

Working Together

Issue 18 Winter 2008

The newsletter of the Warwickshire Parent Partnership Service

NEWS/DEVELOPMENTS

Children's centres

Two new children's centres being developed in Kenilworth are due to open in March 2008. One is at Kenilworth Nursery School on Bertie Road; the other is at St John's Primary School and Nursery on Mortimer Road.

Kenilworth Nursery School has now changed its name to Kenilworth Children's Centre and Nursery School, following designation from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), as a result of meeting the necessary criteria. A new build will start in January to increase the capacity of services already being offered. The whole of the site – both old and new – will be part of the children's centre, which will comprise a nursery school, a nurture nursery and a family partnership centre.

Building work has begun at St John's and is due to be completed by March 2008, when it hopes to begin offering a wider range of services. Its reach (that is, the area it covers) includes Leek Wootton, Haseley, Honiley, Wroxall, Beausale, Lowsonford, Rowington, Lapworth and Baddesley Clinton, as well as Kenilworth. It is looking to develop outreach activities around the Lapworth area using local venues.

At both children's centres parents and carers of children under 5 will be able to gain access to high-quality support and fun activities for their children. The services offered at the children's centres will include:

- high-quality early years provision
- parenting education and family support services

- drop-in sessions for parents, carers and children – for example, midwife, health visitor and breast-feeding support
- support for childminders
- education, training and employment services, with links to Job Centre Plus
- information and support for parents and carers to access services
- information on childcare and early years provision
- information and advice to parents.

This is a very exciting time of development in Kenilworth, and both centres are being developed with the involvement of the parents, children, carers and childminders, as well as local providers of services already in existence.

There are two project workers, who have been consulting with the local community to develop these services. They are happy to be contacted with any questions:

Julie Joannides:
Kenilworth Children's Centre and Nursery School,
Bertie Road,
Kenilworth CV8 1JP

Tel: 01926 853394
Mobile: 07929 580428

Gill Heather:
St John's Primary School and Nursery,
Mortimer Road,
Kenilworth CV8 1FS

Tel: 01926 854450
Mobile: 07825 044610

Diary dates

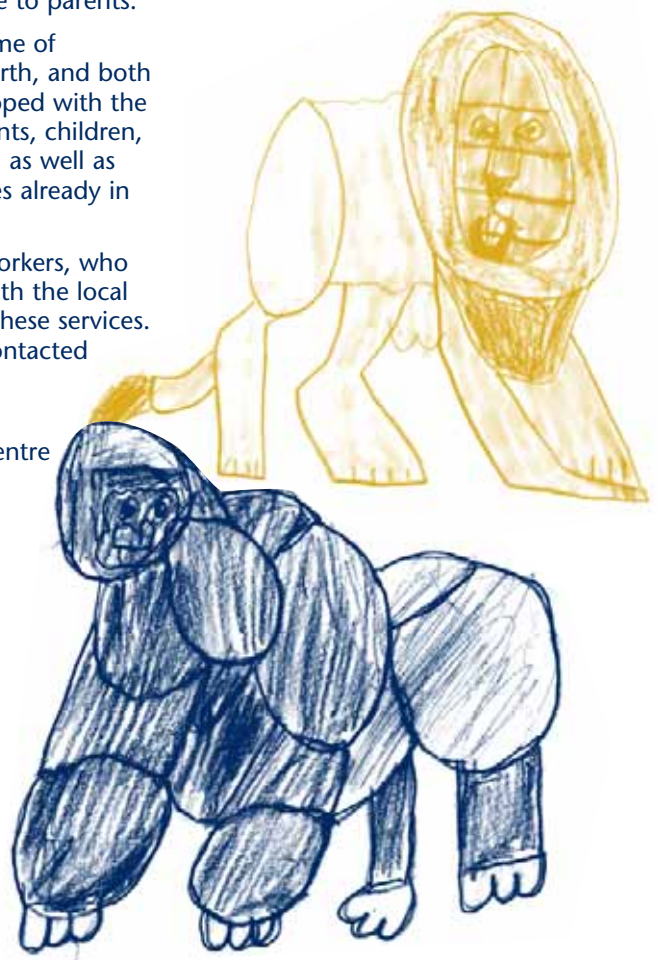
Drop-in sessions at Manor Park School, Nuneaton

Are you confused, or in need of some guidance, about your child's special educational needs?

