



## Parents, Carers & Families Workshops 2020-2021

## Our response to Covid-19

To keep all of our delegates as safe as possible, we are currently capping the number of people attending each workshop to 12. Each delegate will have their own desk, spaced two metres apart, to ensure that we can maintain social distancing.

If each workshop becomes full, we will take your details for a waiting list. If Government guidance changes and we are able to increase the number of delegates that can attend a course, we will contact people on the waiting list in the order that we received their booking request.

If you feel unwell and have symptoms including a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste, please do NOT attend the MIDAS Centre. Please contact us as soon as possible to let us know that you won't be able to attend.

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## SUCCESS ON THE SPECTRUM (PRIMARY)



**Five-part course on:**  
**Tuesday 5 January 2021**  
**Tuesday 12 January 2021**  
**Tuesday 19 January 2021**  
**Tuesday 26 January 2021**  
**Tuesday 9 February 2021**

**09:45 – 12:45**

**Presented by**  
**Clare Barwood & Becky Kenny, Specialist Teachers, Meadowfield**

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### **Workshop objectives**

This course takes place over five morning sessions. The course aims to deepen delegates' understanding of the diagnosis of ASD and to provide effective strategies for children and families. Participants will meet other parents and carers and will share experiences in a supportive atmosphere.

### **Workshop content**

**Session One:** What does a diagnosis of ASD mean? What are the features of autism?

**Session Two:** Investigating communication. Visual supports – what might they be and how can they help?

**Session Three:** Sensory sensitivities. Anxiety

**Session Four:** Developing emotional awareness. Analysing and managing behaviour

**Session Five:** A session to be tailored to the needs of participants and their children

### **Target Audience**

Parents and carers of primary school aged children with a diagnosis of ASD.

*Numbers are limited and so places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.*

*PLEASE NOTE that one parent or carer must commit to attending all five sessions. Another parent or carer is welcome to join any or all sessions.*

This programme is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

# DOWN SYNDROME



**Friday 15 January 2021**

**09:45 – 15:30**

**Presented by:  
Sophie Cartwright, Specialist Teacher, Meadowfield**

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This workshop will raise participants' awareness of Down Syndrome and the associated specific learning profile. We will look at the various challenges and strengths that this profile can present as children grow and develop. There will be opportunities to consider what good practice in the classroom might look like and specific learning strategies that could support progress. We will also look at some aspects of social development and positive behaviour strategies.

In this **one-day** workshop we will:

- Develop an understanding of what Down Syndrome is and the associated learning profile
- Consider the strengths and challenges presented by the learning profile
- Discuss strategies to support learning, behaviour and social and emotional development

This workshop will be relevant to parents, carers and families of children and young people with Down Syndrome.

Staff from settings and schools will also be invited to attend this workshop.

This workshop is free to attend  
Lunch and refreshments are provided

## SUCCESS ON THE SPECTRUM (SECONDARY)



**Five-part course on:  
Monday 18 January 2021  
Monday 25 January 2021  
Monday 1 February 2021  
Monday 8 February 2021  
Monday 1 March 2021**

**09:45 – 12:45**

**Presented by  
Katie Skinner & Jamie Evans, Specialist Teachers, Meadowfield**

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Receiving a diagnosis of ASD for your child can come as a relief after a long process, or can feel disorienting and worrying.

But what does it mean to be a teenager on the spectrum, and how can we ensure our children are successful as they develop into adults?

This **five-part** course aims to provide practical strategies and advice for navigating autistic adolescence and helping young people meet their full potential.

