

Feedback from the pinpoint October Network Meetings

Hot Topic: Activities

The meetings were held in 5 areas during the month of October. The meetings were attended by a total of 32 parents.

In the first part of each meeting parents were asked about their experiences of accessing activities with their children and talked about what had worked well and what had not worked so well, and looked at activities they would like to access in the future.

In the second part of the meeting parents worked with service providers to look at the gaps in provision of activities and what action needed to be taken to try to fill these gaps in the future.

The meetings were very useful as they allowed families to share information and recommend activities to each other as well as look at future provision and how access could be improved.

Feedback was as follows below.

The activities that families have accessed and would recommend included:

- Hire of Emneth Private Pool - £30 per month for one hour per week – contact Lucy Ryan, ryanlucy@rocketmail.com
- Brownies
- Scouts
- Activities that have involved the whole family going on trips and helping to design activities
- Little Aquas swimming - <http://www.littleaqua.co.uk/>
- Hudson Leisure Centre Sensory Room - <http://www.newvisionfitness.co.uk/newvisionfitness/clubs/wisbech>
- Chatteris Swimming Pool - £22 per hour for private hire - empreswimmingpool@btconnect.com
- Riding
- Action for Children Holiday Club - <http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/>
- Sunshine Club through Carers Trust
- Cambridge Kung Fu - www.cambridgekungfu.com
- Aspire - <http://www.romseymill.org/aspire/>
- Swimming at the Steiner School Pool, Ida Darwin - <http://www.cambridge-steiner-school.co.uk/>
- Melbourne Special Needs swimming – has waiting list
- Cambridge Swimming Club Disability Squad – for some children - <http://www.cocsc.org.uk/disability.html>
- Upside Down Club – St Ives - <http://www.upsidedownsportsclub.co.uk/>
- Mencap Befriender

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- Big Sibs – Cambridge University befriending scheme - <http://www.cambridgesca.org.uk/node/329>
- Bounce Club – <http://www.cambridgesca.org.uk/node/330>
- Duke of Edinburgh Award through school
- University Playscheme – good one-to-one support - <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/childcare/playscheme/>
- Woodcraft Folk – really inclusive - <http://woodcraft.org.uk/>
- Hinchingsbrooke Park activities booked in advance with park rangers - <http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/HinchingsbrookeCountryPark>
- Horse-riding at College of West Anglia - <http://www.cwa.ac.uk/chsa-lessons.html>
- Riding for the Disabled - <http://www.rda.org.uk/>
- Music Therapy through Anglia Ruskin
- Opportunities Group – Histon - <http://www.impingtonopportunityplaygroup.btck.co.uk/>
- Air Training Corp – Linton Village College - <http://www.air-cadets-squadron-finder.org/>
- Jump Club – St Ives – jumpclub@hotmail.co.uk
- Monarch Farm – Hilton – riding – 6 years plus - <http://www.monachriding.co.uk/>
- SCIP card very useful in accessing activities and proving needs – available through Joan Adamson, <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/scip>, joan.adamson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
- Oasis Beach Pool, Bedford – Special Needs session on Sundays, 6:30 – 8pm, £2 and carers go free - <http://www.bedford.gov.uk/oasis>
- NAS Peterborough – has exclusive access to soft play area and laser quest for some sessions in the month, <http://www.nas-peterborough.org.uk/homepage.aspx>
- Jane Tuck’s Sibling Group - 07827 309394
- Jane Tuck’s Dads Group - 07827 309394
- Ballet
- Sensory Activities
- Treetops – 1st Wednesday of the month – special access <http://treetopsely.co.uk/>
- All 4 Sports <http://www.all-4-sports.co.uk/>
- Camplay Saturday Club
- Little Miracles <http://littlemiraclescharity.org/>
- Grafham Water Activities <http://www.grafham-water-centre.co.uk/>
- Mepal Activities <http://www.mepal.co.uk/>
- Community Support Youth Club at YPM March <http://www.ypm.org.uk/>
- Act for Kidz
- Roller skating in Littleport
- Burrowmoor Out of School Club <http://www.burrowmoor.net/>
- Music Lessons
- Milton Park – Cycling Club <http://www.miltoncountrypark.org/opus302.html>
- You Can Bike Too <http://www.youcanbiketoo.org/>
- Autistic Bike Riding – Peterborough

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The activities below were listed by families as not having worked so well for them. This is based on individual experience and can vary per individual child and family.

