



Issue 23

May 2011

SCAMPPS NEWS

The Charity that is...Striving for Children's Additional
Medical, Physical and Personal Support in Surrey

Registered Charity No. 1112112

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As I'm sure you all know (and care), it's my favourite season again. My personal belief is that spring is better than summer, in fact I am a Pro-Spring campaigner. Those of you who are golf widows (or any other summer sport widow) will understand my reluctance in supporting the big S. The first sign of double-figure temperatures and our other halves feel the need to don appropriate sports equipment and slink out the door for a couple of hours 'me' time. Let's face it, summer is one big disappointment. We haven't witnessed a 'Barbeque Summer' in years and although we look forward to the school holidays, by week 2 most of us are screaming "new term, new term!"

But spring is a whole other ball game. I'm not the world's biggest tree-hugger but I just love all the newness that spring unfurls. My children and I recently 'borrowed' a small supply of frogspawn from our local pond (don't worry environmentalists, we will return them!) and they just delighted in watching the transformation that took place over just a few days. It's better than any Wii. And this year we had a Royal Wedding to look forward to which is just the icing on the ten-tiered cake! You can only imagine my excitement when I opened an invitation with a royal crest, and with trembling fingers read through the details of the event which was to take place 'in the field behind the Fox & Hounds'. Not quite the palace perhaps but I still got to wear my tiara and boost the annual profits of the alcohol industry...anyone for Pimm's?



Dates for your Diary 2011

Mum's Night Out/Pamper Night - 6th May

Dad's Night Out - 20th May

Family Fun Day - 5th June

Finance Committee meets - 13th June

Quiz Night - 8th July to be confirmed

For more details, go to www.scampps.org.uk

Fundraising News

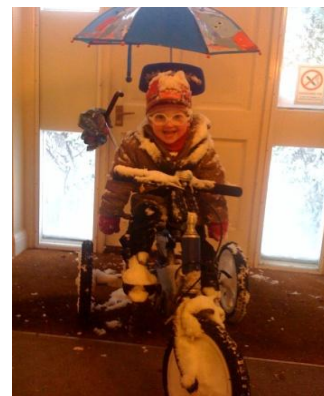


St. Lawrence C of E Junior School who have nominated Scampps as their 'charity for the year' held another event to raise money for Scampps! Each year group were given a £10.00 budget, to design and produce gifts that they were able to sell, making a profit for our charity using their maths

skills! St. Lawrence's children were very excited and extremely imaginative in their efforts raising over **£200!** Could your child's school help Scampps too?



We are loving this picture of 3 year old Ewan Laws on his new trike! Thanks to SCAMPPS, Ewan, who has Cerebral Palsy, can now get about with ease. And remember, this is just the kind of item you can submit a bid for too. Our Finance Committee meets on 13th June so get your bid in early. Forms are available to download from our website at www.scampps.org.uk.



“Thank you SCAMPPS for funding a PAL chair and table for Olivia. It means she has somewhere to sit upstairs in the bedroom she shares with her sister Evie. They can play together without having an adult there all the time to support Olivia’s sitting. They both love the colour, which is very pink! Another bonus is that the chair and tray fit into the car boot easily. If we go away for a weekend we can take it with us and Olivia can have some independent time, whereas she would usually spend the whole time being held in someone’s arms. Thank you also for the Dycem mats and grab bars – they are also really useful. We would be lost without Dycem in our house! These items have made such a big difference and we are extremely grateful to you.” Anmarie and Max Sherwin

- A huge thank you to **Rachel Rose** who ran the London Marathon on Sunday 17th April and raised a staggering **£1300** all in aid of SCAMPPS.
- Happy Birthday to SCAMPPS patron **Terry Sims** who will be celebrating his 40th with a party on Saturday 7th May. Terry has opted out of birthday presents and has asked his friends to make a donation to SCAMPPS instead. Find out in the next edition of the newsletter just how generous his friends are!

Snippets



We are delighted to announce the launch of the BBC Something Special magazine! Created especially for children with learning disabilities, it is based on the successful BBC programme starring Justin Fletcher and his much loved alter-ego Mr Tumble. The magazine creators consulted with professionals from SEN schools, The Makaton Charity and The National Autistic Society.