This programme is designed to:

- Increase understanding of ASD conditions and their impact
- Develop an awareness of potential sensory sensitivities and their impact on everyday life
- Consider adolescent brain development and its impact
- Support parents and carers to understand strategies they can use to support young people
- Support the development of healthy relationships
- Create an opportunity for participants to meet with other parents and carers and share experiences

This course is designed for parents and carers of young people aged 11+ with either a new or existing diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

***Numbers are limited and therefore places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.***

***PLEASE NOTE one parent/carer must commit to attending all 5 sessions. Another parent/carer (or member of staff from the child's school) is welcome to join any or all of the above.***

***If your child is in year 6 or has significant additional needs and you are uncertain if you wish to attend the secondary or primary course, please feel free to contact us and we will support you to attend the sessions best suited to your needs.***

This programme is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

# **SLEEP EASY- EARLY YEARS & PRIMARY**



**Wednesday 20 January 2021**

**09:45 - 12:45**

**Presented by**

**Clare Barwood, Specialist Teacher, Meadowfield & Sleep Scotland Sleep  
Counsellor**

**Susan Cassingham, Inclusion Support Assistant, Meadowfield & Sleep  
Scotland Sleep Counsellor**

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Sleep problems can be a persistent and severe problem for children and young people with learning disabilities. Improved sleep can lead to reduced stress within the family and improved educational outcomes for the young person.

In this workshop we will:

- Introduce participants to a range of sleep problems in children and young people with additional support needs
- Identify possible causes of sleep difficulties
- Consider behavioural interventions to improve them
- Provide an opportunity to share ideas with parents and carers facing similar challenges

This workshop is suitable for parents, carers and families of Early Years & primary age children.

This workshop is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

# AN INTRODUCTION TO MAKATON



**Thursday 21 January 2021**

**09:45 – 12:45**

**Presented by Sophie Cartwright, Specialist Teacher,  
Meadowfield & Makaton Regional Tutor**

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Many children with additional needs benefit from signing used alongside speech. For those who experience the frustration of not being able to communicate effectively, Makaton can really help.

This workshop provides a practical introduction to the Makaton Language Programme.

In this workshop we will:

- Learn a small core vocabulary of everyday signs that are relevant for children and young people with additional needs
- Consider hints and tips for effective signing in settings, schools and at home

This workshop is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

# THE CHALLENGE OF EATING FOR YOUNG CHILDREN



**Wednesday 10 February 2021**

**09:45 – 12:45**

**Presented by Christine Cardosi, Early Years Specialist Teacher**

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Many young children experience difficulties with eating from fussy eating to very restricted diets. This workshop explores the causes of eating difficulties and provides some practical strategies.

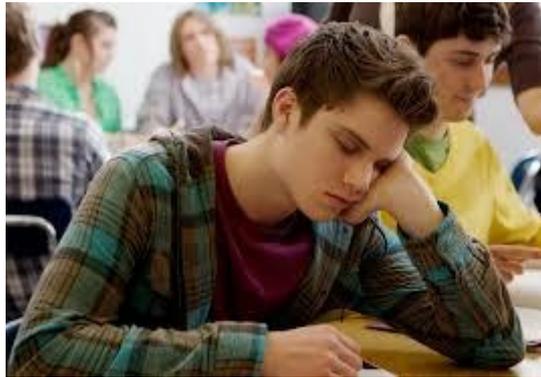
In this workshop we will:

- Learn how taste and appetite develops
- Learn about restricted eating in autism spectrum disorders
- Learn about evidence based strategies to support children with eating difficulties.

This workshop is suitable for parents, carers and families of children up to 5 years of age.

This workshop is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

## **SLEEP EASY - SECONDARY**



**Tuesday 9 March 2021**

**09:45 – 12:45**

**Presented by**

**Clare Bridgewater, District Lead STLS & Sleep Scotland Sleep Counsellor  
Katie Skinner, Specialist Teacher, Meadowfield & Sleep Scotland Sleep Counsellor**

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Sleep problems can be a persistent and severe problem for children and young people with learning disabilities. Improved sleep can lead to reduced stress within the family and improved educational outcomes for the young person.

In this workshop we will:

- Introduce participants to a range of sleep problems in children and young people with additional support needs
- Identify possible causes of sleep difficulties
- Consider behavioural interventions to improve them
- Provide an opportunity to share ideas with parents and carers facing similar challenges

This workshop is suitable for parents, carers and families of secondary age children.

