

Our Voice



Our Voice Newsletter

Issue 11 • 2011
Summer/Autumn

Trust for London
Tackling poverty and inequality



Welcome

Welcome to the summer/autumn 2011 issue of the **Our Voice** newsletter, the parent-led organisation seeking to improve services for children with disabilities in Enfield.

We'd like to thank everyone who came to our Open Days in May. The information we received in your feedback survey forms was very useful in planning some additional workshops. Sleep problems and challenging behaviour in children were most frequently stated as areas where you would like support. We're delighted to announce that we will be holding workshops on both these areas in the autumn. Please see the back page for details on how to book. We also hope to hold an annual Open Day in future to give you the opportunity to be involved in service planning for Our Voice.

Now that the long school summer holidays are upon us, we include some ideas for day trips to try with your children. Please let us know what you have enjoyed locally in and around Enfield.

Going away on holiday gives your children the chance to enjoy a new environment and some different experiences. We talked to Kim Flack about her successful camping holiday with daughter Chanel and to Jay Smith about his adventure holiday with his daughter Phoebe in Wales.

We also include the usual update from the Joint Service for Disabled Children as well as news about the Young people's consultation and the Youth inclusion project.

Enjoy the summer break.

Carol Mustafa

Our Voice Development Coordinator

What's new

Grand days out

Whatever your plans for the long summer holidays, it's an ideal time to fit in some days out with the children. Why not try somewhere you haven't been to before? Here are some ideas.

Fairlop Waters Country Park

Fairlop Waters is a large country park in the nearby Borough of Redbridge. There's a 38 acre sailing lake and two golf courses. For children there's Al's Adventure World and two other play areas. It's



great for children who use wheelchairs as it has good car parking and easy access. It's free to visit and enjoy the woodland and play areas.

In addition, the boulder park is a new and exciting installation which consists of nine boulders of different shapes and sizes for everyone to climb on. The boulders are located in a leafy glade and the climbs cater for all standards. Or you could enjoy a picnic in the shade and watch others climb.

Visit www.fairlopwaters.info to find out more. Fairlop Waters Country Park, Forest Road, Barkingside, Essex IG6 3HN Tel: 0208 500 9911

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Please pass this newsletter on to others - parents and service providers - who might find it useful. You can contact us for additional copies by email or phone.

Lee Valley farms

Lee Valley has two farms to visit, Hayes Hill, where you can get close to a variety of animals, and Holyfield Hall, which is a working dairy farm.



At Hayes Hill Farm you can meet 'Tallulah' and 'Barbara' the pigs, 'Ella' and 'Eve' the goats, tiny mice, slimy snails, and a new meerkat family. You can let off steam in the adventure play areas, enjoy the soft play in Bundle Barn, ride the combine harvester in Piglets' Paradise, or jump on a Giant Jumping Pillow. The visitor centre has a café, there

are guinea pigs to stroke and a rabbit enclosure where you can get close to the bunnies.

At Holyfield Hall Farm you can see how dairy cows live, feed and sleep. There are steps to a viewing gallery where you can see the cows being milked every afternoon. A ground level viewing gallery is available.

There's a useful disabled access guide online at www.disabledgo.com/en/access-guide/lee-valley-park-farms/lee-valley-park

Stubbins Hall Lane, Waltham Abbey, Essex
EN9 2EF Tel: 01992 892 781
Email farms@leevalleypark.org.uk
Website www.leevalleypark.org.uk/farms

Come and have fun in the sun!

Day trips and group sessions organised by the Joint Service for Disabled Children.



Family Fundays for children aged 0-11 years

Enjoy a day trip to the beach:

Friday 29th July - Southend

Friday 5th August - Walton

Friday 12th August - Clacton

Friday 19th August - Southend

Groups for 0-5 year olds

- Father's Group - 7th and 21st August 10.30am-12.30pm at Cheviots Children's Centre
- Stay and Play Groups - 4th August and 18th August 10am-12pm at Raglan School Nursery
- Stay and Play Groups - 11th August and 25th August 10am-12pm at Carterhatch Children's Centre
- Library session at John Jackson Library - 23rd August 11am-12pm

To book a place on these groups or for more information please call Sam Storey at Cheviots on 0208 363 4047.



London Zoo

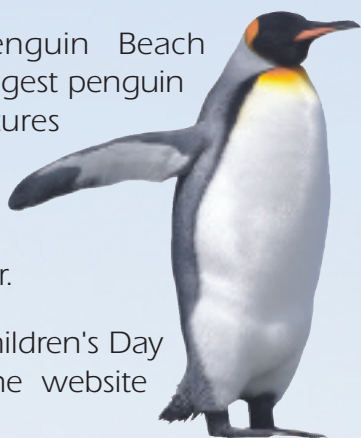
Last year over 5,200 people attended the popular Special Children's Day at ZSL London Zoo. This year's Special Children's Day will be held over two days on the weekend of 10th and 11th Sept - you can attend on either day, or both if you wish.

