

**Aireborough
Summer Activities
Scheme**

Annual Report

Summer 2006

Aireborough Summer Activities Scheme

Statistics

No of children attending	Week one	18 girls 22 boys	40
24 girls & 34 boys	Week two	18 girls 23 boys	41
	Week three	12 girls 28 boys	40
Total number of children/young people attending over the three weeks			58
Age Range	4 to 19 Years		

Ratio of Children's Personal Care Needs

No. with Nursing needs (inc. tube feeding)	14 out of 58
No. needing Medication	14 out of 58
No. needing Feeding	18 out of 58
No. needing Changing	13 out of 58
No. needing Toileting	23 out of 58
No. needing One to One Supervision	38 out of 58

Ratio of Disabilities

No. with Epilepsy	18 out of 58
No. with Autism/Autistic Spectrum	17 out of 58
No. of Wheelchair/ Buggy Users	13 out of 58
No. needing transport	25 out of 58
No with Communication Difficulties (Deaf/ hearing impaired 3, Visually impaired 1)	45 out of 58

No. of Leaders	Week one	18 female, 5 male	23
	Week two	20 female, 5 male	25
	Week three	16 female, 5 male	23
	Total		25

Escorts	All Weeks	3 female	3
	Total		5

Drivers	All Weeks	1 female, 2 male	3
	Total		5

Total Staff employed **35**

No. of volunteers	All 3 weeks	2 female & 2 male	4
	2 out of 3	8 female & 2 male	10
	1 out of 3	10 female & 1 male	11
	Odd days	2 female & 3 male	5
	Total		30

Other people involved:-

Jo Galasso – Play scheme coordinator, Philip Tolchard – Scheme chairman, Chris Parapia – Scheme secretary/volunteer support worker, Lenni Busfield – Scheme treasurer, ASAS Management Committee, Jenny Mason – scheme nurse, Barry – school caretaker, Physiotherapists - hydrotherapy, Nick Toczek – performance poetry, Leeds CC Disability Sports team, Bradford MDC Sports and Arts teams, ? – Drumming, Patsy Bell – aromatherapy, John@Animal Antics – snakes, spiders etc, Roy from DPA – Street dance, Arty Smarty – pottery painting, Stingwray – circus skills & drumming, 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.

Disabling conditions include: - A.D.H.D, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, visual impairment, cerebral palsy, chromosome disorders, Cri du Chat, Downs syndrome, Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, dyspraxia, epilepsy, hearing impaired/profoundly deaf, hydrocephalus, Prader-Willi Syndrome, Muccopoly Sacharide disease (Sanphilippo), Retts syndrome, Tuberos 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, 3 volunteers have learning disabilities 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. 2 children and 2 volunteers were from ethnic minority groups.

Nursing Cover

Jenny Mason, school nurse, was on site through out the scheme, she provided valuable information and training for the leaders and volunteers, on: - reporting of accidents and injuries, medication and safety/security, communication, hand washing, information about shunts, good practice guidelines for mealtimes, working with hearing/visually impaired children, and Epilepsy. She also gave individual leaders training on the administration of an EpiPen for a child with a nut allergy; she gave us cautionary advice about certain children's health needs and liaised with nurses from other schools and parents regarding the care needs of children attending the scheme. During the scheme she was always on hand to deal with any concerns or queries we had. She also stored and administered medication, undertook gastrostomy feeding and monitored epileptic seizures.

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, two 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 financial manager, Lenni Busfield, and I, Jo Galasso, 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 to pay some staffing costs, about £8,000, but this is not even one third of what the scheme actually costs, around £31,000, so other sources of funding have to be found. Luckily our applications to BBC Children in Need have been successful for the past few years, these grants have been for about £8-9,000 and pay for one to one support workers and transport costs. Other grants and donations from Charitable trusts and local groups/ individuals range from £1,200 to £14. Where possible parents/carers pay the full £6 per day, parental contribution, but we do offer those with financial hardship reduced rates on request, and some places are paid for by Social Services as part of the child's care package, income from parents this year will amount to about £3,000. Our largest financial outlay is on wages for play workers, but without so many experienced and qualified members of staff, the care the children receive would not be as good, nor would we be able to cater for children with a very high level of care need.

