

Bradford Portage Service

Issue 7
May 2020

Welcome to our Portage Newsletter in Lockdown!

As we go into our 7th week of no home visiting we wanted to share with you what we have been getting up to and some of the lovely things happening during lockdown and other useful resources, services and organisations we have found for you all to continue learning and having fun.

The team are keeping busy and refreshing their brains on old and new professional development courses, whilst trying to ensure we continue to maintain and deliver the Portage Service as effectively as we can in these strange times. Also keep checking our Facebook page -Bradford Portage Service—where we are sharing lots of things.

Our “Portage Workshop: A Small Steps Approach to learning for Children with SEND” which was due to begin on the 14th and 15th of May has unfortunately been cancelled. We fully intend on delivering this course as soon as we can and will share the new dates once we have these confirmed.



We hope you are keeping safe at home and getting to spend some time playing in the sunshine. We've enjoyed being sent photos and hearing about the lovely things you have been doing.

As always we are trying to keep positive during these uncertain times and can only appreciate the challenges some of you may be facing as we have also heard how some families are finding it more difficult being at home for so long and routines being disrupted, but we also hope it has given you the opportunities to spend quality time together as a family that the pace of everyday life sometimes takes away from us.

Please remember these are exceptionally tough times, give yourselves the credit you deserve and be kind to yourselves.

If anyone can embrace change with a level of resilience they might not even realise they have, we know for sure that this is all of you... hang on in there, better days will come!

We hope to see you all very soon.

Keep positive, keep in touch and stay safe.

The Portage Team x



Useful Websites & Information

Family Fund - A charity that provides grants to support families providing things such as sensory toys or family breaks.

Bradford Inclusive Disability Service—Based at CDC St Luke's, this is a place for children with additional needs to loan a range of sensory toys and join the community on days out, activities and groups.

Cerebra—A charity to support families that include children with brain conditions and other useful information and grants.

Newlife - Another fantastic charity that loans sensory play packs and grants for children with additional needs.

Shabang—Based in Huddersfield Shabang provide shows for children with additional needs using sensory and makaton to bring them to life. They have lots of support groups for families to attend.

The Down syndrome support and training group Bradford—A charity run by parents and carers of children who have Down syndrome. They offer support and training for parents and professionals.

AWARE - A parent run group supporting families with children and young adults on the autism spectrum.

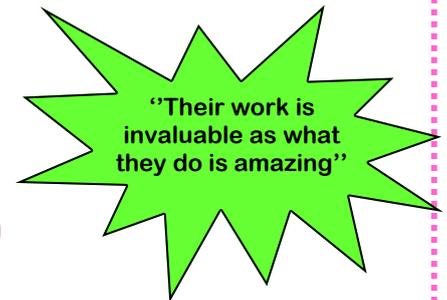


National Portage Association
Partners with Parents and Children



We have gathered together some data from last year about Portage in Bradford we thought we would also share with you...

- We received 160 referrals in 2019
- We currently deliver Portage to 129 families across the Bradford District
- We have six Portage Early Education groups that run weekly



2019 Portage Service Evaluations

100% of families said they enjoyed Portage Home Visits

85% of parents said their child enjoyed Portage home visits

100% of parents said they felt involved in their child's; learning, planning goals and completing assessments

100% of families asked said they have changed the way they play with their child since receiving Portage

100% of families said their Portage Home Visitor supported the transition from home to setting

100% of families said they feel that Portage has contributed to their child's progress

100% of families asked would recommend Bradford Portage Service



The NPA Stamp of Approval Scheme is an award given to early year's settings who have demonstrated they deliver inclusive early years education based upon Portage Principles. Child-minders (registered with OFSTED) who offer early years education are also eligible to apply.

This is formal recognition and acknowledgement of being an inclusive setting that ensure high quality provision for children with additional needs—fantastic for your OFSTED reports!

We are excited to share with you that St Edmund's Nursery School will hopefully very soon be our first setting within the district to be a Portage Approved Early Years Setting. We have made the recommendations to state that they meet all the criteria set by the NPA and they have now submitted their evidence. We want to thank them for all of their hard work in working towards achieving this and the brilliant continued joint-working we do with them in our Early Education Group.

Our aim post lockdown is to encourage all of the Enhanced Nursery Placement provisions across the district to come on board and achieve this status so watch this space!

However, if any setting is interested we would love to support you in this process.

Please get in contact with a member of the team for further information and criteria on how to get started—lockdown could be the perfect opportunity to start planning!!

Bradford Portage Service

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A Portage Service registered with
the National Portage Association.



Bradford District

We know the challenges some families are currently facing. Home-Start can provide emotional support, tips and guidance around managing children's behaviour and activities to keep you occupied. They can provide a listening ear and signpost to other relevant services. Please visit their website where you can self-refer for this support.

Please like and find us on Facebook—Bradford Portage Service - or click on the icon!



We would still love parents/carers, siblings and professionals to contribute to the newsletter too. If you have any celebrations, exciting news or stories, activities or handy hints you would like to share with us please email Portage.Team@bradford.gov.uk or let your Portage Home Visitor know.

