other fun activities available.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Oxygen Activeplay, Reading - SEN Sessions (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=OESYtpHbp1c&familychannel=3)

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SEND Soft Play - Loddon Valley Leisure Centre

A 3-storey soft play area for children up to 12 years old with additional needs, based at Loddon Valley Leisure Centre.

0118 931 2066 E: loddonvalley@pfpleisure.org

Further information can be found here Wokingham Directory | SEND Soft Play - Loddon Valley Leisure Centre (https://directory.wokingham.gov.uk/kb5/wokingham/directory/service.page?id=zPOncWfNcMU)

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Reading - Better Sport & Leisure Centre's

SEND Soft Play across Reading!

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | SEND soft play sessions (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=4NiQR9NEwac&familychannel=3)

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Arborfield Green Leisure Centre

SEND sessions, every Friday afternoon.

Click the link for more details and to book online, or call the leisure centre on 0118 976 2288 **SEND Sessions | Arborfield Green Leisure Centre** (https://www.placesleisure.org/centres/arborfield-green-leisure-centre/news/send-sessions/)

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Camp Mohawk

Camp Mohawk is a day centre for children with special needs and their families, set in 5 acres of beautiful countryside, just outside Wargrave, Berkshire. Our facilities include adventure playgrounds, swings, sensory garden, play village, soft play and sensory rooms, art / craft room, music room, play lounge and, in the summer months, an outdoor, heated play pool. All this is set in approximately 5 acres of natural woodland.

Click on the following link - Wokingham Directory | Camp Mohawk: Day activity / play centre for children with special needs (https://directory.wokingham.gov.uk/kb5/wokingham/directory/service.page?id=Hy0t4IR5bIo)

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Building for the Future - Saturday Club - Our House

11am – 1pm Children with Physical disabilities/Downs Syndrome

3pm–5pm Children with ASD () and associated conditions

Put the dates in your diaries and we look forward to seeing you all soon.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Building for the Future - Saturday Club (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=ABxeWQABsuk)

Christmas SEND Stay & Play Sessions at Our House 2025/26

Tuesday 30th December 10am - 12noon

Friday 2nd January 10am - 12noon

Come and join in the fun!

Our House, Toutley Road, Wokingham RG41 1QN

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The Engine Shed

A SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN and YOUNG PEOPLE

The clubs enable those with an interest in trains to come together with their peers to observe, play, talk and enjoy their hobby in a welcoming, safe and relaxing environment – and where parents and carers can have a chance to relax and talk in a supportive atmosphere.

For further details please click here Reading Directory | The Engine Shed (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=AYPZQaNBGj0&familychannel=3)

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Me2 Club

Me2 is our core service of matching children with volunteers at mainstream activity clubs. Once parents have an activity planned they can register with us by completing the form on our website https://me2club.org.uk/family-advice-and-support/ (https://me2club.org.uk/family-advice-and-support/).

Further information can be found here Reading Directory | Me2 Club (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=E0hgCZUGA4I)

Reading Directory | Include Me2 - A Club for Young People with Additional Needs (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=ktICg0LrCSQ)

Reading Directory | Special United - Youth Area (Young People's Forum) (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/localoffer.page?familychannel=3-16)

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The RAFT Club (Reading Autism Families Together)

Eligibility criteria: ASD children aged between 5 and 12 who are verbal, toilet-trained and do not need 1:1 level of care and would benefit from a play setting to encourage their social interaction and motor skills as well as support for parents/ carers

Further details can be found here Reading Directory | The RAFT Club (Reading Autism Families Together) (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=1JfYEige0es&familychannel=3)

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Coral Reef Waterworld

in Bracknell runs regular Accessible for Everyone sessions tailored for disabled people of all ages and their families and carers.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Coral Reef Waterworld - New Accessible Sessions (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=9hvvB0pwlos&familychannel=3)**

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Ranger Station at Prospect Park in Reading

The Ranger Station is a destination for activities, entertainment and learning for families and children from across Reading and beyond – offering exciting new activities. Visit **Ranger Station Prospect Park - Reading Play (https://www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/active-reading/ranger-station-at-prospect-park/)** for more information.

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Swings & Smiles

Support, friendship and play for children with special needs and their families. Swings & Smiles is a place to play for children with special needs and their families. It offers a unique environment where the whole family feels supported and where they can spend quality time together. Our services include play sessions, sibling support and outreach.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Swings & Smiles - For families who have children 0-19 with SEND (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=0Esn1AztfYU)**

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Fairytale Farm

A Sensory Wonderland

Fairytale Farm is the first family farm attraction where everything is designed around the needs of children with sensory, learning and physical disabilities, but which can be enjoyed by children without disabilities too. A truly inclusive experience.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Fairytale Farm (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=UlraFSL1hbc)

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Museums My Way

Reading Museum & Museum of English Rural Life (MERL)

Museums My Way - Themed sessions for neurodiverse visitors of all ages

Free sessions, developed with Autism Berkshire

Click on the following links - Reading Directory | Reading Museum: 'Museums, My Way' collaboration with The MERL (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=K_3N3lb8R48)

It's all about Christmas 2025!

It's Panto time! - *Oh yes it is*...



As usual, there are autism-friendly relaxed performances of pantomimes and Christmas shows taking place later this year at venues around Berkshire - here is a round-up:

*

The pantomime at **The Hexagon Theatre in Reading** is *Beauty and the Beast* and there will be autism-friendly relaxed performances on Friday, December 12, at 10.30am and on Friday, January 2, next year, also at 10.30am. **Click here** (https://autismberkshire.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e0cfcb9f32dbd9bf921165a4e&id=eafb3d484a&e=345402290b) for more details of the show.

Tickets for both the relaxed performances are only available from the theatre box office - call 0118 960 6060 or email boxoffice@reading.gov.uk (mailto:boxoffice@reading.gov.uk?subject=Pantomime%20relaxed%20performance)

*

The pantomime at **South Hill Park Arts Centre in Bracknell** is *Mother Goose and the Golden Egg*. The relaxed performance will be on Saturday, November 19, at 12.15pm, with discounted tickets for under-16s with SEND costing £10.50. **Click here** (https://autismberkshire.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e0cfcb9f32dbd9bf921165a4e&id=39646c4e2b&e=345402290b) for more details of the show and booking information.

*

This pantomime at the **Theatre Royal in Windsor** is *Cinderella*, and there will be an relaxed performance on Tuesday, November 25, at 1.30pm. **Click here** (https://autismberkshire.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e0cfcb9f32dbd9bf921165a4e&id=8fbff18480&e=345402290b) for more details and to book tickets.

*

The Christmas show at **Norden Farm Centre for the Arts in Maidenhead** is *The Comet*, about a young girl who follows the trail of a comet when it flies over her city, based on the book by Joe Todd-Stanton. There are two autism-friendly relaxed performances during its run in the venue's theatre, on Saturday, November 29, at 11am and on Sunday, December 28, also at 11am. The show is suitable for children aged 5+. **Click here** (https://autismberkshire.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e0cfcb9f32dbd9bf921165a4e&id=c61da8857a&e=345402290b) for more details and ticket information.

*

The festive show at **Reading Rep Theatre** is ***A Christmas Carol***, adapted from Charles Dickens' classic story. There is an autism-friendly relaxed performance in the theatre at Reading College, in Kings Road, on Saturday, December 6, at 3pm. **Click here** (https://autismberkshire.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e0cfcb9f32dbd9bf921165a4e&id=10063656af&e=345402290b) for details of the show and to book.

