



FAMILY LINK NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the first annual edition of The Family Link Newsletter!

Take a moment to explore and discover the incredible activities our wonderful Children and Young People have enjoyed at our Saturday Club and Holiday Schemes over the past year, alongside the remarkable efforts of our dedicated Family Link Staff. This year's newsletter also includes updates on fundraising initiatives, exciting future plans and much more. Our Trustees have shared a few words reflecting on the amazing year we've had and celebrating all that we've accomplished together as a team.

A Warm Welcome to Our New Team Members and Children and Young Adults

We are delighted to welcome all the new members who have joined the Family Link team. We hope this marks the beginning of a fulfilling and rewarding journey with us. Your dedication and support play a vital role in making a meaningful difference in the lives of the children and young adults we serve.

We would also like to say a big welcome to our new Family Link members. We look forward to having lots of fun and making unforgettable memories with you all.

Join Our Team at Family Link!

We are always looking for dedicated individuals to become part of our team, whether on a permanent or voluntary basis. Check out our Job Vacancies and Job Descriptions at the end of this newsletter for more details.

A message from our Chairman, Brian James

As Chairman of the Trustees, I am pleased to share that our Saturday and Holiday Scheme sessions have been running exceptionally well, with no safeguarding concerns reported. The sessions operate smoothly, thanks to a well-established routine and the consistency of having the same staff attend each week. This continuity allows the team to work efficiently, as they are familiar with their roles and responsibilities.

At Family Link, our mission is to create a safe and joyful environment for the children and young adults we support, and it is immensely rewarding to see the positive impact we are making on their lives and the lives of their families. Knowing that we, as a team, have not only achieved but exceeded the goals we originally set out to accomplish fills me with pride.

I am also delighted to announce the addition of two new Trustees to our group, Mr Chris Widgery and Mrs Paula Hollywood. As Trustees, our responsibility is to guide the strategic direction of Family Link and to collaborate closely with the team, listening to their insights and supporting their efforts to ensure the organisation thrives.



A message from our new Trustee, Chris Widgery

Becoming a Trustee at Family Link

I recently joined Family Link as a trustee after witnessing how much my son, Oliver, enjoys his sessions. Everyone involved in Family Link works tirelessly to support young people with additional needs and their families.

The children love spending time with their friends and participating in engaging activities, while their families benefit from a few precious hours of respite. Raising a young person with additional needs is rarely a smooth or straightforward journey, and there is far too little support available for these young people and their families. Family Link is an invaluable resource for us all. Everyone involved should feel immensely proud of the joy they bring to the children and the vital support they provide to families.

A message from our new Trustee, Paula Hollywood

As the parent of a child, now a young man, who has attended the Family Link Saturday clubs and holiday schemes for more than 10 years I am delighted to say that I have recently been accepted as a new Trustee for this wonderful charity. With a background working in both the private and public sectors it is my hope that my skills and experience as the parent of a disabled child combined with my, professional experience at Bromley Mencap and now Bromley Councils SEND service will allow me to help to shape and steer Family Link in the years ahead.

While Family Link describe themselves modestly as providing Saturday and school holiday fun and educational activities for children and young people it has been clear for some years that they offer much more. The support that they provide to children and young people with a range of cognitive, physical and complex needs cannot be underestimated and goes hand in hand with the valued short breaks that their clubs allow parents, carers and other family members to enjoy.

I see serving as Trustee is a fantastic way to help to ensure that as a charity, Family Link will continue to develop and flourish in their quest to support children and young people and families from across Bromley.

Thank you for accepting me into the Family Link team.



A message from our Project Manager, Rachel Palmer

What an Exciting Year We've Had!

2024 has truly been a whirlwind of a year! While we've faced some challenges, especially with funding constraints, things took a turn for the better midyear, and we've had so much to celebrate!

Let's dive into the highlights and extend a huge thank you to everyone who has supported us along the way.

