

College Park School

# Autism Awareness Week- 29<sup>th</sup> of March- 2<sup>nd</sup> of April

## Aims of this letter



College Park School is a special needs school for children with autism in Westminster. We celebrate Autism Awareness Week this year through sharing and celebrating the experiences of our young people who have a diagnosis of autism.

As a school we believe firmly in our mission to support and promote inclusion in all its forms within our school community and our wider community partners. In this newsletter we have some of our young people sharing their experiences of their autism and also their hopes for the future. We also describe our best practice and provide further signposting to other organisations that can help you find out, learn more and further inclusion and inclusive practices in your settings.

## What is Autism and how we support our students?

Autism is neurodevelopmental condition that affects 1-2 % of population. Autistic individuals are described as having difficulties with communication, social interaction and repetitive and restrictive behaviours.

However, we also see our students as unique individuals with many strengths. They are the most extraordinary people because autistic individuals are not tied by social expectations and norms and they live in the

moment. Autistic people rarely lie and judge others. They usually have fantastic memories and a very strong sense of justice.

In College Park School, we support our students through creating a calm and engaging learning environment, listening to their voices and incorporating their special interests and affinities in lessons and learning. We provide individualized communication aids to sup-

port their communication and social interaction.

We always respect and celebrate their wishes, views and their uniqueness!



## Meet two of our former Students

### Kassra

My name is Kassra Saberi. I am 28 years old. I have moderate autism.

#### **The way this affects is as follows:**

Noises bother me a lot

My Mathematical ability is not so good, especially dealing with money

I don't always get on with some people.

Not everyone understands and is patient enough whenever sometimes I do funny stuff, giggling about special scenarios, topics of conversations that are amusing or repeat the same questions as I specifically know the answers to!

I've been finding it difficult to find a paying job. Maybe because I talk too much!

The good thing about autism is I have a fantastic memory whenever I remember everything from my past.

I have an encyclopaedic memory of all animation and movies I'm interested in.

- I remember people's birthdays.

- Although my Maths is not so good, I can work out people's age very quickly if they tell me their birthday!

#### **Things I like are:**

- I am a talented artist. I am also an excellent photographer.

- I'm even a wildlife expert. Probably because of my brilliant memory,

- I enjoy singing when I'm at choir.

- Despite autism, I have many wonderful friendships.

- I'm still looking for a girlfriend!

I'm hoping to find proper job when I gain more experience. Perhaps I should look into acting and pursue a career in entertainment.



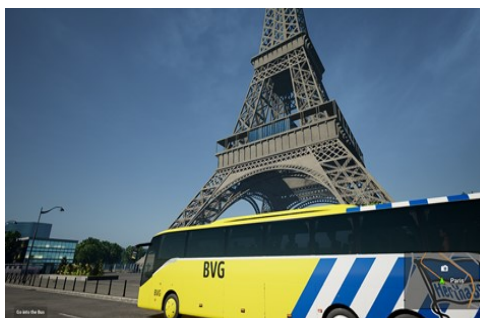
These is Kassra's drawing from his British Museum sketchbook



### Moshtaba

I used to be a student at College Park School for almost 8 years until the lockdown, my age is 16 years old. I left college park on March 17th 2020 due to suspicion that I had Covid 19. I hope to see a much better time in the future and I think of starting a company at some point in the future based on travel. It was very sad that I had to leave college park earlier than expected since I was expecting to get my final exams to then go on to college

Here is a few pictures of what I have been doing for the past few months. These pictures were made via Fernbus Simulator, First picture was in Paris and the second one is from Rotterdam Centraal Station. (My home station in The Netherlands).



**For more information about Autism Awareness Week and how to support autistic people visit:**

[www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

[www.autistica.org.uk](http://www.autistica.org.uk)

[www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk](http://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk)