



## Introduction

Welcome to our third edition, where we continue to highlight the range of support, activities, and opportunities available to families across Weymouth and Portland.

In this issue, we share details of online and in-person parenting programmes and groups, alongside information about our Family Advisor outreach drop-ins, making it easier for families to access advice and practical support locally. You'll also find updates on community groups and initiatives that are building connections, reducing isolation, and creating welcoming spaces for families.

As many families start to feel the impact of global events and rising costs, we continue to spotlight cost of living information and local support. We finish with a feature piece on our Activity & Parenting Workers; showcasing the groups they deliver and the positive impact they have on children and parents.

Nicki & Nina – Chesil Locality Family Advisors



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## What's on

### Summer in Dorset – Free Holiday Activities for Children in Chesil

Families in Dorset can access free holiday activities and healthy meals this summer through Dorset Council's Summer in Dorset Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme.

The programme supports children and young people to stay active, social and well-fed during the school holidays. Activities available locally and nearby may include sports, outdoor and forest school sessions, arts and crafts, cooking activities and fun group experiences with providers such as Houseworks, Happy Healthy Kidz and The Andrew Simpson Foundation. A nutritious meal is provided at each session.

#### Who is eligible?

The programme is free for **school-aged children (Reception to Year 11)** who attend a Dorset Council school and are eligible for benefits-related free school meals. Some children may also access places through professional referral.

#### How to apply

Families need a **HAF holiday passcode** to book free places. Passcodes are issued when free school meals are approved. If a passcode is not available, families can apply by emailing the HAF team with their child's **name, date of birth** and **school**. Activities can be searched and booked online.

The full listing of activities and booking details will be launched by Help & Kindness on 22nd June.

For further information email [holidayactivities@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:holidayactivities@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)  
or visit [www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/haf-programme](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/haf-programme)

If you would like us to highlight any events in your area, please drop us an email as we would love to share this with our local families. Please send the details to [chesillocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:chesillocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

For more listed upcoming activities, and local events, please visit our [Chesil Locality Facebook page](#) or scan the QR code





## Family Advisor drop-in sessions

We are offering weekly drop-in sessions to families in our local community. There is no booking required; parents/carers can just turn up and have a chat with one of our Family Advisors. Some examples of what we can help with are:

- Local groups & activities
- Parenting courses
- Finding early years settings
- Exploring funding options
- Signposting to support services
- Foodbank referrals
- Cost of living advice

Come along to one of our sessions and say hello!

For further information call 01305 762400, or email [chesillocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:chesillocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

### Littlemoor Family Hub

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 9.30am to 12pm

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June, 9.30am to 12pm

### Mulberry Centre, Weymouth

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June, 9.30am to 12pm

Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June, 9.30am to 12pm

### Outlooks Centre, Portland

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May, 9.30am to 12pm

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June, 12pm to 3pm

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July, 12pm to 3pm

## Chesil Locality Partnership Site

The Chesil Partnership site is a locality hub for professionals working with children, young people and families across Weymouth and Portland. It brings together key information, resources and local offers to support effective, joined-up practice.

The site is designed for practitioners across education, health, early years, social care, voluntary and community services, and any professionals supporting families within the Chesil locality.

The Whole Family Working section hosts resources from Dorset Families Matter; supporting practitioners to refer families to a tailored support service that can meet their needs and provide positive early engagement.

To request access to the Chesil Locality Partnership Site, please contact [digitalresources@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:digitalresources@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)





# Supporting Parents to Thrive

## Positive Top Tips

### Drop-in sessions for Parents & Carers

Parents and carers of children aged 5-11 years are warmly invited to attend a series of **four weekly Positive Top Tips drop-in sessions**, designed to build confidence and provide practical strategies for everyday family life, focused around 4 key themes.

- **Praise & Positive Attention** – strengthening relationships and encouraging positive behaviour
- **Emotion Coaching** – understanding and supporting children’s emotions
- **House Rules & Limit Setting** – setting clear, consistent boundaries as a family
- **Ignoring Unwanted Behaviour** – reducing challenging behaviour safely and effectively

#### Supporting parents and carers to:

- Manage challenging behaviours positively
- Build strong relationships and improve communication
- Understand children’s emotions
- Introduce and maintain clear house rules

Following the four sessions, parents and carers who are interested can request to attend the **full Incredible Years parenting course in the Autumn**. Ideally, participants should attend **all four sessions** to gain the maximum benefit.

