

# Newsletter July/August 2012

Edition 04 /12



Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children



## Newsletter Update

We tempted fate when we said "summer is finally here" in our last newsletter as the rain came down by the bucket load! Due to this our community fun day at Welling had to unfortunately be cancelled. So fingers crossed the sun will shine whilst our children are on their upcoming school holidays! The Bexley Voice team have been busy with our School Visit Program and the SEN Green Paper Pathfinder Pilot Scheme. We hope to see you at our AGM in September. (More information can be found 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 with your information.

### ??? DID YOU KNOW....

That only a few schools in Bexley have joined the "Dyslexia Friendly" scheme run by Bexley Council? Raising awareness of dyslexia and getting children the support they need in schools is vital. Bexley Voice will be campaigning soon to encourage more schools to join this important scheme so watch this space!

### NEXT PARENT DROP IN

Our next parent/carer drop in date (as part of the Bexley SNAP assessment morning) for any parent or carer of a child with special need, additional need or disability is;

**Thursday 27th September**

**10am—12noon**

**At Goals Football Centre, Bexleyheath.**

Join us and meet our members for an informal chat over a coffee about any issues you may have. We look forward to seeing you there!

## PATHFINDER UPDATE ~ THE NEXT STAGES

On 28<sup>th</sup> June, Bexley Voice hosted a meeting of local parent forums involved with pathfinder projects for the SEN Green paper. Held at Danson Youth Centre. It was attended by parent/carers from Bexley Voice, Bromley Parent Voice, Greenwich and Lewisham forums. The day was led by Stuart Bromwich from Mott MacDonald – the consultants charged with supporting Local Authorities and parent forums involved in pathfinder work. This provided us with an update on pathfinder progress nationally along with an opportunity to discuss local progress and issues.

The BV committee have also met with an independent consultant, provided by Contact a Family, in order for us to ensure we are adequately prepared, as a group, to undertake the support and evaluation role we have been invited to provide for certain areas of the Bexley Pathfinder.

With the publication of the Governments 'Next Steps' document, outlining :

- \* The replacement of SEN Statements with a single Education, Health and Care Plan from 2014 (including comparable statutory protections).
- \* The requirement for Local Authorities to publish a 'Local Offer' showing the support available to disabled children and young people, those with SEN and their families.
- \* The right to a personal budget for those with an Education, Health and Care Plan.
- \* A mediation service to simplify/speed up the resolution of disputes and giving children the right to appeal if they are unhappy with their support.

**It is important that all parent/carers are clear about the impact of these changes on their child and family.**

**CONSULTATION** We have been asked to consult with parents on a range of different local issues and are considering holding a 'Consultation Day' where parents would have the opportunity to have their say about a range of things. It will be in September – please keep an eye on the website for the date and location.



**Tuesday 17th July 7-9pm Hurst Community Centre** - Bexley NAS Parent Corner Session. If your child is in mainstream or Special Education, has a statement or is at Action/Action Plus—you need to know about the changes that are coming into force in 2014. Although hoisted by Bexley NAS, this is open to any parent/carer of a child with any special need/disability.



**Thursday 19th July 10am- 12 noon MENCAP Offices, Church Road, Bexleyheath** - This session will look at progress on the development of the Single plan and seek input from Parents regarding what should be included, what it should look like, who it should be used for and how it might work for you.

Any parent/carer of a child with special needs/disabilities is welcome. Please let us know if you will be joining us at either or both events. Visit our website for more information. Don't wait until the changes have happened, have your say now!

### BEXLEY VOICE AGM

You are invited to our 3rd AGM

- ◆ WELCOME
- ◆ ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE
- ◆ A CELEBRATION OF THE YEARS ACHIEVEMENTS
- ◆ GRANT /FUNDING/FINANCE
- ◆ FUTURE PLANS
- ◆ REFRESHMENTS & CAKES

**Thursday 13th September**

**10.00am—12.00noon**

**Bexley MENCAP, 19 Church Road,**

**Bexleyheath, Kent. DA7 4DD**

**If you would like to join us,**

**please contact us by**

**phone or email.**

Registered Charity Number; 1142306



Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children

### WE NEED YOU!

If you can offer any help, just a couple of hours each month, such as delivering leaflets to schools and children's centers, envelope stuffing and helping with school visits. Even if you only have your "voice" to offer, together we can all make a difference to children with special needs, so why not sign up for **free** membership on our website today.

