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**Welcome to the first edition of the Aiming High – Short Breaks newsletter.** The new programme of Aiming High activities started on April 1st 2022, with **10 Providers** now offering activities both for children and young people independently and as family groups. This will be the first of our regular newsletters.

**Aiming High – Short Breaks Newsletter**

**April 2022**

*Edition 1*

**So what are Aiming High Short Breaks Activities?**

**Aiming High** is a programme of activities and short breaks for children and young people aged 0-18 years old with a special educational need/disability (SEND) who live in Staffordshire. Activities are available to anyone with a Special Educational Need or Disability. An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is not necessarily needed.

The programme is designed to:

* Boost children and young people’s confidence and independence, and help them learn new skills

Some activities are open to the whole family while other activities are suitable for children and young people to attend independently.

**Activities include:**

* Sensory experiences, day trips, sports, youth clubs, nature and outdoor activities and much more!

**Free activities every month!**

Children and young people can access a set amount of **free activities** each month (usually one per month with extra during the school holidays – e.g., two sessions in May because of half term and two sessions in July and two in August because of the summer holidays.

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**How do you book?**

**Free activities** can be booked a month in advance from first – eleventh day of the month, e.g. activities for June can be booked on 1st – 11th May

**Additional activities** are available on top of the free ones and can be booked a month in advance from 12th onwards. A fee may be payable directly to the activity organiser for additional activities

To find a list of activities in your area, please go to the Aiming High page:

[Aiming High - Activities and short breaks | Staffordshire Connects](https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=6-1-8)

Click on the calendar for a specific area or the grey area to see a whole week or month’s activities. If your child/young person would like to take part in an activity or have any questions, **please call 0300 111 8007 (option 2, option 5)**

We want to make sure that bookings for our activities are accessible to everyone and so if you are unable to contact our booking team via the telephone, please email

[sendreferrals@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sendreferrals@staffordshire.gov.uk)

Please include information on your child’s name, date of birth and the activity provider and date you are interested in.

**Let us know your thoughts …**

We want to provide the best possible activities and support for children, young people and families.

If you have any thoughts on the Aiming High programme, please get in touch by emailing us at [**aiminghigh@staffordshire.gov.uk**](mailto:aiminghigh@staffordshire.gov.uk)

Or call 0300 111 8007 (option 2, option 5)

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**Who are our providers …**

We have **10 providers offering activities to children, young people and families:**

**Action for Children**

**Caudwell Children**

**Chase Aqua Rural Enterprise**

**Chuckle Productions**

**Doves Care**

**Gartmore Riding School**

**Let us Play**

**Sherratts Wood**

**Staffordshire Wildlife Trust**

**Stoke City Community Trust**

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**To book onto their activities -** call 0300 111 8007 (option 2, option 5)

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**Who and what do they do?**

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**Action for Children** operate in the North and West of the county and deliver

activities for families and for children and young people to attend independently.

Activities for May and June include: Meal at the Brewers Fayre in Redhill for

young people to attend independently, a Superworm Trail for families, a visit

to the Imperial War Museum at Salford and a family session at

Biddulph Grange. These sessions are for families and individuals

and aim to support families and children to meet new people, try new things and have a good time.

For more details check out the Aiming High page:

[Aiming High - Activities and short breaks | Staffordshire Connects](https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=6-1-8)

**Caudwell Children** operate across the county and deliver activities for children/young people to attend independently.

Activities for May and June include: Purple Explorers Activity Club for children aged 8-18 at the following venues: Caudwell International Children’s Centre, Keele University, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Brocton Village Hall, Stafford, Whittington Village Hall, Lichfield, Queens Street Community Centre, Burton-on-Trent, Cheslyn Hay Village Hall, South Staffs, Westwood First School, Leek. These sessions are great fun and allow children to be themselves, make new friends, discover new hobbies and build new skills.

For more details check out the Aiming High page:

[Aiming High - Activities and short breaks | Staffordshire Connects](https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=6-1-8)

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**Chase Aqua Rural Enterprise (CARE)** operate in the south of the county.