Staff and Volunteers

We were fortunate that most of the Team leaders from last year were again available, Helen Foyston for the under 8's for week 1 & 2, Louise Naylor for the 9 – 12's and David Singleton for the 13+ group, we just had to recruit a Team leader for the under 8's group for the third week. Due to being registered with OFSTED the leader of the under 8's must have a recognised childcare or play work qualification, Emma Harrison, took on the role, she has been a play leader since 2004 and has just finished a degree in early childhood studies.

We recruited 16 leaders who had worked on previous schemes, 3 of these were promoted from junior leader to leaders, following further training and experience gained in the past year, 6 new leaders were also appointed, of which 2 had previously been volunteers and 2 were also going to act as escorts when transporting the children to and from the scheme.

We are extremely lucky to be approached by people wanting to be volunteers rather than having to go in search of them; they come via word of mouth from other staff/volunteers, parents, our committee and local schools etc.

Of the 30 volunteers, 20 had done the scheme previously and 10 were newly recruited, the youngest were 14 years old and the oldest were retired.

We were again exceptionally grateful for having so many male staff and volunteers, 13, as 34 of those who attended were boys, although many of the girls were particularly keen on the men, often fighting over their attention.

Following comments that it was hard to distinguish between volunteers and the young people attending it was decided to provide the volunteers with t-shirts, they looked good and were extremely practical, and had the desired effect, everyone could tell them from the children, however for our more mature volunteers it was a bit more obvious.

Everyone has something to offer to the scheme, some children like energetic people who can play football, others like someone to sit with them and say nothing, or like to talk about their chosen subject – trains or Harry Potter. These people are a really asset to the scheme, they mean that all the children get more attention, have individual support taking things at their pace and doing what they personally like to do.

Planning and Training

Planning meetings were carried out in May and June, where the leaders met new staff, to discuss roles and responsibilities, scheme policies and procedures, and shared their knowledge, skills and interests. The needs and support the children required were identified and a program suggested, appropriate for their interests and abilities. The training sessions were in July, as well as the training from Jenny, the leaders received moving and handling training and both leaders and volunteers did Makaton training, provided FOC by the Speech and language team for Leeds; a couple of staff from another setting attended the Makaton training, as they were to support a child who uses it.

The new leaders found the training useful, in particular the moving and handling they thought was very practical, useful for many from the first day and encouraged them to feel more prepared for the tasks they would need to carry out. During the scheme they worked together with more experienced staff which allowed them to learn even more and left them feeling more confident in dealing with children with a wide range of support and care needs.

OFSTED

One day an inspector turned up to carry out an inspection, unfortunately the under 8's group were going out on that day so arranged to come back, but cancelled the visit. It will now be next summer when we are inspected so we will do everything we can to ensure the inspector is happy with the care we provide and the setting will gain a good report. The main thing is that the children are happy to attend, those who work on the scheme enjoy it and getting paid is a bonus, plus feedback provided by parents indicates they are happy with the care their child receives.

Finances

Again we have been fortunate in receiving a number of grants and donations, two sizable ones, £8,156 from Leeds City Council and £9,717 from BBC Children in Need.

We would like to thank everyone else who has supported us this year including: - SCOPE, Councilor Latty, Frank Parkinson Trust, Sydney Black Charitable Trust, Morgan Crucible Co., Sovereign Health Care, Metcalfe Smith Trust, David Solomon's Charitable Trust, Addleshaw Goddard Charitable Trust, B O'Connell, Jenny Jeffels, Prader-Willi Association, M Hemingway, Iveson Home Keep fit class and the parents/carers for their contributions; all to whom we are extremely grateful.

