

14th October 2022

Thames Valley School
Newsletter



National
Autistic
Society



Thames
Valley
School



Class of the week:

Hegerty, for great
work in lessons and
full participation in
the Microsoft
event.



A Message from the Deputy Principal

Welcome to the penultimate newsletter of this half term. It's been busy and fun, and we are all looking forward to a good break, however there is still a week of learning to do.....

Today we welcomed Microsoft in to school to work with some students on block coding, and discussing careers in Tech. The team at Microsoft have loaned the school equipment and are hoping to return at some point in the near future to continue working with our students. Thanks for Ms Eden for organising this special event.

Next Thursday is Parents' Evening, we are really excited to invite you in to the school (or on TEAMS if you'd prefer). Staff will be able to give you one-to-one feedback, and we are available form 4-6pm.

You will be aware that Miss Makoka has not been with us for this half term. She has taken some time out for personal reasons, and has decided that she needed more than the original one week planned. We wish her all the best and look forward to her return soon.

Have a lovely weekend, and I look forward to meeting you next week.

Mr Calvert, Deputy Principal

This week's assembly was on The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

The Basic Needs for Living



access to medical help



access to an education



nutritious, regular food



opportunities to get a job to earn money



having a decent shelter or home



What are the **basic needs** for living?

What Is Poverty?

Unfortunately, there are many people around the world who do not have access to these basic needs for living.

People who do not have these basic needs met are living in poverty.



no access to medical help

no access to an education

lack of nutritious, regular food

no opportunities to get a job to earn money

no decent shelter or home

Are we guilty of sometimes taking for granted these basic needs for living?

Why Do People Live in Poverty?

Can you list some reasons why some people might be living in poverty around the world?

War

Living in a country which is at war destroys towns and homes. People often end up with nowhere to live or work.



Big companies taking land

Big companies that build things, or dig for things like oil, coal and gas, often take land away from local people. This prevents them from growing their own crops or keeping animals on the land.



The country they are born in

In some countries, the poor people have no way of earning more money because they are not given the chances that they should have. This often means that the rich people get richer and the poor people get poorer.



No chance to go to school

In some countries, poor people cannot go to school. This means they cannot get any qualifications to get better jobs and earn more money.



What Is Being Done to Help?

In 1992, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly declared an International Day for the **Eradication** of Poverty to be held on the 17th October every year.

Eradication means to remove, destroy or erase something completely.

What is the UN?

The UN is an international organisation founded in 1945. It is made up of 193 nations or 'member states' and is,

'One place where the world's nations can gather together, discuss common problems and find shared solutions'.

The UN try to promote **'Peace, dignity and equality on a healthy planet'**.



The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

When the day was first adopted in 1992, the UN General Assembly invited all States to devote the Day to putting on different events relating to the eradication of poverty and destitution (extreme poverty).

Since then, on the 17th October, people all over the world organise activities and work together towards trying to put an end to extreme poverty.



The participation of the poor themselves has always been an important part of the Day's celebrations.

People living in poverty can use their expertise and experiences to help contribute to the eradication of poverty.

Since the decisions made to help eradicate poverty are going to affect the lives and communities of all those currently living in poverty, it makes sense that these people are at the centre of making the policies and plans to ensure that they are achievable.

How Can We Make a Difference?

What can you do help the fight against poverty?

- Find out more about The UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2022 and how you can get involved.
- Consider how you can limit your waste (electricity, water, food etc).
- Write about the issues; design posters that explain what poverty is, why there are so many living in poverty around the world and what can be done to help.
- Stand up for people who are ignored and being treated unfairly.
- Start looking into charities which are concerned with these issues and find out how you can get involved.
- Make the most of the opportunities that you are given.



Speech and Language Department

You may want to practise with some example problems before attempting this with a 'real-life' friendship problem:

- Someone else has something you want.
- Another student is saying mean things.
- You are talking to your friend but they are not listening to you.
- You said a mean comment to a friend.
- You are having fun with your friend and you don't want breaktime to end.

