

**Aireborough
Summer Activities
Scheme**

Annual Report

Summer 2007

Aireborough Summer Activities Scheme

Statistics

No of children attending	Week one	13 girls 21 boys	34
21 girls & 35 boys	Week two	16 girls 22 boys	38
	Week three	12 girls 23 boys	35
Total number of children/young people attending over the three weeks			56
Age Range	4 to 19 Years		

Ratio of Children's Personal Care Needs

No. with Nursing needs (inc.Medication, tube feeding)	15 out of 56
No. needing Feeding	16 out of 56
No. needing Changing/toileting	19 out of 56
No. needing One to One Supervision	32 out of 56

Ratio of Disabilities

No. with Epilepsy	20 out of 56
No. with Autism/Autistic Spectrum	16 out of 56
No. of Wheelchair/ Buggy Users	15 out of 56
No. needing transport	30 out of 56
No with Communication Difficulties (Deaf/ hearing impaired 3, visually impaired 1)	45 out of 56

No. of Leaders

Week one	22 female, 1 male	23
Week two	22 female, 2 male	24
Week three	20 female, 3 male	23
	Total	26

Escorts

All Weeks	3 female	3
	Total	4

Drivers

All Weeks	1 female, 2 male	3
	Total	4

Total Staff employed

29

No. of volunteers

All 3 weeks	6 female	6
2 out of 3	7 female & 3 male	10
1 out of 3	12 female & 1 male	13
Odd days	1 female	1
	Total	29

Other people involved:-

Jo Galasso – Play scheme coordinator, Philip Tolchard – Scheme chairman, Chris Parapia – Scheme secretary/volunteer support worker, Brian Watkins – Scheme treasurer, ASAS Management Committee, Jenny Mason – scheme nurse, Barry/Stuart – school caretakers, Physiotherapists - hydrotherapy, Diane Brayshaw – music, dance and resonance boards, Leeds CC Disability Sports team, Bradford MDC Sports and Arts teams, Stingray – Drumming and Circus Skills, Patsy Bell – aromatherapy, John@Animal Antics – snakes, spiders etc, Pete White – Suitcase Circus, Junior Jam – music making and boxercise, Anna from Dance for Life, Wendy from Arty Smarty – pottery painting, the Rapide Bros – circus skills, Georgina Hayward – art workshops, Wayne's World – disco & karaoke **and** the parents/carers/siblings/and extended family.

Range of Abilities/Disabilities

Disabilities the children/young people have range from mild learning difficulties to very severe learning and physical disabilities.

Diagnoses include: - A.D.H.D, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, visual impairment, Cerebral palsy, chromosome disorders, Congenital Cytomegalovirus, Cri du Chat, Downs syndrome, Duchenne Muscular Duane's Syndrome, Dystrophy, dyspraxia, epilepsy, Focal Polymicrogria, Fragile X, Global developmental delay, hearing impaired/profoundly deaf, hemi Hypertrophy, hydrocephalus, Prader-Willi Syndrome, Muccopoly Sacharide disease (Sanphilippo), Retts syndrome, Rubinstein Taybi Syndrome, Trisomy 20q Mosaicism, Tuberous Sclerosis, quadriplegia, William's syndrome and other rare or unknown conditions.

Equal Opportunities

The scheme is committed to providing equal opportunities to everyone involved.

All the children/young people attending have learning and/or physical disabilities, one leader is hearing impaired, one is visually impaired, 1 volunteer has communication difficulties and 2 have physical disabilities. The scheme is open to children/young people, 4 - 19 years, in the Aireborough area, whose needs aren't met by mainstream provision because of their disability, learning or social/behavioural difficulties and also their age. 1 child and 1 volunteer were from mixed race/ethnic minority groups.

Role of the Trustees/Organisational structure

The voluntary management committee is made up of 8 local people with an interest in improving the quality of life by way of providing leisure facilities for children with learning and physical disabilities. Two of the trustees work for Social Services, three are parents of children who attend the scheme, one is a volunteer on the scheme and others either work or have worked with children or are in caring professions.

