

Family Fun Sessions

Monday 7 April 2025

12.30-2pm and 2.30-4pm

The King's Church

Budget: £2400 split across 3 dates (approx. £800 per session)

Broken down to:

£900 from Budding Foundation

£1500 from BHTC

Total Spent: £875

Spend Breakdown: £340 -graffiti artist

£145 -inflatable assault course

£40 -new banner

£350 -Hot wheels track

There were no costs incurred for:

-propagation equipment, which was gifted by The Budding Foundation

-Venue hire, volunteers and additional activities were provided by The King's Church (TKC)

Aim: To provide a safe and fun event for children and young people with SEND, whilst providing support and information to parents and carers, as well as offering activities to siblings.

Number of bookable tickets: 60 families, via Ticketsource and the Help Point.

Booking statistics: The total number of bookings was 55 families across both sessions. Tickets were per family but they were asked to provide the ages of the children attending. So, we are able to break down the booking to show how many children attended. We also asked where people lived.

	12.30pm	2.30pm	total
Number of families	28	27	55
People in total	95	80	175
Just Children	62	48	110

Per area	total
Burgess Hill	39
Surrounding Village -Hurst/Hassocks etc	6
Haywards Heath	10
West Sussex	0
None of the above	0

Looking at the ages of the children; we had a mix of ages with the 8-11 age category being the highest, followed closely by children ages 4-7. There were far less children in the under 3's and 12 plus age groups, than the other two.

Most of the activities were aimed at ages 4-11 so hopefully the majority children were catered for.

Child's age	total
under 3	14
age 4-7	40
age 8-11	41
age 12 plus	15
total	110

Attendee statistics: The total number of attendees on the day was 34 families across both sessions, there were 21 no shows/last minutes cancellations, 8 in the first session and 13 in the second.

Publicity:

The event was advertised in a multitude of ways, including:

- The King's Church shared the event with congregation, contacts and on their social media
- Poster in the Help Point Window
- Event calendar
- Press release in advance
- Shared with all local schools
- All noticeboards in the town
- A banner at the McDonalds roundabout
- Several posts on the Town Council Facebook
- Sent to supporting organisations and activity providers
- Sent, via email, to all the Young Carers database
- Shared with a support group I am part of personally

- Nationwide noticeboard
- Middy article (from PR)
- Sent to those who attended the October sessions
- Graphic in the March About Town

Event breakdown:

Local organisations who support families were invited to attend and have an information table at the event. Six organisations attended offering support; these were:

- Brighton Hove & West Sussex Deaf Children's Society
- West Sussex Talking Therapies
- West Sussex County Council Early Help Team
- West Sussex Library Service
- Makaton Jenny
- Action in Rural Sussex (AirS)

The King's Church ran a number of activities with volunteers from the church, and the budget was used to provide other activities, some information services provided activities too. The activities were all free to do and on offer there was:

- Inflatable assault course
- Hot Wheels playsets by World of Wheels
- Propagation activity
- Microscope activity and wood sawing with AirS
- Several colouring activities
- Lego table
- Graffiti art
- Paper caterpillar craft

Author Julie Alison Macdonald provided a book reading of her story, alongside Jenny Fisher who did Makaton signs. Julie then offered a book signing to anyone who purchased a copy of one of her books. This was the only paid part of the event and books were reasonably priced at £7.99.

Feedback:

We created a QR code which is available at the events to scan as well as in notice boards afterwards. The code is linked to a Google form which we can keep adding events to without changing the code itself. The form simply asks what event you have attended, *'what went well'*, *'it would be even better if...'* and *'if the event you attended required you to book in advance, how did you find the process?'*

Here are some of the responses received for this event:

What went well?

