

**Sports**

Kay Swygart is Wandsworth's Disability Sports Development Officer. In the autumn she came to one of our meetings to get ideas about what sporting opportunities families would like to see provided in Wandsworth. She also shared some of her exciting plans:

**New Sailing and Watersports sessions**

These will be taking place for young people with disabilities at Wimbledon Watersports Centre on the following Saturday mornings:  
10.30am – 12.00pm:  
30th May 6th June 13th June

Open to young people 8 – 16 years with any disability. There is the use of a hoist at the centre. Sports include **sailing, canoeing and kayaking** depending on the conditions.

£15 for all three sessions, space is limited, so to book please contact: Kay Swygart – details below.

**Also**  
**New sports sessions coming soon**  
register your interest now!

**Trampolining and dance sessions**

These are currently being explored for young people with disabilities.

To register your interest and for more information please contact:  
**Kay Swygart**  
kswygart@wandsworth.gov.uk/  
Telephone: 0208 871 6857

**WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE**  
and **WE DO NEED YOUR INPUT TOO!**  
**PLEASE COME AND JOIN US**

**Contact details**

**Elizabeth Nasse**  
Parent Participation Facilitator

Available Term time:  
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

Phone: **020 8947 5260**

Email:  
**elizabeth.nasse@cafamily.org.uk**  
or:  
**positiveparentaction@yahoo.co.uk**

Positive Parent Action  
c/o Contact A Family  
1 Siward Road London SW17 0LA

**Easter Camp**

We have been asked to share this idea for the Easter holidays – here is what the organisers say:



**Cycling in Battersea Park**

As spring approaches, now is the time to check out free cycle hire in Battersea Park. For the last few years, Wandsworth Council has been funding free cycle hire for a child with special needs and a carer or a sibling, as part of their short breaks programme. Available for an hour at weekends and school holidays, all you need to do is take a DLA letter or WAND card and a form of identification to the London Recumbent bike hire centre in Battersea Park. They have lots of different types of bikes, trikes, tandems and adapted cycles, so you should find something that works for your family.



for disabled children and young people in Wandsworth

**Positive Parent Action**

After hugely successful Summer, Autumn and Christmas camps in 2014, **Role Models** are looking forward to a four day Easter SEN camp.

The camp is OFSTED registered and will meet the needs of 6-12 year old children with mild to moderate special needs, including Dyspraxia, Down's Syndrome, Autism and Asperger's Syndrome. As per previous SEN Camps, each day will be a balance of calm and dynamic activities, such as whole group games of:

- ✿ **rounders**
  - ✿ **designing posters & pictures**
  - ✿ **team competitions**
  - ✿ **biscuit decorating**
  - ✿ **music & gaming sessions**
- plus  
**some brand new Easter activities.**

The camp will be run by teachers from Blossom House School (a leading special needs school in Wimbledon) and other London teachers with extensive special needs experience.

There will be a minimum of 1:5 staff to children ratio and a maximum of 20 children per day.

**Dates & times:**

Monday March 30 –  
Thursday April 2 inclusive  
(9.30am – 2.30pm daily).

**Venue:**

Wandle Recreation Centre,  
Mapleton Road, Wandsworth,  
SW18 4DN.

**Price:**

£60/day, discounted to £50/day if all four days are booked. Childcare vouchers accepted. Please enquire regarding local authority funding support as this is very much a possibility.

**Further information:**

<http://www.rolemodels.me/sen-easter-camp/>

**How to book:**

Please contact Hugo Shephard on 07825 598344 or [Hugo@rolemodels.me](mailto:Hugo@rolemodels.me)  
**ASAP to receive a registration form.**

**PPA Newsletter**

Spring Term 2015



**Positive Parent Action**

for disabled children and young people in Wandsworth



# Welcome to the Spring 2015 PPA Newsletter

In this issue we sum up our recent involvement in Wandsworth's implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms. We also explain what we have been doing over the last couple of months and our plans for the spring/summer. In addition, included are some other local news which we hope you find of interest.

