

### Hello from Suzie Franklin



Hello, I have recently started as the new Family Liaison and Support Worker at Inscape House Schools and am looking forward to meeting all the families, children and staff.

I have personally had quite a long relationship with Inscape House as my daughter Jennie attended the school at Cheadle from age 5 and then moved on to The Russell Centre, where she finished her education at 19 last year. I was involved with Inscape Friends and also a parent governor for a while. As a family we have been actively involved in person-centred planning approaches to support Jennie and look at what is best for her future. Jennie is now living in her own flat with a team of support staff to help her have a happy, healthy and active life and she's doing really well, much to my relief!

Before I started at Inscape House I spent nine years working for The National Autistic Society (NAS), the last six of those as a Family Support Programme Officer, for the 'help! programme'. This involved supporting families by providing information and advice at training courses and seminars on a variety of topics around autism. Before that I worked for Leisure for Autism as a Project Co-ordinator for seven years.

### Supporting families

One of my responsibilities will be to support families with the changes coming up as the Inscape Schools merge onto one site in Cheadle by Sept 2013. I know families may have a variety of concerns at different times about how these changes will affect their children, whether they remain at Cheadle or are moving from Salford or the Russell Centre. I hope to be able to support parents with anything from liaising with families and local authorities about statements of Special Educational Needs, worries about transport, transition planning for pupils to prepare them for the changes, sharing information from the schools and supporting families with any concerns about the move.

I will also be working with parents whose children are at Inscape House, or prospective new families, to support them with any help they may need regarding the Special Educational Needs process i.e. assessments, statements, annual reviews, tribunals, transitions and getting support from local authorities or Parent Partnership services. So if you have any worries, want to talk or meet with me or get help putting letters together and preparing for meetings etc please let me know.

I will be working closely with other staff at Inscape House and INCA to share information about social events, the Living with Autism Support Group, parent training courses, the family activity programme etc. I hope over the coming months there will be a variety of opportunities for families from both schools to meet up and get to know each other better and for me to introduce myself if I haven't already done so.

At Inscape we want to make sure we are sharing information with families and keeping parents informed of the changes at school and events or activities they or their children may find useful. We have some ideas about how to do this better; a regular newsletter for parents,

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informal opportunities to meet up closer to where some families live and providing information about other support groups that may be helpful. We can email or text information if that is the best way of keeping some families up to date and are thinking about developing an area of the website for parents which may include a Facebook group! Please let me know what you think about these ideas, if you have any suggestions yourself or if you have information you would like to share with other parents.

Some families may also like information about ways of getting family support and I am happy to meet with parents to talk about what may be available and how to go about this. The Together Trust can also provide services that include short breaks, shared care and domiciliary care to enable families to have a break or some opportunities for their children to experience new activities and gain some independence. If you think this may be useful please let me know.

Finally, some families have expressed an interest in Person-Centred Planning approaches and we will be

working with parents to provide information, support and training around this. Hopefully we can help some families to start developing plans and one page profiles about what is important to their children and how to support them best. Please let me know if you want more information about this.

### How to contact me

If I can help with any of the above please get in touch. I am happy to visit families at home, meet at school or somewhere more convenient so just let me know what's best. I will be spending time at Inscape Cheadle and Salford most weeks and also the Russell Centre.

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World Autism Awareness Day

## World Autism Awareness Day 2nd April 2011

Readers may be interested to know that the Together Trust is once again launching a campaign designed to raise awareness of autism in the North West. We aim to spread the word about autism to local people as part of World Autism Awareness Day (2nd April).

To increase understanding the Together Trust has produced a leaflet designed to inform readers on the facts about autism and we are encouraging everyone to pass it on! To make sharing as easy as possible, the leaflet has been produced in both a hard copy and electronic format and it can be downloaded from our website. North West organisations Families Connected, ASGMA, Autism Initiatives UK and Wirral Autistic Society have also worked to produce the leaflet which explains the differences faced by people with autism and the support services available.

Please share the enclosed leaflet with as many people as possible. Our aim is to make a difference for people with autism and their families.

*David Marriott, Chief Executive*

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trusted educational services