- My children both really enjoyed themselves and loved all the activities available. They particularly enjoyed the inflatable obstacle course and the graffiti art. My children definitely preferred the afternoon sessions as it can be hard to get ready and get out of the house for the earlier sessions. All of the people working/helping out at the session were so kind and friendly, my children felt really comfortable there which is so lovely to see as we usually really struggle when we go out.
- The inflatable assault course was a huge hit, as was the graffiti names and the hot wheels track. It was nice to be able to enjoy a drink, and be able to know my children couldn't run out of the door. It's a safe space with other parents who "get it" which is so nice as that's not the experience you have everywhere else. Support for send parents is so important and vital, as it can be incredibly lonely and challenging.
- We loved the graffiti name man Tom and the different inflatable. My children usually struggle to use the dome inflatable as they don't like others near them. As usual we enjoy the planting activity. It was a great event and something for everyone. Oh, and the hot wheels were fab.
- The event was well laid out and the hot wheels cars were a particular favourite with my boys
- Everyone was so lovely and welcoming the world of wheels lady was amazing really engaging and helping my boy
- All volunteers and staff very friendly. Good venue- not too crowded. Good range of activities- lost woods, bouncy castle, Lego and crafts.

It would be even better if...

- Nothing. It was fantastic and my children can't wait for the sessions in August.

- It would be amazing if the event was done for older children as well, although older children are welcome some activities aimed at them as well would be great. Also, a list of what's going to be at the event would be amazing so we can plan and warn our children. E.g. there's a planting activity, hot wheels, graffiti names, colouring, Lego, inflatable assault course. So many send children really appreciate being told what to expect, it would really help our family.
- We daughter very much missed the sand art but realise this may be a costly activity to put on.
- My mother-in-law spotted a child with weeping chicken pox rash part-way through the session so unfortunately, they had to grab my eldest son (who is immune suppressed) and leave. They were in too much of a rush to let the organisers know though they probably should have at the time.
- N/a
- Longer turns on the bouncy castle

If the event you attended required you to book in advance, how did you find the process?

- Booking was easy, but you have to be quick as the events fill up quickly.
- Simple
- Really easy
- Easy to do
- Booking was easy.
- Yes. Booking was really quick and simple.

Feedback from information services and activity providers:

World of Wheels Sussex -It was really nice to be part of the day and lovely to see this kind of SEND advocacy in practice. I thought both sessions ran really well from my perspective.

Tom Goulden (graffiti artist) -I thought the event went really well. Great planning and good range of ages. It felt like most for the over 12s went to support younger siblings. I wonder if there is a way to engage them for a different event or take them to one side so they know there is space for them. I'm glad they all attended and enjoyed my activity. Very well put together.

West Sussex Library Service -We felt having two sessions in the afternoon was helpful from a team workload perspective as it meant we could focus on the event for part of the day rather than the whole day. This is also helpful when we have to consider travel time to and from the events we attend.

We also met and chatted to a total of 22 families, some of which we had met before and a few who were new. The children seemed to enjoy the dark dens and sensory toys, as well as the free books and toys we were able to give away. The parents were also appreciative of the give aways, and those who were new to us took leaflets and information about the Disability Register and the different SEND library resources available.

It was another opportunity for us to network with different activity providers, in particular World of Wheels and the Tom the graffiti art guy, and also share our library SEND information with other providers. Thank you for inviting us to attend and we are happy to attend future events. Also happy to read a sensory story when staffing allows.

The King's Church - There was such a lovely atmosphere, and I feel the contributors are really getting to know each other. It was good to see networking and helpful conversations taking place between them as well as with those families attending.

There were several aspects that provided a helpful re-refresh for the event, including the inflatable, which worked very well and seemed to be in constant use. Well done for choosing such a lovely range of contributors Kayleigh. World of Wheels, Graffiti Art and Lost Woods were great additions, enabling us to provide a wide range of activities, for all ages.

It's lovely to hear some positive feedback about the new timings. The first session was particularly well attended and the engagement in the story time during this session was very encouraging for Anna.

I am aware we had quite a few no-shows to the second session. It would be interesting to see whether this is a bit too late in the day for some people. It obviously means a later pack-down time for team too and people were keen to get away quickly, so we had less support with this.