Interested in joining SCAMPPS F.C? At a recent Dad's night out there was much discussion about organizing a football match for Scampps Dad's to play a local team. For an 11 a side team we probably need about 20 people to cover absentees and subs, so if you are interested then please email us at: newsletter@scampps.org.uk



Thames Valley Adventure Playground



If you haven't yet visited this fantastic sites then what are you waiting for? Located just off the A4 at Taplow, Maidenhead, TVAP provides a chance for children and adults with all types of special needs to have fun in a safe and stimulating environment. Open Tuesday to Saturday only to families or groups with special needs and has a wide range of activities on

offer including crazy golf, a sensory garden, adapted swings and roundabout, a sky walkway suitable for wheelchairs and the newest addition: a zip wire with a specially adapted seat to enable even the most severely disabled child to enjoy the thrill of zooming down the 40 metre wire at full tilt!

Reservations are essential as the park is so popular, especially in school holidays so call ahead on **01628-628599** or visit their website at www.tvap.co.uk



Events - Which Information/Workshop Events Would You Find Useful?

This article explains the purpose of the questionnaire included with the newsletter.

SCAMPPS aim to organise social events which give families the opportunity to have some fun and meet other members. Regular events include Mum's and Dad's Nights Out, the annual Summer Family Fun Day and swimming parties. Our first Family Bowling Event in October last year was very well attended.

We have included a questionnaire with this month's newsletter. The purpose of this is to find out which information or workshop style events our members would find useful. These may involve guest speakers and presentations on relevant subjects.

This questionnaire is for all members as, whilst an event may be organised with family members in mind, our professional and associate members may have useful comments to make and may be able to contribute to an information based event.

This questionnaire is concerned with information events but we always welcome any feedback concerned with any of our events. If you have any comments, or ideas for events, including social events, please send them to info@scampps.org.uk

We would be grateful if all SCAMPPS members could spare a few minutes to complete the questionnaire as all feedback will be useful for future planning. Thank You.

Pre-school Childcare

Coping with a toddler or baby presents enough challenges in itself. Perhaps when you were expecting your child you had it all figured out: give birth, find childcare and then go back to work after 3, 6 or 12 months – simple. Or maybe, like me, you are a stay-at-home parent and your toddler is approaching the age where he/she needs some interaction with other children, and you just need a few hours rest! Having a child with SEN makes the ‘finding childcare’ part of that equation just a bit more problematic.

When I started researching this area I figured I would just do a bit of online surfing which would present me with a wealth of information – how hard could it be? Extremely hard, actually. Starting with the Surrey County Council website and clicking on ‘Children with Special Educational Needs’, I found myself directed from one page to the next, to the next and so on. The end message seems to be that you have to do the legwork yourself. Childcare providers have a legal duty to offer extra support to meet the needs of a child with a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, but that doesn’t mean that they necessarily *can*. At the end of this item I’ve listed some sites which will direct you to details of nurseries, day-care facilities, childminders and nannies but you will have to do your own homework in finding childcare that is right for you and your child.

And so I decided the best people to ask were some of the parents here at Scampys, who were more than happy to share their experiences.

Rachel & Conor’s Story:

I was terrified at the prospect of choosing childcare for my eldest child who has Down Syndrome. I remember being fixated on wanting somebody who had had experience with special needs. My first action was to chat to others I knew with children and get recommendations. Friends gave me good suggestions about the sort of questions to ask e.g. where will they sleep? What food do you provide? What is your routine each day? What other groups do you attend (toddler groups/soft play etc)? Do you have a garden to use? etc. I went to meet a childminder who looked after a colleague’s child, just to chat through general childminding issues. She had been so attentive to him when I visited and open minded regarding his needs, that I was filled with confidence. Her lack of specific experience was no longer important to me – after all I hadn’t had any previous experience before my son!

My gut feeling paid off and she always went over and above my expectations. She had Portage visit her every other week parallel to me and helped him reach his goals. She also came to learn to makaton with me and even spent a morning at JOG to see the sorts of activities he joined in with there.

My experience was similar when choosing a pre-school setting. I thought I knew where I wanted him to go as it was on site of the primary school I had in mind. For me this was important for him to be part of a community and in a sense grow up with these children. When I spoke to the nursery manager about my son, she was warm, welcoming and not at all phased by his syndrome. They had not had any previous children with Down Syndrome, but were open minded and keen to train themselves to cater for his needs. He had two successful years there and it was a very emotional final day when he left his nursery.