Also Ciaran Williams-Young (age 6), who attends the scheme did a sponsored walk around Yeadon tarn; we would like to thank him, his family and friends for their support and donations.

Place Availability

Demand for places was again extreme, within a week of sending out letters to parents our usual 35 places per day were full, so to avoid disappointment everyone was offered some provision pushing us up to 42 on some days. Of the 58 who attended, 27 children attend mainstream schools, 31 attend special schools and 6 children were new to the scheme this year.

Transport

All the drivers from last year were available to do the scheme again, a couple had to attend a days training from their regular job, so two drivers who'd worked for us previously stepped in to help us out on those days, which we were very grateful for. Paul Hargreaves, one of the drivers, organised the buses, planned the routes, sorted out cover for the drivers and liaised with the escorts, which made the transport run easily and efficiently and we would like to thank him. 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, the 13+ group use public transport were possible, but the wheelchair users aren't able to use this. It would be ideal if we had a larger bus that was wheelchair assessable, some thing we may need to look in to.

All of the escorts worked as leaders during the day, two were new, they got on really well with the children and enjoyed themselves as well.

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, Rapide Brothers, Nick Toczec, drumming, circus skills, etc. Plus we found some new people and activities: like street dance sessions, with Roy from DPA, sport, art and tri-golf teams from Bradford Play and Recreation development; and John from Animal Antics; train ride at Bolton Abbey and boat rides at Harewood House.

One of the major highlights was Animal Antics, John came with a lizard, scorpion, tarantula, python, giant millipedes and hissing cockroaches, some of the children were apprehensive about touching the creatures at first but some were straight in there, volunteering to hold them. By the end of the session most of the children had had the courage to touch and handle them and were really proud of them selves for doing it. The group that were out that day complained about missing out, although some of the leaders were thankful. (scared!), we will definitely be having them again, it went down really well, however Chris, the secretary of the scheme was having kittens!

The street dance went down well with the older group, as there was a session every week and the young people were able to learnt a routine which they enjoyed and performed some of their new skills at the disco.

Our usual swimming venue, Guiseley leisure centre was closed for refurbishment over the summer which meant we had to use other pools, firstly Eccleshill, which was a good pool and worked well for our groups, but then that closed for emergency work without informing us, we then had to go to Shipley pool, which was ok, apart from getting a parking ticket on the minibus bus, as not all the buses have their own disabled badges, any way we appealed and the fine was overturned.

The teams from Bradford were good, the sports team were particularly good with the wheelchair users doing slalom, races, curling, bowling and boccia. The 13+ group enjoyed the tri-golf, when a mini golf course was set up out on the field, they enjoyed competing against the leaders and volunteers and usually won, for some reason. The art team worked with the 9 – 12's group doing wood work, using real hammers and saws, the children were really proud of their creations, one lad said 'it's amazing what you can make with some wood and nails'.

The under 8's group enjoyed their boat ride at Harewood House and seeing the penguins, swimming on site, trips to farms and play centres, and seeing the butterflies at Tropical World.

We had an art worker, George (Georgina) come in to do sessions with all the groups which was thoroughly enjoyed, they made modroc heads, frames and puppets, this was a quick and very effective medium and everyone was able to create something wonderful. Arty Smarty did sessions with most of the children where they painted their own plate, which was then fired and they took it home with them.

It seems most people enjoy the trips most, visiting new places and going to places parent/carer may not be able to take them to due to transport or not being able to cope with several children or their behaviour in public, so the children particularly enjoyed going to the cinema to see Over the hedge, bowling, Wacky Warehouse and going on boats and trains, possibly things children usually take for granted.

