



# Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children

Members of

National Network of Parent Carer Forums  
 'Our Strength is our Shared Experience'  
[www.nnpkf.org.uk](http://www.nnpkf.org.uk)

## Newsletter ~ March / April 2016

Issue 26

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### CONTACT US

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**REG CHARITY NUMBER:** 1142306

### BEXLEY VOICE WELCOME

Welcome to the latest Bexley Voice newsletter.

The volunteer team are currently updating our database. If you do not receive this newsletter by email, it may mean that you are not a BV member or your details are not up to date. Visit our website and complete a membership update form today!

We would like to thank the parents and carers who came along to our January meeting on 'The future of the SEND Transport System in Bexley'. The feedback was constructive and the parents all agreed that it was an invaluable opportunity to have their voice heard.

#### WHAT ARE YOUR #SIBGOALS?

Bexley SNAP would like to improve their services and include the siblings of disabled children more often, by providing fun and leisure activities and support.

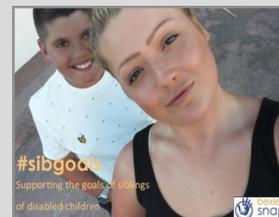
Bexley SNAP realise that sometimes Siblings could do with a helping hand and would like to know how they can best offer this support. They are currently researching the needs of Siblings of Disabled Children in Bexley with a view to in future, look at bringing together a project.

To do this they need your help. This is a simple survey for the siblings of disabled children to

fill in – with or without their parents. It is confidential and the results will help Bexley SNAP create what kids want and need.

Please visit:  
<https://families.typeform.com/to/kove52>

Please do it today on your phone, IPAD, Tablet or PC. It's so important and only takes a few minutes.  
 Thank you for your support.



### 'ENLIGHTENMENT' SUPPORT GROUP

Bexley Voice's new parent and carer 'drop in' support group got off to a great start and welcomed 8 new members at our February meeting.

Join us for a chat and a coffee with other BV parent and carer members. No need to book, just drop in, pop in for a quick chat or stay as long as you like.

We discuss many SEND issues, local organisations, EHC Plans and much more, so if you need information, support or a friendly chat, just 'drop in'!

Our thanks also go to the Lighthouse Group of St Pauls Church, Erith for their support and venue to enable us to host these much needed sessions.

Enlightenment meets on the second Monday of every month (excluding April and August) from 9.15 ~ 11.00am.

We meet at St Pauls Church, Mill Road, Northumberland Heath (see our website for directions/map).

We look forward to seeing new and existing members there!

**We next meet on:**  
**Monday 14th March**  
**9.15 ~ 11.00am.**

Please note that due to the Easter school holidays, there is NO meeting in April.

### 'ENLIGHTENMENT'



Are you a parent or carer of a child or young person under 25 with a disability or special need living in Bexley?

Come along and meet with other parents and carers at our regular 'drop in' sessions. Get support and information on many different issues and enjoy a coffee and chat.

## BEXLEY VOICE PARENT REPS NEEDED



The Bexley Voice team have been busy attending over 20 meetings and events on various SEND issues.

- ◆ The National Network of Parent Carer Forums Regional Cluster Group Meeting held in Wandsworth, was an opportunity to meet members from other parent forums in our South London Region. We shared best practice and were updated by our national reps on what is happening in terms of parent participation.
- ◆ The Children and Young People's Network meeting held at BVSC in Crayford gave BV the chance to network with other local organisations. Safeguarding, funding concerns, sexual and mental health were also discussed.
- ◆ BV also attended the first Local Offer Quality Assurance and Sustainability group meeting to discuss the content and design of Bexley's Local Offer.

The challenge we face in terms of providing parents reps to attend these meetings and feedback to us is always on-going. If you are reading this and are thinking – I could help with that, that sounds interesting, I wonder what kind of commitment is required to get involved? Is there any training available? What support would there be as I haven't done this kind of thing before? Please do get in touch. We would be very happy to talk to you about all of the above and support you to become part of our team. For more details email Juli at [juli.atkinson@live.com](mailto:juli.atkinson@live.com).

