

Aiming High – Short Breaks Newsletter

February 2023

Edition 11



Welcome to the eleventh edition of the Aiming High – Short Breaks newsletter

To find a list of activities in your area, please go to the Aiming High page:

[Aiming High - Activities and short breaks | Staffordshire Connects](#)

Click on the calendar for a specific area or the grey area to see a whole week or month's activities. If your child/young person would like to take part in an activity or have any questions, **please call 0300 111 8007 (option 2, option 5)**

We want to make sure that bookings for our activities are accessible to everyone and so if you are unable to contact our booking team via the telephone, please email

sendreferrals@staffordshire.gov.uk

Please include information on your child's name, date of birth and the activity provider and date you are interested in.

Don't forget it is **two free** sessions in March and April

Booking your activities ...

Booking for April will **start on March 1st**, and you have **until the 10th of March** to book your free activities, **from the 11th** you can call up to book additional activities but there may be a charge by the Provider as Staffordshire County Council will fund two free places. Expression of Interest activities will be confirmed as soon as possible after the 10th, in order for you to look at other activities.

Contact us at the inbox ...

Please remember, if you have any questions, queries, feedback or just general comments, please send us an email to the Aiming High inbox and also if you want to be added to our mailing list: aiminghigh@staffordshire.gov.uk



For children and young people with
SEN and disabilities in Staffordshire

staffordshire.gov.uk/aiminghigh

Bookings via the SEND booking line ...

From March when you call up to book, some of the providers and activities may be by **Expression of Interest**. Some of our providers have sessions which are really popular and generate waiting lists, so from March some of the activities you call to book will have an Expression of Interest list. The providers will then get the list and contact you to confirm the booking, we have asked them to contact you around the 10th of the month, in order that you can look at booking other activities if you were not successful, this means they can keep the list and follow up with you to:

- To confirm your place
- To check any medical or risk assessment needs
- To talk to you about their other activities
- To check if your child needs a 1:1 place, 2:1 place or any additional needs
(many of the providers offer 1:1 support but need to know this before your child attends, the more we know the better we can support, and needing a 1:1 or 2:1 space is not going to stop us trying to ensure your child and you have a short break)
- To check nearer the date that you still are available to attend
- Offer out any cancelled places to the others on the waiting list
- To ensure there is a fair spread of accessing their sessions
- To hopefully avoid the non-attended booked places

We will trial this for March and April and see how it goes. So, for any activities that the SEND booking team say are **Expression of Interest**, you will then get a confirmation call from the **Provider to confirm your place**.

News and updates ...

As we are about to start year 2 of the contract, you may notice that there are a few less activities than normal, that is because of the transition between the planning and delivery of the end of year 1 contract and the start of year 2. We also will no longer be having Sherratts Wood delivering activities, they have sadly chosen to stop the Aiming High contract delivery, putting all their efforts into the other amazing work they do – we would like to thank them for all their wonderful activities over the years and wish them well in their new adventures. However, Doves Care are now back running activities for us across the county!





New group about to start in the Moorlands!

Stoke City presently run **ABILITY COUNTS** sessions at Gnosall and Rugeley and they are about to start a new group at Audley Community Centre, Nantwich Road, Audley, SOT, ST7 8DH from Friday 3rd March at 16:30 – 18:30. They want to focus on the children and young people who struggle to follow structure, are non-verbal or who would be classed as having a severe learning, social or physical disability which may affect their focus or ability to take part in general sporting activity. The age range will be 6 - 16 years and there will be 12 places available. For more details on the group and to ask any questions – please contact:

Sam.cartwright@stokecityfc.com

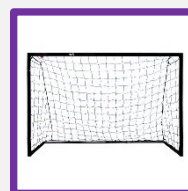
Craig.Lockett@stokecityfc.com

Oliver.Walklate@stokecityfc.com

Or contact the Aiming High inbox: aiminghigh@staffordshire.gov.uk

Parents/carers/siblings can attend and will be encouraged to join in. They will also attempt to create an area where parents/carers can try to relax within sight of the session, so will be encouraged to stay.

Parents/carers will have to complete a participation form on arrival. They will look to have a snack time period, so they will encourage parents/carers to bring their own food/drinks if they wish for their child to use this time during the session. Please be aware of allergies with the type of foods that are taken to the session.



