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For families with children from 0 to 11

Spring 2017

Issue 56

FREE

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Mummies aren't meant to cry

Choosing clubs and classes

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www.helenraephoto.com

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editor's note

The days are getting longer, the weather is getting better (we hope) - the time of daffodils and chocolates is nearly upon us!

Let yourself be spoiled this Mother's day and don't worry too much about spoiling your children with Easter eggs and bunnies. And when you're done indulging, we have plenty of suggestions on burning those recently gained calories - just look at our Activities section and the Events Watch. Not sure how to choose among so many activities for kids in your area? There is some advice in Mike Stevenson's article *Choosing clubs and classes*.

Walking and running through daffodils may prove more than just fun for our readers this year. At a farm near Northwich, local photographer Helen Rae will photograph children in acres of golden daffodil fields to raise much-needed funds for Macmillan Cancer Support. If you'd like to take part in this event, read more in our Charity Corner section.

In the Travel section you can learn about cruising with children - and yes, there is still time to book a cruise for your summer holiday! And for those of you who are well organised and make your plans well in advance, there is always next year to start thinking about. **Zoe x**

visit www.mums-dads.co.uk



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Stagecoach Didsbury - Wonderland Easter Workshop



10th to 13th April 2017 Stagecoach Didsbury will be running their annual Easter Workshop (for 4 -7 year olds and 7-16 year olds) at Parrs Wood High School, East Didsbury, Manchester.

Let your children come and join in the fun with our Wonderland theme - an alternative look at a familiar story with a different twist. Your child will have four days to work with professional actors, dancers and musicians teaching them script work, exciting routines and learning those all so famous catchy songs. This will lead to the final big performance on the last day, a truly special way to enjoy the Easter Holidays.

Costumes, lighting and sound equipment will all be provided. It will be fast and furious and promises to be a lot of fun! You don't have to be a regular **Stagecoach** student to attend - no previous experience is required. All we ask for is enthusiasm!



Show Day: Thursday 13th April Ages 4 - 7: 9.30 - 12.30

Show Day: 12.00 Thursday 13th April. Standard £70.00 Ages 7 - 16: 10.00 - 16.00.

Show Day: 18:00 Thursday 13th April. Standard £110, Sibling £90.

For more information: **t 0161 789 1349** or visit www.stagecoach.co.uk/didsbury

Tennis in the School Holidays

Point-One Tennis is a tennis coaching and activity provider operating from Poynton Tennis Club situated in the heart of the thriving town of Poynton, Cheshire. They offer holiday camps every school holiday throughout the year. With convenient sessions available to cater around the working day, it is a great way for children to learn new things, improve their tennis skills and meet new friends. Appropriate for children aged between 5 and 12 years old it is a fun packed day of tennis with prizes and games. If your child has played tennis before then they will be appropriately challenged throughout the day. If they are new to tennis and trying it for the first time they're sure to come away with a great understanding of the basics. Michael Atherfold Head Coach says, "We've been running holiday camps now for the past 10 years and have been very popular. The kids all seem to

have a great time and generally want to continue to play on a regular basis as part of our programme after the camp finishes.' As well as holiday camps Point-One Tennis also offers a comprehensive year round programme including sessions for pre-school children, mini tennis, junior tennis and adults.

• Easter Holidays

Week 1 - Monday, 3rd April to Friday, 7th April 2017

Week 2 - Tuesday, 11th April to Thursday, 13th April 2017

• Whit holidays

Week 1 - Tuesday, 30th May to Friday, 2nd June 2017

Week 2 - Monday, 5th June to Friday, 9th June 2017

The following sessions are available daily over Easter and Whit holidays:

Early drop off from 8am.

Morning sessions: 9am -12pm

Afternoon sessions: 1pm - 4pm

Full day sessions: 9am - 4pm

Late pick up until 5pm.

The camps are aimed at children aged between 5 and 12 years old

To book your place please visit:

www.point-onetennis.org

and select 'holiday camps'

For more information: **t 07984 973887** or email point-onetennis@hotmail.com





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Choosing clubs and classes *by Mike Stevenson*

Formal education and out-of-school activities



photo: Enjoy-a-Ball

Within driving distance from your home there will undoubtedly be enough activities to keep most children occupied for every waking minute. However, availability does not mean that we should automatically seek to buy into all of them. What needs to be considered then, when making choices on behalf of our children?

Compulsory provision

In England, the compulsory school starting age is five, but the Government has ensured that the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum now influences all pre-school provision for three to five year olds. Our early year's system is among the most formalized in Europe and contrasts with most countries where the starting age for compulsory education is six or seven. A recent report found that young children were not receiving the play-based education they are supposed to, because even nursery teachers now feel pressured to prioritise achievements in numeracy, literacy, and familiarity with 'proper school' routines. So parents must take account of the benefits and costs of participating in the variety of clubs and classes available to their pre-school children.

Do out-of-school activities make a difference?

Certainly, out-of-hours clubs and activities are good for improving children's self-confidence. Generations of children in this country have thrived on activities provided, for example, by Rainbows, Beavers, Cubs and Brownies. On the other hand, the press now reports parents enrolling their children in too many activities, or putting too much pressure on them to do well! We hear of the problems caused by "pushy parents", some of whom are reported to be driving up to 250 miles a week simply to ferry their offspring around a multitude of recreational classes! A recent newspaper report described a 10 year old who spends 50 hours each week in out of school activities which cost her parents £6000 a year! However, when a survey asked parents if they thought that children did too many out of school

activities, 60% of them said 'Yes!' Being bored has, after all, provided the stimulus for some of civilization's most creative inventions.

It can be difficult to know where to strike the balance. We know that most children benefit from experiencing a range of activities. We know that our children are involved in formal school systems earlier than in most other countries. We know that the school system is perhaps tilting its balance too far away from young children's need for structured play activities. We don't want to be guilty of pushing our young children into unsuitable activities, yet we do want them to benefit from some of the opportunities on offer. So where can we start to make sense of it all?

Are they good for preschool children?

It is important to differentiate between the informal provision of recreational activities and the need for the more formal supportive provision given by private tuition. For informal provision parents might wish to give more consideration to their children's 'wants', while wishing to be somewhat more prescriptive in determining what their child's needs are for more formal support.

If children are to grow up as happy, balanced and participating people, they need love, time and attention from the adults in their lives. Human history tells us the best body for providing that care is the family. We also want to be the models our children imitate in everything they do and learn. But what if you feel that your child is a natural dancer and you are more of a footballer? What if your child is a budding Mozart and you can barely sing Happy Birthday? We simply can't be the most competent models for everything our children will engage in!

So perhaps the answer is to introduce our pre-schoolers, very gently and gradually to the wider world of activity classes, run by experts, but carefully selected and monitored by us. Then, as they grow and become more capable, to allow that contact slowly to increase as we and they feel it appropriate to take on more.

Making a choice

First, be sure that you really feel that your child might be ready to benefit from recreational classes. Then, choose a class which will do the following:

- extend and enrich an existing talent or skill shown by your child
- reinforce and support activities in which the child needs extra attention
- provide aspects that are missing from the rest of the child's experience, (eg. fitting into larger groups for an only child).

Choose a class which provides a range of activities and experiences in each session. Above all, make sure that your child enjoys the activities, and wants to participate. Then insist that joining means giving the experience a proper try out. We always stipulated that anything joined had to be stuck at for at least a school term, so no early 'drop-outs' were considered! Then attend a 'taster session' to satisfy yourself that those in charge:

- Observe and recognise the different personalities and developmental stages of the children they work with
- Encourage the children to speak to each other, their parents, and adult leaders about what they are doing
- Recognise and celebrate individual differences and diversity
- Encourage children to observe, question and extend what they experience
- Challenge children to think, rather than train them to conform
- Engage children in challenging activities rather than time-filling ones
- Help children to make informed choices
- Foster healthy attitudes to issues like diet, exercise, sleep etc.
- Respect parental wishes and encourage their involvement
- Encourage co-operation and equality among the groups they work with
- Encourage respect for others and the natural and made environments.



photo: Stagecoach

Tumble Tots in a nutshell



Tumble Tots is Britain's leading active physical programme designed to develop children's agility, balance, co-ordination and climbing, whilst developing their sense of self-confidence and independence.

