

Aireborough Supported Activities Scheme

Annual Report

September 2022 – August 2023



Registered Charity No. 1167044

ASAS Management Committee

Chris Parapia - Chairperson; Sarah Lee - Vice-Chair; Emma Midgley - Treasurer & parent.
Trustees - Andy Mosby, Nicola Davison - parent.

The Trustees work hard behind the scenes managing the charities affairs, and keeping oversight to everything that is going on and providing support to the management team. Committee meetings are now always run via Microsoft Teams which has made it easier for trustees to attend; and it saves time; agenda items are managed quickly and efficiently.

Chair's Report 2023



Please read this amazing report, every year I feel more and more privileged to be involved with such an incredible group of people, looking at all the pictures of the children and young people, staff and volunteers, all enjoying themselves.

This summer we moved to Queensway Primary School for our playscheme, which proved an excellent venue. Many Thanks to all the leadership team for enabling this to happen.

We continue to use our residential centres Low Mill, Lineham Farm, Herd Farm and also Nell Bank in Ilkley. We're always on the lookout for additional appropriate centres if anyone has any suggestions.

Thank you to all our management team - Jo Galasso, our Project Manager who has had to work so hard and often under intense pressure. She is truly a dedicated and committed member of staff. Zoe Cartwright, our Assistant Project Manager continues to support Jo so ably and focuses in particular on parent liaison, volunteer recruitment and training, and Sian has now returned to work after her period of maternity leave and quietly working away in the background.

Thank you to absolutely everyone who has been involved with ASAS over the last 12 months, I am so proud to be the chair of this fantastic organisation.

We are still searching for suitable storage for our equipment so if you know of any going spare let me or Jo know.

We have a brilliant group of Trustees who have been working hard in the background supporting our decision making. We have been on the lookout for more trustees since Jenny and Kathie left and we are in the process of recruiting another parent trustee, Suzanne Akeroyd

We are still in need of Trustees so anyone who is interested and can complement our skills range please contact me at chris.parapia@aireborough-scheme.co.uk

In April Chris was invited to a charity reception at 10 Downing Street, London, as a Charity Champion chosen by the Right Honourable Stuart Andrew MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, what an honour, looking very smart!



Staffing

Jo Galasso - Project Manager

I am so grateful for the support of the trustees and staff, especially Chris, Sarah, Zoe and the team leaders; I've had a particularly difficult couple of months, losing my dad in June and then my mum in August, right in the middle of the summer scheme. Keeping busy is what I do but knowing I had people who were there to carry on if I couldn't made it possible for me to keep going.

There has also been some very good news with my son and partner buying their first home and the birth of my first grandchild, Theo, both in February - that was a busy month, and I am a very proud Nonna (my husband's family are Italian, this is where my surname comes from).

This is my 31st year with ASAS, it's my life, my extended family and I love it!

Sian Sanders - Administrator

Sian returned to work in March 2023 after being away on maternity leave, her and baby Nora are doing well and she has fitted back in effortlessly; her role has changed slightly as whilst she was on leave Zoe took on a lot of her regular tasks so now her role is back office, chasing us all up on policies, keeping track of training undertaken, keeping our files tidy and archiving old documentation, all very valuable tasks that often get put to the back in priority.

Zoe Cartwright - Assistant Project Manager (Volunteer Coordinator, Fundraiser & Admin)

I have continued to work closely with Jo, Project Manager, in all aspect of preparing and running of our provisions. I plan and deliver most of our training, outsourcing where necessary and have been developing our induction program to incorporate a blended approach of virtual and face to face meetings, I have also introduced an induction for volunteers attending residential for the first time which has received positive feedback. As I have gained more experience and understanding of ASAS, and it's needs I have been more involved this year in the planning and running of the summer activity program and the booking of outside agencies - both Jo and I were keen to act upon the feedback received the previous year to ensure the program was suitable and accessible for everyone.