Kicking Off the Year

The year started with a bang! After our annual Rock Choir fundraiser in 2023, one of the talented choir members, who works at **Splash Damage**, generously arranged a donation to support our charity. Then, in July, our incredible staff took on the inspiring challenge of walking from Bromley South Station to London Victoria, **raising an impressive £4,000!**

But the real game changer came with an incredible **£20,000 grant from the Lottery Community Fund**. This funding has made a massive difference for families with limited access to activities and support by significantly reducing costs for 12 sessions over the past year. We will continue to apply for grants to sustain this vital service in 2026 "fingers crossed".

Amazing Supporters

We're thrilled to have received generous contributions from so many wonderful organisations. Rachel Cross, our Trustee Treasurer, works for a company that continues to support us with donations, and we're so grateful for her efforts.

We've also received donations from **John Lewis**, **Liberta**, **JDM Estate Agents**, and my lovely friend Angela at **SWIFT**, who has pledged ongoing support this year. A heartfelt thank you to the families, carers, community members, and local businesses in Bromley who kindly donate raffle prizes for our events.

And how could we forget our **2024 Rock Choir event!** It truly was a magical evening. Some of our lovely young people joined in with Singing Hands, creating a heartwarming and unforgettable performance.

What an incredible evening it was, raising a record-breaking **£2,180!** A huge thank you to **Michael**, the Leader of the Rock Choir, for making this happen for the **5th year running!** And a big shout out to all the amazing **Rock Choir performers** - it's an annual event my family and friends always look forward to and never miss.

SAVE THE DATE FOR ROCK CHOIR 2025: SATURDAY 8th NOVEMBER 2025!

Altogether, we've raised a phenomenal **£29,220 for 2024!** These funds are vital for helping Family Link continue to operate and support over 70 young people and their families.



A Permanent Home

After years of moving between venues, we're delighted to have finally secured permanent spaces for our clubs! **Marjorie McClure School** now hosts our holiday clubs, and the **Astley Day Centre** is home to our Saturday clubs. A massive thank you to both venues for welcoming us.

Growing Together

In November, Becky and I attended the **SEND Matters Local Offer event** at The Warren in Hayes. It was fantastic to meet so many lovely families, some of whom have now joined Family Link through the Lottery Community Support Fund.

This year, we've welcomed new attendees and brought on more incredible staff with expertise in working with children and adults with complex disabilities and high medical needs. Their fresh ideas and enthusiasm have significantly contributed to our growth and success as a charity.

A Fond Farewell

We have sadly had to say goodbye to **Jane**, who served as one of our leaders for the past two years. As she embarks on a new journey in a new city and chapter of her life, we want to thank her for her dedication, support, and care in looking after our young people and keeping them safe. We wish Jane all the very best for the future!

Looking Ahead

Family Link is growing, and we want you to grow with us! With our continued collaboration with the **London Borough of Bromley's 0-25 Years Disability Team** and the **Short Break Service**, we have been able to support so many more young people in the community each year.

We're so excited for what's ahead!

Thank You!

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to every single person who has supported us over the last year. Whether through donations, time, or effort, you've made a huge difference. Together, we're creating opportunities, joy, and support for so many young people and their families.

Here's to an even brighter 2025!

