

**Minutes of a meeting of the PiP Parent Forum
Held on Tuesday 28 February at 10.00 am**

Present: Jane Poulter, Nicole Sowrey-Lewin, Jane Henderson, Diana Albiston, Sarah-Jane Orr, Gaynor Fuller, Julie Newton-Smith, Jane Speller, Agnieszka Gebka

Apologies: Karen Reid, Louise Jones

ACTION TABLE

Item No	ACTION	BY WHOM	WHEN
2	Meeting to agree a second draft of the reasonable adjustments booklet with Judith Lunnon (SEND school improvement officer)	JS/AG	By end of March
3	Talk to Alison Farmer about SEND review consultants' proposal to organise some 'best practice' visits to other LAs.	JS/AG	By end of March
4	Schedule rolling programme of visits to SEND parent groups in schools and nursery settings	JS	By end of March
5	Investigate what happened to the findings of the short break consultation undertaken in December 2015 and locate missing questionnaires (involve George Riley)	CB	Asap
5	Schedule a meeting with CB/PiP parents to go through the data from short breaks consultation	All	April
5	Schedule a meeting with CB and the PiP parent forum in May and November each academic year	JS	Asap
5	Inform parent forum about progress regarding production of new stand-alone Local Offer website	CB	Asap
6	Email a list of key areas of Parent Forum work to individual members of forum for them to express an interest	JS	Asap
9	Give a short presentation on wikis	JP	April's parent forum meeting
9	Follow up on establishing parent reference group with Alison Farmer	AG	By end of March
9	Find out plans for re-location of Croydon Mencap's Chill n Chat group back to Malling Close as promised	JS/AG	Asap

1. Welcome and Apologies

Jane S welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave Karen and Louise's apologies for missing it. Everyone present briefly introduced themselves.

2. Minutes of last meeting

These were agreed as a true and accurate record of the Parent Forum meeting held on 24 January.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

A meeting to agree a second draft of the reasonable adjustments booklet will be scheduled with Judith Lunnon in March.

4. Update on parent forum work

AG informed the group about the Lloyds Bank presentation due to take place in March. This is an interesting piece of work initiated by a parent, where a team from PiP will join her in meeting staff from the bank to talk about barriers and pathways to young people with additional needs/disabilities using a bank's services. Part of this will be to offer some free awareness training, ongoing support and workshops for staff.

JS informed the group about the suggestion of the Independent SEND Review consultants organising some 'best practice visits' to other LAs.

A question was asked about who would decide which authorities were deemed to be examples of best practice. AG and JS will follow up on this with Alison Farmer.

JS told the group of PiP's intention to organise a rolling programme of visits to school/nursery SEND parent groups to reach out to as wide a group of parents as possible, support the work being done by SENCOs and raise awareness of PiP's services. She asked for a show of hands for who would be interested in taking part in these and will follow up with individuals after the meeting.

JS reported that she had recently attended the South London cluster meeting of the NNPCF (National Network of Parent Carer Forums) in Lewisham with DA.

5. Meeting Caroline Baxter, Assistant Director of 0-65 Disability Service

Caroline joined the meeting at 10.45 and introduced herself. She emphasised that she is keen to develop honest and open dialogue with parents/carers, to work in partnership and deliver maximum value for every £ spent by the LA. She wants to hear what the LA is doing right and wrong and what areas are

most in need. She invited us to do that collectively as a group or book a personal appointment with her if necessary.

She made a promise that 'communication will be better.'

Caroline wants to ensure the voice of children and young people themselves is better represented.

A list of individual questions, comments and issues raised in this session with Caroline is attached below.

At the request of the PF, CB will look into the short break consultation which took place in December 2015 and locate the questionnaires which have gone missing. Once she has found them and contacted George Riley to find out more about this piece of work, a meeting will be arranged with PiP to start going through the data.

It was agreed that the PF would meet twice each year with CB, in May and November.

Caroline passed on a message from Alison Farmer to say that the parent reference group for the 0-25 service would be established in 3 months' time.

6. Roles and responsibilities of steering group members

JS will email a list of areas of work for the PF and ask people to respond individually with an expression of interest in what they would like to be involved with. In general it's PiP's intention to have a group of informed, confident parents representing Croydon's diverse population to inform the LA's decisionmaking and plans for 0-25 SEND provision.

Jane emphasised again that playing a part in the PF is not dependent on being present in meetings. Different areas include, for example:

- Wikis
- Short breaks
- Research/learning from webinars
- Attending training/workshop sessions
- Participating in consultations
- LA transport policy
- Transition to adulthood

7. Parent forum training sessions

Jane P is proposing to run some training sessions for Parent Forum members, with the aim of giving them appropriate tools and skills to be effective parent reps, as well as giving the group a chance to bond and get to know one another.