In March I attended and represented ASAS at the Leeds Local Offer event and also attended a volunteer recruitment event at Woodhouse Grove School and a networking event at Lineham Farm. I have continued to develop my CPD completing my Level 3 Paediatric First Aid, GDPR training, Level 2 basic food hygiene, Safer recruitment training and regular Medication administration, child specific training including gastrostomy care and feeding. My role has continued all aspects of volunteer engagement including the whole recruitment process,- we had a successful recruitment campaign this year (see below) and are continually looking at ways to improve and develop our volunteering opportunities.

Leaders

We recruited 7 new leaders - Jamie Reid, Matt Auton, Michaela Aspin, Diane Toney, Glen Gowling, Kay Gwilliams, and Sophie Shaw Chadwick. They all have different levels of knowledge, understanding and experience which benefits ASAS and they soon became valued members of the staff team. Unfortunately, we said goodbye to a few Leaders who have been with us for many years joining us originally as volunteers. Good Luck to Lucy, Rheanna and Kate who have both pursued a career in working with children and young people with additional needs; thank you for all your hard work and help over the years!

Volunteers

A successful year for volunteer recruitment with 16 new members joining the team. We were fortunate to have many of these start with us at Easter and most of them went on to join us again the Summer. Some really enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers have also committed to our activity days and residentials. We are hopeful retention and returning volunteers for next year's activities will be high.



Some of our new volunteers

Training

Induction training continues to be undertaken for all new starters at Easter and Summer with Behaviour and communication training for new starters taking place in July ahead of the summer play scheme.

Medical needs training accounts for a large proportion of our training calendar with child specific training continuing out throughout the year ahead of provisions with those relevant staff. This is generally delivered by Stacey Millinson who is a SILC nurse.

In August staff attended our annual medication and medical needs update training delivered by Tracey Waite from LCHT, this included: - Epilepsy awareness inc. administration of Buccolam; Asthma Care; Anaphylaxis and Epipen; Medication Administration. Several staff have also undertaken child specific training in gastrostomy and colostomy care in order to meet our children's needs.

All staff must undertake Safeguarding training every three years, many work in school settings and do this on an annual basis, others we signpost to undertake the LSCP - Working Together to Safeguarding Children & Young People course. For volunteers aged 16 & 17 we deliver a basic introduction to Safeguarding with a specific focus on practical help and advice is delivered as part of the Volunteer Induction.



Induction Training took place at Guiseley Methodist Church in July

Funding & Fundraising

In April 2023 we entered year 1 of a 2-year extension of our Contract with LCC to provide 6 residential short breaks per year.

Regarding our grant with LCC to provide our holiday play scheme and activity days, last year commissioners decided to roll the grants over for another two years, so in April 2023 we entered year 2 of 2; we haven't heard yet what the plan is from April 2024 but every authority has a duty to provide short breaks for children with SEND but we don't know what funding will be available and how it will be distributed, however we do have plans in place to deliver all our usual activities next financial year.



In October 2021 we were fortunate to again be a chosen "cause" for the **COOP Local Community Fund**, this ended in October 2022, and we were granted £1766.57 for which we are very grateful.

Otley Christmas Tree Festival

Emma Midgley, treasurer, beautifully dressed our tree at Otley Parish Church in December, only 40 charities are granted a tree each year to raise valuable funds, so we were pleased to have been chosen again, this raised **£66.85**.



Christmas Cake Raffle thank you to Amanda Norfolk who again made, decorated and donated this lovely cake, the lucky family, the Stone's, couldn't wait to eat it so when we asked for a picture it was already half eaten, great to know it was very much enjoyed and raised **£119.20**.

Leeds University Study - Learning by experience - Chronic Illness & Disability Project

Again, we were asked to find volunteers to undertake this study, several parents took part and as a thank you ASAS received £10 per volunteer, **£50** in total. This is a project that runs every year with a new cohort of students and the same people can volunteer again and again, it is very worthwhile to help with the education of our future medical professionals.

Ways in which you can help ASAS raise funds...

Do your own fundraising event - such as asking your family to donate in lieu of Christmas cards or birthday presents - Facebook usually suggest you do a fundraiser for your birthday.

Raise free funds just by shopping on the internet...



We now have 85 Easy fundraising supporters who to date have raised a total of **£866.22**, with Christmas fast approaching if you haven't already done so why don't you sign up and raise valuable funds for ASAS just by shopping! Follow this link: -

<http://www.aireboroughsas.easyfundraising.org.uk>

This year saw the end of Amazon Smile which has been a steady source of fundraising for us over the past few years and has raised **£639.34** in total.

