



SATURDAY RAINBOWS: A FLEXIBLE APPROACH

2nd Pittville (Salem) Rainbows is a new **Saturday Rainbow** unit which opened last November, in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. It meets from 10 am - 11.30 am on 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month. The meeting place is near the Town Centre and close to Tesco's and Waitrose supermarkets.

We decided to go for this innovative approach in order to attract new volunteers and also previous volunteers who were no longer able to commit to a weekly evening meeting.

How is it different from "Tuesday Rainbows"?

Although we only meet twice a month, our sessions, at 1½ hours, are longer than the weekly meetings and we do cover the full programme. We are able to do longer activities, and are not so rushed as an hour long meeting. We charge the same subs as the weekly Tuesday Rainbows meeting at the same location.

Why it works

- It's taken girls off the Division waiting list and given them the opportunity to experience guiding
- Parents like it - they like the flexibility of every 2 weeks; it's less stressful than trying to fit it after school; we're within walking distance of 2 large supermarkets and the Town Centre, so parents can go shopping while their daughters are at Rainbows
- Parents are kept up-to-date with a list of meeting dates for the whole year, which is reviewed termly, and are able to plan their weekends accordingly
- It's the start of the day so the girls are less tired than after school
- Its attractive to those volunteer leaders working during the week - school workers, students, medical profession

How to find leaders

Our Growing Guiding Coordinator approached a Rainbow leader who was no longer guiding and persuaded her to open the unit with her. She had given up leading her Tuesday unit a few years ago as she could no longer get to her mid week meeting because of a change in her work commitments;

Saturday Rainbows has offered an opportunity for experienced Leaders to continue/return to guiding when they can't manage regular mid week commitments. Our new Leadership Team demonstrates a flexible use of experienced Rainbow Leaders including a former Rainbow Leader, a student at local University of Gloucestershire and a junior Doctor at the local hospital who has just moved into the area. We have also been approached by new volunteers keen to volunteer at the weekend rather than after work.

How to find girls

Initially we targeted the 67 Rainbow-age girls (aged 5 and 6), who were on Cheltenham's Join Us list, writing to each girls' parents offering them the opportunity to start Rainbows straightaway.

Almost a year on, we are advertising in 2 nearby primary schools, still look out for girls on Join Us and by word of mouth.

Would the model work for other age groups?

Definitely yes

Sample Programme, November 2014 - July 2015

Sat 1 November	Getting to know you activities
Sat 15 November	Light - "light a little candle" song; glass jars, tissues; talk about different lights
Sunday 16 November	Shoe Box Sunday Church Parade 10.45 - 12 noon
Sat 29 November	Festival Roundabout (FR); Christmas - reindeer biscuits; flowerpots; "my reindeer flies backwards" song
Sat 6 December	Promise ceremony ; Christingle; nativity picture
Sat 3 January	Christmas/New Year Party 2-4pm
Sat 17 January	Chose activities from Get Healthy Roundabout (GHR); Winter ; make snowmen; fingerprint snowmen pictures
Sat 31 January	Promise ceremony ; decorate cakes; tap sticks
Sunday 1 February	Church Parade
Sat 7 February	FR; Chinese New Year ; Chinese costume; food tasting; origami fish
Sat 28 February	FR; St David's day ; welsh lady finger puppet; daffodil baskets
Sat 7 March	Sock puppets ; learn "we are rainbows" song
Sat 28 March	FR; Easter ; Easter story ; Easter baskets; balloon chicks
Sat 25 April	GHR; goldilocks ; healthy breakfast for bears; parachute games with teddies; goldilocks relay
Sat 9 May	GHR; Olympic games ; balloon games; paper plate tennis; animal smoothies
Sat 23 May	GHR; Visit from Dental Nurse ; tooth relay game
Sat 6 June	Promise ceremony; GHR - Yoga and ballet
Sun 14 June	Joint meeting with Tuesday Rainbows - Brave, making tartan, shortbread, indoor curling
Sat 20 June	FR; Japan ; Cherry blossom lanterns and haribo shushi
Sat 4 July	FR ; American Independence
Sat 11 July	Tunnelling at Deerpark, Cowley



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