

Newsletter May/June 2013

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Bexley Voice for Special Needs Children



Newsletter Update

Finally some sunshine has arrived, lets hope it is here to stay! The bad weather certainly affected our Fun Run, but it did not stop some of our members. See below to find out why... The Bexley Voice team welcomed new faces offering support at our recruitment event on the 22nd of March. School visits are getting booked up now throughout the summer term, so if you would like us to visit your school, then get in touch soon. Check our 'Diary Dates' for upcoming events this summer. More information on all of these events can be found on our website. 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.

Bexley Voice braved the bad weather for the Sidcup Christchurch Fun Run, raising over £500!

Due to bad weather the Fun Run unfortunately had to be cancelled this year, it was a tough decision but the safety of everyone involved was a priority. Knowing how important the sponsorship money is to Bexley Voice, some of our members decided to still give it a go! With coats and gloves at the ready, they braved the 3 mile walk in the freezing weather whilst shaking our donation bucket. They were greeted at the finish with a very loud cheer, tea and cakes and presented with a beautiful hamper of fruit and cakes for being the fastest team (even though they were the only team!).



A big thank you and congratulations go to Nick Medhurst, Charlie Myatt, Jake Myatt, Connor Selby-Medhurst and George Lamarque. Thanks also go to Sidcup Christchurch and Cake Tops at The Pantiles who gave generous donations.

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 needs, additional needs or any disability is;

Thursday 27th June

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.

PARK ACCESS SURVEY— Please complete our online questionnaire about your local park facilities!

- Do you find playground equipment/facilities at your local park easily accessible and suitable for your child's use?
- Have the facilities prevented you from taking your child to the park or hindered your child's experience/enjoyment of play in the park? Do you feel there is scope for improvement?
- Do you want your voice heard and help improve facilities for your child? Visit our website for more information.



SCHOOL VISIT PROGRAMME



Our visits to schools in Bexley is getting booked up for the summer term!

Belvedere Infants, Belvedere ~ Friday 10th May

Holy Trinity School, Sidcup ~ Friday 24th May

Sherwood Park School, Sidcup ~ Thursday 23rd May

Mayplace School, Bexleyheath ~ Tuesday 4th June

Hillsgrove School, Welling ~ Saturday 29th June (part of the school fete, the date has changed from previous newsletter)

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.**

Charity Number; 1142306



ODD SOCKS DAY! Congratulations to Barnehurst School who took part in 'Odd Socks Day' and raised £218 for the Down Syndrome Association!

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CHANGES TO THE SECONDARY SCHOOL SELECTION PROCESS

There are several changes planned this year, including the length and content of the two 11+ papers, to give a clearer idea of a child's ability. The two shorter papers will be sat on the same morning/afternoon with a short break between. One of the changes is to move from an 'opting out' system to an 'opting in' system, where only those registered will take the test. Schools should be sending out information to inform parents over the coming term. The hope is that it will save children who will not benefit from the test having to go through the stress of sitting it.

For some parents this will be an easy decision, for others it will not be so clear cut. If you are not sure what to do, we would suggest that you make an appointment with your child's Senco or teacher who can help you decide what to do. If the decision is to enter your child for the tests, you may also want to discuss any additional support available.

On-line registration for the 11+ tests can be done between the 7th of May and 14th of July 2013 at www.bexley.gov/selectiontests. Those not registered by the 14th of July will not sit the tests. Many parents are likely to want to discuss the new process with the school, so we suggest you book an appointment as early as possible. We are currently updating our 'Choosing a Secondary School' leaflet—which will be available on our website to help you through the process.

Please feel free to discuss any concerns you may have in our Facebook Group, (only accessible by parents/carers).



DIARY DATES



Look out for the Bexley Voice team at the following events this summer!

More details can be found on our website.

Lark in the Park ~ 27th July-11th August

Danson Festival (Youth Section) ~ 6th-7th July

Welling Community Fun Day ~ 15th June

DYSLEXIA CAMPAIGN UPDATE

We really need your help in spreading the final 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. Questionnaires are available to complete online on our website. **Deadline: 19th July 2013.**

SHORT BREAKS SURVEY

Bexley Voice would like to thank our members who completed the Short Breaks survey and gave their thoughts on the services provided. Your voice can really make a difference!

EASY FUNDRAISING

Bexley Voice are registered as a good cause with **easyfundraising.org.uk**. Why use easyfundraising.org.uk? Because it is FREE!! When you do your shopping online please go through easyfundraising.org.uk as this will raise funds for Bexley Voice - Thank you!

RECRUITMENT EVENT

Our recruitment event held in Bexleyheath on the 22nd of March was a great success!

Everyone enjoyed an inspiring presentation by Nirveen, a personal development trainer, about how we feel about ourselves and the advantages to voluntary work. This made all those who attended feel very positive and inspired to sign up for some job roles! Many thanks to all those who came along to support us and signed up to help with the running of our charity. However big or small, all the job roles are vital and will make a difference, so welcome to the team! Without this support Bexley Voice cannot reach the families in Bexley who need us. Together we can all make a difference....

There are still 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 delivering newsletters/leaflets.
- ~ General administration and Fundraising activities.

If you were unable to attend our event but would still like to offer your support, please get in touch.



Dyslexia Association of Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich & Lewisham

FREE DYSLEXIA WORKSHOP for Families to learn fun ways of helping children at home and at school. **Saturday 8th June, Church of The Good Shepherd, Handen Road, Lee SE12 8NR.** Doors open 9.30am. For further information call 07000 50 50 55 or email: info@dyslexiawise.co.uk, www.dyslexiawise.co.uk.

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