

# Newsletter ~ January/February 2014

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Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children

2014!

Happy New Year!

## HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR MEMBERS FROM BEXLEY VOICE!

The start of a new year is always a good time for new year resolutions. Have you made any? At Bexley Voice, ours is to continue to support parents and carers with the new SEND Legislation being brought in this Spring. We hope that all the new changes will make a positive difference. If you are a parent or carer of a child or young person living in Bexley, you can become a member, gain support, information and join our 'voice'. With so much to pass onto our members, please visit our website at [www.bexleyvoice.org.uk](http://www.bexleyvoice.org.uk) and Facebook page for more information. Don't forget, membership is free!

### PARENT/CARER 'DROP IN' SESSIONS

Drop In sessions are an informal opportunity to chat with a BV member, we can offer support and information about many SEND issues - no need to book to see a BV member, just turn up! Bexley Voice's next 'Drop In' session for any parent/carer of a child with SEND is;

**Monday 27th January 2014  
9.30am—12noon**

**Goals Football Centre, Bexleyheath.**

(This forms part of the Bexley SNAP assessment morning. You will need to pre-book via Bexley Snap if you wish to see a professional advisor on 0208 320 1488.)

If you have any relevant information, ideas to share or articles you would like to include in the next BV newsletter, then contact rachel.bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk.

### Children's Development Centre

Bexley Voice were asked to design and produce an interactive, fun, audit tool, for the Childrens' Development Centre at Queen Mary's Hospital in Sidcup. Two BV volunteers, Claire Watts and Nicki Carter, undertook hours of designing and briefing, collating images, printing, laminating and cutting to make a colourful display. Well done ladies!



### SCHOOL VISIT PROGRAMME



#### Getting Secondary School Parents involved-

#### Have you got a child in a secondary school?

Letters will be going out soon to Headteachers and SENCos in Bexley schools enquiring if they want Bexley Voice to carry out a school visit. We are also asking them for ideas on how we can get parents more involved.

So if you would like us to visit your child's Secondary School, please speak to the Head or SENCo and ask them to contact us.

Alternatively, if you have any ideas about how we can get parents of secondary aged children more involved with Bexley Voice then please let us know.

We still want to hear from parents who have a child/children in a primary school or pre-school setting and would like us to visit their school. Please contact Janet at [janetpeart.bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:janetpeart.bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk) and remember together we can make a difference.

#### Next School Visit

Royal Park, Sidcup—24th January 9.30am.

The Parent and Child Feedback was designed to link in with the CDC's 'Walls of the Wild' theme. With a choice of 6 different animal tokens for the children to post in either a 'Sun' - 'happy' post box, or a 'Raincloud' - 'not so happy' post box. Feedback forms, for parents/carers, to inform CDC of how they felt at their visit that day, questions to prompt thought such as: " Was your child's diagnosis explained clearly to you?, Did the Health Care Professional listen to your views?, How do you feel you were treated?" Bexley Voice will audit the responses and feed back the results, comments and suggestions to the CDC.



**"GREAT DAYS OUT"** Our members have asked about suitable places to visit and things to see, including farms, leisure activities and museums that are ideal for children with special needs. Although we are unable to endorse any in particular, please email us with a short write up on places that you have been, so we can share them with our members in our newsletter and on our website. What were the facilities (food/toilets) like? Were the staff understanding? Did you have to queue? So if you have had a "Great Day Out", then please get in touch, email [rachel.bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:rachel.bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk).

## BEXLEY VOICE PARENT/CARER CONFERENCE

Bexley Voice are delighted at the success of our parent/carer conference which took place on the 14th of November 2013 at Hall Place in Bexley. It was attended by over 200 parent/carers, professionals and local organisations, who came along to share information and support, all to improve the lives of children with special needs.



The 12 different free seminars focused on information about the radical changes to SEN legislation coming into force next year and how they may affect your child/ren. We also had seminars on other subjects including: Managing Challenging Behaviour (Physical and Anxiety), One page Profiles, Transition in Schools, Transition to Adult Services, Access to Health Services, Be Confident For Your Child and Dyslexia/Dyspraxia and Memory Issues.



With over 20 Information Stands from local organisations including Bexley NAS, Bexley SNAP, Whizz Kids, Dyslexia Association, Carers Support, Bexley Mencap, CHYPS, Bexley's Joint Communication Team for Speech and Language, Bexley Children's Centres and many more offering information and advice. We were honored by a visit from Councillor Sharon Massey, The Mayor of Bexley, who spent time talking to people about the work that they do for children with special needs. The Bexley Voice team were on hand all day welcoming many new and existing members, completing forms, offering support and giving out free stress balls!

Our feedback forms were full of positive compliments proving it was a really informative day. Please visit our website for a full summary of our feedback forms. Thank you so much to the Bexley Voice team of volunteers who worked hard to make it a success. Together we can say, we made a difference!



### MEET THE BEXLEY VOICE TEAM!

So much work goes on behind the scenes to make any charity a success and it's no different for the Bexley Voice team. We are all volunteers and have children with special needs so understand the issues involved. Each newsletter will feature a member of the BV team and all our information will be on our website, so that our members can get to know us all a little better. If you would like to be part of our team, even just a few hours each month, we would love to hear from you soon!

### Bexley Voice Supports Bexley Snap Quiz Night

Thanks to Bexley Snap for organising a such a fun evening whilst raising money for Bexley Snap to! The BV red t-shirt team may not have won, but we did well in the raffle!



### BEXLEY VOICE CHILDREN'S PARK ACCESS SURVEY

Access to Bexley Parks survey, BV had a very productive meeting with the Bexley Parks Department. A range of issues were discussed and an action plan drawn up to improve facilities for our families. The first thing arranged is that a set of straps for the disabled swing at Danson Park will be kept at the Kiosk in the new year. Parents that need them can request them from the staff there. Key to the success of this plan is that they are returned after use of course. The other good news is that there is a new park in Bexley - at Carlton Road, which is equipped with several of the disabled access pieces of equipment discussed. The access path to the play equipment is scheduled to go down in early January - so you will be able to get buggies and wheelchairs there by the end of that month. Watch this space for more updates on Bexley Parks.



Following our recent

The prize draw for all completed surveys was drawn by the Mayor of Bexley at our Parent/Carer conference. Thank you to Bruce at Asda Community Life for donating a £20 gift voucher. The winner is JUSTINE CLEMENTS who has been contacted to claim his prize.

### CONTACT US

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