If so, come along to our drop-in sessions at Manor Park School on:

- Tuesday, 26 February 2008: 10am to 12pm
- Tuesday, 27 May 2008: 10am to 12pm

For more information, please contact Susan Higgins on 024 7658 8464.



Leamington Dolphins

A swimming club for children with disabilities and their siblings

When? Monday evening, term-time only (6pm to 7pm)

Where? Newbold Comyn Leisure Centre

Cost? Tuition is free (pool admission prices apply)

For more information, phone 01926 430025.

Dyslexia drop-ins (1.30pm to 4.00 pm)

Race Leys Junior School, Bedworth: 7 March; 4 April; 2 May; 6 June (first Friday of every month)

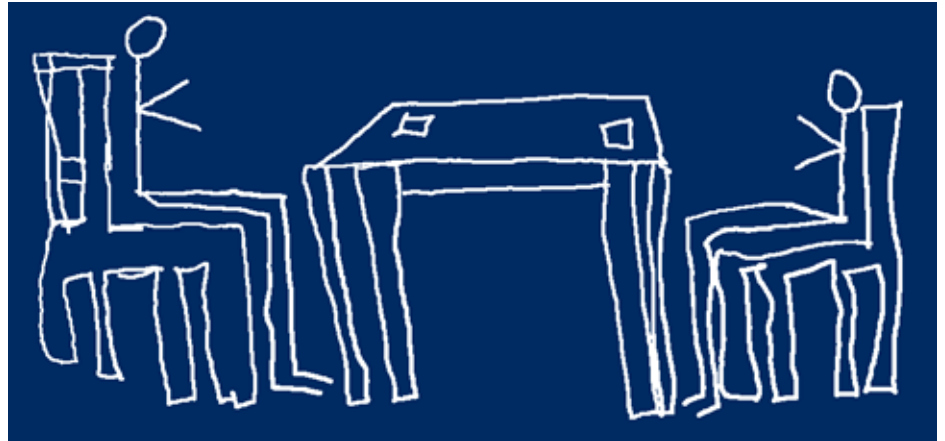
Water Orton Primary School: 4 February; 10 March; 19 May

Wootton Waven Primary School: 22 February

Boughton Leigh Junior School, Rugby: 25 February

Challenging behaviour

A free course about challenging behaviour is being run for parents in Banbury. This will introduce ways of helping your child calm down, preventing further outbursts,



understanding the process behind challenging behaviour, and many other interesting and useful strategies. The course is taking place at the East Street Centre, Banbury, on 12 and 19 March and 14 May 2008 (7pm to 9pm).

Please contact Lesley Bourne on 01295 266763 for more details.

Autism West Midlands courses 2008

Back to basics – developing self-help skills for people with autism

A workshop-style conference run by parents and staff who work and live with people with autism

When? 4 February, 9.30am to 4pm

Where? Deaf Cultural Centre, Ladywood Road, Birmingham

Price? Parents and families with ASD: £25; Professionals: £55

Developing a greater awareness and understanding of ASD within the criminal justice system (regional seminar)

When? 10 March, 9.30am to 4pm

Where? The Rugby Lions Clubhouse, Webb Ellis Road, Rugby

Price? Parents/unwaged: £25; People with an ASD: £25; Professionals: £55

Please phone 0121 450 7576 for more details.

Helping with homework

Why do homework problems occur?

There are many reasons why children experience problems with homework – for example, leaving things to the last minute, not understanding what is required, or wanting to do something else instead.