Most of the staff, volunteers, parents and children thought that the best thing about play scheme was the people they meet, and spending and enjoying time with each other, making new friends and meeting up with old ones they know through the scheme. Several of the young people made good relationships with leaders/volunteers during the scheme which had a very positive effect on their attitude and behaviours, seeing how their peers behave and building up mutual respect

As usual we had our party on the last day, the theme this year was any fictional character, so we had Noddy, Little Miss Sunshine, Sherlock Holmes, James Bond... and that was just the adults, children came as witches, Harry Potter, Robin Hood, Shrek, the Green Power Ranger plus many in other fabulous costumes. Sorry to the group who went swimming on that morning, goodness knows what the public thought, oh well who cares, they were enjoying themselves.

Some of the trips had to be changed or cancelled which was disappointing for some children to deal with, the weather had a part to play, but there was plenty of scope for rearranging and doing spur of the moment activities and trips.

Some of the toys and equipment is now old, bits missing and not very interesting for the children so requests have been made for some more equipment, so the old things were disposed of at the end of the scheme to make room for some new things next year. We would be grateful for donations of good quality toys and games like barbies, action men, construction toys, garage or fort, board games and jigsaws etc.

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

Again I'm happy it seemed to go well, no major problems, if anything we probably felt a little under prepared for the proposed inspection, as it wasn't expected till next year, but we will be ready for it then.

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 high regard for and confidence in the scheme, but especially to the children themselves for allowing us to share their experiences, for teaching us about themselves, for their patience in learning how to deal with us and for giving us some great times.

Jo Galasso
Playscheme Co-ordinator

Child Evaluation Form (Completed by the children if able, if not by parents or play leaders on the child's behalf)

What has your child enjoyed at play scheme?

Everything - in particular the trampoline, meeting everyone again, crafts and dancing; loves every minute of every day; going outdoors, on trips, company of people around and more important the bonding of people who care for him; she has arrived home happy each day; all the attention; wakes up every morning saying 'green meadows, play', even though speech is limited tells me about everything and gets very excited; getting picked up in the minibus, knowing in advance what is happening, friends, seeing the animals; I know he has enjoyed himself because he cooperates fully to get ready to come and runs in when we arrive, doesn't talk much but says he wants to go again every day; playing with friends he has made; playing with the cricket bat and water tray; swimming, art, park trips, bowling; Lister park, Otley park, Ilkley park, Harewood House; has no speech but I know he has had a wonderful time because it has been so varied, something different every day, he can't wait to go in the morning; art + animals; helping out with the less able children; everything especially aromatherapy; all of it; hydrotherapy pool, bowling, trampolining; doing things with friends; trips out and colouring, model making; enjoys things that move; happy at making new friends;

What hasn't your child enjoyed?

C didn't want to go to the Armouries as goes often with school; has come home very happy - even if a bit tired; as far as I am aware nothing; don't know cos he doesn't talk about it; nothing, each morning when Ch realised we were going to play scheme he was very excited; A doesn't like animals but was always given an alternative which she did enjoy; fear of the insects, snakes etc.; I can honestly say he has enjoyed it all; H didn't like staying inside and preferred going out; can't say as child doesn't talk, but would suggest he has enjoyed most things; never keen on group activities - drumming etc.; being with a familiar carer, being able to do things specific to his needs and interests;

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 of them, feel free to name people.

Helpful and ready to listen to concerns, in first week a couple of volunteers seemed shy, but probably different once parents have left; friendly, kind and caring, A liked Emily, Isla & Graham; thanks to Jonathon, Chris and Jenny, for being tuned into M, he's been happy and relaxed and I'm sure it is down to them all, they've been fantastic; Louise was v friendly and explained everything J had done, J really enjoyed Jack's (vol) company & he really helped him; R has been very calm whilst with the escort/driver (wish we could say the same with school transport), people have a good understanding of R and know just how to handle her, Claire has been brilliant, R thrives on people who give her quality time and are friendly towards her, continuity is also important; driver has been chatty, escorts have been kind, polite and patient, M is always happy to see them and go with them; driver/escort always greeted R by name which made him feel happy and safe; spoken to Jo on phone, she has always been helpful and informative; B liked Dee, she had a laugh with the children; Julia & Emily looked after Ch, they were lovely, I'm sure he was very fond of both of them, they really took care of him and each day they filled me in with any news; Sh was very comfortable with everyone, he would certainly let me know if he wasn't; the volunteers were friendly and smiley, most know H by name even after day one, H said 'they looked after me properly', she particularly liked David; G liked everyone especially Dee; escort Vicky was excellent, Jenny J has done a really good job looking after A; J particularly liked Amy & Charlotte; spoke to David on the phone, helpful and pleasant; all great; Bernadette and Paul are fantastic; contact minimal but always polite and helpful; great to see Kate (a wheelchair user) helping; Helen very enthusiastic; Helen & Jo T have been excellent;