The scheme is a Registered Charity and the committee meet about 6 times a year, concluding with the Annual General Meeting in November following the end of our financial year on the 31st of October. Our finances are managed by our treasurer, Brian Watkins, and I am the only permanent part-time paid worker, I work one day a week all year round, throughout the three weeks of the scheme in the holidays plus the Christmas activity day.

Finances

The scheme is registered with Leeds City Council as a special needs play scheme and receives a grant of £8,000, and the scheme actually costs, around £35,000, so other sources of funding have to be found. This year our applications to BBC Children in Need and Awards for All were turned down due to excessive demand on funds. Parents were very supportive when they found this out and many gave their own donations in addition to the fees they pay, which are £8 per child per day, this is negotiable, we don't want children to miss out due to the financial hardship of the parents. However in July we heard that we had been successful in securing £16,000 funding from the Leeds Area Well-being, Inner and Outer Committees, this was brilliant news and a fantastic amount to receive and paid for the salaries of all our leaders.

Leeds & Bradford Airport £ 408.28, Skipton Building Society £1,500, Rene Horton Charitable Trust £5,000, Leeds Building Society £600, Councilor Latty £250, Morgan Crucible Co Plc £150, Sovereign Health Care £500, Garfield Weston Foundation £2,000, Leeds City Council Grant £8,237, Baily Thomas Charitable Trust £2,000, David Solomon's Charitable Trust £1,000, WW Spooner Charitable Trust £250, Toy Trust £2,000, Iveson Ladies Keep Fit £125, Otley Town Council £500, Yorkshire Bank £200, Chil £395.31, Bright Sparks theatre company £1,000, L & M Zeigler £250, G Chan £50, Mr. & Mrs. Jackson £100, Mrs. Yarrington £100, Jenny Jeffels £40, Mr. & Mrs. Wightman £25, C Williams Young sponsored walk £110.

Staff and Volunteers

We had a shift round of Team leaders this year as David, last years 13+ leader was unable to do the scheme this summer; so Helen Foyston and Emma Harrison worked with the under 8's; Louise Naylor was Team leader for the 9 – 12's but moved to working with the 13+ group; and Nicole Dempsey would had been a leader with the 9 – 12's was promoted to Team Leader. Of the 26 leaders we employed we only took on 2 completely new leaders, 5 new Junior leaders were appointed but these had been volunteers last year.

We were exceptionally lucky to get so many volunteers, so much so that unfortunately some had to be turned away, towards other schemes; the youngest who helped was just 14 years old and the oldest were in their sixties, all had lots of offer the scheme, some energy and enthusiasm others patient and tolerance, all qualities needed to care for the wide age and ability range of the children who attended.

Planning and Training

Planning and training meetings were carried out prior to the scheme; this gave everyone the chance to get to know one another, share information about the scheme and those attending; and put together suitable programs for each of the age groups and additional sessions tailored for the more physically disabled children.

All new staff and volunteers attended training organised by Jenny Mason, school nurse, this covered awareness of various disabilities and aspects for caring for the children including Epilepsy, shunts, communication techniques, feeding, hand washing etc. All the leaders did moving and handling training, those working with a child with a nut allergy did Epipen training and one of the Team leaders did a First-Aid course. Jenny Mason is on site through out the scheme to provide the medical care some children require.

OFSTED

We were aware that we were due for our Ofsted inspection this year so tried to do our best to be prepared for this; the inspector turned up during the second week, so we were well into the swing of things by then. She spent the day with the under eights group would were on site for the day and doing swimming in the morning and art in the afternoon, the outcome overall was Satisfactory with many aspects getting Good; we have a couple of things to address but the inspector was very pleased with the care of the children, their interaction with each other and the staff and the fun and friendly atmosphere she felt; Helen, the leaders and myself were relieved when it was over but everyone deserves a pat on the back for the part they played in making the scheme so successful and enjoyable.

The inspector spoke to several parents who applauded the scheme and thought it was a great place for their children to be, where their needs could be met whilst enjoying some interesting and exciting trips and activities.

