



The Avenue Centre Final Newsletter2025

Parent room coordinator Tracey

February has whizzed by. Days are getting longer, warmer and brighter! Planets are aligned and visible in the sky above us!

We constantly handle “change” as human beings - changing seasons, changeable weather, Governments, schools, jobs, friends, houses, partners! Nothing is not subject to change! Our tastes change as we age - our favourite food as a child may not be our favourite aged 50! Fortunately, we are resilient and resourceful human beings, and we find that change can be good for us bringing with it confidence and self-esteem as we stretch our barriers and learn to cope and adapt. But it's never an easy process! At first we long to go back to how things were, after a while we reflect and find we are in limbo - not wanting to go back to how things were but not quite ready for the new future....and then one day we realise we have adapted, the change has occurred, been absorbed by us so much so that this is our new accepted “normal”. And so, it starts all over again! Understanding this cycle can help us to cope - it is also important to understand your children live this cycle of change constantly as they learn and develop so our parental duties include helping them through these challenges. Yet if WE find such challenges difficult then take care as our children watch and learn through US and how WE cope!

We have discussed lots of different topics during the month and as it included half term, we tabled a useful list of outside activities to do with children. We informed mums of where to get meals for children for £1. It was great to welcome our school age sibling children during half term and see how well they are doing. As we promote the importance of reading books with children it was particularly wonderful to hear one child reading an adult poster on speech and language out loud to everyone! Amazing.

March is around the corner - as we know there are changes ahead - rest assured we are here to support you all as always until the very end of the month.

Other topics during sessions comprise

- Behaviour - negative/positive attention, praise and reward, actions and consequences, time out,
- Toilet training
- Healthy eating
- Craft resources shared
- Trolley resources shared
- Clothes and homeware distributed
- Bed bugs, nits etc
- Speech and language, vocabulary, reading, development and stages, dummies
- Women's health - sexual health with quiz and discussion
- Sleep - bath book and bed
- Importance of routines
- Signposting to other groups - CAP, Frontline Swaythling, Family Hubs, Bobby Scheme, Jamie's computers, James maintenance, CAB, Solent Mind, accessing "steps to wellbeing" "I-talk", Baby bank, St Mary's Lodge Road mum and baby group (age 0-4).
- Mental health week - we covered this topic with all mental health resources, books and leaflets up for grabs
- Sexual health
- Draught-proofing windows, keeping properties mould free, fire safety.



Playroom

Makaton signs shared with Parents and children, Sun, Rain, Red, Blue, Flower & Heart

Role play and imaginative play have always been a popular activity within the playroom and as playworkers we understand the importance of this in aiding a child's development.

Imaginative play allows children to follow their own ideas and directions without rules, goals or end products. It creates

opportunities for developing social skills, promoting emotional development and allowing for speech and language. We work hard to create play environments that inspire, previous examples have included.

- A pirate ship
- Various vehicles such as cars, trains, tractors and trailers, fire engines
- kitchen and home corner
- The house of the 3 little pigs
- A castle
- Shops, café, vets, doctors' surgery, post office

It is important to remember that role play is almost always initiated by the child and is then supported by adults. We recognized that in previous weeks, going on a bus has been a popular imaginative activity, so with a large cardboard box painted as a bus we have enhanced their play and allowed their imagination to continue. This bus has promoted the development of social skills such as sharing, taking turns and communication. It has allowed the children to explore new ideas and to make sense of the world around them as one child didn't know that you could ride on a bus to the beach,

"No bus to beach, it only goes to town, not beach, never been to beach".

Another lovely interaction observed between two children whilst using the role play area saw one child who has additional needs and requires adult support to share space allowing a peer to join him sitting in the bus, no verbal interactions were made, however they were able to respond to nonverbal cues and gestures to play alongside each other.

Other activities enjoyed this month included art and craft including making valentines cards, sticker fun, large scale drawing and making food and dinner plate art. We have enjoyed music, singing whilst being joined by siblings during half term.

Play Team

A few words on closing

Well, here I am writing my final newsletter for The Avenue. I didn't think it would be the last ever to be written and it fills me with sadness to think our tiny charity will cease to operate from the end of March 2025.

We've achieved so much over the thirty-seven years we have been operating - evolving into a wrap-around the family support centre. We've covered countless subjects, helped with multi-cultural topics, encouraged all things health and safety, hygiene, finance, first aid and parenting to help you achieve better outcomes for your family and beloved children.

The newsletters each month would have been full to overflowing if we covered the finite discussions from FGM to loan sharks to fire safety.

And the number of families we have made a difference to - far too many to recall over the years.

The families have touched our souls, kept us awake worrying at how best to help, we've laughed, danced, sung and cried over the years but also cried happy tears.

We've signposted families to other relevant and helpful organisations and will continue to do so until the day we close.

It's been a fabulous job; my favourite in my long career - I will remember The Avenue with huge pride and pray our families go on to thrive and flourish.

Tracey Parent Coordinator

We are all very sad to see this unique setting is closing but proud of the hard work we and families have undertaken for better outcomes.

We have supported so many families in different ways and learnt so much with those families. Topics and support from positive parenting, filling in forms to educational topics and everything in between has been spoken about.

Watching the children settle in and develop and play has been something I will treasure.

It has been a special privilege to work with families and witnessing positive change and to be part of such a dedicated Team and Charity.

The feedback from families and other agencies has been so positive over the years and we will close knowing we have done our best to make a difference to children's lives by working with both parents and children.

We thank the Trustees for their support, and we thank those of you who have supported in many ways from referrals to donations.

And the kind emails I have received have been very kind and appreciated.

A BIG thank you to the families who have attended.

Donna Centre Coordinator