How well do you think we communicated with you? Was there anything you felt you needed to know but weren't told?

Excellent, although I would appreciate being able to leave a message on the mobile phone no; some notes in book, some verbal when collecting - very good; told daily what M had done; communication via diary is fine; told daily what had been done and how he had been, couldn't ask for much more; nice having the book, as R isn't always able to tell us; B lost his book so didn't know what he was doing in last week; very good, via note book and in person daily, it was very helpful knowing what Ch had enjoyed; sometimes book wasn't written in; book written in every day, said what she has done and how she has been; confusing when trips changed, but has to happen if weather changes; book not always filled in, not sure my comments were always read;

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?

Helps to keep to a routine and have a purpose for the day, motivates the child as they look forward to what they are doing, able to spend time with sibling, go shopping, prepare for holiday; not having to keep A amused, not having to go out, get ready for hols, relaxed, knowing he was stimulated and happy; great benefit to be able to shop in Leeds on my own, feeling relaxed; it gave us space to take 2 children on emergency placements for Social Services; me and sibling spent time together doing girly things; we were able to go off with other children, big benefit was knowing R was getting lots of attention, coming home in a good mood and tired with it; sibling has been able to have friends round, we have been able to do the garden as M screams when the lawn mower or strimmer are on; been able to go shopping which R doesn't like, been able to spend time with sibling doing sporty things he likes like golf, tennis, cricket, R finds these difficult so we don't take his brother often; have some time to ourselves, make important appointments while boys busy; it has been wonderful spending time with sibling, we have been swimming, cinema (twice), bowling, shopping for new sports kit, and paddling with friends in the river, it is so important to be able to give other child individual attention, these occasions are few and far between; sibling has been able to enjoy farm trip and cinema, also good for her to have full on attention; time to 'chill', his sibling was volunteer, so he has enjoyed himself too; shops- lots, museums, just not having to worry about S being disruptive all the time; shopping for hols without it becoming an ordeal, H gets bored, starts shouting and swearing in public, I can relax so when I pick her up I am much more patient and better able to deal with her, the house is lovely and peaceful for a few hours which is a great benefit to us (and the neighbours); having a well deserved break, my dad died during the scheme so it has given me time to help my mum properly; 2 weeks out of 6 without having to get a wheelchair taxi to go anywhere, I've spent time with grandchildren and my adult daughter, it is also hard to occupy a disabled child at home for 6 weeks; unfortunately I've been at work but the scheme helps immensely with childcare (mum of a 14 year old); able to work and shop which is difficult with B at home; doesn't make a lot of difference to us; able to go to work knowing C has had fun, been stimulated and not stuck in doors at home; have been out every day, other children have been on courses so have had 2 day to myself, which I have never had in school hols since having kids, makes 6 weeks go a lot quicker when busy; others have benefited due to extra time available to devote to family activities; relax, nice only have him from 3 - bedtime, less chance for bad behaviour; R is an only child, I work full time, his mum died this year, she would have done things with him in the hols so he would have missed out; we've all benefited, T hates school hols and can be difficult to handle, he has been much happier which makes it better for other family members; get jobs done around the house, shopping, gym, cinema as a couple (first time in 2 years!); peace of mind he's busy so less time put on parents to care for him while I work; having transport has been a real benefit as I don't drive, so my child wouldn't have been able to attend without it.

