

Red Kite Family Centre Development Strategy for a Sustainable Future

Mission statement/Motto: Supporting families to give every child in our area the best possible start in life. / 'Being there for every family'

Core purpose: To provide a range of services, support and outreach to all parents of 0-4yr olds in our area and their children.

Aim of Development Strategy

This strategy is designed to help the Family Centre transform from the public service model of the former children's centre on which its current operation is based to a new community focussed charity model based on desired outcomes.

Objectives of Strategy

1. To re-state the Centre's core purpose and provision focussing on the desired outcomes and impact of each aspect of both the universal and targeted activities.
2. To devise an outreach plan identifying the main ways in which the Centre is going to reach every 0-4yr old and their parents in our area.
3. A funding strategy that helps to establish a sustainable model of operation for the future (beyond the initial 3 years).
4. A Community Engagement Plan aimed at involving a wide cross-section of the local community in the work of the Family Centre. This will be achieved through a variety of initiatives including:
 - A new volunteer strategy
 - Launching a 'Friends' scheme
 - Promoting the hiring of the centre for parties, courses and meetings
 - Reviewing and strengthening our partnership with health, schools, early years network and other professionals and agencies working with children and families
5. To have a plan for supporting the wellbeing and professional development of all the Centre staff and also volunteers.
6. To update the business plan in the light of the fresh priorities that are agreed.

Red Kite Family Centre Development Strategy



1. The Family Centre's Core Purpose and Provision

In line with the mission statement and aims given above the Centre's core purpose is as follows:

- For every parent with 0-4yr olds in our area to both know about, use and benefit from the range of support services and provision that is on offer.
- To provide regular, free, universal (open to everyone) and easily accessible 'Stay & Play' sessions for parents and children with the aim of supporting the children's social, emotional, creative and physical development through a variety of play activities and parental understanding of their role in these.
- To provide a range of targeted activities aimed at specific groups of parents and children. e.g. The Saturday morning breakfast club for dads and mail carers.
- To offer professional support and advice to all parents and to signpost to other appropriate services that are available when needed.
- To work in partnership with all other professionals involved in supporting parents with 0-4yr olds, in particular health professionals who use the same venues and also nursery and school staff
- To ensure that safeguarding is given top priority and to actively share this responsibility with other professionals who might be involved with the safeguarding and well-being of all 0-4yr olds and their parents.

To achieve these core purposes the following provision will be offered:

- To use the outreach plan (see 2 below) to ensure that all parents with 0-4yr olds are invited to engage with the Centre's activities.
- To run two 'Stay and Play' sessions a week in Thame and 1 in Chinnor.
- To run a 'sensory explorers' session once a week for parents with children who have disabilities or additional needs.
- To run other sessions in support of literacy, numeracy and creative development and to support school readiness.
- To design activities that meet identified needs within our community and in support of national initiatives such as inter-generational co-operation.
- To host sessions run by Health Visitors, Midwives and Speech and Language professionals and other providers as appropriate.
- To offer a range of training opportunities covering such subjects as first-aid, parenting skills, nutritional advice and 'HENRY'.

2. Outreach Plan

This plan is designed to ensure that every family with 0-4yr olds living in our area knows about the Family Centre and is engaged in at least one of its activities. This will be done using a mix of some of the following actions:

- Developing a 'roadshow' run by centre staff that can be taken to different venues around our area promoting the work of the Centre and the activities it runs. This could include running 'mini' sessions in a range of local venues such as the new housing developments and large local employer's premises.

- Ensuring that Centre publicity receives the widest possible circulation by expanding the current distribution map to include leaflet distribution to specified housing areas as well as all schools and pre-schools and public buildings.
- Evaluating the current Chinnor outreach project and running similar projects in this and other areas, subject to funding.
- To regularly consult with service users (parents attending sessions or meeting staff) to ensure quality feedback and suggestions for future provision which are then acted upon.

3. Funding Strategy

To ensure the future financial sustainability of the Family Centre's activities in our community we need to be pro-active in obtaining funding for both our core provision and our development activities. This funding strategy includes the following actions:

- Identifying the local funders that we plan to continue bidding from for our core provision and our plans for keeping them engaged. Designate responsibilities for this within the board of trustees.
- The key aspects of our provision that can be linked to specific funding streams (e.g. High Sheriff award) from fresh funding sources across the county. (Funding the activities that we want to happen to make them happen.)
- Identifying the range of volunteering opportunities with which to engage members of the local business community. (Pick up on companies' CSR [Corporate Social Responsibility] and target this with our approaches to them regarding areas for sponsorship.) Explore the use of pro-bono (in-kind) support from businesses.
- Use OCVA and OCF to help identify new funding sources.
- Appoint additional trustees/volunteers to help with grant research and bid writing.

