

The Buzz

Issue 4 –
Summer 2025



As we approach the end of the school year, I would like to begin with a heartfelt thanks from myself and all of the teaching assistants. Without the support of all parents and carers, including your input into learning support worker contacts or EHCP reviews, we would not be able to ensure that the support we offer matches that what is needed by the students in school.

From all of the team, have a wonderful summer.

The annual parental survey was sent to all parents who have children on the SEND register. Thank you to those parents who have taken the time to share their views regarding SEND provision. There is still time to share your views - log in to your class charts and follow the link sent by Mr Topley via the announcements section. The annual survey allows us to review the way we work to ensure that the relationship between home and school is as cohesive as possible.



The Bolsover School SEND information report and SEND policy contain information about how the school aims to support all young people with additional needs and ensure that their educational journey is not affected by any conditions they may have. For more information visit:
<https://www.thebolsoverschool.org/page/?title=SEND&pid=35>

LEARNING SUPPORT WORKER

The teaching assistants have continued to work with their allocated young people as their “learning support worker” or LSW. The role of the LSW is far reaching and has many facets including:

- Regular check-ins with all young people on the SEND register
- Updates to learning plans and pupil passports which have a pupil centred approach to include their thoughts and feelings
- Home-school liaison and feedback to share any learning plan or passport updates.

The LSW worker aspect of the role allows the teaching assistants to act as a safe adult for all children who are on the SEND register.

If you are unsure who your child’s LSW is or would like to discuss LSW check-ins, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Topley (SEND CO) at the school via email: r.topley@thebolsoverschool.org.uk



DERBYSHIRE LOCAL OFFER

The Derbyshire local offer is a service which helps and supports children and young people with special educational needs to be more confident in their communities and live independently. For more information, visit:
<https://www.localoffer.derbyshire.gov.uk/home.aspx>



One of our big projects for 2025/2026 is the continued development of our school garden, with the aim of creating a sensory garden.

Whilst it is still in its infancy, if you feel that you may be able to help or contribute in any way, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Topley at the school (r.topley@thebolsoverschool.org.uk)

A Spotlight on Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA):

PDA, or Pathological Demand Avoidance, is a profile within autism spectrum disorder (ASD) characterized by an extreme resistance to and avoidance of everyday demands and expectations. PDA may have a range of effects including; sleep challenges, difficulties in performing self-care activities like personal hygiene, experiencing panic attacks or intense emotional distress, troubles in maintaining friendships or other social relationships or an inability to attend school due to distress.

PDA Fact Sheet

(Pathological Demand Avoidance Syndrome)

Key Facts And Strategies

- 1** PDA is a condition where pupils experience very high levels of anxiety when demands are placed on them, which can result in refusal or emotion-fuelled behaviours.
- 2** PDA is actually a specific form of ASC, and is not issued as a diagnosis in its own right. However, it can present very differently to other forms of ASC in the classroom.
- 3** Pupils with PDA are often sociable on a surface level, but lack deeper social understanding.
- 4** As babies, children with PDA are often placid and easy-going. But this changes when they reach their first birthday, and they become more resistant to adult demands.
- 5** A child with PDA will often initially resist demands by being socially manipulative - such as negotiating, deflecting, delaying, task avoidance and quiet non-engagement.
- 6** As young children, students with PDA are often late to acquire language, but make quick gains afterwards.
- 7** The key to managing the behaviour of pupils with PDA is to remember it is driven by anxiety. So avoid direct instructions, build in lots of choices during tasks and be flexible about how the task is completed.
- 8** If possible, *avoid* predictable routines and visual timetables - they help the pupil predict when demands are approaching, causing an increase in anxiety.

AND Finally...

Many thanks to those parents and carers who have kindly donated resources to our board games and Lego clubs. These clubs would not run as effectively without your help.

In the new academic year, we will continue to look to increase the number of Co-Curricular activities as part of the Curriculum Plus programme which are specific to our children with additional needs. If there are any sessions you feel may enhance the co-curricular offer for SEND, please do not hesitate to email Mr Topley with your suggestions. (r.topley@thebolsoverschool.org.uk).