

# Volunteer information pack

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for the Independent Options Children and family centre.



Please take a moment to read through this pack to ensure that you are fully informed about the organisation and the volunteering role before deciding if you complete and submit an application.

Thank you



## **Who are Independent Options?**

Since 1977, Independent Options has been working to empower people with disabilities, enabling them to take control of their lives, achieve their aspirations and enjoy life to the full.

We offer a range of highly personalised support services for children and adults and who have a wide range of disabilities. We work with people who have learning disabilities, autism, physical disabilities, acquired brain injuries and mental health needs.

Society places barriers in the way of people with disabilities and those who love and care for them. However, we know that with the right support, families and carers are able to cope better and people with disabilities can reach their potential and lead fulfilling lives.

Our services enable people with disabilities to get the life they want and also ease pressure on families.



## Our Services:

- **The Children and Family Centre** - We provide inclusive play opportunities for children aged 0 - 10 years. We offer a safe, welcoming environment where children with disabilities/ additional needs can have fun and where parents/carers can access a range of information and support.
- **The Social Activities & Independent Living Services (SAILS)**  
We provide individually tailored support to children and adults with learning and other disabilities enabling them to use their skills and talents, gain confidence and enjoy life to the full.  
We provide individually tailored support to help people develop the skills and confidence they need to manage and maintain their homes.
- **Short Breaks** - We have two guest houses in Stockport where adults can enjoy a short break away from home. Staff are on site 24 hours a day to support our guests and ensure that all their needs are catered for during their stay.
- **Shared Lives** - we recruit, train, approve and support Shared Lives Carers who offer short or long-term support to adults with disabilities in their family homes and in the community.
- **Supported Living** - We provide 24 hour support to adults with complex needs who are living in their own homes, sometimes alone and sometimes sharing with other people. Support is person centred and individually tailored so that people are able to enjoy their homes, develop their skills and be as independent as possible.



## **What is the Children and Family centre?**

The centre is a play space based within the headquarters of Independent Options in Hazel Grove. The facilities include: an adaptable play room, parents lounge, computer room, craft room, kitchen, children's toilets, adults toilet and baby change, and a large, secure playground.

We provide a range of groups and activities for children aged 0 to 10 years who have learning disabilities, additional needs, their siblings and parents/carers. The children who attend have a wide range of abilities and needs. Some of the children who come have the following conditions: Autism, Downs Syndrome, ADD, ADHD, Williams Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy.

Because of their disability or additional needs some of the children do struggle with things such as: sharing, listening and understanding verbal instructions, communicating, making and maintaining friendships, controlling own emotions, make believe or pretending games, understanding the implications of their actions or understanding the feelings and needs of others.

Some may also have delays or struggle with some of the following: movement and mobility, balance, hand eye coordination, toileting and personal care, visual or hearing impairments, sensory overload or sensory seeking, eating and drinking, and fine or gross motor skills.

At the Children and Family Centre we treat each child as an individual. We believe that with the right knowledge and encouragement every child can learn, achieve their goals and have a fun, enjoyable time here at the centre.

Our main service aims are for children and their families to feel relaxed and be able to have enjoyable time while being supported by other families and our volunteers.

We rely heavily on the support and help of volunteers to run our groups and activities. Making sure that you feel supported and are enjoying your volunteering experience is important to us.



### Term time timetable 2015



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
Morning	<b>Parents coffee morning</b> <i>(Last Monday of the month)</i> 9:30 – 12pm	<b>Childminders toddler group</b> <i>Childminder led free play</i> 9:30 – 11:30am	<b>Singing and signing with Jo</b> <i>Pre-school signing class</i> 9:30 – 11:30am	<b>Sensory &amp; messy play</b> <i>For 1 – 4 year olds</i> 9:30 – 11:30am	<b>Toddler group</b> <i>Parent led free play</i> 9:30 – 11:30am	<b>Boredom Busters</b> <i>0 to 10 years old</i> <i>(Second Saturday of the month)</i> 10 – 2pm	
Afternoon	<b>Available for Independent Options use only</b>	<b>After school club</b> <i>Fun play time for 4 to 11 years old</i> 3:30 – 5:30pm	<b>Available for Independent Options use only</b>	<b>Private booking</b>	<b>Available to hire for parties</b>		

### We also run:

- School holiday clubs
- Day trips
- Parents coffee morning
- Training and information sessions for parents/carers

The Children and family centre currently receives the majority of its funding from BBC Children in Need, however we are always looking for new ways to fundraise to add to this funding.



## Who works at the centre?



### **Sam Jarvis is the Manager of the Centre.**

Sam came to independent Options in 2011 as a social work student. Since completing her social work qualification she has stayed with the organisation, first within the children and young person's community support team before moving to the Children and family centre in 2013. Sam manages the volunteers who help out in the centre, as well as organising all of the term time and holiday groups, training for parents.

## General role of a volunteer at Independent Options

- To liaise with the Centre Manager regularly
- To attend quarterly volunteer meetings.
- To read all necessary organisational policies and follow the stated procedures
- To inform the Centre Manager as soon as possible if you are unable to attend a volunteering session or meeting.

## Role of a volunteer in The Children and Family centre

- To ensure that everyone attending the group have correctly signed in at arrival and signed out when leaving (adults and children)
- If the Centre Manager is not available, the money should be taken to the front office where the administration staff will record the money and deposit it in the safe.
- To report any incidences, accidents, broken or malfunctioning equipment, complaints, harassment or bullying by the correct procedures in a timely manner.
- To ensure that the venue is left tidy after the group. For example – All toys and craft materials put in the correct cupboards. Tables and chairs left neatly so not to cause obstruction. This includes the kitchen and all side rooms if the group have used these during their stay.
- To treat all adults, children and young people who access the venue and independent options (including- staff, students, external visitors, all group attendees and other volunteers) with respect, politeness, and to behave in an anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive manner to all people, no matter what their: culture, religion, sex, disability, sexuality, age and race.



## Application process

Now that you have read this introduction booklet, you can decide if you would like to start the application process to become a volunteer. If you haven't done so already then you will need to contact Sam the centre manager and arrange a time to come for an informal meeting. This is so we can put a face to a name and have a chat about the organisation and why you would like to volunteer. We will discuss if there are any suitable volunteering opportunities for you.

You will need to complete and return to us a volunteer's application form, complete with the name and address of two referees'. Once this has been returned our HR department will contact you and ask you to come to our offices so you can complete an Enhanced DBS form (previously CRB). No one can become a volunteer, or indeed a paid employee without completing a DBS.

Once we have received your completed DBS certificate and both of your references you will be able to start volunteering. Sam will be back in touch to arrange a suitable time and date for you to come in to start your induction and volunteering.

## Who can I contact?

General contact information for Independent Options:

- If you have any questions regarding volunteering at The children and family centre please contact Sam Jarvis on – 0161 482 7933 or [sjarvis@independentoptions.org.uk](mailto:sjarvis@independentoptions.org.uk)
- If you have an application currently being processed and need to speak to someone about his please contact Annalise Duo on 0161 482 7937 or [aduo@independentoptions.org.uk](mailto:aduo@independentoptions.org.uk)
- Postal address:  
67 Chester Road,  
Hazel Grove,  
Stockport,  
SK7 5PE

Phone - 0161 456 6502