Each 45 minute weekly session combines fun, excitement and challenges in a safe and caring environment. All sessions use unique equipment and are run by staff specially trained to get the best out of your child.

In order to meet the physical and developmental needs of the children the equipment layouts and class formats are specific for each age group. Every two weeks the equipment layouts are changed to encourage new skills. Classes for children up to age 2 are based around a free play concept. From the age of two, the equipment is arranged in four groups or 'stations', each focusing on a different skill: climbing, balance, agility and co-ordination.



Staff are friendly and are there to help and encourage the children whilst on the apparatus and make sure that everything is used safely whilst having lots of fun! They are fully trained and DBS checked and are passionate about working with children. Your local friendly Tumble Tots Franchisees are Sue and Gill in Bramhall, Cheadle & The Heaton and Jane in Trafford, South Manchester, Lymm & Knutsford.

www.tumbletots.com

The springboard to confidence for your child

Tumble Tots

Tumble Tots is Britain's leading National Active Physical Play Programme for pre-school children

Call Jane 07812 144450 for classes in Altrincham, Timperley, Hale, Lymm, Didsbury & Knutsford

Call Gill 07851 268093 or Sue 07400 532227 for classes in Bramhall, Cheadle & The Heaton

www.tumbletots.com

~ soft play area ~ Bollington Health & Leisure Centre



Bollington Health & Leisure has been a feature of the village since 1977. The soft play area there is designed for children under 5 years old, open every day from 9am - 6pm and costs £2.60 per child when used for a drop-in session.

Judith Mattinson, the centre manager, says: "We also hire out the room for parties and the tea room overlooks the soft play area so customers can set up their party tea whilst the children play. Most times can be accommodated and the hire of both rooms for two hours is £40."

Call to book: **01625 574774**, email: reception@bollingtonleisure.co.uk, visit: bollingtonleisure.co.uk or find **Bollington Health & Leisure** on Facebook.

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Testing the water by Paul Wojnicki



view from Mount Ulia



Spider outside Guggenheim Museum

I'd been toying with the idea of taking the kids on a cruise for a while, but wasn't sure how they'd cope with being on a boat for so long. Cruises do represent excellent value for money, but only if your children don't spend the entire holiday throwing up.

So last spring we tested the water - pun intended - by taking a Brittany Ferries cruise-ferry from Portsmouth to northern Spain.

The Bay of Biscay comes with something of a reputation for large waves at times. But there's a plus side to this route as well: the abundance of large mammals such as whales and dolphins and a team of spotters watching out for them, ready to alert the eager passengers - especially children - as soon as they're sighted.

The south-bound crossing involved neither of the above for us. The Bay barely had a ripple on it and we also seemed to miss every single wildlife sighting. Harrison did manage to spot the ship's indoor play park though, complete with sea-saw, slide, roundabout and climbing frames; and it felt as though we spent every waking minute of the crossing there, with six month old Ella excitedly cheering him on. Luckily there was a cafe next door so we didn't have to drag them away from it - kicking and screaming - to eat.

Had we sailed in the summer, rather than March, we might have enjoyed the pool as well. But I guess the unpredictability of The Bay means that the pool has to remain closed in the winter.

Alena and I were relieved to sight land the following day, as it meant we'd be leaving the play-park behind for a few days, but also because we were excited about the itinerary ahead. Beginning with the unlikely industrial port city of Bilbao.

On the face of it, that probably doesn't sound particularly appealing to parents of young children, but while Bilbao is undoubtedly industrial it's also surrounded by mountains, and - being a port - is very close to the sea. Bilbao is also home to the world famous Guggenheim Museum. The word museum might strike fear into the hearts of parents with younger children but we spent several

hours enjoying the outside of the museum, which was completely free of charge and had lots of interesting oddities for the children to marvel at.

The giant metallic spider was one of the highlights; it looks like it belongs on the set of a sci-fi film rather than a museum and which kids of all ages will find it a lot more interesting than the statues back home. Our kids were also fascinated by the giant floral West Highland Terrier and the dancing fountains; indeed it was almost as hard to drag Harrison from the latter as it was from that play-park on the ferry.

Having finally bribed him into returning to the car we headed to nearby Bermeo and enjoyed a spot of lunch before hiking, around a mile, to the unpronounceable Gaztelugatze. It's a little difficult to put into words how amazing Gaztelugatze actually is but I'll try anyway. Imagine a section of the Great Wall of China thrusting toward a 14th century chapel on an islet in the Bay of Biscay and imagine having this virtually to yourself. Ella slept though the entire visit but Harrison had the time of his life invading the island and running along the sea-walls for over an hour - that's a lot safer than it sounds by the way!

The following morning we drove an hour along the coast, through a scenic Pyrenean motorway to San Sebastian, which is regularly voted as having one of

the best city beaches in Europe, it's also famous for its food and the abundance of Michelin starred restaurants. Needless to say children prefer the beach to Michelin starred bistros, or at least our children do. And we spent the next few days playing endlessly in the sand, though we did manage a side trip by funicular up Mount Ulia, to take in the stupendous views of the beaches we'd been playing on below. The view is not dissimilar to images of Rio de Janeiro and there's even a statue of Christ on nearby Urgill Hill - but Harrison was more interested in the permanent funfair that lives at the summit and Ella had fun laughing at him going round and round on the rides.

Waving goodbye to San Sebastian we headed across the border to the French city of Biarritz for another few days of sand and sea. It actually felt more as though we'd driven to California than France though as the sea front was teeming with nothing but surfers for around two miles or so along Plage de la Cote des Basques that runs back toward Spain, indeed the whole vibe here is more Californian than virtually anywhere else in Europe. The waves and water temperature at this time of year were too dangerous to let the children paddle in but the beach was incredibly wide and we did manage to find a large safe tidal pool for Harrison to splash around in and Ella to dip her little toes.



Dune of Pilat



Medoc

We spent the next few days exploring a number of secluded coves and surf beaches in the city, and found an islet even smaller than the one at Gaztelugatze, though the bridge was less impressive. The highlight of our next few days in France though was the Dune du Pilat further up the Atlantic coast. This massive sand dune is the largest in Europe at 2.7km long, 500m wide and 110m in high. It's a tremendous sight and wouldn't look out of place in Saudi Arabia, were it not for the longest forest in Europe sitting behind the largest sand dune. You could easily spend a week in the area without getting bored, particularly as there are dozens of great campsites around. But alas, we had only a day there, so we've resolved to return again in a year or so.

The return journey was - a tad disappointingly - flat calm again, so we learned nothing about how the kids would handle a week long cruise in choppy seas. Still, we did spot a distant pod of whales and of course the play park, so Harrison has decided that we have to come by ferry again next time!



Events Watch

March

Daily 10:00 - 17:00

Experiment!

Stare into the mirror of infinity, create a tornado, and watch your own skeleton ride a bicycle. Play with 25 hands-on exhibits and see science in action. Could you lift a MINI? Find out how the power of gears can give even the weakest of weaklings super strength.

Be mesmerised by bubbles passing through giant columns of coloured liquids to demonstrate viscosity, see how many of the city's homes can be lit by using household waste as power, and measure your reactions against the speed of light. Recommended for all ages

Museum of Science & Industry

Liverpool Road, Castlefield, Manchester M3 4FP
Tel: 0161 833 0027 msimanchester.org.uk

Daily 10:00 - 16:00

Wythenshawe Park Farm

Just a hop, skip and a jump from the children's play area next door is Wythenshawe Park Farm. This working, countryside, community farm gives children the chance to learn where their food really comes from, as well as watching, feeding and meeting the animals on site.