Reading Rep Theatre is delighted to let you know about its **BSL interpreted and captioned performance** of ***A Christmas Carol*** on **Thursday 11 December at 7.30pm.**

We hope you will be able to join us for this festive classic — a story filled with warmth, joy, and the true spirit of Christmas. Everyone is welcome!

You can book your tickets here (https://www.readingrep.com/whats-on/a-christmas-carol-2/#performances) or via email readingrep.com (http://readingrep.com/) 0118 955 4465

*

This year's Christmas show at the **Watermill Theatre in Bagnor**, near Newbury, is *The Little Mermaid*. There will be an autism-friendly relaxed performance on Sunday, December 7, at 11am. **Click here** (https://autismberkshire.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e0cfcb9f32dbd9bf921165a4e&id=42f67e4645&e=345402290b) for details of the show and to book tickets.

*

The pantomime at the **Corn Exchange in Newbury** is *Robin Hood and Maid Marian*, and there are three relaxed performances on Friday, December 12, at 1.30pm, Friday, December 19, at 1.30pm and on Tuesday, December 30, at 5pm. **Click here (https://autismberkshire.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e0cfcb9f32dbd9bf921165a4e&id=4fcd573044&e=345402290b)** for more details and to book tickets.

*

The pantomime at the **Kenton Theatre in Henley** is *Peter Pan*. There will be an autism-friendly relaxed performance on Monday, December 15, at 6pm. **Click here** (https://autismberkshire.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e0cfcb9f32dbd9bf921165a4e&id=a5ed79feb4&e=345402290b) for details of the show and to book tickets.

*

The Curve in Slough is also presenting some Christmas performances of *The Comet - see above* for details. There are two autism-friendly relaxed performances during its run in the venue's theatre, on Wednesday, December 17, at 10.30am and on Sunday, December 21, at 4pm. **Click here** (https://autismberkshire.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e0cfcb9f32dbd9bf921165a4e&id=119d696949&e=345402290b) for more details and ticket information.



Festive Events

The Museum of English Rural Life (MERL)

MERL at the University of Reading, is holding an autism and sensory needs-friendly festive *Magical Lights, My Way* event in its garden on Monday, December 15, from 4.30pm to 5.45pm.

The event is suitable for children aged 3 to 11.

Sensory maps and a social story will be available in advance, with sensory backpacks and ear defenders available to borrow.

Tickets, which must be booked in advance, are priced £7 per child, with parents/carers admitted free of charge.

Click here (https://autismberkshire.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e0cfcb9f32dbd9bf921165a4e&id=af87e10268&e=944898bc5a) for more details and to book. The museum is in Redlands Road, at the university's London Road campus.

- Autism Berkshire is pleased to support *Museums, My Way* activities at The MERL and at Reading Museum.

Reading Directory | Reading Museum: 'Museums, My Way' collaboration with The MERL (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=K_3N3lb8R48&familychannel=3)

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Once Upon a Christmas at Beale Park, SEN sessions

Step into the Beale Centre as it transforms into a cosy storybook wonderland. Tuck into a festive buffet for grown-ups and little ones, get creative with seasonal crafts, and snuggle up for Elf-led story time. Then, with a sprinkle of sparkle, Father Christmas will make a special entrance to say hello, each child enjoys a brief meet-and-greet and receives a small gift to take home. It’s everything you love about Christmas, all under one roof and made for family memories.

Reading Directory | Once Upon a Christmas at Beale Park, SEN sessions (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=cfx2-T_Vafo)

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Reading Winter Wonderland 2025

8th November 2025 – 4th January 2026

Ice rink

Santa’s grotto

Rides & Attractions

Food & Drink

Authentic German Sausages

And loads more...

www.readingwinterwonderland.co.uk/ (https://www.readingwinterwonderland.co.uk/)

_(%0dhttps:/www.readingwinterwonderland.co.uk/%0d)

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Carols by Candlelight - Launchpad

For tickets and more information Join us for Reading’s favourite Christmas concert, with local choirs, Universal Voices and The Tonyx Barbershop Quartet. launchpadreading.org.uk/carols25 2 Dec | Reading Town Hall Doors open 5pm | Tickets just £14

Carols by Candlelight - Supporting Launchpad (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=QwXkp21nzJY&familychannel=3)

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Windsor On Ice

The rrink opens for its 2025 season at Alexandra Gardens on Friday next week, November 14, and will be offering All Access sessions dedicated to disabled skaters starting at 10am, 11am, noon and 1pm every Wednesday until December 31.

Tickets for these sessions cost £14 per person (plus a £1 booking fee) - a carer accompanying a disabled skater will be admitted free of charge.

Click here (https://autismberkshire.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e0cfcb9f32dbd9bf921165a4e&id=aac315b22f&e=944898bc5a) for more details and to book.

***

Christmas at Blenheim Palace 2025

Bigger, better and brighter than ever before featuring:

An exceptional after-dark trail with spectacular new lights, bigger, better and brighter than ever before.

The Palace of Oz where the State rooms are decorated as magical tale of wizardry, witches, sparkling shoes and the power of friendship.

The Christmas Market, stock-up on festive goodies.

Step into the spirit of the season with our themed Emerald City Afternoon Tea, available from 14th November - 3rd January.

Glide into Christmas at The Great Skate, a spectacular covered ice rink in the heart of the Great Court.

Take your Christmas experience to new heights on our dazzling festive Observation Wheel. **Reading Directory | Christmas at Blenheim Palace 2025 (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=T9OFRsObDP4)**

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Illuminate Reading 15th November – 4th January

Experience Reading's newest winter light trail and immerse yourself in a magical light trail around the grounds of Forbury Gardens & Abbey Ruins this winter. Follow a 30 - 50 minute route filled with beautiful light installations that transform the park & ruins into a glowing seasonal display. Walk through the grounds and take in the sights as you explore different areas designed to highlight the historic landscape and surroundings.

Towards the middle of the trail, you'll find a food and drink court.

Further information & booking What's On events | What's On Reading (https://whatsonreading.com/venues/illuminate-reading/whats-on-events)

Illuminate Reading - Readings Winter Light Trail - Forbury Gardens & Abbey Ruins, England (https://www.illuminatereading.co.uk/)

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Naturally Curious Christmas Special in the Woods

29th & 30th November

Sen session 29th November 2pm-4.30pm - sor families with children with special needs only. Reading Directory | Naturally Curious Christmas Special in the Woods (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=TQcR-Uq0FaA&familychannel=0)

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Christmas Fairytale 2025 at Fairytale Farm

22nd Nov 2025 - 24th Dec 2025

Step into a world of festive enchantment as Fairytale Farm is transformed into a glittering wonderland. With twinkling lights, heartwarming stories, and magical encounters around every corner, Christmas Fairytale 2025 will be our most unforgettable celebration yet.

Running weekends from 22 November to 7 December, and daily from 8 December right through to Christmas Eve, this is your chance to make memories that will last a lifetime. Santa's Grotto is open until 5pm, with special late-night hours until 7pm on select dates. Christmas Fairytale 2025 at Fairytale Farm : Fairytale Farm (https://www.fairytalefarm.co.uk/events/christmas-fairytale-2025-at-fairytale-farm/)

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The Snowman – Live 20th December



Don't miss this magical live screening and live orchestral performance of Raymond Briggs' classic story The Snowman, accompanied by English Pro Musica orchestra.

