

# Downing Street trip for award winning Sure Start project

A TEAM of parents from the Moorlands has won a national award for the unique way they look after children with special needs.

The women collected their award from 11 Downing Street.

They are known as 'Special Matters' and were set up two years ago after parents in the Sure Start area said they felt there was a lack of information and support on how to look after their children. The group was set up after this meeting.

'Special Matters' consists of two groups. Firstly a 'support group' which is made up of parents of children with special needs and facilitated by Sure start. They meet monthly to offer peer support, information and arrange activities.

Secondly an 'action group' which is made up of a range of professionals, agencies and parents who meet every 8 weeks to explore various issues in relation to the needs of families and seeks to find ways to improve services.

The group has organised lots of exciting events for children to do. These have included sailing at a specialised centre on Rudyard Lake, horse riding at local stables and family fun days at the local leisure centre.

As a further element of support the parent to parent project began to operate breakfast clubs at Leek and Biddulph, where parents can



*Ed Balls MP presented the award to Faith Asplin (parent support worker for Special Matters/Sure Start) and Suzanne Senn, one of the parents crowned 'childcare champions.'*

meet after dropping the children at school.

Moorlands MP Charlotte

Atkins is a huge admirer of the group and she joined

Faith Asplin and Suzanne

Senn to collect the award from 11 Downing Street in

London.