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staffordshire.gov.uk/aiminghigh



Gartmore Riding School

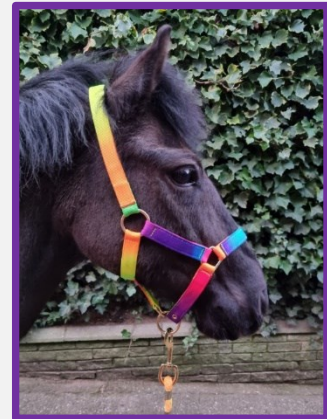
What do children get from the sessions?

Iona and Freya have been attending Gartmore Riding School and this is what they had to say about their session:

Iona said: ***"I really enjoyed it because I got to have fun with other people and lots of ponies."***

Freya said: ***"I enjoyed all the games. It was something different for me as I don't go riding and I actually enjoyed leading a pony round"***

At the end of the session, all the riders received a medal.



Caudwell Purple Explorers ... 8-18 years!

Caudwell Children run their Purple Explorer groups from different venues around the county. They have spaces available at the following venues:

- Keele University
- Brocton
- Burton-on-Trent
- Lichfield
- Tamworth
- Leek

These sessions will allow children to meet other like-minded individuals with similar interests and experiences. They will also provide the opportunity to partake in ASDAN qualifications as a part of attendance at no additional cost. Each session is tailored to meet the needs of the individuals present and allows children to be themselves in a supportive and safe environment.

Places still available in March:

Action for Children:

- Crazy gold and pizza
- Trentham gardens play and ice cream
- Family cycling at Westport Lake



Gartmore Riding School:

- 1:1/semi-private sessions on the 11th and 18th March



Stoke City Community Trust:

- Ability Counts at Rugeley on a Wednesday
- Ability Counts at Gnosall on a Thursday
- Ability Counts at Audley on a Friday



PLEASE REMEMBER TO BOOK IF YOU USUALLY ATTEND THE ABILITY COUNTS SESSIONS

Coming up in April:

Caudwell Purple Explorers:

1st April Keele 9-12pm
1st April Stafford 2-5pm
2nd April Burton 9-12pm
2nd April Lichfield 2-5pm
15th April Tamworth 2-5pm
16th April Leek 9-12pm



Stoke City Ability Counts:

Wednesday 5th /12th/19th/26th April at Rugeley 6 – 8pm
Thursday 6th /13th/ 20th/ 27th April at Gnosall 4.30 – 6.30pm
Friday 7th/ 14th/ 21st/28th April at Audley 4.30 – 6.30pm



Action for Children:

11th April Monkey Forest (Family) 1-3pm
12th April Lambing Live @ Trentham 1-3pm
13th April Breakfast and Wacky @ Stafford 9:30-11:30am



Coming up in April:

Gartmore Riding:

6th April Spring Themed Group Riding 11-1pm

8th / 12th April 1:1 Riding

29th April Spring into Action



Doves Care:

3rd April Monkey Forest 1-3pm

3rd April Tenpin Bowling 4-6pm

4th April / 14th April Chasewater Railway 10-12pm

14th April Stratfold Railway 1:30-4:30pm



CARE:

12th April Spring Fun at the Farm 10:30-12:30pm



Let us Play:

5th April Easter Activity Day 10-3pm

April West Midlands Safari Park Voucher



Still looking for top tips...

If you have any tips about charities or organisations that support families with a child with SEND, please share them with us at the Aiming High inbox and then we can let other families know.

aiminghigh@staffordshire.gov.uk

Enjoy Staffordshire is the official tourism site for Staffordshire, with everything you need to know, including things to do, what's on, places to stay and where to eat!

[Enjoy Staffordshire Official Tourist Information For Staffordshire](http://enjoystaffordshire.co.uk)



Radar Key ...

The key can be purchased by anyone with a permanent disability, you will need to provide evidence to support this. Radar keys can be purchased at Tourist Information Centre's and various locations across the county – please check with your district council.

The Radar National Key Scheme (NKS) offers disabled people independent access to over 9,000 locked public toilets around the country with one key.

[RADAR Keys explained: What are they, where can I use them and how do I get one? \(motability.co.uk\).](https://www.motability.co.uk/radar-keys-explained-what-are-they-where-can-i-use-them-and-how-do-i-get-one/)



Family Fund ...

[Family Fund](#)

Family Fund provides families raising a disabled, or seriously ill child on low incomes, with wide ranging grants for essential items. Whether you need a kitchen appliance, like a fridge, cooker or washing machine, clothing or bedding, sensory or play equipment or technology for your child or a much-needed family break, they are there to help.

You can apply for any items that will help meet your child's additional support needs.

[Family Fund | Grants | Eligibility](#)