This is the perfect event for all the family. Alongside the iconic animated film, the concert will include fun and festive music, with audience participation. Set in this fabulous setting, this is not an event to be missed!
The Snowman - Live | What's On Reading (https://whatsonreading.com/venues/great-hall-reading-university/whats-on/snowman-live)

Further information can be found here **Reading Directory | The Snowman - 20th December 2025 (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=1eNTqh-arGQ&familychannel=3)**

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WiFi Wars Xmas Special - Live, interactive, comedy game show - 20th December

WiFi Wars returns with a very festive version of the live comedy game show where you all play along! Log in with your smartphone or tablet and compete in a range of games, puzzles and quizzes to win the show, and prizes! **Reading Directory | WiFi Wars (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=YMJQrV05dlg&familychannel=3)**

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Christmas Light Walk

Every night from 5th – 14th December 5.00pm-8.30pm

Book here https://thomley.org.uk/events/christmas-light-walk-677-139-407-263/ (https://thomley.org.uk/events/christmas-light-walk-677-139-407-263/)

Santa Experiences

All Aboard the Panto Express, Buckinghamshire Railway Centre. 29th and 30th November 2025, 6th, 7th, 13th, 14th, 20th, 21st and 22nd December 2025. See Father Christmas whilst enjoying a steam train ride, watch a pantomime and meet Mrs Claus and the Elves. Click here (https://bucksrailcentre.org/events/panto-express/) for more information.

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Santa Special at Pinewood Miniature Railway Society, Wokingham Without. Tickets go on sale in October. Click here (http://www.pinewoodrailway.co.uk/specialevents.html) for to book.

*

Santa Cruises with Hobbs of Henley, Henley, 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd December 2025, with Father Christmas and Bertie Slippers. Click here (https://hobbsofhenley.com/product/santa-cruises-with-hobbs-of-henley/) to book.

*

The Magic of Legoland at Christmas, Windsor. Selected dates from 22nd November 2025 – 3rd January 2026. Click here (https://www.legoland.co.uk/explore/special-events/legoland-at-christmas/#tickets) for further details.

*

Odds Farm Park Christmas Cracker, High Wycombe. Select dates 28th November 2025 – 24th December 2025. Journey through a winter wonderland to the North Pole and enjoy a special, heartwarming visit with Father Christmas. Click here (https://www.oddsfarm.co.uk/christmas-cracker/) to book.

Santa's Grottos



Santa at Reading Winter Wonderland, Hills Meadow, Reading. 29th and 30th November 2025, 6th, 7th, 13th, 14th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd and 24th December 2025. **Click here (https://www.readingwinterwonderland.co.uk/santas-grotto)** for details.

*

Father Christmas at the Farm – Jingle Lodge, Bucklebury Farm, Reading, 6th, 7th, 13th, 14th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd December 2025. Click **here (https://tickets.buckleburyfarm.co.uk/event-tickets/51195?catID=58512&navItem=945880)** to book.

*

Santa's Grotto at Daniel of Windsor, 21st November 2025 – 24th Decemeber 2025. Click **here (https://www.windsor.gov.uk/whats-on/santas-grotto-experience-at-daniel-department-store-p1791011)** for more details.

*

Santa's Grotto at The Lexicon. Bookings open 12th September 2025. **Click here (https://www.thelexiconbracknell.com/events/christmas-2025-santas-grotto)** for information.

Breakfast, lunch & afternoon tea with Santa

Thomley

Breakfast with Father Christmas

An accessible and fun way to celebrate Christmas for all abilities. Full English breakfast, tea, coffee or juice included for both the adults and children. The event will be hosted in the pavilion and you will be allocated a table. There will be Christmas activities to do on your table. After breakfast and the activities Father Christmas will enter the room to deliver presents (also included in the price).

20th, 21st 22nd & 23rd December

Book here https://thomley.org.uk/events/breakfast-with-father-christmas-2025/ (https://thomley.org.uk/events/breakfast-with-father-christmas-2025/)

*

Breakfast with Santa, Stubbings Nursery, Maidenhead, 29th and 30th November 2025, 6th, 7th, 13th, 14th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd and 24th December 2025. Click **here (https://stubbingsnursery.co.uk/events/breakfast-with-santa-2025/)** to book.

*

Breakfast with Santa, Peacock Farm, Bracknell, 7th Decemeber 2025, 10am – 11am and 11.30am – 12.30pm. The event supports Daisy's Dream Charity. Click **here (https://www.daisysdream.org.uk/event/peacock-farm-breakfast-with-santa/)** for book.

*

Breakfast with Santa, Ye Olde Leathern Bottel, Barkham, Wokingham. 6th, 13th, 20th and 23rd December 2025. Click **here (https://www.chefandbrewer.com/pubs/berkshire/ye-olde-leathern-bottel/christmas/breakfast-with-santa)** for details.

*

Breakfast with Santa at Seasons Collection, Windlesham, 22nd, 23rd and 24th December 2025. Click **here (https://theseasonscollection.co.uk/events)** to find out more.

*

Santa Afternoon Tea Dec 2025-21st Dec 2025 - Indulge in a magical afternoon tea for all the family set in the beautiful Mansion House this Christmas.

This year, Wokefield Estate will be visited by Santa and his Elf, who will have a gift for each of the children too. **Santa Afternoon Tea | What's On Reading (https://whatsonreading.com/venues/de-vere-wokefield-estate/whats-on/santa-afternoon-tea)**

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Santa Afternoon Tea, Cantley House Hotel, Wokingham. 21st, 22nd and 23rd December 2025. To book call 01189 895100 or book via the **link (https://www.cantleyhotel.co.uk/christmas/santa-afternoon-teas.html).**

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Thomley

Christmas Dinner Day with Father Christmas! - An accessible Christmas dinner with all the trimmings

7th December – 2 sittings

Book here https://thomley.org.uk/events/christmas-dinner-2025/ (https://thomley.org.uk/events/christmas-dinner-2025/)

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Lunch with Santa at Bisham Abbey, Marlow, 7th December 2025 and 14th December 2025. Click **here (https://www.bishamabbeynsc.co.uk/abbey/celebrations/christmas/)** for more details.

Carol Concerts in Reading this Christmas 2025

Reading Directory | Carols by Candlelight - Supporting Launchpad (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=QwXkp21nzJY&familychannel=3)

NHS Christmas Concert at Reading Minster | What's On Reading (https://whatsonreading.com/venues/royal-berks-charity/whats-on/nhs-christmas-concert-reading-minster-0)

Carols at the Minster tickets - PACT (https://www.pactcharity.org/support-us/carolstickets/)

The Christmas Orchestra at Reading Minster | What's On Reading (https://whatsonreading.com/venues/reading/whats-on/christmas-orchestra-reading-minster)

RBC Come and Sing Carols | What's On Reading (https://whatsonreading.com/venues/reading-bach-choir/whats-on/rbc-come-and-sing-carols)

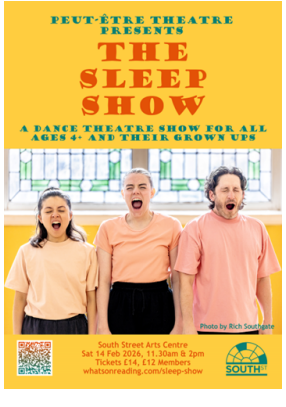
Carol Concert | What's On Reading (https://whatsonreading.com/venues/refugee-support-group/whats-on/carol-concert)

This information can also be viewed here Reading Directory | Carol Concerts in Reading this Christmas 2025 (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=ecsKrHZadyw&familychannel=3)

What's on events and workshops



The Sleep Show by Peut-Être Theatre



South Street Arts Centre | Sat 14 Feb, 11.30am & 2pm. A dreamy dance-theatre experience.

A heartfelt and poetic exploration of sleep, where the wonders of dreaming, soothing rhythms of lullabies, and secrets of the body clock come to life through dance.

