

London Borough of Bexley

News Release

For Immediate Release

07 November 2016 / PR 8403

ONE STOP SHOP FOR FAMILIES

A new Special Educational Needs (SEN) resource and assessment centre for Bexley families has opened in Erith.

The centre is a 'one-stop shop' for parents, carers and their children to get involved in activities, get free, confidential and independent advice as well as useful information and support. The centre also offers support to community organisations, schools and professionals who work with families.

The centre, based on the site of the former Normandy School, is also a new home for local charities including SNAP and Bexley Voice, as well as Council services for families and children with SEN up to the age of five years.

Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Cllr Philip Read said; "This space was the ideal solution for services that until now had been spread across the borough in premises that were not always fit for purpose. The rooms are all on one level, there is easy parking and the centre is accessible by public transport from all parts of the borough. Families can see several different organisations in one place and get all the help or information they need. They can also take part in free or subsidised activities in a welcoming, safe and supported environment.

Rose Robb, Operations Manager from Bexley Snap said; 'To have a central point for families to come for advice, support, practical courses and activities for their disabled children is fantastic. They can be reassured they will receive a warm welcome in a non-judgmental environment to support them through their difficult time coming to terms with their child's needs and discovering their next steps.'

Chairman of Bexley Voice, Claire Watts said; "We are very pleased to finally have a secure base to work with parents and carers of special needs children. We will be right in the middle of the centre, along with other SEND professionals. After seven years of meeting in coffee shops and using our cars as an office it is lovely to be able to store some of our belongings and work from a central hub."

Liz Waterhouse from Sidcup, Mum of two year old Millie. 'We love Little Stars sessions at Normandy as there is so much space. There is even more equipment and the outdoor play area is amazing!'

The centre is already up and running but a special celebration launch event will take place early next year, when even more services will have joined.

To find out more about the centre call 01322 359475

Please contact: Jane Parson on 020 3045 4868
communications@bexley.gov.uk

