An exciting project is underway in Merton and across south west London to improve mental health for children and young people.

As a society, we are more open to talking about mental health than ever before – but the pressures children face are changing and we have to adapt to help them. We want to start earlier and give them the skills to be resilient so they can thrive.

Schools are coming together with health and social care professionals to deliver training and support for children and young people, their families and teachers.

This new way of working will initially be piloted in around 15% of schools. The aim is to gather evidence to demonstrate this approach can make a difference so that all schools can be included in the future.

NHS Merton Clinical Commissioning Group and Merton Council are involved in shaping this work alongside Ursuline High School.

Under the new arrangements a team of support workers will be shared between the schools involved in the borough. They have already started their training and began visiting schools in February 2019. They will offer one-to-one support and group-work sessions for pupils and parents.

*Continued on page 2*
Continued from page 1

Children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) can benefit from this support if they are experiencing mild to moderate anxiety or behaviour problems (primary aged children) or mild to moderate anxiety or low mood (secondary school children). In addition, if SEND young people and their parents want to work together towards a change, support workers can help them practise ways to do this. Melrose School in Merton will be involved in the project going forward.

The project has been awarded £1.85m of national ‘Trailblazer’ funding - to find out more, please visit www.swlondon.nhs.uk.

The extract below is from a Merton Council Press Release - January 2019.

Kelly Braund, Merton Council cabinet member for children's services, said: “Securing this funding is a real step in the right direction, and means that we can access the much-needed resources to deliver pioneering mental health care to Merton’s young people. In Merton, we are proud of our strong partnership work that means we can provide early intervention services by raising awareness, building resilience and helping young people to access the services they need when they first need it. I look forward to seeing the continuation of the brilliant work being done by a comprehensive range of services that work together to improve the mental health and emotional wellbeing of Merton’s young people.”

The trailblazer mental health support teams will offer both one to one support and group treatment sessions for children and young people and, where needed, provide referrals to specialist children and adolescent mental health services (CAHMS).

Initially, the extra funding will support the development of three teams as a pilot across Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth. However, the South West London Health and Care Partnership is also hoping for a future roll out of teams across Croydon, Richmond and Kingston – building on learning from the pilot.

New schemes and services are also being introduced across south west London, including online peer support for young people, mental health first aid training for teachers, courses to empower parents to talk to their children about emotional wellbeing, an improved single point of access for CAMHS and a directory of support services.

BACKGROUND

Nationally, we know that 50% of all mental health problems are established by the age of 14, rising to 75% by age 24.

One in ten children aged 5-16 has a diagnosable mental health condition, such as conduct disorder, anxiety disorder, attention deficient hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or depression.

Merton has the second highest rate of child mental health admissions compared to comparative boroughs (122.7 per 100,000, equivalent to 56 admissions, 2014/15). This is the higher than the average for England (87.4 per 100,000) and London (94.2 per 100,000).

Source: https://news.merton.gov.uk/2019/01/18/mental-health-support-teams-to-support-up-to-25000-young-people-a-year-in-south-west-london/

Kids First will provide updated information about this project as soon as we know more.
About Kids First

Kids First is Merton’s Forum for Parents and Carers of Children and Young People with Disabilities or Special Needs up to the age of 25, who live or attend school/college in Merton. It is a project of Merton Mencap. Membership is growing all the time and we currently have nearly 600 members.

Kids First’s strengths are:
- we are a local group;
- we welcome all parents or carers;
- we support all disabilities and special needs, including mild to severe learning disability, autistic spectrum disorder, physical and sensory impairment, and other complex medical needs;
- we are a source of information and mutual support at our events and work with local providers on issues that matter to parents.

Funding

Kids First receives funding from the Department for Education and the London Borough of Merton. Our money is used to support representative work, help members to have a voice in how services for disabled children and young people are shaped and delivered locally, and run our very popular events and information exchange meetings listed on page 11 of this newsletter.

Please send us any of your issues and queries so we can be sure we are working for you.

Steering Group

The Kids First Steering Group, made up of parent/carer volunteers, meets during the day once or twice per term. The Steering Group drives forward the business and planning of Kids First. We also ensure the voices of all our parents are heard at local policy-making level and we are fully involved on all Boards and Forums which design new services or review existing provision for example, the Kids First SEND Implementation Group, Preparation for Adulthood Board, Patient Engagement Group and the Autism Partnership Steering Group which will oversee the implementation of Merton’s Autism Strategy.

