

Childcare arrangements update

Over the years it has been increasingly difficult to secure volunteers to support our childcare activities at the MPS National conference.

The MPS Society has in recent years welcomed families who have brought other family members or carers to support the care of the children. In many cases this has ensured that the child has:

- a familiar face
- a carer who knows how to respond to the needs of the child, picking up signs and symptoms and is better able to meet the more challenging needs either behavioural or medical that many of our children have.

In meeting the challenge of volunteer recruitment and ensuring that we are able to continue to offer a fun childcare programme, we have made the decision to ask families to provide a carer where possible.

We understand that for some this may not be possible and we will have a small group of volunteers able to support families in this situation or to support those families who may require additional help to care for their child or children.

Alternatively if one parent wishes to go on the Saturday day trip rather than attend the conference programme (this has also happened in the past) this is ok too.

Children's programme

Saturday daytime

We are hoping to offer an outing to Drayton Manor on the Saturday as in previous years but this is to be confirmed as we are also looking at alternatives.

There will be onsite care for those unable to go on the outing due to their needs being too complex or being too young. This will be limited due to the available space within the hotel.

Saturday evening

We will be providing an in-house childcare programme on the Saturday evening until 9pm. After this time children are welcome to join the Gala Dinner. We will provide cover for any parents who have accompanied their child/children on the outings, so that they can attend the gala dinner.

Sunday

In-house children activities will be provided on the Sunday morning. We have purposefully kept the Sunday flexible, with a later start and the option of attending workshops if you would like. Again, care would be offered to any parent carers who wish to attend one of the workshops. Alternatively you may want to take your children swimming or catch up with old and new friends before you depart. This is up to you.

Cost to carers attending

If you are bringing a carer and you are happy for them to share with your family (dependent on room) there would be no charge.

If the carer is happy to share with another carer or volunteer (all our volunteers have to share a room) there would be no charge.

If the carer, however, would want their own room there would be a charge of £150. This is inclusive of all their meals and activities during the weekend. This cost is the same to any volunteers who do not wish to share a room.

The need for change

We appreciate that this is a change to how things have run in the past and we do understand that for some families additional support is not always available. However, the hope is that this change will allow some of our newer families, and families who have not attended in the past due (often due to concerns around needing a familiar person to care for their child/children), to be able to attend this year.

For those of you with any questions or those that wish to come but do not have access to additional support or care, please do contact us to discuss your needs.

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