Suzanne & James' story:

My son has Down's Syndrome, along with extra complications and extremely low muscle tone meant that he did not walk unaided until he was nearly 4 years of age. This was one of the factors I had to consider when I was looking at a mainstream educational placement.

James did attend Woodlands school from the age of 2 ½ years old, which benefited him hugely and continued to make fantastic progress and stayed there for 2 years. During that time he did a split placement with Sparrows Pre-School in Stoneleigh.

I chose Sparrows Pre-School for several reasons, mainly because it was in the same grounds as the school I wanted him to attend – Meadow Primary. But the staff at Sparrows Pre-School could not have been more accommodating even if they tried. James had a 1 to 1 support, the staff learnt Makaton so that they could communicate and understand James, the facilities are all on one level so that he could access all the activities inside and out of the premises, PECS symbols were used too and still remain in use now. The children were aware of James' difficulties but this did not hinder him in any way and has made lots of lovely friends. The staff were so understanding of my concerns and went way beyond their duties to assist James in any way they could. They also welcomed visits from James' therapists so that they could help him whilst in their care.

James has now progressed to Meadow Primary School, Stoneleigh. Before James even started at the school, they were considering putting in the necessary equipment, such as a ramp for James to use his walking frame (although this was not needed as James was then walking unaided). Also handrails were put in for the very few steps that James had to climb to get into the school. James is now in Year 2 at the school and continues to have a fantastic support network of a 1 to 1 the whole time he is at school. All the staff and children know James and are so supportive of him and his needs. The school also paid for 4 of James' key staff to attend a Sign a Long course before James started and all staff have had a one day course this school year on one of their Inset days and the children have all seemed to benefit from it too.

Our tips:

- Check out the **Surrey Family Information Service** website at: www.surrey.fis@surreycc.gov.uk or call them on **0300 200 1004**. It lists all OFSTED registered pre-schools, nurseries, childminders and nannies in the Surrey area. You can also access each individual OFSTED report to see what is important to you. They now offer a brokerage service to help you find suitable childcare.
- Contact **Partnership with Parents** on 01737-737300 or visit their website at www.pwpsurrey.org. Providing information, advice and support for parents of children with Special Educational Needs, they can also help prepare you for the statementing process.
- www.childcare.co.uk also has a comprehensive search facility for helping you check out your local options.
- Always do your own checks and follow up references.
- Insist on meeting with a childminder in their own home and ask for a copy of their OFSTED report or look it up on the OFSTED website – you will need their Unique Reference Number to access individual reports. Visit your chosen childcare facility & ask for a settling-in session, sometimes a parent's instinct is the best guide. Talk to them about your child's individual needs & how they will be able to accommodate them.
- Talk to friends for recommendations but remember that the criteria that are important to you may differ for other people. Make a list of your top ten most important factors. My fantastic childminder was marked down in her OFSTED inspection for 'not providing enough open access to outside areas.' Frankly, I didn't want my 15 month old wandering freely into her garden anyway! She provided a safe, secure and fun environment and that ticked all the boxes for me.

Reach for the Stars – Spring Term 2011

We had three successful and informative meetings last term. We all welcome the opportunity to get together regularly to have a chat and catch up as well as share information and learn something new each time. Please do join us for our next meeting on **Monday 16th May 2011** if you are able.

In January we shared our ideas for local places to visit with the family – particularly those with good access for wheelchairs. We came up with the following list of suggestions:

Horton Country Park

www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk

www.friendsofhorton.co.uk

Frensham Ponds, Farnham

www.farnhamcommunity.org.uk

Priory Park, Reigate

www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk

Brooklands Museum and Mercedes-Benz World at Brooklands

www.mercedes-benzbrooklands.co.uk

The Look Out, Bracknell

www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Tilgate Park

www.theforestbandb.co.uk

Chessington World of Adventures

www.chessington.com

Woodlands Garden at Bushy Park

www.royalparks.org.uk

Alice Holt Forest

www.aliceholt.org

(Please see websites for more information.)

