



Chair's Report

CHIPS 2018 AGM

Introduction: Another year over and another year of success for CHIPS. This is despite the challenges of providing fully inclusive playschemes and other groups in uncertain financial times which support children with special needs and their families living in Eastern Hertfordshire.

My first duty in this report is to thank Helen, Karen, Gill and Suzanne in the CHIPS Office for the immense amount of work they do, a lot of it unseen. This ensures that playschemes and clubs are organised, venues and staff are booked, training is delivered, volunteers are recruited and families are supported to enable children to attend. Without their hard work and dedication, CHIPS would not be the success which it is today.

Can I also outline a special thank you to:

- ❖ Wendy who, for many years, has organised the wages for CHIPS Staff across all of our playschemes with such great skill and good humour.
- ❖ Matt who, again for many years, has helped to ensure that our IT systems work, developed the website and sorted out many things to ensure that the Charity keeps going.
- ❖ Teresa, who has been part of CHIPS for many years, for her support for Billie, our new Leader in Cheshunt, helping her to settle into her new role and her support for Helen in the CHIPS Office.

My grateful thanks also go to the many Leaders, Deputy Leaders, Experienced Assistants, Assistants and Volunteers who work at the five CHIPS Playschemes in Bishops Stortford, Hertford, Ware, Cheshunt and Hoddesdon on Saturdays and during the Summer/Easter/Christmas holidays. Can I warmly welcome the new Leaders, Billie, Jackie and Danielle, and all the other new staff who have joined CHIPS this year. CHIPS Staff are the face of CHIPS and ensure that every child has their particular support needs met in a safe, secure and loving environment.

Parents and carers have nothing but praise for all the staff they meet. I had the privilege of reading the feedback comments from the annual survey of CHIPS parents and carers. The clear message from these comments was that children with special needs love coming to CHIPS, siblings also benefit from mixing with other children in the same family situation as they are and parents/carers really appreciate having the time to themselves or to spend time with a sibling who does not have special needs.

I was deeply moved to read about the young people who, through attending CHIPS, have learnt to be more independent, gained valuable life skills, had fun (it's our core value – have fun!) and made friends. Changing lives for the better is why CHIPS exists and, if we have done that for at least some young people and their families, then we have succeeded.

Inspections: An inspector from Ofsted visited CHIPS Summer scheme in Bishops Stortford and rated it 'Good', This is a confirmation from an official Government inspector that CHIPS met its high regulatory standards thanks to the excellent work

at the scheme by staff and volunteers. An Officer from HCC also visited our Climbing Club in Harlow and the Hertford Summer scheme. Again; she was very impressed by what she saw at both locations, despite the challenges of the venue in Hertford, and confirmed that CHIPS was meeting HCC's high standards.

CHIPS' Activity Clubs: Once again CHIPS was able to run activity clubs to enable children and young people to focus on one activity.

- ❖ Climbing Club, Harlow – Thank you to Vira for running this club.
- ❖ Cookery Club, Ware – Thank you to Gill for running this club.
- ❖ Computer Club, Hertford – Thank you to Peter for running this club.
- ❖ Teen Club, -Thank you to Greg, Jackie and Kasia for running this club.
- ❖ Model Railway Club – Thank you to the Hoddesdon Model Railway Club for welcoming CHIPS children to the club.

Support Group: Our support group ChatSS continues under the guidance of Angela and Jo, who continue to organise excellent speakers for the group. The highlight this year being a talk on Wills and Trusts. They have recently introduced a termly lunch for members to attend.

Fundraising: If CHIPS is to offer its full range of services, and support for the whole family, we need to actively fund raise between £45,000 and £50,000 each year. Although HCC does commission our play schemes and specialist groups, their funding does not cover all children (they do not pay for children under 5, siblings without special needs or the fun activities at schemes), so we rely heavily on fundraising to ensure that we can provide our full range of services and balance the books. Can I therefore thank all the brilliant local people, local groups and businesses who across the year have donated items and raised money for CHIPS including:

- ❖ The Masons in Hertfordshire
- ❖ Longmore Solicitors' Charitable Foundation
- ❖ The Friends Choir
- ❖ The Percy Bilton Charity
- ❖ Local councillors – Cllr Hewitt, Cllr Wyllie and Cllr Kaye,
- ❖ The Childwick Trust,
- ❖ Duncombe School,
- ❖ Sainsburys – Rye Park Depot,
- ❖ Broxbourne Lottery,
- ❖ The Hertfordshire Golf Club,
- ❖ Hanbury Manor Marriott Hotel & Country Club,
- ❖ Christine Clayton,
- ❖ Hazel Smith and Liz Hourican for the Watton at Stone Twilight Walk,
- ❖ Liz Hourican for her sponsored Swimathon in the Serpentine,
- ❖ Rhi Lowe for the Countdown to Christmas Raffle,
- ❖ The Golden Griffin,
- ❖ Karen, Hazel, Marie, Ginny, Sam and Sarah for the glamorous CHIPS Glitter Ball and Gala Dinner,
- ❖ Jacky and Gary O'Leary for opening their garden at Birch Green,
- ❖ Matt and Dani for running the Hertford Christmas Gala CHIPS bottle tombola,
- ❖ The Headley Foundation,
- ❖ Hazel for the Nordic Walking World Record Attempt. Sadly the world record attempt failed but a fabulous £2,600 was raised for CHIPS,
- ❖ Supporters from Hertford Methodist Church,

- ❖ Pro Valet Car Wash in Bishops Stortford and Cllr Colin Woodward for organising,
- ❖ Glaxo Smith Kline (GSK) for being mad scientists and donating Christmas presents,
- ❖ Georgina Lacey who ran the London Marathon,
- ❖ The Amwell Rotary Club who are kindly funding the 2018 AGM and our awards to volunteers.

Plus the many wonderful individual donations to CHIPS which cannot all be listed here.

If you, your work colleagues or friends would like to organise an event for CHIPS, please contact the CHIPS Office on 01992 534664 or e-mail fundraising@chipsplay.org . If you would like to donate to CHIPS please do so via the CHIPS website – www.chipsplay.org – as you can do so via the Just Giving link which allows CHIPS to claim at extra 25% in Gift Aid at no extra cost to you.

If you are ordering anything from Amazon, please do so via the CHIPS Website where there is a link to www.smile.amazon.co.uk and register CHIPS as your preferred charity. This allows CHIPS to gain a donation, again at no cost to you, every time you make a purchase from Amazon.

Farewell: Two members of the CHIPS family sadly passed away this year. Marion Russell, a Leader who had been with CHIPS from the start, died suddenly whilst on a trip with a friend. Marion was the first CHIPS Leader I met 18 years ago when my son first started attending CHIPS. Marion was a special person, she was always warm, inviting and concerned to know more about you. Jennifer Saint also died this year. Jennifer was one of the first children to attend CHIPS. She was the older sister of Wendy who still works for CHIPS. Can I express my grateful thanks to the people who donated money to us in their memory as it will help us to continue running CHIPS.

Finally: Can I thank the many people who give their time to CHIPS to help organise and run our events, raise money for us and ensure that our children have a good time. It is all of the individual efforts together which make CHIPS the great Charity that it is.

Thank you

Graham Nickson

Chair, CHIPS Trustees