Features will include:

- a special welcome entrance for the families
- a 'Discovery Zone' exclusive for attendees of Special Children's Day for 'hands on' activities, storytelling, live animals, crafts, face painting
- hoists within the changing tents. Portable disabled toilets are being brought on site and set up in exclusive areas with respite areas for families
- a hub where charities will be on hand to offer guidance and information for families
- British Sign Language interpreters at animal displays and talks
- tickets at almost half the price of normal Zoo entry (one carer per family comes in for free)

- touch tours for children with sight impairment
- 10% discount vouchers for each family on food and retail purchases
- free animal displays and feedings throughout the day
- extended rides on carousels.

Visit the new Penguin Beach exhibit - England's biggest penguin pool which features underwater viewing areas so you can see how our flippered friends fly under water.



Tickets for Special Children's Day are available from the website www.zsl.org

Trent Country Park

Trent Country Park covers 413 acres and is managed by London Borough of Enfield. It forms part of London's green belt and is a large open space to come and enjoy some fresh air and take a picnic. There is car parking near to the Trent Park Cafeteria and Main Drive (Lime Avenue), The café is open from 11am all year round.



The Swiss Lodge Visitor Centre provides information and advice including guided walks or nature trails. The Wildlife Rescue & Ambulance

Service Animal Centre is just behind the visitor centre and home to rescued animals including deer, foxes, hedgehogs, rabbits and birds, as well as some farm animals, such as goats, pigs, rabbits, ducks and chickens.

Trent Country Park, Cockfosters Road, Enfield
Tel: 0208 449 2459

Swimming

Swimming is fantastic all-round exercise for people of all ages and abilities. British Swimming

have launched a campaign to get more people to visit their local swimming pools. A website has been launched which guides Londoners to swimming deals at their local pool. The following deals are being offered at various pools local to Enfield: 2 for the price of 1, bring your family for free, water workout for free and free taster swimming lesson.



Download your free swimming vouchers from www.swimmingoffers.org

Walker Ground

The Walker Ground is a multi-sport environment where you can enjoy a variety of sports. A range of sports activities for juniors is taking place throughout the summer holidays including, squash, netball, archery, tennis and cricket. Contact Vickie Prow, Sports Development Manager to find out more on 0742 6012954.

It also host some open air theatre productions, notably **The Adventures of Robin Hood and Maid Marion** showing from Tuesday 23rd August to Friday 26th August 2011 at 2.30pm. This classic story is aimed at children and adults and costs £5 for under 16s, £10 adults. Tickets from Linda Colt on 07930 131 051.

Visit www.thewalkerground.co.uk for more information.

Futureversity Enfield 2011

Futureversity are running free summer courses throughout the holidays for young people aged 13-19 years (up to age 25 in some instances). Five weeks of fun, educational, free courses for young people who live or go to school in Enfield. Courses available include cookery, sport, jewellery making, drama, music, dance, art, singing, first aid, self-defence, journalism, hair and make up and animation.

To find out more email: summeruni@enfield.gov.uk

News from the Joint Service

Janet Leach, Head of the Joint Service for Disabled Children in Enfield gives an update on service developments.



As we approached March, the final month of **Aiming High for Disabled Children** – the national transformation programme focused on improving services for disabled children and their families – I spent some time reflecting on how far we have come and also considered how much we still have to do.

It has always been a privilege to work with parents and through Aiming High we have been able to engage with and work with so many more of you. It is your knowledge and experience which is helping us to improve the lives of disabled children and their families in Enfield. It has been equally inspiring to listen to the views of so many more disabled young people, to hear from them what is needed and to learn about their priorities.

So as we come to the end of this programme, I wish to reassure parents and young people, that the Local Authority, together with all our partners, remains committed to working with you and learning from you, so together we can continue to develop and improve services. We really do understand that we cannot progress unless we work together.

In the last issue of the Our Voice newsletter I wrote briefly about our plans to continue to develop and deliver a range of short breaks, so your child can have fun with friends and parents are supported to have a break and a chance to relax. I assured you that in spite of the economically challenging times we have no plans to reduce the number of short breaks. We have now asked Parent2Parent (P2P) – our parent consultation group – to consult with parents over the summer about our programme of short breaks. Are we providing you with the best types of break, at the right times? Do they meet your child's and family's needs? What could we do differently or better?