Learning to problem solve is an essential skill that is used not only throughout childhood but also into adulthood. Social problem solving is the ability to change or adapt to undesirable situations that arise throughout our day. On a daily basis, a child will encounter social problems that they will need to solve. Anything from arguing with another student, to hurting a friend's feelings, to having a difficult conversation, or working with others.

Steps to problem-solving:

Learning specific steps to problem-solving can allow children to remember how to solve a problem when they become overwhelmed or stressed. This requires lots of practise with an adult until the child is able to do this independently.

When a problem arises (friendship problem or otherwise, support the child by discussing the four stages below):

- 1) Identify the problem.** For instance, start by having your child identify the social problem.
- 2) Create three solutions.** Also, have your child come up with three different solutions that they could use to solve the problem that they identified.
- 3) Identify the consequences.** Then, identify the consequence for each individual solution.
- 4) Pick the best solution.** Lastly, have your child identify which of their three solutions is the best choice and why.

Your friend hasn't given back your Yugio cards that you let them borrow.

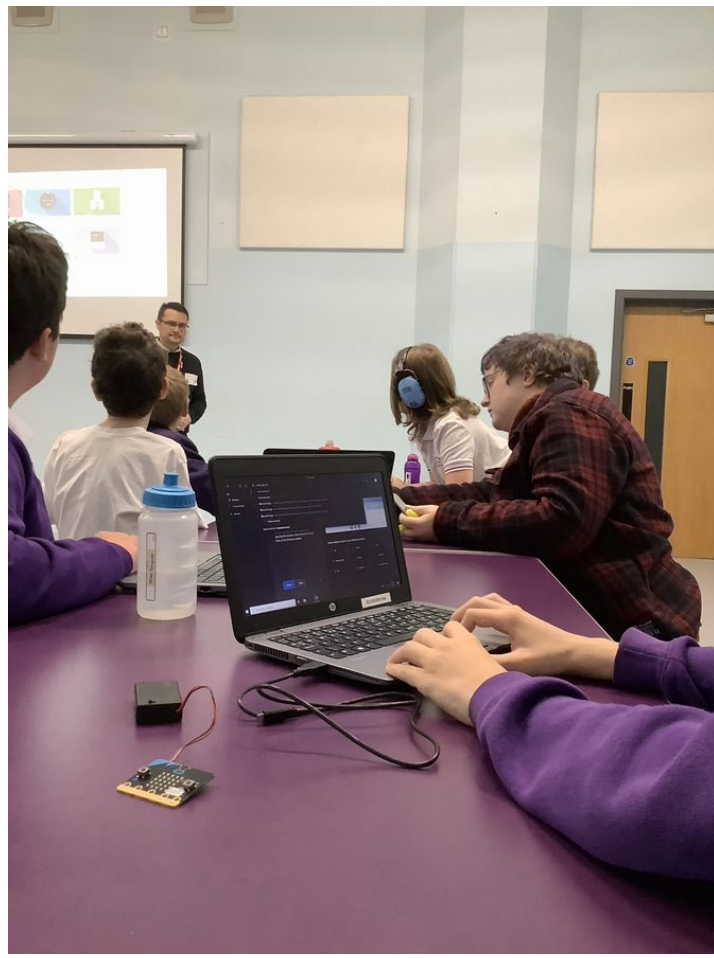
Computer Science

Microsoft joined TVS students across primary and secondary for a fun day of coding activities today.

What a pleasure to see our students engaged in creating games together with peers from other year groups.

David a year 9 student won a micro:bit treasure hunt and said "This has been my best day at school ever!"





(Deputy) Principal's Awards!

HERE ARE THE AWARDS FROM THE WEEK BEGINNING 10th October:

McGuinness: Bella, for positive communication and communicating her needs and wishes to staff.

Applegate: Elliot, for getting all of his tick from his lessons this week and motivating others to engage in class.

Packham: Iain, for continuously following staff instructions and engaging in lessons.

