

December 2021/January 2022

Autism|eye

For parents and professionals

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Welcome to the Autism Eye Newsletter



News



Autistics vulnerable to acid reflux

Autistic adults are “significantly more” vulnerable to acid reflux, new research shows...



Boy’s death related to care failings

Care failings may have played a part in the death of a 13-year-old autistic boy...

Products & services

Looking for schools, sensory equipment or other support? Click the categories below.

Events

Furniture

Nutrition

Resources

Sensory equipment

Schools and supported living

Therapy

Training

Independent Specialist Colleges

Soft play



Mum says treatment denied due to autism > **Nine hospital support workers deny abuse**

Announcements

Experience the magic of Disney on stage

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Come and 'relax' with Robin Hood at Theatre Royal Nottingham this Christmas

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Shakespeare returns to the Royal Shakespeare Theatre

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Relaxed and sensory-adapted performance on sale

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Get ready for clean, mountain air

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Toys, Fidgets And More In The NEW Sensory Direct Kits and Multi-Packs

Stars of the Month



Callum and Nikki McKeefery, grotto creators

For families touched by autism, navigating Christmas can be stressful enough without seeing their children look on at fun activities they would find too overwhelming to take part in. So our Stars of the Month are a couple whose young son suffers from a rare genetic condition and who have created an all-inclusive, free-of-charge Santa's grotto designed to bring the magic of Christmas to other children with special needs or a disability.

Inspired by their five-year-old son Hudson, parents Callum and Nikki McKeefery have spent the past six months creating the grotto in a shop in Leicester. The project, which is run by volunteers, stems from Callum having to ask his uncle to dress up as Santa for Hudson because taking him to a normal grotto would distress him.

"The idea is to give children with special needs and their families that bit of normality. It's a completely safe space, so there will be nobody there judging the kids if they're playing up or taking their time settling in," says Callum who, along with Nikki, has injected tens of thousands of pounds into making the grotto possible.

Callum says: "We give Santa the chance to spend longer with the children, which means they can warm up slowly and the parents can enjoy the process. One of our main aims is to get each visitor a nice photo with Santa – I know just how much that will mean to the parents. Sometimes, perhaps for the first time, they'll be able to get a

festive picture of their child printed and send it to family. They'll be able to look back on that photo and have such amazing memories."

If you have a child with additional needs who would like to see Santa in Leicester, please email Nikki@reviews.io and the McKeefery team will do their best to get you in.

Events

[See All Events](#)

Henshaws Specialist College January Open Day >

22 JANUARY 2022

Henshaws Specialist College supports young people aged 16-25 with special educational needs and disabilities

The Autism Show Manchester 2022 >

10-11 JUNE 2022

The Autism Show is the national event for autism. If you're looking for information or approaching transition points, the show can help

The Autism Show London 2022 >

17-18 JUNE 2022

The Autism Show is the national event for autism. If you're looking for information or approaching transition points, the show can help

The Autism Show Birmingham 2022 >

24-25 JUNE 2022

The Autism Show is the national event for autism. If you're looking for information or approaching transition points, the show can help

Videos

