

PRESS RELEASE

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Opening of the new After School Activity Club for Children with Special Needs

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar, together with the Guardian Angel Foundation, have organised an after school activity club to cater for children with disabilities. Initially the programme will be available for children who attend St Martin's School with a view to integrate children from other schools in the future as the club is developed

The club will encourage and promote physical, emotional and social development of children with special needs as well as being a point of support for their families.

As from next week the club will be run from the new premises at The Boathouse at Victoria Stadium. The premises have been completely refurbished this year and have been designed specifically to be inclusive for children with learning and physical disabilities in mind. Importantly, it has a changing room which caters for all physical disabilities. These are the premises that are used for the Stay and Play sessions that form part of the GSLA's Summer Sport's programme.

The Guardian Angel Foundation is a charity set up in March 2013 with the intention of improving standards of living for local children affected by genuine financial distress or suffering from any disability or illness which impairs their physical or mental well-being or any child in need. It has already worked with the Government of Gibraltar, having funded the Sensory Room at St Martin's School and provided St Bernard's Hospital Rainbow Ward with high dependency cots, amongst other projects.

Minister for Equality & Social Services, the Hon Samantha Sacramento, said: "It is once again a pleasure to have worked with the Guardian Angel Foundation on another project for children. It is great to see that, through this partnership, we have yet another initiative which will help children with disabilities. We started discussing this project as soon as the snoozelan room at St Martin's School was opened. There has been a lot of planning involved in this to ensure that we get it right; We have had a multi-agency working group of professionals, particularly from Social Services & St Martin's School, working closely with the charity to look at programmes being delivered to the

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children to ensure that they are stimulating, appropriate, safe and above all, fun. I am very grateful to the Guardian Angel Foundation and it is a delight to work with an organisation that is so keen to enrich children's lives. I wish to convey my heartfelt thanks to everyone involved in making this possible."

Chairman of the Guardian Angel Foundation, Kevin Hook, said: "I am delighted to see another project come to fruition. As a charity we work very hard to fundraise and it gives me great satisfaction to continuously explore ways to improve the lives of children in Gibraltar. We wish to thank the Government for their advice and support throughout this project and look forward to the next one."