This workshop is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

## MAKATON LEVELS 1 & 2



**This workshop will take place over 4 evenings:**

**Thursday 11 March 2021**

**Thursday 18 March 2021**

**Thursday 29 April 2021**

**Thursday 6 May 2021**

**18:30 – 21:00**

**Presented by Regional Makaton Tutors:  
Sophie Cartwright & Ruth Smith, Meadowfield STLS**

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### **Workshop objectives**

Participants will learn the principles underlying the use of signing and symbols. They will learn signs and symbols for stages 1-4 and additional of the Core Vocabulary.

### **Workshop content**

- The Level 1 and 2 course provides a practical introduction to the Makaton language programme. Over 100,000 children and adults use Makaton symbols and signs, either as their main method of communication or as a way to support speech
- Sessions include discussing commonly asked questions, hints and tips for effective signing and symbol use and how to start using Makaton in everyday situations at home or work
- Participants will learn the signs and symbols for Stages 1-4 and additional of the Core Vocabulary
- Participants will consider what signs and symbols are relevant for them and plan for how to establish and maintain an inclusive signing environment
- You will receive two course manuals, which include the signs and symbols that you have learnt and you will also be given a certificate of attendance. Please remember to keep your Level 1 training certificate in case you want to attend further Makaton training

### **Target Audience**

This **four-part evening** course is suitable for parents, carers and families. Staff from settings and schools will also be invited to attend this course.

**£50.00 per delegate**

**Refreshments are included**

## SCREEN SAVIOURS – TAKING CONTROL OF TECH



**Monday 15 March 2021**

**09:45 – 12:45**

**Presented by  
Jonathan Smeeton & Sophie Cartwright,  
Specialist Teachers, Meadowfield**

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This workshop will offer advice and strategies to support parents, carers and families understand the importance of maintaining children's digital health and how to encourage a safe, happy, enjoyable and manageable relationship with technology. The session will also consider the educational, communitive and leisure role of technology during the pandemic and how we might support our children moving forward.

In this workshop we will be looking at:

- Using smart phones, tablets and computers positively and safely
- Understanding the impact of sustained screen time
- The adolescent brain on games
- Technology and sleep
- How to take control in a supportive and positive way
- Social media-the attraction, using it safely and the pitfalls
- A comprehensive overview of support
- Next steps in technology and gaming – virtual and augmented reality
- Recognising when technology is becoming a problem and what to do about it
- Gaming addiction, the multiplayer game and the online community (Fortnite case study)
- Education's reliance on technology – the benefits and pitfalls

This workshop is suitable for parents, carers and families of primary and secondary age children.

This workshop is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

# AN INTRODUCTION TO ASD



**Tuesday 30 March 2021**

**09:45 – 12:45**

**Presented by**

**Jamie Evans, Specialist Teacher, Meadowfield**

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This is a workshop about autism spectrum disorder (ASD) for parents, carers and families of children with a diagnosis of autism (or a noticeable difficulty).

Participants will gain an understanding of autism and the strategies and interventions to support children and young people with social communication difficulties.

In this workshop we will:

- Discuss ASD, diagnosis and what ASD means for your child
- Consider the cognitive theories relating to ASD – and the impact this may have on learning
- Consider the potential implications for communication and interaction
- Discuss how to support children with ASD – strategies and interventions

This workshop is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

## CHILDREN WHO CAN SPEAK BUT DON'T



**Thursday 22 April 2021**

**Parents, Carers & Families of:**

**Early Years pupils: 09:45 – 12:30**

**Primary school pupils: 09:45 – 14:30**

**Secondary school age pupils and beyond: 09:45 – 16:00**

**Presented by:**

**Becky Kenny, Specialist Teacher, Meadowfield**

**Ruth Smith, STLS SALT, Meadowfield**

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Persistent lack of communication, despite being able to talk freely in some situations, creates feelings of anxiety, frustration and inadequacy, both for the individual and those supporting them.