The information provided by P2P's consultation will then be used to produce our Short Break Statement which will be a published document on the Council's website. This is something that all Local Authorities must publish by 1st October 2011. It should explain what short breaks we provide in Enfield and how parents can access them. To make things easier for P2P and to ensure we get things right, I have written a draft Statement that P2P will use as the basis for the consultation with families.

So if you are approached by one of our P2P consultants when you are dropping off or collecting your child at a playscheme this summer – we would really appreciate you taking the time to answer a few questions – just make sure you have your say!

We also asked P2P to consult with you about transport to and from short breaks. We want to ensure that we are spending your money wisely. Could we provide transport more cost-effectively? Could we be 'smarter' in how we provide transport, so fewer children spend less time on buses?

P2P will be reporting back to the Joint Service about the outcome of this consultation in July. We will of course keep you all informed.

And finally, in June P2P ran a consultation event for parents and professionals on the Government's Green Paper – 'Support and aspiration: a new approach to special educational needs and disability'. We were particularly pleased to welcome David Burrowes, MP for Enfield Southgate, who told us how pleased he was that Enfield was discussing this very important paper with its far reaching proposals, with parents and professionals alike.

Twenty four parents and 18 professionals attended and there was a great deal of lively debate! P2P compiled an excellent report, collating all the discussion and feedback which formed the basis of the Joint Service's response to the Government's consultation on the Paper. We are now waiting to hear how the Government will be working with some Local Authorities and their Health and Voluntary Sector partners to 'trial' some of the Green Paper proposals. We will keep you informed and if we are part of any group working with the Government we will of course involve parents.

If you would like to see a copy of the final P2P report, please contact Megan Steven at Cheviots Children's Centre.

Some of you will know that we are working with childcare providers throughout the borough. We are providing them with training, advice, guidance and support to develop both their confidence in caring for your children and your confidence in them. In particular we have been working with childminders who have attended lots of training and events to develop their skills. Further information about our partnership with childminders will be available in the autumn edition of Our Voice. In the meantime any families wanting advice or information about childcare should contact Informed Families at www.enfield.gov.uk/if or call 0800 694 1066.

Earlier this year the Joint Service worked with our partners in Adult Social Care, with our local special schools and with Tottenham Hotspur Foundation on the Transition Help for Communities Project.

The programme was designed to provide personalised developmental support for 13 young people who were undergoing changes in their lives, to raise their aspirations before they leave school and provide an opportunity to grow and develop in independence. The key modules of the programme were tailor-made to meet their personal requirements and were specifically focused on individual outcomes.

The project was based at the Radiomathon Centre in Enfield. Over a 12-week period young people undertook a range of activities that provided them with an opportunity to build on existing life skills, and develop new ones.



Through involvement in both theory and practical activities, the project aimed to work with young people as they prepared for the transition from school into adult life. The programme's focus was to enable them to become more confident, more independent, more responsible and more accountable.

In addition to participating in classroom-based theory activities, young people were encouraged to undertake practical sports-based activities designed to reinforce the learning that had taken place within the classroom.

As a part of this programme, we have produced a toolkit for schools and other community-based services to enable them to run similar projects. The toolkit was launched on 20 May 2011 at the Transition Help for Communities Workshop. Plans are now under way to ensure we can continue running this programme twice a year.

If you would like to receive a copy of the toolkit, please contact Ineta Miskinyte at Ineta.Miskinyte@enfield.gov.uk or on 0208 379 5738.

Finally, be sure to read the update below from Shaun Barratt about our work with young people who will be out and about this summer enjoying activities at a variety of venues including The Futureversity program. Our young consultants will be letting us know if the activities on offer meet their needs and how we can continue to improve and develop more choice – so watch this space.

I do hope you all have a happy summer holiday and look forward to seeing many of you at our playschemes and other activities.

Young people's consultation and the Youth Inclusion project

Shaun Barratt, Inclusion Development Manager at the Joint Service, reports.

The Young People's Consultation Group (YPCG) continue to meet, have fun and inform us what the

young people of Enfield really want. Recently we have been working with our friends in the Youth Service and once again we have been let loose with cameras, sound recorders and video cams!

The YPCG are always looking to the future and how we would like to be actively involved in, and part of our local community activities, in particular our Youth Services. Yemi Akinfenwa, the Youth Participation Lead Worker for Enfield said,

"Enfield's Youth Service has a passion and commitment for young disabled people to access all of our Youth services. By working in partnership with the Joint Service for Disabled Children we can create wonderful opportunities to bring young people of all backgrounds together whose only common purpose is to belong and have fun."

