

**Brighton & Hove Inclusion Support  
Service (BHISS)**  
County Oak Avenue  
Brighton BN1 8DJ

**Primary Schools**

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> July 2018

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By email

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Dear Parents/Carers, Head Teachers and SEN Co-ordinators,

**AUTISM AND LANGUAGE SUPPORT FROM BHISS FOR CHILDREN AND  
YOUNG PEOPLE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

We are delighted to announce an increased level of support across the city for children with autism.

From September 2018 BHISS will have a combined ***Autism and Language Team***. This will include seven advisory teachers (including SEN Specialist Teachers), three family practitioners and an administrator.

The SEN Specialist Teachers who are currently providing language support in schools have a wide range of experience supporting children with autism, and they are undertaking post-graduate qualifications in the field of autism and social communication.

From next term, some schools will be allocated a single advisory teacher covering both autism and language needs; depending on the number of pupils and the complexity of needs, other schools will have two specialist teachers: one for autism and one for language.

BHISS support will be accessed as follows:

- Schools will be allocated a set number of hours of each specialist teacher's time. Support, advice, bespoke training and post-diagnosis meetings can be agreed by the SENCo and the BHISS specialist teacher at a termly meeting. Language support will continue to be arranged via the action planning meeting format.
- Schools will be contacted by their allocated specialist teacher(s) to arrange dates and timings for a September meeting.
- There will be no need to refer a child with autism for specialist teacher support as our involvement will be agreed at the post-diagnosis meeting in school. Referrals for language support should be made on the standard BHISS referral form, with the signed NHS SLT form attached. It will not be necessary for schools to repeat information on the NHS form (see Marie Newton's e-mail).

- In order to avoid duplication of advice and reports from Educational Psychologists and Speech & Language Therapists, the specialist teachers will be able to attend collation meetings for statutory assessments as part of their school allocated hours, if requested by the SENCo. Brief records can be submitted if requested.
- Annual review meetings can be attended by specialist teachers as part of the school's allocated hours, if requested by the SENCo. Contact records may be submitted as part of the annual review process for both autism and language.
- Our capacity to support children in school with language difficulties will be focused on children with Developmental Language Disorders at a specialist level, and will offer universal and targeted language support to schools via centralised training.
- Our wide range of Autism and Language courses will continue to be delivered centrally, and all school staff are invited to attend these.

We will be increasing our ***Family Support Work*** to involve three practitioners.

- This will allow some longer-term work with families to be undertaken, and referrals to be actioned more quickly. As from this week, pupils with autism and/or language difficulties can be referred to us by using the current BHISS Family Support Work referral form.
- Parents/Carers can request family support from BHISS by either contacting us direct or asking the SENCo to make a referral to us.
- We plan to increase the number of our autism coffee mornings to 22 per year. Two-thirds of these will be parent/carer training workshops on a specific theme; the remainder will be more informal and may include a guest practitioner such as a Health Visitor.
- We will introduce specialist Language coffee mornings from January 2019.

We look forward to working closely with you all - and, of course, with local children and young people who have autism and/or language needs.

Yours sincerely,

**Mohammed Bham**

Principal Educational Psychologist

Head of Brighton & Hove Inclusion Support Service

**Claire Edwards**, Senior SEN Specialist Teacher (Autism & Language), BHISS

**Sadie Gillett**, SEN Specialist Teacher & Professional Lead (Autism), BHISS