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Painting Bee
by
Lauren McGough
aged 5
from
Holm Cultram Abbey
School

Silloth & District OAP's

Weekly Whist & Domino Drives

Whist Drives:
Tuesday @ 2.00pm
Thursday @ 7.30pm

Domino Drive:
Monday @ 7.30pm

in the Recreation Hall
Eden Street Playing Field
Silloth - 50p entry

Everyone Welcome

Dear Buzz,

I have been reading your newspaper for a while and feel so strongly by the articles about Silloth childcare issue that I have decided to write. I am 40 years of age, single and a homeowner. I work really hard on a low wage. I do not have children and do not wish to have my council tax increased to support a childcare centre. I do not want my taxes being spent on something that is already in Silloth. I know Jan Enderby and David Bromilow at TOPO Children's Centre - they both work full time to support their business. They have eight staff that run the nursery school, day care, out-of-school club and holiday club. They have two teachers and the rest are qualified to NVQ level 3 - they are all mature and experienced professionals. This summer they are planning to extend to offer places for babies. Jan and David have put everything into their business and now run the risk of losing it if the government pay for another childcare centre to open. There are not enough children in Silloth to keep TOPO busy so why should we (residents of Silloth) pay for another one. The local council openly and publicly supports the Government Childcare Initiative when they should

be supporting local business and they wonder why Silloth is a dying town? Silloth Childcare Initiative had two years to do this before TOPO opened - they failed Silloth and now TOPO is open they seem to be determined to carry on regardless of what is best for the town. Why would anyone want to get into debt to set up a business in Silloth when the local council (let alone the local people) do not give their support? If TOPO goes under, Jan and David could lose everything - not just a business. I also wonder why a local child minder supports an initiative that will eventually put her out of business - perhaps she has an ulterior motive - guarantee of a job maybe? How many people in Silloth have even been into TOPO to see what a fantastic place it is? We should show appreciation and gratitude to all local business people that strive to make Silloth a better place.



G Lamb

Dear Buzz,

I had the pleasure of attending the Neighbourhood Forum Meeting at Silloth Primary School Wednesday 9th February 2005, whereby the Silloth Childcare Initiative (SCI) beautifully conducted a presentation. When I looked around the room, it was interesting to see who else was present. SCI Team, Head Teacher of Silloth School and his catering staff, a couple of councillors and...oh, what.... only a few parents - presumably looking for childcare, not jobs? There

must have been about forty people in the room but where were all the parents that so badly need childcare? The SCI have stated how they would like to offer a community service but not how the community will have to pay for this service. Will the service be free - well, free to those that use it or will the tax payers be forced to pay regardless of their need. I wonder if our council tax will be increased to help fund the running of such a wonderful facility? Or will the SCI have to charge a going rate, like TOPO? The government are offering funding to set up a facility but not to cover the running costs, i.e. staff wages, food, new resources (paint, paper, pencils, etc), heat lighting. Would it not be of interest to Silloth residents, how the SCI will guarantee the sustainability and longevity of a childcare centre.



R Blackburn

Editors Note:

Normally, the Solway Buzz excludes contentious issues from the Letters page. Our wee paper is into spreading good-cheer, not fuelling disputes. As there is much debate about childcare provision in Silloth at the moment and because two letters supporting TOPO had been received, it was decided to allow SCI to respond in the same issue. This is the end of this subject as far as the Buzz is concerned. We do not propose to print any further letters about the childcare initiative without very good reason.

Dear Buzz,

Silloth Childcare initiative does not wish to undermine the private nursery that has been set up in Silloth but we feel that there have been a number of public statements which are grossly inaccurate and the facts need to be stated. TOPO knew of the plans for the childcare centre when they set up their business. They came to our meetings, took away information and used it to start up their own nursery. SCI have done 2 surveys which show overwhelmingly the town wants a community childcare provision that works alongside and is close to both schools. TOPO is in direct competition with the school nursery which has been in existence for many years and provides 52 places for 3-5 year olds. At present 39 children use the school nursery. This is why TOPO will never fill their nursery. TOPO were informed many months ago that SCI are starting off the first phase of our project by setting up a provision for 0-3 year olds within the school to fulfil the government push to provide extended schools for every community. If they wish to set up in competition with our facilities that is their decision. As a community group SCI needs public money to get started. This is coming from money specifically set aside by the government for childcare provision and the regeneration of Silloth. The running costs of the childcare centre will not be subsidised. Once we are up and running, parents will be charged the going rate. We will not be trying to undercut TOPO with cheap gimmicky offers and there will be NO INCREASE IN COUNCIL TAX to pay for the centre. SCI have had dozens of enquiries from parents wishing to leave their children at the provision within the school. Most residents fully support this long awaited initiative. At the recent open day at the school on the topic of 'Every child counts' SCI were asked to do a short presentation on our project. This was warmly received by the people present. Rachel Blackburn stated that there were virtually no parents present. This is not true. Of 45 people attending 28 are parents, 10 are grandparents along with other interested parties. As an employee of TOPO Rachel is hardly an independent voice.

Brian Hillhouse, SCI



Betham
by
Megan Kendall
aged 7
from
Holm Cultram Abbey School

Silloth Group Medical Practice

OPENING TIMES: 8:30am – 6:30pm
Tel No: 016973 31309 Fax No: 016973 32834

OPEN SURGERY

Could we please remind you that our Open Surgery is for consultations that can be treated quickly and not for long-term conditions such as, for example, back pain. You may be invited back to make a normal appointment if this doesn't fit with our criteria.

EASTER BREAK

The Surgery will be closed Good Friday 25th March until Tuesday 29th March — Please make sure you have enough medication to see you over the Easter period, if not, please order your prescriptions in advance of this date. Please remember to give us 24 hours notice for your repeat prescription and allow 48 hours if requesting this to be taken to the chemist. You can order your prescription through our voice mail system or go on line at the web address below.

We would like to thank you for your continuing patience while we endeavour to recruit a replacement partner for Dr Johnston. Dr Jones has taken up a position on the Professional Executive Committee, which will involve him being out of the Surgery a couple of days a month.

SURGERY WEB SITE

You can now order your Prescriptions online...
Why not visit our Surgery Website on:
www.northcumbriahealth.nhs.uk/silloth

SURGERY CLOSURE

Please note that the Surgery will be closed between 1-5pm on:
Tuesday 19th April
Wednesday 25th May
Thursday 23rd June
This is for educational training purposes. Between the hours of 1-5pm Cuedoc will take all Emergency calls. 016973 31309

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