

Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service

Summer 2022



Welcome to the third and summer edition of our newsletter



As we approach the summer holidays, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of our young people, their families, schools and colleges and the professionals we work with in the Local Authorities and Health for their partnership with us as we aim to provide support which will lead to 'Good Outcomes and a Positive Future' for all of our children and young people.

It has been a challenging year for staff navigating the pandemic and we hope that next year will be easier. In the Autumn term we will be running a daytime and evening short event online on Wednesday 14th September at 10am and at 7pm so that you can find out more about the Service and how we determine the different programmes (Teaching or Advisory) your child may be on. It will also be an opportunity to ask any questions. We have also sent you and our schools and colleges a short questionnaire to fill in about the Service. Please do take the time to fill it

in as your feedback is important to us and helps us make improvements and also celebrate the things we do well.

Finally thanks to Leanne Cox, Teacher of the Deaf who has edited our new newsletter this year. I hope you are enjoying hearing from the young people with sensory impairment and are inspired by the activities they are involved in as well as finding out about some of the events we as a Service have organised or delivered with our voluntary agency partners. Remember BSCS closes from the 4.30pm on the 20th July to the 1st September. Have a wonderful summer holiday and let's hope the sun shines.

Best wishes

Jane Peters

Head of Service

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Transition Picnic, VI

The VI team hosted an event at Thames Valley Adventure Playground for all our pupils with a vision impairment who are transitioning to secondary school in September. It was an excellent opportunity to meet other pupils in the same situation and explore any hopes, fears and concerns about the transition. The pupils had fun exploring the adventure play area, riding an assortment of bikes, having a picnic together, and creating Wishing Jars.





MSI (Multi Sensory Impairment)



Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service provide specialist care and support to children with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions, and their families, across Berkshire and into surrounding counties.

For more information go to their website on: <https://alexanderdevine.org/>

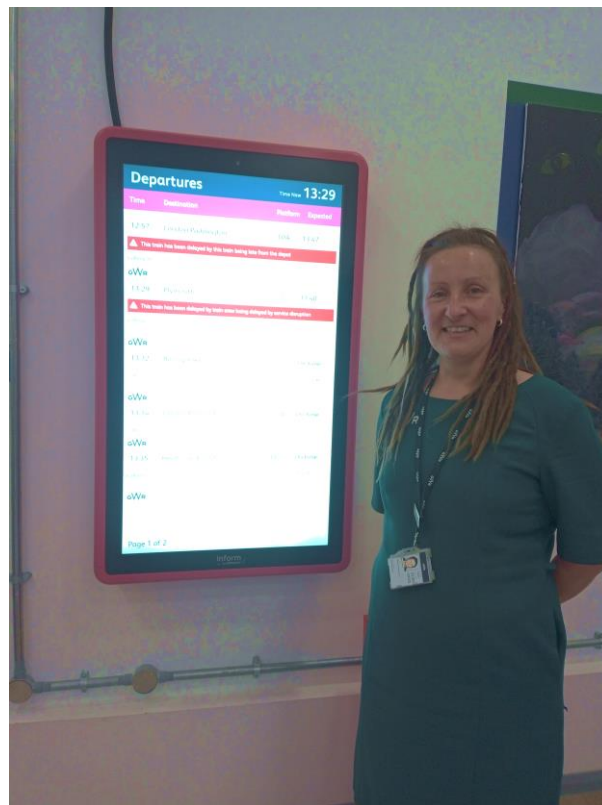


Sebastians Action Trust have a wide range of Services on offer to families of children with life limiting / threatening conditions including places and spaces where families can access time together, away from the stresses of hospital and home at The Bluebells, Hampshire and The Woodlands, Berkshire

Go to their website at www.sebastiansactiontrust.org

Try a Train, VI activity

Julie Calce- Bunker and Lizzie attended the second Try a Train activity over half term. The activity was jointly run by Carol Barnfather from Berkshire Vision, Maddy Mills, Education Officer (North Downs Line), and Dan Pearce from Great Western Railway. Dan and Maddy talked about seeking assistance and staying safe. We had the opportunity to explore the Assisted Travel Lounge and the new electronic display boards at Reading Station, and travel on a train. It was a really successful day and the young people learnt a lot about train travel.





Berkshire Deaf Children's Society



Do you have a child or care for a child who is deaf? Would you like to talk to others in a similar situation to ask for advice or support? Or maybe you'd like to meet up with other parents of deaf children just to compare stories of losing hearing aids down the back of the sofa or somewhere at school?! Would your child like to meet others who wear hearing aids or cochlear implants? Berkshire Deaf Children's Society is here for you!

BDCS was formed in July 2018 following the merger of South East Berkshire Deaf Children's Society and Reading Deaf Children's Society. We are a registered charity run by a small group of parents of deaf children and our main aim is to give help and support to deaf infants, children and their families, alongside offering great days out and organised activities. We are affiliated to the NDCS (National Deaf Children's Society) which allows us to make use of their resources, information and experience.

We are a small but very welcoming group, and we have a full diary of great outings and events throughout the year for all ages of children, many of which are heavily subsidised by BDCS. Some of our events this year have included a very successful trip to High Scores Gaming Arcade in Newbury, a brilliant bounce at Red Kangaroo in Reading, a lovely Easter party at Thames Valley Adventure Playground in Maidenhead and a rather soggy but fun day out at Beale Park! Events coming up later in the year include a trip to Legoland, Halloween fun at TVAP and of course our annual trip to the Christmas pantomime at the Hexagon.

Our events programme is for members of BDCS only but membership is free and anyone can be part of the group, regardless of the level or type of their child's deafness and methods of communication. Most of our members live within Berkshire but we welcome those who live over the Berkshire border as well. To join, please follow the link on our website: <https://berkshiredcs.org/about/how-to-join/>

We look forward to welcoming you and your family to BDCS!

RNIB/Lego - Houses of Parliament Event - April 2022

We were delighted to be invited to attend an event at the Houses of Parliament in collaboration with the RNIB/Lego to meet with politicians. The event was hosted by Stephen McPartland, MP for Stevenage and aimed to promote the use of Braille Lego and the importance of the crucial role that the Qualified Teacher of Vision Impairment (QTVI) plays in supporting all our young people with a vision impairment (VI) in their educational settings. Four of our students attended the event with us; Billy Nyguyen, Grace Haines, Khalid and Arwa Fahim, who had the opportunity to travel into London on the train and use the underground to reach Parliament, and to also meet and talk with the politicians. Each of the children were able to explain about their experience of learning and using Braille and answered lots of questions posed by politicians. They were absolute superstars and we were immensely proud of them. Well done and thank you! It was an excellent opportunity for SCS staff to talk directly to politicians (approximately 51 in total!) not only about the importance of braille as a medium for literacy and access to education, but also the challenges faced by QTVIs, sensory services, schools and the issues surrounding funding to ensure that all VI children receive equitable access to their education.



Family Workshops, VI

Family Workshops (VI) We have been running a series of three family workshops for parents whose child has had a recent diagnosis of vision impairment and been referred to our service. Originally developed with past parents, the workshops aim to support parents and provide information which may not be readily available. The focus for the sessions have been: Starting Out/The Beginning, On the Right Track - developing healthy attitudes, and Moving On. Guest speakers have included a parent of a past pupil, one of our Habilitation Specialists and the Head of BSCS. Parents have had the opportunity to share their experiences, to meet and talk with other parents, as well as receive some practical advice and be given lots of 'Top Tips'.