There are cows, sheep, goats, pigs, ducks, horses and a prize-winning herd of Hereford cattle! The breeding programme at the farm means there are often baby animals to visit too! The farm shop sells locally grown seasonal fruit and vegetables, fresh meat and eggs from the hens.

Wythenshawe Park, Wythenshawe Road,
Wythenshawe, Greater Manchester, M23 0AB
Tel: 0161 946 0726

www.manchester.gov.uk/info/200073/parks_and_d_open_spaces/2242/wythenshawe_park/7

Daily 11:00 - 17:00

Museum Mouse's Musical Meander

Museum Mouse is learning all about music! Come and enjoy our new trail as museum mouse travels around the Museum. Suitable for all ages
Stockport Museum, 30/31 Market Place,
Stockport, SK1 1ES. Tel: 0161 474 4444
www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/stockport-museum

Saturdays and Sundays, 12:00 and 14:00

Engineer Eric's Difficult Day

Learn how a steam engine works in this interactive show right in the heart of the pulsating Power Hall. It's lots of fun and a little bit loud. Forgetful Fireman Fred is learning how to get Pender the steam locomotive up and running, but when Engineer Eric leaves him to his own devices, Fred's going to need to call on the help of his friends. Age: 5-11

Museum of Science & Industry

Liverpool Road, Castlefield, Manchester M3 4FP
Tel: 0161 833 0027 msimanchester.org.uk

Every Sunday 10:00- 16:00

Abbotsfield Park Miniature Railway

Also known locally as 'Chassen Park', Abbotsfield Park is especially worth visiting on a Sunday when the Urmston and District Railway Society operate a charming miniature train around the park!

Suitable for ages: Babies & Toddlers (0-3), Young Children (4 - 8) & Older Children (9 -12) Price: £1
As well as a wealth of wide open green space to play traditional family games in, the park also offers both under 5s and over 5s adventure play areas with heaps of sturdy multi use outdoor equipment, plus formal tennis courts and bowling green too, so even with a mixed bag of age ranges there's something to occupy everybody, especially if you pack up the bats, balls and kites.

The park also plays host to a number of events throughout the year suitable for families including the annual May Day Steam Rally.

Abbotsfield Park, Chassen Road, Urmston, Greater Manchester, M41 9EY. Tel: 0161 912 2000
www.trafford.gov.uk/residents/leisure-and-lifestyle/parks-and-open-spaces/parks-in-trafford/abbotsfield-park.aspx

Every Monday 9:00 - 13:00

Toddler Sense

Sense Toddler is a multi-award winning activity programme, which introduces energy, enthusiasm and a huge amount of fun. The end result is a great sense of well-being and achievement for children aged 13 months to 5 years-old. The activities are designed to keep toddlers and children busy, active, and stimulated by offering them a magical, multi-adventure experience in a safe and happy environment.

Each week introduces fresh new ideas and an action-packed adventure. There is always something new and exciting to look forward to.
Poynton Community Centre, 107 Park Lane,
Poynton, SK12 1RB. Tel: 07985 901901
eastcheshire@miniprofessors.co.uk Laura Pedley
www.babysensory.com/en/MiniProfessorsClassDetails/EastCheshire

1 March 09:30 - 10:15, 10:15 - 11, 11 - 11:45

8 April 09:30 - 10:15, 10:15 - 11, 11 - 11:45

13 May 09:30 - 10:15 10:15 - 11, 11 - 11:45

Baby and Toddler - Storytelling and Play session
Bring your little ones to Quarry Bank, for a special storytelling and play session just for them. Please book your free ticket in advance.

Quarry Bank, Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 4LA
Tel: 01625 527468

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/quarry-bank/

2, 9, 23 March 17:00

Foundation Contemporary Technique Class

Due to popular demand, The Centre for Advanced Training in Dance (CAT) offer Contemporary Dance Technique Classes to male and female dancers who would like to explore the world of contemporary dance.

These Foundation Level classes will begin to lay a valuable foundation of knowledge and skills in contemporary dance technique and the creative process for participants who are new to contemporary dance. Age: 7+

Price: £3.50 weekly or £28.00 for the full course.

The Lowry, Salford Quays. Manchester
Tel: 0843 208 6000 www.thelowry.com

5, 12, 19, 26 March 5-7 year olds:

11.30am-12.30pm 8-11 year olds: 1pm-2.30pm

Flying Saucers Drama Club

The Exchange's Flying Saucer Drama Club returns this year with an explosion of colour, music and good old fashioned storytelling!

Join workshop leader Kate Colgrave-Pope to play lots of drama games, build confidence, make new friends, release your imagination and ignite a sense of fun!

5-7 Years - Monster Mash Up - finding your inner monster!

Mask making, inventing characters, discovering new and imagined worlds, going on wild adventures and making lots and lots of mess!

8 - 11 Years - Pop up Paintings!

Inspired by famous paintings from around the world, we will be using our storytelling and devising skills to celebrate the fantastical and making the impossible seem possible by bringing these masterpieces to life before our very eyes!

Royal Exchange Theatre, St Ann's Square,
Manchester, M2 7DH. Tel: 0161 833 9833

www.royalexchange.co.uk

10, 24, 31 March 10-10.45am & 11-11.45am

7, 14, 21, 28 April 10-10.45am & 11-11.45am

Under 5s First Steps

Weekly dance workshops for children aged under 5 and their families where your little one can explore their creativity and have tons of fun! In this season we will wriggle, jiggle and jump as we explore stories, rhythm and music through our bodies. Everyone welcome, come and have a go!

Age: 2 ½ - 4 ½

The Lowry, Salford Quays, Manchester.

Tel: 0843 208 6000 www.thelowry.com

11 March & every 2nd Sat. in the month

9.15 - 11:00

Early Birds

Come and enjoy the museum at a quiet time and take part in a different craft activity each month. Staff will be on hand to start the machinery and talk about the exhibits.

Suitable for children and adults with autism, their families and companions. Price £2 for craft activity
Hat Works Museum, Wellington Road South
Stockport SK3 0EU. Tel: 0161 474 2487
<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/hat-works>

11, 18, 25 March 11:00

1, 8, 15, 22, 29 April 11:00

Lookout, it's Saturday Playhouse!

Lookout its Saturday Playhouse is now a free and weekly art activity for children and their families in our dedicated Lookout space for families.

Each week we Lookout for what we can see both inside and outside, taking inspiration from our theatres, galleries and surrounding landscape at Salford Quays and MediaCityUK. Age: 5 - 11.

The Lowry, Salford Quays. Manchester

Tel: 0843 208 6000 www.thelowry.com

15 March 11:00-13:00

19 April 11:00-13:00

17 May 11:00-13:00

Walk with the Ranger at Hare Hill

An informative walk around the varied landscape of the Hare Hill estate with the Ranger. You'll learn about the day to day running of the park, and find out more about the life of a National Trust Ranger. The walk will last 1-2 hours. Dogs on leads are welcome.

Hare Hill Garden, Oak Road, Macclesfield,
Cheshire, SK10 4LF. Tel: 01625 827534
john.mann@nationaltrust.org.uk

18 March 14:00 - 15:00

Get back in the kitchen!

Women as cooks & chefs 1650-1950 with Dr Annie Gray. Join Dr Annie Gray, resident food historian on BBC Radio 4's The Kitchen Cabinet, and presenter on BBC series Victorian Bakers as she explores the role of women in the kitchen, both as paid professionals and unpaid domestic labour. Price: £8. Quarry Bank, Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 4LA. Tel: 01625 527468

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/quarry-bank/

18 March 10.30am - 3.30pm

Pi: Platform for Investigation

Sponsored by Siemens UK, Pi: Platform for Investigation is a monthly event where families discover cutting edge research that's happening right now in and around Manchester and the North West. Each month our partners from universities, research centres and other organisations take over our purpose-built high-tech platform, complete with computer ports and experiment tables, to introduce visitors of all ages to important innovations via conversation and fun. Age: 8+

Museum of Science & Industry

Liverpool Road, Castlefield, Manchester M3 4FP

Tel: 0161 833 0027 msimanchester.org.uk



19 March 2017 12:00-17:00

Adopt a Farm Animal Day

Come to the Farm and meet the rare breed animals which are up for adoption. Choose from Prancer the Reindeer, Blossom the Clydesdale Horse, Tamzin the Tamworth Pig and Frosty the Donkey. Tattton Park, Knutsford, Cheshire
Tel: 01625 374400 www.tatttonpark.org.uk

24 March 19:00 - 21:00

Behind the Scenes at Bramall Hall

Find out more about the restoration and conservation of Bramall Hall as we take you on a guided tour with a difference.

Suitable for all ages. Price: £10

Bramall Hall, Bramhall Park, Hall Road, Bramhall,
Stockport. Tel: 0161 474 2020

24 March and every 4th Friday in the month

10:00 - 11.30 (for 2-5 years)

14:00- 15:00 (for babies up to 2 years)

Mad Hatters Art & Crafts Club

An action packed hour of arts and crafts with the emphasis on fun and age and ability appropriate crafts. Dress to get messy! Price £5 per child
Hat Works Museum, Wellington Road South
Stockport SK3 0EU. Tel: 0161 474 2487
www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/hat-works

25 March 9.30 - 11.30

Early Birds

Early opening for families with autism, offering the opportunity to explore the Hall when it's quiet. Enjoy family trails and activity boxes. Staff will be on hand to help you to learn about the Hall. Bramall Hall, Bramhall Park, Hall Road, Bramhall, Stockport. Tel: 0161 474 2020

25 March 11:15

Easter Bunny Run in aid of the Neuromuscular Centre

Easter Bunny Run is a sponsored run with a bit of a difference - there will be 100 paper eggs to locate along the route. Return them in exchange for real chocolate Easter Eggs! Upon arrival, collect your Bunny Ears, which are included in the entry price. Choose between 3km or 5km distance.

You are also welcome to walk, jog or even hop in aid of NMC! This event is suitable for all ages and levels of ability and fancy dress is also encouraged! Upon completion, we will be handing out goody bags to every participant.

Price: £7.50 adult, £5 child, under 5 free.

Blakemere Village, Sandiway, Cheshire, CW8 2EB
Tel: 01606 861733

25 March 14:00 - 15:00

Behind the scenes - machines

One Saturday a month we invite you join us as we look at the Mill and its machinery in more depth. Led by our expert team, this is a real opportunity to find out more about this fascinating place.

Quarry Bank, Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 4LA
T: 01625 527468

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/quarry-bank

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FOR TICKETS: DAYOUTWITHTHOMAS.CO.UK

out & about

Events Watch

25 March - 2 April

Cheshire Residents' Festival 2017

Various locations across Cheshire mark English Tourism Week and celebrate all that our lovely county has to offer, residents of Cheshire can explore what's on their doorstep for FREE for one week only!

From 25th March - 2nd April several fantastic attractions, from Cholmondeley Castle to the Anderton Boat Lift and Macclesfield Museums will be offering free and discounted entry, free tours and other exciting opportunities for local residents to discover more about the county we live in and the fantastic 'hidden gems' in the area. This fantastic festival is for residents ONLY! Vouchers are limited and available on a first come first served basis. If you would like to download your voucher and find out more about the festival, visit the festival website at: www.visfestivalcheshire.com/cheshire-residents

25-26 March 11:00 - 15:00

Lady of the Manor

Celebrate Mother's Day with a glass of bubbly, sandwiches, soup, a selection of sweet treats and tea or coffee. Price: £22.50 each.

Lyme Park, Disley, Stockport, Cheshire, SK12 2NR
Tel: 01663 762023
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lyme

26 March 12:00- 16:00 (1h slots)

Mother's Day Afternoon Tea

Treat your Mum on Mother's Day with a delicious afternoon tea at Quarry Bank. Our afternoon tea includes a selection of dainty sandwiches, hand-made scones with jam and cream, Victoria sponge, lemon posset and mini raspberry tarts. Free glass of Prosecco for each mum.

Price: Adult £19.95, Child £12.95
Quarry Bank, Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 4LA
Tel: 01625 527468
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/quarry-bank

30-31 March 2017 10:30 - 16:00

1-18 April 2017 10:30 - 16:00

Cadbury Easter Egg Hunts - Magical Nature Trail

Spot fairies in the trees, look for the troll under the bridge and let your little ones imaginations run wild on this magical trail around the garden. Price: £2 per trail. Dunham Massey, Altrincham, Chesh., WA14 4SJ T: 0161 941 1025
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dunham-massey

April

1 April 11:00 - 13:00

Special Guided Walk - Birds & Habitats

Grab your binoculars and join our Park Guides to discover the variety of birds and wildlife that call Dunham their home. Dunham Massey, Altrincham, Chesh., WA14 4SJ T: 0161 941 1025
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dunham-massey

3-7, 10-13 April 11:00 - 16:00

Spring holiday fun

Get creative with textiles in the mill. Have a go at weaving a paper basket, braiding a friendship bracelet or help to create a rag rug on our peg loom at this event exploring all things textiles. Quarry Bank, Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 4LA
Tel: 01625 527468
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/quarry-bank/

4 April 10.30 - 12.00 & 13.00 - 14.30

Cave Babies

Join us at Tatton Park for a sensory introduction to the Stone Age. Children will experience how different life was in the past through a variety of hands on activities. The session will end with an interactive story and song session.

Recommended for children aged 3-5 years old. All children must be accompanied by an adult. One ticket should be purchased per child and this includes free participation for one adult. Must be pre-booked. Price: £8 per person.
Tatton Park, Knutsford, Cheshire
Tel: 01625 374400, 01625 374428
www.tattonpark.org.uk

6 April 1.30-3.30pm, family drop-in

Weave an Easter Egg Basket

Use some silk weaving techniques to create your own decorated Easter baskets - you may be lucky and find some eggs to put inside.

£3 per activity pack
Silk Museum, Park Lane Macclesfield SK11 6TJ
Tel: 01625 612045 www.silkmacclesfield.org.uk

6 - 7 April 10am-12.30pm

Craft Workshop

Take an adventure into camouflage and create some fantastic artwork where 'now you see it, 'now you don't'! £6.50 per child, 6-12 years
Silk Museum, Park Lane Macclesfield SK11 6TJ
Tel: 01625 612045
www.silkmacclesfield.org.uk

8-17 April 12:00 - 17:00

Lambing Week at the Farm



Will you be lucky enough to see our lambs being born? This year we have synchronised our ewes to lamb within a 10-day period. Regular meet the sheep talks and learn more about the secrets of spinning.

Tatton Park, Knutsford, Cheshire
Tel: 01625 374400 www.tattonpark.org.uk

12 April 10.30- 12.30

The Court of Henry VIII

Come along to Tatton Old Hall or off with your head! Step back in time to experience what life was like in King Henry's court. Hear tales of intrigue and learn to joust with Henry himself. Recommended for children aged 7-11 years old. Price: £12. Adult accompaniment during the session is not required, but provision of an emergency contact number is essential. This event must be pre-booked.

