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Fun Newsletter February 2016



*Thank you
to Golden*

*Gates Housing Trust
the Community Fund for their grant of £500 enabling
us to buy new toys for the Saturday F.UN Club*

FORTHCOMING F.UN EVENTS

13th February

Sensory Fun Bus at the Saturday Fun Club

27th February

***Live Music Now at Winwick Leisure Centre
Don't miss this great afternoon of interactive music for all the
family. Book your places by emailing the F.UN office
familiesutd@yahoo.com***

20th March at 4.30 pm

***Bowling Party at Widnes Superbowl
1 Game of Bowls and Party Food
Booking essential. £5 per parent/child or £10 per
family.***

Saturday F.U.N Club

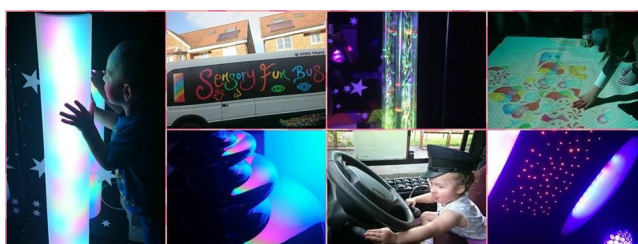
Fearnhead Community Centre, Insall Rd, Fearnhead

Drop in session from 10.30 am – 1.30 pm

£2 per family per session. Healthy lunchtime snack for the children, tea and coffee for parents. Children must be accompanied by a parent/carer who must be responsible for their child/children throughout the session.

FEBRUARY FUN CLUB DATES

13th February - Come aboard the Sensory Fun Bus!



27th February—F.UN Club (finishing at 1.00pm)

Don't forget the Live Music Now after this Fun Club from 1.30 pm

If you would like any further info on F.UN Club activities
please call the F.UN Office on 0743 267 6713

FEBRUARY'S AUTISM FRIENDLY SCREENING

There is a variety of characters joining us for our autism friendly screenings in February;
from chipmunks to monsters.

Goosebumps (PG) at selected Cineworld cinemas on Sunday 7th February at 11am.

Alvin and the Chipmunks: Road Chip at selected ODEON cinemas* on Sunday 28th February at 11:30am.

ODEON* trial screenings for older audiences: **Goosebumps (PG)** on Monday 29th February at 6pm. This is at nine selected cinemas**.

The Good Dinosaur at selected Vue cinemas on Sunday 28th February at 10am.

As always, adjustments will be in place for all of the screenings. These include: lights being left on low, no adverts, lower sound levels, people being able to move around the cinema and able to take their own food. Flyers are attached to my email – please do print and share, as well as send onto anybody you feel would be interested in the screenings.

Vue and Showcase films start at 10am, Cineworld films start at 11am and ODEON films start at

11.30am and 6pm for the adult screening trial – there are no trailers so please make sure you are seated in time.

F.UN NEWS

Apologies—the wrong website for Warrington's local offer was printed in the January newsletter.

Ask Ollie is Warrington's new local offer website which replaces the previous pages on the Families Information Services pages; they will be closed down shortly once the last information has been lifted and transferred over.

The correct link is askollie.warrington.gov.uk/localoffer/site/index.php



There is also a Facebook page at facebook.com/wbc.askollie to help keep parent/carers up to date about local news, events and activities relating to children and young people with additional needs.

The askollie leaflet is attached.

Government intends to exempt Carer's Allowance claimants from benefit cap.

In a debate in the House of Lords on Monday night, the government announced that it intends to exempt everyone who gets [Carer's Allowance](#) from the benefit cap that applies to out-of-work households. Families are already exempt from the cap if they have a dependent child on [Disability Living Allowance](#) or [Personal Independence Payment](#).

However, if a disabled child aged 16 or above either leaves education, turns 20 or claims certain benefits such as Employment and Support Allowance, they stop being treated as a dependent child and [start](#) being treated as an adult. Until now this has meant that their parent could lose their protection from the benefit cap at that point. Once this new rule is introduced, parents will [continue](#) to be exempt from the benefit cap even if they are looking after an adult son or daughter rather than a dependent child. This will be the case so long as the parent is getting Carer's Allowance.

This announcement follows a recent High Court decision, which found that the failure to exempt those on Carer's Allowance looking after a disabled adult amounted to unlawful discrimination.

WHAT IS THE HOUSEHOLD BENEFIT CAP?

The household benefit cap limits the total amount of benefits that an out of work family can receive. At the moment the cap is £500 per week for lone parents and couples and £350 per week for [single people](#). However, in April 2016 the government intends to lower these figures to £442 (£296 for single carers without dependent children) in London and to £385 (£258 for single carers without dependent children) elsewhere. It is likely that there will be a large increase in the numbers of households affected by the cap once it is lowered. If your benefit income is above the cap then the excess amount is cut from your [housing benefit](#) payments. The benefit cap will also be a feature of the new [Universal Credit](#).

WHEN WILL THE RULES CHANGE?

A DATE FOR THIS CHANGE COMING INTO FORCE HAS NOT YET BEEN ANNOUNCED.

Latest parent guides from Contact a Family:

As the temperature drops Contact a Family have put together some useful advice and information to help your family stay warm this winter in our guide [Help with fuel bills and keeping warm \[PDF\]](#). Families in England, Scotland and Wales may be able to get a rebate of up to £140 to help pay their electricity bill. Look up the Warm Home Discount scheme and apply as soon as possible if you qualify. You can also check you're claiming everything you're entitled to in their guide to [Money Matters - England, Scotland and Wales \[PDF\]](#) which covers:

- Money and money-saving vouchers.
- Transport.
- Disability and sickness benefits.
- Benefits for working.
- Help with rent, mortgage and council tax.
- Grants and loans and more.

Caring for a teenager – a new guide is for you

We all remember the turmoil of teenage years, and being the parent of a disabled young person can bring particular challenges. Not least the thorny subject of sex and relationships. Contact a family has two new guides to help navigate issues around growing up and relationships – one for parents and one for young people.

Stop the DLA takeaway in hospital

[Disability Living Allowance \(DLA\) payments](#) are stopped when a child is in hospital for more than 84 days. The government justifies stopping DLA when a child spends a long time in hospital by arguing that a child's needs are fully met free of charge by the NHS. Research shows that without a parents' input, a child's needs are not fully met in hospital and the extra costs continue. That's why we think these rules denies families financial help when they need it most.

Contact a Family :

- Supported the Mathieson family in their successful legal challenge to the rules
- Asking supporters to sign a petition if they agree that the rules should now be scrapped for all families.
- Providing evidence to show that the rules are unfair

What You Can Do

- Support the campaign by [signing the petition](#).
- Have you been affected by this rule? Any evidence we have supports this case. Email the press team at press@cafamily.org.uk if you have a story to share.

Visit: www.cafamily.org.uk/get-involved/campaigning/stop-the-dla-takeaway-in-hospital