

# Family Newsletter

Hello and welcome to the latest newsletter for Little Havens and The J's families

## Updates from the Care Team

Over the past few months, we have successfully recruited into some of our nursing vacancies and two more qualified nurses joined the Care Team in November. Unfortunately, we still do not have the level of staff required to open the building for 24/7 care however, we hope these new appointments will enable us to increase the amount of care we can offer. We recently welcomed Lisa Duggin, Nurse Team Leader, and Maxine Littman, Community Nurse, to the Care Team.

We are currently prioritising support for children and young people who need symptom management and end of life care in their home or at the hospice, because of this, there may be occasions where we may need to cancel your respite stay at short notice. We always endeavour to minimise cancellations, however, when necessary, we will notify you as soon as possible.

From March we hope to ease our Covid restrictions at the hospice and allow the whole family to stay for respite, rather than just one parent or carer.

We want to remind you when staying at the hospice our catering arrangements have changed. We will continue to provide a choice of breakfast and a hot meal at lunchtime. Our evening meals will now be a selection of sandwiches, jacket potatoes and meals that can be reheated at your convenience. Although the parents' lounge is available upstairs for resident parents, it is with regret, we are no longer able to provide self-catering facilities.

## Young Adult Saturday Socials

This year we are piloting a new event for our young people at transition age 14-25 years and their parents, to have fun, meet others and learn about important topics affecting their care. Young Adult Saturday Socials will run from 11am to 3pm with lunch provided, along with activities for young people and a talk from a professional or expert in young people's care.

The sessions will be running throughout the year on:  
**Saturday 19th March, Saturday 21st May, Saturday 23rd July and Saturday 17th September.**

For more information or to register your interest please visit the ['Transition Zone' on the Family Area](#)

These events are specifically for young adults aged 14 – 25 however we will be running other Saturday Socials throughout the year for younger children.

## Upcoming Events

- Stay'n'Play (under 7's) – Tuesday 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th March
- Cosy Sundays – Sunday 20th March  
*A quieter opportunity for a couple of families to visit and have one of our infamous roast dinners!*
- Young Adult Saturday Socials (14+) – Saturday 19th March
- Sensory Storytime (in person) – Wednesday 23rd March
- Online Music Therapy – Wednesdays and Fridays every week

## Reminders

If you have carers supporting you at home, they can bring your child or young person to Little Havens to use the facilities for the day (or a few hours) to enjoy the garden, multi-sensory room, bath, soft play (and pool once it reopens), supported by their own carers. You can pre-book a visit to the hospice online via the Family Area or call us on 01702 552 200 to arrange a visit.

When you come to the hospice you will be able to spend time enjoying all the different facilities subject to availability.

# Feedback on our pre-admission process

Over the last nine months, we have updated our pre-admission process so now (where possible), one of our nurses will call you before your respite stay to help reduce the admission time when you arrive at Little Havens. Since introducing this change to our process we have had lots of positive feedback from families. In one of our recent surveys, 100% of families said the new process has improved admission to Little Havens and that the process takes about the right amount of time. We are pleased this has improved your visit to the hospice, helping families feel more prepared before they arrive and reassured about our care.

*“The new system greatly improved the admission process, as it allowed more time for them to settle into their room and then to get straight into activities. The child is also not keen to sit through all of the admin processes either, so I much prefer the new pre-admission process.” – a parent who recently stayed*

## Little Havens Hydrotherapy Pool

We are pleased to share the Hydrotherapy pool currently appears to be in working order. Over the past couple of months, we have been using it with children staying at the hospice to trial a new testing regime (which ensures the pool is safe for swimming). We are working towards opening the pool from the middle of March for bookings from families and we will notify you all by email once bookings open. You will be able to request to use the pool via the Family Area or by phoning the hospice.

We can offer a two hour slot, giving you a maximum of half an hour in the water, with adequate changing time. Our policy has changed meaning a trained member of staff must be present with families during all hydrotherapy pool visits. This designated staff member must always remain in the pool environment whenever a child or young person is in the water. This person can be on the poolside or in the changing room if there is a second adult present and your family require privacy.

## What's on the 'Family Area'?

The Family Area is a space on the Havens Hospices website dedicated to the families, children and young people receiving care from Little Havens and The J's. You can visit the Family Area here [www.havenshospices.org.uk/familyarea](http://www.havenshospices.org.uk/familyarea). Please bookmark or save this page to your favourites.

On the Family Area you can:

- Read the latest newsletter
- Find important forms and documents (such as consent forms and drug record sheets)
- Give recommendations to other families through our [noticeboard](#)
- Book activities such as Stay'n'Play, Sensory Storytime and online music therapy
- Arrange a visit to the Little Havens gardens or Multi-Sensory Room
- Watch recorded tutorials and activities from our Music Therapist, Complementary Therapy team and Creative Therapist
- Find signposting to other services

## Wipe Away Those Tears - wishes granted

Wipe Away Those Tears is a charity that grant wishes for children with life-limiting conditions and who live in Essex. They are only able to grant one wish per child. So if your family has already been supported by this charity they, unfortunately, can't grant a second wish.

Their Facebook page – [Wipe away those tears](#) – provides examples of wishes they have previously granted such as purchasing specialist equipment and funding therapies for a child or young person. To apply, contact Gail at Wipe Away Those Tears ([gail@wipeawaythosetears.org](mailto:gail@wipeawaythosetears.org)) stating the wish you would like, your child's name, age, diagnosis and why you have chosen this wish.