Tatton Park, Knutsford, Cheshire
Tel: 01625 374400 www.tattonpark.org.uk

12 April 10.30- 12.30

Creative Crafts with Wool & Natural Materials

Come along and be creative with wool and other natural materials. A fantastic family activity. Try your hand at traditional crafts such as simple weaving and braiding. Lots of new ideas and inspiration for your own projects. Ticket price covers costs of all materials, so what you make is yours to take home. This event must be pre-booked. Recommended for children aged 7 and above. Price: £12. Tatton Park, Knutsford, Cheshire
Tel: 01625 374400, 01625 374428,
www.tattonpark.org.uk

13 April

10.30-12.30pm, 1.30-3.30pm, family drop-in
Full of the Joys of Spring

Join in with this inspiring craft session creating your own Spring collage out of recycled materials. £3 per activity pack. The Silk Museum, Park Lane Macclesfield SK11 6TJ. Tel: 01625 612045
www.silkmacclesfield.org.uk

14-17 April 10:30 - 16:00

Cadbury Easter Egg Hunt

Take part in our annual trail and enjoy some Easter fun, including a chocolate reward. Price: £2 per trail. Quarry Bank, Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 4LA. Tel: 01625 527468
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/quarry-bank/

14 - 17 April 11:00 - 16:00

Cadbury Easter Egg Hunts - Great Explorer Trail

Explore the garden just like Thomas Legh, Lyme's great explorer. Thomas had adventures all over the world so this Easter come and have your own adventure following his footsteps... then enjoy yummy Cadbury chocolate as your reward! Price: £2 per trail.

Lyme Park, Disley, Stockport, Cheshire, SK12 2NR.
Tel: 01663 762023
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lyme

14-17 April 11:00 - 16:00

Easter at the Hall

Tackle our Cadbury Easter Egg Hunt for clues that springtime is definitely here and get a Cadbury chocolate bunny reward.
Little Moreton Hall, Congleton, Chesh., CW12 4SD
T: 01260 272018
littlemoretonhall@nationaltrust.org.uk



14 April 12:00 - 17:00

15-17 April 10:30 - 17:00

The Easter Shopping Fair

Free admission to the Tenants Hall packed with gifts for everyone, specialist food producers plus craft, fashion and home furnishings. Contact Countrywide Events on 01530 834056 or www.countrywide-events.co.uk for more details. Tatton Park, Knutsford, Chesh. T: 01625 374400
www.tattonpark.org.uk

20 April 10:00 - 12:00

The Secrets of the Lambing Shed

Join us during lambing with our resident sheep expert Elly Edwards to discover the secrets of a successful lambing period and the secret signs of early labour in sheep. Meet our ewes and help out during one of our favourite times on the farm. This event must be pre-booked. Price: £18 per person. Tatton Park, Knutsford, Cheshire
Tel: 01625 374400, 01625 374428,
www.tattonpark.org.uk

29-30 April 10:30 - 16:30

The Worst Children's Jobs in History - Launch event

Join us for a special launch event for The Worst Children's Jobs in History.
Quarry Bank, Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 4LA
Tel: 01625 527468
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/quarry-bank/

Includes: Buxton Opera House presents

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Events Watch

29-30 April / 1 May 11:00 - 16:00

Kites at the Cage

Lets go fly a kite, high up above the cage. Bring your own kite to show off your skills in our mass kite flying event.
Lyme Park, Disley, Stockport, Cheshire, SK12 2NR
T: 01663 762023 www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lyme

29-39 April 11:00 - 17:00

1 May 11:00 - 17:00

May Day celebrations

Celebrate springtime with activities, music and a Tudor maypole. Make a spring garland and find out more about herbs used to help sleep rituals.
Little Moreton Hall, Congleton, Chesh, CW12 4SD
Tel: 01260272018
littlemoretonhall@nationaltrust.org.uk

May

1 May, 29 May 10am - 5pm

Fun Days in Didsbury



Looking for a great action packed day out for the May Bank Holidays? Redmox Leisure are holding their annual children's fun days on Mondays the 1st and 29th May. The days are fantastic value - the entrance fee covers all activities and you can stay for as long as you wish. There are many activities to choose, from electric go karts (Go Kiddy Karts), Body Zorbing and Battlefield Live Outdoor Adventure game to giant obstacle course, whizz wheels and inflatables. There will be qualified coaches providing a range of sporting activities for all ages both indoors and outdoors. The cost is £9.50 per child - adults and under three are free. Parrs Wood High School, Didsbury, Manchester, M20 5PG. Tel: 07956 557653 www.manchesterfundays.com

1 May - 18 May 10:30 - 16:30

The Worst Children's Jobs in History

Inspired by Sir Tony Robinson's Worst Jobs in History series, find out about the worst children's jobs at Quarry Bank this summer.
Quarry Bank, Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 4LA
Tel: 01625 527468
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/quarry-bank

6 May 11:00 - 13:00

Special Guided Walk - Family Wildlife

Bring all the family to discover Dunham's deer and other wildlife on an accessible walk around the park. Dunham Massey, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 4SJ. Tel: 0161 941 1025
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dunham-massey

13-14 May 10:00-17:00

The Tatton Park Country Show

Returning for the 4th year, this family Country Fair will have something for everyone with all day entertainment including the Cavalry of Heroes Jousting Team, Jez Avery's Stunt Bikes & Buggies, PADS dog training including have-a-go scurry and agility. Living History from medieval right through to World War 2, Terrier Racing, Birds of Prey Flying Displays, Goat Show including bottle feeding lambs and kids, children's petting pens as well as entertainment from Banana Brain, the tallest Magic Show in the World as well as Arts, Crafts and Gifts Marquees, Food Hall and outside Trade Stands.



On Sunday we will also host the Companion Dog Show so bring along a canine friend and have a go (proceeds from Dog Show to Marie Curie). Price: At gate: £9.50 adult, £4 child (ages 5-16), Family £25. Tatton Park, Knutsford, Cheshire
Tel: 01625 374400, 01625 374428,
www.tattonpark.org.uk

27-28 May 12:00-17:00

Sheep shearing at the Farm

Come along from 1:30pm to see our sheep being sheared ready for the start of summer. Local sheep shearer David Norcott will be shearing some of our flock daily, so don't miss this opportunity to see them shed their woolly coats.
Tatton Park, Knutsford, Cheshire
Tel: 01625 374400, 01625 374428,
www.tattonpark.org.uk

30-31 May 12:00 - 16:00

Outdoor Adventures

Find some fun outdoor adventures for all the family this half term. Get closer to nature and tick off some '50 things to do before you're 11 ¾' along the way.
Dunham Massey, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 4SJ. Tel: 0161 941 1025
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dunham-massey

Easter Holiday Clubs and Camps

3 - 13 April 2017

Easter Fun Weeks with Altrincham FC

Price: from £12 per day
Altrincham FC Community Sports Hall,
J. Davidson Stadium, Moss Lane, Altrincham,
Cheshire, WA15 8AP. Tel: 0161 9281045
www.altrinchamfc.co.uk

3 - 7 April 2017 9:00-13:00

Enjoy-a-Ball in South Manchester

Camps are action packed with fun in and out-door games, treasure hunts, arts & crafts and much more! The camps are for children aged 4-9 years old and held at Brookburn Primary School in Chorlton. Early booking discount is available.
Brookburn Primary School
Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 8EH

You can book via the Enjoy-a-Ball website on the South Manchester page. Or contact Sam or Kate on 07973 886 783
southmanchester@enjoy-a-ball.com,
enjoy-a-ball.com

4 - 6, 8 April 2017 13:00 - 15:00

11 - 13, 15 April 2017 13:00 - 15:00

Holiday family workshops

In these fun creative sessions at Manchester Art Gallery, families will explore portraits using tactile materials and by playing with optical illusions.

Free, drop in event suitable for all ages.
Manchester Art Gallery, Mosley Street,
Manchester M2 3JL. Tel: 0161 235 8888
manchesterartgallery.org



Boost your child's confidence

Kumon's maths and English study programmes work to build your child's confidence and inspire a passion for learning.