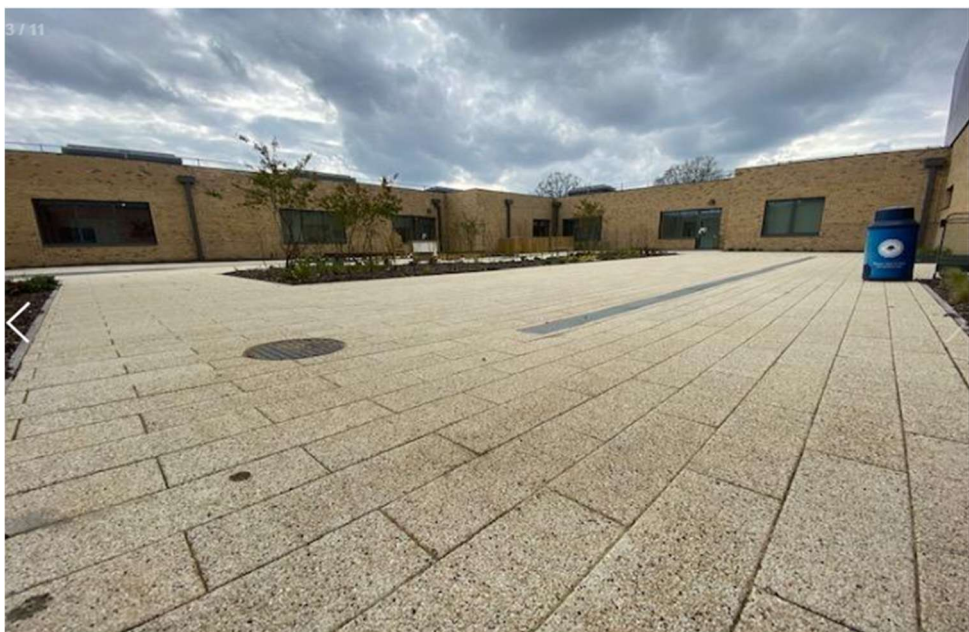
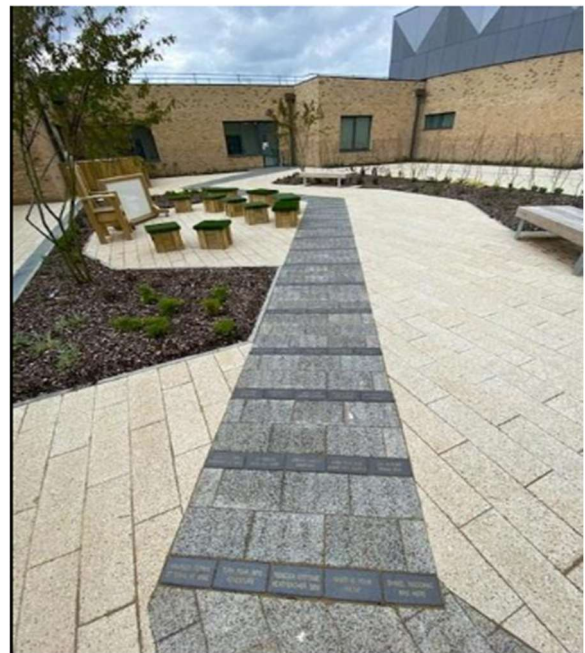
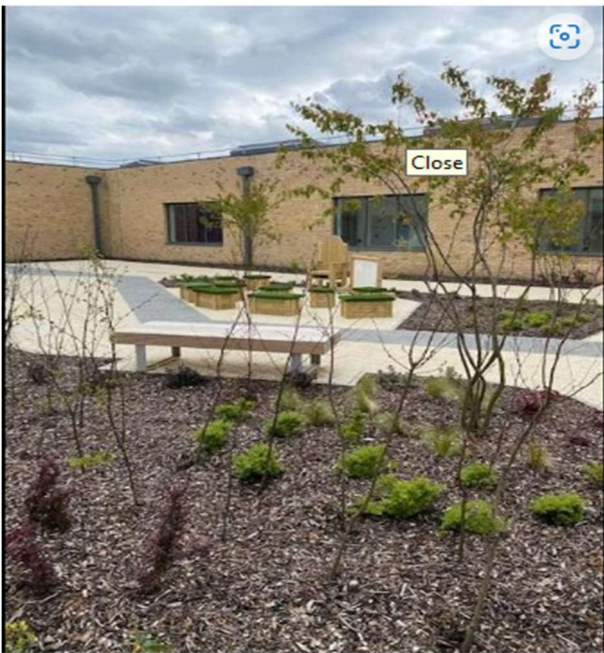


Marjorie McClure School

Since September 2023, Family Link has been fortunate to host our Saturday Clubs and School Holiday Schemes at Marjorie McClure School. This exceptional special school caters to pupils aged 4 to 19 with a wide range of physical disabilities, medical needs, learning difficulties, and sensory impairments.