Hopkins: Luca for his amazing input regarding first aid in PSHE.

Tajiri: Molly, for excellent engagement in her learning.

Hegerty: David for "Excellent engagement in his humanities lessons".

Thunberg: Goncalo is the pupil of the week for remaining focused when others were dysregulated.

Wiltshire: Paige for catching up with missed art lessons.

De Blois: - Dom, for hard work and resilience all week.

Smale: Alex, for good communication and self regulation.

Principal's Shield: Henry, for being really focused in Maths, and showing good listening skills.

Staff member of the week: Mr Holder (again). The Student Council voted for this one, they felt that Mr Holder and his team had been working very hard to keep the school looking great. Thank you Mr Holder!

IMPORTANT

We are always updating the student/pupil records, so please contact the office on office@thamesvalley.reading.sch.uk or tinaralph@thamesvalley.reading.sch.uk to advise of any food allergies or intolerances, or changes to circumstances.

Friends of TVS

MAIN MESSAGE:

This is a new group and a new way for parents to be involved. We can only do it if you help us by joining in, however you can.

FoTVS is a way for parents to help the School by:

- Supporting new parents
- Helping School Fundraise
- Promote opportunities for social activities

At the moment we are helping with:

- Online Family Quizzes
- New parent buddy system
- TVS BBQ & Sports Days
- Parent WhatsApp Groups
- FoTVS Facebook closed group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/friendsoftvs/>
- Pre-loved school uniform sales
- Fundraise for the new TVS sensory garden

If you want to find out more, join in or help us, please email us friendsoftvs@gmail.com

Our Designated Safeguarding Team



Safeguarding Team at Thames Valley School




Miss R Archer
Designated Safeguarding
Lead



Safeguarding Lead

Mrs G Buley
QOL and SENCO



Deputy Safeguarding Officer

Mr S Calvert
Deputy Principal



Deputy Safeguarding Officer

Ms J Southby
Governor



Safeguarding Governor

Everyone has the right to feel safe at ALL times.

Children's Social Care – For reporting concerns **READING** Single point
of access – Tel: 0118 937 3641
Email: Childrensinglepoinofaccess@reading.gcsx.gov.uk

To report and incident to the **LADO** – Local Authority Designated
Officer – Tel 0118 937 2685
Email: LADO@brighterfuturesforchildren.org



AGE RESTRICTION
13+
with parental permission



What parents need to know

Twitch



Twitch is a gaming-focussed live-streaming service, owned by Amazon, where you can watch others play games live and listen to commentary as they play. It has 15 million daily active users and more than three million people live broadcast video game streams and other content on Twitch, with channels dedicated to just about every popular video game imaginable – both modern and retro. There are also shows that feature gaming competitions, professional tournaments, game-related chat and news. Plus, numerous non-gaming channels covering everything from cookery and music to art and travel. But Twitch is not just about watching other people's shows – anyone can broadcast their own gaming action.



Top Tips for Parents

THE RISK - IT'S LIVE & UNCENSORED

As gamers get engrossed in their games, it is very common to hear rather choice words, so the chance of your child encountering swear words and bad language is extremely high. There is not only the language of the person running the stream that you need to consider, but also the language of other Twitch users in the text-based chat that accompanies streams.

What parents can do

There's not much you can do to reduce exposure to bad language on Twitch, but if there are any troublesome users, it is possible to block them. It is a good idea to spend a little time with your child as they explore different channels on the platform, as this will give you an idea of the sort of content they are being exposed to. As Twitch does not offer any parental control options, this is the best way to police what your child is doing. If your child is overwhelmed or disturbed by comments that are being posted in the stream chat, it is possible to hide it from view by clicking the little arrow to the right of the Subscribe button.

THE RISK - VIOLENT GAMES & ADULT CONTENT

Like so many websites, Twitch does not allow children under the age of 13 to create an account, but in practice, there's nothing to stop anyone signing up by simply entering a false date of birth. In addition to swearing, commentary provided by other Twitch users may well contain adult content, and the games themselves can be rather violent. Bear in mind that many of the games on the market these days have an age rating of 18, and this is indicative of the bad language, sexual content and violence that they may contain.

