

PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT

Founder and CEO of Bucks Autism Charity Awarded MBE for Services to Young People with Autism

Today, Saturday 8th June 2019, Alexandra Stanyer, Founder and CEO of Puzzle Centre Trust, has been awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for services to young people with autism.

Alex, a teacher with over 35 years' experience in the field of special education, set up Puzzle Centre originally in two rooms of her house in 2001. Catering for just 10 children in that year, the charity has grown to support over 60 children and families every year, providing high quality early intervention. It also trains around 150 practitioners each year across the region, nationally and sometimes internationally.

Alex said:

'I am absolutely thrilled to receive this award which is a great honour for me personally, but also reflects the hard work of the outstanding staff and trustees that have been instrumental to our success as a charity supporting families and children with autism and other communication difficulties. It has been a great privilege and a joy to work with hundreds of wonderful children and families over the last 18 years and I thank them for all that they have taught me. I count myself as very lucky to have found a career that is both interesting and enormously rewarding.'

The Puzzle Centre, based in Middle Claydon and Winslow, North Bucks, provides a specialist nursery for children aged 2-5 years and an outreach service to support children aged up to 11 years. It has started to expand significantly its outreach service, which provides speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and educational programmes to support both families and schools. The charity has plans to build a new, national centre for excellence in early years autism which will enable it to cater for many more children and families as well as train more teachers, therapists and early years practitioners.

Graham Wylie, Chair of Trustees commented:

'The drive and determination of Alex has been, and continues to be, the foundation for Puzzle Centre's achievements over the last 18 years. Alex has established a reputation for her expertise in early years autism and her work is recognised nationally and internationally as being of an exceptional standard. Puzzle parents, colleagues at Puzzle, the other Trustees and professionals in the field of autism all recognise the very special contribution Alex has made and continues to make in this area. We are all delighted that she has received this honour which she richly deserves.'

To find out more about the work of the Puzzle Centre visit www.puzzlecentre.org.uk

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