Thank you to everyone who has already signed up, please continue to use it and promote it to your family and friends.

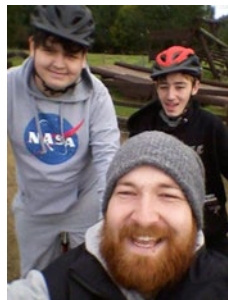
Residential at Herd Farm 23 - 25 September 2022

15 children and young people attended this residential and took part in a wide range of adventurous activities including zip wire, giant swing, bushcraft and adapted bikes; we had some very brave young people who were willing to do the higher-level activities, others were just happy to watch and cheer everyone on. The staff and volunteers don't get away with not pushing themselves either!



Residential at Herd Farm 30 September - 2 October 2022

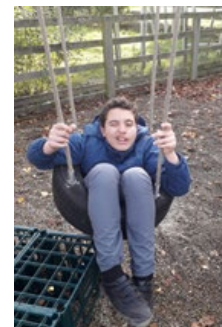
This was an extra residential which replaced the one at Low Mill that was cancelled in June. 18 Children and young people attended and took part in the usual activities available at Herd Farm. There were some great friendships made amongst the young people on this residential with some of the older children just enjoying the time and space to 'hang out' with one another



Activity days at Lineham Farm - Monday 24 and 25 October 2022

Over October Half term we held two activity days which were attended by 26 children. We had quite a few new children join us on these activity days who all settled in brilliantly. This was helped by some of them knowing each other from outside of ASAS, attending the same schools (where the information is available or when requested we do try to group children into friendship groups if at all possible) The feedback we received from these activity days from these new parents was overwhelmingly positive.

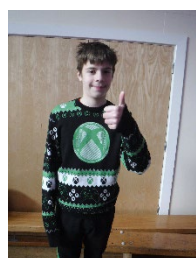
Everyone engaged in the activities and some pushed themselves to try new things. Staff behind the scenes worked hard to ensure all children who were invited could attend despite a number of constraints and obstacles.



Christmas Activity Day at Green Meadows - Saturday 3 December 2022

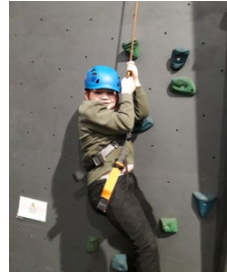
Back by popular demand we invited Boom Chikka Boom along to our Christmas Activity Day as well as our regular entertainer Billy Biscuit. It was a busy one.. 30 children (plus two siblings) 17 leaders and 15 volunteers partied for the day which ended with a visit from Santa with presents. All the children had a great day, and everyone got into the festive spirit.

We also held our annual Christmas Cake raffle which was as popular as ever - thanks to Amanda Norfolk for again donating the cake.



Activity Days at Lineham Farm Monday 13 and Tuesday 14 February 2023

We kicked off 2023 with a chilly but fun couple of days at Lineham Farm. 20 children attended over the two days, enjoying activities which included, biking, animal care and bushcraft - making bonfires, toasting marshmallows and relaxing in hammocks. Some of the children also tried really hard with the climbing pushing themselves out of their comfort zone. We also had 9 children who were new to ASAS activities, and it was lovely to welcome so many new faces!



Residential at Lineham Farm 24 - 26 March 2023

17 children attended this residential along with 15 leaders and 2 volunteers. For a significant number of the children this was their first residential. The team had worked hard to ensure children were attending in their friendship groups and this worked well at easing any nerves and anxieties for the children and parents.

The weekend was a success with activities such as biking, climbing, bushcraft completed by the children. There were some amazing personal achievements made by some of the CYP.



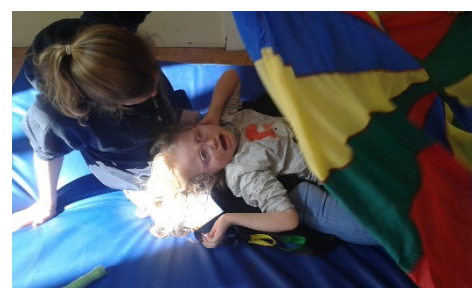
Easter Play Scheme 4 - 7 April 2023

The Easter scheme ran at Green Meadows, due to the high demand for places and limited staff availability we were only able to offer 2 days per child as standard.

