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Parental involvement network for parents of disabled children

Notes from the East Cambs network meeting

Date: 28 June 2013 **Time:** 10am – 2pm

Venue: Ely Cathedral Centre, Ely

Number of parents and carers: 11

Professionals joining at 11am: 6

Facilitator: Lenja Bell, pinpoint

This was the 14th parental involvement network meeting for East Cambs.

Workshop ground rules

The workshop ground rules were put up as a reminder for participants at the beginning of the meeting.

- Everyone is valued
- There are no wrong answers or silly questions
- Everyone will have the chance to hear and be heard – mobile phones on silent
- We respect each other's opinions
- We respect confidentiality
- We respect each other's values and cultures
- Every will be able to understand what people are saying – avoid jargon
- The whole is bigger than the sum of the parts.

Updates

Pinpoint gave updates from previous network meetings. These are outlined in the document: *Parental involvement network for parents of disabled children: feedback for June 2013 network meetings*. Additional updates were:

- pinpoint was successful in its bid for the parent participation contract with Cambridgeshire County Council. Pinpoint will therefore be working with parents for at least another two years.
- pinpoint is actively recruiting more parent volunteers and is holding a volunteer morning on 12th September. For more information see: <http://pinpoint-cambs.org.uk/events/pinpoint-welcome-and-update-volunteers-and-parent-reps>.
- The *People to Talk to* leaflet has been updated and reprinted. Hard copies are available from pinpoint or view an on-line version: <http://pinpoint-cambs.org.uk/support/support-groups-linked-to-the-pinpoint-network>.
- pinpoint is working with Home-Start to deliver *Empowering Families* training to parents of children under five with a disability or additional need. A four week course is running at March Children's Centre from 19th September, and more courses will be scheduled in other areas. See <http://pinpoint-cambs.org.uk/events/empowering-families-course> for more information about the March course and contact details for information about future courses.

Hot topic: Update on the Cambridgeshire County Council SEND Strategy and the Single Plan

Background

At the June 2012 network meetings parents were asked to identify the actions they wanted to see around 14 identified priorities in the new SEND strategy. The outcomes of these meetings can be seen on the pinpoint website <http://pinpoint-cambs.org.uk/pinpoint-reports> and were presented to the SEND Project Board in February 2013.

Parents identified six top priorities in June 2012. At these June 2013 network meetings, pinpoint shared a hand out with the six priorities which showed the actions that parents had requested.

Pinpoint also shared a Parent Partnership Newsletter (Special Edition) which outlined how each of the 14 priorities was being addressed. See: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/specialneedsdisabilities/supportforparents/parentpartnership/parentpartnershipnewslettertrainingevents.htm> for a copy of the newsletter.

Parent feedback on actions for the six priorities

pinpoint put up each of the six priorities on the blue sticky wall and underneath each priority, the actions that were highlighted in the Parent Partnership (PPS) newsletter. Pinpoint then asked parents what they thought of the actions. In all of the meetings, there wasn't enough time to gather feedback on all six priorities so we worked through as many as possible, sometimes prioritising ones that parents felt were most important.

Parents' comments are listed below in bullet points under each of the priorities and under the specific actions for those priorities. Comments from professionals (from when parents' comments were fed back to them later in the meeting) are written in italics. Priorities and actions that were not discussed or commented on in the meeting are not listed.

Priority Continuing professional development for those who work or support children and young people with SEND

- Bring poor schools up to standard of good
- Parents not aware of all the training that exists
- Whole school training
- Train lunchtime supervisors and wider staff e.g. playground staff
- Parents are teaching staff
- Joint parent and teacher training – parents are a great resource
- Improvement of school / parent relationships
- Could consider joint delivery
- Difficult to have all parents at training – parent reps?
- Need continuity from school to home
- *One-stop-shop on SEND info on website*

Action Training provided this year: recognised qualifications for all new SENCOs; qualifications for dyslexia; autism (Early Bird Plus); speech and language (Elkan); effective use of TAs; managing positive behaviour (Team Teach); restorative approach – promoting behaviour that builds and maintains relationships

- Need continuity from school to home
- Match training to need of child
- Evidence of ELKLAN training but not at correct level for child
- TA need to move to next year / class with child
- Quality of training, accreditation, recognised qualification

- Consistency of TAs support is great
- Change of TAs causes problems, all need same training
- Appropriate behavioural training for ASD and LDs
- No training around less common disorders i.e. Prada Willi Syndrome
- Sutton school involved parent in ASD training, good experience
- Beneficial for parents and staff to be trained together
- Too much generalization around ASD training, child specific
- *Parents to co-deliver Level 1 Autism training*
- *Use autism training developed by AET, working with NAS*
- *Join up key messages from parents and staff*