Attending this **half-day or full-day** workshop will give you an understanding of what causes children and young people to withdraw from communication or become silent in certain situations (selective mutism) and the knowledge to work together to develop prevention and management strategies.

This workshop is suitable for:

Parents, carers and families of children and young people who appear withdrawn and reluctant communicators.

Staff from settings and schools will also be invited to attend this workshop.

This workshop is free to attend

Lunch & refreshments are included

# **THE HORROR OF HOMEWORK (AND WORKING FROM HOME)**



**Friday 23 April 2021**

**09:45 – 12:45**

**Presented by Sophie Cartwright & Katie Skinner,  
Specialist Teachers, Meadowfield**

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Many schools have expectations that students will complete homework. For some families this expectation will cause stress, tension and discord. It doesn't have to be this way!

In this workshop we will:

- Look at ways to develop literacy and numeracy skills at home
- Consider how our own maths and literacy anxieties impact on engagement with homework
- Consider ways to support reluctant learners
- Consider strategies to relieve homework related stress and anxiety

Whilst parents of secondary age pupils are welcome, this session will focus on early literacy and numeracy skills so may be more relevant to parents, carers and families of primary aged children.

This workshop is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

# ATTACHMENT



**Monday 26 April 2021**

**09:45 – 12:45**

**Presented by  
Becky Kenny, Specialist Teacher, Meadowfield**

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A child's ability to engage in learning and be fully included in school and family life can be fundamentally affected by their experiences of early relationships or attachments.

This **half-day** workshop will:

- Explain some of the factors that can prevent a secure attachment from forming between a child and their primary care giver.
- Outline some of the challenges that these children experience on a daily basis and the impact that this has on their ability to form meaningful relationships with both adults and their peers.
- Consider some of the behaviours that these children exhibit and how they can be supported to overcome negative childhood experiences.
- Provide an opportunity for parents, carers, families and professionals to reflect on how an ethos of emotional wellbeing may strengthen inclusion, reduce disaffection and promote resilience.
- Discuss practical advice and ideas that can be implemented.

This workshop is suitable for anyone supporting vulnerable children and young people.

Staff from settings and schools will also be invited to attend this workshop.

This workshop is free to attend

Refreshments are provided

# EARLYBIRD



## **Eight-part course on:**

**Tuesday 27 April 2021**  
**Tuesday 4 May 2021**  
**Tuesday 11 May 2021**  
**Tuesday 18 May 2021**

**Tuesday 25 May 2021**  
**Tuesday 8 June 2021**  
**Tuesday 15 June 2021**  
**Tuesday 22 June 2021**

**09.45 – 12.45**

**Presented by**  
**Christine Cardosi, Specialist Teacher**  
**Becky Selfe, Inclusion Support Assistant**

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We are pleased to be able to offer the EarlyBird parents' course again this year. The course was written by the National Autistic Society and is **available to parents and carers of pre-school age children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD)**.

The sessions cover the following topics with a mixture of theory and practice. Participants have the opportunity to develop strategies for their individual circumstances.

- Autism and communication
- Using visual supports and introducing structure
- Preventing problems
- Understanding and managing behaviour

If you would like to request a place on EarlyBird, please contact Midas on 01795 477788 (option 6) or via [midas@meadowfield.kent.sch.uk](mailto:midas@meadowfield.kent.sch.uk) who will send you an application form to complete.

**Numbers are limited and therefore places will be allocated on a first come first served basis. One parent or carer must commit to attending all the sessions. Another parent or carer is welcome to join any or all of the above.**

£20.00 per family (which includes the course book fee)  
Refreshments are provided

# **SLEEP EASY- EARLY YEARS & PRIMARY**



**Thursday 13 May 2021**

**18:30 – 21:00**

**Presented by  
Clare Barwood, Specialist Teacher,  
Meadowfield & Sleep Scotland Sleep Counsellor  
Susan Cassingham, Inclusion Support Assistant,  
Meadowfield & Sleep Scotland Sleep Counsellor**

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Sleep problems can be a persistent and severe problem for children and young people with learning disabilities. Improved sleep can lead to reduced stress within the family and improved educational outcomes for the young person.

