Newsletter March/April 2013

Edition 08 /2013

Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children

Newsletter Update

2013 has got off to a busy start for the Bexley Voice team. We hope to see you at our volunteer recruitment event on Friday 22nd of March, as we are looking for support from some new faces please! Cupcakes and refreshments will be provided.

Our Dyslexia Campaign responses are now coming in and we will be sharing these with you soon. If you are having an Easter/Spring fair at your child's school, let us know, we may be able to come along and introduce our charity to your school. More information on all of these events can be found on our website. We would like to wish you a very happy Easter and lets hope for some much needed sunshine! Do you have any suggestions, ideas or relevant information you would like to include in the next Bexley Voice newsletter? If so, please contact rachel.bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk with your information.

PARENT/CARER 'DROP IN'

Bexley Voice's next '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 21st March

9.30am—12noon

At Goals Football Centre, Bexleyheath.

(behind ASDA's—free parking!)

Join us and meet our members for an informal chat over a coffee about any issues you may have. A Bexley Voice BME member will be there for support and advice. You can also complete a membership form and our Dyslexia Campaign questionnaire if you need to. We look forward to seeing new and existing members there.

BEXLEY VOICE VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT EVENT

Bexley Voice is run by volunteer parents/carers of children with special/additional needs and disabilities living in Bexley. We need more volunteers to help with the general running of our charity so are holding a volunteer recruitment event to give a presentation about how the charity runs, update on what Bexley Voice offers for families, explain about the job roles that you may be able to help with and have a chance for informal chat with volunteers over a cup of tea and some cup cakes! BV has invited Nirveen Chotia, Personal Development Trainer, who will be giving an inspiring and motivational presentation on personal development. A supervised craft/activity table will be provided although children are their parents responsibility at all times.

Friday 22nd March 9.30am—1.00pm

Goals Football Centre, (behind Asda), Bexleyheath. (Free parking)

There are many job roles available depending on the skills and time you have to offer. Just an hour or two every month can really make a difference with:

~ Helping with mailshots, promotions, delivering newsletters to schools and children's centres.
~ Contacting schools to arrange dates and assisting on school visits.
~ General administration, arranging meetings and events / Fundraising activities.
~ Proof reading newsletters, documents and consultations / Website updating.

We would really welcome some new faces coming forward to join us and support the work we do for children with special needs.

If you would like to offer your support and attend our volunteer recruitment event, please complete the response form on our website. Alternatively email **rachel.bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk** or call 07512 409936 . If you are unable to attend our event but would still like to offer your support, please get in touch.

Thank you and we look forward to meeting you soon!

FIND US ON

facebook

If you have a child with special needs and live in the Bexley Borough, then why not join our facebook group today and keep up to date with events and information.

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?

BV 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!

YOUR VOICE NEEDED NOW!

CHILDREN HOME ALONE SURVEY

Bexley Voice members are taking part in an important survey regarding how parents and professionals feel about children being left home alone or with siblings. Children with special needs are a whole different ball game so use this opportunity to have your say now.

More information can be found on the BV website or visit www.surveymonkey.com/s/958956Q.

If you have any questions email Karen Mills at karen.mills@myport.ac.uk. Thank you!

Please sponsor Bexley Voice for the Christchurch Sponsored Fun Run

Please sponsor BV members and their children who will be doing a 3 mile sponsored walk around Sidcup on **Saturday 23rd of March** to raise money for Bexley Voice. It is a fun event, organised by Sidcup Christ Church, with many entrants running or walking in costumes. Lets hope this years event takes place in beautiful sunshine just like last year when we had great fun whilst raising over £500. So come along and watch the fun, we will be shaking our bucket for much needed donations too!

CONGRAUTLATIONS!

Bexley Voice committee member, Frances, has succeeded in NOT drinking alcohol during the month of January. She took part in a "Dryathlon" for Cancer Research UK and managed to raise £130. She said, "It was my Birthday in January and it was difficult going out to celebrate and only drinking mineral water, but it was worth it. Cancer Research is an important charity to me - nearly as important as Bexley Voice!" Let's hope we raise as much for the Fun Run on 23rd March! **Well done Frances!**

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

Another successful fundraising party, was held by Bexley Voice's treasurer Tracey at her home. The Jamie Entertaining at Home Party raised £109! Our thanks also go to Andie of Andies Hair & Beauty, Main Rd in Sidcup who supplied prizes for our raffle and raised £128. Thank you and well done ladies!

BITS
BEXLEY INDEPENDENT TRAVEL SCHEME

INDEPENDENT TRAVEL TRAINING INFORMATION SESSION

LONDON BOROUGH OF BEXLEY

Bexley Voice arranged an information session on the 14th of February at the Mencap Office in Bexleyheath, about an excellent scheme that is available for training children and young adults to travel independently to school or college, also enabling them to increase their social travel, independence and confidence.

PARENT FEEDBACK— My son was hoping to go to college next year but this may not have been possible, as he would not be able to get there by himself due to his memory problems and Dyslexia. This scheme may give him that opportunity to go to college next year so I left feeling very hopeful. Thanks for the valuable information.

For more information, please contact: Nikki Wakefield at nikki.wakefield@bexleyct.co.uk

Is your child's school having an Easter, Spring or Summer Fair? Please let us know as we may be able to arrange BV members to come along and offer information to parents and carers of children with special needs. We will be at **HILLSGROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL SPRING FAIR ON SATURDAY 27th APRIL,** we look forward to seeing you there!