Marjorie McClure School provides the ideal setting for Family Link, offering all the facilities we need to support our young people and activities. It ensures a safe, clean, and nurturing environment where children and young people can fully engage in the exciting programs, we've planned for them. Thank you to Rebecca, The Head Teacher, for accommodating us through the holidays.







The Astley Day Centre

Family Link is thrilled to have been given the opportunity to use The Astley Centre in Bromley for our Saturday Sessions. This wonderful venue offers a safe and welcoming environment for our young people, featuring several spacious rooms, including a sensory room. The onsite car park ensures a secure drop-off point for parents and facilitates minibus transportation.

The Astley Centre's expansive, private grounds provide an ideal outdoor space for activities like games, wildlife exploration, and group picnics, especially during the sunny summer months.

Thank you Pushker, the Astley Centre Manager, for sharing your facilities with us!





Activities throughout the Year

At Family Link, we take pride in celebrating major holidays and events throughout the year. Our goal is to help children and young adults explore and engage in a variety of activities that expand their knowledge and understanding of the world, including its diverse cultures, ethnic communities, and the values of equality, kindness, and happiness. Through these activities, children and young adults can develop their fine motor skills, creativity, hand eye coordination, and other abilities that support their growth and help them achieve their full potential. All of this takes place in a joyful, safe, and supportive environment, guided by our dedicated and caring staff.



EASTER ACTIVITIES

This year for Easter the children and young people made and decorated cupcakes, made toilet roll animals and Hand Bunnies. The activities went down brilliantly and was enjoyed by all who attended.



HALLOWEEN ACTIVITIES



Halloween brought lots of fun and laughter and some very creative imaginations this year from our children and young people. Activities included Pumpkin painting, making Halloween themed bags, Face painting, Scavenger Hunt, Ice Breaking, Monster Bark making, and Bubble Painting.





🎄 🎁 🎄 🎁 🎄 **CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES** 🎁 🎄 🎁 🎄 🎁

Christmas is such a magical time of year and a chance to celebrate with our families and loved ones. The festive period is time for fun, laughter, cheer, excitement, Christmas Carols, putting up the Christmas Tree, decorating your home and who can forget the exchanging of gifts. Let's see what our young people at Family Link were up to leading up to Christmas.



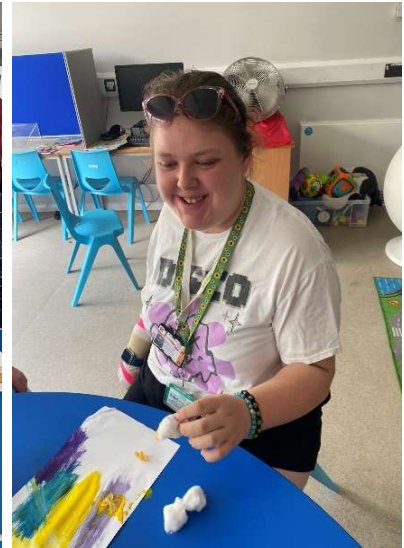


OTHER FUN ACTIVITIES (Holiday Scheme)

Holiday Scheme Activities

During our holiday schemes, the children and young adults who attend enjoy participating in a wide range of engaging activities. We also organise exciting trips to places like Godstone Farm, bowling alleys, cinemas, parks, and other local attractions.

These outings are always highly anticipated, as they help our members feel connected to the community. Our trips are filled with laughter, smiles, and shared experiences, creating lasting memories for everyone involved.







Fundraising in 2024

WOW! What an Incredible Year of Fundraising!