What parents can do

There is nothing that can be done to prevent your child from accessing whatever channel they want – short of using your router settings or parental control software to block access to the site completely. One of the problems with Twitch is that while there is plenty of child-friendly content out there, it is not at all easy to quickly identify what might not be suitable. Spend some time working with your child to help identify channels that will be appropriate for them. While it may be hard to ensure they stick to these channels, it is useful for them to know that there is content available that is not overtly adult in nature.

THE RISK - POTENTIAL COSTS

By default, Twitch is ad-supported, but there is a monthly subscription option – called Twitch Turbo – that offers an ad-free experience. On top of this, it is possible to subscribe to individual channels, and each one is chargeable individually. There's also Twitch Prime, a premium experience included with the Amazon Prime and Prime Video subscription memberships, which offers bonus games and exclusive in-game content and Twitch Merch – an online store offering merchandise, such as T-shirts and hoodies. Twitch Bits is a virtual currency that gives your child the power to encourage and show support for streamers – through 'cheers' – and get attention in chat through animated emoticons. Bits cost real money and there's one option to buy 25,000 Bits for £2.88. It's easy to see how costs could very quickly mount up the more involved your child gets into Twitch.

What parents can do

Take steps to restrict access to your credit/debit card, as well as your PayPal account, to avoid getting hit by a large bill. If you are able to access your child's Twitch account, it is possible to check their purchase history, so you can see if they are spending too much money on subscriptions or donations. Explain to your child that subscribing to channels and purchasing bits for cheers is optional, and that they can watch and enjoy a stream without doing either.

THE RISK - UNWANTED CONTACT FROM OTHER USERS

Just like any website or platform with a social element to it, there is the risk that your child will not only come into contact with the sort of people you might rather they didn't, but also that they could be harassed, groomed or bullied online.

What parents can do

Within Twitch settings, in the Security and Privacy section, it is possible to block messages – known as 'whispers' – from strangers. It's worth noting that this option only blocks messages by those who are not your friend, someone you follow, someone you subscribe to, one of your mods, or one of your editors. Taking things further, it is possible to completely block users who become problematic. Show your child how to make use of this option by clicking on a user's name and in the little pop-up that appears, click the icon that looks like a little speech bubble to block them. If your child wishes to report the user to Twitch, click the three dots button beneath the block option and click Report.

THE RISK - WEBCAM SHARING

As well as seeing streaming footage of games, Twitch also lets users share their webcam, so people can see them. This gives yet another way for people to share inappropriate content, and it also gives another way for streamers to subject your child to advertising, sponsored content and product placement.

What parents can do

Getting involved in your child's use of Twitch is the best way to keep an eye on the sort of content they are consuming and intervene if anything inappropriate crops up. As part of your conversations with your child about what is appropriate to share online, try to educate them about careful use of their own webcam if they choose to stream their own gaming. As well as ensuring they are not encouraged into doing anything inappropriate on camera, it is also important to check that anything that can be used to identify them is not included in shot.

THE RISK - TWITCH EMOTES

Twitch's interactive chat feature is littered with emoticons or 'emotes', which for first time users will be completely bewildering. They typically feature faces of notable streamers, Twitch employees or fictional characters, such as a grey-scale photograph of a game developer known as Kappa, which is often used in Twitch chat as a symbol of sarcasm or mockery. Your child may be upset or sensitive if they are the target of negative emotes while chatting with other gamers, or they may find some emotes offensive.

What parents can do

Chat to your child about how they use Twitch and show an interest in understanding how it works. There are lots of online guides to Twitch emotes if you really want to get clued up on what your child is talking about in chats. Twitch's terms of service dictate that emotes must not be used for harassment – defined by 'targeted insults, defamation, intimidation, and threats of any nature'. If your child finds an emote that violates guidelines, they can report it via the 'User Report' tool. Channel owners can also add specific emotes to their 'Channel Banned Words' list.

