

Hertfordshire

FASD Support Network

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Educational Thoughts from FASD parents in Hertfordshire

As all FASD parents hopefully know, a child with FASD needs to be kept regulated, have structured help and realistic expectations. When they go to school it adds additional strain and problems since they are outside of their safe environment at home.

Tips from parents with FASD

Some of the strategies that have helped parents of children with FASD in a mainstream school

- A coloured card that they could raise in class if they were overwhelmed.
- A go to assigned SEN support or teacher they could see if needed.
- Understanding by the teachers that the child is allowed to go to a SEN allocated room or safe space to get some peace to calm down.
- Providing a pack lunch of his favourite foods. In our experience, a child with FASD has a limited menu and specific brands and food which does not match a school menu!
- Have regular meetings with the SEN teacher who is assigned to your child to help with issues
- Engage the SEN department in the new school when transitioning between primary and secondary.
- Push for an EHCP and do not be discouraged by the school, this can help up to 25 years of age if they stay in education (college, further education etc).

Homework

A special mention for homework which induces anxiety, depression and unnecessary stress to a child with FASD and needs to be managed. This is where mainstream schools in our experience do not understand FASD.

The school needs to understand that the child with FASD cannot manage homework at home and appropriate adjustments are needed to cover this. Why? In our case our child was totally exhausted once back home from school and was mental and physical exhausted and no stamina to do more schoolwork. Also, the child's view is they are not at school now, they are in their safe space and want to chill out....

Working with the school, appropriate slots during the day were found and support was provided so that homework was carried out at school.

Primary and Secondary Schools

Depending on the capability of the child with FASD it may not be appropriate for them to be taught in a mainstream school but usually most kids will enter mainstream school first and then, where appropriate, with the SEN support in school they can move to a specialist school. See the [My child is struggling at school, what kind of support is possible? - National FASD](#) on the National FASD site.

Also some children can hide their disability well such that they are not considered to need a specialist school but start to struggle significantly as they get older.

If looking at Primary and Secondary schools try to look at schools with the smaller class sizes and developed/helpful SEN support and know about FASD.

Secondary school transition is hard for children but this is far worse for children with FASD.

Education Notes

Special schools are more geared up to making the atmosphere truly child friendly, plus more like-minded peers are likely, so it often works better. Once the anxiety is reduced, coping is obviously a possibility...

Springboard training at North Hertford College (Letchworth and Watford – see [Discover Springboard \(SEND\) courses - North Hertfordshire College](#)) is a specialist college for those with special needs, ASD, anxiety etc and all are therapy trained staff and tailor training to needs of individuals. It is setup for between the ages of 16 and 24 and have been diagnosed with or exhibit traits of Autism.