

# Welcome to Parity

The people with multiple disabilities who use Parity's services are able to enjoy a quality of life that everyone deserves, with the right level of support.



At Parity the service users are called students, and each is supported one-to-one by trained keyworkers.

It's a joined-up approach. Families, carers and social services work closely with Parity staff so that each student's emotional, learning, physical and social needs are met.

Some students travel to Parity from as far as Sunbury on Thames and Reading. They attend Monday to Friday, or on an agreed number of days each week.



The students' daily activities reflect their specific needs and interests, as each follows their individual development plan.

They also get out and about in the community and beyond. Locally, the students use shops, pubs and cafes. They might also go bowling, visit London or travel to the coast.



Parity's adapted mini-buses are an important means for the students to get out into the mainstream community.



# Interaction and Communication

Most of the students are unable to use speech or sign-language to communicate. But they can learn techniques such as signs and symbols, communication boards and books, touch talkers, eye-pointing, facial expression and body language.

Anna Kendall, the speech and communication therapist, works with students who need to develop the fundamentals of communication and build on their skills.



## Music Therapy

All people can appreciate and respond to music. Parity's qualified music therapists use music to help some of the students overcome difficulties and to draw out their potential.

The students are encouraged to experiment with percussion instruments and use their voices. The music therapist responds to the sounds, and they use music making as a way of communicating and expressing themselves.



# Physiotherapy

Physiotherapy is a vital part of the service. Parity's students need it to alleviate the pressures on the body of being in a wheelchair. It can stop potentially serious health problems, which means the person avoids unnecessary suffering or discomfort.

Some students need physiotherapy every day that they attend. Heather Pirie, our qualified physiotherapist, writes and oversees the programme for each student that requires it.



## Hydrotherapy

Spending time in a pool with the physiotherapist is also a vital type of therapy. It is a totally different experience from being held in one position in a wheelchair.

The 'weightless' feeling allows weakened muscles to relax and move.

# Visitors and Social Contact



The students build up relationships and friendships through their shared experiences and through regularly meeting new people.

Visitors such as staff from local companies are always welcome.



Teens from the Princes Trust scheme enjoyed a bowling day out with Victoria and other Parity students.

# Sensory Areas



The students need time to relax and stimulate different senses. The sensory room is filled with items that encourage students to touch, feel, look or listen. They can encourage a student to work muscles that they don't easily use.

On the other hand the room can also be used to take a break from constant stimulation.

## Artwork

Staff and students use all kinds of mediums: painting and drawing, and working with many types of materials and bric a brac.



Staff have adapted paintbrushes so Stephen and other students can create independently.



Weird and wonderful things grow in a Parity garden...

# Computer work



Adam creates a project with support from Tarne. The wireless mouse and keyboard make the computer easily accessible from a wheelchair. Students might also use the internet to download recipes and photos, access music and videos on youtube, or connect with the world through e-mail and Facebook.

# Cooking

Cooking is very multisensory and many students enjoy the tastes, smells, sounds and feels of making foods.



Stephen is supported by Becky as he makes cupcakes.

# Specialised Equipment

## Hoists

The hoists safely transfer a student in and out of their wheelchair. Besides needing physiotherapy, sensory time or personal care, the person may just want to spend time out of their chair and on a mat, giving their body a break from being in the same position.



## Switches

Switches like the 'big mac' type shown here can be attached to electrical objects and allow someone with limited mobility to power the object with a simple movement.

## Eating and drinking

Students are supported as much or as little as they need in order to eat lunch or have a snack. Students choose what they want, and some help prepare their meal.



Adapted equipment allows the person to eat and drink as independently as possible.

# The End of the Day



A diary is kept for each student, noting the day's activities.

A separate, detailed review file for each student maintains a complete record of progress, achievements and goals.

The day ends between 3.30 and 4pm as the students go home. Some students live in residential homes while others are with their families. They travel either by taxi, by a Parity minibus, or are collected by a family member.

Sunil waves goodbye.

