

**AHDC Parent Reference Group**  
**Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March**  
**12.00 – 2.00 pm**  
**Old Treasury Building**

**Present:** JD, CM, SB, TB-L, JC, AM, JS, JT, EG, SL, BB.

**Apologies:** PB, AP, RP, KO, LJ, GO, EB, CP.

**1. Welcome and introductions**

- Video conferencing. This was trialled in the meeting. BB is hoping to arrange for Power Points to be shown to attendees via video conferencing also.
- AS briefly joined the group via video conferencing.

**2. JS**

**Single Point of Contact**

- PW attended the last meeting to talk about Single Point of Contact (SPC). SPC will go live on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 for the Children's Integrated Disability Service.
- Key issue- is SPC for children just coming into the system or is it also for children who are already in the system? It is there for new and existing children. Families or professionals can bring their request for SPC forward. Managers are now clear on this. This is a very positive outcome from the discussion with PW.
- At first PW will not be looking for requests, they will be received but it will give time for the service to develop. PW is working on developing partnership working.
- Meetings around children should be Team Around the Child as long as partnership working is embedded.
- There will be a formal review in six months and PW will be receiving full time admin support.
- Parents can refer themselves but existing systems cannot be jumped over e.g. trying to get a Paediatrician before you have spoken to a GP.
- Q: Key Workers can also change through the years, how is this transition dealt with? There are many options at this point, working with the SENCo etc. All of these issues are in PW's planning.
- For many professions the Key Worker role is no different to what they are already doing, people need to see that it will not impact on their role.
- Q: Would it be appropriate for PSAs to take over the Key Worker role in Special Schools? **ACTION-** JT to look at. Need to look at whether this would compromise PSAs impartiality. This would only be feasible for Special Schools at first. It could also be a role for the city wide Parent Partners. EB is now a trainer for SPC so could deliver the training to the Parent Partners. **ACTION-** EG will look at Parent Partners taking on SPC.
- **Transition to adulthood.** JS's team are looking at developing a team to support this period. This has been agreed across both children's and adult's services. This team will focus on young people who have the most complex journey to make not necessarily the most complex needs. The team will consist of EP, CP and a Adult Social Care and Adult Connexions worker who are yet to be appointed. They will work with the young person from the age of sixteen years old until it is suitable to

hand them over to adult services. This was developed through feedback from parents.

- All children are tracked through the Transition Operational Group but some will be identified for further support.
  - **Eligibility Criteria for Short Breaks.** Everyone has a different view on what this should achieve. JS would like some advice before she writes them.
  - There are three approaches when writing eligibility criteria-
    1. Relies on diagnosis or labels. This has a lack of criteria; it is left to an individual to decide on a child's needs.
    2. Describes what the task is and the steps needed to be taken.
    3. A scoring system. Consists of a chart which lays out which areas you need support in and how great the need is. Devon allocates money according to the scoring Matrix. Appears to be a positive approach, it is very transparent.
  - There is a new judicial review judgment in court which states that you cannot limit the need, which makes a mockery of the scoring system.
  - There have been cases of exaggerating needs to gain funding which may not actually benefit the family. There needs to be more trust in the system. The law has stated that meeting the needs of the child should be needs led not resource led but this is not usually the case.
  - JS will be starting a small working group, and would like parents to be part of it.
  - The Children's Disability team do have their own criteria but Aiming High for Disabled Children has superceded it. There needs to be criteria for Short Breaks and also for Disability Social Work.
  - CM and EG are willing to join the working group.
  - **ACTION-** JD will put out the information to Friends and Families of Special Children.
  - Parent Reference Group will review who has put themselves forward and then make sure there is a suitable cross section of parents.
  - **ACTION-** JS to forward info to JD.
  - **ACTION-** Consultation on draft regulations re Short Breaks will be put onto the PPP website.
  - In May 2011 the duty to provide Short Breaks becomes law. The LA has to demonstrate that Short Breaks is part of the 'menu' offered to families. Short Breaks are reviewed yearly at the same time as the Children's Trust Children and Young People Plan.
  - JS attended a consultation event around Aiming High and there is now a new person in the DCSF who deals with this. Positive news.
  - **NI54 Questionnaire.** This questionnaire was taken to evaluate Aiming High in Plymouth. Plymouth scored 61% which is the national average. Two hundred and twenty six questionnaires were returned. Not all of the data is representative and is a different picture to what the LA currently knows. JM (Performance Officer for disabled children) is researching.
  - **Access to child care grant-** £89,000 to early years. Early Years team are presenting their plan to the AHDC steering group. Nothing else is happening at the moment. JP is the new Head of Early Years.
- 4. Phase 3 of Aiming High Grant.**
- The final phase has been allocated.

- PPP have paid for ten thousand texts for a text messaging service but would like to put more aside.
- Video conferencing is up and running.
- Parent Participation training- two more courses will be run with a view of Parent Partnership developing training itself. The course that parents have attended is good but a course which focuses on Plymouth parents is needed.
- Coasts run a course around young people and their mental health. PPP would like to adapt this for their parents.
- Childcare to support parent participation.
- The money will also be put towards transport for parents.
- Parents will also be paid fees for their participation. They will receive £7 an hour. PPP are also aiming to set up a database to show when parents have participated and it will also flag up when parents can claim.
- Administration.
- Any other suggestions are welcome. Ideas have to be checked with SG. Something around ASD children would be beneficial for Plymouth.
- SB had an email from a parent asking for a course on Autism. JD is speaking to NAS re training so will feed back to the group. JS will look at this; she is looking at developing a working group.
- MJ is doing work on developing ASD provision in schools.
- There could be a conference on ASD. Parents may even be willing to pay if they know it will be good quality. JMC is the Chair of NAS in Plymouth; could work in partnership with MJ.
- **Action-** TBL take back as a suggestion.
- ChIDS still give money towards the 'parents weekend' held in Devon. JT used to attend and it is not well attended by Plymouth parents. JS does try to encourage parents to attend.
- Request through Small Grants from Downham parents. Downham parents wanted to run a conference around Down's syndrome. The conference would have been delivered from parents to professionals. The PRG sent back a lot of questions but nothing more has been heard.
- If anyone is interested in receiving text messages about certain meetings then please let someone at Parent Partnership know. Good service if a meeting is going to be cancelled, lets parents know efficiently.
- Parent database- a new database is being built to hold parent's details. It will also contain an option for the parents area of interest so that they receive information re meetings, events which may be relevant. It will also provide opportunities for parent participation so that if anyone needs parents to consult with about certain issues they can look at the database to see who would be interested.
- The Health and Mental Health Reference Groups have now merged into just the Mental Health Reference Group however PPP is currently looking at re-establishing the Health Reference Group. Also looking at a group for parents of young people aged 14-19 years old.

AOB

- The most recent Lamb Report is now on the Parent Partnership website. It is an implementation plan around SEN and parental confidence. The report sets out what has already been done and what will be done. There are still problems with parental confidence in impartiality because some Parent Partnerships sit within the LA. However research has been done and most parents didn't care where Parent Partnership sat but just wanted good quality service. Plymouth Parent Partnership have a impartiality policy and a confidentiality policy and are arms length.
- PSAs received a half day training session around SEN and disabilities which was delivered by JS, AJ (Special Services), PW and EP. ACTION- JT to email PSAs with SEN Code of Practice information.
- It is a requirement of PPP staff that they must have training around laws and tribunals.