



Winter
2025
Issue 47

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NEWSLETTER
For children and
young people
with disabilities or
additional needs
in the Vale of
Glamorgan



The Index Newsletter

Winter 2025 | Issue 47

The newsletter for children and young people with disabilities or additional needs in the Vale of Glamorgan

We would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year. We hope you've enjoyed the busy Christmas period whilst appreciating the change of routine, the traditions, braving the crowds, additional social expectations can be an overwhelming sensory experience for the children and parent carers alike. Most of you would have made small adjustments meaning an inclusive and joyous time for everyone.

We hope the information in our ebulletins before Christmas were helpful and able to support you with this. We look forward to continuing to provide as much information on the ground as we can.



We produce these newsletters digitally and in hard copy therefore you will have the option to click links or scan a QR code for further information.

The Index News

Family Information Service (FIS) host free Christmas Party for families in the Vale | 0-18 | Information

Our FIS Team hosted 2 Christmas parties for families in the Vale on the 5 December 2024.

Despite the awful weather, over 500 children, parents and carers attended the free events in Barry Memo and enjoyed taking part in all the Christmas activities, provided by our wonderful services in the Vale. Organisations such as the Play and Sports Development Team, Dewis Cymru, Childcare and Early Years Team, Early Help Team, Flying Start, Mudiad

Meithrin, Communities for Work Plus and many more supported the event and engaged with families about their services, whilst offering some lovely Christmas activities.

Children had a chance to meet Father Christmas and watch a local choir, while the younger children had the chance to sing Welsh songs with Rhiannon James from Mudiad Meithrin.

Feedback has been really positive: *All the stalls were great and so welcoming, it was lovely to meet with other families and enjoy things that would usually cost a lot of money. My daughter loved meeting Santa, singing with Rhian and doing lots of messy play.*

If any of you attended, we hope you enjoyed yourself.

You can find out more about the Christmas Party and feedback received by [reading the Report](#)



Your views

We would be delighted to receive any feedback on any aspect of the Index but in particularly this Winter edition newsletter to ensure we continue to tailor it to the needs of our children, young people and families in the Vale. Our contact for this purpose is:

Tel: 0800 5871 014 Email: TheIndex@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

[Click here](#) to complete our short survey or scan the **QR code**

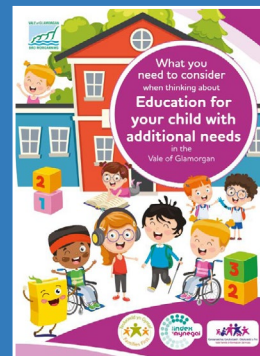


The Index has published a new guide, Education for your child with additional needs in the Vale | Information

The Index has produced an Education Guide for families of children with additional needs. We would welcome any feedback or comments on this. We will be reviewing it every 6 months so any comments received will be reviewed within that timeline.

The Index has formed a consultation group with a mix of parent carers and professionals. The group have reviewed 2 new Index resources, and we will continue to send new materials through to the group electronically for their views. If you would like to be involved, please email theindex@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

You can view our latest resource by clicking the [link](#) or scanning the **QR code**.



The Index attended the Understanding Disability Awards by the Cardiff and Vale Parents Federation | Information

The event, which took place on 31 October 2024, highlighted the extraordinary efforts of individuals and organisations dedicated to improving the lives of people with disabilities across Cardiff and The Vale of Glamorgan.

Some of the winners and those highly commended from the Vale of Glamorgan include:



For a full list of winners [click here](#) or scan the **QR code**.



For further information on the event and a list of categories [click here](#) or scan the **QR code**.



The Index was a finalist at the Diversity and Inclusion Awards Wales 2024 Information

ThinkEDI's Diversity and Inclusion Awards Wales 2024, sponsored by Ogi was held on Tuesday, 17 December 2024.

The event brought together incredible people from all walks of life to celebrate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and showcased the extraordinary achievements of individuals, organisations, and communities driving progress and creating a more inclusive society in Wales.



