

CASE STUDY – BOOKER PARK SEND SCHOOL EASTER 2024

O.N. attended four days of SEND camp with APF Activity Camps at Booker Park School in Aylesbury from April 24 to April 25, inclusive. He was there from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every day, which is the same as all other children on-site and is the regular time of this camp.

O.N. was assigned a 1:1 each day, three times with the same person, and then once in a small group but still set up as 2:2, as O.N. was with another student and two staff at all times, to encourage some cooperative play during splatball and archery.

Prior to camp, we met with Mom, talked through the EHCP, and discussed specific needs that may arise for me to be able to look out for and pass on to the staff at our daily morning briefings. This system, which we used for all parents, really helped the staff as a whole and contributed to the calm and warming environment that we produced, which in turn helped all Children settle each day, including O.N.

O.N. did settle well into the camp and never tried to run, 'escape' or indeed hide at all. He was fascinated and fixated on the front doors, which were sliding and see-through, but operated by a fob, for which only I (Simon, camp manager) had access too. For around an hour on the day O.N. was 2:2, he sat in a chair opposite the front doors with the other child in the next chair and two staff supervising, and while there wasn't that much interaction between the two children, he was comfortable, felt safe, and didn't make any movement to suggest anyone was crowding his space. He continued to look around, making his usual noises and regularly talks out loud to himself throughout. This indicated how content he was at the camp.

It was clear that clear boundaries worked well for O.N., and on the very first morning, O.N. did notice a fire extinguisher, which he went towards, looked back at, and smiled. Mum had notified us that this is a common behavioural trait, and the staff told him firmly that it wasn't to be touched. O.N. listened and never went back to it.

O.N. didn't eat much on camp but did have a bit of fruit. He was always offered food and drink at mealtimes but also in between after we realised he wasn't eating much and Mom was informed each day.

O.N. met various staff that he wasn't familiar with throughout the four days but coped very well, and played football for a long time on the first day and took a huge part in splatball and Archery on the second day. At other times, he would look to revert to the front doors, but we tried to limit this and offer alternatives, but if access wasn't available, he never got angry or upset, he would just wait. In such a new but temporary environment, he did so well and adapted and made it his own in this new setting. The staff's understanding and cooperation with him was excellent, and he responded to all of them, but especially his main 1:1, who could get through to him the most, despite having only just met him.

Simon Tyler
Operations Manager, APF Activity Camps