

## **Chair's Report**

### **CHIPS 2019 AGM**

**Introduction:** Another year over – our 25<sup>th</sup> year – and another year of success for CHIPS. Despite the challenges thrown at us; we have continued to deliver fully integrated playschemes and special interest groups for children with special needs alongside their brothers and sisters. This makes us unique in Hertfordshire, and possibly beyond, and something that we are very proud of.

**Thankyou:** I would first like to thank the fabulous Helen, Karen and Gill who work in the small CHIPS Office in Hertford. It is their hard work which means that venues to deliver our playschemes are booked, staff are organised to work (it is always a challenge to ensure enough staff are booked), new staff are recruited, supplies purchased, entertainers booked, finances managed, DBS checks carried out, .. the list goes on.

Can I also thank the equally fabulous Suzanne for recruiting volunteers, Jo for her perseverance chasing up outstanding fees, Rita for ensuring that our books are in order and Wendy for organising the payroll.

Without this vital work, much of it unseen, CHIPS would not function.

CHIPS is truly fortunate to have wonderful professional staff to lead each of our five playschemes and special interest groups. Our professional staff not only ensure that all children are safe, they organise a variety of activities such as arts & crafts, trampolining, playing on bikes, playing football and making healthy food to eat. Every child is included and every child has the opportunity to take part. This is the essence of CHIPS and our paid staff, supported by equally excellent volunteers, ensure that it is delivered.

My heartfelt thanks to each and every person.

**CHIPS Parent Survey:** Feedback from this year's annual survey of parents underlined the importance of the support provided by CHIPS.

- ❖ 91% of respondents said that CHIPS helped them and their family to feel less isolated,
- ❖ 87% of respondents said that CHIPS helped them and their family to cope and feel better,
- ❖ 95% of respondents said that CHIPS helped them and their family to feel stressed after attending,
- ❖ 67% of respondents said that CHIPS was the only short break support which they received.

Lots of you said your children love coming to CHIPS and the staff are amazing. That your children had made new friends, increased their confidence and tolerance and that coming to the playschemes had given them exercise and new experiences. One person said 'we have been so impressed with the level of care and professionalism shown by CHIPS staff during our child's first summer with you. You have really contributed to his wellbeing during the long summer break – thank you.'

## **Inspections:**

The Playschemes and clubs are subject to inspections from both Ofsted (Playschemes only) and from Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), who provide our core funding.

This year the Ware summer scheme, Computer and Cookery clubs have been inspected.

I have summarised the outcome the reports below:

### **Ware-**

- ❖ Children develop very close bonds with staff and volunteers, and look to them for support when needed. Children thoroughly enjoy interaction with staff during games.
- ❖ Parents report that they are happy that their children have the opportunity to mix with others with a varied range of abilities. Parents describe the scheme as 'amazing' and talk about what a great support it is to them. Parents also report that they are confident to leave their children in the care of the 'lovely staff'.
- ❖ Children enjoy spending time in this lively environment. They decide what they would like to do next from the good range of activities available.
- ❖ Self-evaluation is carried out using the feedback of children, parents and staff. This helps to drive future improvements.

### **Computer-**

- ❖ The visit to the CHIPS computer club was very positive. The Children and Young People (CYP) attending the scheme were happy and playing well with the other CYP in attendance.
- ❖ The scheme was well organized and the computer equipment was set up prior to the CYP arriving which enabled them to be kept safe at the scheme whilst also ensuring they were able to engage well with their peers and play together.

### **Cookery-**

- ❖ The CYP attending the session were of varying ages and abilities, however they all seemed to get on and were well supported during the session. The CYP I spoke to said they enjoyed the sessions. The CYP had a chance to socialise and chat with each other during their time at the scheme. They were engaged throughout via the staff/ volunteers.
- ❖ Discussions with parents at the time of the visit were very positive. All parents felt their child enjoyed coming to the sessions and found CHIPS to be helpful and supportive of their family.
- ❖ One parent said her son had recently demonstrated the skills he had learnt at the Cookery Club, at home whilst they were baking a cake as he used a knife to test if it was cooked through. Something he had not known to do before.
- ❖ Parents were happy to talk to Gill, the CHIPS Cookery Club Scheme Leader, and seemed to have a good relationship with her.

**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:** The club has gone from strength to strength under Vira's leadership. All children attending are challenged to achieve their personal goals working with others.
- ❖ **Cookery Club, Ware:** As well as cooking delicious food, young people attending learn valuable cooking skills which will help them to become more independent. Every attendee is given a folder with recipes in them so they can try cooking at home. Thank you to Gill for running this club.
- ❖ **Computer Club, Hertford:** Thank you to Peter for running this club which allows lots of computer game playing.
- ❖ **Teens Club:** The group aims to build up the confidence and independence of the teenagers who attend. Various outings are planned by the group including a trip to Southend, a meal out and trip to the cinema. Thank you to Jackie for running this club.
- ❖ **Model Railway Club:** Thank you to Hoddesdon Model Railway Club for welcoming CHIPS children to the club.

I would also like to make a special mention for **ChatSS** run by Jo and Angela. They organise a series of meetings on the third Thursday of each month in term time with guest speakers. The meetings are not only informative, they allow parents of children with special needs to come together to support each other. Thank you, Jo and Angela for all that you do.

#### **Volunteer of the Year Award:**

Every year each of the five CHIPS groups nominate their volunteer of the year. For 2019 these are:

- ❖ **Bishops Stortford:** Ruby Willcocks
- ❖ **Cheshunt:** Sam Cawdell
- ❖ **Hertford:** Tom Donnelly
- ❖ **Hoddesdon:** James Pink
- ❖ **Ware:** Evie Mangham

This is always a difficult choice for the leaders of the groups as CHIPS is lucky to have very many wonderful volunteers who contribute such a lot to the running of each scheme. Each of the nominated volunteers will receive an award from CHIPS in recognition of their nomination. CHIPS' Trustees have looked at each of the nominations and have made the difficult choice of the overall CHIPS Volunteer of the Year. I will announce the winner at the AGM.

#### **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 and ChatSS), fully cover the increase in our costs (ie the annual increase in the

minimum wage) or the extras we seek to provide to deliver an excellent experience for all children attending. CHIPS will also subsidise the session fees for families who are unable to afford them and we need to fund this. Hence; we rely heavily on fundraising to ensure that we can 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:

- ❖ **Yarnbombers** – The fabulous Yarnbombers (aka The Secret Society Of Hertford Crafters) brought fun, wit and imagination to Parliament Square in the middle of Hertford for 3 weeks in the middle of the summer. Overnight they turned the town centre into an Enchanted Wonderland, complete with pixies, fairies, toadstalls, woodland animals, a dragon, unicorn and hundreds of flowers all made from wool. They also organised a collection for CHIPS which raised a lot of money. We are deeply grateful for their support.
- ❖ **In house team of volunteers**-lead by Hazel Smith who organise fun events which raise money for the charity. Souperwalk, Quizzes, Coffee mornings and recently the Spanish Evening
- ❖ **Local Councillors** -who have allocated funds from their Locality Budgets.
- ❖ **Magic Radio**-for funding the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party.
- ❖ **Great Hadham Golf Club**
- ❖ **Hertford Rotary club**
- ❖ **Couchfield Trust**
- ❖ **Hertfordshire Community foundation**
- ❖ **Royal London**
- ❖ **Bengeo School**

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](mailto:fundraising@chipsplay.org) . If you would like to donate to CHIPS please do so via the CHIPS website – [www.chipsplay.org](http://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](http://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.

**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**