Transport

Few worries regarding changes to hire conditions of the buses, but this was resolve for this year, but will need reviewing in time for next year, all our regular drivers were available, Paul, Bruce and Dee, and an additional new driver Keith; Paul coordinated the transport arrangements and planned the routes and everything ran smoothly with only minor hiccups. Even though we now have 3 buses throughout the scheme, transport is still a problem, due to the number of children and staff/volunteers in each group; it is difficult for all of a group to go out at any time. It would be ideal if we had a larger bus that was wheelchair accessible, it's great having so many people helping out but it makes it a bit of a nightmare trying to fit everyone on the buses for outings, the 13+ group often use public transport and when a group of about 30 go out you get miles and miles of tickets, which are quite hard to file.

The Scheme/Programme

We had many of our usual and well loved activities, sessions and trips, like trampolining, swimming, aromatherapy, art and crafts, sport, donkey sanctuary, Stingwray - drumming, Diane Brayshaw's music and dance sessions, the Rapide Brothers circus skills, and Animal Antics back by popular demand, with their hissing cockroaches, scorpion, tarantula, lizard and 2 metre long snake, to name a few.

The kids enjoyed Pete White – Suitcase Circus, trying to manoeuvre a digestive biscuit, chocolate side down, from his forehead into his mouth, it was quite tense for a while wondering whether he would get it in or drop it, however he completed his mission and got a huge round of applause, he also offered the half eaten part melted item as a prize for helping but everyone declined.

Bradford Play development team came and did a range of art and craft activities with the under eights including making grass heads and provided a bouncy castle session; and the sports team did a 'crazy' golf session with the 13+'s as well as a range of other sporting activities.

The 9 – 12's group had a thrilling time riding on the Bolton Abbey steam railway and visiting Hesketh Farm Park. Whilst those with more physically disabilities enjoyed a day out at Ilkley Park, hydrotherapy at Hollybank sensory pool and several rebound, aromatherapy and resonance board sessions.

The 13+ group went to the cinema in Leeds to see 'Shrek the Third' and 'Bruce Almighty'; they also visited Bradford Industrial Museum, went swimming and bowling, they also thoroughly enjoyed 3 dance sessions with Anna, from Dance for Life, who was excellent at involving everyone in the session and keeping them interested and busy, no drop outs in her sessions and the Junior Jam, Kick boxing session (Note to self -.next time make sure the instructor advises the kids not to try this at home or on the leaders. Ouch!)

Our usual end of scheme party and disco was eagerly anticipated, 'A' had been waiting since the Christmas Activity day party to re request his favourite song – Hey Baby; this year we had a pyjama party, to make it was easy for everyone to participate in, so one would think, however it is a good job it was summer, as not many of the leaders or volunteers had winceyette pyjamas, to be brief!

Feedback (Sheets Attached)

Verbally feedback was gained during the scheme; other was received from the child/parent, volunteers and leaders evaluation forms and via the communication books we send home daily, these were particularly appreciated by parents of non-communicative children.

Final Comments

Most of the leaders have now worked on the scheme for many years; we have a group of excellent volunteers who help on a yearly basis, and some who have progressed from volunteers to Junior leaders: this familiarity and experience meant that the scheme ran smoothly and they made it seem effortless.

There was a lot of preparation to make sure we were addressing all the changes that have come in with regard to Ofsted, Every Child Matters and the introduction of the Safeguarding Children's Board and feel that we provided an even better provision for the children.

As usual it's only possible due to the support of all involved in the running and organisation of the scheme – the Management Committee, the leaders and volunteers, Jenny the school

nurse, Green Meadows for letting us use the building, everyone who gave financial support, the parents/carers for their support, respect and confidence in the scheme.

Finally it's lovely to have such great children and young people to work with; we'd like to thank them for

- their honesty “this is boring” (waiting to get on the bus), “you were rubbish at circus skills”
- for their help – distributing sand all over the floor
- for their consideration – cooling you down when you're supervising on the side of the pool
- for reassuring you - when they've had ‘another’ pooh accident – “never mind, accidents happen”
- but most of all having a great sense of humour “I'll drive the bus today”. (Charlie 6)

Jo Galasso
Playscheme Co-ordinator

Child Evaluation Form

(Completed by the children if able, if not by play leaders on the child's behalf)

What things have you enjoyed?

