

PARENT CONSULTATIVE GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING
held on
11 March 2009 10.00am - 12.00pm
Booker Park Community Special School

Present:

Penny Chadwick	Parent Partnership Coordinator
Helen Davies	Parent Rep, Vale Federation of Schools
Ruth Goodman	Parent Rep, Chiltern Gate School
Glynis Haines	SALT Services
Kathy Forbes	Service Manager, Children and Families Safeguarding
Marie Ostercamp	Parent Rep, AFASIC
Jenny Pearce	Principal Educational Psychologist
Jenny Perkins	General Commissioner
Shami Rait	Senior Educational Psychologist
Sarah Shaw	Parent Rep, South Bucks Downs Syndrome Group
Mark Smith	SEN Manager
Janet Sparrow	Divisional Manager, Achievement and Learning
Yolande Smith	Student Social Worker, PPS
Norma Wallace	Parent Rep, NAS Representative, South Bucks
Suzy Woodmansey	SEN Manager

Chair: Peter Memory Independent Chair

Scribe: Fajita Wheeler Admin Assistant, PPS

		ACTION
1.	Apologies	
	Julie Battersby Janet Burgess Gail Walshe Penni Thorne Andrew Coles Jan Sunman	Children's Information Service SEN Consultant Parent Rep and CAF BAB and BAB Children's Group South Bucks Dyslexia MENCAP

	Peter welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2.	Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising	
	<p>Minutes Correction to minutes of meeting held on 23 October 2008. Sarah Shaw's presence at the meeting was not recorded. Sarah Shaw did attend the meeting (arrived late).</p> <p>Minutes (with the exception of Sarah Shaw's attendance) agreed as a true record and signed by Peter Memory, Chair.</p> <p>Matters Arising Penny Chadwick has altered the PCG terms of reference and queried whether attendees wished to change the name of the group from PCG to Parents Forum. It was agreed that the matter would be discussed at a later date.</p> <p>Penny Chadwick confirmed that the Together for Disabled Children grant of £3,300 was received and thanked everyone for their help. PPS was busy spending it. The post of Participation Worker has not yet been appointed; however, the post has been re-advertised.</p> <p>Penny Chadwick advised that membership is increasing, but has not been looked at yet. This will be reviewed when the Participation Worker is on board.</p>	
3. and 7.	Participation Framework – Consultation: Jenny Perkins and Participation Update: Penny Chadwick	
	<p>Jenny Perkins included item 7 (Participation Update) for discussion together with item 3 (Participation Framework).</p> <p>Jenny Perkins asked attendees if they had all received a copy of the Conference report. As a number of attendees had not received a copy, it was agreed that Penny Chadwick will ensure all PCG members have a copy of the report.</p> <p>Buckinghamshire PP is setting up a new consultative and representative body in the form of Parent Carer Forums. There will be four forums of localised groups. These will be co-facilitated from parents from this group (PCG). The aim is to try to be more accessible to the local community and give parents greater representation. It is also important to ensure that it is participation and not just consultation.</p> <p>Penny Chadwick provided attendees with the Parent Carer Forum Open Meeting document which will be the same for all forums. The aim is that parents are clear that whatever contribution they make, makes a difference. There will be greater more localised representation. The Parent Carer</p>	PC