Contact your local instructor for a free assessment.

Altrincham 0161 905 2474	Hazel Grove 0161 327 2717	Timperley 0161 980 0851
Bramhall 0161 439 3946	Heald Green 0161 870 2205	Wilmslow 01625 532529
Cheadle 0161 286 0791	Heaton Moor 0161 791 7690	
Didsbury 0161 718 9313	Knutsford 01565 621142	

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kumon.co.uk

3 - 7 April 2017

Kings Camps - All week or daily camps

Children participate in a lot of different sports and activities each day in groups with others of a similar age and get active, while making new friends.

Multi-Active Mornings

4+ years. A week of shorter days allowing children to experience a mix of sports, games, arts.

Multi-Active

5-11 years. A week packed with a wide range of sports & activities with theme days, challenges...
Cheadle Hulme School, Claremont Road, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle SK8 6EG
Tel: 0114 263 2160 www.kingscamps.org

3-7, 10-13 April 2017

Little Sports Coaching's holiday courses

School holiday activities are open to boys and girls aged between 4 and 12 years and run between 9.30am and 3.30pm. Alternatively your child can enjoy the benefits of school holiday activities between 8am and 6pm every day. There are options to suit most children regardless of their age or experience. We offer three main courses to choose from: mini soccer holiday courses, Olympians multi-sports courses, Rhythmix (range of dance & gymnastic activities). Children of all abilities are welcome at any of the courses. The Grammar, Altrincham WA14 2RS.
Tel: 0800 032 1806
littlesportscoaching.co.uk/holiday-courses

continued on page 17 ...

"We love reading"
"We love maths"

I have fun with my numbers!
I am a confident reader!

Parent Concern

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Improve spellings, Language skills, Comprehension technique

STEADY

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Have fun with maths
Learn your times tables, additions, subtractions and number bonds
Help for children with learning difficulties
For children 3-11 years old

Ring Sara to book a place and find out more.
07939108682
sara@parentconcern.co.uk - www.parentconcern.co.uk

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Ring 0161 747 1819 for more details
or email: enquiries@impacttuition.co.uk

Chorlton Tuition Centre

Does your child need extending or extra help with Reading, Writing or Maths?

Chorlton Tuition Centre provides tutorial assistance to a wide variety of students. We cater for children who are having difficulty with their school work and for children who would like to be extended.

Do you choose a home tutor or Chorlton Tuition Centre?

Choosing the right English or Maths tutor can be a daunting prospect. All our tutors are qualified teachers with an up to date DBS certificate. Chorlton Tuition Centre offers Maths and English tuition in a bright, modern and positive environment.

"It seems as if the employees enjoy working here," Iman, Year 8.

What does Chorlton Tuition Centre do?

Chorlton Tuition Centre gives children the motivation to succeed. We start at the child's ability level and progress is made at their own pace. Children are extended and challenged, but never overwhelmed.

"I enjoy coming here every week because I know there is a new challenge waiting for me. Everything is at my pace, not too slow and not too fast," Amina, Year 6.

Call **0161 860 6888** Now For An Assessment

the Chorlton
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Providing tuition in Maths and English

- Providing Tuition in Maths and English for ages 5 - 16 in Chorlton
- We also provide tuition for 11+ and Entrance Exams
- Find out why 150 students and their parents can't be wrong

"I like coming here because it's helping me learn Maths and English." Aayush, Year 7
"I enjoy the teachers," Aayush, Year 8
"The help and support for students is excellent." John, Year 11
"It helps me with my GCSEs." Zara, Year 11
"Coming here has been amazing." Amina, Year 6

Chorlton Tuition Centre

Trafalgar House
5-7 High Lane
Chorlton
Manchester M30 4DJ

T: 0161 860 6888
M: 0738 856 0178

chorlton.tuitioncentre@gmail.com
www.chorlton.tuitioncentre.co.uk

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They ensure that each pupil maximises his or her ability, in a warm, caring and nurturing environment.

Equally adept at developing boys and girls, they really do make the difference and demonstrate daily why WPS is such an exceptional School.

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11am until 1pm

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www.wilmslowprep.co.uk



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Each child is unique – and so is their educational journey. Whether joining OGS at the beginning of their journey or transferring from other schools, entering the Senior School aged 11 or joining us for the crucial GCSE Years, we offer a unique, challenging and dynamic education which enables each child to develop as a well-rounded, socially confident, independent young adult.

theadmissionsschool.co.uk

01625 260000

admissions@theadmissionsschool.co.uk



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19th May, 24th May and 12th June

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www.stockportgrammar.co.uk

Easter Holiday Clubs and Camps

continued from page 13 ...

3 - 7 April, 11 - 13 April (Easter Holiday)
30 May - 2 June, 5 - 9 June (Whit Holiday)

School Holiday Tennis Camp in Poynton

9am - 4pm - full day, 9am - 12pm - morning only, 1pm - 4pm - afternoon only. Early drop and late collection are available.

Fun tennis camp appropriate for children aged between 5 and 12 years old. With prizes and games the days are fun packed. Children will learn new skills and meet new friends. They'll be appropriately challenged if they played tennis before and will come away with a great understanding of the basics if they are trying tennis for the first time.

Poynton Tennis Club
 Contact Michael Atherfold tel: 07984 973887
 email: point-onetennis@hotmail.com
 Or visit www.point-onetennis.org and select 'holiday camps'.



5 - 7 April 10 am - 4.30 pm

SciTech Easter 2017

Fun with science and technology for kids.

SciTech:+1 is a little bit of extra SciTech fun for the Easter holiday!

There are 3 separate days. You can come to any or all of them.

There are three different age groups and three different science topics.

Sound

Shh! Even when it is quiet, Sound is all around us...

Formula1

It's time for you to join the pit crew! Here's where you find out it's not just the driver that wins the Grand Prix - it's the team!

Robotics

Robots seem to be everywhere. Sometimes they are fun toys whilst others work in industry to build cars, load furnaces and grab samples of rock from other planets. At SciTech:+1 you are a robot master.

Baguley Hall Primary School, Ackworth Drive Baguley, Manchester M23 1LB
 Call: 0161 903 9133 www.scitech.co.uk

10 - 13 April 2017

4-7 year olds 9:30-12:30 7-16 year olds 10-16:00

Stagecoach Didsbury - Wonderland Easter Workshop

Children and Teenagers will have four days to work with professional actors, dancers and musicians teaching them script work, exciting routines and learning those all so famous catchy songs. They can make friends, have fun and develop some great new skills.



Stagecoach Didsbury

Final big performance on the last day. Parrs Wood High School, Wilmslow Rd, East Didsbury, Manchester M20 5PG. T: 0161 789 1349
www.stagecoach.co.uk/didsbury

3-21 April 2017

Superstars Holiday Club

Bring your kids for whole day filled with fun and exciting sports and fitness activities. You could choose Multi Sports, Dance or Football program.

Multi-Sports Include:

(4 sports per day): Basketball, Football, Rugby, Lacrosse, Hockey, Badminton, Tennis, Boxing, Squash, Cricket, Volleyball, Minor Games, TriGolf, Fencing, Baseball, Mini Sports Day, Rounders, Handball, Orienteering, Circuits, Gymnastics, Athletics, Archery, Ultimate Frisbee, Curling, Netball, Team Building, Dodgeball... and so much more!

Dance activities include:

Street, Cheerleading, Gymnastics, Modern, Disco, World of Dance, Pop Routine, Glee, High School Musical and Camp Rock themes... & much more!