The Sleep Show is a captivating performance which transforms the mysteries of sleep into a playful adventure. The show softly explores the challenges children face around bedtime, turning the often daunting experience into one of fun and discovery.

Relaxed performance

Age guidance: For ages 4+ & their grown ups (children must be accompanied by an adult)

Running time: 45 minutes (no interval) plus 10 mins stay and play after the performance

https://whatsonreading.com/sleep-show (https://whatsonreading.com/sleep-show)

Information can also be found here Reading Directory | The Sleep Show - by Peut-Être Theatre (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=f32Q7sBrhis&familychannel=3)

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Reading Community Learning Centre (RCLC) - Spring Timetable

Reading Community Learning Centre

SPRING TERM MONDAY 12/1/26 – FRIDAY 27/3/26

HALF TERM: MONDAY 16/2/26 – FRIDAY 20/2/26

ENROLMENT IN NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2025 FOR COURSES IN THE SPRING TERM.

Women only courses.

Please click on the link for further Information Reading Directory | Reading Community Learning Centre (RCLC) - Spring Timetable (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=XAx-3fGx2Pg&familychannel=0)

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Our Story with David Attenborough Relaxed Viewing

A spectacular new 360° cinematic experience, away from the crowds @ Jerwood Gallery

Get ready to immerse yourself in the epic tale of people and planet in this new 360° experience, presented by Sir David Attenborough.

Watch as the walls and floor burst into life around you. Witness the birth of life on our planet and see it evolve over thousands of years. Look on as a family of gorillas play in their lush forest home and follow the journey of a humpback whale beneath the waves.

Reading Directory | Our Story with David Attenborough Relaxed Viewing A spectacular new 360° cinematic experience, away from the crowds @ Jerwood Gallery (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=5Rw7RDolTZs)

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Great Western Railway (GWR) - Travel Training for people with SEND ()

Try-a-train

At GWR, we want our railway to be accessible for everyone, but we appreciate some people feel it is not for them or are anxious about station environments and rail travel.
Our aim is to show that rail travel is open to all members of the community.

Further information can be found here Reading Directory | Great Western Railway (GWR) - Travel Training for people with (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=6pDCXQfMVOg&familychannel=3)SEND ()

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Southeast Train Partnerships - Free Go Train Workshops

Services for schools and colleges near to a station on the North Downs Line in Berkshire and Surrey

Services we provide:

Travel confidence and travel training courses; Go Train for Primary Schools; Sustainable & Healthy Travel Workshop (Yr 6); Try a Train; Careers Fairs & 16+

For further information please refer to website https://www.southeastcrp.org/ (https://www.southeastcrp.org/education-in-berkshire-and-surrey/)

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Network Rail, Our autism friendly guide to travelling by train.

This guide has been designed to show and tell you about some of the things you can expect to see while you're using the railway. It will include information, pictures, sounds and links for further information. If you're only looking for information about part of your journey you can use the contents page to skip to the section that is most relevant to you.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Network Rail, Our autism friendly guide to travelling by train. (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=okhcac14Fpo&familychannel=3)
(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=okhcac14Fpo&familychannel=3)

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Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Reading Parenting Service (BFfC) (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=8Tr2_GQzaGY)

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Berkshire West Autism & ADHD () Support Service

Dates for the Berkshire West Autism & ADHD Support Service's free online autism advice workshops for parents and carers during the autumn are now available on the Autism Berkshire website.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Berkshire West Autism & ADHD Support Service (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=4kKoLTo8vzI)

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Parenting Special Children Upcoming Events:

All of our events can be viewed and booked via our website here: https://parentingspecialchildren.co.uk/events/ (https://parentingspecialchildren.co.uk/events/)

For Children

- The A Team: A monthly face-to-face group for autistic/ADHD girls (age 8-18) living in Berkshire.
- Let's Get Creative for Adopted Children: A monthly face-to-face group for adopted children.

Support Groups for Parents and Carers

- Adopter Support Group: A monthly face-to-face group which runs alongside our Let's Get Creative session.
- Community Support Group Reading/Whitley: A monthly face-to-face group.
- Dads and Male Carers Support Group: A monthly face-to-face group.
- Ethnically Diverse Communities Support Group: A monthly face-to-face group for families living in the Reading Borough Council area.
- Neurodivergent Parents/Carers Support Group: A monthly online group for parents and carers who are neurodivergent, either diagnosed or self-identified, living in the Reading Borough Council area.

Courses and Workshops for Parents and Carers

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Wellbeing Hub Support for 2025:

Support for autistic children and young people, and their parents/carers. If you interested in taking part, please email us for more information: autism@reading.ac.uk

Beautiful Lives: How We Got Learning Disabilities So Wrong (Webinar)

Speaker: Stephen Unwin

Date: Thursday December 4th, 7.00-8.30pm on Teams

Please click here (https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/stephen-unwin-beautiful-lives-how-we-got-learning-disabilities-so-wrong-tickets-1857525732469?aff=oddtdtcreator) to register and for more information

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | University of Reading Centre for Autism (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=hLO97peG8QM)

SEND - Family Support

Autism Berkshire & Graft Reading Survival Guide



New Survival Guide programme aims to help autistic adults move into employment

Autism Berkshire is working with the Reading-based charity Graft Thames Valley (https://autismberkshire.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e0cfcb9f32dbd9bf921165a4e&id=49f3cac083&e=345402290b) on a new service to help autistic adults who want to find a job.

The free Survival Guide Skills for Employment course draws on Graft's expertise in helping to eradicate barriers to employment for disabled people in the region.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Autism Berkshire & Graft Reading Survival Guide (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=AN4ZlR5sFk4&familychannel=3-12-1)

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Berkshire Deaf Children's Society was formed in July 2018 following the merger of South East Berkshire Deaf Children's Society and Reading Deaf Children's Society. We are a registered charity run by parents of deaf children and our main aim is to give help and support to deaf and hearing impaired infants, children and their families.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Berkshire Deaf Children's Society (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=EKnav9WK__c&familychannel=3-12-1)

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Depression Xpression

Depression Xpression is a peer support group for people with depression and other mental health issues in the Reading and Wokingham area. Our meetings are completely free of charge and everyone is welcome without the need for referral. We aim to provide a safe and confidential environment where everyone is listened to and treated with respect.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Depression Xpression (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=1nf3e7QKhwY&familychannel=3-12-1)

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Parent Talk is our online advice hub. Browse expert articles on common parenting questions - from potty training to emotional wellbeing. Or use our live chat to connect directly to a qualified parenting coach. It's all free, and no topic is too big, small, or embarrassing.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Action for Children - Parent Hub (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=vLVA9nK1JfE&familychannel=3-12)

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Aurora Family CIC is an education support provision and community enterprise consisting of an outdoor learning space, a community coffee shop and in indoor multi function media learning suite. We provide mentoring services, support for young people with additional needs and a community space which can be hired.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Aurora Family CIC (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=xvOCLcJCoDo&familychannel=3-12)

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Fab4All

Is a welcoming activity centre where individuals of all abilities can enjoy fulfilling days in a safe, friendly environment. We support people with physical and learning disabilities, mental health conditions, and older adults, offering a diverse range of engaging activities from Monday to Friday. Whether you're looking to enhance your skills, explore new crafts, or gain confidence with computers, Fab4All is the perfect place to learn, grow, and connect—among friends!

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Fab4All - Day Service for people with (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=R7hRmMS9Ajg&familychannel=3-12-1)SEND ()

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Autism Berkshire

Set up in 1990 by parents of autistic children and challenging behaviours.

We have 250 members, including individuals, families and professionals.