Dyslexia Association of Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich & Lewisham

Our next open meeting is on **Thursday 21st March at 7.45pm 'How was it for Ewe?' A Sheepish view of Dyslexia by an Old Goat of an EP!** Educational Psychologist Ged Balmer talks about his views on Dyslexia and it's assessment and management. Held at: St Nicholas Church Hall, Church Lane, Chislehurst, BR7 5PE (between the Bull and the Tiger's Head). If you would like to book, please contact: Amanda Sutton by email info@dyslexiawise.co.uk or call 020 8315 2526.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY - 'Dus Ths Mack Senz Too U ?' – A one day workshop for families, teachers and teaching assistants to learn fun ways of helping children with literacy. Entry is free, and refreshments are available. **Saturday 5th October 10.00am-1.00pm**: Chislehurst & Sidcup School, Hurst Road, Sidcup, DA15 9AG.

For other forthcoming events and membership contact DABBGL. Tel; 07000 505055.

BEXLEY VOICE

DYSLEXIA CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Questionnaire responses are now coming in, thank you to those parents and schools that have replied already. We really need your help in spreading the word about our campaign! The more responses we receive, the more feedback we can give to service providers and Bexley LA about the support that your child receives or what your school offers, thus helping to improve support and resources in children's education. Both questionnaires are available to download from our website. Please can you:

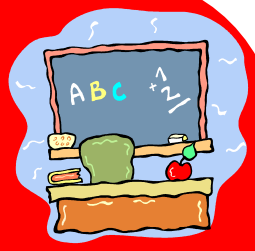
~ Give one to your school Head Teacher or Senco.

~ Distribute them to parents/carers of children with Dyslexia and ask them to complete it if they have not already.

Due to the School Improvement Team stopping the Bexley Dyslexia Friendly School Scheme, Bexley Voice is now supporting the British Dyslexia Associations School Friendly Scheme. Their information packs are on our website and are full of useful teaching and support advice, techniques and resources.

Visit www.bexleyvoice.org.uk for more information.

SCHOOL VISIT PROGRAMME



Our visits to schools within Bexley have really taken off. We have received some positive feedback from parents that we would like to share with you;

"The BV coffee morning was at my daughter's school in Sidcup. I had never heard of BV before, so it was a good way to find out more about you. It was also nice to get together with other parents, even though we had different issues. Since joining the group I have got some helpful advice. My daughter has a rare condition and we often feel like we are swimming against the tide so it is nice to feel that we are not completely alone. It would be nice if these could continue into secondary schools".

"My daughter is Dyslexic and struggling at school. I have some lovely friends who try to understand but unless you have gone through it, you can't. It can get you down and you feel alone at times. It is lovely to have the support from these wonderful people who are giving up their time so that we can all feel supported and get information".

If you would like us to visit your school, then please speak to your Senco/Head teacher and ask them to contact us to arrange a convenient date. All members of the Bexley Voice team who visit schools have a child of their own with special needs, so it is great to chat to other parents and offer you support and advice. Visit our website for more information. **Please help add your school to this list of visits booked already.**

PELHAM PRIMARY 1st March **UPLANDS PRIMARY 21st March** **BELVEDERE PRIMARY 10th May**

Registered Charity Number; 1142306

Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children

BEXLEY NAS NEWS

The local branch of the National Autistic Society.

The National Autistic Society

Our next Bexley NAS Coffee Mornings will be held at Sidcup Youth Centre, Burnt Oak Lane, Sidcup on March 21st and 18th April from 9.30am—12.30pm. We welcome parents/carers and pre-school children. Local professionals will be invited along to provide relevant information.

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, Easter and half term activities, along with our regular activities, then please visit our website at **www.bexleynas.com** or contact Juliet Roblett at **bexley@nas.org.uk** or on 07826 950496.

ASSESSMENT MORNING

BEXLEY SNAP

Thursday 21st March

Goals Football Centre,

By Asda's, Bexleyheath.

9.30am-12.30pm

For prospective, new and long standing SNAP members who would like to meet the SNAP team and find out what services are available for your family. Please call the SNAP office to book your appointment.

0208 311 6777

MCCH Easter & June Half-Term Playscheme

Arrow Football Club 100-130 Perry Street Crayford, DA1 4RL. 9.30am - 4.00pm. Cost: £25.00 per day. Activities will be organised in advance and may incur additional costs. We provide one-to-one staffing support for every child whilst out in the community.

MCCH Saturday Playscheme

mcch your choice matters

Carlton Centre, Sidcup. 9.30am - 4.30pm every Saturday. Cost: £10.00 per session - full day. £5.00 per session - half day (before or after 1pm). Various outings and activities are booked as often as possible, giving the children a chance to try out new things.

To join the Playscheme, please contact Denise Whiteman, Children's services co-ordinator on 07921 056283.

SHORT BREAK SERVICES

YOUR VOICE NEEDED!

Bexley Council has asked for feedback from parents and carers of children with special needs to consider the impact of individual budgets and direct payments on short break services. A questionnaire is being devised and will be downloadable from the Bexley Voice website as soon as it is available.

If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact Janine Wooster on 0203 045 5025 or email janine.wooster@bexley.gov.uk.

LIGHTHOUSE COFFEE MORNINGS

If you would like to meet other parents and carers of children with special needs or disabilities, then pop along on a Monday morning to St Pauls Church, Mill Rd, Erith between 9.15am and 12.15pm for a coffee and a chat. Please call 01322 332809 for availability before you go.

FACEBOOK TIP FROM PARENTS

Did you know that shopping trolleys adapted for children with special needs and disabilities are available from Morrison's in Erith and Sainsbury's in Crayford. If you know of any other supermarkets who have these trolleys, please let us know so we can spread the word and help make those nightmare shopping trips that little bit easier!

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

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

Happy Easter