	<p>Forums is not a model set in stone but PPS has to start somewhere. The plan is to broaden it out to further local areas probably within the local delivery areas. Nationally the core group is called the Parent Forum. Penny Chadwick stated that naming of the group needs to be looked at.</p> <p>Jenny Perkins, Programme Manager, discussed the role of parents in the governance structure. The message is that we should have parent reps across the board.</p> <p>Jenny Perkins provided attendees with “Bucks Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme, Progress Report on Aiming High and Short break Transformation for the Aylesbury” report. Some amendments have been made since the hard copies were circulated. At a meeting in September 2008, it was agreed that there would be two parent representatives from the Forum on the Aiming High Board. Jenny Perkins stated that this is one place where we want to see parent reps. The Expert Group Network is a source of expertise. At the moment it is chaired by Heather Clarke from Safeguarding. Jenny Perkins believes that the working structure of the group will become more formal. In addition they need two parent reps on this group.</p> <p>On 11th March 2009, the forum considered the participation structures and the draft Commissioning Framework for short break services. There is a lot of work to do on workforce development. Another key area is information for parents. A number of strategies for commissioning and representation need to be developed. The government strategy is for more provisioning in school holidays/after school. There is also potential work stream for children on the autistic spectrum. That is the government strategy and they would be looking for parent reps across the board.</p> <p>Penny Chadwick stated that the key is to get parents on board the Expert Group and the Aiming High Board and election papers would be provided. Jenny Perkins stated that the key date is the Away Day on 27.3.09 for which there should be two parent reps. Jenny Perkins and Penny Chadwick will arrange a follow up meeting regarding parent reps.</p> <p>Penny Chadwick advised that the key at this stage is that we are in the early stages of involving parents in a true participatory way. Having meetings in school holidays or over school leaving times is not ideal.</p> <p>Jenny Perkins opinion was that the Board Away date should be kept for board members and two parent reps only. Jenny</p>	<p>PC/JP (Perkins)</p>
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	<p>Perkins agrees with the issues regarding timing of the meetings and these will be changed.</p> <p>Helen Davies was at the Parent Reference Group yesterday and is not clear about how the two groups fit together. There are large forums with large sums of money coming in at speed. Jenny Perkins acknowledged that there are lots of different work-streams with money coming in.</p> <p>Kathy Forbes stated that there needs to be some kind of mapping to avoid duplication. Jenny Perkins agreed and stated that this was one of the reasons that they are looking into the governance structure. Jenny Perkins suggested that perhaps parenting groups should report into one overarching group. Jenny Perkins is meeting with Steven Bagnell and Francis Powell where she will raise the issue of parent representatives on the board.</p> <p>Penny Chadwick is discussing with Linda Cauldwell, Consultant, a project plan for the next two years which will include matters such as courses for parents, getting parents on board and involving them with facilitation. Jenny Perkins advised that one of the things discussed is a job description for parents. Jenny Perkins pointed out that it does indicate the challenges and complexity and puts a strain on parents to attend all of these meetings. Penny Chadwick felt that hopefully as we expand there will not be so much pressure on the core group of parents attending. In addition once the Participation Worker is on board it will help with the full participation model, but there is a lot work to be done between now and the grant period.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Jenny Perkins and Penny Chadwick for their input.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Commissioning Framework – Consultation: Jenny Perkins</p>	
	<p>Jenny Perkins provided attendees with the “Buckinghamshire Commissioning Framework for Short Break Services” report, as she believes that it was important to share with attendees how the money was been spent. There will be even more money next year.</p> <p>Jenny Perkins attended the Commissioning Group in February 2009. The Commissioning Framework for Short Break Services looked at Children’s Trust Vision which is about closing the gap in children’s life chances. A range of services will be developed that will tap into existing funding streams so that there is not dependence on grants in keeping the service going.</p>	