Proposed dates for this training are 20th and 21st April. Two consecutive days with the need to attend both if at all possible to get maximum benefit from the training. More details and times will be circulated nearer the time.

8. Upcoming events

Information was given about the NNPCF (National Network of Parent Carer Forums) event being run on 16th March in Southwark. JS invited anyone interested in attending to join her.

She also informed the group about the Challenging Behaviour event being run by PiP on 30th March at Bernard Weatherill House in the Community Space. A flyer advertising the event would be posted to the secret Facebook group and sent out to the mailing list.

9. Any other business

Jane Poulter will give a short presentation about wikis, including the wiki which was in development for the parent forum, at the meeting in April.

AG expressed her disappointment that the SEND 0-25 parent reference group has been delayed for for another 3 months and will follow that up with Alison Farmer.

10. Date and time of next meeting

The meeting scheduled for 14 March will not be a full parent forum meeting and will instead be used for a working group to look at the reasonable adjustments booklet. Please do come along if you are interested in this.

The next meeting of the Parent Forum is 20th April.

Questions and issues raised with Caroline Baxter, Assistant Director of 0-65 Disability, Croydon
Tuesday 28th February 2017

Q: There are have been many consultations in Croydon but rarely any feedback to the parents who have taken the trouble to get involved. For example, nothing has come of the short breaks consultation in December 2015. Where is the end result from this? How can you ensure there will be proper communication with parents to inform them of actions coming out of pieces of work like that?

A: CB has identified communication as a main priority and recognises there is insufficient communication from the Croydon LA. When researching Croydon before being in post, she was unable to find the Local Offer.

Developing a good Local Offer is a priority. The day before CB had been to the ICT commissioning board with a business case for a stand-alone Local Offer website. The statutory requirement for the website is that it is 0-25 but CB wants Croydon to have an all-age one.

Q: Will someone be employed to oversee implementation of that website?

A: Yes

Q: Will there be a website designer?

A: Yes. It will go out to tender. CB is clear that the website needs to follow the '3 click rule' of easy navigation of a website, to provide the information people need in 3 clicks.

Q: What are the next steps for the Local Offer website?

A: The business case will go to the council Board for ratification and the tender process for the website will subsequently be confirmed.

Q: Many people don't realise there is currently nobody managing the i-count service in Croydon. Could PiP and George Riley (0-25 SEND Social Care) manage i-count?

A: For information, CB told the forum that in Kingston and Richmond local families had felt strongly that they didn't want their children's details to be held by a non-statutory body under any circumstances. Ultimately the local community would need to make the decision about who managed it when PiP have given further consideration to this issue.

Q: What is happening about short breaks? Will a report be published following the short breaks consultation (December 2015)?

A: CB is hearing from many groups that outcomes from different consultations aren't being fed back. She has no knowledge of this specific consultation, only being in post since November, but will look into the findings from it as a matter of urgency.

Q: How can you ensure you have high quality staff working at the LA who won't leave Croydon? There are many cases of emails bouncing back to parents and them finding out, for example, that their social worker left a week ago.

A: Croydon are working on this. New tax rules (IR35) coming into force from 6 April will affect the employment of locums and there is likely to be a turnover of staff. But there is currently a big recruitment drive with good opportunities in Croydon.

Q: You've talked about the 'agile working' spirit of the LA with very flexible working hours for council employees. Please could you ask your teams to make their availability and hours explicit to parents, so they know when they can expect to be able to contact key people.

A: CB will ask staff to include working hours on their email sign-off.

Q: Is there the possibility of really bringing about joint commissioning with Health?

A: CB has only had a 30 minute conversation with the CCG so far. A much more joined up approach is need. CB can't give an answer on Health yet.

Issues raised with Caroline, to be reviewed as part of rolling agenda.

A lot of young people with ASD don't fulfil the criteria for direct payment assessment and depend on the Local Offer, but there's nothing there for them. What can be done about this?

How can Croydon support the large group of families/young people receiving no financial support in the Borough?

There are no published criteria for access to assessment.
CB has just written the assessment criteria for children's social care

Lack of information is the biggest issue in Croydon. There is insufficient information provide by schools, including special schools.

Caseworkers writing EHCPs need more training. Parents have to push all the time and tell them what needs to be done. They need more training in how to write the plans.

School places are limited and mainstream schools don't suit every child. Are there any plans for more special schools?

There seems to be quite good provision for sporty activities, but other activities need to be made available to encourage friendships and independence.

Families' interests in short breaks is often less about respite and more about wanting a social element for their child, to experience things without them.