The Index reached the 'finalist stage' in this event. Whilst The Index did not win their category of Inclusive Services Award, we were commended with a medal recognising the contribution we make. We were pipped to the post by 'Motion Control Dance', who were very worthy winners.

Becky and Lyndsey attended the event, noting "*It was a celebration of meaningful work and the opportunity to connect with people who genuinely care about making a difference*".

We were delighted to see our colleague Tristan Harris, Social Care Officer Early Help Team, win the award for 'Inclusive Front-line Professional'. Tristan supports parent carers and young carers in the Vale. Well done.



Check out the video from the Diversity & Inclusion Awards 2024!
or scan the **QR code**

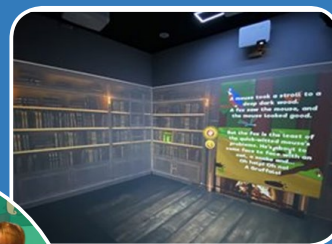
The Index News

The Index visited the new Immersive Classroom at Cadoxton Primary School | Information

Lyndsey and Cath were delighted to visit The Immersive Classroom back in November 2024.

The classroom, funded through Welsh Government's Community Focused Schools Grant, uses Immersive Interactive software to operate, which boasts a large library of ready to use programmes available in numerous languages, including Welsh.

For a full report and further information on hiring this space and 'the adjoining sports hall if needed' [click here](#) or scan the **QR code**.



The Index is supporting families from Afghanistan & Ukraine | Information

The team are working with the Vale of Glamorgan Resettlement Team and the Health Visiting Service to support vulnerable families from Afghanistan and Ukraine being resettled within the Vale of Glamorgan.

This has involved translating our materials into Pashto, Dari and Ukrainian; arranging translation of bespoke and tailored information for families based on ages of children, interests and needs.

We are attending information sessions with these families.

[Click here](#) for support for Ukraine schemes or scan the **QR code**



What's going on locally

Rainbow Group | under 5 years | No diagnosis required

When: Every Thursday in term time

Time: 10-11:30am

Where: Ty Robin Goch, Barry CF63 1QB

When: Every Tuesday in term time

Time: 1.15-2.45pm

Where: The Gathering Place, St Athan CF62 4JH



A stay and play playgroup for children with additional needs and their parents/carers

- Meet new friends
- Support and Information
- Singing and Rhymes
- Sensory Play
- Soft play
- Music and movement

Email: kbarrett@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk or zbell@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

What's going on locally

Vale Family Information Service | 0-18

| No diagnosis required

If you are looking for activities across the Vale, you can find many options on our FIS webpage: www.childcareinformation.wales or contact FIS directly on: 01446 704704

Our **step-by-step guide** can also support you in navigating the page to access the specialist tiles and information you need. These have recently been developed to include the providers experience of working with children/ young people with disabilities or additional needs, if you wish to source this information yourself. We are very happy to do this on anyone's behalf by contacting us Tel: 01446 704704 or email: theindex@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk



Specialist support for families of children with disabilities / additional needs (104)

A range of family support services that can provide specialist support to families of children with disabilities / additional needs.



Activities that support children with disabilities / additional needs (58)

A range of children and young people's activities that can support children with disabilities / additional needs.



Gwasanaeth Gwybodaeth I Deuluoedd y Fro
Vale Family Information Service

Motion Control Dance | 3 years - adults

| No diagnosis required

When: Many options please see their timetable on their website

Where: Motion Control Dance Studio, YMCA Hub, Court Rd., Barry CF63 4EE

Motion Control Dance has completed the InSport standards achieving Ribbon, Bronze, Silver and Gold status.

The insport Club programme is part of the broader InSport Project which aims to support the physical activity, sport, and leisure sectors delivering inclusively of disabled people.

