

Early Years Alliance:

Play and learn sessions run in West at Abbey Green and Farnham as part of the family hub model.

Play and learn Case Studies – building relationships by The Early Years Alliance.

(Farnham) In our Farnham direct delivery session, we have a mum with her younger child that attends on occasion. She enjoys our sessions, as it gives her quality time to spend with her younger child, as her older child she been diagnosed with autism. Sometimes she struggles with activities for both of her children to attend at the same time, as she felt overwhelmed or felt judged by her older child's behaviour.

Mum rang me after several weeks of not having been able to come to our session, wanting information about groups that she could attend with both of her children especially during the holidays. She was struggling to find anywhere that could feel comfortable. I mentioned to mum that I currently didn't know of any, but I was happy to try and find things around the Bradford area to help her out.

I first asked the Play and Learn team if they knew of any Special Educational Needs (SEN) groups to support the mum. One of the team members mentioned to me about a place called Dans Den in Ilkley that supported children with SEN. I looked up the group before passing the information on, to learn more about it. This group was a soft play centre, with a family friendly café for children 0 to 8 years old. Upon looking up the group, this was suitable for both children and the staff were knowledgeable about SEN children. Some of the staff were trained in hidden disability awareness and the centre provided a safe space for these families. I explained all this to mum and sent her the website, therefore she could read about the location and learn more for herself about the place.

My next part of my research was to search on internet, including social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, etc. Through my research I found out about Swimbright Special Needs swimming lessons in Leeds.

When I spoke to mum, I explained that it was outside of Bradford but just having that knowledge that this group did exist and that she had all the details if she wanted the information.

Along my research, I came across a training course for children to attend that assists with how to develop positive behaviour, develop life skills and it provided quality learning support. Again, I explained to mum that it might be suitable for her daughter at the current moment, but more for information so that mum knew about the different agencies that could possibly help if required. This group not only support the children with dealing with autism but also helps support the family understand about autism and how they could support someone with autism.

After one of my group visits at Little Dots, I was talking to one of the group leaders who was talking about her passion in supporting children learn English, working with families learn the English vocabulary and skills but was also promoting the work they did with Shine. Shine Together is an after-school club that have opportunities for all children that are disabled to participate in activities such as arts, crafts and cooking in a relaxed and sociable environment.

Recently whilst looking on Facebook, I was looking for groups on the Family hub pages, where I came across the AWARE newsletter. As I looked further into AWARE, I found that it is a parent-run group supporting families with children and young adults

on the autistic spectrum of all ages. The newsletter mentioned about activities that are taking place over the summer holidays, which has stay and play groups for children from 0 to 16 years and their families. Again, I sent all the details to mum with the links to the information.

I will be contacting mum in the next few weeks to see how she is and whether she has attended any of the sessions or groups that I have sent her. Also, a good chance to see if mum found any other groups herself.