Ryedale Special Families

Supporting families of children with disabilities and additional needs

Newsletter – October 2026

SUPPORT TODAY - give us a 'big push' and help us bring home the swings!

We'll be spending 24 hours on the swings at Woodlands Park on 24-25 October! Why? To fundraise for an inclusive basket swing and standard playground swing to be installed at our centre in Pickering, as part of our plans to develop our grounds, so we can offer inclusive and social opportunities for young people outdoors too!

We'd love for our community to get involved! Come along over the weekend to take a turn on the swings or just to show your support. If you're able, please consider giving us a 'big push' by donating in person or online.

FIND OUT MORE HERE:
justgiving.com/campaign/rsf-big-push

What's On?

With support groups, an ADHD-focused talk, plus family Halloween and Christmas parties, there's lots going on over the next few months.

Don't forget, you can always get in touch with questions about our services or to find out how you can support our work.

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Letter from Lisa

Over the last few months, we've been busy campaigning with friends. Wherever possible, Ryedale Special Families will always help other organisations and businesses who are championing the rights of disabled people.

Save Cauwood Day Centre

In the spring there was word from North Yorkshire Council that Cauwood Day Centre in Malton was closing. There was no committment on alternative facilities and care for the adults with physical and learning disabilities, autism and sensory needs. We added our support to the local families and Councillors who launched a petition - over 2,000 signatures strong - to 'Save Cauwood'.

Cauwood is a service that young adults have the option of attending after leaving RSF so its closure was very concerning to us. It would have limited the options disabled adults had for their essential care needs. It would also mean closure of the only Changing Places toilet in Malton - disregard for specialist facilities we found unacceptable.

Everybody's hard work paid off and a new Cauwood will open at the council's 5 Whitby Road premises in Pickering. There are still details to confirm following the closure in Malton, but renovations to the site in Pickering are underway and there's assurance that there will be no gap in support for the adults who receive care from Cauwood. A great result and well done in particular to Caroline and Stuart who did an amazing job leading this campaign.

Butterwick Alpaca Retreat is challenging planning restrictions

This wonderful place is a favourite of RSF. We have visited many times over the years, having group sessions and family events with guided alpaca walks. Our main use has been to give work experience opportunities to disabled young people. As part of our Alternative Education provision, young people use the farm to gain practical skills and these are invaluable. These visits show day to day working life as well as building confidence and promoting positive mental wellbeing.

There are barriers for disabled young people to find jobs and if we want to ensure our young people are not further disadvantaged, we need places like the Alpaca Retreat. Work experience opportunities are in short supply locally and RSF would be very disappointed if this were to close, it would be a great loss to the community and its young people.

Lisa Keenan
Chief Officer, Ryedale Special Families

Such wonderful fun at the Fete!

In August we opened the doors to our centre in Pickering to welcome everyone to our **Summer Fete**. It was incredible to see so many families enjoying the games and entertainment!

With huge thanks to **Butterwick Alpaca Retreat** for bringing along two lovely alpacas, **Swinton and District Excelsior Band** for providing wonderful music, **Scarborough & Ryedale Mountain Rescue Team** for demonstrating their rescue kit, and Simone and Phil for bringing bubble cars.

Lots of **generous volunteers** helped with organising, creating, baking and manning stands on the day. The event wouldn't have been possible without their help. A huge thank you to all, as well as everyone who donated money, prizes and materials. Along with the **tremendous support** from everyone who attended on the day, we have **raised over £1,500**!

We're busy looking at potential dates for another Summer Fete next year, but with a birthday theme next time, to celebrate 30 years of Ryedale Special Families!

Fabulous fundraisers...

⭐ Crafty Hubbers of Thornton-le-Dale have kindly used proceeds from various craft sales to purchase us a large sensory/activity tray and lino print kits!

⭐ Lady Lumley's Academy held a student and teacher lip-sync battle and donated £165 from this fabulous fundraiser!

⭐ Supporters Stephen and Andy (below) completed a 30-mile challenge walk from Whitby to Pickering in August - they've raised an incredible £610 plus Gift Aid!

⭐ Leavening YCA donated a speaker's fee when Lead Fundraiser, Kirsty, talked to the group in September. Then kindly pledged Leavening Village Show proceeds to further support our work!

⭐ The Coach House Inn at Rosedale held a coffee morning for us, raising £280.60!

⭐ Ryedale Agricultural Society kindly gifted £500 from Ryedale Show proceeds!

⭐ Kirby Misperton Parish Clerk, Jacqui, generously donates her salary to good causes locally and we were picked from Committee members' nominations to receive a £100 donation - thanks to all!

