

WHO is Accuro?

Accuro is a small, local, charity which aims to support people with disability, in West Essex, by providing a wide range of social activities which help reduce loneliness and social isolation, increase happiness, health and wellbeing, develop skills and potential and provide much needed short break respite to families.

Accuro provides a safe, supportive environment where our service users can belong, contribute and thrive.

We have over 36 years' experience and a proven track record of successful delivery. We identify needs, develop practical solutions to meet them, directly enhancing the lives of children, young people and adults with disability, and their families, across West Essex.

We aim to provide the highest quality, person centred services for children, young people and adults with a wide range of disabilities, focusing primarily on learning disability.

We believe we make a real impact and in our 2020 stakeholder survey 100% of respondents said they were proud of Accuro and would recommend us to a family in need.



We have been told Accuro is “a lifeline”, “Without Accuro my son’s life would be less” and “without Accuro we have nothing”. We have been told we have “given my child a chance” and are “a highly valued support for our family and have helped us cope in the darkest of times when we felt alone”.

WHAT does Accuro do?

Accuro’s strategic vision is to eliminate loneliness and the social isolation of people with learning disabilities within their local communities, enhancing their confidence to cross bridges into a wider world.

Accuro aims to

- help reduce loneliness and social isolation
- improve self-confidence, self-esteem
- increase independence and help prepare children for adulthood
- increase happiness, health and wellbeing
- develop potential and help teach new skills, including life, social and communication skills
- provide much needed short break respite for families.

To meet our aims Accuro currently runs the following services

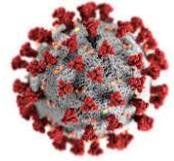
- Cool Connections – a youth club for 11 – 19s in Harlow
- Under 19 project – 2 youth clubs for 11-19’s in Uttlesford (Great Dunmow and Saffron Walden)
- Loughton Youth Group – for 11-19s in Loughton
- Saturday Play Club – for 8 - 19s in Saffron Walden
- School Holiday Club – Group activities and 1 to 1 sessions for 8-19s across Harlow, Epping and Uttlesford
- Adult Friendship Scheme – Social evenings, small group activities in Harlow and Uttlesford for over 19s

We currently support 69 children and young people under 19 and 66 over 19s with disability, and their families in West Essex, providing up to 7,000 hours of services and short break respite pa.

Many of our activities happen in the wider community e.g. bowling, cinema trips, eating out, and trips to zoos, seaside, swimming pools etc. Service users are encouraged to get involved, order their own food / drink / tickets etc. – building their independence / self-confidence, helping to break down barriers / change social attitudes, whilst making individuals feel part of their wider community.

COVID-19 IMPACT

In response to Covid-19 Accuro had to suspend our 'normal' services. We worked closely with our service users and their families to understand what they needed from us and quickly adapted our services to make sure we 'stayed connected' and provided the support they needed.



During lockdown we

- set up NEW Remote services including regular Zoom sessions for both our children's and adults services.
- have been in contact all service users and their families by phone. Weekly calls made to most vulnerable.
- have provided activity packs to do at home
- have shared ideas, videos and challenges online to 'stay connected' and encourage our service users to keep active during the crisis.

Over the summer holidays we also provided 1:1 support for children we had identified as in critical need of support.

As restrictions are 'eased' we have resumed some 'normal' services that can be made 'Covid secure'. Capacity at clubs will be restricted to meet current Covid guidance and we recognise that not all of our service users will be able to immediately return, due to ongoing anxiety around COVID-19, the stress of settling back into school after 6 months off and additional health conditions.

To make sure that we continue to support all our service users we will continue to provide remote support via Zoom and activity packs to do at home, ongoing, to support those unable to return to face to face services at Accuro.

NEW PROJECT – STAY and PLAY for Under 8s with disability and their parents/ carers

Accuro's NEW STAY and PLAY sessions will provide an opportunity for children under 8 with disability to meet and make friends as they start their lifelong journey with Accuro

STAY and PLAY also provides an opportunity for parents and carers of young children with disability to meet and make friends, share ideas and personal experiences, gain support and get much needed respite.

Accuro will coordinate the sessions, providing safe, stimulating activities and opportunities for young people with disability and providing much needed support and signposting for families.

Accuro's STAY and PLAY will launch in Saffron Walden in 2021 and will provide a weekly, 2 hour, drop in session, 48 weeks of the year.

We hope to be able to provide this across the whole of West Essex, bringing people together at the start of their journey.

Why? What is the need that has been identified?

Friendships are important to people, but particularly those with a learning disability as they tend to have fewer friends and opportunities for socialising.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) are twice as likely as other children to be bullied regularly (IoE 2014). 85% of disabled young people feel lonely (Scope)

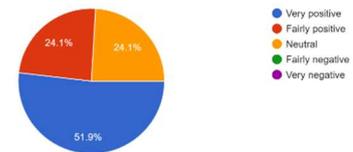
Although, in theory people with learning disabilities should have the same rights, choices and opportunities as non-disabled people, in reality this is not always the case.

Parents and Carers of young children with disability need extra support and respite as they start on their journey into a world they previously may not have experienced.

There is a shortage of services for Under 8s in West Essex as identified by Essex County Council, Action for Children and Accuro's own stakeholder survey.

Over 80% of respondents in our 2020 stakeholder survey were positive about the idea of Accuro providing STAY and PLAY sessions for children under 8.

