

Family Hubs Spring Newsletter

Welcome to the Family Hubs Newsletter

Our Family Hubs have been busy supporting families across the local community. From festive activities and holiday programmes to ongoing universal and targeted support, this newsletter highlights some of the wonderful work that is taking place and the partnerships that make it possible.

Exciting Development at Walney Family Hub

We are pleased to share that plans are underway to transform a large office space at Walney Family Hub into a welcoming, multi-use community area.

This new space will be designed to support a wide range of activities, including parenting groups, youth sessions and community-led programmes. A key feature of the development will be dedicated to chill-out area, creating a relaxed and inclusive environment where families and young people can feel comfortable, connect, and access support.

To ensure the space truly meets the needs of our community, we will be working closely with local families, young people, and partner organisations. Through consultations and engagement, we'll gather ideas and feedback to help shape the look, feel, and functionality of the space.

We are really excited about the potential of this development and look forward to sharing updates as the project progresses.



Baby Massage

Over the past few months, from Christmas through to April, our Baby Massage sessions have continued to be a warm and welcoming space for families across the Barrow Family Hubs. These sessions have supported parents and carers to build strong, nurturing bonds with their babies while learning calming techniques that can support sleep, digestion, and overall wellbeing.

We have seen wonderful engagement from families attending, with many sharing how valuable the sessions have been in helping them feel more confident in understanding their baby's cues and creating special moments of connection.

Looking ahead – Expanding Our Baby Massage Offer

Due to the positive feedback and growing interest, we are excited to share our plans to expand our baby massage provision.

We are currently developing:

- **Dedicated baby massage sessions to fathers and male carers:** Creating a relaxed supportive environment where dads and male carers can build confidence, connect with their babies, and meet others.
- **Family baby massage sessions:** Offering a more inclusive approach where both parents and carers can attend together, supporting shared learning and bonding as a family unit.

These new sessions aim to ensure our offer is accessible, inclusive, and reflective of the needs of all families within our community.

We look forward to sharing more information soon and welcoming even more families to experience the benefits for baby massage.



Family Hubs Barrow Infant Feeding Group Relaunch!

We have relaunched our lovely Infant Feeding Support Group at our Greengate Family Hub this quarter. This informative and supportive group is well attended with our families, and our trained and passionate team are available to support with any of your infant feeding questions or issues. This group runs every Thursday 9:30-11am with no booking required.

Easter Family Fun Days

Our Easter Family Fun Days were full of fun, laughter and excitement, bringing families together across our Family Hub sites. Children enjoyed a wide range of Easter themed activities, from creative crafts and games to hands on play, with plenty of smiles all round.

The sessions had a real warmth, with families getting stuck in, making memories and enjoying quality time together in a relaxed and welcoming environment. It was lovely to see children proudly showing off their creations and parents and carers connecting with others.

These events are a great way to bring families together, reduce isolation and create positive experiences, and we are already looking forward to planning more fun filled Family days throughout the year.



Development Of Our Sensory Spaces

We are continuing to develop our sensory spaces across Family Hubs, with a focus on creating inclusive, supportive environments for children and young people with additional needs. As part of this, we have been consulting with the Limitless SEND Youth Council, SEND Partnership and Youth Squad to help shape the sensory space at Greengate Family Hub.

A huge thank you to Barrow Leisure Centre for their generous donation of sensory equipment following the closure of their sensory room. This equipment is now being used within Barrow Library and Greengate Family Hub, helping us to enhance our offer and better support local families.

Families can access the sensory spaces through booked sessions or by speaking to a member of the Family Hubs team for more information. We welcome feedback to help us continue developing these spaces to best meet the needs of our community.

Prom Dress Project – A night to remember!

We were absolutely delighted to welcome local girls and their families to our recent Prom Dress Project event. It was a truly special evening, filled with excitement, confidence, and lots of smiles as each young person found a dress they loved and proudly said “yes to the dress”.

The atmosphere on the night was incredible, with every girl leaving feeling beaming, confident, and ready for their upcoming prom. Events like this are so important in helping young people feel included, celebrated, and supported during key milestones.

A huge thank you to Kirsty our Volunteer Coordinator for the stunning balloon arch and backdrop, which transformed the space and made the experience feel even more magical for everyone attending.

We would also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our wider community for their generosity and support. From dress donations to helping us organise the event, this project would not have been possible without the kindness of those who gave their time, resources, and encouragement.

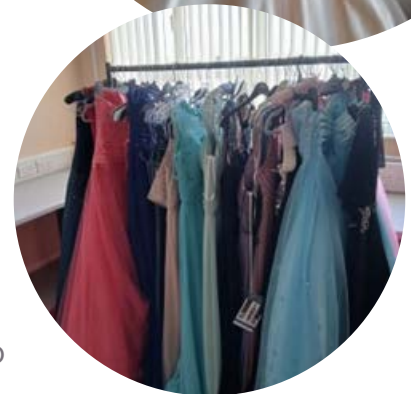
This event is a fantastic example of what can be achieved when communities come together to support young people, and we are so proud to have been part of such a memorable experience.

Together Towards School

We were pleased to deliver our Together Towards School workshops in partnership with Victoria Infant and Nursery School. These sessions brought families together to share simple, practical ideas to support children as they prepare for starting school.