We are also part of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) through which steering group members can access free national training programmes or can attend meetings with other parent forums if they are interested.

New Focus Groups

In addition, Merton Council has recently set up 8 new focus groups, which Kids First have parent representation on, in preparation for the anticipated SEND inspection by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission.

The original overarching focus group is the Kids First SEND Implementation Review Group which was set up by Merton Council with Kids First to look at how well the implementation of the SEND reforms is going in Merton. The additional focus groups are topic specific. These are:

1. Early Years – including identification of SEND and early intervention;
2. Identification of SEND and early intervention (not in Early Years);
3. Participation, Involvement and Engagement with parents;
4. Vulnerable Groups with SEND;
5. Outcomes and impact of local area improvements on raising standards;
6. Assessment and Meeting Needs;
7. Therapies focus groups;
8. Local Offer focus group.

Plus, we have been asked to provide parent representation on the new Merton SEN Information, Advice and Support Service (MIASS) Advisory Board, the creation of which, was one of the requirements of the new national minimum standards for all SENDIASS services effective from the 1 April.

It is never too late to volunteer; you are always welcome – why not try it out? You can just come along and meet the team. You can play a very small part or a larger part; it is up to you.

Help us recruit more members

If you know someone who lives in Merton and has a child with a disability or special need, please ask them to contact Kids First. Membership is free, new parents simply download a word registration form from the website and email it to the Kids First Administrator or you can fill one in at your first event – see page 11.

Is this newsletter useful?

If you have any comments about this newsletter, our website or service in general, please take the time to email kf.admin@mertonmencap.org.uk

Feedback is essential for the continuation of our funding so... all comments welcome!
Update from Merton’s Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Integrated Service (SENDIS)
Submitted by the London Borough of Merton

SEN Support

Merton school improvement service and inclusion teams are continuing to focus on support for meeting the needs of pupils identified as SEN Support. This is both a national and local theme. As a local area we are pleased that by the time SEN Support pupils reach the end of KS2 in primary school, their progress from KS1 is above the national average for all pupils in reading and maths. Whilst progress has improved for writing it is still below the national figure. As a local area we have made a successful bid to carry out a project focusing on measuring the progress of pupils with SEN and particularly those identified as requiring SEN Support. This project aims to produce a toolkit of assessments that can be used to more accurately measure the progress made by pupils with SEN, in a range of areas of learning and development. Alongside this we will provide moderation meetings for schools to quality assure their judgements for pupil progress.

Our recent Spring Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) Forum was attended by over 50 Merton SENCos. Merton SENDIS ran a workshop focusing on identification of pupils with SEN. This built on work already carried out by SENCos in the autumn term in which they worked together to create an identification flow chart to share with parents and school staff, setting out the stages required to make an accurate assessment of a child or young person’s additional needs.

At the Spring SENCo Forum, Members of Kids First provided a very insightful presentation about the journey of their children through the SEN Support process, highlighting successes and barriers. This provided much food for thought for SENCos.

A focus for our SENCo working group meetings will be to look at teaching strategies that support pupils identified as SEN Support to access learning in the classroom more effectively. We aim to create a toolkit of strategies used by class teachers that support improved learning for this group.

Education, Health and Care Plan Hub pilot

Merton SENDIS will be implementing an EHC Plan Hub which is an online portal for parents/carers, children/young people and professionals to co-develop Education, Health and Care Plans. The portal will streamline processes and allow tracking of timeframes, receipt of reports and professional advice. The Hub will also ensure that Annual Reviews are undertaken effectively and EHC Plans amended within the statutory timescales. We will be seeking parents to be part of the development of the documents to be used on the Hub and to pilot this prior to going live. If you are interested in being part of this pilot please contact Tracy Blackwell at kids.first@mertonmencap.org.uk.

SEN Transport Renewal Form

SENDIS have discussed an annual application renewal for transport assistance with Kids First representatives as part of the working group on the SEND reforms implementation. Further consultation regarding this process will be taking place throughout the year in readiness for the academic year 2020/21. Merton SENDIS will be providing updates on the progress of this and will be calling on Kids First members to coproduce the application form with the Local Authority. The aim is to ensure that we commission the appropriate level of transport and transport assistance and to ensure that information regarding children’s needs is up-to-date.

