

**Parent Reference Group**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> July 2009**  
**Catherine Street**

**Attendees:-**

JT (Parent Partnership)  
BB (Parent Partnership)  
JC(Parent Partner)  
EB(Parent, representative of several groups)  
TBL(PSA, Longcause)  
PB (Parent)  
GA(Parent)  
SL (Parent Partnership)

**Apologies:-**

SR, CM, AF, DF, LG, CS, ML, CP

**1. Notes from last meeting/ Matters Arising**

- Disabled children cannot get into Jump for free unless they have a blue badge.
- A new parent is interested in coming in the future.
- JT has dealt with the delay in parents being reimbursed. EB now has her cheque.
- JT forwarded the information about Jump to JGS and they have removed it. Feedback about Short Breaks was also passed on to JGS.
- GA- Short Breaks DVD. Hopefully get some copies for Parent Partnership.
  - give to PSA special schools
  - good that siblings and children got to speak for themselves
  - It is important not to just have children on the DVD who can speak.
- JC explained that she will be taking on the Aiming High work at Parent Partnership.
- The feedback on Small Grants applications were sent to JGS.
- Residence at Woodlands Respite centre- going from 14 beds to 6 beds.
  - Over budget cannot afford
  - Cannot fill the spaces because no one can refer, even though there is a need.
- EB went to a meeting concerning this lack of provision. There was no consultation, everyone was just told that the beds would be going. EB said that the officials present at the meeting were surprised at the quality of the questions from parents.

- Parents need to be members of the executive team to stop this lack of consultation.
- The meeting was about trying to get the residence at a level they can cope with. A business man challenged all of this. There will be a meeting in September regarding staffing.
- It is a PFI school, from the LA perspective do they have to fit in with Aiming High and involving parents?
- Do all parents know that the meetings are happening? What about parents who could be entitled to it?
- Eligibility criteria for respite- PJ to look for the document.
- Direct Payments cannot be used for residence.
- EB emailed JS and copied in lots of other professionals because a parent needed day care at Woodlands and was only able to get it in October when they needed it now.
- Another single parent needed respite and was not given anything.
- Direct Payments are not accepted by many organisations. If you need help you can advertise in the Herald. Many find this scary. Woodlands would make you feel confident because you know they are professionals. No other parent would have to do that.
- A4E are supposed to have people standing by but they don't. They are supposed to support parents in accessing services that are available to children and adults. GA has had good experiences with A4E. They are good at doing the administration side of things when dealing with paying carers etc.
- Does PPP have the capacity to look at Direct Payments in the city?
- Who have contracted A4E? Who is monitoring the contract?
- **Action-** Take to Learning Disability Partnership Board re administering Direct Payments for children.
- Need to make sure that the carer is suitable for the child. A teenager won't want a carer that is older. They need someone closer to their age.
- **Action-** JT to get confirmation of date and venue at Woodlands re the overnight residential care that is being taken away. JT will send these details out to the Parent Reference Group.

## 2. Information

- Include Me Too training courses. They are expensive.
- Parents and Carers training- getting the best for our children.
- Lamb Enquiry stake holder event- JT is going to Leeds for this on the 30<sup>th</sup> July.
- There is a national issue with parents that PP's cannot be independent because they are part of the LA.
- Parents who have fed into the Lamb Enquiry still do not feel (after exemplification compliance) that they are independent. They do not understand that if PP was still a part of the Voluntary Sector the LA would still have to monitor it. Watch this space.
- There is a new consultation about handling parents complaints around school issues, includes SEN. When it can't be dealt with SENDist goes

to judicial review. They are looking to have an independent company. JT showed the group the consultation report.

- It includes information about teachers, school staff etc. If a parent complains it will first go to the governor, then to the LA and then to the Secretary of State. JT can email this to everybody.
- **Action-** JT will arrange for it all to be on the PPP website.
- The Short Breaks newsletter is very good- very accessible and felt comprehensive. It also had a good tone. All of the info is on the School's Out website.
- JC is working for two days a week focusing on Aiming High and the ChIDS web page. She is also working with GO and the special schools PSAs. JC and BB are pulling information together concerning Aiming High.
- NI54. Parents in Plymouth are starting to receive letters and questionnaires. JT has a full copy of the questionnaire. It focuses on the Core Offer and features of it. JT also has the Performance Indicators if anybody would like them emailed.
- Torbay, Somerset and Cornwall councils all chose disability as a Performance Indicator, Plymouth did not. NI54 sits under local action so it is not required.
- The British Research Bureau were commissioned to carry out the consultation.
- Question: How do they choose parents that will receive the questionnaire? Answer: All pupils in school are on a database, pupils are chosen from that list; however pupils with SEN or disabilities are more likely to be chosen.
- The Questionnaire has been sent out nationally and to Plymouth even though they did not sign up for it.
- There is also an OFSTED questionnaire around parent satisfaction and around SEN.
- The Aiming High oversight group are looking for another parent representative of ASD. JT has sent an email out about this, but has so far had one response. This will be put on the agenda at the Parent and Family Forum in September. JT will also ask JMC from the ASD local branch.

### 3. Bob Burton and Jeanette Chinnock

- The Short Breaks funding was discussed by the group.
- BB and JC handed out a breakdown of what the Aiming High money will be spent on.
- JC will contact AW re the Parent Participation training.
- JC has left a message for SD at Face 2 Face re the training.
- By the next meeting BB and JC will work out their ideas and pass them out before the meeting.
- **Action:** The Lay People document will be circulated to the group. It is a large document so JC will summarise it. It is done around a legal framework.

- Lay people will be discussed at the next meeting in detail where a decision needs to be made.
- It has huge implications for parents who are on benefits. Also some parents may not want to be paid. It should be a multi choice scenario, where everyone could potentially use it.
- It is about being valued.
- The pilot from Plymouth City Council is free and provides Parent Partnership with the resources needed and support.
- People who want to participate via video conferencing will need a PC and broadband. It has a lot of potential.
- Can a parent really take part in a meeting when they are also taking care of their children at home? If the parent has a telephone a head set can be provided and the phone can be muted.
- Parents who are involved should not have to rely on other parents attending meetings.
- Even if a parent cannot continue the meeting for whatever reasons it is better that they give half an hour than nothing at all.

**Next Meeting:** 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009