- CamPlay – activities did not meet child’s needs, not personalised enough
- Football – difficulty with other players
- Group swimming lessons – too noisy, crowded
- Team sports
- CCS worker – not well informed
- Sessions which have too many children
- Cambridge Swimming Club Disability Squad – restricted access for autistic children
- Aspire – timings not right, activities not right, not right level of help with socialisation
- Upside Down Swim Club – child’s behaviour not accommodated
- Special Needs Groups with unstructured activities
- Access to specialist outdoor play equipment is restricted due to lack of keys, misuse of facilities
- NAS Peterborough – has exclusive access to soft play area and laser quest for some sessions in the month
- Paradise Pool – not very inclusive/accommodating

The activities that families wanted to access for their child in the future included:

- Activities in school holidays
- Special needs swim sessions
- Activities when child is 5 and 6 still in the holidays
- Facilities within special schools during evenings, weekends and holidays
- Trampolining
- Softplay for older/taller kids
- Barracudas
- Sessions in Leisure Centres opened after hours to allow access for families with children with additional needs – gym and swim pool and other facilities
- Lego and games clubs
- Drama
- Music
- Special Needs Youth Clubs
- Activities that are offered to small groups – often when groups grow they then are no longer accessible for some children
- Art Groups
- Nature activities – outdoors with support

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- After school clubs so children can do activities in familiar surroundings – specialist schools need to offer this provision in the same way mainstream schools do. Have parents actually been asked if transport is a real barrier?
- Horse riding
- Aspire type provision for younger age group
- Activities that are streamed so that children can take part with peers with similar levels of need
- Activities with animals
- A culture change within mainstream activities to make the provision accessible without asking the parent to stay to be the one to one support
- Provision which can include siblings
- Provision which honestly states who the sessions are applicable to
- Access to Hydrotherapy pools
- Sailability – Grafham Water
- Dance Clubs
- Weekend activities
- Relaxation sessions e.g. yoga
- Non-team sports – cycling, climbing etc.
- Non-competitive sports sessions
- Gymnastics
- Gym sessions
- Music Therapy
- Activities for pre-school children and younger children
- Soft play for older kids
- Opportunities to access allotments and gardening activities
- Cooking clubs
- Sensory Activities
- Horse riding – Smithy Fen

When the service providers and parent carers looked together at the gaps in provision an action plan was drawn up to ensure that this was progressed. The following actions were agreed:

Specific actions for other agencies:

- Living Sport to feedback about the use of Leisure Centres outside of standard hours.
- Living Sport to feedback about access to swimming lessons in Fenland.
- Living Sport to feedback about the use of the softplay room in the Hudson Leisure Centre.
- Living Sport to follow up about the location of a home for Little Aquas Swim Club.
- Living Sport to follow up about gym sessions and the use of the Olympic Gym.
- Living Sport to feedback about special needs Yoga sessions.

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- Siobhan to investigate the cookery club and allotment ideas to look at existing provision.

Further actions:

- Consider an on line forum for sharing of ideas and experiences relating to activities – focus group to look at this including Joan Adamson and Living Sport.
- Prepare an email to go to the specialist holiday play schemes copied to Richard (draft to go to Sherie) raising the following points: parents need to be asked about activities their children will enjoy in advance of the scheme, children to be offered alternative activities within the scheme not just be given one activity a day, parents feedback to be used for future planning.
- Develop an activity passport based on the hospital passport for parents to use when their children want to access activities and services.
- Work with Living Sport and Joan Adamson to offer a survey to evidence demand for activities.
- Contact Barracudas play scheme to check who funds the one to one support for children who attend.
- Attend the next Special School Heads meeting to talk about the use of facilities outside of school hours and after school provision and clubs.
- Form a focus group looking at Childcare sufficiency with the relevant service personnel.

Parent carers and service providers also discussed how provision could work more successfully and the following points were raised which need to be considered further:

- Could publicity materials include a pictorial key to show who the activity is suitable for? e.g. blanket inclusion can equal exclusion.
- Schools need to play a more active role in social inclusion.
- Could schemes like Big Sibs connect with providers to give support for children to attend mainstream activities?
- Could parents group together to fund joint activities with direct payments monies?
- There is a need for more taster/induction sessions from providers before money is committed to an activity which may not work and then has a notice period attached.
- There is still a lack of family inclusive provision - groups like Bizzykidz worked very well because it was parent led and activities were for the whole family in a supportive environment. The issue is that provision led by parent/carers can be difficult to sustain when the caring role requires a lot of energy.