In this workshop we will:

- Introduce participants to a range of sleep problems in children and young people with additional support needs
- Identify possible causes of sleep difficulties
- Consider behavioural interventions to improve them
- Provide an opportunity to share ideas with parents and carers facing similar challenges

This workshop is suitable for parents, carers and families of Early Years & primary age children.

This workshop is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

## SCREEN SAVIOURS – TAKING CONTROL OF TECH



**Thursday 20 May 2021**

**18:30 – 21:00**

**Presented by  
Jonathan Smeeton & Sophie Cartwright,  
Specialist Teachers, Meadowfield**

---

This workshop will offer advice and strategies to support parents, carers and families understand the importance of maintaining children's digital health and how to encourage a safe, happy, enjoyable and manageable relationship with technology. The session will also consider the educational, communitive and leisure role of technology during the pandemic and how we might support our children moving forward.

In this workshop we will be looking at:

- Using smart phones, tablets and computers positively and safely
- Understanding the impact of sustained screen time
- The adolescent brain on games
- Technology and sleep
- How to take control in a supportive and positive way
- Social media-the attraction, using it safely and the pitfalls
- A comprehensive overview of support
- Next steps in technology and gaming – virtual and augmented reality
- Recognising when technology is becoming a problem and what to do about it
- Gaming addiction, the multiplayer game and the online community (Fortnite case study)
- Education's reliance on technology – the benefits and pitfalls

This workshop is suitable for parents, carers and families of primary and secondary age children.

This workshop is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

## ANXIETY, TRANSITION & CHANGE



**Monday 24 May 2021**

**09:45 – 12:45**

**Presented by  
Katie Skinner, Specialist Teacher, Meadowfield**

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Anxiety comes in many forms and can create barriers to learning, wellbeing and social interaction, as well as impacting on families and siblings. Tackling the root cause of the anxiety and developing appropriate emotional regulation strategies is the key to developing resilience.

In this workshop we will:

- Consider the types of anxiety and why it causes such a barrier to learning and engagement
- Discuss and share strategies for supporting children and young people with anxiety
- Consider the common periods of change and transition for young people and how preparation and pre-emptive support can reduce worry

This workshop is suitable for parents, carers and families of primary and secondary age children.

This workshop is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

# **THE HORROR OF HOMEWORK (AND WORKING FROM HOME)**



**Tuesday 8 June 2021**

**18:30 – 20:30**

**Presented by  
Sophie Cartwright & Katie Skinner,  
Specialist Teachers, Meadowfield**

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Many schools have expectations that students will complete homework. For some families this expectation will cause stress, tension and discord. It doesn't have to be this way!

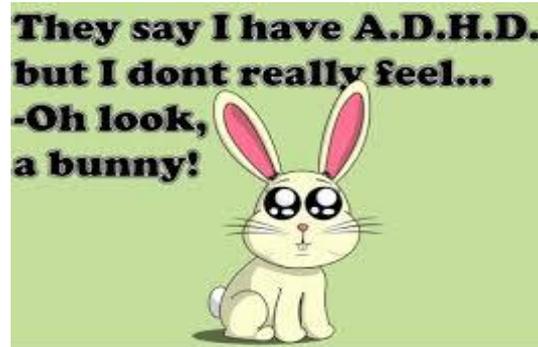
In this workshop we will:

- Look at ways to develop literacy and numeracy skills at home
- Consider how our own maths and literacy anxieties impact on engagement with homework
- Consider ways to support reluctant learners
- Consider strategies to relieve homework related stress and anxiety

Whilst parents of secondary age pupils are welcome, this session will focus on early literacy and numeracy skills so may be more relevant to parents and carers of primary aged children.