3. Provide stay and play sessions for children under 8. How do you feel about this idea?
54 responses



Respondents told us

- Under 8s will help interactions with other children and increase independence
- There is a big demand for support for the under 8's. There is currently no support anywhere for this age group and it is much needed
- There is a gap for the under 8s where parents need some respite and support
- When my son was younger this service was invaluable, not only for him but also for me to form a network of friends and a local support group
- it's a great opportunity for parents to get together with other parents and not feel so isolated, all of this while the children play
- Parents need support at this early age
- This would be a great way to introduce families to Accuro services, providing lifelong support
- I was very isolated when my daughter was under 8 due to lack of services for under 8s. My husband had died and I was working full time to bring up my daughter and felt very alone.

How will STAY and PLAY for Under 8s meet the need?

There is a real shortage of choice and social opportunities for Under 8s with disability and their families in West Essex.

By providing a regular stay and play session we will bring people together helping provide much needed support, respite and friendship

WHAT impact will STAY and PLAY have?

Accuro's NEW STAY and PLAY scheme will help children with disabilities and their parents / carers

- avoid loneliness and social isolation -
- improve self-confidence, self-esteem
- increase happiness, health and wellbeing
- develops potential and help teach new skills
- provide much needed support, signposting and respite for families.

Why Accuro?

Accuro has been trusted to support children, young people and adults with disability, and their families since 1984.

We have a track record of success and provide lifelong services supporting over 130 people ages 8 to 70+.

STAY and PLAY for Under 8s is a natural evolution of our services to meet a NEW identified need, providing more choice and opportunities for younger children with disability and their families

Results from our 2020 Stakeholder survey tell us

- 100% of service users are happy and look forward to coming to Accuro
- 100% of parents say their child enjoy attending Accuro
- 100% of service users have met and made friends at Accuro
- 94% of parents agree their child is less socially isolated and has increased social opportunities at Accuro
- 87% of parents agree that Accuro helps their child gain greater community access.
- 100% of service users feel confident about themselves at Accuro
- 80% of parents agree that their child had increased self confidence
- 100% say that their child has increased self esteem

- 67% agree their child has become more independent, 33% neither agree nor disagree
- 97% agree that Accuro provides opportunities for local people with disability to belong contribute and thrive.

Respondents have told us that “Accuro has provided fun and friends for my son that he didn’t have before”, “my daughter was very isolated and lonely when she arrived at Accuro and I have seen her grow in confidence”, “she has made most of her friends through Accuro” and “my daughter can be herself without judgement” and “my son loves Accuro, he gets to meet other young people and the staff ‘get him’ ”. We have also been told that “my son gains independent from family” and “My son now has a normal (ish) social life, going to the pub with friends was something I ever thought would happen”.

We have been told that “Accuro has given my child a chance” and “without Accuro we have nothing”

We have continued to monitor and evaluate during Covid-19 and 94% of respondents to our surveys are very satisfied with the support we have provided during the crisis and 100% would recommend Accuro to others.

We have been told “your support is an absolute blessing”, “10/10 Brilliance”, “R really enjoys the Zoom chats. It’s a fantastic way to keep connected with her friends”, “loved the activity boxes”, “J was really happy after his Accuro Zoom. It really lifts him up”, “Accuro Zooms make me laugh and happy” and “that has made my day!”

An active life can help people with a learning disability to feel happier, healthier, included and valued.

Having friends can help people with learning disabilities to be more confident and independent, improving health and wellbeing.

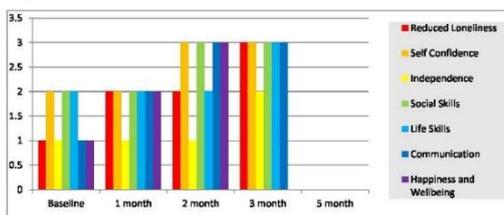
How do we measure our impact?

We recognise that identifying needs and being able to measure our outcomes and demonstrate our impact is vital to the future sustainability of Accuro.

We have developed a “Tool kit” including cool walls, scrap booking, small focus groups, and smiley face surveys, giant foam thumbs up / down, vocalisation, touch, games and simple online surveys for some who are more able. We plan to capture more video evidence in the future.

In 2020 we have created new tools to enable us to measure and evidence individual’s progression in key areas.

The survey form includes fields for 'ADDRESS: NAME' and 'DATE COMPLETED BY'. It features a grid of 12 emoji options for users to mark their agreement with. Below the grid are several questions with corresponding emoji-based response options (Yes, Sometimes, No).



Outcomes measured:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced Loneliness • Self confidence • Independence • Social skills • Life skills • Communication • Happiness and wellbeing 	Grade of outcome:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Severe difficulties 2. Significant difficulties 3. Support needed to improve 4. Progress 5. Significant progress
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We use the information obtained to demonstrate our impact to funders and to help us in designing our clubs, services and activities as well as developing Accuro’s strategy. It ensures we continue to focus on delivering our vision to eliminate loneliness and the social isolation of people with learning disabilities within their local communities and enhance their confidence.



How can you help?

It costs almost £500,000 pa to run Accuro.

STAY and PLAY will cost approx. £XXX pa to run in Uttlesford and West Essex.

INSERT BUDGET TABLE

Families will make a contribution towards the cost of Accuro's STAY and PLAY but we have to fundraise with the local community and apply for grants to cover the full costs.

With your help and financial support we can continue to make a real difference to the lives of local people with disability by providing opportunities to meet and make friends, developing skills and potential, building self-confidence and independence as they transition to adulthood

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you require any additional information please contact Natalie Trapmore. Email grants@accuro.org.uk or Tel 0787647871 and go to www.accuro.org.uk