The main aims of the charity are to provide a comprehensive advice and information service for autistic adults, parents & carers and professionals.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Autism Berkshire (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=JPKWibWDMVQ&familychannel=3-12)

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Autism Berkshire's Helpline service is available by telephone and email.

The free and confidential service is available from Monday to Friday (except bank holidays).

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Autism Berkshire Helpline (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=yehhp1NVbtk&familychannel=3)

Berkshire West Autism & ADHD () Support Service

Autism Berkshire (https://www.autismberkshire.org.uk/) and **Parenting Special Children** (https://www.parentingspecialchildren.co.uk/), delivering services on behalf of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire & Berkshire West NHS () Integrated Care Board, which serves the Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire council areas. Please note that you must be registered with a Berkshire West GP () surgery to get support from this service.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Berkshire West Autism & ADHD Support Service (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=4kKoLTo8vzI&familychannel=3-12-1)

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Thames Valley Autism Alert Card

The aim of the Thames Valley Autism Alert Card scheme is to provide a simple way for autistic children, young people and adults, or a parent or carer, to quickly and easily explain their condition to others, giving cardholders more confidence to go out and about.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Thames Valley Autism Alert Card (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=6ynr_FyqNnQ&familychannel=3-12)

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Parenting Special Children Community Support Groups

Parenting Special Children has several established local community support groups for families of children and young people with additional needs.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Reading Family Information Service (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/family.page?familychannel=0)

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Parenting Special Children - Neurodivergent Parent/ Carer support group

A supportive, non judgmental space offering connection and shared understanding of navigating family life, balancing our own unique strengths and challenges.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Neurodivergent Parent/Carer support group for Reading based families. (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=2vzVDeYjuZk&familychannel=3)

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University of Reading Centre for Autism Wellbeing Hub

The Wellbeing Hub is a new initiative, funded by University of Reading Alumni/ launched in November 2023.

The aim of the Hub is to bring together autistic children and young people, their families, practitioners and researchers to co-produce and deliver neurodiversity-affirming activities that support autistic young people and their families to lead their best lives.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | University of Reading Centre for Autism Wellbeing Hub (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=hLO97peG8QM&familychannel=3-12)

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Berkshire Opportunities, SEND () Moving On, Career Pathway Support

SEND- Moving On

Explore a range of resources to support you with career pathway options for your young person with SEND.



Young people face many challenges in reaching their aspirations as they move on into adulthood and it can be both exciting and scary for them. They are exposed to unfamiliar surroundings, people and experiences. It's vital that we make this exciting but difficult move work for them.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Berkshire Opportunities, SEND Moving On, Career Pathway Support (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=Falh-KJgP1M&familychannel=3-12)

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Organisations near you that can help with benefits, form filling and everyday support.

Communicare

We provide information, advice and support to anyone in need. We deal with a huge range of issues including helping with benefits checking, welfare rights, form filling and housing advice, information on living with disabilities, help for carers and much more.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | CommuniCare (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=OT9CsOfWR6Y&familychannel=3)

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Stepping Forward

A Full Life for Disabled People and Carers Bespoke Benefits Advice and Practical Support for Disabled People & Carers Stepping Forward works to facilitate access to essential services, information, resources and life opportunities so that disabled people and carers can live a full life.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Stepping Forward - A full life for everyone affected by disability (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=LtmGyGQ7Dgs&familychannel=3)

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Reading Mencap

Reading Mencap is the charity in Reading supporting people with learning disabilities and their families throughout their lives by providing information, advice and practical support to help them lead happy, safe and fulfilling lives.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Reading Mencap (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=9Cun3yyYZ0M&familychannel=3)

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Continence Advisory Service

Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust Continence Advisory Service

- We offer clinics across Berkshire, school & home visits
- Self referral as well as professional ie GP
- We offer assessment, administer prescription service and home delivery (Pads)
- We are available to support parents with education

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Continence Advisory Service (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=4I6vTmVqL-I&familychannel=3)

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Reading Families' Forum

Reading Families' Forum are the local parent carer forum. Our board of trustees and steering group are all volunteers and have children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities ourselves. We understand what it is like to care for a child with additional needs and to fight for the services are children and their siblings need.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Reading Families' Forum (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=PZvYS96zEyE&familychannel=0)

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The ACRE Family Support Team (formerly Alafia)

Supporting black and minority ethnic families with a child (0-25) with additional needs or disabilities.

Alafia works in partnership with local statutory, voluntary and community organisations to facilitate access to services by BME families in Reading.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | ACRE Family Support Team (Alafia) (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=tgHL8hTvLzw&familychannel=3-12)

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Service for unpaid carers

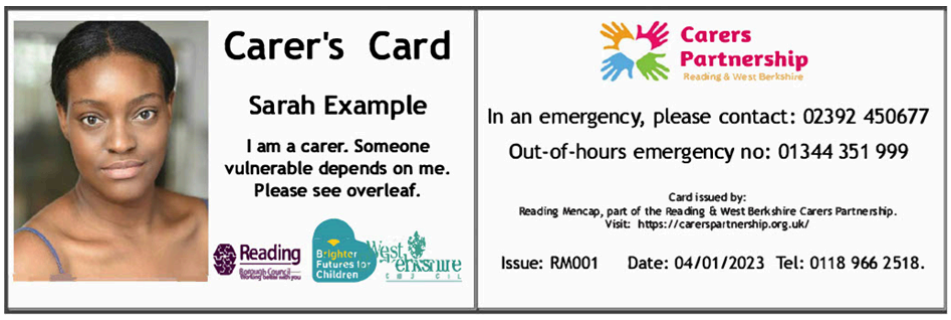
Information, advice and support services for family carers in Reading and West Berkshire provided by the Reading & West Berkshire Carers Partnership. The partnership members - **Age UK Berkshire**, **Age UK Reading**, **CommuniCare** and **Reading Mencap** - all have a successful track record of working with carers.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Reading & West Berkshire Carers Partnership (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=ORVKhnG6BaQ&familychannel=3) (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=ORVKhnG6BaQ&familychannel=3)

Make an emergency plan

As a carer you need to know that if an emergency happens, replacement care will get sorted out speedily and efficiently.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Emergency Plan and Reading Carers Card (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=oqM5ao1kZmE&familychannel=3)



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CAMHS Learning Disability Team - BHFT ()

The CAMHS Learning Disability Team is specialist mental health services to children and young people who have a moderate or severe learning disability and a significant or suspected mental health need.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | CAMHS Learning Disability Team - BHFT (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=dZiifwroKlY&familychannel=3)

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Reading Information, Advice & Support Service for SEND

Reading Information, Advice & Support Service for SEND (Reading IASS ()) offers free confidential and impartial information, advice and support about education, health and social care to Reading parents and carers who have children (up to the age of 25) with special educational needs or disability. We also support children and young people in their own right.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Reading Information, Advice & Support Service for SEND (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=VqahHpIA19A&familychannel=3-12)

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ABC to Read - Supporting Children Who Struggle with Reading

ABC to read is a Berkshire-based reading charity working in over 100 schools across the county. While we ordinarily do not provide specialist SEND support—because children with SEND generally benefit from support within their school—we are increasingly supporting children who are waiting for assessments or additional help.

Our trained volunteers provide one-to-one reading sessions for children who struggle to read, lack confidence, or have low self-esteem. Many of the children we currently support are neurodivergent or awaiting a diagnosis. By working closely with schools, we help these children make progress, build confidence, and develop a love of reading.

We are recruiting more volunteers to support more schools and reach more children across the county. If your school would like to find out how we can help, please get in touch. **info@abctoread.org.uk** (mailto:info@abctoread.org.uk)

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Launchpad Reading - DO YOU NEED HELP WITH A HOUSING ISSUE?

