

Bower Grove Support

Support for the Wider Community 1993 - 2014
For Families of Children with Special Needs



Bower Grove School Fant Lane Maidstone Kent ME16 8NL

Summer 2014 Newsletter

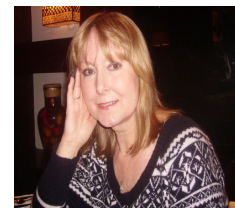
21st Birthday!



Hi! Here we are into the summer term already and we have a good programme of meetings planned, please see below. This Year Bower Grove Parent Support celebrates 21 years. We have come a long way since we started out in 1993 and are very proud to have been the first parent led group of a kind in a school setting to offer such a diverse range of information and support for families of



children with special needs. It wouldn't have been possible without all the great people who have supported us along the way; a big Thank You to Bower Grove School and all our speakers and supporters.

This year there has been **a real sense of community** as parents and professionals joined us once again not only from Bower Grove School but many other schools in Maidstone and the surrounding area. We continue to offer a great service and are for ever expanding and developing; please join us for our next meeting. Workshops during the year included Behaviour Management, Speech and Language Therapy, Anger Management, Services available from the Kent Parent Partnership Service as well as talks by the Community Liaison Officer, Clinical Psychologist and several informal Coffee Mornings. Please see a synopsis of recent meetings throughout the newsletter and a special message for new parents and carers on page 4. Please also take a look at our web page for key information and updates: www.bower-grove.kent.sch.uk and click on: Parent Support. If there is a special subject you would like covered please email me, Josephine Cousins psg.bowergrove@btinternet.com or speak to me at one of the meetings.



Josephine Cousins

SUMMER 2014 PROGRAMME - OPEN TO ALL SCHOOLS

Friday 2nd May 10.15am- 12noon	 COFFEE MORNING 'Strictly No Work-Just Chat' Please join us for an informal chat to meet other parents & family members.
Friday 9th May 10.15am- 12noon	BENEFITS WORKSHOP: Clare Harding From CONTACT A FAMILY will be joining us to discuss the Benefits system. This meeting is open to all parents and carers whether you are just starting out or have older children. Benefits change when your children approach their 16 th birthday. (Talk includes non means tested benefits)
Friday 27th June 10.15am- 12noon	ASD - CURRENT APPROACHES: This talk will be a joint training session with Bower Grove School and Speech & Language when Jackie Golds, Bower Grove School and Suzanne Bachelor, Speech & Language Therapist join us.
Friday 11th July 10.15am- 12noon	 COFFEE MORNING 'Strictly No Work-Just Chat' Please join us for an informal chat to meet other parents & family members.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES BILL FOR ENGLAND BECOMES AN ACT

As stated on the Contact a Family website, the Children and Families bill received royal assent which means it has become the Children and Families act. The new law, which takes effect from this September, will introduce a number of changes.

See extract below from the Contact a Family website:

<http://www.cafamily.org.uk/>

'The Children and Families bill receives [royal assent](#). This marks a landmark in how children and young people with [special educational needs](#) (SEN) in England will be supported in the future. The Children and Families Act 2014 is the culmination of over two years work with the views of parent carers at the heart. The new law will introduce a number of changes including a move from special educational needs statements to education, health and care plans'

See further Key Links below:

<http://www.se7pathfinder.co.uk/>

<http://www.kpcf.co.uk/>

KENT PARENT PARTNERSHIP SERVICE

Sue Cunliffe-Jones from the Kent Parent Partnership Service (KPPS) joined us for a talk about the service offered by the KPPS and provided information about the drop-ins they hold across the county. Please see some key information below

KENT PARENT PARTNERSHIP SERVICE

Helpline 03000 41 3000 Office 0300 333 6474

kentparentpartnershipservice@kent.gov.uk

Website: www.kent.gov.uk/kpps **currently being reconstructed**

Kent Parent Partnership Service (KPPS) is statutory, which means that every Local Authority (LA) must provide a service for parents of disabled children and children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). The Service operates at arms length from the LA and provides **free confidential, impartial advice and support** to parents. KPPS are committed to parental involvement and offer a range of support to increase parental confidence. The experienced team is available to listen and discuss any issues around your child's education and development in complete confidence. The Helpline is open Monday to Friday 9am-5pm (answer phone and email are available 24 hrs). KPPS staff are available for face to face meetings either at a drop-in (please telephone or see website), or in a place that is mutually convenient (out of these hours if necessary).