The play scheme was a success with some lovely positive feedback from parents and carers who were grateful for the experiences provided to their children and a break in their caring duties.

We were joined for the first time on play scheme by Liz who organised Easter themed baking activities which proved popular with the children. We also had Lauren who ran artwork along with Billy Biscuit and BoomChikkaBoom who were as popular as ever.

We had scheduled trips to Nell Bank and The Big Swing and were able to utilise the bus to complete multiple trips to ensure more children could access these off-site events. In total 60 children were given places on the scheme, 26 in Sunshines, the younger group, and 34 in Rainbows, the older group. We had 26 leaders working all or part of the week plus 18 volunteers.



Activity Days at Lineham Farm Tuesday 11 and Wednesday 12 April 2023

28 children and young people attended over the two days, five were new to ASAS activity days. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the activities which included climbing, biking, animal care and bushcraft - making bonfires, toasting marshmallows and swinging in hammocks.



Residential at Lineham Farm Monday 12 - 14 May 2023

17 young people, 14 leaders, 1 volunteer (plus Jo and Zoe!) attended this two-night residential. This was an extremely busy residential for all staff involved - that didn't stop us having fun in the beautiful surroundings of Lineham Farm; we were fortunate to be there when all the Blue Bells were on in full bloom in the woods adding to the magic of the weekend. We also extended this residential due to road closures in the area as a marathon was taking place - thanks you to all our staff for being so flexible with their time.

The children and Young people had a great weekend and made the most of the amazing weather playing in the woods and on the play equipment as well as taking part in our usual activities of climbing, bushcraft, animal care and biking.



Activity days at Lineham Farm Monday 30 May and Tues 31 May 2023

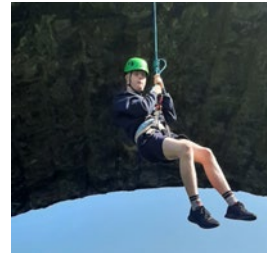
32 children attended over the two days at Lineham Farm, a number of whom were new to ASAS. Another busy couple of days with a few unexpected events; luckily thanks to the flexibility and professionalism of all staff all children enjoyed a range of activities such as bushcraft, biking, climbing and Lineham Explorers. These last few activity days we have also said goodbye to a few young people who have been with us from very young age but will shortly turn 18. We received some lovely feedback from their families - these young people have been a big part of ASAS over the years, and we wish them luck as they move onto the next stage. We will miss them!



Residential at Low Mill 2-4 June 2023



16 children attended this residential and travelled by coach from pick up points in Leeds. Having not attended Low Mill for the last few years (Covid and last year the booking was cancelled by LM) it was nice to get back and provide a different experience to some of our older and more adventurous young people. They took part in abseiling, canoeing, climbing tower, archery, camp fire, tuck shop and walking along a dried up river bed, which is usually quite full at this time of year but due to the extreme and extended hot weather we've had a long stretch had dried up.

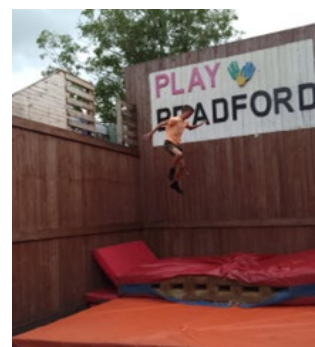


Summer Play Scheme 2023

What a summer play scheme this was - we didn't get the usual back-to-back sunshine this year or the soaring temperatures, but we certainly had lots of fun both on and off site!

This year for the first time we were based at Queensway Primary School, and we could not have been made to feel more welcome by the staff there. The venue worked perfectly for us - the indoor and outdoor spaces meant that our Children and Young People could spread out and enjoy a variety of activities to suit their needs. We made lots of use of "The Retreat" the onsite sensory room and both the Sunshines and Rainbows Group benefitted from having their own bases and chill out spaces.