Evaluation:

Whilst at the event I was informed a family had left as they thought another child attending with chicken pox, this was also followed up on the event feedback form. Unfortunately, I was unable to speak to the family directly, as they left swiftly. Angie was able to follow up with the family and the child it was thought may have chicken pox, actually had a non-contagious skin condition. It was suggested by Angie that in future, when we send the reminder ahead of the event, that we include a statement about sickness/illness as this is a vulnerable group of people. This is something we will do moving forwards.

We had quite a large number of no shows, mainly in the second session (2.30-4pm), whilst we normally have a number of no shows, to be expected with this cohort, it was unexpectedly high. Whilst we can't be 100% sure of why it was, we can speculate it was down to the very nice weather. It was likely many families opted for a longer day out, outside, rather than a short event inside. Whilst it is always disappointing when there are no shows, all the families attending seemed to thoroughly enjoy the sessions, and the feedback received just proves it was valuable to run these sessions.

Looking at the stats in comparison to October 2024, I can see that we had 9 more families book to attend, which broken down meant the total number of people booked 147 (Oct) to 175 (Apr), with 77 children (Oct) to 110 children (Apr). The majority of the additional families seem to be Burgess Hill residents with the number up from 29 in October to 39 in April, with 6 families stating they were from Surrounding Village - Hurst/Hassocks etc in both months, and 11 in October and 10 in April from Haywards Heath. The ages of the children remain the same across the two dates with children aged 4-11 being the majority.

Having changed the session times, to a later session, I am still unsure if that worked or not, due to the number of no shows, so it maybe that we need to trial it again for the summer. Regardless of time, so far, the first session always seems to be more popular!

The pre and post event press releases were picked up by the Middy Sussex Times, which was good and it was also covered again in an article that covered all of the Easter activities.

The events now have a good number of returning families and organisations. I will carry on working with Angie to run these, continuing to work with businesses and organisations who I've build good relationships, to provide familiarity as well as ensure we make sure to mix it up with new activities, to ensure it doesn't become stale.

Kayleigh Elliott-Davidson

Events, Communication and Administration Officer

22/4/2025

Photos of event



Pre event:

Family sessions return next week

The next Family Fun Sessions – for families of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) – will take place next Thursday (August 8).

Held at The King's Church, families can expect the ever-popular inflatable disco dome to return, Train Master with their never-ending train track and crafts.

Reaching Families, West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Early Help, Kangaroos, WSCC Young Carers, Makaton Jenny, and West Sussex Libraries will all be available to offer information and support to families.

Julie Alison McDonald will also be returning with her newest book!

The sessions will run from 10am-11.30am and 12.30pm-2pm, and are free to attend but spaces must be booked in advance.

The sessions are aimed at ages three to 18, with pri-

ority given to those living in Burgess Hill and the surrounding villages.

To book visit www.ticketsource.co.uk/burgesshilltowncouncil or contact the Help Point on 01444 247726 or visit in person at 96 Church Walk. Please note under-16s must be accompanied by a parent or carer at all times.

Anyone over 16 who is able to attend the event space without the need of parent or carer support may do so, but a responsible adult must remain onsite for the duration of the event.

We are unfortunately unable to provide any individuals with independent support at the event.

For further information visit www.burgesshill.gov.uk/family-fun-sessions/

The Family Fun Sessions are co-organized by The King's Church and Burgess Hill Town Council, with funding from The Budding Foundation.

Post Event:

Children enjoy April family fun sessions in Burgess Hill

By Julie Holden
Contributor

38 families attended the Family Fun Sessions, for families of children and young people with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) on Monday, April 7.

Children enjoyed graffiti art with Tom, an inflatable assault course and the other crafts on offer. They also loved the Hot Wheel tracks from World of Wheels Sussex and the propagation activity supplied by the Budding Foundation! Julie Alison Macdonald led a story time with Makaton Jenny teaching the Makaton signs alongside, and Action in Rural Sussex also ran an activity

at the sessions.