In November 2024, BBC's Strictly Come Dancing Pro Dancers made a special appearance to shine a spotlight on the incredible work they do thanks to Children in Need funding. The producers wanted to celebrate the joy of dance and showcase how it brings people together, regardless of their abilities. Motion Control Dance has also been awarded the Inclusive Services Award at the Thinkedi Diversity and Inclusion Awards in December 2024.

Tel: 07725 038778 Email: info@motioncontroldance.com
Website: www.motioncontroldance.com



MOTION CONTROL DANCE



What's going on locally

Vale Inclusive Play Provision | 5-14 years | No diagnosis required



Vale Play Team will be running our free open access playscheme over February Half Term.

When: Tuesday 25th, Wednesday 26th & Thursday 27th February 2025

Time: 10am – 12pm & 1pm – 3pm

Where: Palmerston Adult Learning Centre, Cadoc Crescent, Barry CF63 2NT

The provision is inclusive, all sessions are delivered by trained playworkers and include a range of fun indoor and outdoor activities: sensory play, group games, messy play, muddy kitchens, multi-sport, junk modelling and lots more.

These sessions are turn up and play sessions, a registration form can be completed on the day, or in advance here: [Registration Form](#) or Scan the **QR code**



Due to high demand, children that require additional support whilst at our play provision, must be referred by either a Social Worker or the Early Help Team.

Our playwork approach means that children who may require additional support in other settings, may not require this level of support whilst at our play provision.

Please feel free to get in touch with the team, to discuss the suitability of the provision for your child's needs Email: playdevelopment@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Teenscheme | 11-18 years | Diagnosis required

When: Every Wednesday & Thursday in school holidays

Time: 10am – 3pm

Where: Celtic Community Hall, Celtic Way, Rhoose CF62 3FT



Teenscheme is an inclusive environment, the aims of the sessions are to give young people a chance to express themselves and empower their voices and decisions in a safe and friendly environment.

Parents are to provide the transport to and from the centre. Young people are to provide their own snacks, lunch and drinks. We kindly ask for a small donation of £5.

They will have Personal Assistants for personal care, one of whom will be medically trained for young people requiring medication or peg feeding.

Spaces are limited. Attendance at Teenscheme is still by referral only which is available via: tmills@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk



What's going on locally

Clwb Hwb | 11-16 years | No diagnosis required

When: Every Wednesday in term time

Time: 5:30pm – 7:30pm

Where: YMCA, Court Road Barry CF63 4EE

Clwb Hwb is a Youth Club for young people with additional learning needs. On offer is Arts and Crafts, Music, Games, Sports and Cooking.

There is no one to one support or personal care available. Please contact Annette Harrison with any enquiries.

Email: aharrison@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk



Ysgol Y Deri Sponsored Walk for 6th form provision | Information



A 10k route was plotted (starting at Cardiff Bay) with shorter sections and options for wheelchair users. Four 6th form classes wanted to be involved so there were 34 pupils taking part with their class staff teams on the day.

About half of them walked the whole 10k. With flexible pick-up options, many pupils walked further than they had planned or thought they could.

The majority ended their walk at the official finish line in Cosmeston where they received medals. All were happy and very pleased with their achievements. The fantastic weather helped.

It was a great challenge and social opportunity for the pupils and staff who are settling into new class groups this term. Vale staff enjoyed meeting and spending time with our pupils.

Pupils collected over £400. This will be ring-fenced for something particular in the new 6th form provision after consultation with the pupils.



Ysgol Y Deri – A Special School has returned to TV screens in the BBC One show's third season | Information



The programme has been nominated for two BAFTA Cymru Awards and won a Royal Television Society Cymru prize in the comedy or entertainment category.

The school based in Penarth caters for students aged 3-19 years with a range of learning and physical needs and autism.

Watch [here](#) or scan the QR code



What's going on locally



Barnardo's Children with Autism Support Service | 5-18 years | Diagnosis required for Cygnet but no diagnosis required for other services

The Children with Autism Support Service (CASS) is delivered by Barnardo's Cymru and funded through the Vale of Glamorgan Families First. The service supports families who reside in the Vale of Glamorgan and have a child(ren) aged 5-18 years old who have received a formal diagnosis of Autism or are awaiting an Autism assessment by the Neurodevelopmental Team. We support parents and carers, by providing information, advice, and guidance to help the whole family. Specialist support is provided focused on communication, understanding sensory processing, and supporting behaviour associated with Autism.