This year has been nothing short of amazing for our fundraising efforts, with incredible events, generous donations, and outstanding achievements. Here's a look at what we've accomplished together:

- Summer Fundraiser (22nd September): JDM Estate Agents generously sponsored this event, donating towards a bouncy castle, cakes and refreshments.
- Sponsored Walk (6th July) Our dedicated Family Link staff completed a four hour walk from Bromley South Station to London Victoria. Huge thanks and congratulations to everyone who participated in this incredible effort!



Generous Donations form

- Waitrose (John Lewis Partnership Scheme)
- Liberata
- Swift
- Rachel Cross, our Treasurer, won the "Hands on Heroes Reward" through her workplace, securing an additional 1,000 Euros for Family Link. Well done, Rachel!
- Successful grant application from the Lottery Community Fund of an incredible £20,000
- Christmas Fundraiser (30th November): A truly magical evening featuring the spectacular Rock Choir, whose performance captivated the audience. Our talented children and young people delivered heartwarming singing hands renditions of "This Is Me" from *The Greatest Showman* and "A Thousand Years" by Christina Perri. It was a fantastic night enjoyed by all. Through this event, we have been generously donated two iPads to help launch the ClassDojo app for families and carers.





Save the Dates!!

Beckenham Concert Band - Saturday 22nd March 2025, from 7PM

Join us for a wonderful evening of live music at St Augustine's Church, 8 Southborough Lane, Bromley, BR2 8AL. Enjoy an unmissable performance by the Beckenham Concert Band, while supporting Family Link.

On the night, we'll also be hosting a raffle, tombola, cake sale, and refreshments, so bring your friends and family for a fantastic community event!

Kenzie Castleton's Skydive - Saturday 21st June 2025, from 7.30am

Our amazing staff member, Kenzie, is taking on the ultimate challenge to raise vital funds for Family Link! This event will be taking place at Headcorn Aerodrome, Shenley Road, Ashford, TN27 9HX.

More details will follow soon, including how you can support Kenzie's fundraising journey. Let's get behind her and make this an unforgettable event! 🎉 ✈️

The Rock Choir - 8th November 2025, from 6PM

Join us for a very special evening at Christ Church United Reformed Church, Tudor Way, Petts Wood, BR5 1LH.

The spectacular Rock Choir will be performing for the 6th consecutive year in support of Family Link. This cherished annual event is not to be missed! Featuring a heartwarming performance by our lovely young people, who will take the stage with a medley of songs. Come along and be part of this unforgettable night!

On the night, we'll also be hosting a raffle, tombola, cake sale, and refreshments, so bring your friends and family for a much-loved annual community event!

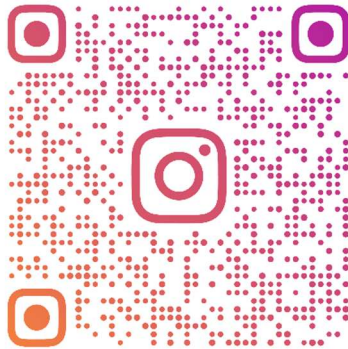
If you would like further information or would like to make a donation, please visit our website www.familylinkcharity.com or email askfamilylink@gmail.com



Family Link Social Media Platform



We're excited to share that Family Link now has an Instagram page! Follow us to stay updated, and don't forget to invite your friends and family to follow us too. The more followers we have, the better we can spread the word about Family Link and the valuable services we provide. Click on the QR code below...



FAMILYLINKBROMLEY

Well, that's a wrap!! 🎉

A sincere warm thank you to everyone who contributed, supported, and participated in making this year such a phenomenal success. Your dedication and enthusiasm have made all the difference, and we're excited to carry this momentum into the new year! Family Link wishes you a Happy and Prosperous New Year!! Looking forward to all we'll achieve together in 2025! 🌟



Playworker and Volunteer Vacancies at Family Link

Volunteer Advertisement

Family Link deliver fun and educational activities for young people aged 6-25 years old with physical, complex, and learning disabilities. We are looking for volunteers that have some experience looking after young people with disabilities and could be available for the summer holidays in August 2025 and at our Saturday clubs that are run twice a month at Marjorie McClure School in Chislehurst and The Astley Centre in Bromley. The aim of our club is to provide a fun environment with an exciting programme of activities. This is also an opportunity for young people to socialise with friends, build relationships, confidence, and to provide families/carers with respite.