	<p>Jenny Perkins advised that in parallel with the participation worker, there will be several young people's participation workers with one specialising in disability.</p> <p>Jenny Perkins discussed overnight services and stated that one of the aims is maintaining current beds and also extending services to those who do not want overnight service. Also discussed were activity based short breaks and activity based universal services supporting children and skilling up services. There is a broad range of children whose parents need support, particularly Aspergers and we will be looking to use non-aiming high facilities to bolster those services.</p> <p>Money will be spent on additional commissioners and participation workers. Additional money will also be available from the PCT.</p> <p>Jenny Perkins stated that they are struggling with establishing how many children will need the service. There is 3-4 times as much short break provision. The estimate is 500 children, however, she believes that there are many more children based on DLA and statement figures. Jenny Perkins discussed the figures in the report. She stated that the figures are based on a one week snap-shot so may not necessarily be representative. The Gap Analysis accords with the national picture and confirms that we have not got adequate community based services.</p> <p>Jenny Perkins summarised the observations from parents. Some parents believed there was not adequate funding, others felt services were not provided regularly enough and that principles were skipped over. Table 4 details the Full Service offer which is what the national requirements are and the right hand column is our thinking so far.</p> <p>Also discussed were significant breaks during the day for example for foster carers and expansion of weekend clubs for autistic children. Jenny Perkins will be looking at tendering/re-tendering the overnight residential service which would be easier to manage if there was one management structure. Complex health through providing nurses across the service is still out for decision which is due to happen this week. Jenny Perkins needs to look at how we use various units and nights of the week. Jenny Perkins is making sure that between them they all hit the service priorities. There will be additional training for care workers. Separate reviews are taking place of how we can use 'take a break'. Funding for 14+ is also been looked at</p>	
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	<p>and the Tomley Centre is also looking at this as part of the capital spend. The Summary of income and Expenditure in the report gives an idea of how money will be spent. There is twice as much in year 2 as this is a full year.</p> <p>Jenny Perkins asked if there were any observations. Penny Chadwick advised that there are a few parents who could not make the meeting today. Penny has emailed these parents and knows they will have observations to submit.</p> <p>Penny Chadwick asked if it was the Expert Group that makes the decisions. Jenny Perkins stated that ultimately it will be the Board, then at the Away Days. She stated that there needs to be separate meetings with parents.</p> <p>In response to a query as to who from the PCT was involved in these discussions, Jenny Perkins confirmed that it was Chris Petforde, Andrea West and Elaine Coleridge-Smith.</p> <p>Jenny Perkins asked if people were broadly supportive of proposals. Ruth Goodman felt that it will remain to be seen and that it is a challenge. Attendees were broadly supportive of the proposals.</p> <p>Jenny Perkins stated that there are still many decisions to be made.</p> <p>Norma Wallace pointed out that the other part about Aiming High is that there is also money coming in for transition. Ruth Goodman added that there is also another strand of funding for transition from primary to secondary school.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Jenny Perkins for her presentation and work.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>SEN Update: Janet Sparrow</p>	
	<p>Janet Sparrow stated the items to be discussed, namely:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed update on SEN • Headline data SEN • Data Set from Department of Education <p>The recently received Data Set lists the statistics in Bucks compared with other local authorities. Although Janet refers to the SEN statement figure of 2,300, this is now approaching 2,700. There has been a significant increase over the last year. The pattern seems to be duplicated nationally over the last year. There are a number of reasons for this. The 14-19 Agenda means that there will be more</p>	

