



# SUMMER THERAPY NEWSLETTER

July 2026

## Therapy team news

What a wonderful year it has been for KHS. We are delighted to have completed a full year at our Bisley site and are proud of the progress that has been made across both provisions.

One of the highlights of the year has been the opening of our new Therapy Hub at Bisley. This dedicated space has created a calm and welcoming environment where students can access both individual and group therapy sessions. The larger therapy area also provides opportunities for movement-based activities that support the development of core skills essential for learning and accessing the curriculum. The therapy service at Bisley continues to evolve as we deepen our understanding of our students' needs and further develop tailored therapy pathways to support them.

At Pirbright, our therapy provision has continued to grow and develop. The therapy pathways established are regularly reviewed and adapted to ensure they remain responsive to students' changing needs, goals, and aspirations. Across both sites, we remain committed to a child-centred approach, placing each student's individual needs at the heart of our work.

Our overarching aim is to help students develop confidence, independence, communication skills, soft skills and the life skills they need to prepare for their next educational steps and, ultimately, adulthood.

With this in mind, we have chosen to focus this newsletter on **life skills**—celebrating the progress our students have made this year and sharing ideas for how parents and carers can continue to support the development of these important skills over the summer holidays.

# OVERVIEW OF LIFE SKILLS AT KHS

We all play a role

## Life Skills, Soft Skills, and Success Together at KHS

A Collaborative Approach for Every Student

At KHS, we believe every child can thrive when we work together.  
School, families, therapists and our community – all playing a part in their success.

### WE WORK TOGETHER TO HELP YOUR CHILD...



#### TEACHING & LEARNING

Engaging lessons that build confidence, independence, and real-life skills.



#### LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS (LSAs)

Helping students access learning, develop independence and celebrate progress.



#### THERAPIES (SPEECH & LANGUAGE AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY)

Supporting communication, social skills, regulation, and preparation for adulthood.



#### WELLBEING & COUNSELLING

Building emotional wellbeing, self-esteem and resilience.



#### PARENTS & CARERS

Our most important partners. Sharing goals, celebrating progress and supporting skills at home.



#### COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Providing real-life experiences, work opportunities, visits and activities that build independence.

### BUILDING LIFE SKILLS & SOFT SKILLS FOR EVERYDAY SUCCESS

#### Life Skills We Develop



Cooking & healthy living



Travel training



Money management



Looking after ourselves & our space



Shopping & using local services



Planning & organising



Communication



Teamwork & cooperation



Confidence & self-esteem



Problem solving & resilience



Respect & kindness



Goal setting & perseverance

### LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM



Creative arts, music & drama



Sports & wellbeing



Work experience & careers education



Outdoor learning & enrichment activities



School council, fundraising & leadership



Residential trips & community projects

### PARENT & CARER INPUT MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE

- Share your child's strengths and interests
- Support routines and learning at home
- Celebrate achievements
- Stay in touch and work with us
- Together, we achieve more!



### WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE TOGETHER



Confident individuals



Independent thinkers



Healthy, happy & resilient



Strong communicators



Work-ready & life-ready



Prepared for adulthood

We celebrate progress, big and small – every step forward matters!



### THE IMPACT

By working together, we help every student become:

**CONFIDENT** • **INDEPENDENT** • **RESILIENT** • **READY FOR LIFE**



KHS is a community where everyone plays a part in helping students thrive and achieve their potential.



# ABAS-3 TOOL

**ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT SYSTEM, THIRD EDITION:**  
MEASURING ADAPTIVE SKILLS HELPS US UNDERSTAND HOW PEOPLE  
FUNCTION IN EVERYDAY LIFE AND WHERE WE CAN SUPPORT GREATER  
INDEPENDENCE. USED BY BOTH OT AND SLT.



