

# Newsletter March/April 2012

Edition 02/12



Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children

## Newsletter Update

It's been a busy start to the new year with lots of meetings as the BV team have been busy preparing for our parent conference and are delighted with the response for seminar bookings. We would like to welcome and thank 2 new members, Kate (Minute taker) and Tracey (Treasurer) who have given us their much valued time and support and have settled in well to their new roles. If you can offer any help, even just a couple of hours each month, delivering leaflets

and doing admin amongst other important roles, please do let us know. 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. Do you have any suggestions, ideas or relevant information you would like to include in this newsletter? If so, please contact us. We would like to wish all of our members a very happy Easter and hope to see you all at our parent conference.



### Please sponsor us for the Bexley Voice Sponsored Fun Run (or "walk" in our case!!)



Please sponsor our "brave" members and their children who will do a 3 mile sponsored walk around Sidcup on Saturday 24th March to raise money for Bexley Voice. It is a great event, organised and supported by Sidcup Christ Church, with many entrants running or walking in costumes. Lets hope this years event takes place in beautiful sunshine (unlike last year where we all got rained on but we had great fun and raising almost £400 was worth it!). So come along and watch the fun, we will be shaking our bucket for much needed donations to!



## FREE Parent Conference - Thursday 15th March

Don't forget the Parent Conference hosted by the Bexley Voice team is coming up soon, so make sure you have booked your seminar place as spaces are filling up fast! Different seminars covering subjects such as motor skills & dyspraxia, DLA/benefits advice, activities/clubs, transport, anti-bullying, ASD, dyslexia, transition, the

pathfinder project, speech and language with and eating/feeding approaches. Many local services and charities such as Bexley NAS, MCCH, Inspire, SNAP and Carer Support, will be giving out information. The BV team will be welcoming existing and new members so don't miss out, book your seminar place now by emailing your details to [bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk). Please visit our website [www.bexleyvoice.org.uk](http://www.bexleyvoice.org.uk) for more information.

### Thank you!

We could not carry out the work that we do to without the support that we get from local companies. We would like to thank;  
Riot of Colour ([www.riotofcolour.com](http://www.riotofcolour.com)),  
4Imprint ([www.4imprint.com](http://www.4imprint.com))

**9.30am—2.30pm**  
**HALL PLACE, BOURNE ROAD,**  
**BEXLEY, KENT. DA5 1PQ**

### NEXT PARENT OPEN MEETINGS

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

**Thursday**

**26th March**

**10am—12noon**

**Danson Youth**

**Centre,**

**Brampton Rd,**

**Bexleyheath.**

At 10.30am we will be welcoming Mary Howard, Bexley's Parent Partnership Officer who will be leading a discussion on the SEN Green Paper. (Please read over for more details.)

Join us and meet our members for an informal chat over a coffee about any issues you may have. We will be also be updating you on feedback from our Parent Conference. If you have a subject that you would like to know more about for future meetings, please let us know. We look forward to seeing you there!



Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children

Registered Charity  
Number: 1142306

### 2012 DIARY DATES

Open Meeting— Thursday 29th March  
Parent Conference— Thursday 15th March

### WE NEED YOU!

Whatever time you have spare, even just a few hours every month, then we would love you to join our team to help with the running of Bexley Voice, from delivering leaflets to helping with school visits.

## Bexley Voice Goes to the Bowling Alley!



Some of our members and their children got together during the February half term for some much needed fun and laughter at Orpington Bowling Alley. It was great to get together socially and spend time with each other's children whilst attempting to get that all important strike! Bowling is ideal for most children with special needs to have some fun together, they had so



much fun that nobody even worried what the final scores were! Special

thanks goes to Juli, our co-



ordinator for organising the family social event. A great time was had by all and we even managed to get everyone together for a group photo!

### A message from Mary Howard – Parent Partnership Officer

The Government's plan to completely overhaul SEN provision and processes (the Green Paper), involves changing how everything is done, from identification and assessment to provision from early years through to post 16 and into adulthood. Before these reforms are put into operation throughout the country, there are a number of pilot schemes called 'Pathfinders' that are being trialled to establish how effective these changes are likely to be and how best to implement them fully.

One of the most crucial elements of the 'Pathfinder' is gauging parental opinion and involving parents in all stages of the project development. As service users, many of you have experience of the effectiveness of services (varying from being new to SEN processes and provision to those of you who have had many years negotiating the way) and your knowledge and views will make a very valuable contribution to this process.

Although it can be all too easy to recall problems and challenges with the present system, as there are some serious flaws, any examples of effective and positive experiences will be welcome. It is essential that we make every effort to encourage the authorities to acknowledge aspects of provision that work well as this knowledge can help inform future changes.

If you would like to share some of your knowledge and views, there will be an opportunity at the next BexleyVoice Open Parent meeting at the SNAP Information and Assessment Session on Thursday 29 March (10.30-11am followed by coffee and biscuits).

NOTE FROM BEXLEY VOICE: Bexley are Pathfinders for the Individual Budgets component of the Green paper and will be involving families with complex needs in the pilots. However, the SEN Green paper proposals will affect all families with a child with a disability or Special Need. This is an informal opportunity to find out more and how it may affect you and your child.

### CONTACT US

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WEBSITE:

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

FACEBOOK:

**Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children**



### ?? DID YOU KNOW ??

Bexley Beavers is a special swimming session at Crook Log Sports Centre in Bexleyheath for people with a disability or a special need. It is on Friday evening from 6.00—7.30pm. Open to — any person, any age with any disability, additional need or sensory impairment, resident in Bexley. Their whole family can join in the fun and there are balls and floats to play with too! Just turn up and register at the sign in desk by the changing rooms. **By the way....its FREE!** (You can make a donation in the collection if you wish)