This workshop is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

# OMG! ADHD



**Four-part course on:**

**Friday 11 June 2021**

**Friday 25 June 2021**

**Friday 18 June 2021**

**Friday 2 July 2021**

**09:45 - 12:45**

**Presented by:**

**Katie Skinner, Specialist Teacher, Meadowfield  
with guest speaker Dr Kim Selby, Community Paediatrician**

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A **four-part** course about Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) for parents and carers of children and young people **with a diagnosis or a noticeable difficulty**.

In this **four-part** course we will:

- Explore the causes and effects of ADHD and address some of the many misconceptions and myths surrounding this contentious label
- Consider the role and implications of medications
- Consider strategies and interventions to support learning and social development
- Explore positive approaches to behaviour management including sanctions and rewards
- Consider what “good practice” looks like for children with ADHD in the home and in the community

**Numbers are limited and therefore places will be allocated on a first come first served basis. One parent or carer must commit to attending all four workshops. Another parent or carer (or member of staff from the child’s school) is welcome to join any or all of the above.**

This **four-part** course is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

# AN INTRODUCTION TO ASD



**Tuesday 22 June 2021**

**18:30 – 20:30**

**Presented by**

**Jamie Evans, Specialist Teacher, Meadowfield**

---

This is a workshop about autism spectrum disorder (ASD) for parents, carers and families of children with a diagnosis of autism (or a noticeable difficulty).

Participants will gain an understanding of autism and the strategies and interventions to support children and young people with social communication difficulties.

In this workshop we will:

- Discuss ASD, diagnosis and what ASD means for your child
- Consider the cognitive theories relating to ASD – and the impact this may have on learning
- Consider the potential implications for communication and interaction
- Discuss how to support children with ASD – strategies and interventions

This workshop is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

# LET'S PLAY NICELY



**Monday 5 July 2021**

**09:45 – 12:45**

**Presented by  
Katie Skinner, Specialist Teacher, Meadowfield**

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Learning to play collaboratively is an important skill linked to successful friendship development and the ability to build positive relationships.

It is normal for children to fight and bicker, but for some children collaborative play is tricky and they may need additional support to learn to play together. As a parent it can be difficult to find strategies to help children achieve this without losing your patience or your marbles.

The best way to learn to play nicely, is by playing with structure. Lego Therapy is a popular play based intervention used by many schools to support the development of social skills. But Lego Therapy can also be used as a play approach at home to aid sharing, better relationships with siblings, peers and parents and to improve social interaction at home and in public for children and young people of any age.

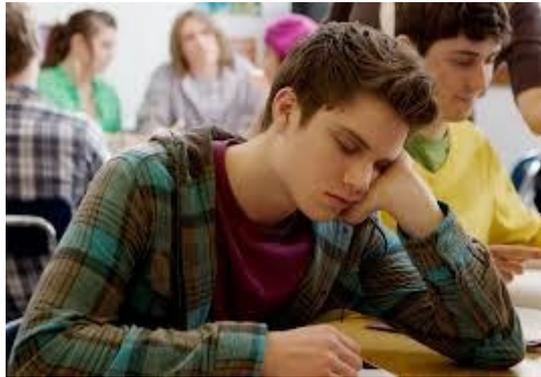
In this workshop we will:

- Consider what Lego therapy is, how it works and the skills that can be developed by accessing it
- Discuss strategies for using Lego Therapy approaches at home with your family
- Consider how the principles of Lego Therapy can be applied to play with other toys
- Consider how the play based approaches of Lego can be used to provide structure to make tricky activities like shopping, cooking, sharing and going out more productive and less stressful
- Consider how Lego approaches can be tailored for teenagers and toddlers

This workshop is suitable for parents, carers and families of primary and secondary age children.