Over the 12 days we welcomed 80 children, 52 staff and 13 visiting performers / entertainers as well as 15 trips out (not including spontaneous trips to the parks and local walks! It was an amazing summer scheme which would not have been possible without our army of dedicated staff (leaders and volunteers).



Light Water Valley family Trip

With the funding from the Coop Local Community fund we said we'd like to do a trip to a theme park so that's what we did, we offered the trip to our families whose children attend the play schemes and 47 people attended in total.

It was a lovely sunny day but not too hot, some families chose to travel in their own cars to allow them more flexibility so if their child needed to go home early it was possible, for the others we arranged a coach which enabled those who don't drive a chance to attend.

Parents found strength in numbers and many families buddied up and the children were able to go on the rides with their new found friends.

We set up a WhatsApp group so the parents could share their photos and get help from others if necessary, everyone said they had a lovely day and were very grateful to ASAS for arranging it, and ASAS are very grateful to the Coop for this funding.



Jo Galasso, Project Manager, Final Words

These are the words I wrote in my report last year but I just have to say the same again - it has been another successful, stressful, enjoyable and memorable year, we always rise to the challenge and by putting strategies and contingency plans in place we make it possible for each and every child to have a brilliant time whilst with ASAS.

The new venue for the summer scheme was a concern at first, because it's a mainstream school we were worried about our children wrecking it, as many don't have any concept of what's valuable but we were welcomed with open arms and an open mind which really helped put our minds at rest. As previously said it worked really well for our children and young people and we'd very much like to use it again if possible.

In the last couple of years with Covid etc. Lineham Farm had been struggling to meet the needs of our residential groups but they've now managed to recruit more staff and are under new leadership which seems to be working a lot better. It's a good venue for children who haven't stayed away from home before, the activities are lower level so not overly challenging and it's not too far for parents to transport their children.

Herd Farm and Low Mill offer a slightly different service which always includes instructors and catering which makes those bookings easier but the venues don't suit as many of our children hence only doing one residential at each per year.

We have a very dedicated core group of leaders who commit to all the play schemes, activity days and residentials even though they have full time jobs, many in school settings; none of this would be possible without them and I am thankful for the families who put their trust in us to care for the most precious things in their lives - their children.

Here's looking forward to another fun packed year of activities to come!

And sorry, I just had to share this.....

Jo Galasso, Project Manager



Parent feedback – Playschemes, Residentials & Activity Days

Feedback this year has been overwhelmingly positive, with parents praising everything from the organisation to the expertise and empathy of the staff.

- **Impact of playscheme on family**

All parents reported a very positive impact on their families, saying that ASAS provision allowed them to spend time with other children, get jobs done around the house, visit family, or take time for themselves. This year, some parents also said that it allowed for them to work and prevented them needing to take unpaid leave over the summer holidays. Another said that the break meant they could more easily manage the caring responsibilities they have for their own parent.

- 'It was a break we all desperately needed'
- 'We feel really confident and comfortable that when W goes to ASAS he's in great hands, with people who can support his complex needs but also engage with him, so he has lots of fun'
- 'Me and my mum had a peaceful lunch'

Many parents reported they had met other parents through their child attending ASAS, allowing them gain support and arrange for their children to see each other again outside of the scheme.

- 'Get to meet other parents who are going through similar situations to yourself, you can swap tips and tricks with each other'
- 'We have since swapped numbers with D's family and met up for play dates'
- 'He has now made three good friends; we even regularly meet with the parents outside of the playscheme'

- **Impact on child**

A number of parents fed back that the summer playscheme added much-needed structure to the long school holidays and gave their children the chance to be active, creative, and to spend time away from screens.

Parents frequently stated that they were pleased that their children were able to meet new people, make friends and have new experiences in a safe environment.

Parents noted a number of positive outcomes in their children after attending provision, such as in their behaviour, independence, confidence, well-being and life skills.

