Newsletter ~ May / June 2014

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Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children

Welcome to our Bexley Voice newsletter. We hope you all enjoyed the Easter break and your children enjoyed their Easter eggs! The sun came out for this year's Christchurch Fun Run in Sidcup on the 29th of March. The Bexley Voice team had good fun whilst raising funds for our charity. We will update you soon on the total amount from sponsorships and donations. The Children and Families Act gained Royal Assent in April, meaning that the new changes will come into force this September. These changes may affect your child so please see the article below and our website for more information. Look out for our new Bexley Voice leaflet being distributed soon. We are looking for volunteers to help with this so if you have a few hours free, please get in touch.

If you are a parent/carer of a child/young person or a professional working with SEND in Bexley, you can become a member, gain support, information and join our 'voice'. Don't forget, membership is free! If you have any relevant information, ideas to share or articles you would like to include in the next BV newsletter, please contact rachel.bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk.

PARENT/CARER 'DROP IN' SESSIONS

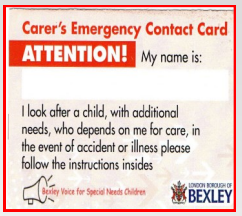
Bexley Voice 'Drop In' sessions are an informal opportunity to chat with a BV member. We can offer support and information about many issues - no need to book to see a BV member, just turn up! The next session for any parent or carer of a child with special or additional needs is;

Thursday 26th June 2014
9.30am—12noon

Goals Football Centre, Bexleyheath (behind Asda).

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.

EMERGENCY CARER'S CARD ~ Juli and Wendy from Bexley Voice have been working with the Disabled Children's Service to develop a card that can be carried by those with a caring responsibilities. If you should be incapacitated, it will give details to the emergency services of who to call. We are pleased to announce the new emergency carers card is now ready! Please visit our website for more information on how to obtain your card or email sharon.lewis@bexley.gov.uk



BEXLEY VOICE WEBSITE RECEIVES OVER 200 HITS!

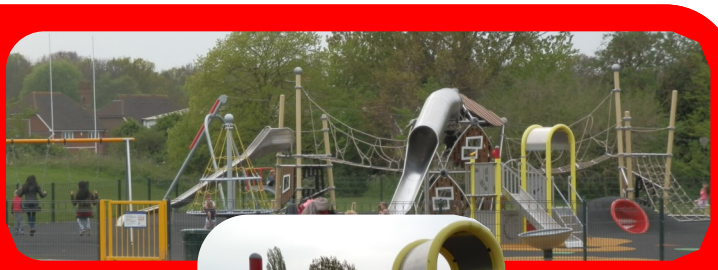
With so much information to pass onto our members, the Bexley Voice website has become such a useful tool in sharing information. We now receive between 100-200 hits every day! We have recently updated our pages on National issues including Individual Budgets, The Local offer and EHC Plans. A recent talk by Brian Lamb OBE regarding the law changes was given by the Dyslexia Association of Bexley, Bromley, Lewisham and Greenwich. They have kindly allowed us to share his presentation and this can be found on the DABBGL page on our website. Now is also the time for Transition through schools and into adulthood so please take time to read the information as it may make a difference to you and your child.

If you have any comments or suggestions for information or links to be added to our website, please email rachel.bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk.

Bexley Voice raised sponsorship in the Sidcup Christchurch Fun Run!

An enthusiastic team of Bexley Voice members and trustees and their families took part in a 3 mile walk/run in Sidcup on Saturday 29th March. The event started at Christchurch in Sidcup and the route was around the parish borders. Well-deserved refreshments were awarded at the end, along with medals and certificates for winners and participants. The event this year was in glorious sunshine, there were smiles and laughter all around, but most importantly much-needed funds were raised to continue our work. Thank you to all who supported us and a special thank you to 8 year old Alice who shook her donation so well!

NEW SIDCUP PLAYGROUND NOW OPEN!



A new children's play area has been opened in Carlton Road, Sidcup. The park has a wheel-chair friendly gate and a smooth entrance path for wheel chair access. Several pieces of the play equipment are suitable for children with disabilities - a walk-on roundabout, a 'bucket-style' swing, a ladder for the slide with hand rails so that children can hold on to feel safer and also there is a very good sit-in roundabout with safety ropes so little ones don't fall off. Why not give it a try and let us know what you think? Or do you know of another good park that we could share with other parents/carers? Any feedback will be greatly appreciated and can be emailed to bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk.

BEXLEY VOICE TEAM BUILDING EVENT

So many decisions to make, ingredients to choose, what packaging and advertisement, what each member of the team can do and all for the love of ice-cream! The BV team learnt so much from our team building exercise last month in Sidcup, where we had to make, package and promote a new flavour of ice-cream. Running a charity with volunteers brings together everybody's skills and experience, with each member playing an important role. We learnt how to prioritise, what was important within given times and more importantly it proved that we can all work very well together as a team. And yes, the ice-cream we made was delicious!!

BV Facebook Group hits 200 members!

With so much information to pass on, why not join our parent/carer only Facebook group today! We have recently changed to a 'secret group' to protect the identity of our members, so send us an email request if you want to join or visit our website for more details.

facebook

Do you receive a Direct Payment?

Are you struggling to find the services you want to buy with it? We are hoping to hold a workshop (potential date -12th of June) with parents and local providers to share ideas, please let us know if you would be interested in attending by emailing Juli at juli.atkinson@live.com.

BEXLEY VOICE SCHOOL VISIT PROGRAMME

Since our last newsletter we have been into 3 Bexley schools: Normandy Primary School in Barnehurst, Christchurch Primary School in Erith and Oakwood Secondary EBD School in Bexleyheath and also the Mellow Monday Group at Hillsgrove Children's Centre in Welling. All 4 of these visits provided us with positive feedback and many of the parents felt they came away with lots of useful information and valuable support. A member of staff from one of the schools that Bexley Voice recently visited, wrote a thank you letter following a school visit about how Bexley Voice had supported them:

"Bexley Voice visited our Parent/ Carer Support group this morning and shared some really valuable information on the services your organization provides as well as other agencies that can provide advice and support to families where the child or young person has special or additional needs. I know that the people that attended found it really useful but for me as a professional working with these Parents/ Carers it was invaluable. I will ensure that I recommend your organization to my colleagues that work in other schools. Once again, thank you very much."

If you would like us to come into your pre-school setting or school (especially Secondary Schools) please complete the on-line school visit request form on our website or ask your school to contact us. We can visit your school Monday to Friday, each visit last for 1-2 hours. If you would like any further information please visit our website or contact Janet (School Visit Coordinator for Bexley Voice) at janetpeart.bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk.

CONTACT US

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Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children

contact a family
for families with disabled children

FIND US ON facebook

NNPCF
National Network of Parent Carer Forums
'Our Strength Is Our Shared Experience'