

Balloon Woods Briefing Paper

Balloon Woods is an open access adventure playground. Open access means where children can come and go as they please, unless agreed with parents/carers and staff that they are collected.

Balloon Woods is a unique site, situated in the middle of a wood so can offer environmental play activities.

There is an inclusive core offer to families of children with additional needs, where support can be provided for children who may need support to access activities. The play centre is open Tues, Weds, Thurs evenings and two sessions on a Saturday during term time and Monday – Friday during school holidays.

Activities include arts and craft activities, outdoor adventurous play. National and local events and festivals are celebrated throughout the year. During school holidays, low cost day trips and outings are offered to Children, Young people and their families which are supervised by staff.

Term time sessions are

Tuesday 3.30 - 6.30pm

Wednesday 3.30 - 5.30pm

Thursday 3.30 - 5.30pm

Saturday 10 - 12.30pm 1.30 - 4.00pm

School holiday times are

Monday 10 - 12.30pm 1.30 - 4.00pm

Tuesday 10 - 12.30pm 1.30 - 4.00pm

Wednesday 10 - 12.30pm 1.30 - 4.00pm

Thursday 10 - 12.30pm 1.30 - 4.00pm

Friday Trips /10 - 12.30pm.

Attendances April – Nov 2014:

61 individuals of which:

19 from Wollaton area – 3 have additional needs

14 from Bilborough area – 3 have additional needs

There are also some attendances from: Radford, Sherwood Rise, Forest Fields, Sneinton, and Beechdale areas of Nottingham City, with 1 or 2 children and young people from Stapleford, Beeston and Chilwell areas of the county.

Historically Balloon Woods and Wollaton Vale Youth club was managed by the Family Community Team in Bilborough area, until August 2011 when it was handed over to the Wollaton Team.

In 2009 £52,500 from Aiming High Capital Funding was invested to refurbish the centre; it is now more accessible for young people with additional needs.

Whats working well?

Due to the restructure new staff have adjusted well to their roles and responsibilities and future planning and resource development is being taking place.

What's not working so well?

Level of attendances from the Bilborough area is low with only 14 individuals attending. These young people tend to come from the "Coventry Lane" area of Bilborough as it has been reported that it is too far for the young people to walk from the "Birchover /Central Bilborough area" especially during the dark nights.

Over the next financial year we need to consider how to use this resource more effectively to serve the Young people in the Bilborough area or do we continue to invest in a resource if we are unable to serve these young people.

Outreach work has taken place within the Wollaton Vale Area from Team 5 Play and Youth workers, which has resulted in Wollaton Vale Youth Club opening at Wollaton Vale Community Centre working in partnership with Team 3 to deliver these sessions weekly.

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Plans for the future

Discussions to take place with Team 3 to identify if transport can be provided for the young people from the centre of Bilborough/Birchover so they are able to access Balloon Woods Play centre especially during the dark nights.

Would it more cost effective to use Birchover Community Centre to deliver and serve the young people in Bilborough?

Developing relationships with schools to promote services to the young people

Better publicity and information sharing processes to promote services

Possible Relaunch of the centre in April 2015

Pat Mills

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Wollaton, Radford and Dunkirk Childrens Centre
Balloon Woods Play Centre