Week One: 3 - 7 April 2017

Chorlton High School, The Barlow RC High School East Didsbury, Sale High School

Week Two: 10 - 14 April 2017

Chorlton High School, Flixton Girls School, The Barlow RC High School East Didsbury, Sale High School, Maple Lodge Guide Hut (Lymm)

Week Three: 17 - 21 April 2017

Maple Lodge Guide Hut (Lymm), Flixton Girls School. T: 07904 311 552 www.littlesuperstars.co.uk

The M&D Events Watch and Easter Holiday Clubs & Camps listings have been carefully selected to offer our readers useful information. Although every effort is made to ensure that information is correct at time of going to press, M&D cannot be held liable for any errors or omissions. We strongly advise you to check details with the event organisers before setting off.

SciTECH

Inspiring Science - Inspiring Children

in the Easter & Summer Holidays

'If I have any ability it is the ability to learn from scientists and talk to children,' says Philip Rose, the founder of SciTECH, an organisation that for 25 years has brought the most amazing science experiences to children. Philip explains that this ability stems from his imagination which he claims 'never really grew up!'

The Easter Programme **SciTECH:+1**, runs on Wednesday April 5th, 6th and 7th. This year children will be one of the pit stop crew as part of their Formula1 day, design, build and program a Lego NXT lunar rover as part of their robotics day and as part of their Science of Sound day, use an explosion to measure the speed of sound!

The Summer programme **SciTECH: 17**, is even more spectacular! This year the five -day programme starts on July 31st and again on August 4th, 2017. The South Manchester venue is yet to be confirmed and so the final parts of the programme also need to be confirmed but they do say that this year the children will be setting up collisions with cars and crash test dummies as part of the Car Crash Technology day, using surgical microscopes as part of their Ophthalmology Day. On their Perception and Illusion day they get to experience life in an upside down room as they learn the science of magic. There is a Spy Technology day too but apparently if they tell you about it they will have to... The plan for the fifth day is still under wraps until the venue is chosen.

To find out more about the Easter and summer programmes, please visit: www.scitech.co.uk or email them on admin@scitech.co.uk or telephone **0161 903 9133**, available during office hours, evening and weekends.



'Mummies aren't meant to cry' by Sandi Mann



These rather poignant words were uttered by a tearful 38 year old woman at my Manchester clinic. She was in fact quoting her bewildered youngest child who had found her bawling her eyes out one afternoon when everything just got too much.

Depression in mums is surprisingly common, yet very much overlooked. Postnatal depression, quite rightly, is widely recognised now, with health visitors and midwives trained to look for signs and symptoms. But depression amongst mums of older children is also prevalent; in fact, Australian research in 2014 suggests that mothers are twice as likely to suffer from depression when their child is four years old than when they are a new baby. Later onset 'mummy depression' tends to be under-reported due to lack of awareness; many of the mums that I treat at my clinic are convinced that they are the only mums in the playground fighting this terrible condition.

People generally don't talk about mental illness much, but I think mums are even less likely than most to talk about depression. Most of the mums I see in my clinic feel terribly guilty about their low mood and there is a strong feeling that they 'shouldn't' be feeling the way they do. The conviction is that if they have healthy kids and can manage financially, then they have no right to feel down.

Indeed, many of the mums who come to me do have all that - and more. Many are financially secure, have delightful children, active social lives, holidays abroad... they seem to have it all. Yet they are still depressed - and overwhelmed with guilt at feeling so.

Part of the cause of a lot of depression these days is social comparison and never has this been more prevalent than in a world dominated by social media. In the old days, the only lives we had to

compare with were those of our immediate neighbours - and, being in the same socio-economic group (probably) they tended to live pretty similar lives to us. Bar the odd 11 plus success, seaside destination or new-fangled household gadget, the lives of our parents and grandparents would not have been a million miles away from those of the people they mixed with.

Nowadays, thanks to Facebook and other social media, it is all so different. Our lives are so public - and on social media, we can see the successes and achievements of a much wider variety of people, many of whom seem to enjoy lives that are far more fun, exciting, productive and adventurous than our own. Uber-Mums, with sparkling careers, boast of their kids' every achievement, as well as each minute detail of their hectic social lives. It is easy to feel that everyone else is living the dream, with the perfect career, partner, home, holidays, and, of course, kids.

The reality is often far more different - in fact, it is often those most prolific posters who are the most insecure about their lives. An alarming number of mums feel that the rather more humdrum lives than they care to admit to publically, don't match those of everyone else's. Add to this the pressure to be the 'perfect' mum (a report in 2013 suggested that 22% of new mothers felt pressure to get things right) as mums are pelted with parenting advice from all sides about everything from diet, extra-curricular activities, stimulation, toys and discipline - it is no wonder that many mums feel disheartened in their attempts to get it right. The leap to feeling inadequate and being plagued by low self-esteem is clear - and these feelings can easily lead to a spiralling into depression.

Studies suggest that financial worries can also be a big factor for some whilst the stress and strain of juggling work and family life can also be contributors to depression. Stay-at-home mums may, in fact, struggle more than working mums; according to a survey of 60 000 mums in America, 28% of stay at home mums reported depression 'a lot of the day' compared with 17% of employed mums. It is thought that isolation, lack of appreciation and lack of accomplishment are factors that lead to the home-mums being so vulnerable to depression.

Any mums who are experiencing symptoms of depression (such as crying a lot, struggling to make decisions, spending daytime in bed or slumped in front of the TV, feeling worthless, constantly comparing themselves unfavourably to others etc) should know they are not alone. There is no shame in feeling this way and there should be no embarrassment about seeking help, either from friends, self-help books or even professional input (via your GP or a private therapist).

Perhaps mummies aren't meant to cry - but they do. Everyone gets down at times, but if these feelings are frequent or are very severe, it is time to do something about it.

Dr Sandi Mann is the director of The Mind Training Clinic and specialises in the treatment of phobias, panic attacks and anxiety conditions. She is also author of *Surviving the Terrible Teens* and *Dealing With Difficult Eaters*, both published by Crimson. www.mindtrainingclinic.co.uk

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Mama's Pies - a gourmet twist on traditional



nb: all Mama's pies are made exclusively from halal meat

What better name for a family business in the food industry than Mama's Pie Kitchen. What better twist on conventional than combining two traditions? Mama's Pie is a new service in Manchester that delivers mouthwatering pies straight to your oven.

Managing director, Noor Ali, explains, "From our kitchen to your oven: the pies take around 25-30 minutes (from frozen) baking time in the oven. We prepare, fill and freeze our pies



within a strict time-scale to ensure 100% fresh and flavoursome food. As we are a family business we aim to provide wholesome meals for other families in the area, here at Mama's Pies we understand that after a long day people may want a quick fix dinner, and we aim to provide this at the highest standard."

Their pies are certainly a 'twist' on traditional as each pie is filled with fragrant family curry recipes, that have been adapted and perfected after being passed down through generations. Head chef, Ambreen Ali, says, "I really wanted to create a dish that captured elements from both eastern and western traditions, so I created a pie! It is something new for families to try at home and as a parent you sometimes want an easy dinner but at the same time you don't want to feed the children a load of chemicals."

The ingredients Mama's Pie Kitchen uses are all sourced locally and selected with care. No chemicals or preservatives added, just clean, home-made, and tasty food. Perfect for a pie night in for you and your family or as a fuss free option when hosting dinner parties or events.

If that sounds like a delicious and easy family dinner or party option, please call **07479 550063** or email **mamashomecooking2016@gmail.com** to have a chat with Noor and to place an order.

Think Cubic by Lucy Burt, nest interior design

The most common scenario we discuss with clients is that almost everyone wants just a little more space in their house for something: a new arrival, playroom, den, office, storage, spare room, the list goes on.