Going on the adventure play ground at Harewood House and going to Wacky Warehouse; playing hide and seek with the leaders; trampoline & art activities; playing the drums & circus skills; going to see the animals & playing football; painting; walking; swimming & being outside; going on the train ride; ice-creams; being with friends; playing sport & day trip to Royal Armouries; playing with water; Junior Jam - music making; reading stories, playing with dolls & the pushchair; Hesketh Farm & seeing geese and ducks at Lister Park; playing with the air cooling fan; wheeling myself round in my wheelchair, turning lights on and off and opening and closing doors; art room & playing Cludeo; music & story tapes; visit to the airport; climbing, trampolining, swinging, playing with my friend Vicki; dancing & steam train ride; playing basket ball; watching other people; resonance boards & rebound therapy; going out on trips; making badges; music sessions/visual activities, colouring; Mc Donalds, reading stories; bus rides; donkey riding; picnics, ice cream and playing football.

What haven't you enjoyed?

Nothing; people clapping; Junior Jam, music making was too complicated; animals at St Leonard's farm; waiting to go out on trips; going to Morrison's; not being allowed to eat everyone else's food; not knowing who would look after me on my first day; long bus journeys - boring; circus skills; not being able to go swimming or trampolining every day; bouncy castle; staying in centre; getting off the bus; anything requiring use of hands and mess e.g. art/sand; bird garden at Harewood house.

What would make Playscheme better?

More sensory toys to play with; more of it; trip to Eureka; more activities for children with PMLD; more swimming & trampolining, adapted bikes and donkey rides, and more scenic walks; more grown up toys e.g. small world, lego, remote controlled car; more toys/craft things; visual lightgroups / fish tank; bikes for outdoors, more books; rides on different vehicles i.e. boats, trains, trams; material resources - fabric, textures.

Would you like to say anything else?

I like play scheme, it's good.

Child Evaluation Form

(Completed by the parents/carers on the child's behalf)

What has your child enjoyed at play scheme?

Appears to have enjoyed everything, keen to attend every day - particularly liked swimming, trampoline and donkey sanctuary; everything; resonance boards; going out on more trips; going to a variety of parks, enjoyed the company and being with people he knows, he has looked so happy every day; making friends and visiting places; socialising with everyone and getting away from confines of home; going on the minibus (sorry there were one or two tantrums when it was time to get off); Royal Armouries, swimming, being able to choose to take part or not, just observing if she wants and that's great; particularly enjoys disco part, but just enjoys being with all the other young people; all the attention she has received; being with friends; everything, G has been happy & relaxed, always keen to get himself ready, especially enjoyed bowling and swimming; O always came home in a good mood, and was really excited to be coming every morning.

What hasn't your child enjoyed?

Garden centre trip - twice; having to get off the bus when it reached it's destination; not so keen on art activities but willing to give it a go, comes home tired but happy; noise!; not keen on art and dance but still quite enjoyed them; G is wary of animals so needs gentle encouragement to relax & approach them.

If you had contact (in person, or over the phone) with the leaders, escorts or volunteers looking after your child, we would appreciate your opinion.

Extremely helpful and friendly; everybody was friendly and seemed to know 'R'; Jenny J has again communicated and looked after 'A' very well, the team leader contacted me regarding her seizures; Helen & Lauren were particularly good; Jonathan is excellent with 'M' he can read his mind and 'M' responds to him; everyone is enthusiastic and made C very welcome; friendly, communicative, caring, concerned and efficient, felt D was safe in their hands; Julia was wonderful and felt she had got the complete measure of C; we were most impressed with how well-organised the Playscheme was.

How well do you think we communicated with you?

Good communication, no problems; very good, better than last time, always helps when child is known etc; told everything he and done and where he had been; excellent; Jo always takes time to talk to me and ask about D; you do a good job year on year; diary worked well, well informed; notes in the books informed on activities and how the children had been (always happy); first rate organisation.

How have you/your other children benefited, what sort of things have you been able to do that you aren't usually able to do?

