

CASE STUDY – HAMPTON TIDDLERS

Parent A was contacted by PCVS as part of the parent-led forum work to be undertaken by PCVS on behalf of Children's Services. Parent A was a member of her local Children's Centre and wished to seek alternative facilities due to the de-designation of the centre. Parent A was very proactive in trying to establish a group but bewildered by the practicalities, legalities, funding and risks involved in establishing a group. PCVS worked with Parent A, seeking information from her with regards to setting up a Parent Forum/Family Support Group in her area. PCVS drew upon its wide range of expertise, networks and facilities and resources in order to support the group to develop and become more sustainable.

Initially Parent A was contacted by our dedicated Community Development Advisor who completed a questionnaire with her to establish needs and vision for the group.

Parent A was unsure as to appropriate management structure of the group. PCVS gave guidance on appropriate structure and key members such as a chairperson to take the lead and treasurer to take responsibility for financial purposes, record keeping, funding etc. This support is continuing in regard to forthcoming workshops re management and business planning for not-for-profit groups and opening a Charity bank account. Parent A expressed an interest in registering as a charity. PCVS advised that she would need to have an annual turnover of £25k for this to be obligatory but if she wished to register the group out of choice, they would need an annual turnover of at £5k.

Parent A was unsure about procedures in respect of legal cover. Working with our colleagues at Pro Help, an organisation that brings private companies who want to donate voluntary time together, PCVS were able to source professional information and advice from local businesses about Public liability insurance specialising in charities and not-for-profit. She was also advised regarding risk assessments of the premises and how to record this information and issues relating to volunteering and HR.

Although Parent A was successful in obtaining volunteer support from her peers she raised concerns about retaining them due to parental commitments our Volunteer Centre Manager gave advice in respect of managing and retaining volunteers. We also supported the group in recruiting and advertising for new volunteers via a local and national website and utilising local resources and contacts.

Parent A was concerned regarding DBS checks including cost and how to obtain them for volunteers. The PCVS Volunteer coordinator conducts DBS checks for volunteers as part of her role. Coordination took place within PCVS to ensure DBS checks were obtained for the identified volunteers.

Parent A enquired as to what would be a necessity for safeguarding the children attending the group. PCVS gave advice and support in constructing a safeguarding policy based on the premise that it was to be a stay-and-play group. PCVS were also in a position to utilise external guidance from Inspire2Enterprise and have arranged safeguarding training for the team of volunteers.

Initially Parent A enquired about first aid training and whether all volunteers would need such training. PCVS advised that not all volunteers would require training but the need for identifying key individuals to be first aiders. PCVS liaised with our network of over 400 organisations and established a free First Aid Training opportunity with a local charity, Little Miracles. This not only helps Parent A's group but also enables Little Miracles to meet its target for service delivery in this area of training.

Parent A was concerned about funding the group going forward as most costs had been covered by her and volunteers which was not sustainable. She had to consider funding for premises, snacks/refreshments, liability insurance, activities and toys. PCVS advised of an up and coming funding workshop hosted by PCVS to support not-for-profit groups in becoming more sustainable. Support was also offered regarding completing grant applications.

In what seems a short time, PCVS has built up a rapport with Parent A and her group. PCVS affiliation has taken place so that Parent A can utilise our resources fully ensuring ongoing support throughout the group's journey. Affiliation also ensures Parent A will be kept informed of up and coming events, funding opportunities, training, valuable networks and links with other user-led groups and communities and a continual link with PCVS to support throughout the ever-changing socioeconomic climate. The group's details, including their new name the 'Hampton Tiddlers' will be accessible via our online database ensuring individuals looking for a parent and child activity will be aware of the group and how to make contact. Already the working relationship has been reciprocal as Parent A has utilised her group's networks via a Facebook page to support in raising awareness of events PCVS have supported.

The work and support is far from complete with numerous activities to follow including specifically tailored workshops aimed at user-led groups and a Family Forum to empower and support individuals through peer support. PCVS are honoured to be working with this group and look forward to continuing to support and watch this group grow and evolve.