Visit Launchpad's free drop-in service for information and support. Every Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10am–2pm

Whatever your housing situation – whether you're rough sleeping, worried about paying your rent or concerned about your landlord's actions – our drop-in service is here to help.

Simply visit Launchpad's offices during the opening times – or contact us via telephone or email – and speak to one of our friendly, trained advisors.

Launchpad Reading, The Stables, 1A Merchants Place, Reading RG1 1DT

Email: **support@launchpadreading.org.uk** or call**: 0118 929 1111**

Reading Directory | Launchpad Reading (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=DT3V3-czi6g)

16-25 Preparation for Adulthood

Berkshire Opportunities, SEND () Moving On, Career Pathway Support

Explore a range of resources to support you with career pathway options for your young person with SEND ().

Young people face many challenges in reaching their aspirations as they move on into adulthood and it can be both exciting and scary for them. They are exposed to unfamiliar surroundings, people and experiences. It's vital that we make this exciting but difficult move work for them.

The CEC and Berkshire Careers Hub have collated some key resources to help you support your young person with student transitions and preparing for adulthood.

Reading Directory | Berkshire Opportunities, SEND Moving On, Career Pathway Support (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=Falh-KJgP1M)

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Learning Disability Transition Videos

BOB ICB commissioned Reading charity, Starting Point and Realtime Film Company, to co-produce the films with more than 20 young people across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West who are neurodivergent including autistic Young People and those with a Learning Disability and all keen to learn and manage the storyboarding, filming and editing process. Throughout the project, participants led the topics covered and were responsible with what was finally produced. The overall aim of these films is to help other health, social care and education professionals and the general public better understand transitioning to adulthood for these young people.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Learning Disability Transition Videos (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=MBgW_DCtfao)

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Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Support group for adult siblings of autistic people, SIBS (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=XelJT0G73nI&familychannel=3)

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The Hub - Weekly Social Drop in at Starting Point

STARTINGPOINT
Unlocking. Enabling. Releasing.

2 Drop-in Clubs: Under 18s, Over 18s - Weekly Social Drop-in

Play games, do some art, go on the Wii or just sit and chat.

A space to have some fun, spend time with others and chat to the Starting Point Team.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | The Hub - Weekly Social Drop in at Starting Point (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=NYWYG14ZAZU)

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The Engine Shed - New Group, Ramble and Rail

The Engine Shed is launching a new group, called Ramble and Rail, for young autistic adults aged 18 to 25. It will provide opportunities to get out and enjoy the countryside, taking guided walks from railway stations in nearby parts of Oxfordshire, Surrey and Hampshire that can be reached by train from Reading. Email Sarah at mail@theengineshed.org.uk (mailto:mail@theengineshed.org.uk) for more information and details of forthcoming walks.

Reading Directory | The Engine Shed, 'Ramble and Rail' group for young autistic adults aged 18 to 25 years old (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=EousznLgTtw)

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Building for the future plus (18 to 25)

Building for the Future plus

Helping young disabled people build a successful working and social life after school and college.

Further information can be found here: Reading Directory | Building For The Future Plus (18 to 25) (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=B3E7GM2mTq0) (https://www.bftf.org.uk/bftf-plus-18-to-25-club)

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Swings & Smiles 17+ sessions

Youth Space

Weekly sessions are designed especially for young people aged 17 and over — a space to relax, connect and have fun together.

Games, activities & social play, opportunities to build independence and a supportive community where friendships grow.

Reading Directory | Swings & Smiles 17+ sessions (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=UwyeAWa_2GY)

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Berkshire Adult Autism Support Service

Autism Berkshire provides the Berkshire Adult Autism Support Service to help adults aged 18+ in the county who have an autism diagnosis, or who are waiting for assessment.

The aim of the service, which is funded by the NHS (), is to provide advice and support to autistic adults who do not meet the criteria for help from specialist NHS-funded services, such as mental health and learning disability teams.

Further information can be found here Reading Directory | Autism Berkshire - Berkshire Adult Autism Support Service (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=13xfY8MqKcI&familychannel=3)

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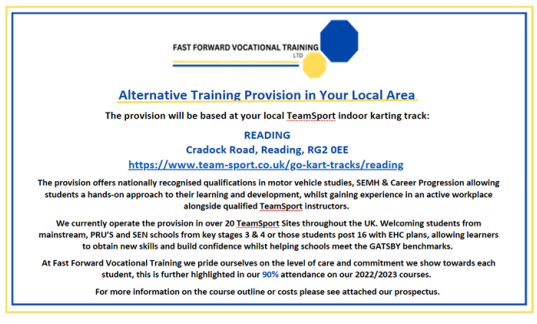
Neurodiversity Club

An informal meet up for people with Neurodiversity, diagnosed or not, we are here to meet like-minded people.

Further information can be found here Reading Directory | Neurodersity Club (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=y1U97weQwVc&familychannel=3)

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Fast Forward Vocational Training



Further information can be found here Reading Directory | Motor Vehicle Alternative Provision (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=5nWfvg5Lj7Q&familychannel=3)

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The Butterfly Community Cafe CIC

Work-life skills for a better future

A new enterprise to train young people with severe learning disabilities/difficulties

Further information can be found here Reading Directory | The Butterfly Community Cafe CIC (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=LRiYctlySuc&familychannel=3)

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Transition to Adulthood

Transition to adulthood is a whole new world to navigate!

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Parenting Special Children - Transition to Adulthood Workshops (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=M7psEpq44hs)**

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Finance Decisions

Making finance decisions for young people: parent and carer toolkit (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-finance-decisions-for-young-people-parent-and-carer-toolkit?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=00413530-e4b6-46e2-a32f-faced10d7601&utm_content=daily)

This toolkit provides a guide for parents and carers to make financial decisions for a young person who lacks mental capacity.

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Branching Up

Branching Up is a Day Service providing work experience placements for adults with learning disabilities.

Further information can be found here_Reading Directory | Branching Up (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=tZ9Xb2nwnIM&familychannel=3-10)

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Supported Internship Reading 2025 - Shaw Trust

The program is co-ordinated by Shaw Trust in partnership with Reading Local Authority - Brighter Futures for Children

A fantastic opportunity on our Supported Internship programme, now available in Reading, for 16 to 24 year-olds who have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP).

Further information incuding how to access the programme can be found here Reading Directory | Supported Internship Reading 2025 - Shaw Trust (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=zFUfiHMAxCQ&familychannel=3-10-2)

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Route to Recruit - Supported Internships

Further information can be found here Reading Directory | Route to Recruit - Supported Internships (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=kXGHzvid2u8&familychannel=3)

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Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Fedcap Employment, Inspiring Futures. (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=zXN70FDZVNk) (https://www.readingiass.org/)

Supported Employment and Training Services in Reading

Supports Reading residents with autism and/or learning disabilities into the right work placement that support and improves their health and wellbeing.

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Gateway Club for adults with a learning disability

Gateway Club is a friendly, lively social club for adults with a learning disability. It meets on a Tuesday evening and gives members the chance to try new activities in a friendly, supportive environment.

Further information can be found here Reading Mencap - The Local Voice of Learning Disability (https://www.readingmencap.org.uk/)

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Reading Mencap - Life Skills Club

Life Skills

A new Life Skills Club tailored for adults with learning disabilities has been launched.

What is the Club?

