

Newsletter January/February 2012

Edition 01/12



Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children

Bexley Voice launches Newsletter!

Welcome to the first edition of the Bexley Voice newsletter. Every other month we will update you with news and developments and keep you informed of many local and national issues, such as the Special Needs Green Paper developments. In our first newsletter we would like to celebrate reaching the milestone of Charity Status. After much hard work by the volunteers, from filling by Juli (our coordinator) with lots of support from Carol at BVSC (who we would like to thank profusely!), Bexley Voice became a registered charity and are now able to move forward and offer the best service and support

to our members. We are in need of more members, even if you only have your "voice" to offer, together we can all make a difference so why not sign up today on our website. We hope you find our newsletter informative and if you have any suggestions, ideas or relevant information you would like to include, please contact us. We would like to wish all of our existing members a very happy New Year and look forward to welcoming many new ones over the coming months.



NEXT PARENT OPEN MEETING

Our next Open Meeting for any parent or carer of a child with special need, additional need or disability is:

Thursday

26th January

10am–12noon

Danson Youth

Centre,

Brampton Rd,

Bexleyheath.

Please come along and meet our members for an informal chat over a coffee about any concerns you may have. We will be giving out information on our Parent Conference in March. We invite local service providers to our regular open meetings so if you have a subject that you would like to know more about, please let us know. We look forward to seeing you there!

FREE Parent Conference hosted by the BV team!

Having to care for a child or young person with special needs can be quite daunting at times and occasionally everyone needs a helping hand. That's why the team at BV are delighted to announce the date for our first parent conference. Various different workshops and talks covering subjects such as behavior problems, benefits advice, activities/clubs, safe transport, anti-bullying, ASD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, person and centered planning, Disability Living Allowance, your rights and responsibilities, stress reduction, speech and language with more to be announced. Many local services and charities such as Bexley NAS, MCCH, Inspire, SNAP and Carer Support, will be on hand giving out advice and information. The BV team will be welcoming our existing members and look forward to meeting

many new ones, so come and fill in a membership form, it's free to join us! A FREE pre-school age creche will be bookable in advance. Beverages and lunch will be provided so don't miss out, book your FREE place now by emailing your details to bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk. Please visit our website www.bexleyvoice.org.uk for more information.

THURSDAY 15th

MARCH 2012

9.30am–2.30pm

**HALL PLACE,
BOURNE ROAD,
BEXLEY, KENT.**

DA5 1PQ





WE NEED YOU!

We are in desperate need of more volunteers to help with the running of Bexley Voice. Whatever time you have spare, even just a few hours every month, then we would love you to join our happy team!

2012 DIARY DATES

Open Meeting— Thursday 26th January
Parent Conference— Thursday 15th March

SEN Green Paper Pathfinders!

Following the consultation on the SEN green Paper "Support and Aspiration" last summer, Bexley and Bromley have been selected as Pathfinders. This means both boroughs will work together to develop and pilot some of the changes laid out in the Green Paper. Bexley and Bromley will be pathfinders for:

- ◆ The Single Assessment Plan— replacing statements and bring Education, Health and Social Care planning together. This plan will stay with the child until they are 25 years old.
- ◆ Personal Budgets— to enable parents to take control of the provision of services for their child.
- ◆ Banded Funding—looking at National and local funding bands.

- ◆ Support to parents and young people—ensuring that they are adequately supported to make the most of the proposed reforms.

The two boroughs are in receipt of government funding to conduct the pilots and have access to a Pathfinders Program Support Team. Along with a strong emphasis on partnership working between all local services and agencies they will be looking to develop the role of the voluntary groups and parents in the new system. Bexley Voice will be involved with the Pathfinder work in a range of ways, we are only limited by our number. If you are interested in finding out more about the Pathfinder and would like to input into the development of the EHC Plan or Personal Budgets, please do get in touch with us.

Thank you very much for all of your much valued donations!

Bexley Voice is a voluntary charity making a difference to the lives of children with special needs. We could not carry out this work without the amazing donations we have recently received from:



CO-OP Community Fund

WAITROSE

BMW/Steve James Ruxley

Robin Hood and Little John Public House

Teresa Pearce Labour MP

Christ Church Sidcup

The Late John Richards

www.yarnia.co.uk

Introduction to Person Centered Planning

Bexley Voice's last open parent meeting was a training session "An Introduction to Person Centered Thinking and Planning" by Yvonne Linton, who works for Family Footings.

Yvonne linked what she was telling us to the SEN Green Paper and planned changes of the new assessment process and the formation of Individual Budgets. Person centered planning enables individuals with disabilities requiring support to increase their personal self determination and improve their own independence. It uses a collection of tools and approaches. These tools can be used to help the person think about what is important in the lives now and to think about what would make a good future.

Planning should involve all the people who are important in that persons life.

Person-centered planning has key features:

- ◆ The person is at the center of the planning
- ◆ The persons family and friends are partners in the planning
- ◆ The plan shows what is important to a person now and for the future and what support they will need.

We had 11 parents at the meeting with children of various ages, disabilities, with some at special and some at mainstream schools. We all felt the training session was a very useful tool and would like the opportunity to use it for our children.

CONTACT US!

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WEBSITE:

www.bexleyvoice.org.uk

FACEBOOK:

**Bexley Voice for Children
with Special Needs**



(Open group)