

AIMING HIGH FOR DISABLED CHILDREN

Newsletter Two, December 2009

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL/IOW PCT NHS

Welcome - The Aiming High Programme

Welcome to the second edition of the Aiming High for Disabled Children's newsletter on the Isle of Wight. Much progress has been made since July, and this newsletter aims to bring you up-to-date with some of the exciting new developments being planned for next year.

Aiming High Programme

This exciting transformation programme offers everyone who is involved with disabled children the opportunity to transform the way in which services are planned and delivered.

Key to its success is the participation of young people and parents.

Funding is intended to be used to provide further short breaks for children and their families, along with access to universal services that all children enjoy.

Parents — Help us to improve



our services to you

It would greatly help us to plan for next year's delivery if you would complete the enclosed questionnaire.

This aims to find out what you would like to see developed on the Isle of Wight in terms of short breaks for your disabled child.

All information will be collated and passed to the Steering Group to help to secure and commission services for next year.

If you would like to be kept regularly informed by newsletter, please send your details to the address on the enclosed questionnaire. A stamped envelope is provided for your use.

M Henderson

The Children's Disability Register

The Local Authority is about to relaunch its Disabled Children's Register. This will make it easier for services to provide information to parents and carers of disabled children. It will also help the council and other agencies, such as health, to improve their planning of services for

disabled children and young people.

The register is unconnected with social care and parents can choose whether or not to sign up to this. But in order to provide the opportunities and choices that young people and

their families are entitled to, the various agencies will need the kind of data about young people's needs that signing up to the Register will provide.

The publicity launch for the Register is expected to take place in December.

Aiming High Activities

This programme is primarily aimed at those disabled children who have severe and complex needs which require lifelong support from statutory services. The Government have recognised that these children have not benefited from services as they should have.

Funding bids for next year's activities can be sent in now. You can obtain a form by emailing moira.henderson@iow.gov.uk. However, for those providers wishing to secure larger amounts of funding, i.e. over £10,000, a procurement process will need to be followed. Details of this process and how

to proceed will appear in publicity in late December.

Activities on offer should include a broad range of diverse short breaks, which either support disabled children to access universal provision or which provide a positive and enjoyable experience for the young person in specialist settings.



Parent Voice

The Parents' Voice steering group are pleased to announce that we have been successful in our application for further funding from the second phase of 'Aiming High for Disabled Children'. We hope this will enable us to expand and help develop new links with even more parents, carers and service providers.

As you may know we are developing a register of parents and carers who would like to be asked for their views when consultations are taking place. Parents' Voice hopes to be able to help by raising issues or difficulties with service providers (including Education, Health and Social Care), which may affect many of our families as a result of looking after a child or young person with SEN or Disability. Together we can approach the service providers and help to highlight problems we may have, and help to find a way to resolve them, if possible.

The Parents' Voice steering group is already

successfully contributing to meetings with our local authority, and now has parent representatives attending other steering groups, including the I.W. 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' steering group. This group decides how money is spent locally on improving short break services for children with complex needs and disabilities. Members from the Parents' Voice group have also been involved in updating the Statutory Assessment letters, in an effort to make them more parent-friendly.

We have recently attended a seminar in London to help us plan our next steps. We hope to be able to involve many more parents in our activities, and are currently making plans for the New Year.

We are also developing a website, but **we would like your ideas** on what you would like to see included. We hope that in time it can become a useful source of information for local families of children and young people with SEN and dis-

abilities.

If you would like to join our parent/carer register, or feel that you would like to take a more active part in the future of Parents' Voice then please let us know.

Our parent volunteers can be contacted at parentsvoice@hotmail.co.uk or Parents' Voice, 11 Orchard Street, Newport, I.W. PO30 1JZ. Alternatively you can telephone Parent Partnership on 01983 825548 who will put you in touch with one of our parent volunteers.

You can also visit www.ivpp.co.uk/parentsvoice.aspx to download a leaflet which includes a short registration form for our parent/carer network. (These leaflets are also available through all the above contacts.)

We look forward to hearing from you.

Helen C. & Lorraine (members of the Parents' Voice steering group).



"A short break should: support access to universal provision, offer overnight breaks, and/or significant breaks during the day."



Success of summer holiday schemes

Despite late publicity owing to the constraints of the Aiming High process, the two summer schemes which ran in summer were very successful. It is planned that further holiday play schemes for children up to 16 are run next year.

The YMCA Fairthorne Group ran a three week

pilot offering 12 places for children with disabilities and complex needs in August 2009. The play scheme offered a variety of experiences through play 'zones' and the outdoors and was staffed on the assumption that 70% of the children would require 1:1 support.

The play scheme was

aimed at children who cannot access mainstream school holiday provision and the pilot successfully proved the demand for more schemes of this nature.

Funky Friends ran a two week action-packed summer holiday club. The young people were involved in directing the refurbishment of a youth

Success of summer holiday schemes

centre, whilst taking part in many trips and activities. This holiday scheme received extensive press coverage because the young people went boat racing on adapted boats during Cowes Week.

Activities ranged from crafts and games, cooking, to canvas painting and mosaic making to outdoor bowls, sailing and a treasure hunt. Various trips were made to Robin Hill and the Spinnaker Tower and all



the activities were recorded by the young people's photography.

Landez Wheelchairs

Two of these all-terrain specialist wheelchairs have been ordered through the Aiming High programme. They are capable of riding over sand, gravel and snow with soft pneumatic tyres enabling children and young people to access farm visits and areas of the Isle that they formerly couldn't.

It is intended that one of these chairs is kept at

the Dinosaur Isle Museum in Sandown; the other at St. George's School. To hire either of these wheelchairs, please contact either Peter Pusey at Dinosaur Isle on 404344 or Roger Unsworth, Deputy Head on 524834.



Parent Consultation—January Conference

I am delighted to announce a planned fourth workshop for Aiming High, primarily for parents of disabled children or those with special needs. This will take place at Landguard Manor in Shanklin from 10.00 – 14.00.

Parental views are key to the planning and commissioning process. It is

vital that parents have their say about what matters to them and their families, so that future planning and strategy development takes this into account.

It is also hoped to have a representation of the Council's Cabinet members at the conference to answer questions raised during the morning.

January 20th 2010,

Landguard
Manor,

Shanklin,

Isle of Wight

10.00—14.00



"I want to thank you for organising such a wonderful play scheme this summer. My child absolutely loved it and to be able to leave my daughter knowing she was going to be so well cared for by your superb team and she was having fun too, made hers and my summer. I truly hope this will be a permanent play scheme."

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Workforce Development

We have begun work on the development of a trained and specialised workforce who can offer children and young people access to short breaks. Any training offered will feed into the Island's Workforce Strategy.

Finally, if you have any questions or ideas about the Aiming High programme that you would like to explore in more detail, please contact Moira Henderson, Short Term Breaks Implementation Officer on 533523 or maira.henderson@iow.gov.uk.

Young People's Forum

With the help of the Children's Trust, a new sign/symbol website called 'Askability' offering access to information will be launched on the Island in January 2010. This service will provide local news and information in a readily-accessible format for children and young people with specific needs.

It is intended to set up a disabled young people's forum, from both mainstream and special schools, who - with the help of a disabled people's champion - will seek the views of young people about the social and leisure services they can access on the Island. It is vital that young people have a say in the services that their local authority can offer them.

