

VIBE



Issue 13

October 2021

Welcome to the new term and the most current edition of VIBE! We hope all is well with you and would like to share with you some news from the Sensory Service for Visual Impairment for Kent.

KAB supporting social interaction opportunities



Kent Association for the Blind (KAB) launched an online group for 16 – 19-year-old service users on 18th February 2021 with the objective of bringing together people in this age group who may have missed out on social interaction with their peers due to two national lockdowns.

KAB offered to invite speakers, run cookery classes, or facilitate any other activity that could be done online but it soon became evident that the young people enjoyed the social aspect of the group, coming together every few weeks to talk about things like the way different schools approached the grading of exams at the end of the last school year, going back to school in April after lockdown, and about what grades the young people were hoping, and expecting, to achieve this year.

The one guest speaker we did have was a young man who is known to KAB and is currently studying at Reading University. He gave a very helpful insight into the transition from school to university for a visually impaired student, and some of the key learning points in this process. The group found the talk enlightening and enjoyable, and was particularly beneficial for those preparing for university later this year.

With consent from parents where appropriate, the group members have shared email addresses as they were keen to be in touch outside of the group sessions proving how successful this group has been. The group took a break during the summer and KAB will reconvene the group in the autumn if that is something our young people would like us to do.

English Heritage—Improving access

English Heritage have written a piece called Access All Areas which is about making heritage sites and their history accessible for visitors with disabilities which come with complex challenges. Their aim is to discover how and where these challenges are being tackled to ensure everyone can enjoy a rewarding day out. More information can be found on the English Heritage website english-heritage.org.uk



Training Dates

2nd November 2021 – VI Half day seminar – Topics include braille maths and braille and dyslexia – Cornwallis Suite, Maidstone Masonic Centre

16th November 2021 - KAB Liaison - Virtual via Teams

Please contact Lisa Bell if you are interested in attending either of these lbell@valence.kent.sch.uk

My Time to Play

Guide Dogs are offering structured, fun, and supportive sessions for parents, carers and families, each based around sensory stories and related activities including songs, craft activities, yoga, and music. Families will be able to meet people in a similar situation and share experiences and pick up skills and knowledge that will help them support their child's early years development with confidence. On offer is:

- a programme of five face-to-face and two online sessions, including an assessment with a habilitation specialist. This helps identify additional support that a child may need - of particular value for older children transitioning into nursery or pre-school.
- a virtual programme of seven sessions, so if you live in a remote location or find it difficult to travel, you can still join in. All activities can be easily done at home, using everyday items.

Any families interested can contact Guide Dogs on 0800 781 1444 or email: children@guidedogs.org.uk



Athletics Day

When: Tuesday 26th October 2021

Where: Paddock Wood Athletic Club,
Putlands Sports Ground, Mascalls Court
Road,
Paddock Wood, Kent TN12 6NZ

Time: 10am – 12pm **Cost:** £5.00

Age group: 6-11yrs (siblings are welcome)

This session will give everyone the opportunity to try out a number of athletic events in a relaxed and friendly environment. This event has been organised by KAB and Paddock Wood Athletic Club. Please bring a water bottle and wear appropriate clothing and footwear.

To book a space on this activity please contact:

Nicola Tallon on 07585 978755 or email:
nicola.tallon@kab.org.uk

All My Own Work

Two QTVI colleagues have put together an exciting new programme aimed at students for supporting them towards developing independence and understanding and thinking about the world of work. This was identified, as too often, people with VI find it difficult to secure employment. Therefore, thinking about this and learning to develop skills and opportunities early on will help to ease the way into adulthood. This course will take place at Lower Grange Farm in Maidstone and would be a wonderful opportunity for them to learn some new skills and meet others with VI in a fun environment. The remaining dates are:

10th November (Conference room 10am-2pm)

24th November (Conference room 10am-2pm)

If you know any interested party, please contact Lisa Bell at lbell@valence.kent.sch.uk

Important

If you have any news or information you would like to share, please contact:

hstickings@valence.kent.sch.uk or lsteere@valence.kent.sch.uk