

APF ACTIVITY CAMPS - ENFIELD

Activity Camp for SEND children – Case Study

During the Christmas holidays, APF delivered a range of multi-activity camp in Enfield for children aged 4-14. The venue was the Brigadier Community Hall, Cedar Road, in Enfield. At this camp, we decided to integrate children with moderate to advanced learning difficulties as part of the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme.

Preparation for camp



Given the specific needs of each child, it was important that we prepared accordingly so that they enjoyed their experience, were kept safe and staff could identify key strategies for managing them.

Our procedures included:

- Insisting that parents send us their child's Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) prior to camp starting, so that we could produce a passport (simplified provision map) for each child to use by staff at camp.
 - Site visits or remote meetings for parents to attend so that we could discuss their child's needs.
 - Designing specific timetables and purchasing specific equipment to meet their needs.
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- Training SEND staff so they were familiar with the needs of each child.
 - Evaluating daily how well each child was progressing and making amendments to the provision to ensure we were improving our provision.

Details of camp

The camp catered for children who require a specific type of care due to a learning need or disability. Our key objective was to provide a safe and stimulating experience to those with learning and emotional needs, as well as physical and mental disabilities. This includes communication and interaction, Social and emotional mental health difficulties (SEMH), cognitive learning difficulties and sensory and/or physical needs. We catered for up to 5 SEND children each day on a ratio of 1:2:1 or in small groups. Children generally had ASD/Autism and or ADHD.

Activities on offer for these SEND children.

The activity programme fitted into 4 main areas and timetabling and allowed students to experience at least one activity from each of these per day. These included extreme activities such as Archery, sumo wrestling, Sports such as dodgeball and Arts and crafts such as clay modelling and painting. In addition to the above, we had a quiet area which was intended to be a therapeutic place these SEND children could visit to calm, regroup, and refocus themselves. Children could visit for a few minutes when needed or have scheduled time in the sensory room to explore, imagine, and burn off some energy.



Example of support (child A)

- A specific parent wanted to send her child to camp for 4 days. She stated that regular use of seclusion at his school has worsened her son's behaviour and accepted that her son can be difficult to handle on occasions. He's autistic and has been diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- It was clear from the discussion with the parent and from his EHCP that there are times when he gets frustrated, angry and stressed. Equally, she says, he can be calmed down quickly with simple interventions.
- "He's very intelligent," says " He could tell you anything about any car. He loves playing with cars . . . when he does act out, I can control him with one hand (firm grip) or distract him."
- But she says the past two years have been marked by a sharp deterioration in his behaviour. She puts much of this down to what she says was the overuse of seclusion at school to control his behaviour.
- In all, she estimates he was placed in a seclusion or "time-out" room on more than 30 occasions over a 6 month-year period.
- "To help a vulnerable childlike child A manage his emotions and control his behaviour, he needs support, guidance and explanation," she stated.

Provision for child A

After careful consideration, we devised a personal passport for this child. This included having a specific timetable of activities that he liked including cars, tractors and sports. The timetable included specific times of the day when he would be with only one child and 2 adults, interchanged with times when he would be with his instructor and other children for a sports activity. The quiet area was used more frequently than expected and in particular when he felt frustrated, or we experienced episodes of poor behaviour. However, there was a key emphasis on demonstrating that this was not a punishment or a form of seclusion and we ensured that the periods spent in quiet area were of 20-minute durations.

Outcomes for Child A

- The child was always kept safe – and all other children were kept safe even when he displayed outbursts of poor/aggressive behaviour.
- He was able to participate in over 4 different activities each day and seemed to enjoy most of them.
- He was able to eventually build trust and a strong relationship with the SEND instructor looking after him because this adult had a good understanding of his needs and we ensured it was the same person looking after him each day.
- The child attended for 75% (3 days) of the days offered (4) which was a great success.
- It was particularly pleasing to see this child engage with other SEND children and children without any additional needs.

Factors to consider moving forward.

- Despite our success with this child and the other SEND children attending camp, the site is not suitable for children who are 'overly' aggressive or 'flight 'risks' (constantly run away). Therefore, special consideration must be taken when choosing children to attend at this venue to continue to ensure they are kept safe.

Table 1: Overall scoring for SEND provision, parent feedback, staff feedback and pupil observations

1 = Low

10 = high

Quality of activities	Suitability of site and additional rooms (sensory room)	Resources available	Engagement of SEND children	Safety of provision	Enjoyment of camp
8	7	6	7	9	8

Table 2: Overall feedback from all children (SEND and Non-SEND)

	I had fun	I have made new friends	I liked the food	I want to come here again
Yes	90%	70%	80%	100%
No	0%	10%	10%	0%
Not sure	10%	20%	10%	0%

Activities children would like to see at the Easter camp:

- Again: Scooters, inflatables, Archery, and more visits to the forest are (outdoor education)
- New: Electric Go-Karts