## Quick facts

We use the ABAS-3 to build a functional bridge between clinical progress and home life. This can help to identify a practical goal: It highlights precise areas where a child needs support, such as learning to cross the street safely, using utensils, asking for help, expressing ideas or initiating play. It also measures real-world independence: It shifts the focus from "test-taking" to practical self-sufficiency. The tool also captures multiple perspectives through gathering input from parents, caregivers, and teachers, it uncovers if a child acts differently at school than they do at home. It can also track progress and support capturing a child's progress over time. If our therapy team asks you to complete an ABAS-3 questionnaire, here is what you need to know:

- **Time Commitment:** The form generally takes 15 to 20 minutes to complete.
- **Be Realistic:** You will rate behaviours on a scale from 0 (not able) to 3 (always or almost always). Rate your child based on what they do independently, not what they can do with your help or reminders.
- **No Right or Wrong Answers:** Seeing low scores in a specific area is not a failure; it simply gives our therapy team a clear starting point for a targeted, highly effective intervention plan.

| <i>Adaptive Skill Area</i>  | <i>Scaled Score</i> | <i>Descriptive Range</i> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Communication</i>        | 7                   | <i>Below Average</i>     |
| <i>Community Use</i>        | 6                   | <i>Below Average</i>     |
| <i>Functional Academics</i> | 6                   | <i>Below Average</i>     |
| <i>Home Living</i>          | 8                   | <i>Average</i>           |
| <i>Health and Safety</i>    | 7                   | <i>Below Average</i>     |
| <i>Leisure</i>              | 10                  | <i>Average</i>           |
| <i>Self-Care</i>            | 10                  | <i>Average</i>           |
| <i>Self-Direction</i>       | 7                   | <i>Below Average</i>     |
| <i>Social</i>               | 9                   | <i>Average</i>           |

Example of the results table.

# SPOTLIGHT ON WORK SKILLS

## Work skills group

In the summer term of Year 10, students complete a week's work experience. This opportunity helps to prepare students for transition post 16 and for them to experience the world of work. Our current year 10s have recently successfully completed their work experience at a range of placements: hairdressers, schools, university, businesses, cafés, shops and farms.

### Student feedback

#### Comments from the students about what work experience taught them about jobs:

- 'it's harder than school.'
- 'you must be independent.... It's not like school'
- 'You have to be prepared to do anything'
- 'You have to be organised and sociable'
- 'It taught me it's quite tough being a sports teacher because one of the skills you have to have is being organised'
- 'That I'm ready for work'
- 'Work is a lot less strict than school'

## The best thing about work experience

- I like being outside
- I enjoyed everything
- Learning how it'll be in a job
- Meeting a lot of people in the office
- Everything
- The children
- Drone flying
- Eating lunch at the staff table
- The best thing I liked about my work experience was my work team
- Having fun

## Advice from the current yr10s to the year9s

- "Pick something you will actually like.....think and take time"
- "Just work hard and listen to your colleague"
- "Ask for help if you need it. Do something you like or enjoy"
- "Even if your nervous, still go... I really enjoyed it there"
- "Go to a place you like"
- "Go to a place you have interest in"
- "Make sure you are confident and ready to go"
- "Try something new"
- "To ask for help if you have forgotten the instructions"
- "To ask lots of questions"
- "Have fun"

# BISLEY HUB GALLERY

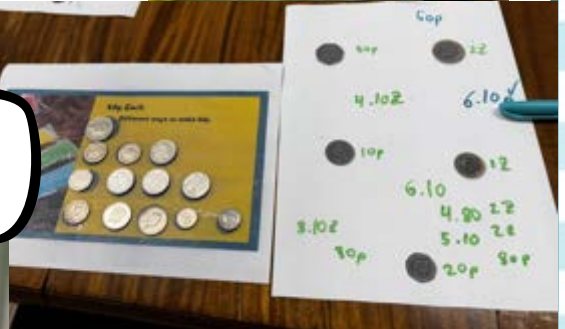
Bisley students building units for the gym! Lovely life skills being developed and used....



Students have been planting and caring for the small therapy garden.



The heat wave brought ice lollies, money skills, and much needed cooling fown.



# FUNDRAISING AND FUNCTIONAL SKILLS!

## Busy term for students

Our students have been busy raising funds to support OT, speech and language, and school resources through a range of exciting activities, including selling ice lollies, running the tuck shop, hosting a chip shop event, and managing a stall at Sports Day.

