



Guest Speakers

Geoff Evans

Geoff Evans is an independent autism trainer and consultant. Over the last 30 years Geoff has gained considerable experience as an autism consultant and trainer. His services have been used by Universities, the National Autistic Society, local authorities, providers of children and adult specialist services as well as parent groups.

"Supporting life long learning with autistic individuals"

In this presentation Geoff will look at how we can contribute to autistic individual having a positive experience of learning. He will talk about important aspects of learning including, individual learning styles and building upon strength and abilities, and encouraging and motivating learning. He will also discuss the part played by the learning environment and how we address the individuals sensory strengths and needs. Geoff will explore our communication and how this can support or hinder learning. Throughout his presentation Geoff will make use of current research, best practice and what autistic individuals have told him has worked for them.

Wendy Charles-Warner

Wendy Charles-Warner is a retired legal professional and a published independent academic researcher and educator with a specialist interest in the field of home education. This interest is based on her view that all children should be provided with an education which enables them to attain their full potential. Wendy has home educated children and grandchildren and has been involved with home education practice and assessment overall for approaching 40 years. In the last 12 years this has included advising individuals, local authorities, NGOs and governments in respect of home education. She is regularly asked to contribute to articles and debates on home education and has given evidence to the Welsh Assembly Government, the Education Select Committee, MPs and peers in respect of home education.

Wendy is the Co-Chair of Education Otherwise. Wendy loves spending time with her family, their huge dog and tiny puppy. An interesting and little-known fact about Wendy, is that she has played over 7,500 games of cut throat Scrabble with her husband and her highest score for one word was 379 points.



Chris Bonello

Chris Bonello is an autistic advocate, award-winning writer and international speaker, also a novelist and a former teacher (mainstream primary and special education). In 2015 he launched Autistic Not Weird to share his insights from both a personal and professional perspective, a venture which has seen him attract over 160,000 Facebook followers and over 3 million page hits on his website (autisticnotweird.com), as well as speaking engagements as far away as India and Sydney Opera House. He is the author of the novel series “Underdogs”, a series of dystopia books with heroes from a special school, and “What We Love Most About Life”, an uplifting book designed to help autistic young people feel less alone. He was a nominee for the 2017 National Diversity Awards (Positive Role Model for Disability), two-time winner at the Autism Hero Awards (Top Journalist 2017, Online Social Community 2018) and won the National Autistic Society Professionals Award for Outstanding Achievement by an Individual on the Autism Spectrum in 2019.

In this keynote speech, Chris will talk about his experiences in education, both as a teacher and from his days as an autistic student, as well as sharing helpful insights into meeting the needs of young people. He will address important topics such as anxiety and school refusal, while discussing his wellbeing-centred approach to educating autistic students.