SEND Legal Training for Parents

SENDIS will be providing legal training in the coming term to Head Teachers regarding the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Code of Practice 2015 particularly focusing on consultation and reasonable steps. It is envisaged that this training will also be rolled out to parents and carers. If you would be interested in receiving training, please register your interest with Tracy Blackwell at kids.first@mertonmencap.org.uk.
Meet the new Manager of Merton’s Information, Advice and Support Service

As mentioned in our last newsletter, over the summer the London Borough of Merton were recruiting for the Merton Information, Advice and Support Service Officer post following Chris Wilson’s retirement after many years’ service. Kids First were asked to be involved in the recruitment process.

Melanie Pheasant, a Kids First steering group member, met on three separate occasions with Keith Shipman, Merton’s Education Inclusion Manager, and Jane McSherry, Merton’s Assistant Director of Education, during the recruitment process to appoint the MIASS Manager.

The first meeting was to discuss and formulate the job description and person specification using information provided by the Steering Group and input from Chris Wilson. The second part of the process was to shortlist four candidates to interview, and the final meeting was to be part of the interview panel interviewing the four candidates.

Melanie was very impressed with the rigorous and professional nature of the process and felt she had very much been an equal and valued partner in the whole process. It is hoped that Kids First could take part in future appropriate recruitment processes with the London Borough of Merton.

Fran Turko has been in post as Merton’s new SEN Information, Advice and Support Service Manager since September 2018. She kindly took time out of her very busy schedule to answer some questions for Kids First.

KF: How has it felt stepping into the large shoes of Chris Wilson?

FT: Daunting but an honour. So far it has been smoother than I expected but I have definitely been benefiting from the large amount of goodwill that Chris created and have had a lot of support. Parents in particular have been patient and understanding and have really encouraged me. I am pleased he is still going to be involved in the service at a strategic level as he is going to be a member of the service’s new advisory board.

Can you explain a bit about the service and the different roles you and Nicole Ashbolt-Collins (post-16 advisor) have within the service?

We offer impartial advice and guidance for families with children with SEND and for young people with SEND. We cover ages 0 to 25 and often signpost to other services as well.

Nicole tends to focus on those young people in year 9 and above as she is the post-16 worker and the SEN Code of Practice expects the year 9 annual review to include planning for adulthood and independence. However, we both have cases from the other year groups.

Nicole is due to go on maternity leave from the beginning of May and we are recruiting maternity cover for her. We will let you know more about that appointment when it is confirmed, which is expected to be around mid-June all being well.

What is the most rewarding part of your role?

That’s really hard! Probably making a difference to children and young people’s experience of education and helping parents feel more confident in using the system to get the right outcome for their child. I have really enjoyed meeting the children and young people and continue to be struck by how much each child is different and has a unique set of talents.

Do you get the opportunity to meet other IASS officers from other Local Authorities and is the Merton service similar to theirs?

I attend the London regional forum for the IASS services once per term. Most of the focus of these meetings has been support for the funding bids as this has been crucial in sustaining services for parents.

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Continued from page 5

The informal networking with IASS officers from other Local Authorities is great for me as a new Manager and they again have been very supportive.

Merton’s service is different because we already have a post-16 worker and many other services are going down the same line. The other unique aspect is how long Chris had been in post (over 20 years) and the continuity that has brought for the service. Many other Local Authorities have outsourced the service so they are structured differently to ours. A lot of other boroughs are doing more online than we are and we continue to invest in good quality relationships by offering face-to-face contact where possible.

*From your experience in the role so far what do you think are the top 3 areas of concern that parents have?*

1. Retaining their relationships with schools whilst challenging them.

2. That their questions are not worth asking as they may be thought of as irrelevant or ignorant - both of which is never the case! (Parents are not expected to be experts of the SEN framework but certainly are experts of the needs of their child).

3. Good quality communication lines with SEN case officers.

*How do parents access your service?*

Either by phone or email. We can also attend external meetings and meet parents, carers and young people face-to-face either in our office, at their school or college, at their home or in the community (for example at the Civic Centre or at a coffee shop). We do have a very high caseload so we are working on ways to reduce the waiting time for parents to get a response.

Fran & Nicole held a Kids First session on 28 January 2019 to talk to Kids First members about MIASS. We are pleased to let you know that Fran will be returning to Kids First on 24th June to cover the topic of primary to secondary transition.