Students were involved in every stage of the process, from planning, budgeting, to setting up stalls and serving customers. These activities provided valuable opportunities to develop life skills such as communication, teamwork, organisation, and independence, while also applying functional maths skills through budgeting, handling money, calculating costs, and giving change. We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm, responsibility, and confidence shown by our students. Through these real-life experiences, they have developed important skills while helping to raise funds for valuable resources that support learning and wellbeing across the school.



# WHAT THE FUNDS WENT TO...



All funds raised go straight back into the therapy spaces. Several of the students had the opportunity to try out some of the new equipment. First up is the **sensory spinning chair** which was a big hit. The reason we love it:

- **Vestibular Stimulation:** Spinning stimulates the vestibular system which supports balance, spatial awareness, and an understanding of where their body is in space.
- **Sensory Regulation:** The intense but controlled spinning motion provides the exact sensory input that "sensory-seeking" children crave, helping them calm down and transition into focused, ready-to-learn states.
- **Proprioceptive Input:** Gripping the edges of the chair and using the core muscles to initiate or stop spinning helps a child understand how much force their body is applying. This builds body awareness.
- **Core & Postural Strength:** Sitting in a recessed or low-profile spinning chair requires a child to engage their abdominal muscles and maintain balance, directly contributing to better overall posture.

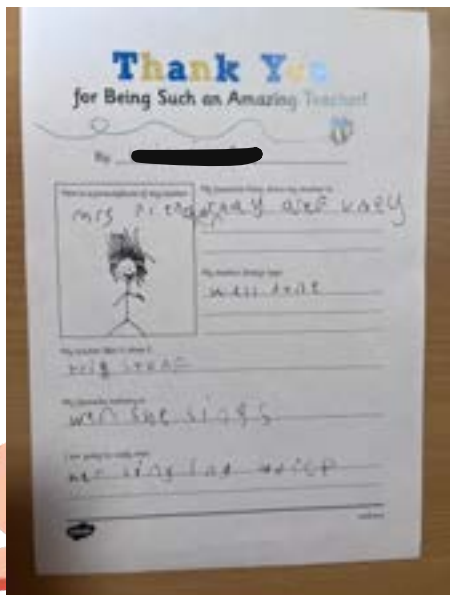
The wobbly **Bosu Ball** benefits:

- **Vestibular and Proprioceptive Input:** The wobble of a BOSU ball gives the brain vital feedback about balance and body position in space (proprioception). This deep sensory input helps calm a nervous system anxiety and improving focus.
- **Core and Postural Control:** Balancing engages the back, neck, and abdominal muscles.
- **Motor Planning and Praxis:** The unpredictability of the surface forces children to plan how to execute, sequence, and time movements—such as taking a leap or balancing on one foot.
- **Bilateral Integration & Coordination:** Adding tasks like throwing, catching, or tossing a ball while balancing trains the brain to integrate upper and lower body movements simultaneously.



# OT JUNIOR GROUPS WHAT A YEAR!

Student work



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT: FUNDRAISING UPDATE!



## FUNDRAISING

Mrs McEvoy raised £725.00 (+ £145.00 Gift Aid) for the Speech and Language Therapy Department after completing the London Marathon. A BIG **thank you** to all those that donated. The department is going to use the money for some resources which will be extremely useful.

[Rebecca McEvoy is fundraising for The Knowl Hill Foundation.](#)

The page is still active and may be for a little longer should anyone else decide they still would like to donate.

**Well done Mrs McEvoy!!**



## Photos



# SPOTLIGHT ON DLD

## Developmental Language Disorder

### DLD

During the summer term, staff attended training delivered by the Speech and Language Therapy team on Developmental Language Disorder (DLD), which included information about what it is and strategies of how they can support students with DLD or language disorder.

DLD is a diagnosis given by a speech and language therapist to people who have lifelong difficulties with talking and understanding words. These difficulties create barriers to communication or learning in everyday life and aren't due to another condition (e.g. hearing loss, Autism).

**DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISORDER**

Children with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) have significant, on-going difficulties understanding and/or using language which can affect their behaviour and progress at school.