Makaton

All face to face Makaton training has been put on hold for the time being following the Government and The Makaton Charity's advice. All of our scheduled Makaton training events through Portage have now been cancelled. If you have previously made a reservation, you should have received notification of this from our admin team.

We have plans to deliver face to face Makaton training again from the next academic year when hopefully social distancing restrictions are lifted. We will advertise future training (when we can) on our Facebook page, on Bradford Schools Online (BSO) and on The Makaton Charity's website www.makaton.org.

One of our Makaton Signing for Babies Trainers and Portage Home Visitor, Lucy Rowley, started to deliver a Makaton Signing for Babies course at St Edmunds Nursery School. She wasn't able to complete all of the sessions as lockdown had started. We will carry on with these sessions and complete the course for those who came along when we are able to again in the future.

There are some fantastic online stories and sing along songs with Makaton from Singing Hands and our friends Shabang! on Facebook. Have a look on their pages to see their schedules including live streaming!



Specialist support is out there for parent carers

Parents of children with additional needs are first and foremost parents. But they are also unpaid carers – and often don't know it.

An unpaid carer is anyone who, without payment, provides help and support to a friend, neighbour or relative who could not manage otherwise because of frailty, illness or disability.

Life as a parent who cares for a child with additional needs can be challenging, exhausting and relentless. Caring can be 24/7. Parent carers rarely think about their own health and wellbeing, as they strive to provide the best for their children.

There is support available. At the charity Carers' Resource, we help parent carers to solve their problems. We give them information, help them navigate systems (care, disability benefits and funding, to name a few) and give them emotional support. We also signpost parent carers to other organisations as needed.

During coronavirus we are still offering this support across the Bradford district (and North Yorkshire), but it is by telephone rather than face-to-face. Video calling is an option, as is text messaging and emails, and information can be sent through the post where necessary.

Parent carers can access additional support through our Facebook groups if they are registered with us. Up-to-date information is posted regularly and parent carers are able to support one another.

We are also working on delivering online workshops/sessions in the near future. Some will be pre-recorded, some live, and others interactive. Subjects will include completing DLA and PIP forms, a virtual coffee, cake and chat and other content and themes that carers tell us they need. If they are successful we will carry them on beyond lockdown, as we hope they will be accessible for carers who cannot get out and about easily.

Carers' Resource can help any carer, whether they have just started to care for another person or whether they have been doing it for years, whether the cared-for person lives with them or not, whether they care for just a few hours a week or round-the-clock, and whether they have £1 or £1m in their bank account.

Parent carers, any other type of unpaid carer, or professionals can refer into our services by filling out a form here: www.carersresource.org/contact/ or by calling 01274 449660 (option 1).

Lockdown Celebrations of Success and Fun!!

We love celebrating and seeing what you are all getting up to during lockdown, thank you to everyone for sharing with us!

Please see a print out at the end of the newsletter for anyone that would like to make a rainbow to share in their windows to thank our NHS and Keyworker Hero's. We would love to see photos of you with these or sharing your own creations you have made!



This is Adam.

Adam is 3 years old and has Autism.

He attends the Early Education Group at Fagley Children Centre.

During lockdown Adam has learnt to say 'ready, steady, go' and plays catch/tig with his brothers and sister.

Mummy Melanie says "his laugh when he is playing has me in happy tears as he doesn't usually show this emotion"

Well done Adam and how wonderful to share these fun experiences with your brothers and sister!



This is Hashim, he is 22 months old.

During lockdown he has been practicing his physical skills at home with his mummy and big brother and has recently started to kneel and pull to stand!

His mummy said "Hashim is doing some amazing things! He manages to get to his knees by pulling the sofa or my clothes and does this comfortably. He has managed to stand a few times and is trying to do this more. It is an amazing feeling to watch. Hashim also likes to pretend he is answering the phone and says "ello!"

Well Done Hashim, we are super proud!



This is Aaleyiah.

Aaleyiah is 2 years old and has Autism, she has some new skills she wanted to share with us all.

Aaleyiah has learnt to shout 'yaaaay' whilst putting her hands in the air when she is happy and has been making the most of this extra time at home with her big sister Amarnie, having lots of fun baking jam tarts together.

She also wanted to share her first photo of mummy putting pretty plaits in her hair - this is a pretty big thing for mummy as I'm sure lots of you out there can agree with!



Aaleyiah has recently been awarded a laptop through the Family Fund Grant which mummy, Stacey is using to create visual symbols to support her communication—fantastic!

We hope they are a success!

This is Emily, she is 3 years old and wanted to share with us some of the exciting things they are doing at home.

“I have been doing some painting; and of course I had to see what it felt like on my face! We have planted so many things including giant strawberry plants and our cherry tree is growing cherries! I also enjoy playing in my sisters play gym at home and have spent hours of fun playing inside a big box from one of our deliveries. I also said Emmie for the first time a few days ago which mummy and daddy are really proud of.”