The scheme has allowed me to cover work commitments and prepare for our family holiday, H has met lots of new people and enjoyed being independent; help my daughter with her home move and go out on a day trip with my son & family; spent quality time with sibling at park, swimming and trips out where she was centre of attention for a change; fishing, shopping relaxing; as a parent I benefit greatly, totally relaxing knowing he is in safe capable hands with people he trusts and feels secure with, I've been able to do lots of shopping; helped with child care taking pressure off grand parents; sisters got time out and I was able to clean the house; we have been able to ordinary, everyday things other families take for granted, my husband and I even had a pub lunch, I can't remember the last time we did that! Thank you;

"I wish I could put into words just how much the summer play scheme means to us, I've been able to take W to the cinema, swimming, shopping and even playing tennis and cricket in the back garden or just chatting, to be able to give him my complete attention, it helps to make up for all the times I can't"

Work let me do early shifts while C was at the scheme then I was able to spend the rest of the day caring for her (child at a residential school, so only home school holidays); able to go shopping, walking group, dad played golf twice, able to relax and prepare ourselves for entertaining our son for the rest of the holidays; it has been nice to hear 'S' talking about different things and I've enjoyed some time to myself; trips out with other children; 'I' hates clothes shopping so her sister and I have been on our own, I've been out of lunch with friends and just had some quite time for myself; first time my child has been on transport which meant more family time to enjoy usually non accessible places as it is hard to accommodate all the children's needs and H needs time out too; very valuable time to do some much needed cleaning, gardening and shopping, time to prepare work for next term, good to know my children were being very well looked after with interesting & fun things to do.

What do you think about the cost of attendance?

Too much

About right

Too cheap x 1

Very reasonable; about right; very good value for money; would pay more if necessary.

Is there anything that could improve the scheme?

Some changes to timetable to weren't aware of what to expect, swimming more than once; you seem to do a brilliant job each year; more money available to run it for longer; most impressed with all aspects of the scheme.

Other comments..

'A' really showed she was enjoying the scheme, she smiled & had her happy face when I said she was going to play with the children, I never worry about her as the staff are so good & also the nurse is there; this play scheme just gets better and better, I have never seen M so happy to go in all the years he's been attending, the following week he went and got his lunch box ready for the scheme and I had to tell him it was finished and he wasn't going that week; I really don't want it to end; just hope it continues as valuable to all concerned; D is vulnerable and can't go out unaccompanied, unless I take him out he is like a prisoner in his own home, play scheme is a life line to him in the school hols, he loves it and it helps to keep me sane; I think it is excellent, different things everyday and something for everyone;

"I know how much my son enjoys the play scheme because although he tells me nothing about it, as he finds it difficult to express himself, I can tell by his actions. He is totally cooperative in the mornings before we arrive, he goes to the bathroom for a shower, gets dressed, comes down for breakfast, eats, goes back to brush his teeth, gets ready and gets in the car, when we arrive he runs in. The morning routine I have described can be a major battle most days and I have used different strategies to achieve these everyday tasks, so the two weeks he attends play scheme bring a most welcome relief".

"The scheme is so special, it helps me give my other son something I so often can't 'my time' , everyone involved makes such a difference to the families who are lucky enough to benefit, all are smiley and friendly and that certainly rubs off on the children; thanks for giving young people an enjoyable time".

"A has attended for many years and it is the highlight of his holidays, he has never had anything but praise and good things to say about the scheme".

"I am the parent of 2 boys diagnosed with autism, my husband has to work during the summer and we have no family locally. Previously it has been my sole task to try and keep the boys entertained which has got harder as they have got older. The Playscheme has been a godsend for our family, all the lovely days out and activities in centre, the boys have come home 'buzzing', energised & excited, really enjoying everything and anticipating future trips. This has been our first year at Playscheme , we can't praise it enough and would love to be involved again".

"complete confidence in the knowledge that our daughter is being very well cared for, appreciate the job done by all who help make this particular scheme so successful, we would be lost without it, as well as the respite we get from it, R, we know has much fun too"; it has been fantastic for all of us, thank you all so much;

"L has lots of very happy memories from his 16 years at Playscheme, he is very sad that this is his last year".