Our offer for parents/carers of children aged 8-18 years with an Autism diagnosis is the Barnardo's Cygnet Programme. This is delivered both virtually and face to face and comprises of six sessions discussing topics such as thinking, sensory processing, communication, and behaviour. For the parents/carers whose children are being assessed for diagnosis by the Neurodevelopmental Team and are aged between 5-18 years, we offer themed sessions virtually and face to face looking at advice, guidance and strategies associated with communication, sensory needs, and behaviour.

Our Neurodevelopmental Pathway Parents Group consists of a weekly session for four weeks each quarter and our Themed Online sessions are offered every month, offering morning, afternoon and evening sessions.

Referrals for the service are made through the Families First Advice Line on 0800 032 7322 & you can find more information about us here: [Children with Autism Support Service \(CASS\)](#)

What do parents, who have accessed the Neurodevelopmental Pathway Parents Group, say?

- *'Fantastic service, approachable and friendly staff, feeling it's ok to be overwhelmed most of the time, knowing my child isn't alone'*
- *I learned a lot during the course, and it's really helped improve my understanding. I found the 8 senses mind blowing'*



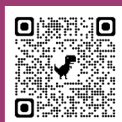
The Hangout launches in Barry | 11-18 years | No diagnosis required

Platfform and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board are delighted to announce the opening of The Hangout in Barry, a mental health and emotional wellbeing support hub for children and young people.

The Hangout in Barry is based at 3A Tynwydd Road and is a place where people aged 11 – 18 can access mental health support, find volunteering opportunities, meet other people and get involved in groups that can boost wellbeing.

Further information:

Website: <https://platfform.org/news/launching-the-hangout-barry/>



What's going on nationally

Dreamflight | 8-14 years | wide range of illnesses and disabilities



Dreamflight is a registered charity in England, Wales and Scotland.

Each October, 192 nominated children from across the UK come together to board Dreamflight's privately hired aircraft to Orlando. A huge volunteer team of doctors, nurses, physiotherapists and other helpers look after the children for 10 days without parents/carers. Volunteers and supporters fundraise for the charity year-round, to make the trip happen. They believe the 10-day experience helps build independence, confidence and friendships.

Children must be aged between 8 and 14 on the date of travel to Orlando. We accept nominations for children with a wide range of illnesses and disabilities, including (but not limited to) Cystic Fibrosis, Cerebral Palsy, cancers, epilepsy, cardiac issues, haemophilia and amputees. Since 2021, Dreamflight has also taken small groups to fully accessible activity centres in the UK.

Click [here](#) for further information or scan the **QR code**



Sensory Dens | children - adulthood | No diagnosis required

Five caravans in Porthcawl have become a safe haven for children with additional needs after a Mum decided to help families like hers who may find holidays difficult and overwhelming.

Read more [here](#) or scan the **QR code**.



We:Thrive | 16+ and adults | No diagnosis required



WE:THRIVE is a new service to help people who have mental and physical health challenges within the Cardiff and Vale area. They aim to encourage and support participants with a holistic approach to wellbeing and recovery, through access to work. They build on the participants strengths, skills and preferences, leading to better mental health outcomes.

The WE:THRIVE service is for anyone who wants support to obtain competitive, paid work as part of their recovery journey.

You can refer by completing the online [self referral form](#) or scanning the **QR code** and completing the form.



What's going on nationally

The LEGO Group Announces New Initiatives to Support Fans and Colleagues with Non-visible Disabilities, Conditions & Sensory Needs | 2+ - adults | Information



The company is partnering with Hidden Disabilities Sunflower to create awareness through LEGO products; supported by employee training.