What do you think about the cost of attendance?

Too much

About right

Too cheap

Most people thought it was about right, but some people would be willing to pay more.

Is there anything that could improve the scheme?

A designated area to leave bags & coats, transport perhaps one way per day, to lengthen free time; would love it to be longer, but grateful for what we receive; just keep doing it; get parents involved in fundraising; would like my child to go out a bit more frequently;

Other comments..

I know A is in good hands at play scheme and I never worry about her; extend the length of the day, very tiring for parents who pick up and drop off, although really appreciate it, extends child's circle of friends/acquaintances, which will be useful for college, reduces isolation; what would we do without it?; wonderful, thoroughly enjoyed; nice to know people at the scheme understand my daughter and what makes her happy; I've never seen my child so happy to go somewhere for 2 weeks without at least screaming once; reassuring to know R is somewhere safe, happy and contented; difficult to find somewhere where my son fits in, he finds it hard to talk about his feelings/thoughts but had nothing but positive reactions from him; would like more information on how we can help; it's been just right for L, he can chill cos he knows what to expect, he knows the building etc, but there are new activities, people, situations for him to remain interested and enable him to build up his coping skills; I really, really appreciate the break, this means a lot believe you me; seemed to be a few new activities this year; B enjoyed being in the 13+ group for the first time this year; this is J's last year, over the years him and his sister have always had a great time and looked forward to the next years scheme; R talks constantly about his day upon his return home;

'When J was small I thought the scheme was brilliant, somewhere to play and go on trips, it was a well-needed break for me, now he's older and easier to look after, it is now that the scheme shows it's true strengths and value, because he is still motivated to come because it is fun. He attended a mainstream scheme at Easter, he wasn't bothered about attending as he said it boring, ASAS gets 5 stars!';

'Even though my son is 15 he leads a very sheltered, restricted life because he can't go anywhere by himself, he can't go to friends or the shops like normal boys of his age, therefore at weekends and holidays he is under 'house arrest'. He is at an age where he doesn't want to do things with mum, but I can't leave him home alone, and you don't get many invitations to children's houses when you have a disability, so play scheme is vital for children like my son. He has benefited from it enormously, his behaviour at home improved, he has been most cooperative in order to get there on time, he has participated in a wealth of activities and experiences that he would not normally have, also it has given me some respite which I am extremely thankful for'.

Volunteer Evaluation Form

What have you enjoyed about play scheme? Highs

Playing and talking with the children; trips out, D singing Kaiser Chiefs!; learning more about the children, activities were beneficial for all; everything; seeing children laughing and enjoying themselves; sharing experiences, participating in variety of activities, working with all the staff; trips; helping children; I made lots of new friends; been a great experience; swimming, making balloon heads; sport with the children in wheelchairs.

What haven't you enjoyed? Lows

When children are down & in a mood, and you don't know how to deal with their behaviour; having to get up early; not having enough buses, so sometimes struggled for activities on base; not knowing what to do when helping certain children; hurt my finger; haven't had any lows the whole thing has been fantastic; having to stay in when it was warm; the day when I didn't have a child to look after;

Did you receive enough information prior to the scheme? If not what else did you need/what might have been useful?

Yes; Makaton session was very useful, possibly more info on children's conditions; more help communicating with the children; all info required was given; received enough information to get an idea of what was expected; more info about the children so we know more about their capabilities and habits;

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

Thought the trips were good, but 9 - 12's would benefit from some of the under 8's trips; great range; brilliant; fairly good range; fun & interesting; drumming was good, held the children's attention, street dance was easy to follow and went really well, Animal Antics was really good, the children were fascinated; giving the children a choice made it easier for them to make a decision without feeling pressured; enjoyable and different; sometimes changed and got confusing; some things weren't always suited to the group who attended; only problem, public transport unreliable; wide range to suit children's abilities;

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?