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**Merton’s Information, Advice and Support Service (MIASS)**

Based at, but independent of, Joseph Hood Primary School, Whatley Avenue, Raynes Park, London SW20 9NS.

Telephone: 0208 543 8854 (leave a message)

Fran Turko MIASS Manager: fran.turko@merton.gov.uk

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**Links to other useful sources of help & information:**

**SOS SEN! 0300 302 3731** Local, free, friendly, independent and confidential telephone helpline for parents looking for information and advice on Special Educational Needs and Disability.

Information
Submitted by the London Borough of Merton

What is the SEN Local Offer?

The Merton SEN Local Offer website www.merton.gov.uk/localoffer provides information about support and services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and disabilities and their families.

The Local Offer provides details of services and support from birth to the age of 25. It includes information about:

• Schools, Colleges and Further Education
• Childcare
• Health Services
• Social Care
• Preparing for Adulthood
• Leisure Activities
• Work and Training
• Support and Advice

It tells you how to get the services you need, such as how to get a referral or assessment, if required. Why not take a look today and see how useful it is? Merton Council manages the website and continues to develop the Local Offer with help from parents, carers, children and young people, professionals and practitioners. Whether you think any information is missing or difficult to find, or you found the site helpful and easy to use, please do let the team know. If you know of any services that are not on the website that may be of interest to families, they would also love to hear from you.

You can contact the team at localoffer@merton.gov.uk.

Independent Travel Training

Merton Council commissions Merton Mencap to train young people with learning disabilities/autism to become independent travellers for their journey between home and their place of education. To be eligible for the service students should be between the age of 14 - 18 (or from 12, subject to a risk assessment & suitability for the programme), have an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) & have the potential to become an independent traveller.

Although students do not need to have Merton transport to have travel training, priority will be given to those who currently receive Merton transport assistance to their place of education.

Travel training will include; route planning from home to school or college, confidence using public transport, personal safety, how to use timetables and buy tickets, road safety and what to do when things go wrong (e.g. the train is late). Each stage is repeated until the young person is able to satisfy the trainer that they have acquired the necessary skills to confidently travel alone.

You may self-refer your child to the service by contacting Sally Taylor, Merton Transport Coordinator on 020 8545 4810, option 2, or by sending an email to sally.taylor@merton.gov.uk.
NAS Merton

Submitted by National Autistic Society Merton

NAS Merton was established over 4 years ago. Our committee team are now confident to spot the areas where we can make a positive difference for our community. This is our list of Main Aims for 2019 – our initiatives will be posted on our website, well worth a look.

- Offer a forum for the autistic community.
- Provide a signposting service.
- Raise awareness with the local community.
- Offer autistic adults a social community.
- To be involved with relevant Local Authority departments.
- To aim to improve local business and services.

Among other new initiatives, 2018 saw the launch of our popular Sensory Processing Workshops with OT Sheena Rufus, and the Sensory Library, where you can loan OT equipment to trial at home. We also organised our first coffee morning for adults on the autistic spectrum.

Have you been to our regular coffee mornings? South Park Garden Pavilion has become a home from home for our friendly meet ups. We offer occasional appearances by professionals and experts – not formal talks, but more a chance to ask questions and open discussions. Our Facebook group enables members to share their concerns, successes, advice and suggestions.

As a team of volunteers, we work hard to build and represent the autistic community in Merton. We hope to welcome you soon. Join our mailing list or join us on FB NAS Merton Support Group for more information. Spread the word!

Miranda Duffy - NAS Merton Lead

Email: merton.group@nas.org.uk
Web: http://nasmerton.webeden.co.uk/
FB: NAS Merton Support Group
Twitter: @NAS_Merton

adults first

Adults First is a service for carers of adults with a learning disability aged 18 plus and is a project of Merton Mencap. Membership is free. Kids First parents of young adults aged 18-25 can be members of both Adults First and Kids First and so can benefit from the activities and support of both. Sessions are usually held at the Leyton Road Centre, 21 Leyton Road, Colliers Wood, SW19 1DJ.

For details, check the website www.mertonmencap.org.uk/adultsfirst.htm or contact us at af.admin@mertonmencap.org.uk.

SIFFS (Sensory Impaired Friends and Family Society)

Submitted by SIFFS

SIFFS is a social activities group for young people with sensory impairments and their families. It is run by Merton Sensory Support Service, along with parent volunteers. We organise two social events a year in the autumn and summer terms. The autumn event has a Christmas theme and typically involves some games of bingo with pizza plus a tombola and raffle. In the summer term we plan different activities such as a summer fete or drumming workshop. The events are a good way for families to meet each other, so please do come along if you receive an invite.

For more information, please contact sen@merton.gov.uk or call: 020 8545 4810.

We also work closely with Merton Vision’s Eye Can Do It who organise monthly activities for children with sensory impairments. Past activities have included trips to museums, farms, climbing walls, pottery painting, laser tag, mini-golf, jewellery making and much more. There is something for all interests!

For more information on Eye Can Do It please contact: info@mertonvision.org.uk or call: 020 8540 5446.
**Useful tips and contacts**

**Transport for London (TfL)**

**Travel Support Card**

TfL have produced a card for anyone who finds travelling difficult. It can be used on buses, trams, the Docklands Light Railway (DLR), the Tube, London Overground, London River Services’ boat services and at Victoria Coach Station.

When you need help or support you can show your card to any member of transport staff.

Types of assistance may include:

- telling you or showing you which stop you need to go to for your journey;
- helping you to plan a new journey if there are delays;
- making sure you have time to sit down on the bus before it moves off.

Cards can be obtained online at [https://tfl.gov.uk/forms/12387.aspx](https://tfl.gov.uk/forms/12387.aspx) or by calling 0343 222 1234. You can also find a range of useful documents to help people get around more easily including audio guides, large print maps and much more at [tfl.gov.uk/accessguides](http://tfl.gov.uk/accessguides).

**Merton M-Card**

The M-Card is a concession card issued by London Borough of Merton which provides a quick, easy and discrete method to raise awareness that eligible children have disabilities or Special Educational Needs.

To be eligible for an M-Card, your child must be aged 18 or under and meet one of the following criteria:

- Child Tax Credit to include the disabled child element or Universal Credit with child element and additional disabled child element (lower and higher), or
- A letter confirming current receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) at Middle or Upper level or Personal Independence Payment for this child, or
- A letter from a medical or educational professional confirming there is a complex health need that impacts significantly on getting about or accessing services.

You will be asked to upload evidence of this eligibility as part of your application.

You can apply online through Merton’s Local Offer [https://directories.merton.gov.uk/kb5/merton/directory/advice.page?id=jO8hiyX2kMw](https://directories.merton.gov.uk/kb5/merton/advice.page?id=jO8hiyX2kMw).

The M-Card is valid for two years from the date of issue. If you are already an M-Card holder then you can renew through the same link once your existing card expires.

The M-Card does not automatically renew so you will need to keep track of the expiry date and apply for a new one if your child is still eligible.

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**Did you know....**

... that there are a variety of GPS phone tracker watches on the market? These can give peace of mind when your child is travelling independently.

The Contact free helpline is an advice service for families caring for a disabled child.

Freephone helpline 0808 808 3555 (9.30 – 5pm Mon-Fri) or [helpline@contact.org.uk](mailto:helpline@contact.org.uk).
**Personal story...**

*Submitted by a Kids First member*

I have a son, called Christopher, who has ASD and also anxiety. His anxiety disorder causes him to panic, especially when outside. When using public transport Chris doesn't feel safe and gets very overwhelmed on both buses and trains. So, we avoid public transport and I take him everywhere by car, including college and back every day. Because of this I thought he would be entitled to the mobility part of PIP, this would help me to always have a car to avoid the stress that travelling can cause.

In December I made an application for PIP as it was replacing disability living allowance. He was awarded enhanced daily living as I have to help Chris quite a bit, but he scored 0 points for mobility. I was shocked by this as when my car went for a repair, and I couldn't get a courtesy car, Chris refused to go to school. I couldn't just sit back and do nothing so I filled out the mandatory reconsideration form explaining I feel they have got the decision wrong. The form came back saying no to mobility again, they even said that Christopher's trouble getting to school without a car wouldn't entitle him to mobility for PIP. I was so shocked about this as I know that my son needs help with his mobility every day and that this will continue for the foreseeable future.

