



Norfolk County Council



Virtual School Sensory Support News update



VSSS parent/carer survey

Give us your views!

Fill in our [Parent / Carer Survey](#) and tell us how we can improve our service. Thank you if you've already filled in our survey.

As always, if you want to contact us directly for any reason, we will be pleased to hear from you and can be contacted via delyth.crook@norfolk.gov.uk and kate.stocks@norfolk.gov.uk.

Kind regards, Delyth and Kate



Free visit to Gressenhall Museum

There are two FREE opportunities coming soon for children and young people who are supported by VSSS to attend Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse Museum:

1. On Monday 4th September, for all families with pre-school children and those in Reception, Y1 and Y2 supported by VSSS. This event is free of charge for everyone in the group (maximum group size is 6). Registration opens at 10:30am.

Please contact Cathy Rodd for any questions and to pre-book. Please tell us how many people there will be in your group and give us a contact number. Contact Cathy on 07825 733544 or email cathy.rodd@norfolk.gov.uk.

2. On Tuesday 5th September, there will be a visit to Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse for all families with children in Years 3,4,5,6 and 7 supported by VSSS. Again this event is free of charge for everyone in the group (maximum group size is 6). Registration opens at 10:30am.

Please contact Debbie Sheils for any questions and to pre-book. Please tell us how many people there will be in your group and give us a contact number. Contact Debbie on 07799 348864 or email debbie.sheils.yot@norfolk.gov.uk.

This is a great opportunity to have a free fun day out with the whole family – siblings and grandparents are all welcome (max group size is 6). Please ask your teacher of the deaf/ VI or MSI if you would like more information on what to expect.

Please contact us to book your place by Friday 21st July. If your circumstances change over the summer, please email us to let us know if you cannot take up your place. Emails won't be checked until Friday 1st September.

Further information about access at Gressenhall can be found on the Gressenhall website [Access facilities at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse - Norfolk Museums](#).



Time to get dressed

We're getting to the time of year when we all start to look forward to the summer holidays and parents begin to think about buying uniform for September; particularly for those children who will be starting in Reception. Lots of children struggle with dressing skills and this is more difficult for children and young people with a vision impairment. Here are just a few tips that may help:

- **Adaptive clothing**
Some supermarkets sell "easy on easy wear" school uniform which is made of sensory kind fabrics and adapted fastenings (ie. Velcro instead of buttons) to promote independence for children.
- Buy the next size up – looser clothes will be easier for your child to get on and off.
- **Contrasting colours** – when purchasing a school coat, look for one with a contrasting lining which will help your child identify if their coat is inside out.

Contrasting fasteners (zips and buttons) will be far easier for your child to locate. Using brightly coloured zipper pulls can make it easier to locate the sliders.

- Easy zips – check the zips before buying coats and hoodies because some are easier than others and there's nothing more frustrating than a zip that constantly gets stuck!
- Large buttons and buttonholes – these will be easier to manipulate when practising buttons for the first time. If buttonholes are too tight, try enlarging the hole slightly using a stitch ripper/unpicker.
- Practise and allow time - make sure your child can undress confidently before focussing on them getting themselves dressed. When encouraging independent dressing, start with loose easy on clothing which will guarantee success and build confidence.
- Be detectives – look for clues with your child to help them work out if something is inside out or back to front; explore seams, look for tags, pictures on tops, tie cords on trousers, pockets, zips and hoods. Explore different types of clothing; how can we tell if something is a cardigan or jumper, T-shirt or shirt, shorts or trousers or tracksuit bottoms?
- Lace up shoes – children love having school shoes with laces but tying them is a tricky skill to master. If they can't be enticed with Velcro shoes, there are lots of no-tie laces available, which will promote independence while your child is learning how to tie their own shoes.
- Tactile clues/ left and right name stickers - can help your child get their shoes on the correct foot.
- Shoehorn – holding the tongue and back of the shoe is tricky; an old-fashioned shoehorn is worth a try.



Short breaks consultation

Please get involved in the following consultation if you have children with SEND who receive short breaks:

The council's Short Breaks service is asking hundreds of families for their views about changes to the way out of school activities and respite are provided for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in Norfolk.

The service is proposing changing the way children's needs are assessed for Short Breaks. It is consulting on a new approach to work with families to create a plan of activities and support for children with SEND focused on their needs, instead of focusing on setting a budget for the child and matching support to that budget.

The consultation is part of a broader review of our £2.4 million a year Short Breaks service, which supports around 1,700 families with activities and support at home, at centres and in the community.

The consultation and review do not propose any reduction in access to Short Breaks or reduction of the service's £2.4 million annual budget. It seeks to increase choice of activities on offer in local areas and give opportunities to experience activities together, if that is what's right for a child and their family.

The [Short Breaks page on the NCC website](#) has more information about the consultation including how to get involved. The consultation can be completed online or printed off and posted back to the council for free. It is also available in large print and easy read. It's open until Tuesday 25 July.



Thank you for reading our newsletter

We hope you have found these articles engaging. Further information can be found on our Facebook pages: