

## **HELPFUL INFORMATION**

### **(with grateful thanks to Freemantles School and their supportive community)**

These pages have been put together by parents of children at Freemantles.

#### **Autism-friendly holidays**

You will find a list of autism-friendly holiday destinations at

<http://www.autism.org.uk/living-with-autism/out-and-about/holidays-and-days-out/holidays-autism-friendly-venues.aspx>

[www.harriet-davis-trust.org.uk](http://www.harriet-davis-trust.org.uk)

This trust has an autism-friendly house in South Wales. It's easier to book if you can avoid school holidays.

#### **Dentistry**

If your child struggles with visits to the dentist, several hospitals in Surrey have a Department of Special Care Dentistry, staffed by dentists who specialise in treating children with special needs.

#### **Finances**

<https://www.gov.uk/search?q=Disability+Living+Allowance>

The website that gives information about applying for Disability Allowance, soon to become Personal Independence Payments.

#### **Holiday Playscheme**

[campmohawk.org.uk/](http://campmohawk.org.uk/)

They run Family days some weekends

[www.disability-challengers.org/](http://www.disability-challengers.org/)

They have centres at Farnham, Epsom/Ewell and Guildford. They offer respite after school, at weekends and during the holidays. They run a Family Day on Sundays at Farnham.

[www.whitelodgecentre.co.uk/](http://www.whitelodgecentre.co.uk/)

They offer one-to one holiday respite at Easter and during the summer holidays in Spelthorne, Elmbridge and Runnymede. Other services can be accessed via a Social Worker, if you have one.

#### **Horse-riding**

Several stables affiliated to Riding for the Disabled run sessions specifically aimed at children with special needs. The website below gives further information.

[www.rda.org.uk/](http://www.rda.org.uk/)

#### **Legal advice**

[www.sossen.org.uk/](http://www.sossen.org.uk/)

The Independent Helpline for Special Education Needs (in their own words)

### **Local Carers Support organisations**

<http://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/getting-help/support-near-you/>

Worth getting in touch with these people as they have all sorts of useful tips. We parents/guardians are classified as carers.

<http://www.surreyilc.org.uk/>

Surrey Independent Living Council – provides payments to qualifying carers to help improve their health, given the impact that looking after a child with special needs can have.

### **Miscellaneous**

[www.ceacard.co.uk/](http://www.ceacard.co.uk/)

For cinema lovers, an annually renewable card that allows a carer in free at participating cinemas. Currently costs £6 annually.

[www.radar-shop.org.uk/](http://www.radar-shop.org.uk/)

A radar key enables you to access disabled toilets when out and about. Especially useful if your child cannot queue or cannot cope with the noise of hand-driers.

[www.myvue.com/](http://www.myvue.com/)

Vue cinemas run autism-friendly performances, where the sound is dimmed and lights do not go out completely. The best thing is that nobody stares at your child if they are noisy or unsettled as everyone is in the same boat.

[www.polkatheatre.com/](http://www.polkatheatre.com/)

A children's theatre in Wimbledon that puts on 'relaxed' performances for children with special needs.

[createarts.org.uk](http://createarts.org.uk)

A London based charity that runs live music and craft performances for children with special needs. They have events in Southwark and Reading, amongst other places. Very friendly.

[www.cycling.org.uk/](http://www.cycling.org.uk/)

They have a branch in Surrey, run by Matthew Wing. They have all sorts of bicycles for all sorts of children. They run sessions around the county for a nominal fee.

### **Recommended local days out – other**

[www.hobbledown.com/](http://www.hobbledown.com/)

Children's adventure park and farm near Epsom.

<http://www.tvap.co.uk/>

Thames Valley Adventure Playground, near Maidenhead. Indoor and outdoor activities for children with all types of special needs. Secure perimeter!

### **Recommended local days out – theme parks.**

All of the following have systems whereby a carer can get in free with a child who receives DLA. They also allow a child with autism to bypass the normal queuing system.

[www.legoland.com/](http://www.legoland.com/)

[www.chessington.com/](http://www.chessington.com/)

[www.thorpepark.com/](http://www.thorpepark.com/)

### **Respite services**

<http://www.whitelodgecentre.co.uk/children-young-peoples-services/out-of-school-activities>

Some of these are only accessible via a social worker.

[www.cherry-trees.co.uk/](http://www.cherry-trees.co.uk/)

Overnight respite for children accessed via a social worker.

### **Sources of information**

[www.autism.org.uk/](http://www.autism.org.uk/) - website of the National Autistic Society

<http://www.mugsy.org> – website of the Surrey branch of the National Autistic Society. They issue an occasional newsletter, with information about informal and formal meetings in the area.

[www.metooandco.org.uk/](http://www.metooandco.org.uk/)

Richmond based charity that provides information, courses and free legal advice to members. Very useful.

[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk) (Contact a Family)

Provides all sorts of information for parents of children with special educational needs.

### **Wills and trusts**

The National Autistic Society provides a simple guide on this subject.