- 'R was more confident following playscheme'
- 'He was more engaged than usual in the activities we did in the following days'
- 'His confidence had a huge boost!'
- 'For the days he was there he wasn't as aggressive'
- 'Became more interested in getting herself dressed independently and her tendency to push other children has decreased since play scheme'
- 'O started to use his visual cards/PECs again after watching another child with them'
- 'Meltdowns and O's ability to cope better with school holidays has been overwhelmingly better'
- 'He feels increasingly confident about spending time away from home'
- 'P was tired all the way home and was calmer in the evening'
- 'Slept very well the following evening'
- 'He decided he wanted to do his own water down his gastrostomy when he got back'
- 'It helped with her socialisation, communication and independence'
- 'He has been more interested in doing activities together such as card games and pretend play'
- 'The exercise she had will have had a positive impact on her health'
- 'D has recently had a mental health crisis and his self-esteem can be low. He came home very happy and proud to have made friends'

One parent told us that ASAS allowed her child to experience a residential, because he was excluded from the one organised by his school.

Parents in residential feedback reported that short breaks gave their children the chance to push themselves, face fears and try difficult new things (e.g. staying away from home, reaching high places, coping with a new routine, being away from parents, etc.).

- Activities

Parents commented that the activities offered on activity days and residential made their children more confident and adventurous. There was also praise for the venues and the possibilities they bring.

- 'J has shown more of an interest in cycling and scootering'
- 'He loved the setting, going for walks in the countryside and especially the stream walk'
- 'The amount of space and variety of activities were brilliant'

Activities that came up a lot when parents were asked what their child enjoyed the most were: adapted bikes, climbing wall, canoeing and zip wire.

Billy Biscuit and the Big Swing received the best/most frequent feedback from parents of children attending the Easter and Summer playschemes.

- 'She kept laughing about what Billy Biscuit had done and wanted to see him again!'
- 'N enjoyed role play activities and the Big Swing in particular'
- 'The Big Swing was his favourite part'
- 'O loves Billy Biscuit!'
- 'He really enjoyed the entertainers and the trip to the park. The variety of activities offered is brilliant'

- Praise for staff

- 'The staff and volunteers obviously care a lot for all the children which means I don't have to worry about him at all when he's there'
- 'I think the quality of care is amazing – it's one of the best schemes out there for young people with learning disabilities. All the staff are so friendly, helpful, and accommodating'
- 'Lovely staff who always have a smile on their faces and shows they enjoy doing the job'
- 'I absolutely love all the staff. I think you are amazing and am so grateful playscheme exists!'
- 'I am amazed by your hard work and dedication'
- 'He expressed on his talker that "Chris is a top guy"'
- 'I think the staff I encounter are without exception, fantastic. I am so in awe of their positive attitude and warm kindness'
- 'I think everything you do goes over and beyond – the fact H didn't sleep the first night and Emily just dealt with it fantastically, no pressure on H'

- General feedback:

Parents had a lot of praise for the organisation of the provision, especially the communication both before and after.

- 'Loved the email beforehand with the timetable and menus (that helped a lot)'
- 'ASAS provided all the information needed to reassure and prepare A. ASAS always try to think of alternative ways that may help CYP attend activities'
- 'Communication beforehand was great with a comprehensive kit list and schedule. It was also helpful to be able to fill out the daily routine form'
- 'The daily feedback is very helpful so that I am able to start the conversation about what activities he has undertaken'
- 'Before the residential I spoke on the phone about all my worries regarding night waking etc. This really helped put my mind at ease'
- 'Love how he knew who he would be spending time with, with a picture which is really useful'
- 'We both loved looking at the photos together and have printed them out as a keepsake of a fab day'

- 'I can't think of anything that would improve the service. I feel it is organised and run in a very professional manner. I am given lots of information beforehand and feedback about K afterwards, which means that I can talk to her about it'
- 'I like the feedback we get which is really important. She spoke about what she did when I showed her the photos'
- 'Everything ASAS do is always so well organised and that is down to Jo and her wonderful team'

So many parents wanted to take the opportunity to send their heartfelt thanks.

- 'Please keep doing what you do. You're all amazing and we can't thank you all enough'
- 'Loved absolutely EVERYONE and EVERYTHING about it!'
- 'O is pre verbal, but we don't need words to know that he has had the best time'
- 'We love how inclusive and positive ASAS are!'
- 'Don't change a thing! You're all amazing!'
- 'I can't thank you enough for all you did, from wiping my tears and reassuring me on that first drop off to making sure that he had the best time whilst with you. We have never accessed anything like this before and it was honestly amazing and meant so so much to us as a family.'

