

## **Parent Network Meeting – Communication**

**East Cambs, 16 October 2015 (daytime)**

**Ely Library, Ely**

### **Attendees**

Parents: 14

Service Providers: Eloise Riches, Chloe Chapman, Jane Tuck, Josh Hang Gong, Julie Rutterford, Maxine Crouch, Paul Howard, Bob Wilson, Nicola Foreman, Maria Nowshadi, Katie Thompson

Pinpoint: Eve Redgrave, Lenja Bell, Jackie King

### **Overview**

The topic for these network meetings was Communication, with an aim to gather parents' views on ways to improve communication with health, social care and education services. Parents worked in groups with providers from each service to answer three questions on communication. After the group work, each service fed back the key points which had been captured on flip chart paper and are recorded below. The parents had a chance to talk individually with each other and service providers over lunch. After lunch, Eve Redgrave ran a mini training session on communication with parents.

### **Feedback from group work**

Parents and service providers were asked to answer the questions below with regard to communication methods, not about what the service provides.

1. Stop – What communication methods with Education / Health / Social Care services **do not work?**

#### Education

- Ensure new provision of school knows about child's start at new school
- Communication START – admissions, transport
- Gap in provision, if don't meet SEN school / mainstream a struggle
- Panel decisions need to be consistently given to parents but also stop having to go through process again
- Inconsistent support start to finish of process
- No space available at local special school and going to tribunal causes great distress in family

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- Lack of communication – knowing when meetings taking place
- Parents leading discussion
- Not getting correct info
- EHC Plan – 3 areas not looked at / 3 areas not communicating with each other
- Stopping parents at the door (Highfields)

#### Health

- Having to tell same story over and over again, even letters not read in advance, or names and details wrong on letter
- Getting addresses wrong – letters, medicine
- Incorrect information on letters
- Send copies of letters to parents after appointment so know what's happening
- Not by email unless agreed / preferred
- GP stop being 'clueless', need to be able to refer and help – more trained, listen to parents more
- Not having nurses based in special schools (new from September)
- Is access to services too based on school performance (of child), if okay in school no access to health services

#### Social Care

- Changing names e.g. Early Help
- Communicate better transfers between teams
- Multiple changes of social workers

2. Keep – What current ways and forms of communication **work well** with Education / Health / Social Care?

#### Education

- Bob and team
- Jane – helpful, text, lots of frequent meetings / updates
- Eloise
- St John's SENCo's – done more and beyond, will always find support and carry it through
- Millfield School – really supported by school
- Tracey Morris – TA behaviour support, due to her kept my child at school
- Family workers – especially with lack of CAMHS provision
- Good support from START to look at complexity of case
- Home / school diary works – staple letters, doctor appointments, etc. / behaviour at home

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- Daily re: child, if filled in it works
- Listened to parents' views – EHC Plan
- Main person to be a contact – email (named person)
- Newsletters
- Emails
- Planning / drafting meetings for EHC Plans
- Core Assets support through transfer review process

#### Health

- Text / phone to remind re: appointments
- Enough time to talk (2 hours appointment with consultant psychiatrist and paediatrician)
- Supporting letters from professionals to access funding / equipment from other charities (if not available from NHS), need to share this more
- CAF but explain why it's important to fill it in properly – gateway to services

#### Social Care

- Social Care comes to me, in an environment I feel comfortable in
- Are reliable, on time and regular
- Ringing to remind when things are outstanding
- The service as people do use it
- Continuity of social workers

3. Start – What **new methods** would like Education / Health / Social Care services to use when communicating with you?

#### Education

- More provision in this area for appropriate education settings when children fall in a gap
- Consistency of worker from start to finish of process
- Consistency – IEP's
- Review in a neutral place
- Parent friendly letters
- Phone call better as follow up to paperwork or to say it is coming out
- Realistic times of meetings for young people
- To hear positives too – balance
- New services introduce themselves and explain role

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- More face to face daily communication with school staff (especially at secondary), difficult to find out what is happening if children are non-verbal / find it hard to communicate
- Ask schools to ask parents if okay for a certain parent to come in and observe to advise
- More connection between services and letting parents know what is available

### Health

- Once diagnosed, give further information on support available e.g. short breaks, benefits (maybe a week later)
- Keep communication open so parents kept up to date
- Tell parents if a referral has been made, more transparency, services communicating with each other
- Start texts to remind re: appointment for services not doing it
- Communication better over electronic systems, no gap e.g. GP's, Addenbrooke's, also about whether to share or not, downside though when electronic system is down or moving out of county to different system
- Mainstream school to communicate child's health needs to school nurse
- Communicate parents where to go for support for child if on CAMHS waiting list
- Talking to other services, more contribution to EHCP
- Wheelchair service needs to be more proactive, parents have to chase all the time
- Need to improve communication between parents e.g. groups
- Individualised information
- Joined up communication, more continuity
- Central point on website, click for central helpline number and individual numbers for specific services (Local Offer)

### Social Care

- Mainstream schools less good at knowing availability via social care, etc.
- Be aware of the demands of having children, school runs / school holidays
- Be clear in what budget is
- Better communication / signposting when people do not meet eligibility
- Social care could make the signposting referral
- Siblings need signposting
- Better services for children with Aspergers / High Functioning Autism
- More flexibility – be listened to – rather than having to write complaining letters
- Communicate what direct payments can be used for
- More clarity about how long things are going to take, specific and meet those targets
- Employ more social workers

## Next Steps

The feedback from the group work will be collected and analysed across the five network meetings and shared with education, health and social service managers and frontline staff. Pinpoint will update parents on how this work is taken forward.