



East Devon Parent Carers' Voice
Notes from the meeting held on Wednesday 16th September 2008 – Exmouth Leisure
Centre, Exmouth

Present:

7 Parents

Nicky Ruane Development Worker

Louise Edmonds Activity Scheme Co-ordinator

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Nicky welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Louise Edmonds.

Apologies had been received from 5 parents who were unable to make the meeting

2. East Devon Activity Scheme

Louise began by telling everyone how she felt the scheme had worked over the holidays. She felt that it was very positive. All families had the days they had requested. There had been several trips.

All the schemes had different mixes of children with several children accessing different locations. Throughout the summer the schemes provided consistency of staff and the children attending had choices of activities.

Staff at the schemes had undergone training in different areas, which included tube feeding and epilepsy.

They had received much positive feedback from families. The children attending the schemes had enjoyed themselves and the staff were happy.

On the negative side the weather was awful and one of the locations was not as suitable as they would like.

Due to the current staff restructure they are unable to recruit at present so no more referrals are being accepted.

Unfortunately not all care plans were completed prior to the holiday, and also, two young people have decided not to use the scheme.

Louise advised everyone that there would be a team day on 22nd November and wondered whether a parent would like to attend to give feedback on their perception of the scheme.

Parents then discussed how they had found the scheme and any issues they had.

Several parents had raised concerns over their allocation of days. Another issue was with the amount of available space. Louise acknowledged that there had been problems with one of the venues and they were looking for an alternative. At present the choice was whether to run the scheme and work with the problems whilst looking for an alternative venue or whether to close the scheme until another location could be found. She felt it was better for families to continue with the scheme whilst looking for an alternative site.

Where care plans had not been updated some important information had not been noted, such as toileting needs. Louise agreed that this was not acceptable and assured parents that this problem should be overcome before the next holiday.

It was suggested by parents that they could be given some care plan/information sheets on which they could use to notify activity scheme staff of any changes that they need to be aware of with regard to their children.

There were also issues around privacy when conversations with carers were overheard. This had been taken on board and will not happen in the future.

It was felt by many parents that the scheme in Exmouth worked better for younger children and it may be necessary for the ages to be split to ensure that the older children/young people are not bored and have access to age appropriate materials and activities.

Parents had found the booking grid better. Louise advised everyone that allocations were currently being done for the period up until Christmas.

There followed a discussion around activities for children with sensory impairments.

3. Joint Agency Service – update and questions

Ali Grew was at the meeting to represent the Joint Agency Service and to answer any questions from families.

She began by explaining a little about the structure of the teams and the managers who were heading up the Integrated Assessment Team and the Complex Cases Team.

Ali went on to talk to some individual issues and to either advise the families or to take some details and forward them to the relevant person when she returned to the office.

4. Any Other Business

Parent Partnership

There will be a new parent partnership officer for the East Devon area starting shortly. It is hoped that she will attend the meetings regularly to answer any questions that families have to do with educational issues.

They also offer several training/information sessions that may help families. They can offer a short 30 minute information session on:

- Conflict resolution
- Assertiveness
- Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus
- Disability Discrimination and the Disability Equality Duty

Longer, awareness raising sessions lasting approximately 2½ hours are also available on the following subjects:

- How schools meet the needs of children with special educational needs
- Managing meetings
- Children with SEN reaching their potential

Conversation days

Details of the 3 conversation events were given out together with the contact information for reserving a place at these events.

Since the meeting these events have been postponed until later in the year, possibly November. Details will be announced as they become available.

Restraint training

Nicky is currently looking to secure some training on restraint techniques for families. It is proving a little difficult to find a trainer/suitable course. Further information will be circulated when more is known.

Transport

Lois raised the issue of transport. She is aware that there have been several problems with school transport and hopes that this will be looked at by the County Forum in the near future. If any parent/carer has experienced problems with transport could they please let either herself or Nicky know so we take these issues forward.

Nicky apologised again for the hurried change of venue and thanked everyone for attending.

Date of next meeting:

Wednesday 19th November

Venue to be confirmed