

Newsletter January/February 2013

Edition 07/2013



Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children

2013

Happy New Year

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL BEXLEY VOICE MEMBERS!

Newsletter Update

As we put the decorations away and finish off the last of the turkey sandwiches, it's time to kick 2013 off to a great start with the first edition of our BV newsletter this year. We have started to receive responses from our Dyslexia Campaign and are also looking forward to the school visits we already have booked in. Our Facebook group is proving a very useful tool for daily contact with our members who need information and it has been good to share useful tips. The BV team are confident that 2013 will bring us more new challenges to face and look forward to watching our membership continue to grow! Do you have any suggestions, ideas or relevant information you would like to include in our newsletters? If so, please contact us with your information.

DYSLEXIA CAMPAIGN UPDATE

BV held an information evening for parents/carers at the Bexley NAS Parents Corner on the 11th of December. We discussed what support is available for your child at school and what help you get from the school. Thank you to those parents who braved the cold weather and fog to join us for a relaxed and informative session. We gave out lots of information and appreciate the feedback we received. Thanks also to Thelma and Bexley NAS for hosting the event.

A questionnaire has been sent to all Bexley schools requesting Head Teachers and SENCo's to provide information about the training staff have received/are undergoing, the resources and teaching aids available, what extra support is provided to children and their parents. Visit our website to download the parents questionnaire, we need your voice now! We will be sharing the responses on our website with you soon!

For more information on our Dyslexia campaign, with useful links to local and national organisations, please visit our website.

NEXT 'DROP IN SESSION'

Our next parent/carer drop in session
(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 31st January 2013

9.30am—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!

CHRISTMAS VOLUNTEERS LUNCH

A lovely Christmas pub lunch was enjoyed by the hardworking volunteers that keep Bexley Voice running.



Without their great support and passion, we would not be able to continue the work we do to help families of children with special needs. Maybe this Christmas you could be in this photo too?!

SCHOOL VISIT PROGRAMME

BV has recently visited lots of Bexley schools to meet with parents and carers.

This is some of the feedback that we have received from parents and carers:

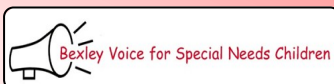
- "Very useful, informative with an element of fun!"
- "You are doing an incredible job, without you, people don't know what they are entitled to. Keep up the good work, it will make a difference!"
- "It was nice to meet other parents of children at the same school"
- "Claire gave information to parents which empowered them with decisions they need to make"

Ask your SENCo to contact us so we can come to your child's school for an informal talk about what BV can offer parents/carers of children with special needs and update you on local/national issues. Thanks to the schools who have welcomed us in already and we look forward to meeting parents/carers at more schools very soon!

BME AWARENESS AND SUPPORT

Are you an Ethnic Minority parent/carer of a child with special needs living in Bexley? If so, BV is inviting you to their "Drop In" session on **Thursday 31st of January**, 9.30am—12noon, at Goals Football Centre, Bexleyheath (behind Asda's), where you will be able to get information and talk to our BME representative.

Registered Charity Number; 1142306



WE NEED YOU! Are you able to offer just a couple of hours each month, such as delivering leaflets to schools and children's centers, general admin and helping with school visits? Are you able to offer your 'voice' and can include you in consultations? Visit our website for more information.

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If you are a parent/carer of a child with special needs and live in Bexley, then join our facebook group so we can keep you up to date with consultations, events and information. Join in our friendly chat with other parents, remember you are not alone!

ARE YOU THE PARENT OF A YOUNG PERSON IN YEAR 9 AND ABOVE?

Bexley is currently undertaking a pilot to explore how best to make available social care personal assistants. The aim of the initiative is to help local people who are eligible to receive adult social care services, recruit and pay for their own Personal Assistants. This gives the cared for person more choice and control over their care, allowing them to decide when and how they receive their support.

As parents of those who will be accessing the service over the next couple of years and we need your thoughts on the scheme and the process of transition to adult services.

A briefing has been arranged for **Tuesday 29th January, from 1.00-2.00pm.** This will take place at the council offices at Hillview in Welling, Kent, DA16 3RY. **If you would like to attend, please contact June Knowles, Adult Social Care Project Manager on 0203 045 4164 or via email: june.knowles@bexley.gov.uk**

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT BEXLEY'S INDEPENDENT TRAVEL TRAINING SCHEME?

In the time it has been running, more than 30 youngsters have successfully completed the training tailored to their needs. It is a step by step process learning a specific route, in a safe and responsible way.

BV have invited Nikki Wakeford to talk to parents about the success of the project and what is involved for families considering it for the future. If you would like to join us on **Thursday 14th February at the MENCAP offices, Church Rd, Bexleyheath at 10am. (Tea/Coffee from 9.30am.) Please email or call us to book your free place.**

UPDATE ON THE DRAFT SEN CHILDREN AND FAMILIES BILL



The Education Select Committee has released a pre-legislative report of the draft SEN provisions of the Children and Families Bill.

Christine Leneham, Director, Council for Disabled Children, said:

"We particularly welcome the Committee's recommendation that the entitlement to education, health and social care provision should include all disabled children, not just those with special educational needs. We believe that this is key to achieving the Government's ambitions set out in the original SEN Green Paper."

This important information will make a difference to the life of a child with special needs/disabilities. Please visit their website www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk for more information.

EASY FUNDRAISING

Bexley Voice are now registered with easyfundraising.org.uk. When you shop online with companies such as M & S, Tesco's, Amazon and Ebay, you can help raise those all important funds needed by BV.

Just visit their website, register your details, select Bexley Voice as your cause to support and then do your online shop in the normal way. It costs nothing to register and it only takes 2 minutes to do.

**Help to raise funds so together
we can all make a difference!**

IPAD APP TRAINING SESSION

**Have you recently bought or been given
an Ipad for your child?**

**Are you thinking of buying one and don't
know where to start?**

Bexley Voice are planning an Ipad training session for apps appropriate for children with special needs, including security control and exploring its capabilities. If you are interested in coming along, please let us know what areas you would like to learn about. We will advise our members on dates, location and how to book soon!

FAIR ACCESS TO SERVICES

Do you feel that your child is missing out due to their disabilities? Please email us with your thoughts if the following (or anything else appropriate) applies to you:

- * Children with Cerebral Palsy/physical disabilities are finding access to holiday clubs difficult
- * Lack of wheelchair/toilet facilities
- * Lack of staff to support children
- * Swimming pool hoist and changing bed
- * Lack of a separate play area for complex needs children

The more response we receive from Bexley Voice members will mean a stronger voice to act on your behalf!

CONTACT US TEL: 07512 409936 EMAIL: bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk

WEBSITE: www.bexleyvoice.org.uk FACEBOOK: Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children

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