Kent Parent Carer Forum (KPCF)

'Kent Parents as Equal Partners' have changed their name to:

Kent Parent Carer Forum (KPCF)

Kent Parent Carer Forum is for parents/ carers of children with SEN or disabilities to listen to their views and help to influence change. KPCF sit on a range of boards and decision-making groups to ensure that the parent/carer voice is heard.

01233 469 241

info@kpcf.co.uk

<http://www.kpcf.co.uk>

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

A PARENTS' SURVIVAL GUIDE



Mrs Pam Stephens, Bower Grove School, STLS, spoke about Behaviour Management – A Parents' Guide. She described being a parent as one of the toughest jobs in the world, with little opportunity for formal training, no pay, huge restraints on freedom and a drain on money and emotional resources! However, it's a job that can be hugely rewarding as well.

Pam shared with us some ideas from people who have been through the parent trap and some information from researchers and professional people.

Pam highlighted that many children have disabilities or conditions that cannot be changed. As parents we need to accept what can't be changed but at the same time give our children strategies to cope in our society. There was a special mention for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders – where children benefit from clear language, routines and recipes to reduce their anxiety levels.

Pam outlined how we can use Behavioural Methods to manage behaviour in the early years, being consistent in our responses and only giving the reward of our attention for appropriate behaviours (just like "Super Nanny"). Later, children can understand a more "Cognitive" form of management, reasoning about their actions and planning ways to avoid stress. At this stage children can use the ABCD of behaviour management:-

A = Antecedent (what happened just before...)

B = Behaviour (What did you do....)

C = Consequence (Then what happened?)

D = Discussion (OK, so how could we have done it differently?)

Help children to be responsible for their own behaviour. Avoid "Naughty Table Syndrome" – its no good smacking a table if your child bumps their head on it! Give the cuddles but the message must be "You should have looked where you were going!" Pam talked about rewards and sanctions and pleaded with us never to threaten "Father Christmas won't come" when we all know he will!

(Far better to say he works on a points system – giving more for good behaviour)

Pam touched on many of the common "battlefields" such as bedtimes, dinner times and peer group pressure. She gave us some ideas for anger management, building self-esteem and using reward charts and contracts. Through it all she encouraged us to take charge and use:-

Mum and Dad Power!


- ❖ **You love your children – let them know it.**
- ❖ **Hang on to parent power – you are boss!**
- ❖ **Be clear, consistent and positive.**
- ❖ **It's a job for life! (And it's a great one!)**

KEY SEN LINKS & INFORMATION

(A permanent feature in the newsletter)

We have provided key information for parents and carers for many years on our parent support web page and in 2009 I was asked to put the Maidstone Resource Directory together. The directories are rather out of date now so for the past two years I have provided **UPDATES**

Please follow the link below:

 <h3 style="text-align: center;">BOWER GROVE PARENT SUPPORT KEY LINKS FOR PARENTS AND PROFESSIONALS</h3> <p style="text-align: center;">Go to: http://www.bower-grove.kent.sch.uk & select 'Parent Support' See BGPS – Key Links page</p>		
SIGNPOSTING INFORMATION FOR PARENTS & CARERS	SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)	ASSESSMENT OF CARE NEEDS KCC SOCIAL SERVICES
EARLY SUPPORT	HEALTH UPDATE	LEISURE, SPORT & CLUBS SHORT BREAKS LINK HOLIDAY PLAY SCHEMES
CHILDREN CENTRES	LOCAL ORGANISATIONS	DIRECT PAYMENTS
BENEFITS	NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS	USEFUL WEBSITES

SPECIAL MESSAGE FOR NEW PARENTS/CARERS

If you are reading this newsletter for the first time I hope you find it interesting. Our workshops and meetings are free and open to all parents/carers regardless of your child's age, with or without a diagnosis, and that includes any other school and **there is no need to book**. Family members and young children are welcome to join our informal meetings too. We see parents and carers of children of all ages and cover a wide range and area of topics including workshops on Anger Management, Behaviour, Speech and Language, Autistic Spectrum Conditions, the Benefits system and much more. We have accrued a host of specialist speakers and utilise the expertise within Bower Grove School. If you would like a subject or topic covered please contact me, Jo Cousins (see below). Please join us for an informal chat and coffee at our next meeting; you will be sure of a warm welcome. **Please see contact details below.**



I hope to see you all at our first meeting of term, please see full programme on first page.

Josephine Cousins

BOWER GROVE PARENT SUPPORT

CONTACT: Josephine Cousins Tel: 01622 726773 (during school hours)

Web: www.bower-grove.kent.sch.uk and select **Parent Support**

Email: psg.bowergrove@btinternet.com

Address at top of newsletter