The Sunflower has become a globally recognised symbol for people with non-visible conditions, signalling they may need extra support, time, or understanding in daily activities like travel, shopping, work, or public spaces. LEGO Group's new initiatives include:

- The first toys to ever feature official Sunflower lanyard as LEGO® Friends, LEGO® Icons, and LEGO® DUPLO reveal Sunflower references to promote inclusion.
- All 55 LEGO Minifigure Factories worldwide to launch Sunflower lanyard designs, allowing fans to personalise their minifigures as Sunflower wearers.
- New partnership with Hidden Disabilities Sunflower to better support employees.

Read more [here](#) or scan the **QR code**



The Neurodevelopmental pathway | up to 18 years | Information



The Neurodevelopmental (ND) Referral Process has been reviewed and updated in December 2024. As well as many professionals, referrals are also accepted from parents of children and young people who are electively home educated.

The current wait time is approximately 3½ years from the date your referral is received.

Click [here](#) or further information on assessment, diagnosis and support or scan **QR code**



Useful contacts

Neurodivergent Support via the C.A.L.L. Helpline Wales

If you have worries or concerns relating to Neurodivergent, the team at CALL are available to offer emotional support via the helpline.

Text: **Help to 81066** Tel: **0800 132 737** Click [here](#) for website or scan **QR code**



Cardiff and Vale Speech & Language Therapy Helpline

For tips on how to help your child's communication skills, contact the Cardiff and Vale Speech and Language helpline on: **02921 836 585**



Cardiff and Vale Chat Health Service

A texting service for your 11–19-year-old for advice and support. Text your message to: **07520 615718**



Useful contacts

Cardiff and Vale School Nursing Service & Parentline

Speak to the Vale School Nursing Team about a wide range of issues including emotional wellbeing, body changes, healthy weights and more.
Tel: 01446 704114 Or use the text service 'Parentline' on: 07312 263178.
Parentline is available during school holidays.

parent line



Vale of Glamorgan Early Help services

Families First Advice Line for information on family relationships, childcare, parenting, parent and young carer assessments, employment, money and housing. Tel: 0800 0327322



Click [here](#) to visit the Families First Advice Line webpage or scan the **QR code**.

Cardiff and Vale Health Visiting Service

The Health Visiting Service will fundamentally provide a universal service for all families with children under the age of 5 years.

Tel: 02921 836 916 Vale Flying Start: 01446 732180



Cardiff & Vale Occupational Therapy for Children & Young People

Anyone can now request access to occupational therapy without having to go through another healthcare professional. Tel: 02921 836910

Click [here](#) to visit the webpage or scan the **QR code**.



Ready, Steady School! checklist of activities and grounding exercises for learners to try during transition, alongside a trusted adult.

Click [here](#) for activities and grounding exercises or scan the **QR code**.



A-Z of online resources

Click [here](#) for the Cardiff and Vale UHB Healthboard's A-Z of online resources or scan the **QR code**.



Neurodivergence Wales website Click [here](#) for access to the resources on the Neurodiversity Wales website or scan the **QR code**.



Transition

Neurodiversity Drop-Ins | 16+ | No diagnosis required

When: Monday 24 February (every 2 weeks) Time: 2pm-4pm

Where: The Pod, Golau Caredig, Barry CF62 7AZ

Celt+ and Communities for Work are hosting fortnightly drop-in sessions with Keith Ingram, Cardiff and Vale's Autism Lead covering all things neurodiverse.



Disclaimer

The majority of organisations included in this newsletter are not managed or run by the Vale of Glamorgan Council. The newsletter has been compiled in an effort to assist you in contacting services. The Vale of Glamorgan Council cannot be held liable for the services provided by any external organisation named in this newsletter and cannot be held liable for any damage or loss caused by any inaccuracy in this newsletter, nor for the actions of any of the external organisations listed.

The listing of an organisation in this newsletter does not imply that the Vale of Glamorgan Council endorse that organisation, nor does the absence of any organisation imply that we do not support it.



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