



East Devon Parent Carers' Voice
Notes from the meeting held on Tuesday 13th October 2009 – Heathfield Inn, Honiton

Present:

7 parents

Nicky Ruane Development Worker

Apologies:

Apologies were received from 3 parents

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Lois welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave apologies from those parents who were unable to attend.

It was explained that the aim of the meeting was to have a session where parents could discuss any problems or issues, look at who parents felt they would like to attend future meetings and what training or information they felt they needed.

2. Issues and problems

Schools and Statements

Some parents mentioned that there seems to be a long delay in receiving an amended statement following their child's annual review. This was felt probably due to the amount of work that is being dealt with by CSET. At the moment it does not seem to be causing problems.

There followed a discussion around SEN funding and what schools can spend their money on and how parents can check whether the money is being spent as it should be. Lois agreed to contact Jeanette Kemlo and see whether this could be discussed at the County Forum.

Flu jabs

Lois reminded everyone that Carers are entitled to receive a flu jab. Any parent who wishes to have one should contact their local GP and ask for one.

East Devon Activity Scheme

The scheme in Exmouth appeared to run well over the summer. Some concern was raised over whether the size of the room used is sufficient for the number of children, although it was acknowledged that most of the time the children were going out and not staying in the whole day.

Parents wanted to know who would be in charge of the scheme now that Louise had left. Nicky agreed to contact Glenn and ask.

One parent had experienced problems with the scheme in Honiton. On one occasion the medication she had sent in with her child was lost and could not be found at the end of the day. The medication was found later and sent home with another parent who picked her child up on

another occasion. There were also reported incidents of staff giving children food or drink that they should not have. It was suggested that the parent put their concerns in writing to Glenn.

Transport to CEDA

There are several parents in the Exmouth area who now use CEDA during holidays or after school. They felt that it might be worth running a bus from the Exmouth area daily for those families. Nicky agreed to mention it to CEDA so they were aware of this and to ask whether there would be any possibility of arranging this.

I have since spoken with Trish Oliver at CEDA. They do not have the transport to be able to offer this at the moment however, they are hoping to get another bus at some point and if they have the capacity to do so they will look at this.

Training

Parents still feel that one of their needs is for training around staying safe and how to handle violent and aggressive situations safely. Being told to 'walk away' or 'get out of the room' is not always an option and parents want training.

Dealing with stress or anger was also an area that parents felt would be of benefit to them.

Parents had found the talk by Chris West extremely useful and interesting and it was discussed whether she could be invited again to go into some areas in more depth.

How to support siblings was another area parents felt they might like some guidance in.

3. Other questions

School funding

It was queried what the responsibilities of mainstream schools were in relation to children with additional needs and whether it would be worth having a session for parents clearing up some of the common problems and misconceptions.

Keyworkers

It was queried who the replacement parent carer keyworker is for East Devon. Nicky was asked to contact the Joint Agency Service and find out.

4. Any other business

Charles Holme is to retire fully soon. It was thought that his remaining list was to be taken over by Karen Street.

Nicky shared with parents the plans for the Integrated Children's Services Assessment Team process which will be the way that all new cases will be handled from 9th October. It is hoped that the new process will mean that referrals are dealt with more quickly and that families will not have to repeat the same information to many different professionals.

Nicky asked parents a question she had been sent as part of a consultation exercise

"How do you know when a children's worker is working to get the best for your child/children?"

Nicky will forward the responses to Annie Moore at Devon County Council.

Lois thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Date of next meeting:

Tuesday 1st December

Venue to be confirmed, but provisionally Honiton

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