

SEND Newsletter

Christmas 2024



Welcome to this Christmas edition of the Clifton SEND Newsletter!

Christmas can be a time of excitement, magic and fun but it is also a busy time of change, lots of socialising and a break from routine and we know that this can be challenging for some children and families with SEND. On this newsletter you will find information to support families of pupils with SEND over the Christmas period as well as some fun things you can do together! As always, please don't hesitate to drop me an email with comments, responses, questions or suggestions using the SENCo email address:

senco@clifton-upon-teme.worcs.sch.uk

Merry Christmas! From Miss B

Sensory-Friendly Christmas Events

Malvern Glow



Malvern Glow are offering 'sensory-friendly' light trail sessions on 6th, 17th and 18th December at 4:15PM. During these sessions rapid movement lights, noise and music will be reduced and capacity will be capped.

[Details here.](#)

Severn Valley Relaxed Santa Train



The relaxed Santa Train runs on December 15th this year. You do not meet Father Christmas, but he is on stage in the relaxed Panto performance. [Details here.](#)

Do you know of anymore? If so, please email me the details and I will send them out!

Keep Moving at Christmas!



Christmas-themed exercises to keep your child moving, release some energy and provide sensory feedback. Click the links:

[Christmas Indoor Workout](#)

[Elves on the Run Game](#)

[Danny Go! Christmas Freeze Dance](#)

[Cosmic Kids Christmas Yoga](#)

Worcestershire's SEND Improvement Plan

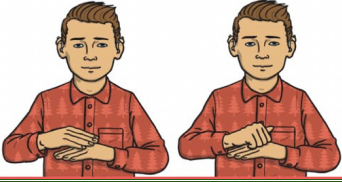
Following the Worcestershire SEND Ofsted report which found 'widespread, systemic failings' in the Local Authority SEND department, Worcestershire Children's First disbanded and education returned to being under the umbrella of 'Worcestershire County Council.' The Council regularly publish updates to their SEND Improvement Plan and you can read these here: [SEND Improvement Plan](#)



Learn some Christmas words in British Sign Language

[Click here](#)

Christmas



Does your children need support with their fine motor skills?

[Click here](#)

This page is full of Christmas-themed activities for all ages that you could try at home. Wrapping presents, writing Christmas cards and decorating the tree are also great for fine motor skills.



Christmas overwhelm, meltdown or overstimulation?

Try this Snowflake-themed mindfulness activity to bring things back down.

[Click here](#)



A bit of reading...

Below I have linked some blogs posts offering support and guidance to navigating Christmas if your child has Autism, ADHD, Communication Needs or sensory issues.

[A Sensory Christmas Survival Guide](#)

[Christmas and the Sensory Child](#)

[Tips for an ADHD Family Christmas](#)

[Christmas Tips for Autistic People and the families](#)



Is your child receiving Speech and Language support?

Here are some Christmas Speech and Language activities you can try at home.

[Click here](#)



Autism Friendly Christmas Tips

Christmas is different to other times of the year – it can be loud, intense, bright, unpredictable & busy.

LIGHTS

Get lights that have controls to adjust the brightness and the flashing function

TAKE A BREAK

Christmas day can be intense..ensure there are opportunities for breaks, quiet space & keep headphones handy

PRESENTS

Not everyone likes presents, not everyone likes opening presents in front of others, not everyone likes the surprise of a wrapped gift

VISITS

Unannounced visits are unpredictable... let the person know that someone is calling

UNPREDICTABILITY

Prepare a person for whats happening around the Christmas period. e.g. social stories, timetables, who will be visiting/what time is dinner

EATING

A person's idea of Christmas dinner may not be the same as the traditional meal...pizza or pasta is cool to eat too!

HAVING FUN

Create games that includes everyone...change the rules if you need to so that everyone can play



Surviving Sensory Overload During the Festive Period

1 Even at festive times, it's ok to take food with you that you know your child will eat.	2 Keep things simple to help you all enjoy it.	3 Don't allow others to dictate how you spend time during your festive period.	4 To prepare for Christmas create a sensory tool kit in a pencil case or similar.	5 Promote lots of personal time before any outings and extra winding down time on return.
Be flexible, no event or activity is more important than each other. 6	Be mindful of additional stress levels; use your usual tactics to nip any meltdowns in the bud. 7	Have a sensory retreat location in mind when traveling to an unfamiliar environment. 8	Party occasions may still require comfortable clothes for your child. 9	Use social stories to prepare for occasions you want to join. 10
11 Don't expect everything to be perfect, it's ok and normal if there are some setbacks.	Learn all about your Christmas with your child, don't be afraid to create your own family traditions that suit you. 12	13 Avoid sensory overload and sudden transition by putting up your Christmas decorations gradually.	Don't overwhelm with presents, give your child a private quiet space to open their presents, or allow them to open one per day until they have all been opened. 14	Give your child a tool such as a card or wristband to let you know if it's getting too noisy. 15
Provide a tried and tested meal for an individual with sensory difficulties and maybe allow them to eat in a Christmas free space to reduce any unfamiliar smells. 16	17 Ask all visitors to check in advance before visiting and don't be afraid to say no if you feel it may be too much.	Don't force the Christmas you want on your child, try to help and encourage them but not force them. 18	Involve your child when putting up decorations but be aware of decorations that may upset your child such as flashing lights or talking Santa's. 19	Be aware that a behaviour change may indicate a new sensory trigger, they're everywhere at Christmas. 20
Dress your child in layers; they may soon become hot in unfamiliar environments so removing clothes layers can help. 21	22 Remind of rules, and structures which are helpful, these rules can help a child that needs and prefers routines.	Be prepared as usual, having to hand any items or devices that calm your child down when their becoming overwhelmed is recommended. 23	Take care of you, the thing your child needs most at Christmas is for you to be OK! 24	Have a merry Christmas! 25