Volunteering with Family link will make a huge difference to our young people and comes with many benefits, such as: helping our local young people, meeting new people, training opportunities and it will also help you with your own personal development. All volunteers will need to be DBS checked and this will be covered by Family Link.

The location of the group sessions will be held in, Chislehurst and Bromley. There will be 3 sessions per week in the holidays which are on a Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8:30am to 3:30pm. The Saturday club will be at Marjorie McClure School and The Astley Centre from 8.30am to 3.30pm. If we arrange day trips, Family Link will cover travel expenses.

The main duties volunteers will be required to undertake are:

- To ensure that all young people attending our sessions have stimulating activities which meet their individual needs.
- To encourage an exciting and enjoyable atmosphere.
- Encourage young people to be independent and self-confident, maximising opportunities to reach their full potential.
- Ensure positive relationships and open communication is maintained with parents/carers.
- Maintain confidentiality in matters relating to the young people and their families.
- Understand and follow Family Link's policies and guidelines.
- Ensure good health care and safety is maintained for the young people.
- To report to the Play Leader and undertake other duties at their request.

Apply to: askfamilylink@gmail.com with a copy of your CV.



Playworker Job Advertisement

Family Link delivers fun and educational activities for children and young adults with complex disabilities. We are looking for committed, reliable experienced staff to join our team.

We provide Saturday and school holiday activities which can be accessed by young people with learning, physical, complex disabilities and medical needs. The young people that attend our sessions enjoy a range of creative fun activities.

The role of a Playworker is to work closely with the Play Leader to provide young people with an exciting and challenging programme of activities in a safe and stimulating environment. You will be self-employed and responsible for your own tax and national insurance.

Location: Astley Centre, Bromley and Marjorie McClure school, Chislehurst

Hours: 7 hours (8.30am - 3.30pm)

Salary: £12 per hour

Main Duties:

- To ensure that all young people attending our sessions have stimulating activities which meet their individual needs.
- To encourage an exciting and enjoyable atmosphere.
- To attend to the young person's personal care where necessary; this may include assisting with meals, dressing, meeting personal care, depending on the young person's individual needs.
- Encourage young people to be independent and self-confident, maximising opportunities to reach their full potential.
- Ensure positive relationships and open communication is maintained with parents/carers.
- Undertake additional training, as and when required, both externally and internally to follow Family Link's regulations.
- Maintain confidentiality in matters relating to the children and their families.
- Understand and follow Family Link's policies and guidelines.
- Ensure good health care and safety is maintained for the young people.
- To report to the Play Leader and undertake other duties at their request.

Essential Requirements:

- At least 1 year experience working with young people with disabilities or a keen proven interest in working in this sector.



Desirable Skills:

- Relevant childcare qualification e.g. NVQ2/equivalent or above. Current First Aid certificate, safeguarding children and adult's certificate.

Start Date: With immediate effect

Apply to: askfamilylink@gmail.com with a copy of your CV.

At Family Link we do not discriminate against anyone, be they staff, parent, child, or volunteers on the grounds of their ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy and associated rights or background. This is in line with the Equality Act 2010. We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to the quality of our provision. We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion, and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve. We challenge stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs. We celebrate the cultural diversity of our Family Link community and the wider community and show respect for all minority groups, and form partnerships with the wider community. Through positive experiences and support for each, individual's point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all, combating ignorance, which can lead to prejudice and stereotyping.

If you would like to become part of the Family Link team, please get in touch we would love to hear from you. Please email Rachel at askfamilylink@gmail.com