### Review of Respite Services for People with Learning Disabilities

Following the consultation that took place earlier this year, Bexley Council is now part way through a 12 month review of the adult respite service. The Council have already carried out a number of focus groups with carers, and are now seeking service users feedback on the type, timing and location of activities they would like to access. **The Council would also like to hear from parents and carers of children with learning disabilities** who may access respite services in the future in order to fully understand people's requirements and to help shape the service going forward. There will be a number of events after the summer, for people to participate in the development of the service requirements and we would like to hear from any parents and carers who would like to be involved. If you would like to review previous documentation relating to the consultation, these can be accessed via:

[https://www.engagespace.co.uk/engage/bexley/consultation\\_Dtl.aspx?consult\\_Id=2397&status=4&criteria=1](https://www.engagespace.co.uk/engage/bexley/consultation_Dtl.aspx?consult_Id=2397&status=4&criteria=1)

If you would like to get involved at any stage, please contact June Knowles, the Adult Social Care Project Manager who is leading the Review of Respite Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities. June can be reached via email on [june.knowles@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:june.knowles@bexley.gov.uk) or via telephone on 0203 045 4164 .



#### ASSESSMENT MORNING

Thursday 27th September

Goals Football Centre,  
(By Asda), Bexleyheath

10am-12noon

0208 311 6777

### SCHOOL VISIT PROGRAMME

**Our schedule of visiting schools within Bexley is now getting busy, with some great feedback already received and many new members! Our school visit coordinator will be contacting more schools soon but we also really need your help. peak to your SENCO and ask them to contact us to arrange a convenient date so we can come to your child's school for an informal chat about what Bexley Voice can offer parents and carers of children with special needs and update you on issues such as the Pathfinder Project. Please get in touch!**



### SUMMER FUN ACTIVITIES!



#### BEXLEY NAS NEWS

The local branch of the National Autistic Society will be offering two Family Holiday Club sessions a week over August, as well as their usual calendar of activities. The Family Holiday Club sessions are for all the family and they aim to offer a range of activities for the children and young people as well as something for the parent/carers. You need to be a member to be able to access this programme – you just need to live in Bexley and have a child or children on the Autistic Spectrum - **it's free**. To find out more about membership and what is on offer over the summer, please contact Juliet Roblett on [bexley@nas.org.uk](mailto:bexley@nas.org.uk) or 07826950496.



**Free event!**

**Lark in the Park 2012**

Creating Community,  
Investing in Lives

Saturday 21st July - Sunday 5th August  
at Sidcup Place, Sidcup

16 days of free activities for all the  
community this summer!

[www.larkinthePark.com](http://www.larkinthePark.com)

Tel: 020 83090556 Charity No: 1115947

You can register online for kids club before the event at [www.larkinthePark.com](http://www.larkinthePark.com)

We have kids clubs weekday afternoons for all ages, 2-3.45pm: Sparkles (0-5yrs), Fizz (5-7yrs) and Buzz (7-11yrs). Bublz is for 5-11yrs and is a venue with a high adult to child ratio which works with Fizz and Buzz, for children with a mild/moderate diagnosis or additional needs. Or for children who find the large venues too intimidating or need a more tailored environment. Children are supported to have fun, build self-esteem and where appropriate, enable them to integrate in Fizz or Buzz activities. You need to register for all clubs and you need to book in each day, registration opens at 12.15pm. Lark in the Park has something for everyone of all ages across the whole 16 days.

0208 309 6056  
[www.larkinthePark.com](http://www.larkinthePark.com)

#### MCCH SUMMER HOLIDAY SCHEME

MCCH will be running a summer holiday provision from 23<sup>rd</sup> July -17<sup>th</sup> August held at Arrow Football Club, 100-130 Perry Street, Crayford, DA1 4RL.

The scheme is run in 2 groups— 1st 2 weeks 4-11yr olds, 2nd 2 weeks 12-18yr olds. 8am—5pm £20 a day and 9.30— 4pm £15 a day.

Children are supported to select activities that reflect their interests, culture and aspirations and include swimming, cinema, day trips to the coast etc. At the end of each two week period they hold a party with a BBQ (weather permitting). This is a very popular scheme and places are limited, to secure a place please book early .

For more information or to book a place please contact Denise or Mandy on 01322 344295 or 07921 056283.



### Bexley Voice Sponsored Fun Run

A quick update from our last newsletter as we have now have the final total of sponsorship money raised. Well done to everyone who took part in raising **£452!** We look forward to raising even more money next year with a bigger team!

### CONTACT US

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

FACEBOOK: Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children