### Parents Participating Confidently ~ 2 day workshop.

**Dates: 21st & 22nd of March**

**Time: 10am ~ 2.45pm**

**Venue: Bexleyheath Library**

To enable parents and carers to participate confidently with professionals at meetings, Bexley Voice

have invited the Kent Independent Advice and Support Service (IASS) to run a 2 day workshop for parent/ carers who have a SEND child or young person (age 0-25).

What will I learn?

- ◆ What is meant by 'Participation' and the specific activities that this might involve.
- ◆ How to identify the barriers that might make taking part difficult.
- ◆ Communication skills to increase confidence when expressing your views.
- ◆ Strategies for coping with difficult situations.

Please see the poster below or visit the Bexley Voice website for information. At the time of going to print, there are spaces available but if the workshop is now fully booked, please register your interest for possible future workshops.

## BEXLEY VOICE MARCH EVENTS



### AN INTRODUCTION TO 'SIGNALONG'



Bexley Voice are hosting a free one day introductory Signalong course for parents/carer members who have a child or young person up to age 25 with Down's Syndrome.

'Signalong' training focuses on developing communication skills including: aspects of total communication, such as facial expression, body language and voice tone; plus simplification of language and keyword selection.

**Date: Wednesday 16th March**  
**Time: 10am ~ 2.15pm**  
**Venue: 2nd Floor, Dickens Room**  
**Bexleyheath Library**

(Please note that the main library doors do not open until 10am. Please wait by the main door and you will be collected at 10am prompt)



By Registered Tutor: Iona Stephens ~ Language Resource Teacher  
 The course will enable you to:

- ◆ Learn key word signing in an informal and relaxed atmosphere.
- ◆ To read basic signs performed by others.
- ◆ Benefit children with Down's Syndrome who need communication support.



Numbers are strictly limited and will be given on a 'first come first served' basis. Please note this course is not suitable for young children to attend. Lunch and refreshments will be provided. Please provide any dietary requirements on the booking form.

To reserve your place:

Visit [www.bexleyvoice.org.uk](http://www.bexleyvoice.org.uk) for our on-line booking system

For more information contact:

Tel: 07512 409936 ~ Email: [rachel.bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:rachel.bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk)



### PARENTS PARTICIPATING CONFIDENTLY 2 DAY WORKSHOP

Bexley Voice have invited the Kent Independent Advice and Support Service to run a workshop for parent/carers who have a child or young person (age 0-25) on how to participate confidently with professionals.

**Date: Monday 21st & Tuesday 22nd March**

**Time: 10am ~ 2.45pm**

**Venue: Bexleyheath Central Library**

(Please wait outside the main Library doors where you will be collected at 10am prompt)

#### Why should I take part?

- ◆ This course aims to strengthen your knowledge and skills to confidently contribute and participate.
- ◆ It is important that parents are actively involved with decision making for their child and the planning of services for them.

#### How will I learn?

- ◆ In a comfortable and informal setting.
- ◆ By doing activities and having discussions.
- ◆ By having fun.
- ◆ By receiving and giving information.
- ◆ By working with other parents and carers of children with SEND.

#### What will I learn?

- ◆ What is meant by 'Participation' and the specific activities that this might involve.
- ◆ How to identify the barriers that might make taking part difficult.
- ◆ Communication skills to increase confidence when expressing your views.
- ◆ Strategies for coping with difficult situations.

#### What will I be able to do at the end of the course?

- ◆ Understand the different types of participation.
- ◆ Use the skills you have learnt to prepare for meetings effectively.
- ◆ Feel confident to give your views.
- ◆ Be able to express or challenge a different view confidently and positively.

Places are limited and will be allocated in order of receipt. Please ensure that you are an existing parent/carer member of Bexley Voice and that you are able to attend BOTH days of the course prior to booking a place. A light buffet lunch and refreshments will be provided. (Please indicate any dietary needs on the booking form).

