



TAILOR ED FOUNDATION

***Welcome to our February newsletter.
We hope this finds you all safe and well.***

We continue to provide a range of services to tackle daily difficulties, help your children learn important life skills and stay ok during this second period of school closures. The majority of our services remain via remote delivery in line with current guidance. Details of our remote events are below and we'll continue to provide these for the foreseeable appreciating that it continues to be a mixed picture of school provision. We've also produced a short guide to home learning that we hope you'll find helpful.

With love from Roo and the Tailor Ed Team

JOINING TEAM TAILOR ED...

We've been busy recruiting and are delighted to welcome two new members to the Tailor Ed Team, both talented and committed practitioners. You may have seen Kirstie at Circle Time or Games in the last month and Toni will join us in March.



Toni



About Kirstie

Kirstie is originally from the Isle of Man but currently lives in Belgium with her husband. Kirstie is due to start maternity leave any minute but will then re-join the team, contributing to our remote offer of services.

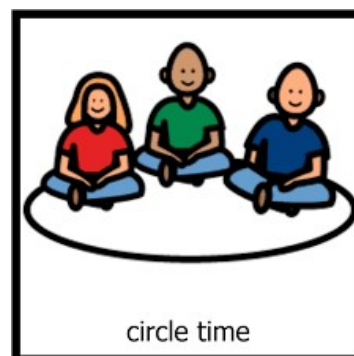
Kirstie completed her undergraduate psychology degree and masters in Applied behaviour analysis at Bangor University in 2011. Kirstie has worked in various special education school and clinics in London and Wales, working with children from the ages of 18 months to 18 years. She has also supported children and families in home, nursery, mainstream school and community settings.

Kirstie is a board certified behaviour analyst since 2018. Since then she has been a supervisor in a Maidenhead SEN school. She has a wide range of experience from multi disciplinary teams and has a wide range of interests from mental health (AIM/ACT curriculum) to early years development.

REGULAR EVENTS

Circle Time - weekday mornings

Circle time will last around 15 minutes and be led by two of our Project Workers. As well as some familiar structure and songs we'll also read a visually supported book each day. Some kids like to join in with everything and some just have it on in the background whilst they play. So don't worry about your child sitting down to watch all of it, just come and join in however they would like.



Group 1 - 9.15am Monday – Friday.

Join the group from 9am to check everything is working and Circle time will start promptly at 9.15am.

Group 2 - 10.00am Monday – Friday.

Join the group from 9.45am to check everything is working and Circle time will start promptly at 10am.

Zoom links to follow. If you don't receive these please contact Kate: kate@tailoredfoundation.co.uk

Games Session (including 'quiet' option)

We'll be playing mainly visual games with clear visual prompts on the screen. We expect this

Every Monday and Wednesday afternoon

Week of the 8th Feb (mid-term break) sessions will be at 3pm.

Following weeks will have a later start time of 4.30pm

as some children are in school some days.

Zoom link to follow. If you don't receive this please contact Pete: pete@tailoredfoundation.co.uk

We also run a 'quiet' games sessions for those who like to play but can find a big noisy group a bit overwhelming. Contact kate@tailoredfoundation.co.uk if this would suit your child better.



Quiz Night for parents/carers - fortnightly

Next date is Thursday 18th of February. Quiz will start at 8.30pm.

Zoom link to follow. If you don't receive this please contact Callum: callum@tailoredfoundation.co.uk

It's a whole lot of fun,
prizes to be won...
like this ultra comfy inside sole for a
size 5 right foot as modelled by
reigning champ Pauline.

Future quiz dates

18th February

4th March

18th March

1st April

What we've learned about... 'home schooling'

The pressure to 'home school' is causing friction and worries for many parents, and for those whose children think and learn a bit differently the challenge can be even greater. Part of the problem stems from the phrase 'home schooling'. A parent simply isn't a class teacher and the kitchen table just isn't a classroom. There are so many aspects that set a school up as a learning environment and so the idea of recreating this in our homes is an impossible aspiration. So rather than thinking about 'home schooling' we're going to talk about 'home learning' - how best to support your child's learning and development at home - something that you probably already know quite a bit about.

The Tailor Ed team have gathered our learning from the last year and experience of home learning more broadly to share with you in this short guide. Taking some time to think about how you approach 'home learning', to plan priorities and decide on expectations (for you and your child), is time very well spent. So please, take a few minutes to hear about what we've learned and hopefully the overwhelming challenge of 'home schooling' might begin to feel not so daunting.

SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Schools are typically providing more work than they expect to be completed. When we're given a list we tend to think the aim is to check everything off – but in this case see it more as a menu to choose from.
2. Most schools and teachers are also very happy for you to make the most of natural learning opportunities. They don't know your home and routines so might not be able to suggest them, but that doesn't mean teaching you do from your own ideas doesn't count. And teachers will love to hear about it too – even if it's not work they've set.
3. Feedback to school and your child's teacher if something is or isn't working for them. They will understand. They might be able to help you set priorities for your child, tailor the work or agree what to aim for. Having a realistic goal gives you and your child a much better chance at experiencing success rather than failure.

For example, if your child finds sitting in a Teams meet really hard, plan up front to only join for a few minutes or for a specific activity.

4. You don't need to be teaching something new to be supporting your child's learning. Your child generalising skills to the home environment and using those skills with a parent, are valid targets in themselves. Likewise, maintaining supports and school skills e.g. sitting at a table, following a short timetable, doing a pencil and paper activity are really helpful things to do, regardless of the content of the activity.

everyone safe and well. If you can keep your child happy at home that's great. And if they can engage in some learning fantastic!

“The main thing is everyone's happiness and well-being. The mental health of the whole family is the most important thing.”

Mainstream class teacher, Midlothian.

With these principles in mind, take a moment to think about what you actually want to achieve from 'home learning' right now and reset the expectations you're setting yourself and your child.

Then we also need to think about the practical strategies that will help you deliver whatever version of 'home learning' that feels right for you.

PRACTICAL WAYS TO SUPPORT HOME LEARNING

1. Select your start (or re-start) point based on what feels achievable rather than aiming for everything sent home from school. If you had a way of doing homework or indeed any structured activity that worked well that's often the best start point and you can build from there.
2. Consider your medium. Whilst some children are preferring some on screen delivery of their learning for others this is too close to their recreation time and print outs will work better. For others they can engage much better when an activity involves concrete materials. (We can help with the things you might need for this.)
3. Creating 'school' or 'work time' signifiers can help a child accept this new and often more formal activity into their home environment. It may be having separate devices for school work and down time is useful (and schools and we can help provide this if needed). Also just keeping all school/learning materials in a specific box that comes out and goes away again can be easier to cope with than a gradual invasion of one environment by another.
4. When it comes to getting started teachers have a very useful technique called 'soft starts'. This is about finding a way to ease into school work. This could be playing a board game that gets your child sat at the table or doing some really easy work or a favourite activity as the first task so they get to experience success early on.
5. Getting started at any task is often the hardest part so giving lots of help (and even answers) for the beginning of a task or worksheet (even though you know they can do it) can really help get the momentum going.
6. Having some schedules and expectations can be helpful and doesn't mean you need to schedule the whole day. Perhaps always doing reading before lunch could work.

access can help.

8. For children that find it hard to sit still and focus, planning changes of scene can help. Maybe you could do maths in the kitchen, writing in the living room. Initiate movement breaks by asking them to help with tasks that get them moving e.g. taking clothes to their room.
9. Sometimes what matters most isn't simply the task but the manner in which it gets done. It might be more important your child does 5 maths sums quickly and happily than slog it out and get a page of 20 done but it's taken 45 minutes, complaining and tears. Start small or rein things back to get things going positively.
10. Watch out for the child who likes to be persuaded! For some children who love to hang out with mum and dad you can quickly find yourself involved in lengthy negotiations over the most simple activity. Trying not to get drawn into this can help your child get the message that it's not time to chat but time to do. If it's important to them, set aside time for chatting and negotiating, this could help them to engage in activities by giving some choice and control but make it clear when the time to chat is finished and it's time to get on with the plan.

“I know that for many of my pupils this is a very difficult time. Work from school should certainly not make it more difficult. If it ever did, I would much prefer that families didn't do it. I'm confident that when schools return children will re-adapt quickly and this school closure will soon become a distant memory.” ASN Class Teacher, Edinburgh.

We hope this has provided some useful suggestions on how to approach home learning. You can contact your Project Worker to discuss specific strategies for you and your child and we can also help with tablets, printers and teaching materials. We're so impressed by the creative ways families have found their way to manage this huge challenge and massive disruption. There's no right or wrong way through this and we're here to help you find what works best for your child and your family.



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Tailor Ed Foundation (SCO39246) wishes to see children with autism and their families empowered and included, able to live the lives they want to and access all the day to day experiences that other families take for granted. We work with families living in the city of Edinburgh with a child with autism up to the age of 16.

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Tailor Ed Foundation (SCO39246)

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