⭐ Mr & Mrs R, with family and friends, donated to RSF in lieu of 50th wedding anniversary gifts! Congratulations to you!

ADHD & Me talk
Wednesday 28 October, 5pm

"I was the child who felt different. The one who was misunderstood and the one got the blame for everything resulting in being permanently excluded from school."

These are the words of **Ryan Swain**, who's delivering ADHD awareness talks across the UK on his **You, Me & ADHD** tour this year, including here in Pickering.

"Now I'm using my lived experience with ADHD to make sure other children know they're not alone and feel supported."

Ryan has launched this movement to help mainstream schools better understand neurodivergent children, empower families and, most importantly, help young people understand themselves and this condition. **The talk is open to both parents/carers/anyone supporting a child or young adult with ADHD, as well as any young people with ADHD.**

Join us to hear Ryan's talk:
RSF, Outgang Lane, YO18 7JA
Booking not required.

Family activity days a big hit!

We've had a wonderful time welcoming families to our recent activity days - **Dalby Forest** in August, **Peat Rigg** in September and a trip on the **North Yorkshire Moors Steam Railway** earlier this month. Great fun was had by all.

Dalby attendees enjoyed a picnic, some time at the park and our own duck race! Peat Rigg Outdoor Training Centre staff led caving, climbing, zip-lining, fire-lighting and archery activities, with a fantastic BBQ lunch to re-fuel everyone! **The train trip was kindly supported by Malton & Norton Lions**. Leo the lion made some new friends on the journey and families enjoyed exploring Whitby!

Local support and events

Ryedale Parent Carer Forum

Chris Kleys from CAMHs: Wed 11 Nov
Find out more about the support available from CAMHs (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) and share your feedback about the CAMHs website - what could be improved and what would you like to see.

Christmas Activity: Wed 9 Dec
Get into the festive spirit with us! We'll be holding a fun Christmas activity for all. Come along, get creative and enjoy a little festive cheer with our Family Support Worker, Heidi.

There's no need to book, just pop along to the sessions. **9-11am, Kirkbymoorside Community Hub, YO62 6AG.**

Pickering Library

There are a wonderful variety of family-friendly events at **Pickering Library** that are free and open to everyone.
This half term there are drop-in sessions:

Monday Fun Club - make an autumn window wreath and other craft activities!
Mon 26 Oct, 10:30am-12pm

Tuesday Crafts - origami bookmarks and more crafting fun to enjoy!
Tue 27 Oct, 10:30am-12pm

If you need more information, please call 01609 533624 or email the Library via pickering.library@northyorks.gov.uk

Autistic Girls Network

This small charity has spaces available at their social group in **Scarborough**. These sessions are open to autistic girls and non-binary young people aged 9-12 years.

The organisers say "we do lots of craft, cooking and outdoor activities but we also make time for **understanding more about being autistic, in a positive way**. We spend a short time covering different life skills-related topics each session, for example we might talk about emotions, or friendship, or money management."

Young people attending need to be:

- Autistic or on the pathway to diagnosis (self diagnosis is valid)
- Able to attend the group alone without the need for 1:1 support or for a parent/carer to stay

The group is held at Burniston and Cloughton Village Hall on alternate Fridays from 5pm to 6:30pm. Booking is essential, please see their website: **autisticgirlsnetwork.org/face-to-face-groups**

Ryedale Special Families is interested to hear from anyone who might be interested in a similar type of social group being held here in Pickering. Please get in touch and let us know your thoughts. Thank you!

How RSF can support you

Family Parties: Halloween 28 Nov 4-6pm, Christmas 20 Dec 11am-2pm

With thanks to our fabulous family volunteers, we can offer a number of seasonal parties for families to attend throughout the year. We ask everyone to contribute some food or drinks so there are some tasty snacks to enjoy alongside fun activities. Children of all ages are welcome, along with siblings/friends too. Parents/carers to stay throughout.

Free to attend. BOOKING ESSENTIAL, call 01653 699000 or email post@ryedalespecialfamilies.org.uk

Home Education Support Group

Thu 15 October, 12-2pm
Thu 5 & 19 November, 12-2pm
Thu 3 December, 12-2pm

For children home educated full or part-time, attending with a parent/carer.

Free to attend. For more info or to book: call 01653 699000 or email heidi@ryedalespecialfamilies.org.uk

Ryedale Communication Club

Fri 23 October, 10am-11am
Fri 27 November, 10am-11am

Open to young people, attending with their parent/carer, using or wishing to explore using Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).