Tips for helping your child with their homework

- Let your child relax after school. Offer them an afternoon snack and let them tell you about their day.
- Ask your child about their homework – for example, what equipment they need or when it needs to be completed.
- Set a time for doing homework that fits into your family schedule. You may need to fit this around your work and your family's other commitments, such as sport, clubs and family visits. It is important to

get into a good study routine and homework should have a high priority. A good time for doing homework is immediately after your child has had time to relax but before they are allowed to play or watch television.

- Arrange a place to do homework. Children can do homework in the family living area, but it is best to set up a good study environment – clear a space at a table, make sure the room is well lit and reduce distractions.



- Help your child to get started – be prepared to sit at the table with your child.
- Praise your child for their effort – this can motivate them to persist with the homework.
- Help your child to solve problems for themselves, rather than giving the answer straight away.
- Offer help if asked, but don't do their work for them.
- Show an interest in your child's work – children need encouragement for attempting the task, rather than criticism for making mistakes.
- Encourage a positive attitude towards homework – praise and reward your child's efforts when they have finished it.

What are special educational needs?

Children with special educational needs (SEN) have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children of their age. A child with a learning difficulty or disability usually needs extra, or different, help from that given to other children of the same age.

What extra support is available?

Differentiation – children make progress at different rates and not all children learn in the same way. Some children understand and remember well if they read something; others need to be more actively involved. Teachers can use a range of strategies to enable your child to make progress. This is known as differentiation.

School Action – your child will receive support that is additional to, and different from, the help that the school

usually provides. Your child's teacher will ask for advice from the school's special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo).

School Action Plus – the school will bring in external specialists who can provide additional advice and support and carry out assessments.

IEP (individual education plan) – this is a written plan that provides details of support put in place for your child. The IEP will include agreed targets to help check on your child's progress.

Statement of special educational needs – most children's needs will be met by the extra help available through their school. However, for a very small number of children, the support provided through School Action Plus may not be enough for them to make adequate progress. The school should then consider asking the

local authority (LA) to carry out a statutory assessment. If the assessment shows that your child needs more help than can be provided at School Action Plus, the LA may issue a statement of SEN. The statement is a document that gives details of the support your child must be given.

If you would like more information, please contact the PPS team on 024 7658 8464.

Times get better with age

'I learned that I like my teacher because she cries when we sing "Silent Night".' (Age 5)

'I learned that our dog doesn't want to eat my broccoli either.' (Age 7)

'I learned that when I wave to people in the country, they stop what they are doing and wave back.' (Age 9)

'I learned that just when I get my room the way I like it, mom makes me clean it up again.' (Age 12)

'I learned that if you want to cheer yourself up, you should try cheering someone else up.' (Age 14)

'I learned that, although it's hard to admit it, I'm secretly glad my parents are strict with me.' (Age 15)



Christmas card competition

We would like to say a big thank you to all the children who took part in our Christmas card competition. There were some very good designs, which made it a difficult decision. But, after a lot of discussion, we chose Ross Jordan Chatterton (age 11) from River House School, Patrick (age 12) from Brooke School, and Jack Cross (age 7) from Leamington Spa. All three winning designs have been sent out as our Service's Christmas cards.

They were all fantastic designs, so well done to everyone. We have put together a collage of all the other Christmas card entries for you to see.

Question and answer

Question: *I have been told by the school that my child has a group IEP (individual education plan). What does this mean?*

Answer: A group IEP is sometimes used for children who may have similar learning difficulties and may have targets in common. These children may go to withdrawal groups together to work on specific areas. Each child will be assessed individually to see if they are meeting their targets and appropriate action will be taken.

Contact us

If you have something that you would like to share with other readers, something you have found helpful or something that has made you laugh, please send it to us.

Useful websites

National Association of Specialist Colleges – www.natspec.org.uk

Natspec is an association of specialist independent colleges providing further education and training for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Special Direct.com – www.specialdirect.com

This website has books, games, gadgets, toys and other resources for ADHD, dyslexia, handwriting, dyspraxia and much more.