CARE is a rural wellbeing and educational activities project supporting children, young people and adults of all ages, needs, abilities and disabilities. They provide a wide range of different activities – from feeding and grooming their animals, woodland wanders, scavenger hunts, growing projects, making and baking and lots more.

For more details check out the Aiming High page:

[Aiming High - Activities and short breaks | Staffordshire Connects](https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=6-1-8)

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**Chuckle Productions** operate in the West of the county and deliver activities for children/young people to attend independently, but children and families can access from all areas of the county if they are prepared to travel.

Chuckle Productions provides a range of services for children and young adults with additional needs including: An Arts Training Scheme, an inclusive Musical Theatre Company, our Sound Connection music and movement projects for children with PMLD and Complex Autism and Aiming High Short Breaks. Come and join the fun at Chuckle House for games, play, art and craft and have fun with other young people in a safe environment for 5 - 18 years.

For more details check out the Aiming High page:

[Aiming High - Activities and short breaks | Staffordshire Connects](https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=6-1-8)

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**Doves Care** operate across the county and are a new provider. They will be offering sessions in libraries across the county and having sessions for children and young people to attend independently. They provide opportunities or children and young people with disabilities to have enjoyable experiences away from their primary carers, contributing to social inclusion and personal and social development. They also provide parents and carers a necessary and valuable break from their caring responsibilities.

For more details check out the Aiming High page:

[Aiming High - Activities and short breaks | Staffordshire Connects](https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=6-1-8)

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**Gartmore Riding School** operate across the county as long as you are prepared to travel. They provide riding lessons and horse and pony care instruction for children and young people of all ages, abilities and disabilities. They also provide horse-related sessions based around art, reading and writing. They can offer equine sensory therapy in their outdoor learning pathway for those who want to be outside and benefit physically and mentally from their time spent outdoors with ponies and horses.

For more details check out the Aiming High page:

[Aiming High - Activities and short breaks | Staffordshire Connects](https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=6-1-8)

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**Let us Play** operates across the South and West of the county**.** They offersports, arts, play and respite activities for children with special needs and disabilities aged 5 – 19 years.  They are based in Wolverhampton but supporting South and West Staffordshire. They offer some 1:1 places, most personal care needs met but before activities sessions will be discussed with the parent/carer to ensure all needs can be met.  Small and large group sessions, Saturdays, school holiday and occasional evenings. Some sibling places available. Activities running in May and June are: Alice in Wonderland Theatre trip, Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Celebration and a day of activities at Baggeridge Country Park.

For more details check out the Aiming High page:

[Aiming High - Activities and short breaks | Staffordshire Connects](https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=6-1-8)

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**Sherratts Wood** operates across the North, East and West of the county**.** They offer fun family activities, including animal care, forest fun, gardening, arts, crafts, games and cooking from sites in Leigh and Burton-on-Trent. They support many areas of the Local Authority and are working on new areas within their farm to offer exciting activities. Activities run every Saturday from the two venues. Outdoor fun at its best.

For more details check out the Aiming High page:

[Aiming High - Activities and short breaks | Staffordshire Connects](https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=6-1-8)

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**Staffordshire Wildlife** operates across the North, East and West of the county**.** They run activities which support children and young people’s environmental learning. Wildlings runs from the Staffordshire Wildlife Centre Outdoor classroom at the Wolseley Centre, Biddulph Grange and Beans Covert, where children aged 0-4 or those children who are older but function at a younger developmental level can try new things outdoors; swing in a hammock, make a mud pie or be mesmerised by a campfire. They also run Wild Yoga sessions for children and young people aged 5 – 12 where they can practice yoga poses along a story line or theme. Compete in mindful, nature based activities during the yoga explore and learn breathing and relaxation techniques.