All great especially Louise; everyone was welcoming; super; all did their best to help when they were around, most were really friendly and welcoming; great team effort; staff weren't too possessive of their allocated child so made it easy for children to interact as they wished; easy to get on with and helped when needed; all were amazing, couldn't ask for nicer group of people; yes, although could have included volunteers a lot more when discussing/planning day's events.

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

Training was excellent; met people I'd be working with and learnt about conditions some children may have like epilepsy; useful; I think volunteers would benefit from some training on wheelchair handling; Makaton was beneficial; more signing; learnt about seizures, so knew what to expect; need something putting in about what to do if you feel you can't help them; gained basic Makaton, however would be good to do on first session and revised at 2nd so more is remembered by first timers; learnt about the children which was useful;

Is there anything that could improve the scheme?

More toys; makes sure leaders/volunteers aren't stuck with the same child for more than a couple of days; keep it running; more activities for indoors e.g. more felt pens & crayons, easy board games, playdoh / plastacine, baking; more buses; stick to original plans, even though it's hard; more buses so kids can do out more.

Would you do it again?

Yes; yes I'll definitely be back for my third year next year; definitely consider it - it was a great experience; maybe as a leader next time?

Any other comments, ideas, suggestions would be appreciated.

Some cars/animal toys for 9 - 12's and play dough too; even though I was moved twice from 9 - 12's to 13+, I enjoyed 13+ group better, as there is more interaction; more toys for kids with less mobility; trips more suited to the age range; could we go ice-skating, cinema, Golden Acre Park, more interactive visits - feeding & touching animals. Can I be a Junior leader next year?; would be nice if children had more time on the scheme; change colour of volunteer t-shirts; find a few more places to take kids out;

Leader Evaluation Form

What have you enjoyed about play scheme? Highs

Seeing the happy faces, children enjoying themselves during trips and activities they really enjoy; interaction with children and trips out; most of it; the whole play scheme, staff were friendly, children were a delight, the trips, seeing children getting so much out of them, flexibility; working with enthusiastic leaders and children; full day trips, trampolining and swimming; volunteers being identified by t-shirts; children getting on and helping each other; working with lovely people & children, well planned activities; Harewood house, Animal Antics, Nick Toczec and art sessions; trips give children opportunities to do things that they don't usually have the chance to do. Enjoyed being 1 to 1 with children so you can really build up trust and form friendships. I especially enjoyed trampolining, hearing SJ squealing!!; laughter and smiles, positive comments from parent/carers; well organised, well planned activities the children have really enjoyed, working extremely well as a team; continual friendly atmosphere, informal relationships between adults and children, young people being friends and helping each other, able bodied children helping to feed those less able and everyone encouraging each other to take part e.g. cheering people on to touch the scary animals; I particularly enjoyed seeing J who is reluctant to participate take part in something and enjoy it, she would usually spend time doing the same thing and I felt I was failing her, it was fantastic when we had a lot and interesting conversation about nature and sea animals, which she knew a lot about and was happy to talk about; train ride at Bolton Abbey, boat ride at Harewood House; support from fellow staff, general freedom to cater for needs of child in my care; staff being brilliant, always offering to help out if you have a child that is 'hard work';

What haven't you enjoyed? Lows

Occasional arguments between children; trips that weren't suited to the group e.g. the play day; lack of appropriate activities, games to suit more able children; some strange choices for activities, poor discipline from some volunteers; not having a bus or not enough seats on a bus for all the children; No lows!; bowling at Shipley, felt staff there didn't want us and treated adults like children; staying in centre if nothing organised; when C was unable to go on a boat as it wasn't running that day, he was upset as he had been looking forward to it; nothing, thoroughly enjoyable.

What have you enjoyed the least?

Wacky Warehouse when they wouldn't let us go in with children who need help; when everyone stays in there isn't always a lot to do, as the children are entertained/play together and don't always need your interaction or attention; I did feel too much time was spent in centre & the art materials weren't as good this year; some of the discipline of the children was quite poor; a child being upset; one of the music & movement people who didn't pitch her activities at the right level; some changing difficulties & when a child became frustrated; messiness, a little too much freedom and confusions sometimes.

