



Referral Form

(for use by families or professionals)

Family Name

Parent / carers first name

Contact number or email

Closest Family Group Craven Arms / Oswestry

Child with difficulties

Name

Age

Diagnosis or area of difficulties.....

School attended

Siblings Name/s.....

Age/s

School attended

The family would like

Empathy to contact them

More info about

Family Friendship groups

Holiday Activities

Unleashed

Would like to attend a Family Friendship Group.

All information will be used and stored as confidential and will not be past on to or discussed with any other agencies without the families written consent.

Referring professionals please provide your name and a contact

Q—Ours is not a standard family unit, can we attend?

Of course your family is welcome whatever it's shape or size. If you have extended family members, friends or neighbours that either support you or make you feel more comfortable in attending then for us they are a part of your family unit and are welcome to attend with you.

Q—Is there a cost ?

Holiday activities are variable. The first session of a family friendship group is free, thereafter the cost is £5/ Family/ session. Finances is the barrier we can most easily remove and therefore if cost is an issue, please talk to us in complete confidence.

Q- I don't have transport, can you help ?

Unfortunately we cannot provide transport to either the groups or the pick up points for holiday activities, however if transport is an issues please talk to us and we will do all we can to help you resolve the situation.

Q—My child does not see themselves as having a disability and therefore will not attend.

We don't have the answer but this is a common thread with all of our special children; their hidden disability means they spend much of there time normalising themselves. Empathy has taken the decision to become a specific high functioning group to overcome this barrier. Whilst in the south is population is more diverse, on the whole at any Empathy session your child will simply meet more children like them and their siblings. Please call us if this is a specific problem for your family.

For more information about please contact



www.empathyforasd.org

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Email; empathyforspecialchildren@gmail.com

Look out for the smiley face and like us on
FACEBOOK
or tweet us @empathyforasd



EMPATHY

What is it all about ?

**If you have a child with ASD
or
similar high functioning
difficulties**

**please read on to find out more
about a local organisation,
that may be able to help
your family.**



Family Friendship Groups.

Family Friendship groups were our starting point and remain at the core of all we do. The aim of the groups is to provide a forum in which families can meet in a safe, supported and non judgmental environment to socialise, enjoy some family time and try something new.

We now run 2 groups on alternate Saturdays in Craven Arms and Oswestry. At either group you will always find trained playleaders to support your family in their interactions, a timetable of regular activities and families much the same as yours.

We hire our buildings exclusively and the doors are locked throughout the session.

You will be met on the door by a member of the parent team who will sign you in and help you choose a coloured sticker to reflect how you are all feeling. You will be given a tour and introduced to one of the playleaders.

Each session follows the same timetable

Supported free play; your family can choose to access the delivered sport (i.e., football, dodgeball, cricket) the available racket sport or the free play sporting equipment. If sport isn't your thing then play opportunities are always available through Lego, speed stackers, board games etc, as is a creative activity or if you just need a jump around there is equipment available for that too

Snack; the children are encouraged to come together and enjoy a snack, usually of cake and fruit before the

Taster or lead Sessions; this is your chance for a cup of coffee and a break whilst the playleaders take care of the children for either a session / game lead by them or a taster session from a local club or activity; recent visitors to group have included junior rugby, golf and a samba band.

We end each session with

Together time; when everyone comes back together for a group game (something like Dragon Treasure/ Duck, duck Goose)and circle time.

At each session we have a designated quiet space (usually a tent) and no one is expected to join with anything if they can't. If you need to integrate gradually 10 mins at a time that's fine by us and likewise you are free to leave the sessions at any point.

For dates and programmes please see the website
www.empathyforasd.org
or contact us

Frequently asked questions

What is Empathy for special children ??

Empathy was established in 2010 by a small group of like minded parents to combat the isolation of growing up with ASD or additional needs.

The organisation remains parent run and lead.

Q- What does Empathy do ??

We aim to improve the lives of families living with high functioning ASD or additional needs through provision of regular social activities ; please see this leaflet for more details

Q-Who can attend an Empathy session ?

Any family with a child aged 0 -18 years, having or suspected of having a high functioning autistic spectrum disorder or related condition (ASD, HFA, Aspergers, ADHD, Dyspraxia, Selective Mutism, Semantic pragmatic disorder to name but a few)

Q-Does my child need a diagnosis ??

Absolutely not ! As parents we understand just how difficult it can be to get your child's difficulties formally recognised. We also know that you know your child best and if you have concern enough to need the group then you that's good enough for us.

Q-Can I drop my child off at a session ?

No, other than unleashed, our ethos is one of family support and whilst we have playleaders at every session we cannot provide care for any child.

Q-We have had bad experiences in the past, why might Empathy be different ?

We can make no guarantee that Empathy will suit your child or family; whilst our children's common areas of difficulty bind them together they do not remove their individuality and each child with asd remains as unique as their neurotypical counterparts. However ,at Empathy we work very hard to meet the needs of our special children first. As parents ourselves we understand not only the difficulties your family faces in accessing something new and social but also the concerns you have. We do not ask that you book before you attend an Empathy friendship group. Although if you contact us before you attend not only can we have a discussion with you (the expert) about your family but also provide you with some further material and information . This we hope will ease some of that transition anxiety and give you the confidence as a family to take that first big leap of faith.

Holiday Activities

In addition to our family friendship groups Empathy runs holiday activities one day a week during each school holiday. Again these are outings for the whole family, with the playleaders attending to support We try to maintain a support ratio of 1 adult: 2 children as a minimum on all outings.

Holiday activities for 2014-15 have included

Easter

Park Hall Farm
Secret Hills
Warwick Castle

May Half Term

West Mids Safari Park

Summer Hols

Unleashed#gainingindependence
(Our pilot project for those 10 years and over who accessed 3 full days of activities at Condoval Hall)

The BIG camp out
Archery and Cardingmill
Crocky trails
BMX with Wrekin riders
Fairbourne Beach

Oct Half term— Cadbury's World

Christmas

Ice Skating at Telford
Severn Valley Railway
Panto at Shrewsbury

Feb Half Term—Laser Tag

Exclusive hire of Mickey Millers

A membership scheme exists giving members a discounted rate, however we try to keep the cost of each activity to a maximum of £30 / family without membership.