This fantastic new group is designed to provide information and advice on a variety of useful, everyday topics to help boost independence and confidence. Each session will feature engaging guest speakers covering subjects like:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Energy Advice
- Basic First Aid
- Managing Money

When and where

Time: 10am – 12 noon

Location: Museum of English Rural Life, 6 Redlands Road, Reading RG1 5EX

Click here for further information **Reading Directory | Reading Mencap - Life Skills Club (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=0rLBg5FNZCo&familychannel=3)**

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AskSARA: Advice and support to help with daily living

AskSARA is an online self-assessment tool that helps to make daily living easier. By answering a few questions, AskSARA will provide personalised advice about equipment for health, assistive technology and daily living ideas.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | AskSARA: Advice and support to help with daily living (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=Cehp3GPQH4Y)

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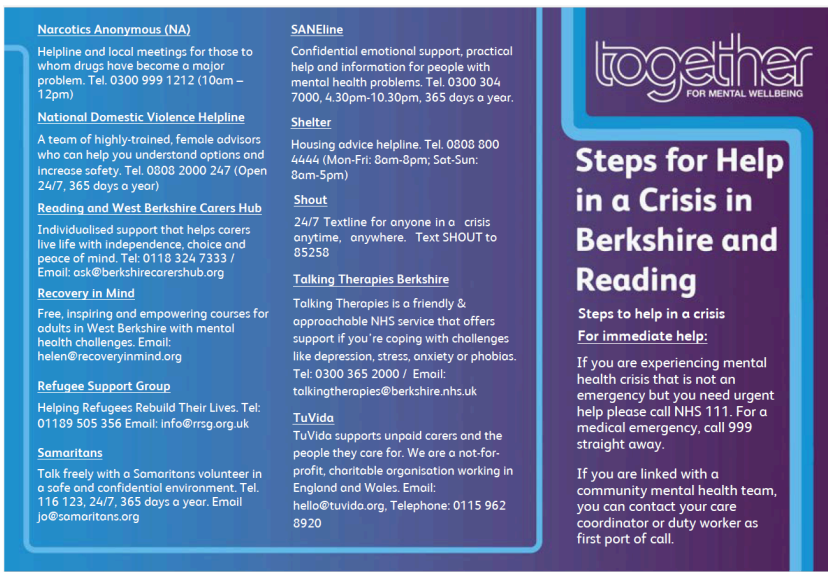
Transition 16-25 - Preparing for Adulthood

Reading Directory | Transition 16-25 (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/localoffer.page?familychannel=3-10)

- Becoming an adult in Reading - Your guide to the process of leaving children's services and entering adult services - preparing for adulthood - December 2024 (https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/reading/enterprise/files/becoming_an_adult_guide_for_young_people_updated_3_october_2024_-_december_2024.pdf)
- Preparing for Adulthood - Easy Read Guide - December 2024 (https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/reading/enterprise/files/preparing_for_adulthood_easy_read_guide_-_december_2024.pdf)
- Preparing for Adulthood An information guide for parents and carers - December 2024 (https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/reading/enterprise/files/preparing_for_adulthood_guide_for_parent_carers-final_small-december_2024.pdf)

Counselling – Mental health support







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Family Information Service has a dedicated page with information on local and national support click the following link to view - Young People & Mental Health (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=NjGDR1IGovc) - Me2, have created a great video which can be view on the young people mental health page.

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Together, Berkshire West, Breathing Space Service

The Berkshire West Breathing Space service is a safe, welcoming and supportive space for anybody aged over 18 experiencing emotional distress and struggling to cope. Whatever the reason for you feeling distressed or in crisis – we're here to help you.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Together - Berkshire West - Breathing Space Service (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=NEBDs8bvpC0&familychannel=0)

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Together for Mental Wellbeing

The Reading Community Outreach Service provides mental health support in the community within Reading to improve the wellbeing of people and help build resilience and independence to help combat issues that directly impact people's mental wellbeing such as experiences of poverty and inequality. Reading Community Outreach Service provide: Community support, Outreach and Peer support.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Together for Mental Wellbeing (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=by5VdwdlJEo)

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No5 Young People and Young People's Mental Health Helpline

No5 Young People's Mental Health Helpline

Text TALK followed by your first name and postcode to 07786 202430 to request a phone call from one of our trained counsellors.

Looking for direction? Signposting service:

Click on the following link - **Home Page - No5 Reading Signposting | No5 Reading Signposting (https://signposting.no5.org.uk/)**

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | No5 Young People – Young People's Mental Health Support (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=kbrCVhuUcrk)**

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tellmi

New Digital Mental Health Service Launches for Young People Across Berkshire West.

The Tellmi app will be made available to all 11-17 year olds (up to their 18th birthday) living and studying in Reading, West Berkshire And Wokingham. Providing 365 day access to an age-banded, anonymous space to discuss feelings and seek support.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | tellmi (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=6WHCY_y3HMA&familychannel=3)

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MindJam

Mentoring MindJam offers emotional support and guidance for children and adolescents through gaming and game design. At MindJam, our aim is to support children who suffer anxiety, stress, social issues and other emotional needs and their parents.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | MindJam (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=ZeJi2z9w1YI)

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Young Minds

Young Minds is the UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.

If you're a young person and need urgent support with your #MentalHealth, text YM to 85258. 0808 802 5544 (parent helpline)

Click on the following link - YoungMinds | Mental Health Charity For Children And Young People | YoungMinds (https://www.youngminds.org.uk/)

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National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi)

The National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) is a not for profit organisation working to enable people at risk of exclusion, due to age or disability, to live the life they choose. We inspire and support policymakers, services and communities to make change happen - change that leads to better lives.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=186azsTyPPE)

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SHaRON

The Support Hope and Recovery Online Network (SHaRON) is a secure and confidential online platform, moderated by clinical staff, to enable parents, carers and young people to support each other and get expert advice.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | SHaRON online advice platform – (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=qXUwAr3r3so)BHFT ()

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Place2Be Improving children's mental health

Place2Be is a children's mental health charity with over 25 years' experience working with pupils, families and staff in UK schools. We provide mental health support in schools through one-to-one and group counselling using tried and tested methods backed by research.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Place2Be – Improving Children's Mental Health (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=Wc1R26Cb9UY)**

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Anxiety UK

The charity offers support, advice and information on a range of anxiety, stress and anxiety-based depression conditions. Helpline/text service/web-chat offers information on anxiety and self-help resources.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Anxiety UK (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=9ig3d9D0djA)**

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Mental Health Support Team (MHST)

The Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) covering West Berkshire, Reading, and Wokingham is now delivered by Berkshire Healthcare NHS () Foundation Trust (BHFT).

Contact Information

If you need to get in touch with the MHST (), please use the following details:

Email: CAMHSWestMHSTs@berkshire.nhs.uk (mailto:CAMHSWestMHSTs@berkshire.nhs.uk)

Phone: 0300 2473002

For more information use the following link - **Mental Health Support Team (https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/for-parents-carers/mental-health-support-team/)**

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Primary Mental Health Workers (PMHW)

Primary Mental Health Workers work within Children's Education Department. They support children and young people where a concern has been identified around mental health issues such as low mood, self-harm, anxiety, challenging behaviour, aggression, attachment difficulties, school phobias and emotion regulation. This might include assessment, time-limited support and counselling.

Reading Directory | Primary Mental Health Workers (PMHW) (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=JCYK7k1YoQs&familychannel=6-6)

National Organisation Supporting SEND



BDA is the largest organisation in the UK that is run by deaf people for deaf people, includes British sign language (BSL).