Priority SEND provision needs to be regulated and accountable

- Parent doesn't know what of the statement is being provided
- Don't get anywhere by complaining, going round a loop
- Trust is very important, easily broken down, hard to get back
- Holding schools accountable for delivering statements, also Board of Governors
- Complaints take too long, stressful for parent and nothing changes
- Complaints take energy and strength from parent, county need to be involved
- *SEN Caseworker (START) should help*
- Parents need support to complain / challenge
- Where do I go with social care issues? *Go via social care*
- Evidence and document everything
- Educational Psychologist (EP) is paid by LEA – independence and transparency
- Early EP assessment needed
- EP sooner and more often
- Want EP involved again regularly, things change
- *EP is employed by LA, gives advice within LA framework, not completely independent but linked in with other professionals*
- *EP service information on SEND website*

- SENCo needs to be available to parents
- Holding head teachers to account
- LEAs need to see parents' views of head teachers
- *No statement – go to SENCo, Head, Governors, also PPS*
- *Right to request statutory assessment and reassessment*
- *Ofsted – parents can feedback their views "Parent View"*

Action Parents took part in reviews of mainstream Specialist Provision re: quality of provision

- No parents aware of this

Action PPS Special Edition newsletter comparing attainment, attendance and exclusion with other LAs

- Parents not aware
- Surprised this is only just happening
- What is the value of this?

Priority Parents want to be treated as equal partners

- Diagnosis and change of diagnosis needs to be communicated to all professionals
- Parents need to be at multi-discipline meetings, no closed meetings
- Need to be able to talk to TA each week, not home liaison (worker) who doesn't see child
- More effort needs to be made with feedback when child is non-verbal
- Parents excluded from child's learning
- Pre meeting in advance of statement review with SENCo
- Parents outnumbered by professionals in meeting
- Keyworker / advocacy to attend with you
- *PPS can offer this support, usually (almost always) accepted by school*
- Only speak (with school) when negative feedback
- Parents should be able to see child in school setting
- Papers not given in advance for statement review
- More parents' evenings, staff need to turn up

General comments

- Where is inclusion in the SEND strategy?
- Lack of support after age 5
- *Single plan has same thresholds as statements*
- *National push – child need to be seen within context of family and community – holistic view*
- *SEND Pathfinder information is available*

Feeding back to commissioners and service providers

Commissioners and service providers joined the meeting at 11am. After introductions and going over the ground rules, parents fed back on the priorities and actions from the morning. Comments from professionals are written in italics in the above section.

Update from commissioners:

Jane Ryder-Richardson, Head of Access for Enhanced Services, gave an update on the reforms to SEND at a national level with key highlights from the Children and Families Bill. See **Appendix 1**.

Jane gave a talk on the Single Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, also known as the Single Plan. See **Appendix 2**. Jane asked parents to work in groups with service providers to answer questions on what would a good single assessment look like, what do you value about the current assessment process and system, and what would you like to change? Jane collected parents' responses which she will summarise and use for the development of the single plan.

Finally, Jane told parents that the statutory assessment process is being reduced from 26 to 20 weeks and shared a table which outlines the steps in the old and new processes. See **Appendix 3**. The new process will be practiced on statements from September 2013. Jane asked parents to feedback on how they would like to be involved in drafting statements in the new process. Parents fed back as follows:

- School does it all in advance – parent not involved, no chance to feedback and talk to professionals
- Vulnerable parents – won't ask for help, child not represented
- Ideal situation to involve parents and getting parental permission, what about parents that don't get involved?

Evaluation

We asked parents and professionals to feedback on the meetings by answering a few questions on a flip chart. This was voluntary so unfortunately feedback was not always gathered. Comments from professionals are in italics. See feedback below:

Liked this

- Very good, honest approach
- Request for parent views

Didn't like this

No comments made

More of this

No comments made

Anything else?

No comments made

Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 18th October 2013 from 10am – 2pm at the Ely Cathedral Centre, Ely

pinpoint actions

In response to issues raised at this meeting, we will:

1. Summarise and report findings to the Disabled Children's Action Group and SEND Project Board, and other groups that pinpoint is represented on.
2. Add the network meeting notes, presentations and summary report to the pinpoint website. Share the link in our weekly update.
3. Discuss key issues arising from the district network meetings at the county Partners in Commissioning (SEND) Group meeting in July 2013.