West Sussex Talking Therapies, West Sussex Library Service, Brighton Hove & West Sussex Deaf Children's Society, and some of the team from Mid Sussex Family Hub (run by WSCC) all attended with information for families too.

Our thanks goes to The Budding Foundation who sponsored the event and provided the propagation activity, and the volunteers at The King's Church, who help run the sessions.

Tell us your news!

Scan the QR code to send us your photos and pictures



Action in Rural Sussex activity at The Family Fun Sessions

SUBMITTED



Angie Bee, Makaton Jenny and author Julie Alison McDonald doing story time at The Family Fun Sessions

SUBMITTED



Picture left to right: Kayleigh Elliot Davidson from BHTC, Clive Gray from The Budding Foundation and Angie Bee, family and children lead from The King's Church with propagation items donated to the sessions by The Budding Foundation.

SUBMITTED

Easter fun events in Burgess Hill keep children and young people busy

By Julie Holden
Contributor

Children and young people were kept busy this Easter holidays with free events in Burgess Hill.

The Easter Trail proved popular with nearly 200 children completing the trail across the holiday period. 22 local businesses got involved displaying raffle Bunnies lost items, for the children to find. All the children received a book when they returned their map and three children, Niamh, Sebastian and Nakshatra, won the main prize of a soft toy (Bunnies and his two friends) and an Easter egg.

There were taster sport sessions to join with qualified coach, Zaire Taylor, from Worthing Thunder teaching basketball skills and Jimmy Smith and his team, from Incore Tennis teaching tennis skills. A large number of children attended the 5 sessions over the holidays and picked up new skills!

Over 50 Children visited the Kilo for Easter bonnet making with the Burgess Hill Creative Community on Monday 14th. The children then paraded on the Kilo and headed on a loop around Church Walk so the children could show off their wonderful creations! After all the hard work the children tucked into a yummy picnic back at the Kilo!

On Tuesday 8 coach Nicki, from Gosport BMX had children and young people (even the teenagers!) fully engaged during the Rock Up and Ride coaching sessions. They learnt how to use the track better and make their jumps higher, whilst DJ Matt blared out the best tunes!

38 families attended the Family Fun Sessions, for families of children with SEND on Monday 7. Children enjoyed a whole range of activities including graffiti art with Tom on inflatable assault course and the Hot Wheel tracks from Wotw Sussex. They also enjoyed story time with author Julie Alison McDonald and learnt sign language with Makaton Jenny. There were also several organisations attending with information for families.

If you attended, we would love to hear your feedback, as it helps us plan future



Coach Nicki at the Rock Up and Ride event. SUBMITTED



Children at the tennis session at St John's Park. SUBMITTED



Children enjoying the track at Rock Up and Ride event. SUBMITTED



Coach Jenny with children at the tennis session at St John's Park. SUBMITTED



Graffiti art at the family Fun Sessions. SUBMITTED

event. Please complete the Google form: <https://forms.gle/1EALpQL5eNfLwvL17h9feXu6V4LzWw0UkCabAbbq-MIFkLQGYLQ/ewofwcn>
Missed out on all the wonderful events?! Sign up

our mailing list and you will be emailed directly about events organised by us: <https://www.burgesshill.gov.uk/town-community/low-events/events-mailing-list/>
The Family Fun Sessions were sponsored by The Bur-

ding Foundation and co organized by Burgess Hill Town Council and The King's Church. Rock up and Ride was funded by The Mid Sussex Partnership, and organized by Burgess Hill Town Council in coordination with

Gosport BMX and Respect Youth Club. The Easter bonnet making was planned and run in association with The Burgess Hill Creative Community, Burgess Hill Town Council and Central Sussex Rotary, with donations from Burgess Hill Yambombers and sandwiches donated by The Mustard Seed Cafe. The sports sessions and Easter trail were funded and organized by Burgess Hill Town Council.

Our thanks goes to the



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