

Bath & North East Somerset Council

Chew Valley Children's Centre offers additional support for families

Families with children with additional needs are being invited to attend a support group at Bath & North East Somerset Council's Chew Valley Children's Centre.

The Early Support Group meets every two weeks, on the first and third Tuesdays of the month, between 9.45 and 11.30am, at the Children's Centre, which is on the site of Chew Valley School. The next session is on 3 January 2012.

These sessions are open to families from across the Chew Valley area and surrounding villages including West Harptree, Temple Cloud and Pensford. Transport can be provided by contacting Chew Valley Children's Centre.

Councillor Nathan Hartley (Lib-Dem, Peasedown), Deputy Leader of Council and Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children and Youth, said: "Bath & North East Somerset Council is encouraging parents from across the Chew Valley area to find out more about the centre and see how it can benefit their families.

"The group is aimed at families who may have concerns about their child's development. This could be anything from a speech delay, through to concerns about behaviour or much more complex needs. The group is for the under-fives but siblings are welcome during school holidays.

"Improving the life chances of children and young people is a priority for the Council, and children's centre services are there to support families and help ensure that children get a good early start in life."

Chew Valley Children's Centre has a range of sensory equipment including a sensory tent, bubble tube, fibre-optic lights, oil projector, torches, sensory objects and sensory material, which can be soothing or stimulating, depending on how the equipment is used. The children can also play outdoors in the garden, which is a great chance for them to develop their confidence in climbing, running and exploring.

Kelly Bearne, Bath & North East Somerset Council's Children Services Outreach Worker, who runs the sessions with her colleague Kate Allport, said: "The group is for any child who might need a little bit of extra support. They are run as stay and play sessions where parents, carers and children can spend quality time playing together while also finding out about what support is available to them.

"The children can explore lots of different ways of playing, including sand, water, painting, imaginary play, play dough and construction toys."

The children's centre offers a range of services to families with children under five right across the Chew Valley area. Other services provided include: drop-in baby clinics, post natal support and ante natal support, messy play sessions, child-minding group and, from January, new Citizens' Advice Bureau drop in sessions. Families can come along to the centre, or support can also be provided in the home.

Chew Valley Children's Centre is open 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday. It is one of 11 children's centres across Bath and North East Somerset. There are also centres at Keynsham, Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Paulton, Peasedown St John and Bath.

To find out more about any of the services call Chew Valley Children's Centre on 01225 395455 or email chewvalley_childrenscentre@bathnes.gov.uk. Or for information on wider support for children and families available across the area please contact Bath & North East Somerset Council's Family Information Service on 0800 073 1214, fis@bathnes.gov.uk or visit www.bathnes.gov.uk/fis

Children's centres are a partnership between Bath & North East Somerset Council, the community and many other local professional and voluntary organisations including local schools and nurseries, the NHS, Citizens' Advice Bureau, Job Centre Plus and voluntary organisations including First Steps, Barnardo's and Southside.