Appendix 1

Update on the Reforms to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

The National Context: SEND Green Paper and proposals for new Children and Families Bill 2013

- ◆ The vision
 - Early recognition and support
 - Staff knowledge, understanding and skills
 - Parents knowing what they can expect from services
 - An integrated assessment and single plan 0-25 years for children and young people with complex needs.
 - Greater control for parents
- ◆ The commitments
 - single assessment process
 - Education, Health and Social Care Plan
 - offer of personal budget
 - a 'Local Offer'
- ◆ Draft Legislation and indicative SEND Code of Practice

Children and Families Bill - Key Highlights

- ◆ Involvement of children, young people and parents at the heart of legislation, including assessments and local offers.
- ◆ More streamlined assessment process, which integrates education, health and care services, and involves CYP and their parents.
- ◆ New 0-25 Education, Health and Care Plan, replacing Statements and Learning Difficulty Assessments, which reflects the child or young person's aspirations for the future, as well as current needs.
- ◆ New requirement for LA, health and care services to commission services jointly to meet the needs of CYP with SEND.
- ◆ LAs to publish a clear, transparent 'local offer' of services for all CYP with SEND, so parents can understand what is available.
- ◆ New statutory protections for young people aged 16-25 in FE, and a stronger focus on preparing for adulthood.

Timetable for the new Code of Practice

- **Stakeholder engagement** - September 2012-January 2013
- **Initial Drafting** - New Year 2013
- **Publish indicative draft of Code to support Parliamentary progress of the Children and Families Bill** - Committee Stage, Spring 2013
- **Public consultation on draft Code** - Autumn 2013
- **Code of Practice laid before Parliament** - Spring 2014
- **Final Code of Practice published** - Spring 2014

This means that there will be opportunities throughout the process to be involved in commenting on the new Code.

Appendix 2

Single Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan

EHC Plan

- ◆ 0 – 25 years
- ◆ A streamlined assessment process, which integrates education, health and care services
- ◆ Children, young people and families are central throughout the process
- ◆ Replaces statements and learning difficulty assessments, and Individual Healthcare Plans (IHP)

EHC Plan

- ◆ Threshold for an EHC plan is the same as for a statement of SEN
- ◆ EHC plans extend statutory rights and rights to appeal to the Tribunal into further education.

We'd like to hear your views...

- ◆ What would a good single assessment look like?
- ◆ What do you value about the current assessment process and system?
- ◆ What would you like to change?

Appendix 3

STATUTORY ASSESSMENT PROCESS

	Request received	Parental Agreement	LA Decision	Statutory Assessment	Drafting	Final and Resources
<p>Current process</p> <p>26 week process</p> <p>Final outcome is a Note in Lieu or Statement of SEN</p>	<p>Request received from school, parent, setting or other professional</p> <p>Day 1 of week 1</p>	<p>LA secures parental permission to consider the request</p> <p>To be received within 29 days</p>	<p>LA decides whether the evidence indicates that it is necessary to undertake a statutory assessment</p> <p>Within 6 weeks a decision must have been made</p>	<p>If agreed LA contacts parents and professionals requesting up to date advice (reports). LA monitors receipt of the advice and gathers the reports submitted</p> <p>Must be received within 16 weeks on the start date</p>	<p>The LA considers the advice submitted. If the advice received supports the drafting of a Statement the LA will agree to issue a draft/proposed Statement If not agreed a Note in Lieu (NiL) will be issued</p> <p>LA issues a draft/proposed or NiL by week 18</p>	<p>Parent/carer has 15 days to respond to the draft statement. At this stage parent/carer can ask for a meeting or just confirm their agreement to the draft Statement. The parent will also indicate their preferred school. LA agrees (through a panel process) the level of resources required to meet the needs detailed</p> <p>Process must be completed within 26 weeks</p>
<p>Proposed Process from September 2014 (TBC)</p> <p>20 week process</p> <p>Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)</p>	<p>Request received from parent, young person (or person acting on their behalf) school or other professionals such as Health, Youth Offending Team</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>LA decides whether the evidence indicates it is necessary to undertake a statutory EHC assessment</p> <p>Within 6 weeks a decision must have been made</p>	<p>If agreed LA contacts parents and professionals to gather the evidence required for a statutory EHC assessment. LA monitors receipt of the advice/reports and gathers the reports submitted</p> <p>Must be received within 12 weeks of the start date</p>	<p>The LA considers the advice submitted. If the advice received supports the drafting of an ECHP the LA will agree to issue a ECHP.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Drafting Process</p>	<p>Parent/carer has 15 days to respond to the draft EHCP, At this stage parent/carer can ask for a meeting or just confirm their agreement to the draft plan. The parent will also indicate their preferred school. LA agrees (through a panel process) the level of resources required to meet the needs detailed. The ECHP will name a setting, school or college.</p> <p>Must be completed within 20 weeks</p>