Often, Spring prompts people to embark on a project and, if budget allows, this niggling thought will start to take shape as an extension or conversion plan and here at nest we can fully support this being a brilliant idea. What we would say is, before deciding on your final plan, think cubic in terms of m². Give your house a good look up and down and consider the often spacious and under-utilised spaces of your loft and cellar, if you are lucky enough to have both. This way, you don't eat into your garden space but can still add both an extra room(s) and value to your home. Another bonus is that often the bulk of the inevitably messy work can be contained and contractor access can often be via the roof or cellar light-well - avoiding the frustration of your front door being constantly open for a good couple of months! Cellars naturally lend themselves to creating cosy and inviting rooms, think a spare bedroom, teenage den or playroom. Lofts offer great opportunities for bright and airy home offices, see



images for our very own sunny nest office, or an indulgent sanctuary at the top of the house in the form of a master bedroom/en-suite. Often, particularly in period houses where loft spaces are divided into front and rear, there is the opportunity to retain a part of the loft for much-needed storage. If you are creating an extra bedroom in either area then it is worth adding an extra WC/shower room, however compact, if space allows. This will ensure that your ratio of bedrooms to bathrooms still works well and will further increase re-sale value. Always do your research before employing a building firm to work with, take up testimonials, visit previous projects and ensure both building regulations and planning permission are in hand, where required. An architect is invaluable, often costs less than you would imagine and will offer ideas in terms of layout, space planning, ensuring

natural light and linking to the original part of the house which will make the difference between a standard space and a brilliantly planned new space. nest have worked on a number of similar projects and can both recommend all relevant contractors and work with you to ensure your new space is tailored to your requirements. Just get in touch for an initial chat and quote **M&D Spring** for 10% off initial consultancy fees.

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Born to Read

Are you looking for a new challenge in 2017?

Save the Children recently launched their report: *Untapped potential: How England's nursery lottery is failing too many children* which focused on support for early child development. There was wide media coverage on this issue. If a child is already behind in their development when they start primary school they are more likely to be behind not just throughout school, but for the rest of their lives.

Across Greater Manchester there are opportunities for local residents to give back to their community and volunteer for Born to Read, a partnership between Save the Children and Beanstalk. The charities help children improve their reading and are looking for members of the local community who could spare some time sharing their love of books with pupils.

Born to Read trains volunteers to read with children on a one-to-one basis developing their skills and confidence. Research by the *Read On. Get On.* campaign, of which Save the Children and Beanstalk are both part of, revealed a quarter of all children leave primary education without reading well each year, with poorer children nearly twice as likely to fall behind. Not being able to read can have a devastating impact on their life chances, so early intervention is vital.

Desiree, a local Born to Read reading helper in Manchester, said: "I wanted to do some voluntary work and I really like children so I thought when I heard about this it interested me because it was more than just listening to children read, it's about trying to introduce children into reading for their life's, to enjoy reading."

Schools across Greater Manchester are looking for new Born to Read volunteers to support children in primary school that have fallen behind in their language and literacy. Potential volunteers must be able to commit to visit schools twice a week during term time and will receive specially designed training so they can deliver one-to-one reading support to primary school children.

For more information about volunteering please call one of our Volunteer Support Advisors on 020 7012 6997 or visit www.savethechildren.org.uk/bornstoread



WILL YOU HELP GIVE A CHILD A BETTER START IN LIFE?

Become a volunteer reading helper in your local area. You could give a child the skills and confidence they need for a brighter future.

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Working together to support children's literacy

Portraits with daffodils

Children's photographer Helen Rae helps to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer Support

Someone once said 'When I see a daffodil it's so hard not to smile'. So imagine having exclusive access to fields full of the golden beauties!

This Spring, Cheshire children's photographer, Helen Rae, will join forces for the second year running with Daffodil Walks near Northwich to help raise funds for Macmillan Cancer Support, the UK's leading source of cancer care.

There are thousands of daffodils to see, walk and even run through at Foxwist Green Farm near Northwich and exclusive mini portrait sessions will be held on 7th and 10th April 2017. Helen of *Helen Rae Photography* will photograph children in acres of golden daffodil fields to raise much-needed funds for Macmillan Cancer Support. Each 20-minute photo session includes a package of prints and digital images, with all profits going to the charity.

A daffodil session is suitable for children from 7 months (sitting baby) to 12 years old and further details are available on Helen's website. Last year Helen and her clients raised £1200 as part of a £7200 donation from The Daffodil Walks to Macmillan. The Daffodil Walks happen annually at Foxwist Green Farm in the heart of Vale Royal in Cheshire, in the village of Whitegate, and were begun back in 2005 by retired farmer and daffodil expert, Len Tomlinson, after he lost a close friend to cancer. Now, the Daffodil Walks regularly raise around £7000 per year for Macmillan Cancer Support. Daffodil Walks in 2017 are from 29th March to 9th April.

Helen Rae is a children's and family photographer, working in beautiful locations across Cheshire. Known for her ability to capture natural expressions and for her ease with her child subjects, Helen is a published photographer with work displayed in clients' homes throughout the world.

All bookings for Daffodil Mini Sessions must be made in advance by emailing enquiries@helenraephoto.com or on the website at www.helenraephoto.com/portraits-in-daffodils-macmillan www.daffodilwalks.com / www.macmillan.org.uk www.helenraephoto.com

For further information contact Helen Rae on 07857 284498

Putting your children first when separating

Chris Fairhurst,
Principal Lawyer,
Family Team
Slater and Gordon



A child's welfare is the family court's paramount concern when it comes to deciding arrangements after separation.

As society changes, with fewer of us identifying with the traditional nuclear family, splits and divorces can be more complicated and family courts are increasingly being asked to resolve issues.

Here are a few answers to frequently asked questions which will explain some of the processes and terms:

Q: How do I Get Parental Responsibility?

You automatically have Parental Responsibility if you are a mum; and if you are dad, you have it if you were married to mum when the child was born, or if not you can obtain it through a Parental Responsibility Order. You also have it if you subsequently get married or have re-registered your child's birth on or after 1 December 2003.

Other people can secure it such as in the event of Adoption, obtaining an Order or being the child's Guardian.

Q: How do I apply for an Order?

There is a principle of non-intervention of the court, meaning it will only get involved if parents can't agree.

In most circumstances before anyone can apply to the court for an order you have to attempt to resolve matters.

This usually means attending a Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting (MIAM)

to see if mediation might be one way to get parents talking and keep matters out of court.

Parents may wish to try and resolve matters more informally, perhaps with trusted family members or friends to assist with anything that might be considered an obstacle. Mediation is not obligatory in situations involving potential harm to a child or where domestic abuse might feature.

Q: What if mediation doesn't work?

If it is really necessary, you may wish to make an application to court. This might be in relation to when and where a child should live or spend time with a parent, a Specific Issue Order such as which school a child should attend, a Prohibited Steps Order, which could prevent removal of a child from United Kingdom, or any other relevant order to a child's upbringing.

If an application is made to court then CAFCASS will be asked to undertake a safeguarding check which involves contacting social work agencies and the police about any information held before the first court hearing, to make sure there is nothing which might impact upon the child's welfare and therefore the court's decision making.

Q: What is CAFCASS?

It's the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service, which is independent of the court, social services and other similar agencies. It may be asked by the court in the

more serious cases to provide information about a family and guidance as to how the court should exercise its powers. It seeks to provide a voice to the child in line with the court's need to take account of a child's "ascertainable wishes and feelings" in any decision. The court will be guided by any recommendation made by CAFCASS or give good reasons if not doing so.

Q: Does the court always go in favour of the mother?

The family court is even handed in its approach and decisions are made with the best interests of the children in mind.

We believe it is important that you seek legal advice during this process. The award winning team I work with have years of experience representing parents who are going through children disputes to secure the best possible outcome.

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Chris Fairhurst is part of the award-winning Family Law Team at Slater and Gordon. For 20 years he has expertly represented parents going through disputes over their children.

A member of the Advanced Children Law Panel, and a father of four himself, he works tirelessly to find a solution that is fair and helps to provide protection and stability for your children.

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