## Action for Children

### Behaviours that Challenge Sessions

Action for Children, Dorset Services, work with children, young people and their Parents and Carers across the county to ensure they have the love, support and opportunities they need.

They are currently offering **Behaviours That Challenge information sessions** for Parents and Carers living in Dorset.

These **virtual sessions** are designed to help parents better understand children’s behaviour and explore practical ways to respond to behaviours they may find challenging.

Each session is **delivered online** via Microsoft Teams and is **free** to attend.

#### Upcoming sessions

Wednesday 1 July 2026 - 10am to 12pm

Tuesday 22 September 2026 - 7pm to 9pm

Tuesday 3 November 2026 - 10am to 12pm

Tuesday 19 January 2027 - 10am to 12pm

These sessions are suitable for Parents and Carers of children aged 5–11 years who would like additional guidance and reassurance around managing behaviour.

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June – 10am-11am  
Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June – 10am-11am  
Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June – 10am – 11am  
Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June – 10am-11am

Mulberry Centre, 2 Newstead Rd, Weymouth

For further information please visit:

[service.actionforchildren.org.uk/dorset-services/](https://service.actionforchildren.org.uk/dorset-services/)





## Spotlight on Community

### Friendly Food Club



### Supporting Healthier Communities Across Dorset

Thousands of families and individuals across Dorset face challenges in preparing affordable, healthy and nutritious meals. The **Friendly Food Club** supports communities to overcome these barriers by bringing people together to **cook, eat, connect and flourish**. Their work contributes directly to improved wellbeing, increased confidence and strengthened community resilience.

The Friendly Food Club supports people from vulnerable groups across Dorset by helping them to:

- Develop practical, everyday cooking skills
- Build positive and sustainable healthy eating habits
- Increase confidence and resilience
- Reduce the impact of food insecurity and low wellbeing

By working with people at all stages of life, our programmes help break cycles of food poverty while promoting long-term health outcomes. We have developed an effective, local model of intervention that responds to the specific needs of each community.

Our experienced tutors and trained volunteers deliver **tailored cooking workshop programmes**, designed around local circumstances, barriers and strengths. This flexible approach ensures support is relevant, accessible and impactful.

Our success is built on expertise and collaboration. We combine professional skills with a **listening and learning approach**, working closely with communities and partner organisations.

Through **ongoing feedback**, we adapt our provision as needs change and so we can target resources where they make the greatest difference.

#### A Celebration of Food, Cooking & Community

Come along to a free event at **Corn Exchange, Dorchester on Wednesday 20th May**.

The Friendly Food Club invites friends, supporters and everyone with an interest in healthy eating to a **fun, interactive celebration of food and cooking**.

#### What to Expect:

- A live, hands-on cooking experience
- A delicious three-course lunch you help create
- All equipment and ingredients provided
- Cook, eat and enjoy the meal together

#### Featuring:

- **Lesley Waters** (BBC *Ready Steady Cook*)
- **Nicholas Balfe** (*Great British Menu*, Holm, Somerset)
- **Steve Yates** (The King's Arms, Dorchester)
- Compered by **Steve Oxford** (Oxford's Bakery)



Learn more about the Friendly Food Club at  
[www.thefriendlyfoodclub.org](http://www.thefriendlyfoodclub.org)





## Local Alliance Group

### Do you have a project that could make a real difference for children, young people and families?

The Local Alliance Group (LAG) is pleased to once again invite applications for funding to support initiatives that improve outcomes for children, young people and families within our communities.

#### Funding available

- Up to £5,000 for individual groups or schools, or
- Up to £20,000 for consortium applications, where two or more settings work together (for example, schools, early years settings, community organisations or independent practitioners).