SOURCES:
<https://www.twitch.tv/>



National Online Safety

A whole school community approach to online safety
www.nationalonlinesafety.com

Email us at hello@nationalonlinesafety.com or call us on 0800 368 8061



School Calendar:

20 th October	Parents' Evening
21 st October	End of term

Some of you may have had difficulty accessing the school website in the last week. We've just updated the address to

www.thamesvalleyschool.org.uk ,

please let us know if there are any issues or errors.

This page is for you at home to send in notices that you think other families might find interesting or helpful. Email simoncalvert@thamesvalley.reading.sch.uk with your notice.

Please send in any school uniform that has been outgrown but is still in good condition. The Friends of TVS will be arranging a redistribution, and we don't have much stock at the moment, so always happy to accept more!

Ruth, Friends of TVS



Me2 Club's Exciting New Project for Teenagers with Additional Needs

Teenagers and their families have told us that they would like Me2 Club to run a group for teenagers to meet together, have fun and develop confidence and independence skills.



We are planning to hold monthly sessions teenagers with additional needs. Teenagers will have an opportunity to plan activities that they would like to do with the support of Me2 Club's experienced staff.

Our first session will be on:

Wednesday, 19th October 6 – 7:30 pm

at Addington School

We will have a takeaway together and plan our first activity!

The sessions will be open to all Reading and Wokingham teenagers with additional needs aged 13 - 19.

If your young person isn't ready to help plan activities, we will support them to be involved as much as they can and to enjoy the activities

**To book your place, email
ramona@me2club.org.uk**



Parenting Programme

June 2022 – March 2023



An annual planner for **FREE** parenting sessions held in our various children's centres across Reading.

June start
2022

Whitley Children's Centre
AM
Mellow Bumps
Starting Tues 7 June
10-11.30am
6 weeks
PM
Dads-to-be evening class
2 hours, 2 weeks

July start
2022

Sun Street Children's Centre
AM
Mellow Bumps
2 hours, 6 weeks

Sept start
2022

Sun Street Children's Centre
AM
YMTB
9.30am – 1.30pm
Weds, 12 weeks
PM
Webster Stratton evening class
2 hours, 12 weeks
Ranikhet Children's Centre
Mellow Mums and Babies
All day, 14 weeks

October start
2022

Southcote Children's Centre
PM
Dads-to-be evening class
2 hours, 2 weeks

Jan start
2023

Sun Street Children's Centre
AM
YMTB
9.30am – 1.30pm
Weds, 12 weeks
Ranikhet Children's Centre
AM
Mellow Bumps
2 hours, 6 weeks
Whitley Children's Centre
AM
Webster Stratton
2 hours, 12 weeks

March start
2023

Southcote Children's Centre
Mellow Mums & Babies
All day, 14 weeks

Find out more!



For all sessions, please book your place.

Email: reading.childrenscentres@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

more info overleaf

Follow us at
@BFCchild



More information on our FREE parenting sessions



YMTB Young Mums-To-Be: A 12-week antenatal course taught with a Poppy Team midwife to help pregnant young first time mums prepare for a new life as a parent. You will learn about having your baby and preparing for labour and birth. We explore the changes to you and your baby to understand antenatal development. We discuss the knowledge and understanding you need to care for your baby in the first 6 months and the support available. The course aims to help you develop skills around social interactions, managing emotional well-being and self-confidence.

Dads-To-Be: A 2-week evening session where expectant fathers can get practical advice from a midwife from the RBH and explore the emotional implications of having a new baby on both parents, as well as ways to support emotional well-being. It is a relaxed, friendly session and a great way to meet other expectant fathers.

Mellow Bumps: A 6-week antenatal group, especially relevant for families needing extra support eg. those working with a family worker, social worker, specialist midwifery team, perinatal mental health team or requiring extra support from health-visiting team. It is intended to decrease the stress levels of mums-to-be in pregnancy, to understand the importance of early interaction with babies for their brain development. The mums-to-be are also helped to identify their own needs and how to access support both in pregnancy and after the birth of their baby.

