

Bradford Portage Service

Issue 9
April 2021

Welcome to our final 'Lockdown' Newsletter!

We have good news...Following the easing of restrictions, we will be offering home visits from 12th April.

Home visits will be optional. You can choose to continue virtual support if you prefer. We will follow government guidelines and risk assessments will be in place to ensure the safety of us all during visits.

We have worked extremely hard to continue providing a high quality service and support families during the pandemic. We have carried out video and phone calls, applied for nursery places and funding, supported transitions, helped apply to charities, and have enjoyed singing and play sessions with families.

We hope that our Early Education groups can resume in the upcoming weeks, along with other events we had planned prior to lockdown. We will keep you posted on these.

We appreciate that there will have been good and bad days, but we hope that you will be able to look back on this time and treasure the time spent together as a family as what we know as 'normal life' gradually returns and we are back to living life at lightning speed.

Over the past year we have seen more than ever how resilient and amazing you all are - you inspire us immensely every single day.

We are SO ready to get back out doing what we love, to meet you in person and hopefully spread some Portage sparkle along the way!

We look forward to seeing you all very soon.

Stay safe, brighter days are coming.

The Portage Team x



Useful Websites & Information

Family Fund - A charity that provides grants to support families providing things such as sensory toys or family breaks.

Bradford Inclusive Disability Service—Based at CDC St Luke's, this is a place for children with additional needs to loan a range of sensory toys and join the community on days out, activities and groups.

Cerebra—A charity to support families that include children with brain conditions and other useful information and grants.

Newlife - Another fantastic charity that loans sensory play packs and grants for children with additional needs.

Shabang—Based in Huddersfield Shabang provide shows for children with additional needs using sensory and makaton to bring them to life. They have lots of support groups for families to attend.

The Down syndrome support and training group Bradford—A charity run by parents and carers of children who have Down syndrome. They offer support and training for parents and professionals.

AWARE - A parent run group supporting families with children and young adults on the autism spectrum.



National Portage Association
Partners with Parents and Children



We would also like to say a HUGE thank you to Cameron French and his family who have very kindly donated a Scoot to us.

Cameron loaned a Scoot from the Portage team and found it so useful that his Grandma, Julie applied to a charity for one of their own. Cameron has out grown the Scoot now, but his family would like more children to benefit from it.

The Scoot is a fantastic piece of equipment that has been specially designed by therapists to provide children with more choices, more opportunities to play and explore and to develop their independence.

Speak to your Portage Home Visitor about loaning the Scoot.



firefly by LECKEY®



Frankie's Portage Journey: Family Perspective by mummy; Debbie

Well what can I say about the amazing world of Portage. There are no words to describe what this service and Frankie's wonderful Portage Home Visitor Lisa did for us all as a family.

From the day Lisa did the initial visit she knew Frankie would benefit from Portage and could see the potential he had to learn Makaton to support his communication. Lisa was kind, caring and extremely patient when Frankie did not want to sing and she persevered with this when he was mischievous, not wanting to play and do his own thing until he learnt to sit and engage in play activities with her.

All of the family have benefited from Lisa's visits. She introduced us to Makaton which she believed Frankie would be quick to learn as she had observed that he was a visual learner. Frankie is now using Makaton to communicate along with some single words and is teaching us new things everyday. It was a priceless reaction from Lisa the day he signed and said her name - a memory will we all never forget.

Lisa ensured we were involved in everything she did for Frankie and supported us to ensure he had the correct support in place as he transitioned into nursery along with other things such as a grant for sensory toys and outdoor play equipment he loves.

Frankie was one of Lisa's youngest Portage families and she supported us for over 2 years. Unfortunately due to Covid-19 Lisa had to stop visiting and during this time Frankie started nursery which he loves and continues to learn lots of new things. We have kept in contact with Lisa and share new exciting milestones with her. There are not enough words to describe how grateful we are as a family to Lisa and the Portage Team and we would highly recommend the service to everyone.



Bradford Portage Service

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▶ A Portage Service registered with
the National Portage Association.

This is Violet. She wanted to share with us how brilliantly she is adapting to her new splints and enjoying much more time in standing—we love the activity idea you are using with your cot!

Violet started her new nursery provision this term too. We hope you have lots of new, fun learning experiences.



The team are looking forward to attending a two-day training session with ERIC this month. We will learn how to best support toileting needs and hope to be able to share further information and tips with you. Check out their website for some fantastic resources and factsheets, plus training they offer to families. www.eric.org.uk.



Family Fund

Helping disabled children

Family Fund Mobility Support is a pilot scheme provided by Family Fund and Motability to help families raising a disabled or seriously ill child under three years old meet their mobility needs by providing a discretionary grant to lease a car for a limited time.

Visit www.familyfund.org.uk/mobilitysupport for further information and criteria.



Please find and like us on
Facebook:
Bradford Portage Service



We would still love parents/ carers, siblings and professionals to contribute to the newsletter too. If you have any celebrations, exciting news or stories, activities or handy hints you would like to share with us please email

Portage.Team@bradford.gov.uk or let your Portage Home Visitor know.

Accessible Inclusive Music

Check out this new non profit organisation which aims to provide accessible and inclusive musical opportunities for children and young people of all ages with additional needs.

They aim to share their passion of music whilst promoting the positive effects music can have on children's development.

Find them on Facebook for more information.

Fully Inclusive Choir
You can join in by...

- Moving your body
- Using Makaton
- Using an Eye-gaze/switch
- Singing
- Making a noise (hit a drum, use a shaker)

For more information, please send us a message

AIM
Accessible Inclusive Music