4. Community Engagement Plan

The main aim of this plan is to ensure that the widest possible cross-section of people in our local community understand the importance of the Centre's work and act as advocates, volunteers and supporters for its work, now and in the future. To achieve this the following actions will be taken:

- a) Devise a volunteer strategy.
- b) Set up a 'Friends of the Red Kite Family Centre' scheme.
- c) Promote the use of the Centre as a venue to hire by a range of community groups.
- d) Develop and promote our partnership with health professionals and other groups listed in objectives.

a) Volunteer Strategy

Aims:

- To establish three groups of volunteers; vocational volunteers, recent service user volunteers and community volunteers.
- To support Red Kite staff with group delivery and creating resources to support early learning.
- To expand Red Kite services through engagement with the wider community.
- To upskill parents and carers who are thinking of returning to work or wish to gain skills in early years settings.

- To support the sustainability of the Centre's activities.

Success Criteria:

- To recruit 2 vocational, 8 recent service user and 8 community volunteers within an agreed timescale.
- For each group to have at least one regular volunteer by April 2019.
- Day to day groups are supported by volunteers working alongside staff so enabling staff to run Red Kite services in other community venues e.g. Housing estates, New build communities, local parks, local pre-schools, day care centre

How will we do this?

- 1) Volunteer roles/ descriptions to be created for each group – Team Lead
- 2) Local advertising of volunteer roles available via social media and Red Kite website and selected community venues – Centre Administrator
- 3) Engaging with the local business community contacts
- 4) To work in partnership with local colleges, universities, job centres and OCVA to offer student placements and volunteer opportunities – Team Lead

b) Friends of Red Kite Family Centre

Context: The core purpose of the Family Centre continues to be the provision of support and advice for all families with 0-4yr olds and to offer services that are free at the point of use. We are however aware that in the area that we serve there are many families that could afford to make a financial contribution towards the costs of running the centre and we are keen to do this in a way that does not prejudice those that cannot afford any contribution. This draft plan sets out how this might be achieved.

Objectives of plan

- For service users (parents with 0-4yr olds), volunteers, members of the wider community and employees of local businesses to be prepared to make a regular financial contribution towards the costs of running this charitable, community run centre.
- To increase the sense of ownership and engagement in the work of the centre by service users and volunteers.
- For the membership scheme to make a significant contribution to the overall running costs of the centre.
- To establish a wider core group of supporters for the continuing and developing role of the centre within the communities of Thame and Chinnor.

Outline of Plan

The scheme to be known as 'Friends of the Red Kite Family Centre', 'RKFC Friends' in short. All current service users and volunteers to be sent/given a publicity leaflet inviting them to become a friend. Membership can be set up from our website or in person.

Benefits:

- 20% discount on subscription package to Thame Leisure Centre and other benefits
- Advance notice of forthcoming events (via email with consent)
- An annual Friends Evening Reception held at the centre.

- Discount of 10% on Centre Bookings
- Termly (3 times a year) newsletter
- A membership card

Cost: A monthly contribution of £5 (or more) collected by standing order.

Extension

This model will be used to attract a wider circle of supporters from the community at large with the flexibility to make a monthly contribution of differing amounts.

c) Promoting Venue Hire

The Centre website has been upgraded to include an online booking facility for hiring the building for parties, courses and meetings.

A new promotional leaflet has been drafted and will be printed and widely circulated.

d) Strengthening Partnership with Health and other Professionals

In many ways the centre's long-standing partnership with the Health Visitors, Midwives and Speech & Language Therapists that regularly hold their sessions in the building can be seen as the lifeblood of the centre's activities. A mother visiting with her new-born child is often the first introduction that the family has to the centre. The visit leads to a valuable opportunity to introduce the wider range of activities and services on offer.

This relationship has continued from the time of the original publicly funded children's centre and the working relationship is largely still defined by that era. Given its importance it needs to be reviewed and re-stated in the light of the now charitably run centre. The key issues to address are:

- The protocols for the sharing of confidential data.
- How the wider services the centre offers can be effectively signposted by health professionals and visa versa by centre staff.
- Managing the costs of hosting the health sessions (no rent is currently paid).
- Arrangements for publicising each other's provision.

Other Professionals

Given the pressure on space in the town there may well be other professionals who would welcome using the centre as a venue and this needs to be investigated.

Further work needs to be done to develop our partnership with pre-school nurseries, schools, social services and the local early years network.

Joint projects/initiatives with other voluntary groups such as the CAB will also be explored.

5. Plan for supporting the wellbeing and professional development of all the Centre staff and also volunteers

The most important resources of the Centre are its staff. The success experienced by the Centre in its first 18 months of operation has largely been due to the leadership of Amy Spicer, the Centre lead and the skills, professionalism and enthusiasm of the staff team. The actions outlined in this development strategy, although supported by the trustees, are very dependent on the full commitment of the whole staff team and members of the volunteer team as they are recruited. With this in mind it will be important to have a staff development programme aimed at achieving the following objectives:

We want to ensure that:

- All Centre staff are valued, are clear about their specific roles and are supported in them.
- All staff have the opportunity for further training to both maintain and develop their professional skills.
- All staff are included in an annual appraisal scheme.
- There is plenty of opportunity for all staff to contribute to the future development of the Centre e.g. through this development strategy.
- These same objectives will also be implemented in support of the volunteer team as appropriate.

6. Updated Business Plan

This will be compiled following completion of detailed action plans on parts 1 – 5 of the development strategy.

J.H. 10/2018