Autism, Aspergers and pervasive developmental disorders (PDD) – www.autism-help.org

This website provides information and resources on autism, Aspergers Syndrome, early intervention and communication, as well as on behavioural issues and strategies, challenging behaviours, repetitive behaviours and learning life skills.

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation – www.thecbf.org.uk

This website offers access to factsheets and support for families and professionals through a family support network and a scheme linking professionals.

Useful resources

Chatter matters DVD

This explains how you can give children a great start in life by helping them grow into good communicators. *Chatter matters* DVD contains a fascinating programme presented by Dr Tanya Byron (House of Tiny Tearaways, Little Angels) and offers dozens of brilliant ideas. There is also a series of colourful mini-posters for your wall or fridge, which are packed with helpful tips.

Families may order a free copy and professionals and organisations may order multiple copies. To find out more, visit www.ican.org.uk or phone 0845 225 4073.

Useful organisations

Daytrippers

This charity aims to help children suffering from disabilities and chronic or life limiting illnesses by offering financial support for daytrips. They are actively looking to make new contacts, especially with small support groups that receive little or no funding.

Although the charity does not actually organise the trips, they provide funding and suggestions for trips for groups with a minimum of ten children.

For further information, visit www.daytrippers.org.uk, where you can download an application form. Alternatively, phone 020 7758 0030 or email enquiries@daytrippers.org.uk.

Family Information Service (FIS)

- Need childcare?
- Looking for family support?
- Want to know about youth activities?
- Unsure about your rights as a working parent?
- Don't know where to start?

This service, formerly the Children's Information Service (CIS), is a free and impartial information and signposting service for Warwickshire families, children and young people (aged 0 to 20), schools and practitioners.

For more information, please contact the FIS on 0845 09044.

Scope

'I would like to introduce myself to you all. My name is Jackie O'Kelly and I am the Scope Regional Response Worker for Birmingham and the Black Country, Coventry and Warwickshire.

'Scope is the national charity for people with cerebral palsy and associated disabilities. Scope Response is a free and confidential information, advice and support service for all disabled people and their families. It is the first contact point for all enquiries about Scope, cerebral palsy and disability issues.

'As a regional response worker, I work specifically with children and adults with cerebral palsy, and families and carers who may need a higher level of advice and support, to identify their needs and to help ensure that those needs are met.'

If you need advice or support, call 0808 800 3333, email response@scope.org.uk or write to Scope Response, PO Box 833, Milton Keynes MK12 5NY.

Factsheets from Contact a Family

A guide to claiming Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for children

This guide is useful, whether you are claiming DLA for your child for the first time or whether you are already getting DLA and want to check if they are entitled to a higher rate. The factsheet also gives information about how to challenge a decision if you are unhappy with an outcome.

Individual copies can be ordered free of charge from the West Midlands office on 0121 415 4624 or downloaded from www.cafamily.org.uk/factsheets.

Disabled Children's Services in England and Wales

This looks at social services assessments and the rights of families to get the support they need.

Individual copies can be ordered free of charge from the West Midlands office on 0121 415 4624.

Preparing for adult life and transition

This factsheet explains the transition plan and aims to identify the main areas that parents and young people need to think about in planning for the future.

Individual copies can be ordered free of charge from the West Midlands office on 0121 415 4624.



The members of the Parent Partnership team are:

- **Sue Robus:** Co-ordinator
- **Susan Higgins:** Support Assistant
- **Sally Park:** Caseworker
- **Janet Gatens:** Assistant Co-ordinator
- **Dawn Lamont:** Caseworker

They can be contacted at ContinYou:

Tel: 024 7658 8464 Fax: 024 7658 8441

Email: pps@continyou.org.uk

Website: www.continyou.org.uk/pps

continyou
Building learning communities

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Unit C1, Grovelands Court, Grovelands Estate, Longford Road, Exhall, Coventry CV7 9NE

Tel: 024 7658 8440 Fax: 024 7658 8441

Email: info.coventry@continyou.org.uk

Website: www.continyou.org.uk

ContinYou is registered charity number 1097596.

If you know of any other useful websites or organisations, please send us the details.