Did you receive enough information prior to the scheme? If not what else did you need/what might have been useful?

Would have been good to know about children's dietary requirements, behaviours and ways of dealing with them; did as much as poss. without having children there; info regarding recent behaviour problems among children; useful to have known about change to payment procedure; lots of info which recapped last years training well; would be helpful to have more info from parents on individuals toileting/changing and feeding routines, so you know if you're going about it the right way; the job description was pretty useful; felt fully informed; training provided good amount of info; possibly extra responsibilities of being a Leader opposed to Junior leader could have been more clearly pointed out; more info on clients always useful; to know the calming methods others who work with the children use, e.g. at home/school;

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

Difficulties finding somewhere to take a child that wanted a boat ride; some days no organised activities, but did give time for children to relax; find more activities for PMLD children; enjoyed flexibility of being able to decide on a trip on the day depending on weather; good on whole, sometimes inappropriate; there was plenty to do on site and trips out; our group didn't go to McDonalds and asked why they weren't going; more trampolining, Animal Antics was really good, also Wild Wild West and Harewood House; would have liked to go to Royal Armouries; range of trips brilliant especially for more able children, liked fact leaders could spontaneously organise trips for those left on site; lovely to see a wide range of trips, especially for the PMLD group; trips worked really well this year, particularly liked art with George, accessible to all children; have been pleased to see improvement on provision for PMLD children, the 13+ group enjoyed doing things other people their age do like cinema, bowling, swimming. Animal Antics, street dance, golf, sport and circus skills were all good base activities, drumming got a bit repetitive; trips were limited, some never got the opportunity to attend.

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?

New staff and vols were made to feel part of the team quite quickly; team was led well by David, who encouraged the team to welcome everybody; some volunteers needed reminding about phones on a fairly regular basis; didn't realize how young some volunteers were (14), expectations would have been different had I known; on the whole, some exceptions; good support network, always a good atmosphere; everyone really helpful, especially volunteer, Jack (14); brilliant people, nice to socialize after work with them; everyone was friendly and helpful, didn't feel afraid to ask for help if I needed it, one of the reasons why I enjoyed working on the scheme so much!; best team I have ever worked with on the scheme; some volunteers seemed reluctant to get involved; fantastic, we had good fun and plenty of laughs, which meant the children also had fun; some volunteers were far too young to be working with some clients, age differences caused some inappropriate contact, though it was good to see adolescents enjoying time with their peers; not always able to find a free leader to help if required;

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

Useful as a refresher; knowledge about moving and handling, use of hoist, Makaton, also useful to meet other leaders and team leader; gained confidence, more info on child protection and intimate care issues; Makaton was good; simple wheelchair handling would be beneficial to new leaders/volunteers; first aid training please; practice with the hoist was especially useful; handling training was useful as hadn't done it before; when going through list of children would be more useful focusing on key points, general tips about motivating children, understanding/dealing with challenging behaviour, intimate care guidelines.

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;

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

Helen is very enthusiastic and energetic, she has a skill for organising and encouraging children and staff alike; if I had a problem I know they would support me; approachable; had meetings every morning where we could discuss problems and gain support; felt very well supported, appreciate the effort they put into the scheme; did such a good job meant children had a safe and enjoyable experience; I received a great deal of support, a lot more than I expected, for which I am very grateful; for leaders to do home visits, always good to see children in different environments; received a lot of praise and thanks from our team leader.

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

Time for a coffee would be appreciated, staff never actually had time for a break once the children arrived; more encouragement to volunteers to help tidy up and set up the room, also how to play with the children; I thought the art has been much improved this year, decorating tiles was a useful for spare time, could expand this to decorate inexpensive cups, plates etc; more focused activities tailored to individual needs would be a great improvement.