- We also talked about the free home insulation (loft and cavity walls) for those in receipt of high and medium rate DLA. Check out the Mole Valley website for more information.
- One family has stayed at the Sands Resort Hotel and Spa, Porth, Cornwall (www.sandsresort.co.uk) and said this was very accommodating for families and particularly for children with special needs.
- In February we welcomed **Emma Shires** who is the **back care advisor** based at Epsom Carer's Support. She covers Epsom, Ewell, Banstead, Mole Valley and East Elmbridge and will come out to your house to do a risk assessment and suggest techniques for lifting, moving and handling children to minimise injury to your back. Just a few changes in your daily routine can help enormously. **Contact Emma on 01372 729947 or email backcare.epsom@btconnect.com**
- **Jane Brooks** from **Mole Valley Carer's Support** also came to the meeting. She makes filling in the dreaded DLA and Carer's Allowance forms so much easier. She is available to come to your house, ask questions and make notes. She then goes away to type out all the responses to the questions and attaches them in the relevant places. Once you have looked through the form you just need to sign and post it. It makes the whole process much less stressful and much quicker as you are not agonising over answers – Jane knows just what to write! Carer's Support produce regular newsletters and they will do their best to help you to find the support, help or advice you need in your area whichever office you contact. Jane has agreed to attend future Reach for the Stars sessions so if you would like to meet her informally please come along to our next meeting. **Contact Mole Valley Carer's Support on 01306 640020**
- In March **Lisa Smith** from **Partnership with Parents** visited us. She was able to give us an overview of the service and also answer some questions and queries from parents. From the Partnership with Parents website you can download various information sheets to help you with specific queries. They are a resource well worth knowing about. They are also willing to run courses for parents to help us gain a better understanding of issues like the statementing process and annual reviews. Please contact us if this is of interest to you. If we can put together a small group who want the same sort of training then we will arrange for a member of the service to come out to us. **Contact Partnership with Parents on 01737 737300 via the website www.pwpsurrey.org or by email pwps@surreycc.gov.uk**
- If you have any suggestions for speakers at future Reach for the Stars meetings or would be willing to come along and speak about your experiences raising a child with special needs please contact Clair on 07833 257141 or Annmarie on 07867 898142.

Help Lines ...

This quarter we have listed a few of our favourite websites...



www.special-needs-kids.co.uk

An information directory and shopping site to help parents & carers of children with special needs. Several helpful links to a number of websites from dining out to holidays and so much more.

www.foodsmatter.com

An information source for allergy-related conditions such as celiac, gluten allergy sufferers, eczema and allergies related to autism.



www.ichild.co.uk

Provides a range of printable activities and educational resources for young children. All your toddler's favourite characters can be found here, and you can also print out reward 'certificates' to encourage learning.

www.disney.co.uk/playhouse-disney

If you have browsed through a number of children's TV websites (CBeebies, Milkshake etc.) you may be familiar with the games and songs on offer. What sets the Disney Playhouse website aside from the others is that all the instructions are audible and so your child does not need to be able to read in order to play the games, and may only require minimal adult supervision.



As recommended by Mums...



Nitty Gritty hair comb is designed by Mums and its award winning design removes live eggs before they can hatch as well, as remove head lice and unsightly nits. Can be used with Nitty Gritty natural aromatherapy products (pesticide and chemical free) or with your ordinary conditioner. Priced at £11.49 but can be used for all the family and lasts forever, unlike some counter products. www.nittygritty.co.uk

Our top nit tips:

- Use conditioner on your children's hair in the bath, then rinse out. Nits have difficulty 'hanging on' to conditioned hair.
- Mix a third conditioner with 2 thirds water in a pump-action spray bottle and spray on your child's hair regularly.
- Some say hairspray is a good deterrent...

SCAMPPS does not endorse any of the products or services listed in the newsletter but we hope you find the information useful.



SCAMPPS

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SCAMPPS



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IN SURREY

(no calls after 9pm please)

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You can always make a donation to us by cheque, or at;

www.scampps.org.uk with Pay Pal or now at

www.justgiving.com/scampps/raisemoney



Alternatively why not try the following Fundraising initiatives which continue to help us:

Recycle 4 Charity.co.uk



To find out more, contact Helen at Fundraising. All support is hugely appreciated!



To make the deadline for the next Newsletter, please send in any articles or photos by Friday 15th July to:

newsletter@scampps.org.uk