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | British Deaf Association (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=xmsPgLHaGJM&familychannel=3-12-2)**

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Provides support and advice for parents with children who are dyslexic. Helpline available.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | British Dyslexia Association (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=V8ewUj2wZj0&familychannel=3-12-2)**

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Calibre Audio is a national charity which provides free audiobooks for children and young adults with SEND () (0-25 years). Our service makes books and stories accessible to children who find reading print difficult because of a special educational need, long term health condition or disability.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Calibre Audio: free audiobooks for children and young people with (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=KGlCJp2-ObU&familychannel=3-12-2)SEND ()**

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The Children's Trust gives children and young people with brain injury and neurodisability the opportunity to live the best life possible by providing specialist rehabilitation, education and community services across the UK.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | The Children's Trust (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=6rGznYoCQ5k&familychannel=3-12-2)**

***

Frank (Talk To Frank)

FRANK is a national information campaign providing information for young people and their parents and carers about substance misuse.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Frank (Talk To Frank) (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=l8EMbTOQlvk&familychannel=3-12-2)**

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The national charity for children and young people with autism

We provide services, raise awareness and understanding, and campaign for change. Through TreeHouse School (http://www.treehouseschool.org.uk/), The Rise School (http://www.theriseschool.com/) and Ambitious College (http://www.ambitiouscollege.org.uk/) we offer specialist education and support.

Our ambition is to make the ordinary possible for more children and young people with autism.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Ambitious about Autism (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=PqqSfGRhutY)**

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Sibs - For Brothers & Sisters of disabled children & adults

Sibs exists to support people who grow up with or have grown up with a disabled brother or sister. It is the only UK charity representing the needs of over half a million young siblings and over one and a half million adult siblings.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Sibs - For Brothers & Sisters of disabled children & adults (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=pPAkhdjwxrQ&familychannel=3-12-2)**

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Cerebra

Set up to help improve the lives of children with brain related conditions through research, education and directly supporting the children and their carers, Cerebra helps children up to 16 years with neurodevelopment disorders and conditions, their parents, carers and professional practitioners.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Cerebra (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=JJq2uDiwtyM&familychannel=3)**

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Council for Disabled Children

The umbrella body for the disabled children's sector bringing together professionals, practitioners and policy-makers.

Click on the following link - Council for Disabled Children (https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/)

The Communication Trust

The Communication Trust is a coalition of more than 50 not-for-profit organisations working together to support everyone who works with children and young people in England to support their speech, language and communication.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | The Communication Trust (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=u-H9Yyhb2aA&familychannel=3)

Click on the following link - The Information, Advice and Support Services Network (https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/about-us-0/networks/information-advice-and-support-services-network)

Information, advice and support services for young people aged 25 old or younger and need extra help with learning and have a disability. There are lots of different ways to talk to a friendly advisor.

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Contact - For Families with Disabled Children

FREE workshops and 1:1 support for families with disabled children from Contact.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Contact - For Families with Disabled Children (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=pNEdmuhpMeE&familychannel=3)**

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Family Fund

We support families living across the UK who are raising a disabled or seriously ill child or young person up to the age of 17. Our support is focused on those on low incomes. We believe that all families should have the same choices, quality of life, opportunities and aspirations.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Family Fund (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=W-JqwwyF5Sc&familychannel=3)**

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Anxiety UK

Anxiety UK is a national charity, helping to support people living with anxiety, stress and anxiety-based depression.

Click on the following link - **https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/ (https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/)**

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Epilepsy Action

There are many ways Epilepsy Action can help support you and your loved ones.

Our trained advisors can give you an idea of our services or provide the answers and resources you need.

Click on the following link - **Epilepsy Action (https://www.epilepsy.org.uk/)**

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Scope - Navigate (Emotional Support for Parents/Carers)

We're Scope, the disability equality charity in England and Wales. We provide practical information and emotional support when it's most needed, and campaign to create a fairer society.

Click on the following link - **Home | Disability charity Scope UK (https://www.scope.org.uk/)**

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KIDS

KIDS is a national charity, founded in 1970, that provides a wide range of services to disabled children, young people and their families in England.

Click on the following link - **KIDS (https://www.kids.org.uk/)**

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IPSEA

The Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (IPSEA) offers free and independent legally based education advice to parents of children with SEND. They also provide training on the SEND legal framework to parents and carers.

Click on the following link - **(IPSEA) Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (https://www.ipsea.org.uk/)**

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Click on the following link - The Information, Advice and Support Services Network (https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/about-us-0/networks/information-advice-and-support-services-network)

Information, advice and support services for young people aged 25 old or younger and need extra help with learning and have a disability. There are lots of different ways to talk to a friendly advisor.

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Click on the following link - Down's Syndrome Association (https://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/):

The Down's Syndrome Association have specialist advisers who can provide you with information and support on issues such as health, social care, benefits and education for people with Down's syndrome.

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AccessAble

AccessAble is here to take the chance out of going out. To give you the detailed information you need to work out if a place is going to be accessible to you. Their Detailed Access Guides tell you all about a venue's access. They are 100% facts, figures and photographs.

Click on the following link - **Home | AccessAble (https://www.accessable.co.uk/)**

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National Autistic Society

The UK's leading autism charity. Their goal is to help transform lives, change attitudes and create a society that works for autistic people.

Click on the following link - **National Autistic Society (autism.org.uk) (https://www.autism.org.uk/)**

National Autistic Society, Resources for Autistic Teenagers, The know Yourself Series

The Know Yourself series offers free resources (videos, PDFs, worksheets) to support autistic teenagers in understanding what being autistic means to them.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | National Autistic Society, Resources for Autistic Teenagers, The know Yourself Series (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=6sJfpC510L8)**

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National Deaf Children's Society

The National Deaf Children's Society is the leading charity for deaf children and their families.

Click on the following link - **National Deaf Children's Society | Supporting deaf children (ndcs.org.uk) (https://www.ndcs.org.uk/)**

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Sense Active - for Children & Young People

Activity videos to enjoy in the house or garden, new live yoga session specifically for children and young people, more quick challenges for pairs or groups. If you need any support accessing any of the activities please contact us on Sense.Active@sense.org.uk (mailto:Sense.Active@sense.org.uk)

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Sense Active - for Children & Young People (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=Oe6rmVerq-k&familychannel=3)**

Sense gives legal advice and assistance to deafblind individuals or their family members and supporters.

Click on the following link - **Sense | For people with complex disabilities (https://www.sense.org.uk/)**

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The Autism Central vision is a world where parents and carers of autistic children and adults are knowledgeable about autism, confident in navigating services and empowered to maintain both their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of the autistic person they support.

Click on the following link - **Reading Directory | Autism Central for Parents and Carers (https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=Rwf9033dojs)**

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Unpaid Carers

If you help look after someone, either for a friend or family member, who could not manage without your support due to illness, disability, or a mental health problem, the UCR team may be able to support and help keep the person at home in a crisis.

Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Urgent Community Response for Unpaid Carers
(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=REB5YH6n0XM&familychannel=3)

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Click on the following link - Reading Directory | Hidden Disabilities Sunflower
(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=voFYFETAvn0&familychannel=3)



Christmas holiday activities at Reading Libraries

(https://whatsonreading.com/venues/reading-libraries/whats-on-events)



Young Voices Online Safety Summit - Goodie Bag

(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/site.page?id=s7RFch7hVlQ)

Christmas Holiday Fun at Reading Museum

(https://www.readingmuseum.org.uk/whats-on-reading-museum)

Family Information Service - Winter (Christmas) 2025 Activities

(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/family.page?familychannel=8)

Special United - Me2 Club

(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/localoffer.page?familychannel=3-16)

Include Me2 - A Club for Young People with Additional Needs

(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=ktICg0LrCSQ)

Young People & Mental Health Support

(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=NjGDR1IGovc)



(https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=JPKWibWDMVQ)

Page last reviewed: 24/11/2025