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Virtual School Sensory Support News update



VSSS update - staff changes

The new academic year has seen a number of staff changes within VSSS, including a move to a slightly different management structure with Delyth Crook and I sharing the post of Head of Virtual School Sensory Support. I will be available in the first part of the week and Delyth the second part of the week.

We were once again delighted to attend events at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse Museum at the start of term. We were pleased so many families were able to join us and

the feedback we received was that those who attended had enjoyed their time and were glad to meet other families with a child who is supported by VSSS.

If you would like to contact either of us for any reason, our email addresses are:

delyth.crook@norfolk.gov.uk and kate.stocks@norfolk.gov.uk



VSSS family days at Gressenhall

Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse Museum provides a wonderful setting for the VSSS family days, the staff are always friendly and supportive. The Key Stage 2 day at Gressenhall was a great success, we were joined by 18 families, and everyone enjoyed taking part in the river dipping, dissecting owl pellets alongside the familiar favourites of the tractor ride, watching the animals and of course the fabulous adventure play area.

There was also another very enjoyable day at Gressenhall for preschool and KS1 deaf, multisensory impaired, VI children and their families on Monday 5th September. 33 families came, involving 140 adults and children. Families and children enjoyed the variety of activities – the museum, the adventure playground, tractor rides and activities at the farm. A particular highlight this year was the Bear Ear Clinic (organised kindly by Toy

Like Me) which had previously successfully attended the Norfolk Deaf Festival in July 2022. Children brought their teddies and cuddly toys to have a hearing aid fitting at the Bear Ear clinic – the toy hearing aids were a variety of colours and types and all free. There were signed stories of the book 'Bears Can Ski' which is related to the Bear Ear clinic. Toy Like Me also organised tactile activities for the event. Thank you to Gressenhall and Toy Like Me who supported the event so well.

Some comments from families:

"Thank you for a lovely day at Gressenhall yesterday! We loved it and glad we did the Bear Clinic early O always loves the little cottage! Here are some pics including of her cat with hearing aids- they are so good and have literally been tried on every single toy she possesses! I wish Toy Like Me would sell them as I'd buy in all the sizes"

"It was an amazing day out. Days like this are so important for deaf families because the kids can play with each other, see that they are not alone, not the only ones wearing hearing aids or cochlear implants, also a great opportunity to meet other families and parents and talk about your journey, your difficulties, be more confident and see your kids being super confident as well! My daughter had an amazing day meeting other kids wearing cochlears or hearing aids and she was proud and happy as well! We enjoyed the bears clinic and the book reading and all the activities as well! Thanks so much for arranging such a wonderful day for all of us!"



Free bus pass

Did you know that any child or young person with a vision impairment (CYPVI) can apply for a bus pass, which allows them to travel for free at any time on any bus in Norfolk (except for Park and Ride buses)?

CYPVI who are 12 years old or over, are also entitled to have a companion enhancement, which will allow one companion to travel for free with them. A companion can be anyone (a carer, friend, relative etc) of bus fare paying age, who can support the CYPVI on the bus.

Anytime travel

CYPVI can travel with their bus pass at any time of the day in Norfolk, without the usual off-peak restrictions of a standard disabled pass. The pass will have a clock face at the top, indicating you can travel at any time so this will be clear to the bus drivers.

Companion enhancement

The bus pass will have a C in the top right-hand corner to show the driver that the CYPVI has a companion enhancement.

How to apply for a free bus pass

You can use the link below to apply for a bus pass online and clicking on “Apply for new disabled pass”. You will need a photograph of the CYPVI along with supporting documentation as detailed on the website.

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/public-transport/buses/concessionary-travel-pass/disabled-travel-pass>

When applying online, there is no option to request a companion enhancement, so you will need to request it separately (it is not issued automatically). Once you have submitted your application online, you will receive confirmation and an Application ID number. You should then send an email requesting companion enhancement with your Application ID number to:

concessionarytravel@norfolk.gov.uk

If you would prefer to complete a paper application form, you can print one from the NCC website. The “tick box” in section E will need to be checked for the companion enhancement to be added.

I already have a bus pass but no companion enhancement

If the bus pass does not have a C in the top right corner, you do not yet have companion enhancements but can request it by sending an email (with the name and date of birth of the CYPVI) to:

concessionarytravel@norfolk.gov.uk

Park and Ride buses

The bus pass can be used on park and ride buses at a discounted rate rather than free like normal buses. Pass holders are entitled to a discounted rate of £1.80 return on park and ride services in Norfolk after 9.30am and £1.50 after 12 midday.

If you have any questions or concerns around bus travel, please contact the Habilitation Team. If not, happy travelling!

georgina.rose@norfolk.gov.uk

nicola.rowe@norfolk.gov.uk

rachel.britcher2@norfolk.gov.uk



Vision Norfolk pre-school group

Do you have a pre-school child with a diagnosed eye condition?

The Vision Norfolk early years group meets every Wednesday from 10:30 till noon.

Vision Impaired parents/carers of pre-school children are also very welcome.

Sessions are free and refreshments are included.

Venue: Vision Norfolk, Bradbury Activity Centre, Beckham Place, Edward Place, Norwich, NR3 3DZ

Email: cypf@visionnorfolk.org.uk

Phone: 01603 561242



Date for your diary - Norfolk Deaf Festival 2023

The Norfolk Deaf Festival is so excited to announce that they will be back next year. They will be heading to the Forum, Norwich on the 7th and 8th July 2023, ready to inspire, celebrate and educate both deaf and hearing people of all ages.

Come along and learn something new, meet awesome deaf role models and take in the amazing atmosphere that you can only find at their festival; all of which is completely accessible with captioning, good quality sound systems and BSL interpreters. You don't want to miss out!

More info to follow nearer the time.

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