



## **Hello and Welcome to PACC's Buddies Social Network**

Buddies is part of the Community Support offered by the Parent Carer Council (PACC) Shropshire.

PACC is a Parent Carer Forum and a registered charity. Since 2008 we have worked to improve the experience of SEND families in Shropshire. We are an experience led organisation, run by a team of Shropshire parent carers, who bring a personal understanding of the challenges faced by SEND families to all aspects of PACC's work.

PACC has three main areas of work:

- Influence & Change – using your experiences to improve the SEND system.
- Information Provision – ensuring that you understand what support is available and how the SEND system can help your family.
- Community Support – providing direct support to SEND families in Shropshire, so that they know they are not alone.

You can find out more about PACC on [www.paccshropshire.org.uk](http://www.paccshropshire.org.uk)

The aim of Buddies is to bring together young people with SEND and their parent carers, to support the development of friendships and to build confidence in accessing activities in the community. We started by arranging activities for the 14 – 25years age group, with a focus on supporting young people with SEND to prepare for adulthood. Recently we have also begun to offer activities for younger children aged 8 to 14 years. Buddies also provides important opportunities for parent carers to come together, to share information and experiences and to benefit from peer support.

When attending Buddies activities young people do need to be accompanied by a parent carer or a personal assistant. As young people grow older, build friendships and become more confident, adults providing support are encouraged to step back, while still being present to provide support and reassurance if needed. We have found that this approach enables the young people to build a network of friends and trusted adults they are comfortable to interact with and be supported by.

There is usually a small charge for young people attending Buddies activities, normally between £7 and £10. You will be told if this needs to be paid on the day or in advance of the activity. A half termly timetable is shared for both Buddies and Junior Buddies, giving you notice of the dates of planned activities. Bookings are opened for each activity through a post on the Facebook group and you book a place by responding to that post. Regular activities include bowling, theatre trips, walks at Attingham Park, we also trial new activities for our 'Healthy Lives Programme' with Buddies, this has included canoeing, team building and tennis sessions. If you have any suggestions for activities, please do get in touch and let us know.

All of the PACC team work to support Buddies activities but you are most likely to meet Annie, Denise, Ruth and Sarah at these sessions. If you have any questions about Buddies or anything SEND, do speak to them and they will try to help. If you would like to know more about PACC's work you can request to go on our mailing list by completing [this form](#). We like to share photographs of our young people having fun together and so please also complete the photograph consent form [here](#)

Thank you for joining Buddies!

Contact Details: [Info@paccshropshire.org.uk](mailto:Info@paccshropshire.org.uk) or [enquiries@paccshropshire.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@paccshropshire.org.uk)