Please get in touch if you have any ideas or if you would like to know more about us: you can use our website, Facebook page, email or phone.

## PPA is your forum

Positive Parent Action was established five years ago and is Wandsworth's forum for parent/carers. Our aim is that we engage with and represent all families in the Borough who have a child with a disability or special needs. Membership is free and anyone who cares for a child or young person (0-25 years) with special needs in the Borough is welcome to join. We are increasing membership each year and are currently in contact with over 300 local parent/carers.



PPA Steering Group Meeting

PPA is run by a steering group of 16 parent/carer volunteers and is supported by a facilitator employed by Contact a Family. Many of our steering group members are also parent reps and Co-Chairs on the Council's workstreams that are implementing the SEND reforms in Wandsworth.

If you want to know more about PPA or make suggestions about how it could work better for you, please look at our website or get in touch. Our work needs to reflect all your views, so please let us have your contact details if you haven't already – your email address would be perfect.

## We welcome new members...

Please get in touch if you would like to come to the next meeting Positive Parent Action c/o Contact A Family, 1 Siward Road, London SW17 0LA [www.positiveparentaction.org.uk](http://www.positiveparentaction.org.uk) and [info@positiveparentaction.org.uk](mailto:info@positiveparentaction.org.uk)

## Upcoming meetings and events

Tuesday 3rd March 10.30am-14.30pm  
**'Making Our Voices Heard'**  
Young people's participation in preparing for adult life. An event at Wandsworth's Town Hall, Civic Suite – aimed at parents/carers of young people over 14 years and professionals. This event has limited places and booking details will be sent out separately.

Tuesday 10th March 6.30pm-8.30pm  
**PPA/Contact a Family SEND Information Evening**  
**Early Years Service, 1 Siward Road.**  
Contact a Family, Wandsworth Council and Wandsworth Information, Advice and Support Service (previously known as Parent Partnership) will be on hand to answer questions.

**First Tuesday of each month, during term time, 10.00am-12.00pm**  
Monthly PPA meeting at the Early Years Centre, 1 Siward Road – dates to be confirmed.

**Building Links**

We are really keen to build links with other local Parent/Carer support groups, so we are planning a networking lunch in the spring/summer.

If you run or are a member of a local support group please get in touch and we will make sure you get details when finalised.

Please let Elizabeth know if you would like to come to any of these, so we can register your interest.

# Special Educational Needs Disability Reforms

PPA's continued involvement has included:

- ✦ participating in meetings – giving a parental perspective
- ✦ reviewing documentation
- ✦ observing panel meetings
- ✦ attending conferences
- ✦ training and holding SEND information coffee mornings for parent/carers.

It has been a real commitment for parent/carers and they have received a small payment for their input. PPA will continue participating in Council meetings and need more volunteers to take on the role. Please get in touch if you are interested in finding out more.

The new SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years and an easier to read guide can be found here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398815/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/344424/Special\\_educational\\_needs\\_and\\_disabilities\\_guide\\_for\\_parents\\_and\\_carers.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/344424/Special_educational_needs_and_disabilities_guide_for_parents_and_carers.pdf)

The new Code of Practice means young people will have more decision making rights – a topic that the event on 3rd March focuses on – we include an extract from a recent statement made by the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF).

## ... Young people's rights at 16.

All young people have the right to have their views taken into consideration about decisions that affect them. However, an important change is that when they reach 16 certain rights transfer from you, their parent/carer to the young person themselves.

A young person can:

- Ask for an EHC needs assessment
- Make decisions about the support in their EHC plan
- Ask for a personal budget
- Appeal directly to tribunal about a decision relating to an EHC assessment or an EHC Plan.

*It is assumed that young people have this right unless they lack the mental capacity to make specific decisions about their lives. Young people with disabilities and special educational needs should be treated as having the capacity to make their own decisions, even if they need support to do so.*

*Local authorities have to ensure that there is an independent source of information advice and support available for young people. This should be separate from the advice available for parents/carers.*

*What is the role of parent carers when their son or daughter reaches 16? Many parents/carers are concerned about what this change will mean in practice and how the change in legal status affects parent/carers' rights to be involved in decisions affecting their son or daughter. The changes to the law do not mean that parent/carers have no say. In practice many young people will want and need their parents'/carers' support to make decisions, and many people will still need to make decisions on their behalf. It is about placing the views and aspirations of the young person at the centre of the process ...*

The NNPCF have also included links to legal advice, information and organisations.