**Afasic**  
Value for life

**How can I support my child's communication?**

- GET THEIR ATTENTION**  
say their name and get down to their level to support their listening
- USE SIMPLE LANGUAGE**  
keep sentences short; use simple words; repeat if necessary
- KEEP INSTRUCTIONS SHORT**  
say exactly what you want them to do; give one instruction at a time
- SLOW DOWN**  
talk calmly and slowly; give them time to respond
- HELP THEM SEE IT**  
use gestures, facial expression, pictures and symbols to help them understand what you say
- CHECK THEY'VE UNDERSTOOD**  
ask them to repeat what you have said; if needed, say it again and show them
- LET THEM CHOOSE**  
reduce the number of choices; show them or point to the options
- FOCUS ON WORDS**  
talk about new words; explain their meaning and use them often in play and shared activities
- STOP AND LISTEN!**  
make positive comments; repeat what they say with correct grammar
- ENJOY TIME TOGETHER**  
model language while you play; practise taking turns and listening to each other; have fun!

Further support and guidance for parents can be found at:  
**afasic.org.uk**  
**moorhouseinstitute.com/dld**

© Moor House Research & Training Institute, Mill Lane, Hurst Green, Leeds, LS18 5AG

### Further resources:

[Developmental Language Disorder \(DLD\) awareness - Speech and Language UK: Changing young lives](#)

# SPOTLIGHT ON COLLABORATION with Art



## A word from Ms Moorhouse

I wanted to introduce Alpha art students to the idea that mistakes are a natural part of the creative process and can often lead to something even more imaginative. Rather than erasing or hiding mistakes, the lesson encouraged students to work with them. After discussing this idea with the Occupational Therapy department, they recommended *The Beautiful Oops*, a pop-up book that celebrates imperfections and shows how smudges, scribbles, tears and paint splatters can be transformed into creative artworks. We read the book together and discussed how unexpected "mistakes" became inspiring works of art. Students then completed three activities: transforming random pencil scribbles into drawings, creating artworks from simple shapes, and using colourful paint smudges as inspiration for original pieces. They were also encouraged not to use erasers, helping them become more comfortable embracing imperfections. This lesson encouraged students to see mistakes as creative opportunities, build confidence and resilience, and develop flexible, imaginative thinking. Most importantly, it reinforced that there is no single "right" way to create art.



# TRANSITIONS..

## IT CAN BE CHALLENGING!

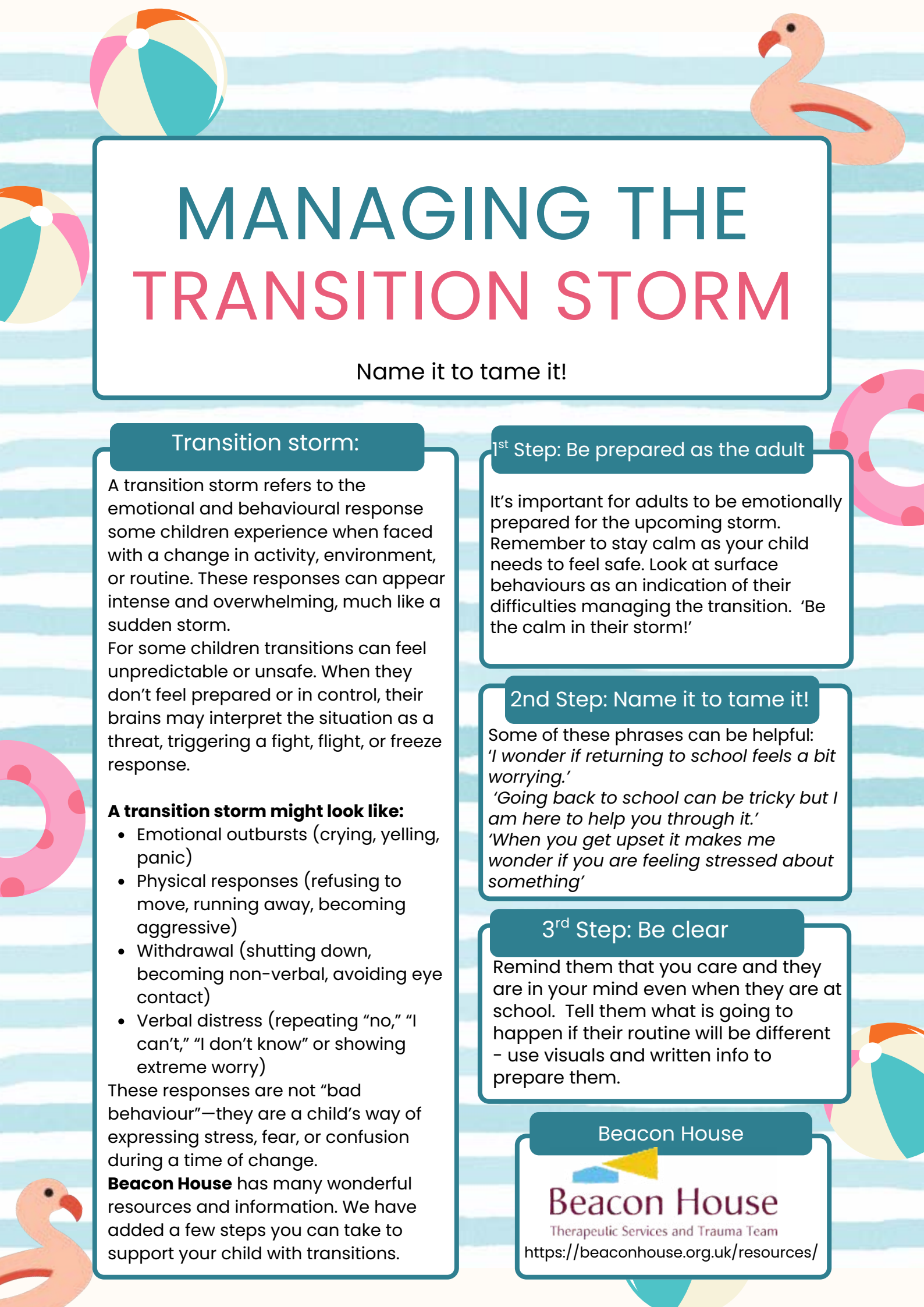
A few thoughts and tips for supporting our students..

