

North London Deaf Children's Society AGM Committee Report for 2018

Presented to members on 14th January 2019

The NLDCS aims to offer support by providing accessible events and activities for deaf children and their families in an inclusive, safe environment where ideas and knowledge can be shared and friendships made. All events are heavily subsidised by the NLDCS or free of charge to members.

Subsidised or free events for families	11
Email communications	43
Newsletters	2
Mailing list of members, schools, professionals	82
Families who regularly attended our events	36
Age range of children	0 -18

Events

The first event of 2018 was the February disco party. There was dancing, bubbles, foam and hilarious races along with art tables. Kids of all ages (even the teenagers!) were joined by parents for the dancing, making it one of our most memorable parties.

The following month, 21 children attended our Pottery Painting. They chose a variety of items to paint including plates, bowls, cups and tea pots. Even some parents couldn't resist having a go and it was lovely to see new members join in the fun.

On a chilly day in April, 13 families attended Mill Hill Fire Station to meet the firemen and learn about fire safety and the role of a fireman. The children were invited to explore the fire engine and much to their delight, take a turn on the hose.

The same month the younger members of the group attended Sarah & Duck at the Arts Depot in Finchley. 11 families watched the live show "Big Top Birthday" based on the animated characters from the BBC.

Once again, we visited the Lee Valley VeloPark where 10 families took part in our June cycling extravaganza funded by a grant from the National Deaf Children's Society and the generosity of the Lee Valley community Fund. The very young children, aged 2 and up, had a chance to use balance bikes and the under 7s had a go at pedalling. The older children rode the outside mountain bike track, taking on the narrow and twisty paths around the site.

In July families met at Little Dinosaurs in Alexandra Palace for a play date. This popular event for the younger members of our group offers both a safe outdoor playground, an indoor soft play area and a lovely café for the parents.

August saw our second visit to the Lee Valley, this time to the White Water Rafting in the Olympic Water Park. Sadly, numbers for this event were low, but we were able to offer it to include siblings. Everyone who did take part had a brilliant time.

There was a real treat in store in September, as 15 young people and their parents saw a captioned performance of Aladdin in the West End enjoying the thrills of the genie and the magic carpet.

Also in September, the NLDCS took part in the Festival of Treasures fully accessible Family Day at the British Library along with other providers such as the Science Museum, Bletchley Park, Postal Museum and others. The NLDCS has taken part in this event, run by Camden Family Learning and Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children, for the past four years as a way to reach out to families.

Our second party of the year featured the magician David Weeks who has entertained us in the past and his sleight of hand and illusions entranced us all. As it was close to Halloween, we invited all the children to

come in fancy dress, so David Weeks kindly judged the costumes and we all finished up with a delicious shared finger buffet.

The NLDCS annual Christmas event at the Chickenshed was one of the best attended events and our last event of 2018. 23 children and their families (totaling 43 altogether) shared in the enchanting adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic "A Christmas Carol". With over 200 young performers this was one of Chickenshed's most impressive productions to date.

Committee Activities

The committee of 2018 was Esther Conway (chair), Donna Apparicio (treasurer), Kam Makram (secretary), Linda Sells, Andrea Dean, Denis Coelho, Lauren Rapacioli (mat leave), Sharon Webb, Suki Gill, Maggie O'Regan, Barbara Kasperska and Zibiah Loakthar.

Esther represented the NLDCS at the First Give School Final at Fortismere School in Haringey. Despite good presentations by our teams in the charities competition, they failed to win, but the children did raise £170 for our charity by fundraising in school.

Esther met with the NDCS local groups team to discuss the changes to General Data Protection Regulations and our responsibilities around data holding. She also attended the NDCS Local Groups annual meeting to meet other local group committees and to receive information and training on certain issues.

We had a good year for communication with two newsletters and 43 other emails to members. Mailchimp shows us that our communications achieved an open rate of twice that of the industry standard. Our newsletter includes information about NLDCS events and topics such as government policies, NDCS campaigns and local services for deaf families. We also share information about other events and news that might interest our members.

We have a private Facebook Group for members and hope to grow this as a way to share ideas, stories and news. Please do let us know if you'd like to join.

We have a new website at www.nldcs.org which keeps an up-to-date events page, news and useful links. It also provides a join-up link for potential new members.

Fundraising

In 2018 we joined the PayPal Giving Fund and are receiving donations collected through eBay.

We were delighted to be supported by the Finchley Hollywood Bowl through its pins for hero's cause which donated £1,000 in 2018.

Other income was achieved by successful grant applications to the NDCS for the Local Groups Grant, which paid for communication support for both of our trips to the Lee Valley and for the communication support at our Party in October.

Plans for 2019

We have some events already organised for 2019 including a sign language focused event based around road safety and a trip to make pizza's with Pizza Express.

We will spend some time on developing fundraising opportunities through Big Give, Facebook and Give as you Live. If anyone has any experience and spare time to help with these, we would be grateful.

We also have a new database courtesy of the National Deaf Children's Society. This is a GDPR compliant, safe application for keeping our membership records safely.

We are always looking for new committee members to join the team, especially those with good organisational skills. If there are any family members who can help with Mailchimp, WordPress or the Database we'd love to hear from you.