Parents took part in activities and discussions around key areas such as toileting, moving on from dummies and bottles, and building independence skills. It was great to see families sharing experiences, growing in confidence, and taking away helpful tips to support their child's transition into school.

We look forward to continuing to support families through future workshops and the Family Hub.



Healthy Plates Cooking

We are pleased to be delivering our Healthy Plates Cooking Courses at Women's Community Matters, with sessions specifically targeted at male teenagers to build confidence in the kitchen, develop essential life skills, and promote healthy, affordable eating.

Alongside this, we continue to support families through Project John, working with parents who have been referred following financial hardship. The programme offers practical guidance around budgeting, meal planning, and making healthier food choices on a budget, as well as support with debt management and signposting to relevant services.

These programmes aim to empower both young people and parents with the knowledge and skills needed to make positive, sustainable lifestyle changes, improving overall wellbeing for the whole family.

National Year of Reading

As part of our work supporting the Department for Education's National Year of Reading, we have been working in partnership with the Westmorland and Furness Early Years Team to deliver a Woodland Story Trail and distribute 10 reading baskets across cafes in the Furness area.

Each basket contains a selection of high-quality books for children aged 0-5, alongside '50 things to do before you're 5' flyers, top tips for parents and carers when reading with babies and young children, QR codes linking to useful resources, and feedback jotter to capture thoughts and experiences.

Following the success of the woodland story trial and the positive feedback received, further plans are now in place to deliver additional outdoor sessions to continue promoting a love of reading across our communities.

Reducing Parental Conflict

Family Hubs continue to support the Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) programme, helping parents and carers to build positive relationships and create calmer, more supportive home environments for children.

Through this offer, we provide advice, resources and access to Targeted Support for Families experiencing conflict. This includes guidance on improving communication, managing disagreements constructively, and understanding how conflict can impact a child's emotional wellbeing and development.

Our teams work closely with partners to identify families who may benefit from additional support, offering one-to-one guidance, group sessions, and signposting to specialist services where needed.

By supporting parents to manage conflict in a healthy way, we aim to improve outcomes for children, strengthen family relationships, and promote a more positive home life.



Did You Know?

Children who are registered for Free School Meals may also be eligible for support during school holidays through the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme.

Apply online now: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals> – this official government page will help you check eligibility and direct you to your local authority application. GOV.UK

Even if your child already receives free meals because of their year group, applying ensures your school gets extra funding which can help with educational support and resources.



Easter Holiday Activities Fund

Over the Easter holidays, Family Hubs were delighted to deliver a range of engaging activities as part of the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme, supporting children and families across the Furness area.

Sessions included a variety of fun, enriching experiences such as crafts, yoga, and an exciting trip to Jump Rush, where children were able to stay active, build confidence, and enjoy time with their peers. A healthy meal was provided at each session, ensuring children had access to nutritious food alongside activities.

The programme was a great success, with positive feedback from families highlighting how much the children enjoyed the sessions and the opportunity to take part in activities during the school holidays.

We are pleased to continue offering HAF provision throughout future holiday periods, supporting families with free, high-quality activities and helping to reduce holiday pressures.

How to Book Future HAF Activities

Future Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programmes will run during school holidays throughout the year.

Families can find out more information and book upcoming HAF activities by:

- Visiting the Family Hubs Barrow website or social media pages
- Speaking to a member of staff at any Family Hub or Community Centre

If you need help with booking, accessing activities, or attending sessions, our friendly team are always happy to help.



Volunteering with Family Hubs

Here at Family Hubs, we are proud to have our valued volunteers supporting our services and making a real difference within our community. Their time, dedication and enthusiasm play an important role in helping us deliver support to children and families.

We are currently recruiting for volunteers and would love to hear from anyone interested in getting involved. If you would like to find out more information, please contact

Kirsty.Parkinson@cumbria.gov.uk

Family Hubs and Community Spaces – What's On

Our Family Hubs continue to partner with local community spaces to bring you activities, support and fun for all ages! Family Hubs offer welcoming drop-in sessions and events right across Barrow-in-Furness and surrounding areas, connecting families with support, learning and play opportunities. wandffamilyhelp.org.uk

Here's a snapshot of regular and upcoming activities you and your family can be part of:

Weekly Drop-Ins and Play Sessions

- **Baby Time** – interactive play and sensory activities for babies, helping early development and exploration. wandffamilyhelp.org.uk
- **Little Learners** – themed craft and learning sessions for toddlers and young children. wandffamilyhelp.org.uk
- **Play Space & SEND Play Space** – relaxed parent-led play sessions for children of all abilities. wandffamilyhelp.org.uk
- **Mums Minds Matter** – wellbeing support group for mums, babies and carers. wandffamilyhelp.org.uk
- **Lego & Pokémon Clubs** – creative and social sessions for school-aged children. wandffamilyhelp.org.uk (This is a Barrow Library activity)
- **Weekly wellbeing being walks** in partners with Barrow Raiders

Special Support and Services

- Baby Weigh Stations at Barrow and Walney libraries — free baby scales available during library hours. wandffamilyhelp.org.uk
- Midwife Clinics at Family Hub locations by appointment.

Keep an eye out

Follow our Family Hubs social media pages or speak to a member of the team at your local hub to find out more and book onto upcoming sessions.



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