We are also having our very own ‘2020 Lockdown Olympics’. We are designing our own t-shirts with fabric paint and my new baby sister has a sleep suit for us to design too.

I will be competing in the welly throwing and bubble popping football—mummy said she will share these photos with us for the next newsletter!

It is lovely to see how much fun you are having Emily and spending lots of time outdoors learning in your garden!



This is Jacob, he is 2 years old and wanted to share how much fun he is having in his hot tub with mummy and daddy during lockdown!

The float is called a ‘MamboFloat Baby Safety Swim Trainer’ which they purchased from Amazon—it also has an option to go on your tummy and you can purchase a canopy to keep the sun at bay for an additional cost.

Spending lots of time in the hot tub has made a huge difference to Jacob’s life, he gets to do his daily physiotherapy and he is so content and relaxed in the water.

It looks like you are having lots of fun Jacob whilst working hard on your physio—how fantastic and such a cool little dude!



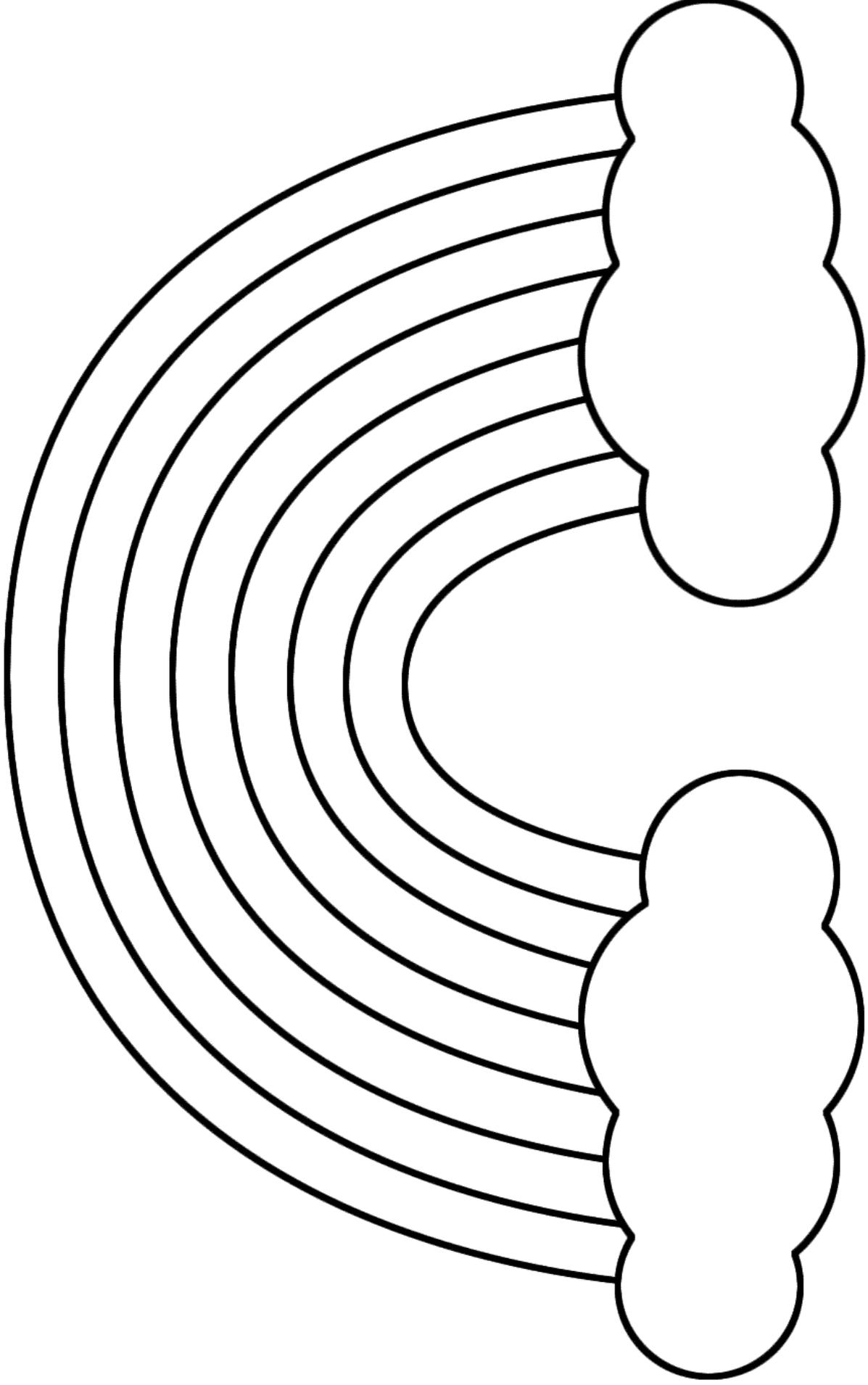
This is Sarah.

Sarah is 3 years old and has been keeping very busy at home with her family.

She has been working on matching and grouping colours with lots of encouragement from her big sister.

Take a look at Sarah’s photos in action.

So lovely to see you keeping busy and smiley Sarah!



Thank you NHS & Keyworkers