

NAGC's local support work

One of NAGC's strengths lies in the network we have in place to support our families at a local level.

We provide this support through:

- Family Network Groups – informal groups which meet on an irregular basis where parents/carers can keep in touch for support
- Local Branches which meet regularly and which run a programme of activities with Explorer Clubs for children and young people and support groups for parents and carers
- Other activities coordinated at a national level by NAGC
- It can help reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation which many gifted children and their families experience
- It can help to mitigate any problems experienced at school or at home as a result of a child's giftedness eg school exclusion, truancy, challenging behaviour

In 2008-2009, the achievements of this work included:

At present, most activity at a local level is volunteer-led, with over 100 volunteers coordinating the various activities we offer. This is a tremendous strength and helps to ensure that the service provided is coordinated by parents who understand the needs and concerns of others with gifted children. However, despite this, we have recognised the increased difficulties experienced at a local level in recruiting volunteers. This has meant that a lot of time and effort has had to go into the recruitment process rather than in delivering the programme and in some cases, where volunteers cannot be found, in the closure of Branches. This is a great pity when we have a growing number of families who want the support we can offer.

How this service delivers public benefit

This service delivers public benefit in a number of ways:

- It provides social and emotional support at a local level to both children and parents/carers thus helping to alleviate or reduce any problems they may face as a result of their child's giftedness
- Establishing three new Family Network Groups in Oxfordshire, Cumbria and Devon and Cornwall
- Establishing an online Family Support Group for home educators
- Obtaining funding to enable us to employ a paid parent support worker in the Black Country
- Obtaining a small amount of funding to support the creation of a new Branch in Central London
- Agreement in principle to run new Branches in Durham and Bedfordshire
- Developing of a programme of Let's Explore after school clubs in partnership with Select Education

What we would like to have done better:

- We have been seeking funding for over four years now to underwrite the working capital needed to enable us to pay for regional support teams to coordinate our local activities. We had hoped to obtain funding this year for this programme but this has not been possible

“The support network NAGC provides to the families of G&T children is crucial to the success of G&T education both in and out of school and we frequently recommend their services to parents and carers in our region.”

West Midlands Excellence Hub



NAGC Branch - West Kent

Every weekend, at locations around the country, hundreds of families travel to NAGC Branches to join in activities. At present, all of these Branches are set up and run by volunteers, most of whom are parents and Kent and East Sussex Branch is no exception. This Branch has been providing a range of activities and opportunities for 2-18 year olds for over 40 years. Its Explorers' Club meets monthly to offer quality curriculum extension, enrichment and experiential classes for young people age 2-18, opportunities for individual and team-work, opportunities for social interaction, and lots of fun. At these clubs a variety of extra-curricular award opportunities are available for children over 11. Mini Explorers is for the under 4's who want to have fun while their older siblings are busy in workshops. The Branch also organises family activities including summer events.

- We lost our volunteer team in Buckinghamshire and we were forced to close our Branch despite having a vibrant membership in this area
- We would like to have been able to open new Branches in areas of high demand but we have found it difficult to recruit volunteers to coordinate the activities
- We put forward to CfBT an innovative idea to identify children who are home educated and put them onto the gifted and talented register so they could access provision. However, this was not seen as a funding priority for them so it could not be taken any further
- We wanted to run more regional events with activities for children and support for parents/carers but we have found it difficult to obtain sufficient funding

In 2009-2010 we want to:

- Launch our Let's Explore after school clubs initiative and establish clubs in four areas of the country
- Obtain funding for a further two areas of the country to have paid workers to develop all or some of NAGC's services at a local level
- Develop a presence and service in each one of the nine Regional Partnership areas in England
- Develop new models of partnership working with Academies and the independent sector
- Find funding and deliver four regional events, particularly in areas with few family support networks for gifted children and their parents/carers

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