Mellow Mums & Babies: A 14-week, one day a week group for mums with babies aged 12 weeks to 1.5 years. Free creche on site where the babies will be cared for 2 hours in the morning and 2 hours in the afternoon. Between sessions there is a shared lunch and joint activity to help parents to enjoy interacting with their babies. Mums explore their own experiences to help them understand their care giving style. The programme is designed to improve attachment and develop strong parent-child relationships. Mellow Mums & Babies is a group based approached designed to support families who have additional health and social care needs.

Webster Stratton: A 12-week course, focusing on children aged 1-3yrs. Exploring simple but effective ways to enhance your child's emotional and social competence. You'll learn how to use play, language, positive discipline strategies and more to build a good relationship with your toddler. Free creche for under 5s to attend while their parent/carer attends the course.

Find us at:

Ranikhet	Southcote
Children's Centre	Children's Centre
Spey Road	85 Coronation Square
Reading	Reading
RG30 4ED	RG30 3QP
Whitley	Sun Street
Children's Centre	Children's Centre
330 Northumberland Ave	Sun Street
Reading	Reading
RG2 8DH	RG1 3DX

If you are working with a family that you think would benefit from one of the courses, email: sue.blackwood@brighterfuturesforchildren.org or sarah.ashton@brighterfuturesforchildren.org
A parenting referral will need to be completed through mosaic.

Follow us at
[@bfrcchild](https://www.facebook.com/bfrcchild)



What do we do about money?

Do we need lasting power of attorney or adult social care?

What about housing?

Preparing for adulthood - how we can help

Transition from children's to adults' services can be a challenging and worrying time. What does the future hold and what are the opportunities going to be for the young person when they leave school?

With many plans and decisions to be made within the world of adulthood, controlled by different laws, processes and professionals, what are the young adult's needs and aspirations, and how can these be met? What college or course is right? Do we need health services or adult social care? What should that look like? How do we get those services? What about work? What do we do about money? How will benefits be affected? Do we need lasting power of attorney or deputyship? What about housing? It is a daunting list!

The Reading Mencap Family Support Service has a specialist 'Preparing for Adulthood' Family Adviser who is skilled and knowledgeable about all the issues a young person and their family will face over the next few years.

The Family Support team are longstanding experts in learning disability and autism – some are also experts by experience.

We also have our own in-house Legal Officer for those, hopefully, rare occasions where you need a bit more specialist help to get your young person the service they need.

Our 'Preparing for Adulthood' Family Adviser will help you identify needs, define aspirations and plan and take action to ensure they are met and achieved.

Things to consider...



Looking after the Finances

We can help you to decide what is the best way to support your young person with their finances, either by being their appointee, getting a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) or Deputyship for finance. Our in-house Legal Officer will help to guide you through all the steps you need to take to decide what is best for your young person.

Benefits

Benefits can be more complicated when someone becomes an adult and when there is a need to develop financial independence for the young adult. Our specialist Family Adviser will guide you through the system, including assistance to access specialist

benefits advice from our partner colleagues such as Communicare and Reading Community Welfare Rights, to help you make decisions, applications and to manage the requirements of benefits. If necessary, we can also support attendance at face-to-face benefit assessments, or appeals and tribunals.

Adult Social Care

Before the age of 18, a young adult may have an adult social care assessment under the Care Act 2014 if there appears to be a need for social care.

Our Preparing For Adulthood Family Advisor will give support to identify the young adult's needs and prepare for, and engage in, the assessment process. They will support you to achieve a good, sustainable care plan to meet

those assessed needs. This may include the Family Advisor helping you to make use of the Reading Directory, or to consider Direct Payments, or the use of a personal assistant and to advise about care providers along the way. The Family Advisor can also support the family or other unpaid carers to prepare for and access a carer's assessment. This may be as part of, or separate to, any Education, Health and Social Care Plan process.