The Youth Service and the Joint Service have jointly funded three fabulous projects to promote inclusion into community-based youth services. These projects included a journalism course, a music course and a carnival-based activity.

The journalism project was run by a group called **Headliners**. **Headliners** is a charity which inspires and encourages the personal development of young people through journalism. Young people are trained to research and produce stories on issues important to them for publication and broadcast in national and local newspapers, magazines, television, radio and online. **Headliners** gives young people with disabilities a genuine voice on issues that concern them by using accessible multi-media journalism to express themselves.

Sharon Boyd from **Headliners** states, "In collaboration with young people from the YPCG and Croyland Road Youth Club we carried out a process called 'story idea generation' with the group and from this the young people were very keen to create a film about have a go heroes and community support within Enfield."

One young consultant said "I love being a journalist and asking questions about what is important to me. Next I want to interview Kate and William!"

Seven young people have had a wonderful time making music in our second project with Ponders End Youth Club. The Red Rooms group who ran the project for us utilise creative methods and media to explore the world of music and make it accessible and enjoyable to all. Seun, who is regularly seen serenading Oaktree staff with guitar in hand, said he **loved the music and singing and hitting the drums** and staff report he talks daily about how much he enjoys going!

For our third project, look out for us at Edmonton Cultural Festival and Carnival on Saturday 23rd July. Our young people have been joined by other local children designing and decorating a float at Edmonton Carnival.

Hattice, the Arts and Events Development Manager states: "The project will be bold, colourful and vibrant. Each child will be a colour of the rainbow with their costume in an array of tones. This allows for lots of different materials to be used along with reflective materials. We should be dazzling!"

The YPCG demanded that the collaboration with the Youth Service didn't end there. So our young disabled people are going to enjoy the activities laid on by the Youth Service during the summer under the **Futureversity** program. These include DJ-ing, jewellery making, multi sports, hair and make up, street art, trips out and much more. The Youth Service has recruited a number of young people to act as peer motivators for our young people to make the transition smoother.

Now we have laid the foundations with the Youth Service we need everyone out there to ensure the partnership continues to grow! If there are any young disabled people who would like to be part of our journey please call Shaun Barratt at Cheviots on 020 8363 4047.

Update on gastrostomy tubes

In the July 2010 newsletter of Our Voice we reported that a parent had raised a concern about the availability of gastrostomy tubes. As a result of this we have now set up a direct delivery system from the manufacturers for all children who have Mini buttons or Mickey buttons for feeding. If you are not registered with this system and would like to be, please contact Julia Hopkins, Associate Director for Children's Services at Cedar House, St Michael's Primary Care Centre. The parent who raised the concern has also fed back to us on the new arrangements and this has enabled us to make some additional changes. Your feedback is so important as it helps us to ensure our services are meeting your needs - keep letting us know how we are doing!

We are also looking at improving the service we offer through the loan store by offering dedicated opening times on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday. This would ensure that you can request equipment and know exactly when the loan store will be open to collect it rather than turning up and hoping to find the manager around. Further details will be sent out via Waverley School and directly to other parents as soon as the opening times have been confirmed.

Speak up - your experiences

It can feel like a huge effort to plan and pack for, but a holiday offers a welcome change of environment and the chance to enjoy new experiences. We spoke to two parents who took their children on a holiday adventure.

Kim Flack went on a camping holiday to Ladram Bay in Devon with her daughter Chanel and partner Wayne. Never having camped before, they weren't sure whether they would enjoy it. In particular, they didn't know whether it would suit Chanel, who has just turned 14 and has global developmental delay as well as severe epilepsy and behavioural problems.

They needn't have worried however, as she loved every minute. "It was just the perfect holiday for Chanel," says Kim, "it was so successful that I don't think we'd do anything other than go camping for our future holidays."

Rather than invest in expensive kit, Kim decided to borrow a tent and other equipment from friends and family in case they didn't use it again. "Everyone lent us stuff, our small car was packed to the roof, you could just see Chanel's head over the top of everything."

From the moment they left, Chanel was excited and happy. Camping gave her the chance to enjoy different things - because the pitch had no electricity they used wind-up torches and Chanel enjoyed charging hers up several hours before it got dark. She also loved the fact that they cooked and ate outside and enjoyed sleeping in the tent.

There were lots of children around and Chanel took huge pleasure in watching and participating in ball games with them. She was befriended by a teenage girl who was very kind to her and bought her a present when they left. Kim was surprised by the wide variety of people who had a connection with some form of disability - she met a special needs teacher and enjoyed chatting to another mum who was on holiday with her autistic son.