	<p>children staying on at 16+ at school and retaining their Statement. Currently a 16+ statement ceases but that will change, therefore more young people will retain Statements up to age 19.</p> <p><u>Headline Data</u> Up until April 2008 performance in the SEN process was based on the ability to issue SEN proposals within 18 weeks. By the end of 2008 year, we were achieving 96.8% excluding exceptions, 91% including exceptions.</p> <p>Having reached that point, the government changed the way of judging performance. From April 2008, the measure was based on the ability to issue FINAL statements within 28 weeks. Currently there is no benchmarking data. A target of 75% has been set by Janet Sparrow which is being achieved but we are anxious to find out how other local authorities are performing so that we can set a target for Bucks. Mark Smith's view is that 75% is a good target at this stage.</p> <p>Performance of children with SEN is another measure. This includes School Action, School Action Plus and Statements. The first measure is performance at KS2 and the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 and above in English and Maths. The latest data in Bucks is that 37% of children are at Level 4+. This compares with 31% nationally, so our performance is good.</p> <p>The measure at KS4 is the percentage of children achieving 5 GCSE A* including English and Maths. In Bucks 22.8% achieved this which compares with 9.4% nationally. Therefore Bucks is doing exceptionally well.</p> <p>Another indicator is the Achievement Gap which is the gap between children with SEN and those with no identified special needs at the end of KS2 and KS4. They have been tasked by the government at narrowing those gaps. However, because Bucks is high achieving (ranking First in the country), it means if children with no identifiable needs are performing 'right up there', there will be a significant gap to close.</p> <p>In September an Achievement and Learning Workshop was held to look at what we needed to do to close the gap. It was concluded that we should not just focus on closing the gap, but on raising achievement of children with SEN. The ideas from the workshop were taken to the SEN consultation Group in November. From that a working plan was developed to look at what we can do to improve children</p>	
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	<p>with SEN. This will go back to the Consultative Group on 2.4.09. There is no additional money attached to this.</p> <p>Helen Davies pointed out that those figures are based on children largely in mainstream schools. Janet Sparrow stated that the Government is very keen to measure us against children who do not have SEN. Achieving level 4+ is clearly never going to be achievable for SEN children. Although we cannot aspire to those levels we need to ensure we are challenging children and schools to raise achievement.</p> <p>A new target setting/monitoring the system has been introduced (CASPER) which is used by 19 local authorities in the South East. Data from 19 LA's can produce benchmarks and give schools an expected level of progress of an individual child. It will enable our schools to demonstrate progress. Janet Sparrow stated that CASPER will give schools benchmarking setting targets.</p> <p><u>Jenny Pearce</u></p> <p>Jenny Pearce discussed the service delivery of EPS. There will be a re-focus of the service on the most vulnerable children in society. Various groups have been consulted and a model is slowly developing. Jenny Pearce can attend a longer session in the June meeting if required.</p> <p>Headlines from the consultation process:-</p> <p>Open Access system to EP with referral criteria. Jenny is hoping that the system will be online. The idea is that any EWO, parent, social worker etc. can phone or email and have a discussion about that person or child. If the criteria is met, an online form can be completed. This will provide greater accessibility and will give parents more access to the service.</p> <p>Another thing being developing is a specialist therapeutic role. It is important to have someone who is a specialist for example in ASD or dyslexia. One or two EP's will have a particular interest in that area and will provide support to other EP's or school. Some secondary schools are concerned that EP's will spend less time in those schools. These schools rely on EPs to help with children who do not fit the criteria such as children experiencing bereavement. 'Drop-in' sessions will also be provided on a half-termly basis where they can book in staff or parents for a 20-30 minute session and is another mechanism for schools.</p> <p>Jenny Pearce is happy to bring some paperwork relating to</p>	
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<p>the matters discussed above for attendees.</p> <p>Sarah Shaw approved of the idea of open access.</p> <p>In looking at referrals Jenny Pearce can see that the service is not getting to vulnerable people.</p> <p>Sarah Shaw wanted to know how this new information will be communicated to parents. Jenny Pearce has not yet decided this but believes that some will be by word of mouth, some via forums. Jenny Perkins suggested informing professionals such as doctors.</p> <p>Mark Smith stated that one example of releasing EP time is that when a statutory assessment is received for example in a sensory or hearing impairment case, there is likely to have been EP involvement/report. Therefore the panel already has that information and there is duplication.</p> <p>The Chair asked if there is going to be a charge for the new service. Jenny Pearce advised that there will be no charge as it is still centrally funded.</p> <p>JS asked what age the service covers. Jenny Pearce confirmed that the EP service covers age 0-19, although in practice it mainly covers age 2-16.</p> <p>Helen Davies wanted to know if the criteria had been set yet. Jenny Pearce stated that the aim was having enough structure so that the service was not overwhelmed but also retaining flexibility. Jenny Pearce will bring the criteria document in June.</p> <p>The Chair stopped procedures due to time constraints.</p> <p><u>Suzy Woodmansey</u> Suzy Woodmansey is due to go on maternity leave so this is her last meeting until after her maternity leave.</p> <p>The main thing that Suzy Woodmansey is looking at is banding of statements. They have moved to a new banding system for special schools. Since last April Suzy Woodmansey has been working on ensuring that the system is robust enough. They ran 100 statements through the system and realised that they needed more complexity/detail. Various LA's were looked at and they decided to team up with Warwickshire as it is similar in size to Bucks (Bucks has 30 departments). They were using banding and a matrix as used by Birmingham. Suzy Woodmansey's team did not want to create a new system</p>	<p>JP (Pearce)</p>
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	<p>and re-invent' the wheel.</p> <p>They have adopted a new system for special schools whereby a matrix is used to determine funding for special schools. A meeting has been set up with special schools in a couple of weeks. The Head teachers have submitted the information and carried out a moderation exercise.</p> <p>From this April to next April, they effectively will have the same budget (taking into account inflation) and will shadow this with the new matrix.</p> <p>The next stage is resources for additionally resourced provision. They need to find a system that balances their budgets. The stage after that is individual statements in which a matrix will be used which tells us what provision they need (but not funding). The process is taking a long time but they do not want to launch too quickly and get it wrong. The new system will shadow the existing system and the budget will run as it is on the old system.</p> <p>They will get a new budget for April 2010. One of the things that came out of the consultation is that Bucks is in one of the higher funding authorities. The Consultant was quite alarmed at the amount of money put into pupils but this was defended quite strongly by Suzy Woodmansey's team.</p> <p>Mark Smith stated that Bucks are quite generous compared to our neighbours and Suzy Woodmansey added that there are certain projects which they want to continue with high funding.</p> <p>Norma Wallace noted that the funding perhaps reflects the high achievement of Bucks. However, although there are more resource provision and more placements we still send children out of county.</p> <p>Suzy Woodmansey agreed that we have very good provision in county.</p> <p>Norma Wallace wanted to know if they are sending children out of county that they cannot meet the provision for. Suzy Woodmansey stated that this was not necessarily the case. They are carrying out a major review of provision. There is a lot happening and the pressure is on to make things happen.</p> <p>Norma Wallace believes that there have been massive leaps.</p>	
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	<p>Helen Davies wanted to know if the matrix will be published on statements. Suzy Woodmansey stated that it would not be published as it would not make sense. The matrix is quite complex and lifting common phrases from the matrix onto the statement will not mean anything for example 'A10'.</p> <p>Suzy Woodmansey provided an explanation of how it works:- Children are banded A, B or C, then 1-10 on different variables in different areas of need. The highest need is C10 (C is severe and 10 is the most complex of needs). Then account is taken of the average cost of all children and SEN across the schools. Mainstream schools will be mainly A's and B's.</p> <p>Penny Chadwick stated that parents will want to know the criteria. Helen Davies also believes that the criteria is relevant to parents.</p> <p>Mark Smith advised that there is a new provision for ASD in Aylesbury at Oak Green in September, which takes into account the reduction at Elmhurst. Stoney Dean special school will be re-designated as communication and interaction. The school already has specialist school status.</p> <p>Mark also discussed the increase in statutory assessments which is 6% up on last year. He is trying to unpick why that is the case. Nationally there is a confused picture. Mark believes there are a number of reasons, one of which is that they are seeing more and more complex children who are surviving due to medical advances. There is also an increase in ASD and an increase in identification of these groups and others such as children with mental health problems.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the team for their presentation.</p>	
6.	SALT Update: Glynis Haines	
	<p>Glynis Haines apologised for her absences. A change of email address meant that she was not aware of a lot of the meetings and she apologised for this.</p> <p>Glynis Haines advised that SALT is understaffed. They have employed 4 new therapists, one in hearing impairment, one in physical disability and 2 in the mainstream schools teams. There is a huge waiting time for CRB's which slows the recruitment process considerably.</p> <p>There is going to be a letter going to parents agreed by the LA and PCT, week commencing 23.3.09 explaining the</p>	

