

**Parent Reference Group Meeting
Tuesday 30th June 2009
Catherine Street**

1. Present: IB, EB, PB, LG, HL, JM-C, CM, CP, JS, JT

Apologies: AN, LM, DF, GA, GO, AF

2. Welcome and introductions.

3. AHDC Parent Participation Grant

- The £10,000 Parent Participation grant application has been approved.
- There has been a significant delay in parents being reimbursed their expenses. Some members of the group have waited up to six months for their money. JT will raise this again and ensure that it gets addressed.

4. Small Grants Fund Applications

- **Summer Group- £620.**
- Need to see the details of the double funding for the rent.
- It was felt that this was a good idea but concerns raised about Beckley charging rent when the activity is being held on their own premises.
- **National Autistic Society (Plymouth Local Group) £3,000.**
- J M-C – unaware of their application, local group has not been involved. It was agreed that there was so no need for JT to declare an interest. Concerns raised about lack of communication from the NAS.
- This is being partly funded by NAS.
- They need to provide a breakdown of what they aim to spend the money on.
- Feedback from JS that the regional coordinator from NAS (Amy) has had difficulties trying to engage locally.
- There will be a disabilities section on the School's Out webpage.
- **RADICAL- SW £4,412.35, £1,801.95, £2,422.75**
- Support group for parents who have children with an attachment disorder. Query whether the small grants fund is for this kind of group?
- IB – commented that there are many carers, grandparents, foster carers, who are caring for children with AD and there is very little in the way of support for respite for them. They rarely get a break from caring.
- Discussion around alternative sources of funding for this group. Is there another pot of money that they could be tapping into? JS has approached Social Care and they have no budget for it.
- As referrals are from CAMHS, could they fund it?
- They are altogether asking for a fifth of the total money from the small grants fund.

- They need to start small and then if it is successful apply for more money, twenty to thirty children is very optimistic.
- With the referral process (coming through CAMHS) how can they be up and running for the summer?
- If the grant covers the costs of the activities, why do parents need to pay for their children to attend the group?
- Need more information on what the money is going to be spent on- however do not have the time for this because it is nearly the summer holidays.
- Agreed to give them £2,000 for a combination of the three applications for the summer holidays. If the group is successful then they can apply for more money. Needs careful monitoring.
- **Friends of Plymouth Portage £2,107**
- Friends of Plymouth Portage run a holiday caravan (in Cornwall) for families of children with disabilities. They bought the caravan for £30,000 and it costs a further £6,000 for repairs, maintenance etc a year. They have a short fall of £2,107 which is what the grant would cover.
- They update the caravan every year and it is always fully booked for the holiday season. After ten years they need to replace the caravan, they want to sell it before it loses value.
- They need the extra money because they don't want the caravan to swallow up all of their provisions which could be spent on other things.
- Everyone agreed that this was very worthwhile and approved the full amount.
- **Jump- Crownhill £650.**
- JS brought a new application to the meeting. Jump would like £650 to run a session once a week for an hour. Will allow disabled children to access the soft play.
- Some of the funding is for hire of the centre. Query whether this will be for exclusive use or will it also be open to the public during this time?
- Children get into Jump free if they are disabled.
- How many children will be allowed? How will it be publicised?
- JS will email response to above queries to JT.
- Disabled children could be vulnerable if it is not exclusive access to them.

5. Jo Siney- Short Breaks.

- Plymouth has been nationally recognised as successful in working in partnership for Short Breaks. They have been recognised as being responsive to local need.
- Plymouth did not want to risk putting money into big projects that are not sustainable.
- Organisations etc need to feedback information about who is accessing the Short Breaks so that Plymouth can prove people

have been accessing Short Breaks. They need stories from families about how Short Breaks has changed their lives.

- After 2011 Plymouth is hoping that the money will be built into the Comprehensive Spending review which will then mean increased funding.
- There are many activities running over the summer because of the grant money.
- Discussion around how this information can be gathered.
- Suggestion to draw up a standard five question questionnaire for parents of children who have accessed it. Include photos, videos etc.
- Many of the activities are run by parents - what happens if a parent cannot run it anymore? How can the council support the group and make sure it can be sustained. Needs support and infrastructure. Groups can become vulnerable if dependant on volunteering.
- JG-S has already begun to build in support and infrastructure. Contingency planning - need continuity and sustainability.
- If the money is taken away after 2011 parents will be very angry.
- How much money is left? JS will feedback this information.
- A short loan scheme is being developed in the city for a responsive equipment store. The building and equipment are there but need infection control and drivers.
- What equipment is needed?
- Discussion around the Wheelchair Services group. Parents should write to HM with any comments/complaints.
- Short Breaks DVD shown to the group. Showing parents and children enjoying Short Breaks activities/facilities.

Next Parent Reference Group meeting:

**Wednesday 22nd July
6:00 pm. – 7:30 pm.
The Old Treasury
Catherine Street**