Record-keeping and Communication Log

Appointments Calendar

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

In order to reuse this calendar we recommended using pencil

Key contacts

Name	Number

Top tips for record keeping

Parents / carers of children with SEN or medical needs will find themselves making frequent visits to various health professionals, education meetings and receiving copies of various reports. In order to be effective in meetings and in your communication good record-keeping is important and will help prevent additional stress. Here are some top tips we have put together for effective record-keeping:

- Keep everything in one place. Most parents / carers tell us that they find keeping everything in a ring binder file the best way to store everything.
- Get a system in place. If you are using a ring binder file, create a contents page and colour code each section so everything is organised and easy to identify. This means if needed you are able to find information in a timely manner without having to sift through lots of records. If organisation is difficult for you, if you have a smart phone take photos of every document and save them to your phone.
- Keep the records somewhere safe and secure.
- Include your contact information in the front of the file. This will come in handy in the case of the file getting lost or if someone else ever needs to bring it to you.
- Write in pencil on the file's contents page and contact details as these details are likely to change over time and rather than having to replace the file, if you use pencil, it makes changing the details a lot easier.
- Request copies of everything; meeting notes, reports, appointment notes etc.
- Keep the most recent information at the front of each section.

Top tips for preparing for an initial diagnostic appointment

- Read 'Autism in Under-18s: Recognition, Referral and Diagnosis (NICE clinical guidelines)' This document outlines evidenced-based recommendations and outlines what should happen during the diagnostic process and when.
- Tap into autism services and support groups. Hearing from other parents / carers about their experiences may help.
- In some cases, you don't need a diagnosis to be able to apply for extra support and benefits. Your first initial diagnostic appointment may be a while away, looking at options available to support you in the meantime is important.

- Prepare a list of behaviours, characteristics, concerns about your child. It could be useful to keep a diary of behaviours to take along.
- Research what to expect on the day - this can help decrease any anxieties you may have.
- Arrange for someone to come along with you; appointments can be overwhelming, and you may not take in some of the information you are being given, so having an extra pair of ears there to listen and take information in can be useful
- Talk to someone about your feelings and fears.
- Prepare a list of questions you have for the clinician.