

# Bright Sparks News

Newsletter No. 20

January 2023

Brrr! It's cold outside. The Christmas holidays seem an age ago and the fun and sparkles been replaced with frosty mornings, icy puddles, warm fires and comfort food (in my house). Hopefully the next season will be equally fun and exciting. These newsletters are intended as a collaboration so please feel free to contribute; you can do this by emailing me. All contributions welcome!



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## Games to play

### Visual Perception Activities

#### Tactile Objects

Have an assortment of different everyday objects in a bag (key, cotton reel, toothbrush, marble, buttons, paperclip, small toys, etc). Start with just a few objects. Have the child feel an object inside the bag, without looking, and describe it in as much detail as they can – shape, texture, size. Can they tell what the object is?

#### Silly Steps.

" Each day each member of the family gets to give one of the others a set of silly directions to follow. Begin with two-step directions, such as, "Go get a spoon from the kitchen and bring it back to me on your head." Gradually increase the number of directions, elaboration of the directions, and complexity, such as "Bring me the ruler in the back of the third drawer of my desk, come back into the kitchen, and turn around three times."

#### Visual perception activities:

Hidden pictures games in books such as "Where's Wally".

Picture drawing: Practice completing partially drawn pictures

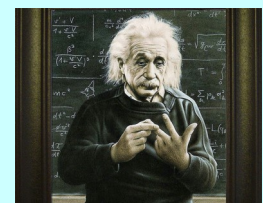
#### Fine motor skills and spelling activities:

Write the child's name or word you want the child to spell on a piece of paper, approximately A3 size. They could do this themselves! The child makes the word by covering the letters with the stickers. This can be used for weekly spellings, connectives, or tricky words.

**Auditory memory activity** Orienteering Type Activities. Child follows verbal directions from adult e.g. "go to the gate, turn left, take 6 steps and come back to me".

## Top Tips from parents

"So you know those times where you want your child to do something and they are refusing. I have found giving a choice of two things really helps. So if I want to go out and my child refuses to put on a coat then I ask if they would like to put the red coat on or the blue one. I actually don't care which coat they put on as long as they have one on and we can get out of the door but my child feels they have some control or say in the decision. I've now tried this with other things like getting ready for bed-pj's on or teeth brushed. Again, it doesn't matter to me as long as they both happen." **Parent of Y3 child**



### Random bit: Did you know?

**A chef's hat has 100 pleats.** Apparently, it's meant to represent the 100 ways you can cook an egg.



## Spring Activities 2023



Yor-ok is a brilliant website linked to a range of support for families. There are a number of activities for Winter and Spring on there and many are free. Have a look:

<https://www.yor-ok.org.uk/young-people/SpringActivities>

# maxcard

If your child has a disability or additional need, they will be entitled to a Max Card. This card provides free or discounted entry into many attractions across the UK. In signing up for the Max Card, you also sign up for our myFIS+ newsletter which provides enhanced information for families who have children with disabilities and additional needs. To sign up for the myFIS+ and Max Card scheme, please go to the FIS Newsletter sign up page:

<https://www.yor-ok.org.uk/families/FIS/myfis-sign-up.htm>

**Parenting support and advice:** The Specialist teaching teams now offer parent training sessions, phone line advice and sign posting. Although these are primarily aimed at families with children who have diagnoses of autism there are other services available too. Have a look here for further information:

<https://www.yor-ok.org.uk/families/Local%20Offer/sendlocaloffer>

### Staff Training

Erika Deverall and Andrea Walton have taken over P.E this year and attended training on inclusion in sports. They are working hard to look at developing all P.E to be based on those children with additional needs as a starting point rather than adapted to meet the needs of additional needs e.g. where children have physical needs activities will be done sat down for all children not just those who find standing for sustained periods difficult.

Did you know that all our teaching assistants take part in staff training half termly? This is so we can be kept up to date with the best ways of supporting your children.

### Tea, coffee and chat

Thank you to those



## Useful websites

### YOUNGMINDS

The voice for young people's mental health and wellbeing

We know parenting isn't always easy.

Although it's often amazing and rewarding to watch your children grow up, and to help them learn to be independent, it can also be really hard work. It can feel especially hard if your child's mood and behaviour seem different and you're not sure why, or what you can do to help. But you are not alone. Young Minds have lots of practical advice and tips on supporting your child - from how to encourage your child to open up about their feelings to dealing with mental health services. No matter what you and your child are going through, things can get better. <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/>

### THE OT TOOLBOX

The OT Toolbox has a huge amount of free resources to support with executive functioning, fine motor skills, visual and sensory perception and handwriting skills. All these are play based, fun and 'non school like'.

<https://www.theotttoolbox.com/parent-toolbox/>

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