Volunteer Evaluation Form

What have you enjoyed about play scheme? Highs

I've really, really enjoyed it, very interesting and enjoyable - donkey sanctuary & Tropical World; getting to know the children better; cinema trip and walk to Menston park; going out on trips & the sunshine; I have enjoyed working one to one with some children, also swimming and activities on site; really enjoyable, sometimes hard but extremely rewarding - particularly enjoyed Harewood House; glad to have had the experience and would love to do it again - working 1 to 1 with a child and developing a bond with them; lots of fun, a brilliant experience, made me realise the things we take for granted - seeing the children enjoying themselves and achieving something for themselves; lots of fun - swimming, seeing them enjoying themselves; forming relationships with the children; meeting the children and everyone involved in the scheme; joining in with the children during art, circus skills & street dance was fun; good fun, would enjoy it as a career,

What haven't you enjoyed? Lows

Not always enough minibuses; the walk to Aireborough was hard for the child I was with; going to the donkey sanctuary and realising we weren't booking in; not much to do at donkey sanctuary while others were riding.

What did you think about how the scheme was run?

It was well managed; well organised, well structured with a variety of activities and trips; very well run, organisation of the trips was well managed, there was always something for the children to do; everything was fully explained to us all of the time.

What did you think about the range of trips and activities? Were there any highlights or problems with them?

Good range, kids loved tropical world, art and the park; I thought they children with PMLD were more included this year, more so than the last 2; range of activities were extremely enjoyable for the children and myself, lots of different experiences; the children particularly enjoyed bowling, farms and Harewood House; the range of trips and activities ensured that there was always something to suit every child, the more able kids enjoyed Junior Jam and baking, the less able enjoyed trampolining and Wacky Warehouse, Harewood House was a success for all the kids; the children really enjoyed the cinema and swimming trips; range was fab; trips were really good; there could be more sensory things available for some of the children; the wide range allowed the children to have many different experiences; street dancing was popular, as was

swimming; trips offered are varied, different children like different activities so it is good to be flexible between age groups and activities;

What did you think about the other leaders and volunteers you were working with, were they helpful, welcoming, did they make you feel at ease?

Leaders made sure you knew what to do; very friendly even those who were new to the scheme; always someone available if I had any questions or was unsure of anything; easy to ask them questions; felt comfortable with them; really helpful and nice to me; everyone worked well together and got on; some were helpful introducing us to the children in the beginning, however others stayed within their own groups; could have made me more welcome.

If you attended the training, what did you gain from it, was there anything else that should be included?

It was useful and fairly understandable; learnt about Epilepsy; should use a child as an example of explaining a disability; I gained a lot of knowledge from attending the training; third year attending so knew most of it; easy to understand, on a level that was personal and not complicated by jargon, useful because it answered questions I wanted to ask and gave me more confidence; didn't need to put some things into practice but it made me feel a bit more at ease; more detailed explanations of the children's issues, such as examples of how they will act; useful, answered your questions, helped feel at ease, easy to understand, handouts were helpful and easy to read; the communication training was especially helpful;

Is there anything that could improve the scheme?

More activities for children with PMLD to participate in; nothing springs to mind; more sensory trips for the children who would benefit.

Any other comments, ideas, suggestions would be appreciated.

Same the weather was bad, sport on the back field was popular last year; the t-shirts to differentiate between leaders and volunteer were a very good idea, it made certain situations easier for everyone; volunteers could work with different children each day so we all get the chance to mix and socialise; attract more male volunteers as lots of boys attend the scheme.

Leader Evaluation Form

What have you enjoyed about play scheme? Highs

Swimming, cinema and trips out; enjoyed all of it - swimming, music & relaxation with resonance boards, trips to Tropical World and St Leonard's farm; meeting new people and seeing new activities e.g. resonance boards - doing different activities each week; going out on trips with efficient staff, seeing the physically disabled children being encouraged to do activities they themselves thought they couldn't do and seeing their happy faces; challenging but a great experience - I enjoyed working with more profoundly disabled children, and going to the cinema; thoroughly enjoyed and have felt completely comfortable with extra responsibilities that come with being a junior leader rather than a volunteer; it has gone really quick this year; the golf session was well organised and catered for a mixed ability group, it was a good way of involving both the leaders/volunteers and the young people.