To reserve your place:

Visit [www.bexleyvoice.org.uk](http://www.bexleyvoice.org.uk) for our on-line booking system

For more information email: [rachel.bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:rachel.bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk)

## CARING MATTERS BEXLEY CONFERENCE

On Friday 15th January, a conference was held in the Council Chamber and Public Galleries at Bexley Civic Offices.

The Worshipful Mayor of Bexley Councillor Sybil Camsey and Bexley Voice were invited along with around 60 parents. Other local voluntary organisations and services also attended such as: Mind, Crossroads Care SE London, Alzheimer's Society, Age UK, The Local Offer for parents, carers, children and young people, Bexley Mencap, Bexley Moorings, Leisure services and Parkwood Leisure, Oxleas and CCG Patient Experience, Adult Social Care carers and payment cards, Adult Social Care OT and Telecare (equipment/gadgets), Carers' Support Bexley and Healthwatch Bexley, who all had information stands.

It was a very informative day and gave us an opportunity to network and find out more about Carer resources and support within Bexley. An update was

given on the Carers' Strategy by Tom Brown, Interim Director Adult Social Care, Brenda McCaig, Co-Chair of the Carers' Partnership Board and Councillor Eileen Pallen, Cabinet Member for Adults' Services. We listened intently to a keynote address from a carer who also works at the London Borough of Bexley, Kerry Worthington. A question and answer session then followed.



After a networking lunch we had an Introduction to the Carers' Well-being Hub from Alison Baker, Carers' Support (Bexley). This was followed by 10 tables of at least 8 people per table, facilitated by a Service Manager or Senior professional to coordinate the table discussions. These were aimed at generating and collecting Carers' thoughts and insights including ~

- ◆ What Matters Most?
- ◆ How does this impact on your life? What makes the biggest difference to you?
- ◆ What might improve this?

The day ended with feedback and a networking opportunity. This conference was essential in recognising the valuable contribution carers make across the Bexley borough.

## YOUNG EPILEPSY TRAINING COURSES

Do you work or live with a young person who has epilepsy?

Epilepsy is a complex condition that can present in a variety of ways. Children and young people who have epilepsy can cause challenges for parents, as well as health, education and social care professionals.

Our training programmes, run by experienced trainers, will help those that work with people who have epilepsy to fully support them. For schools and colleges, the training will help you to meet the new Children and Families Act 2014 statutory guidelines on 'supporting pupils with long term medical needs'.

Take a look at the upcoming courses which are held at our campus in Lingfield in Surrey.

### Epilepsy Awareness:

This half day session is for anyone who wants to find out about epilepsy and understand how to support those with epilepsy in a variety of settings.

### Complex Childhood Epilepsy and Managing Challenging Behaviour:

This one day course will provide an insight into understanding why complex epilepsy is difficult to treat and the impact it can have on the individual and their families.

### Epilepsy and Autism:

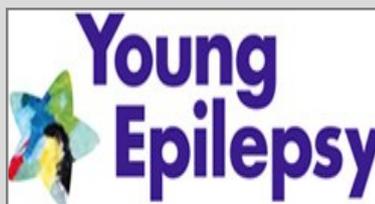
A half day course to help understand the links between epilepsy and autism and be better placed to identify and integrate supportive strategies.

### Epilepsy and Administration of Emergency Medication:

A half day course about epilepsy awareness and administration of emergency medication includes a practical session and assessment of knowledge, skills and understanding.

The training sessions are suitable for a range of parents/carers and professionals including: teachers, SEN staff, first aiders, LSAs and TAs, care support workers, school/community nurses, youth groups as well as families who want to learn more about epilepsy.

For dates and to book please email: [epilepsytraining@youngepilepsy.org.uk](mailto:epilepsytraining@youngepilepsy.org.uk) or call 01342 832243 ext 296.



**Epilepsy Action** is the working name of British Epilepsy Association. They provide support, information and have an on-line shop.