My only option at that point was to go to a tribunal, so, after a 6 month wait, I attended court on the 6th of June 2018. I had assembled so much paperwork, all evidence of Christopher's mobility needs, which had been sent to the panel to read. My evidence came from his college that he currently attends, doctor’s letters, a psychologist’s report, therapy reports and his EHCP. The evidence showed that he has quite severe anxiety especially outside and while travelling. At the start of the hearing the panel said they did not have to go through the paperwork at all as they had read through everything already and it is clear the wrong decision had been made. Chris should have got it from the start, they awarded him 12 points rather than 0 which entitles him to enhanced mobility from now on. I was so pleased, I will now always have a car for Chris as I can apply for a Motability car, which helps me out so much. I think it’s worth going all the way to the end if you feel like the decision that the Department for Work and Pensions have made is wrong.

If you have a personal story that you would like to share with Kids First members in a future newsletter, please get in touch at kf.admin@mertonmencap.org.uk

If you want to find out whether you may be entitled to claim Welfare Benefits, Merton Council’s Welfare Benefits Service offers residents of the borough help and advice about:

- whether you are entitled to claim welfare benefits including Disability Living Allowance, PIP, and tax credits;
- help with filling in the forms;
- sending the forms to the correct place; and
- help with first stage Department for Work and Pensions appeals.

https://www.merton.gov.uk/council-tax-benefits-and-housing/benefits/benefits-advice#contact

If you are looking for some quick advice your query might be answered over the telephone or if you would like to make a face-to-face appointment, call: 020 8545 4178 or email: welfarebenefitsteam@merton.gov.uk.

It is based at:
Welfare Benefits Service
2nd floor, Merton Civic Centre
London Road
Morden
SM4 5DX
Workshops and events

All Kids First workshops and events are FREE. Those below will take place at The Chaucer Centre, Canterbury Road, Morden SM4 6PX.

Bookings

Please book as early as you can as not all events can accommodate last minute attendees. Only 30 places are available at each session.

Please note, some details about the sessions below are not yet finalised but Kids First members will receive further information about each session when it is publicised.

Upcoming events in Summer Term 2019:

Thursday 10 June, 10am to 12pm
Young Carers
with Joe Collins & Avril Doyle, Carers Support Merton
Carers Support Merton help support Young Carers between the ages of 5 and 17 who are significantly impacted by the diagnosed health condition, disability or substance misuse of a close relative. Come and hear about how Carers Support Merton can support the Young Carer in your family and find out how to make a referral to the service.

Friday 21 June, 10am to 12pm
SEND Update
with Karla Finikin, Merton’s Head of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Integrated Service (SENDIS)
An opportunity to hear about and discuss SEND issues that will affect you and your child.

Monday 24 June, 10am to 12pm
Transition from Primary to Secondary
with Fran Turko, Manager of Merton’s Information, Advice and Support Service
Find out what you need to consider when your child is in Year 5 & 6 about the move to Secondary School. Come and ask your questions.

Date to be confirmed
ASD pathway update
with Merton CCG
Hear about developments on the ASD/ADHD diagnostic pathway in 2019.

July (date to be confirmed)
Workshop for parents of children who attend Perseid Lower and Upper School, Morden
with Specialist Speech & Language Therapists
A session providing strategies supporting play and communication skills for parents of children who attend either Perseid Lower School or Perseid Upper School.
Important note: Whenever we refer to ‘parents’ in our newsletters, flyers and emails, we mean all carers of children and young people.

Disclaimer: Any views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of Merton Mencap. Nor do we necessarily endorse the useful tips and contacts, many of which are recommendations from Kids First members.

HOW TO CONTACT KIDS FIRST

*Kids First* is a project of Merton Mencap

www.mertonmencap.org.uk/kidsfirst

Administrative Assistant, Parent Forums (Kids First/Adults First/Talk Autism)

**Usual working days (subject to variation):** Mondays & Fridays

**Email:** kf.admin@mertonmencap.org.uk

**Direct:** 020 3963 0597

**Tracy Blackwell:** Stream Leader, Parent Forums (Kids First/Adults First/Talk Autism)

**Usual working days (subject to variation):** Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays

**Email:** kids.first@mertonmencap.org.uk

**Direct:** 020 3963 0598

To join Kids First, general queries, to book a place on our sessions and for newsletter contributions, please contact the Administrative Assistant.

We also want to hear about any challenges or positive experiences you are having as a parent. Case studies are always welcome and can be included in the newsletter anonymously, if you prefer.

Please also contact us with any feedback on this newsletter or any comments about local services for children with SEN.