What haven't you enjoyed? Lows

Activities starting late; some children don't seem to go out on many trips; changing groups in week 3; children didn't have much time on the donkeys at the sanctuary; may be more organisation of minibuses re needs of children in wheelchairs; having difficulty communicating with a hearing impaired child; quite tiring but to be expected; being with a child in the garden centre when they had a handful of toys and I struggled to put them back in one piece; swimming - the pool onsite seemed hotter this year; expecting the Ofsted inspection, but it was ok on the day.

What did you think about how the scheme was run?

Really good, children always come first, and special arrangements made for each individual child as required; much better this year, better communication with drivers regarding use of buses; it was very well run this year; good provision, flexible and revolves around the children's likes and needs.

What did you think about the range of trips and activities? Were there any highlights or problems with them?

Sometimes rushed as the Playscheme day isn't very long; much better this year, all the children enjoyed the trips due to staff participation, they were enthusiastic and encouraged the children to join in, thus being more beneficial; working with a child with PMLD meant the range of trips available was slightly limited, however this child seemed to enjoy onsite activities such as swimming and trampolining more; the physically disabled children seemed to gain a lot from swimming, relaxation, play and interaction with others; more sensory equipment needed for children with visual/hearing impairments e.g. sensory

room, lights, textural experiences: thought Hesketh Farm wasn't very age appropriate for the 13+ group and time at the Armouries was very short so not sure it was worth the effort; there was a lack of outdoor play equipment for 9 - 12's group.

What did you think about the other leaders and volunteers you were working with, were they helpful, welcoming, did they make you feel at ease?

Welcoming and helpful; leaders were very helpful, some volunteers needed direction to do things; the deputy was well organised, thorough and fair, everyone worked well as a team, good group of enthusiastic, friendly, helpful and confident volunteers/leaders willing to take advice; they allowed me, as a new junior leader, to gain experience of feeding and changing without feeling uncomfortable or inferior, I felt that the majority of volunteers were very helpful though occasionally one or two were not very useful; the very best we've had, the volunteers were very confident, naturals and quickly built up trusting relationships with the children, felt like one big team.

If you attended the training, what did you gain from it, was there anything else that should be included?

Good preparation, helps to know what to expect; useful and easy to understand; didn't attend this year, but previous year's training was put into practice; the moving and handling (hoist) training was very useful; very useful and a good chance to get to know people you'll be working with; info on how to handle seizures or anaphylactic shock was useful and made me feel more prepared in case one was to happen, re-run of hoist training was quite useful.

Is there anything that could improve the scheme?

Inviting parents and siblings to join in for half a day; some new toys; more appropriate activities; more specific activities for PMLD children; better toys and equipment - ball pool, more buses; more ideas for activities if it is bad weather; available for whole summer or all year round; focus on healthy eating, go somewhere else rather than McDonalds; more time with other Team leaders and coordinator before play scheme begins; rota for changing children; more swimming trips, less parks; introduce a social evening prior to the scheme for people old and new to mix and learn about the scheme in a relaxed environment, and team can get to know each other before we start; maybe have groups based on disability rather than age, an Autistic group could do more suitable activities; more sensory activities for children with visual or hearing impairments would be great.

Do you think the coordinator and your team leader supported you, was there anything else they could have done to help you?

Yes; L was very supportive and treated me fairly; they made themselves available and were approachable, the deputy treated the team fairly, she was thoughtful when choosing appropriate people to support the children, she found time to discuss if the trip was suitable afterwards and was 'there' when needed; My team leader has never made me feel inferior and has valued my opinion, I have learnt a lot from her about dealing with individual children and adapting to their needs, she has really built up my confidence as a junior leader.

Any other comments, ideas, suggestions, case studies, would be very much appreciated.

The team I worked with were excellent, and gelled very well, a pleasure to work with, always had the children in mind and not talking to friends or messing about, I would like to see more outdoor play equipment for the 9 - 12's group; I think the children would enjoy a music session with people playing different instruments and allowing the children to have a go.