Helpline: UK 0808 800 5050

Email: [helpline@epilepsy.org.uk](mailto:helpline@epilepsy.org.uk)

[www.shop.epilepsy.org.uk](http://www.shop.epilepsy.org.uk)

### Epilepsy Action Wristband

Raise awareness of epilepsy and Epilepsy Action by wearing our popular, two-colour silicone wristband!

Each band has the words 'epilepsy action' in white and is made in the charity colours.



### Epilepsy ID Card and Wallet

This handy wallet has the Epilepsy Action logo and contact details on the outside in pink and blue. The wallet will safely hold your membership card, travel card and our awareness cards. Wallet - £1.00 and ID cards are free!





## ADDITIONAL NEEDS YOUTH CLUB

Danson Youth Centre in Brampton Rd, Bexleyheath, (operated by the Danson Youth Trust) offers a youth club every Thursday 7pm – 9pm, open to young people with additional/special needs aged 11+ years.

The Thursday night group originated when SNAP ran their “Buddy Club” and was a huge success in offering new facilities to their autistic group.

We offer a range of activities including; football, basketball, badminton, roller skating, table tennis, and pool, as well as a social area for arts & crafts or where the young people can just chill out and

meet new friends. All activities are organised and supervised by experienced, qualified staff and volunteers.

Team Leader for the night, Anne Bowman said “It is a great way for young people to integrate. At first we wondered if this would work for our regular users but it has proved to be a real success”. Anne added “Although parents are not allowed into the group, if anyone would like to come along for a free taster, on their first night myself or another member of the team are more than happy to show parent/s and their young person around and

introduce them to the staffing team and the activities on offer, everyone is very welcome”.

Entrance Fee:

£2 members, £3 non-members.

Annual membership is £5, this is not compulsory, however a registration form must be completed for all new attendees.

No booking is required, just turn up!

**If you would like to arrange an introductory meeting with Anne to discuss your young person’s needs and suitability, please call 020 8303 6052.**



Welcome to

# Danson Youth Trust

at Danson Youth Centre

Brampton Road, Bexleyheath, Kent DA7 4EZ

Tel: 020-8303 6052



Bexley

Works for me

## Works for me

16 Weeks of Free Job Search and Employment Skills for Those with Autism



Introduction to Job Search



Confidence Building and Team Work



Health and Safety



Starting Work



Money Matters



Creating Your CV

Along with supported job search, those who come along will be given a range of workshops to gain skills to find work and stay in work including all of the above.

The workshops and job search sessions will be run at Bexley Mencap, Bexleyheath in partnership with Bexley Voluntary Services Council, Bexley Twofold and Re-Instate.

For more information, please contact:

Stephen McIlroy  
Bexley Twofold  
Atrium Court  
104 Erith High Street  
Erith, DA8 1SL

Telephone: 020 3045 4917  
Email: [stephen.mcilroy@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.mcilroy@bexley.gov.uk)



## THE 8th CHRIST CHURCH ANNUAL

# ‘FUN RUN’



**Saturday 16 April 2016**  
**2.00pm Start**

The Run starts at Christ Church, Main Road, Sidcup (Following the Parish Boundary)  
There will be a short ‘warm up’ from 1.45pm

**FUN** - Prize for the best fancy dress. The theme is school reunion/blue and orange.

**RUN** - 3 miles, individual and team prizes.

**Entry Fee: Adults £5 Under 16s £3**

Fee includes refreshments at the end and a competition certificate.

To enter contact Juli Atkinson (020 8300 1350) or [juli.atkinson@live.com](mailto:juli.atkinson@live.com)  
Or visit [www.christchurchsidcup.org.uk](http://www.christchurchsidcup.org.uk)

For offers of catering or marshalling help, contact Juli Atkinson as above.



This is a fund raising event and all money raised will go to CRIBS  
For more information see [www.cribsonline.org](http://www.cribsonline.org).  
Registered Charity Number 1122295