This workshop is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

## **SLEEP EASY - SECONDARY**



**Tuesday 6 July 2021**

**18:30 – 21:00**

**Presented by**

**Clare Bridgewater, District Lead STLS &  
Sleep Scotland Sleep Counsellor**

**Katie Skinner, Specialist Teacher, Meadowfield &  
Sleep Scotland Sleep Counsellor**

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- Introduce participants to a range of sleep problems in children and young people with additional support needs
- Identify possible causes of sleep difficulties
- Consider behavioural interventions to improve them
- Provide an opportunity to share ideas with parents and carers facing similar challenges

This workshop is suitable for parents, carers and families of secondary age children.

This workshop is free to attend  
Refreshments are provided

## BOOKING INFORMATION

For further information, to make a booking or to be added to our mailing list please contact Jenna Morley, MIDAS Administrative Assistant on 01795 477788 (option 6) or via [MIDAS@meadowfield.kent.sch.uk](mailto:MIDAS@meadowfield.kent.sch.uk)

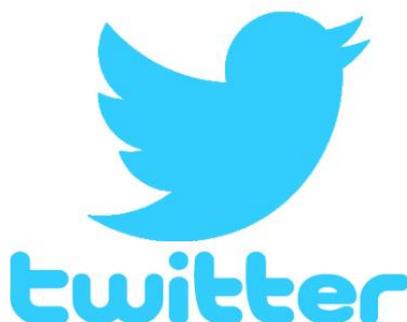
The majority of our parents, carers and families' workshops are free to attend but we still need to know in advance if you would like a place.

If you have booked a place but are then unable to attend, could you please notify the MIDAS Centre at your earliest convenience.

For up to date information, follow us via:-



STLS Swale

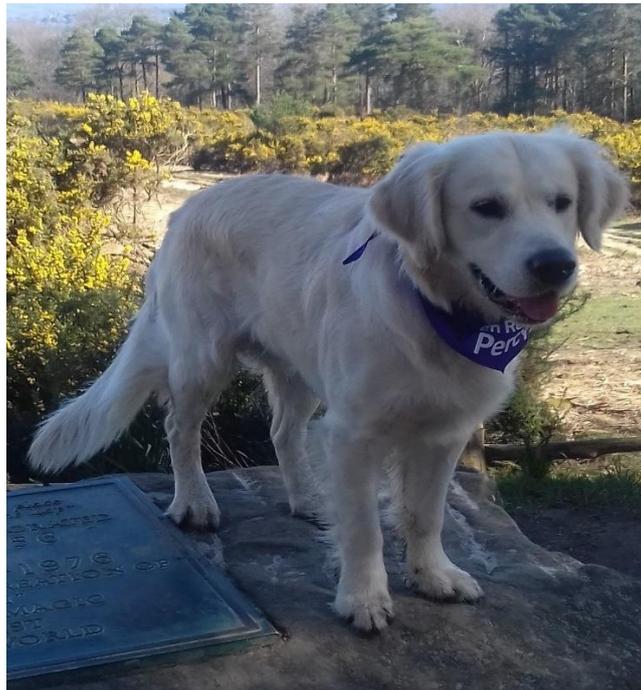


@MeadowfieldStls

## THE MIDAS TEAM

Jenna Morley & Bex McCarthy, Administrative Assistants  
Jodie Williams, Administrative Officer  
Clare Bridgewater, Inclusion Manager  
Meadowfield STLS Team are also based at the MIDAS Centre

## PERCY



Percy is the STLS Wellbeing Support Dog. In his role he visits Early Years settings and mainstream primary and secondary schools. Percy visits schools as part of pupils' personalised curriculums, as a reward for pupils and quite simply to add a feel good element to the children and staff's day. In 2019 Percy qualified as a Pets as Therapy (PAT) dog. Percy is now two years old and has been a valued part of the team since he was 12 weeks old.

Meadowfield School, Swanstree Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 4NL  
01795 477788 (option 6)