- Suggested areas for improvement

A number of suggestions revolved around parents wishing there was more provision available.

- 'I cannot think of one thing that could improve (apart from more sessions! But fully appreciate the demand is so high now)'
- 'Just wish there was more!'

One parent expressed that activity days can be difficult to get to on public transport.

Leader and Volunteer Feedback – Playscheme 2023

- Venue and Activities

Staff had positive feedback about this year's venue, particularly the size, layout, facilities and proximity to local amenities (such as the park).

Staff opinions on the activities offered were very positive.

- 'The Big Swing is always a hit, and I thought the train ride out was a great addition'
- 'The visitors we've had this year have been really engaging and perfectly pitched for the children we have. They were very adaptable and made the play/activities really free flowing'

- Overall Positives

- 'I find working on the Scheme a privilege as we get to share such fantastic experiences with the young people we support'
- 'Not knowing what the day would bring because things change all the time which I like because it keeps it exciting, and you get to go to different places'
- 'Seeing a child feel more comfortable with you so they become a lot less shy and start coming out of their shell and it's all down to you - is a great feeling!'
- 'How different every day is because of the variety of activities that are happening. I loved the trip to Ilkley Park!'
- 'I enjoyed going to ZEN sensory, trip to Roberts Park and the visit from Susie Sparkles.'

- Suggestions for future provision (based on responses)

- Visits to York Railway Museum or Harewood House
- Have a 'Plan B' programme in case of rain interrupting activities
- Make Nell Bank visits half a day, so that both groups can go
- Make more use of public transport to help older children learn life skills
- Make an 'I Spy' or Bingo board with things to spot (sheep, tractors, etc.) for use on bus trips, either individual copies or a larger laminated version for the window

- Teamwork and Support

Leaders praised the strength of the group's teamwork and the level of support they received from each other, as well as from their team leaders and the managers.

- 'We had a great team who looked out for each other, helped out where needed and checked in that you were ok'
- 'I liked the way the whole team pulled together on the really wet days to change the activities offered on site that meant the children and young people still had fun'

Staff commented on how helpful it was to have Jo and Zoe on site and available.

- 'Both Jo and Zoe were approachable, and I felt that they had confidence in me that it gave me the encouragement that I was doing a good job'
- 'Zoe and Jo were a great resource when needed and were always there to help and check in on how the day was going'

Volunteers reported feeling confident in asking for help and that they learnt a great deal.

- 'I am fairly new, and it was a very welcoming and friendly environment'
- 'They were extremely welcoming, and it was a lovely atmosphere. Each leader that I was with were so descriptive of what the child needed and how affectionate they were towards the child'
- 'I was so worried on my first day about how am I going to do this but there wasn't a single moment where I felt unsafe during the scheme. Everyone is so kind and helpful and you instantly feel at ease with everyone else as if you've known them for years'
- 'The leaders I worked with were really supportive and I learned from watching them. It's helped me learn how to work with other adults because this is my first experience working with people who are older than me in a team'
- 'I have loved meeting all the kids and beginning to understand how each one has fun in their different methods because no child is the same'
- 'Working with different individuals with the "same" disability has shown me that there is a wide spectrum of abilities, personalities, likes/dislikes. I have also learnt how to be more accommodating to people's needs e.g. sensory needs'

- Praise for ASAS

'ASAS has been part of my life for so long, just watching the children and young people developing is wonderful but also watching leaders who were once volunteers and how their lives have developed into these strong leaders has been great also. ASAS has helped me through a difficult part of my life as spending time with all involved has helped my mental health to stay healthy as I always look forward to being at scheme, because the scheme itself is rewarding but the relationship between the other leaders, volunteers and management have given me the support, respect and laughs that I have needed'

- Feedback from the parent of a young volunteer

'It's so lovely to hear how well they've done. Thanks again to you and your team for all your support. To see them engage fully in training and team meetings is incredible, they clearly feel very safe with you all'