	<p>interim measures taking place whilst the staffing of the SLT Service is being resolved.</p> <p>Glynis Haines praised the Local Authority for their generous funding of SLT services. The SLT Services in most other counties provide a consultative model of therapy for school age children, where each therapist is given an allocation of schools and just supports those schools. Those therapists are leaving and coming to Bucks as they do not feel that they are able to support children effectively in this way. Bucks are providing large funding to children with SEN to support those children.</p> <p>The LA and PCT cannot afford to continue statementing children. It is the right time now to look at the most equitable and effective way of targeting support. If the SLT service can en-skill staff at school we would be able to support children more effectively. The SLT service is currently delivering the Collaborative Language Support for Schools, CLaSS, project in 3 new schools in Bucks to gather evidence to support the delivery of a broader range of services for statemented pupils in mainstream schools. There are more and more schools requesting to become involved which is encouraging.</p> <p>The Integrated Service, consisting of SLTs working collaboratively with Specialist Teachers from the Cognition and Learning Team, is currently being delivered in 8 schools. The HELP4Schools project produced highly statistically significant evidence of the benefits of this way of working to develop a whole school approach but the cost of the service is prohibitive, particularly for smaller schools.</p> <p>Glynis Haines is looking at secondary provision and researching different ways of supporting these pupils. We need to be assured that the SLT services for these pupils are effective.</p> <p>The SLT Service is also discussing with the Specialist Teaching Service ways of reviewing the service provision for statemented pupils to ensure that the children are receiving the service they most require at the time. This would save money but it would need to be based on clinical findings of professionals in discussion with schools.</p> <p>The mindset of mainstream teaching staff needs to change to ensure that a child who has SLT on his/her statement still requires the involvement of all the teaching staff and does not become totally reliant on the specialists' input.</p>	
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	<p>Jenny Perkins is concerned about outcomes and where to get the most for your money.</p> <p>Norma Wallace queried whether it was valid that Oxfordshire/Beds/Bucks PCT is seeing what we spend our money on.</p>	
7.	Included in item 3 above.	
8.	<p>Date and time of the next meetings</p> <p>Pre-Meeting 20/5/09 PCG 24/6/09</p> <p>Pre-meeting 16/9/09 PCG 14/10/09</p>	