For more details check out the Aiming High page:

[Aiming High - Activities and short breaks | Staffordshire Connects](https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=6-1-8)

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**Stoke City Community Trust** operate across the county and are a new provider**.** They will be offering football sessions for 6 – 16 years, across four venues each week: Tuesday’s at Uttoxeter Leisure Centre, Wednesday’s at Rugeley Community Centre, Thursday’s at Gnosall Village Hall and Friday’s at Biddulph Youth and Community Zone. All sessions run from 4:00 – 6:00pm, with 2 hours of football fun in a supportive, engaging and relaxed environment. Participants will be encouraged to learn new skills, push social boundaries and step out of their comfort zones to help them in a sporting capacity and also in their everyday life. At the start of the new football season – family days, which include a match day experience will also be on offer.

For more details check out the Aiming High page:

[Aiming High - Activities and short breaks | Staffordshire Connects](https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=6-1-8)

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For more details check out the Aiming High page:

[Aiming High - Activities and short breaks | Staffordshire Connects](https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=6-1-8)

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**Training and learning opportunities:**

Four workshops which are available to everybody in Staffordshire via **PEGiS (Parent Engagement Group in Stoke).**

Please join and learn together, it is completely free and a lovely environment. They will be run through PEGiS zoom so you can learn from home.

**Selective mutism** by Libby Hill Tuesday 3rd May 7pm-9pm

**Understanding Tourette’s** from Tourette’s action Thursday 7th June 7pm-9pm

**Let us learn about trusts, power of attorney and wills** from Estate Planning Webinar Monday 13tn June 7pm-9pm

**Looking after you when you are a parent carer.** Lisa works with Younger Minds and also had a beautiful daughter with autism.  Wednesday 29th June 7pm-9pm

Zoom codes will be sent out nearer the time – please let **:** Michelle Craggs [Pegis.stoke@hotmail.com](mailto:Pegis.stoke@hotmail.com) know if you would like to join any and if you could advertise it to parents and work colleagues. They are free and open to everybody, not just Stoke-on-Trent residents!

Anticipating your response

**Training and learning opportunities Caudwell Children:**

**Meeting Sensory Needs:**

This workshop aims to provide information about the ways in which sensory processing may impact a child with additional needs. It also discusses sensory processing difficulties and details how these may be impacting on the child/family.

**Language and Communication:**

This workshop provides an overview of communication in general, exploring how difficulties with these concepts can impact on the child and family. This workshop will give parents ways to support their child in developing their use of language and ability to communicate.

**Forming relationships:**

This workshop outlines the importance of relationships and some of the difficulties a child with additional needs may encounter. It outlines the importance of play to a child’s development and how play helps forming of friendships. This workshop will give practical strategies and tips to allow parents to support their child.

**Supporting Positive Behaviour:**

This workshop provides an overview of challenging behaviour and will help parents to understand why these behaviours may be happening and suggest strategies to support this.

Families can find out more information and register their interest using the following link:

[Workshops - Caudwell Children](https://www.caudwellchildren.com/workshops/)

Please contact Caudwell directly for further information or to book on.

Some providers ask for a referral or a conversation with parents/carers before the activity takes place, to determine needs and if 1:1 is required. Please give as much information as possible to ensure that the right support and care is put in place for your child/children to enjoy the activities. We are here to support all needs and abilities so the more information we have means we can offer a safe and enjoyable time for all – thank you.



**SENDIASS**

Staffordshire SENDIASS is funded by Staffordshire County Council. It operates independently as a confidential service for parents and carers of children and young people (0 -25) with special educational needs and disabilities. Staffordshire SENDIASS also operates independently as a confidential service for children and young people.

To contact Staffordshire SENDIASS: Tel: 01785 356921 Email: [sfps@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sfps@staffordshire.gov.uk)  You can find out more information at:  [www.staffs-iass.org](http://www.staffs-iass.org)

**Age and Stages**

All our providers aim to be inclusive of all children and young people with a variety of special educational needs and/or disabilities – some can also offer support for older children to attend who have limited capacity for their own age range and function at a younger age range, and some providers are able to offer provision for children with mobility issues -  please contact the provider to discuss further.

**We would welcome your thoughts on the types of information that would be most useful to you. Please contact** [aiminghigh@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:aiminghigh@staffordshire.gov.uk) with ideas, contributions or to be added to the distribution list.

Look out for updates on activities on **SEND Local Offer Facebook**

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