For some students, transitions can be challenging. This might look like difficulty stopping one task and starting another, moving between lessons, arriving at school, or returning after a long break. Whether big or small, transitions can often lead to feelings of anxiety or uncertainty. Students with autism or ADHD may find transitions especially difficult due to challenges with executive functioning, sensory processing, and emotional regulation. For some vulnerable students, transitions can feel overwhelming or frightening.

As we look ahead to the long summer holiday, it's normal to feel excited. However, it's also important to prepare for the significant transition of returning to KHS. We've included a poster with some ideas to support students and families during this time. We hope you find them useful.

If you would like a specific social story please contact your child's OT or SLT.





# MANAGING THE TRANSITION STORM

Name it to tame it!

## Transition storm:

A transition storm refers to the emotional and behavioural response some children experience when faced with a change in activity, environment, or routine. These responses can appear intense and overwhelming, much like a sudden storm.

For some children transitions can feel unpredictable or unsafe. When they don't feel prepared or in control, their brains may interpret the situation as a threat, triggering a fight, flight, or freeze response.

### A transition storm might look like:

- Emotional outbursts (crying, yelling, panic)
- Physical responses (refusing to move, running away, becoming aggressive)
- Withdrawal (shutting down, becoming non-verbal, avoiding eye contact)
- Verbal distress (repeating "no," "I can't," "I don't know" or showing extreme worry)

These responses are not "bad behaviour"—they are a child's way of expressing stress, fear, or confusion during a time of change.

**Beacon House** has many wonderful resources and information. We have added a few steps you can take to support your child with transitions.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Step: Be prepared as the adult

It's important for adults to be emotionally prepared for the upcoming storm. Remember to stay calm as your child needs to feel safe. Look at surface behaviours as an indication of their difficulties managing the transition. 'Be the calm in their storm!'

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Step: Name it to tame it!

Some of these phrases can be helpful:  
*'I wonder if returning to school feels a bit worrying.'*  
*'Going back to school can be tricky but I am here to help you through it.'*  
*'When you get upset it makes me wonder if you are feeling stressed about something'*

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Step: Be clear

Remind them that you care and they are in your mind even when they are at school. Tell them what is going to happen if their routine will be different – use visuals and written info to prepare them.

Beacon House

  
**Beacon House**

Therapeutic Services and Trauma Team

<https://beaconhouse.org.uk/resources/>