#### Who can apply?

A simple and accessible application process has been designed to enable a wide range of applicants to take part, including:

- Community groups and voluntary organisations
- Early years settings
- Schools
- Individuals with a clear project proposal

LAG funding enables local ideas to become a reality, supporting early help, prevention and innovative practice across the community. Whether you are piloting a new approach or expanding existing support, this funding could help you strengthen your impact and reach more families.

Find out more and to apply at  
[www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/lag-funding-for-projects](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/lag-funding-for-projects)



## Crisis & Resilience Fund

From 1 April 2026, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) introduced the Crisis Resilience Fund (CRF). This new fund replaces short-term crisis grants such as the Household Support Fund (HSF) and brings together housing-related discretionary support.

Families can self-refer directly to the fund – a professional referral is not required. For more information and to make an application, families can be directed to:

[www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/crisis-resilience-fund](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/crisis-resilience-fund)





## Cost of Living

### Supporting Families Employment Advisors

Supporting Families Employment Advisors help families move closer to, or into, employment. Seconded to the Dorset Families Matter team and working alongside the Department for Work and Pensions, they bring specialist knowledge to support families at every stage of their employment journey.

#### Advisors can help with:

- Reviewing household income and benefits
- Exploring routes into work, including training, volunteering and qualifications
- Better off calculations to show that work pays
- Job searching and applications
- Accessing Jobcentre funding to remove barriers to work (such as childcare or work clothing)
- Ongoing in-work support and help managing changes to benefits
- Regular updates for Lead Professionals

Professionals can refer families via Dorset Family Matters if employment support would be beneficial.

### The Repair Café Weymouth

#### Don't bin it! Fix it!

Repair Café Weymouth is a friendly, volunteer-run project helping local people repair everyday items and reduce waste. Bring along broken household items and work side-by-side with skilled repairers, picking up useful fixing tips along the way. Small donations are welcome if you're happy with your repair.

#### What we repair

Electrical items, clocks, toys, clothing, jewellery, technology, garden tools, furniture, sewing machines, crockery, crafts and more. If it's too big to carry, bring a photo.

#### When & where

- Second Saturday of every month
- 10:00–12:30
- Southill Community Centre, 137 Radipole Lane, Weymouth, DT4 9SS
- Free parking and drop-off right outside

Proud winners of *UK Community Group of the Year 2024* and multiple local awards. Repairers, organisers and meet-and-greet volunteers always welcome.

To find out more email  
[dfm.employment@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:dfm.employment@dwp.gov.uk) or visit the  
Whole Family Working page on the Chesil  
Partnership site.

To find out more email  
[repaircafeweymouth@gmail.com](mailto:repaircafeweymouth@gmail.com), visit their  
website [Repair Cafe Weymouth](#) or find them  
on Facebook [@RepairCafeWeymouth](#)





## Meet the team

### A week in the life of our Activity & Parenting Workers



Most weeks include welcoming families into our centres for all sorts of appointments, from Health Visitors and Midwives to speech and language sessions, Youth Justice meetings and 1:1 family work. We're often the first friendly face families see – helping with signing in, room bookings, hiring breast pumps, and lots of signposting to groups both in the centre and out in the community.

We also run and support a range of groups. Our weekly music drop-in is always full of energy, with under 3s and their families singing, dancing and trying out instruments together. We host monthly Young Parent Drop-ins, giving young parents time to chat, link in with professionals and meet others in the same boat. Alongside this, we deliver bookable 1:1 Parent Skills & Strategy sessions, focusing on routines, behaviour and positive play.

Our activity groups are a big highlight. Mini Explores and Under 1s run in blocks, covering everything from sensory play and communication to physical play, early counting and mark making – all rooted in fun, learning through play and building confidence for both children and parents.

We're also just starting our Empowering Parents Empowering Communities journey, training up Parent Group Leaders and getting ready to launch the programme.

Busy, varied, and always rewarding – that's a week with us in a nutshell.

If you would like to know more about any of our groups, we're more than happy to have a chat with you.

Rachel Bennett, Habiba Uddin & Denys Newman



To have a chat with our Activity & Parenting Workers please call 01305 778294 or email [chesilfamilyhubs@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:chesilfamilyhubs@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