Adult Social Care is not free

Unlike children's services, adult social care is not free and the local authority will assess the young adult's income, including their benefits, to decide how much they must pay towards their care. We will help you to manage this situation and to ensure you only pay what you need to. We will help you understand the financial assessment process and ensure you know your rights and the information and evidence that needs to be presented. This will include help to understand what Disability Related Expenses are and how to claim them.

Attending College and Training

When a young person leaves school they may have clear ideas about what they want to do in college or they may not. We can help them make a good decision about their education. We can help to ensure they get the college placement they want and need. But, if they don't want to attend college, we can put you in touch with the other organisations that can help with training and apprenticeships.



Life after College

Finding work or meaningful things to do for young adults who leave college but who do not gain employment can be a worry. We will help you to explore the different services in and around Reading which are there for young people to help them find employment or keep busy and stay healthy during the week, as well as making friends and having a good time.



Housing

Some young people may need to look for accommodation outside the family home. We can give support about housing and care choices and also help to access our partner voluntary sector colleagues who are experts in housing benefits.

Health

Young adults with learning disabilities may need a little more help to navigate adult health services and to manage health issues and stay healthy all year round. We can also help you understand how to obtain and attend

a free annual health check and about health screening services. We can advise you about health passports and making a plan for emergencies and about who will be there to help if the young adult or carer has to have a stay in hospital.

Leisure and socialising

Our family Advisor will help you to source age-appropriate leisure and social opportunities to meet individual needs of young adults. These opportunities are essential to the health and wellbeing of every young adult.



About Reading Mencap

Reading Mencap has been helping people with learning disabilities and their families in Reading for 60 years.

As well as our Family Support Service, we also run a range of services to provide a holistic response to the needs of those with learning disabilities and their family carers.

We run clubs in both weekday evenings and in the daytime, as well as two day-activity services for those who need a little more help.

You can also sign up for our quarterly newsletter which is packed with news and information as well as regular updates for important news you need to know.

Our Family Support Service has five Family Advisers, who offer an outreach case-working service of information, advice, and advocacy, whether in the family home, at our advice centre or at meetings, reviews or tribunals or wherever support is needed.

We work closely with the Reading IASS for



SEND service and the RBC Preparing for Adulthood Team and Communicare, as well as many other colleague voluntary sector organisations in Reading, to ensure our clients get the very best support available no matter what they need.

How to contact us

Reading Mencap, 21 Alexandra Road Reading, RG1 5PE

Office hours: 9:30am to 1:30pm Monday to Friday;
answering machine at other times

Call: 0118 966 2518

Email: familysupport-kate@readingmencap.org.uk

web: www.readingmencap.org.uk

Service commissioned by:



The local voice of learning disability

Reading Mencap is a registered charity No.1118287 and a company limited by guarantee No. 05976118.

It exists to inform, support and provide services for the families of children and adults with learning disabilities. We are affiliated to Royal Mencap, but remain an independent organisation, we receive no financial support from them.

Support for transitioning to adulthood



An information, advice, and advocacy service for young people with learning disabilities aged 16-25 and their families.

A new Reading Borough Council funded service to support young people and adults with Learning Disability and Autism and their families, who are aged 16-25 and preparing for adulthood. Our new full time Transitions Family Adviser will offer an independent, outreach, information, advice and support service to guide young people and their families through the complexities of becoming an adult, to manage the changes in social care, benefits, housing, health, education, employment and financial management.

Our vision for children and young people with learning disabilities and autism in Reading is the same as for all children and young people, that they achieve well in their early years, at school and in college and make a good transition to adulthood to lead contented and fulfilled lives.

For enquiries about this new service contact:
Tel: 0118 966 2518 (open Mon-Fri, 9.30am-1.30pm)
Email: familysupport-kate@readingmencap.org.uk

You can view the information flyers by clicking on this link [Reading Mencap - Preparing for Adulthood Service | Reading Services Guide \(openobjects.com\)](#)