Despite the fact they had a small tent with just one sleeping compartment, Kim found it quite comfortable. "Because our tent was on a hill, we found that our airbeds gradually slipped down the tent during the night so we would wake up and have to move them back up the slope! But we generally managed to get enough sleep".

The best aspects of camping for Kim were the relaxed environment and having no deadlines or time limits, simply enjoy the chance to do as they pleased. And being on a safe site in an enclosed area meant that she could allow Chanel the freedom to wander around.



Chanel enjoying camping

Would they do it again? "Definitely," says Kim, "we hope to go for longer next time."

Jay Smith's eldest daughter Phoebe is also 14. She was born prematurely with a cleft palate and has CHARGE syndrome, a rare condition which means she has hearing, sight and feeding difficulties and is very small for her age. Phoebe is tube fed and uses a feeding pump overnight.

Phoebe attends West Lea School. Last May, along with her dad Jay and lots of her schoolfriends, she went on an adventure holiday to Latymer Ysgol near Betws y Coed in Wales, a field centre owned by the Latymer School Foundation in Edmonton. The centre put on a range of outdoor activities including canoeing, archery, horse riding, rock and rope climbing, walking and visiting the top of Mount Snowdon.

Apart from horse riding, Phoebe had not tried any of these activities before and although she found some of them difficult, she loved the whole experience. The children slept in dorms, although Phoebe had her own room which was vital, given her support needs. Everyone ate together with meals cooked by the organisers. The children enjoyed helping with different chores on a rota basis such as handing out food, setting plates and cutlery, cleaning the tables and looking after the dorms.

Lots of other children from West Lea School attended so Phoebe was amongst friends. "I mostly stayed out of her way", says Jay, "I was around for her in the evenings and at night when she needed support, but during the day I let her get on with being with her friends and enjoying the activities which I think was very good for her."

Phoebe enjoyed canoeing the most. For this activity three or four canoes were banded together in a block to assist those who found it more difficult to use the oars. The children were kept extremely busy all week and the activities were very well organised, which made the whole experience positive for Jay too.

"I loved it," says Jay, "the teachers were wonderful and the whole thing was fantastically well organised. One of the best things was that it pushed Phoebe to her limits. I was amazed at some of the things she had a go at, such as the zip wire and climbing. She found them hard but was determined to have a go and it was very good for her to stretch herself."



Phoebe on the ropes course

Did you know?

Promise Dreams

The charity Promise Dreams raises money for children who are seriously or terminally ill and provides treatment, help and support for both them and their families. Whether your child's dream is for a holiday, a toy, medical treatment or equipment, or even the chance to meet their favourite celebrity, Promise Dreams may be able to help.

Promise Dreams accepts applications to help children and young people between the ages of 0 and 18 years inclusive, and each application is assessed to ensure the child meets their medical criteria.

Visit www.promisedreams.co.uk where you can request or download an application pack.

Are you bilingual?



Enfield Parent Partnership Service is looking for volunteer interpreters! As you may know, we support the parents/carers of children with special educational needs. We help lots of parents, but we sometimes need interpreters, especially for families who speak Turkish, Somali and different African languages. Can you spare the time to help please? For more information, please ring Mary on 020 8373 2700 or email enquiries@enfieldparents.org.uk

Events

Workshops for parents, carers and professionals

Following your feedback, which asked specifically for support on sleep problems and challenging behaviour, we are delighted to announce dates for some new workshops this autumn.

These workshops will enable parents, carers and professionals to work through some difficult issues relating to children with special needs. Each workshop will focus on the practical issues and developing the skills needed by parents/carers and professionals to support the child with special needs in overcoming specific difficulties.

Just a few more minutes, please - the art of sleep

This workshop will identify:

- what is a sleep problem.
- the impact a sleep problem has on people
- how sleep problems develop
- general points to bear in mind before you start to tackle the problem.
- approaches toward resolving sleep problems in people with special needs

Date: Tuesday 18 October 10.45am-1.45pm

Location: Cheviots

Lunch will be included

Be your own super nanny - managing behaviour in children and young adults with special/additional needs

The workshop will:

- define what challenging behaviour is
- briefly explore the processes involved in developing individualised strategies
- briefly explore some practical ways of working with behavioural difficulties.

Date: Thursday 17 November 10.45am-1.45pm

Location: Cheviots

Lunch will be included

To book either or both workshop, please contact Carol Mustafa on 07503 161248 or email carol@ourvoiceenfield.org.uk or Megan Steven at Cheviots on 0208 363 4047 or at megan.steven@enfield.gov.uk at least two weeks in advance.

Our Voice/Enfield Disability Network meetings

Providing an opportunity for parents to network with professionals

Our next meeting dates will be announced in the autumn.