AAC refers to tools and systems that support or replace speech for individuals with communication difficulties, ranging from simple picture boards to advanced speech-generating devices.

The club is run by **AAC & Me** www.aacandme.co.uk

Free to attend. BOOKING ESSENTIAL, please email: clubs@aacandme.co.uk

Level Up Club

Tuesdays, 10:30am-3:30pm

A social group for **18 to 25 year olds** to discover options for their future and meet other young people. Arts, crafts, music and group activities, with help for attendees with social and life skills - aiming to improve independence and organise access to work experience and volunteer opportunities.

Free to attend. BOOKING ESSENTIAL, call 01653 699000 or email beth@ryedalespecialfamilies.org.uk

Ryedale Autism & ADHD Families Together (RAFT)

Wed 4 November, 10:30am-12pm
Wed 2 December, 10:30am-12pm

An informal and friendly support group for parents/carers of children and young adults with autism and/or ADHD, whether diagnosed or under assessment. Share experiences, make friends, swap advice or just have a chat with others who understand the challenges these families may face.

Free to attend. No booking required.

How you can support RSF

Join the 200 Club: just £1 a month

The **200 Club lottery** raises funds for Ryedale Special Families, supporting our general charitable work.

Annual payments of **£12 per number** enters your number into the next 12 monthly draws. Payments can be made by cash, cheque, BACS or PayPal.

Multiple numbers can be purchased - more chances to win! Prizes total 50% of each month's income, with a 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize. The other 50% is donated.

If you'd like to join the 200 Club, you can find the rules and sign up on our website: ryedalespecialfamilies.org.uk/200
Or get in touch via 01653 699000 so we can send you all the information.

Green-fingered volunteers wanted

If you enjoy gardening and have a few hours a month to spare, could you help us keep our plants looking fabulous?! General weeding and pruning is all that's required. Please get in touch if you'd like to volunteer here in Pickering. Thank you!

Charity of the Year 2027

If your business, or the company you work for, choose a **Charity of the Year** to support, please consider choosing or nominating Ryedale Special Families.

Local support - whether in the form of **fundraising, volunteering or skills donations** - can have such a positive impact and is always very welcome.

Please get in touch with Kirsty, our Lead Fundraiser, for more information or to find out how you could help:
kirsty@ryedalespecialfamilies.org.uk
Tel: 01653 699000

Vouchers, bottles and treats!

If you're able to donate any of the following items to support our fundraising efforts at the Pickering Christmas Lights Switch On (28 Nov), we would be very grateful indeed:

- **Bottles** - wine, fizz, spirits or tasty non-alcoholic options, for prizes.
- **Tins** - tubs or boxes of chocolates, biscuits or sweets, for prizes.
- **Vouchers** - for days out, treatments or monetary gift cards for local shops or attractions, for prizes.
- **Cards** - we are creating some Christmas cards to sell at our stall, if you have any card blanks and/or colourful envelopes left over from your own crafting projects.

What's on - October to December

DATE	EVENT	WHERE	WHEN
Thu 15 October	**Home Education Support Group** See page 6, booking essential. Also on 5 Nov, 19 Nov and 3 Dec.	Ryedale Special Families Pickering, YO18 7JA	**12pm to 2pm**
Tue 20 October	**Level Up Club** See page 6, booking essential. Every Tuesday in term time.	Ryedale Special Families Pickering, YO18 7JA	**10:30am to 3:30pm**
Fri 23 October	**Ryedale Communication Club** See page 6, booking essential. Also on 27 Nov.	Ryedale Special Families Pickering, YO18 7JA	**10am to 11am**
Wed 28 October	**You, Me & ADHD - talk by Ryan Swain**, for parents/carers and young people (no booking required).	Ryedale Special Families Pickering, YO18 7JA	**5pm**
Fri 30 October	**Family Halloween Party** See page 6, booking essential.	Ryedale Special Families Pickering, YO18 7JA	**4pm to 6pm**
Wed 4 November	**RAFT - support group** See page 6, no booking required. Also on 2 Dec.	Ryedale Special Families Pickering, YO18 7JA	**10:30am to 12pm**
Sat 28 November	**Pickering Christmas Lights Switch On - see us at the RSF stand!**	Market Place, Pickering	**2pm to 6pm**
Mon 20 December	**Family Christmas Party** See page 6, booking essential.	Ryedale Special Families, Pickering, YO18 7JA	**11am to 2pm**

01653 699000

post@ryedalespecialfamilies.org.uk

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Ryedale Special Families

Ryedale Special Families is a registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation in England and Wales, no: 1170988.