The whole Statement can be read on this link:

<http://www.nnpf.org.uk/post-16-nnpf-position-statement/>

Lots more information about the new SEND system can be found on-line. Here are a few suggestions of where to look:

**Council for Disabled Children**  
[www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)

**Contact a Family**  
[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)

**NNPCF**  
[www.nnpf.org.uk](http://www.nnpf.org.uk)

**IPSEA**  
[www.ipsea.org.uk](http://www.ipsea.org.uk)

**Special Needs Jungle**  
[www.specialneedsjungle.com](http://www.specialneedsjungle.com)

**Information, Advice and Support Services Network**  
(previously known as Parent Partnership)  
[www.iassnetwork.org.uk](http://www.iassnetwork.org.uk)

**Family Information Service**  
[www.wandsworth.gov.uk/fis](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/fis)

**Positive Parent Action**  
[www.positiveparentaction.org.uk](http://www.positiveparentaction.org.uk)

## Independent Support

As you may know, the Children and Families Act is now up and running and a new system is being used to assess and support children with special educational needs and disabilities. One of the main changes is that children will receive Education, Health and Care plans, instead of Statements.

To help families understand the new system, the Department for Education has introduced a national programme called Independent Support.

Contact a Family have been chosen to provide this service in Wandsworth,

and my colleague Mike Dwyer and I have recently started in our roles as Independent Supporters. Mike formerly managed Contact a Family's Sutton office, and I was chair of Positive Parent Action and Co-Chair of the Preparing for Adulthood workstream. Our role is to support families as they go through the whole process of obtaining an EHC Plan, from making an initial request, through to reviewing draft EHC Plan documents. The system is new to everyone, including professionals, but one of the key principles is for children and families to be fully involved in decision-making, and for their views to be included. We are independent of the Local Authority and can support families in their meetings and other communications with professionals to achieve good support and outcomes for children with special educational needs and disabilities. Some of the things we can help with include:

- ✦ Attending Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings and helping to make sure the family/child/young person's views are fully heard.
- ✦ Attending annual reviews and transfer meetings for those children who are transferring from a Statement of special educational needs/LDA to an EHC Plan.
- ✦ Help preparing and writing information about the interests, views and aspirations of the child, young person and their family, which are described in the EHC Plan.
- ✦ Reviewing professionals reports, reviewing draft EHC Plans and helping parents to comment on these.
- ✦ Help understanding the Local Offer and advice on personal budgets.
- ✦ Work with Wandsworth Information Advice and Support Service previously known as Parent Partnership where issues are outside the remit of the Independent Support service.

Meagan Leggett  
Independent Supporter Contact a Family  
Telephone: 020 8947 5260

## National Network of Parent Carer Forums

There are over 30 Parent/Carer forums across London and another 120 nationally.

Positive Parent Action is part of the NNPCF's South London Cluster group and regularly attends meetings with the other forums from this region.

In October we went to the NNPCF AGM in October in King's Cross. There was a lot of talk about the reforms and which approaches were working and which were not. The NNPCF intend to keep issuing guidance on the reforms and other issues to try and maintain a consistent message from forums across the country.

The network is now a well established key player in parent participation; working with Contact a Family, Council for Disabled and the Department for Education. Take a look at their website if you want to know more [www.nnpf.org.uk](http://www.nnpf.org.uk)

At the end of last year we ran a series of SEND reform information coffee mornings with Contact a Family in Battersea, Roehampton and Earlsfield. The sessions were well attended and parents had the opportunity to meet Council officials and ask questions about how the new SEND systems will work in Wandsworth.

It was really useful for us to meet so many new parents and to learn about what concerns they had.

We are holding another evening session at the EYC on 10th March.

Please see details on front page.