

OxPCF with Mental Health Natters

October 4th 2024



Summary

The Oxfordshire SEND Room Connect Afternoon event aimed to provide a supportive space for parent carers of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Ana Bonasera, Communications and Engagement Lead and Jules, forum chair, introduced the event, emphasising the importance of community and understanding. Participants shared their personal experiences, highlighting challenges such as diagnoses, school refusal, and the need for flexible support. Guest speakers Danni and Emily from Mental Health Natters discussed emotionally based school avoidance, advocating for a holistic approach and the importance of mental health before learning. The session concluded with a Q&A and information on upcoming events.

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Questions and Answers

Q: When is it best to start looking at secondary school for my 7 year old, I'm very scared.

A: The best time to start looking for secondary schools is in year 5, make a list of open days you want to attend to narrow down your choices and revisit the ones you like in year 6. The open days are usually in September and you have to give your final choices by the end of October, therefore not giving you much time to make an informed decision. Have a look for different choices of open evening/days, evening events can be a bit of a show, try and go in the day to get a real feel for the school.

Q: SENCO s are often overwhelmed and not given the time and resource and support in school to help. Talking is so essential for the youngsters. Schools don't have the space for it.

A: Mental Health Natters want to have a positive relationship with schools while still prioritising the children's needs. We understand the teachers and SENCOs are stretched but changes do need to be made.

Q: We have twin 14 yr old Audhd children. One 2 yrs into burnout & one six months into a burnout period . I think there is little info about burnout on offer before it can possibly happen. The advice was always get them into school.

A: A lot of our young people are struggling with burnout, have a look into <https://www.spectrumgaming.net/> they are doing a project on burnout, signs leading up to it, recovery and more.

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Questions and Answers continued

Q: Home schooling advice

A: Before taking your child off role, please explore every option possible, keep them home while you search for an alternative path as the minute you take them off role you are responsible for your child's education, whereas if they are on role and it can't be managed in school it is their responsibility to find an alternative path for their education.

Q: There doesn't seem to be any options/schools for very academic autistic pupils if they can't manage in mainstream school.

A: There is a list on the county council website, there are a lot of different provisions available, some may be animal based, a little bit of education, outdoors based. If there are any specific providers you'd like to get in touch with please do email us and we can refer you to someone more suited.

<https://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/access-learning/approved-alternative-provider-list>

Q: Online tutors or in person?

A: There are a lot of different options, Academy 21 is one that a lot of the children they work with. The school your child is on role at can refer them to, it is not one that you can enrol at as a home schooling family. There are different age group/key stages and they have a set timetable so if your child is academic but can't manage school they can learn from their comfort spaces.

<https://academy21.co.uk/>



Questions and Answers continued

Q: Do you have any male staff? My teen son has been unable to engage with Dare to dream because they have no male staff and he can't seem to interact with the young lady they have sent

A: Currently, mental health matters does not have any male staff but they hope their previous male staff member will return soon.

Q: My 7 year old when using the laptop he becomes very hyper after 10-15 minutes, the school give him work on the laptop but he then goes on to YouTube to watch Peter Rabbit and when trying to direct him back to work he begins to scream and I get scared.

A: Mental Health Natters suggest trying to start a routine of work, then time to watch his programmes. Talk to school and explain the situation and tell them that you will ask your child if they are ready to do the work but if he says no you will not be forcing him. If it is possible ask the school for paper based materials.

Q: How can I add on to next week's event?

A: You can join our next event on 21st October 8-9pm by clicking this link <https://www.oxpcf.org.uk/events>

Q: What do you think about psycho education?

A: Our ethos is grounded in humanistic psychology, so yes Mental Health Natters believes a psycho education is key.

Q: Can you tell us how we can come to the parent monthly support?

A: Send Dani a message dani@mentalhealthnatters.org for further details

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Resources

<https://www.naomifisher.co.uk/>

<https://notfineinschool.co.uk/>

<https://www.heidimavir.com/>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

<https://www.charliewaller.org/>

<https://missingthemark.co.uk/>

<https://autismunderstood.co.uk/>

<https://www.autisticrealms.com/>

<https://neuroclastic.com/my-brain-is-autistic/>

<https://www.barrierstoeducation.co.uk/talking-about-autism>

<https://www.pdasociety.org.uk/>

<https://autisticgirlsnetwork.org/>

<https://academy21.co.uk/>

www.learnlaughplay.co.uk

<https://www.spectrumgaming.net/>

<https://onhs.autismoxford.com>

<https://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/access-learning/approved-alternative-provider-list>