

## *Nottingham City Parents'/Carers' Forum : December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2008*

### *Agenda :*

- Welcome/Introduction
- Launch event - February 4th, Council House 10.00-2.00pm
- Toby Beck, Project Officer AHDC : Progress so far!
- Findings from October 22nd meeting
- Links with AHDC Steering Group and Parents'/Carers' Shadow Board
- Future information topics

### *Launch event :*

It would be useful to invite Cara Holland to the next forum meeting (Jan 14<sup>th</sup>) to tell parents what she has in mind for the parents' vision part of this, and for her to hear what parents are saying now. She can then start to produce a graphic which accurately represents the starting point (ie now) and this will be added to on the day.

### *Comments raised during Toby Beck's presentation :*

- Satisfied parents rarely speak up
- If you are too vocal about what you get, you might have it taken away
- Places at Crocus Fields have been reduced - parents would take up more places if they were offered
- Concerns voiced over providers/organisations not delivering what they are contracted to do
- Constant reorganisation of services means lack of consistent support and periods of much poorer quality of support
- Services need to be sustained - families can't do constant change
- Getting information about what's available to parents/families is key
- Offers and invitations for children to join in universal activities are there, but too often staff don't seem to have the skills to support them appropriately and things go wrong
- Support groups for parents in special schools - Asian parents would benefit from the opportunity to learn from staff and to have experience of being around children with complex needs (*Asian father*)
- It would be good to have somebody come in to the home, do things with the children or take them out and give parents a break in their home
- Providers should be expected to give development opportunities for children within all activities they offer

- It is unacceptable for parents to be asked to take children home from school because they are having a wobbly day
- Children at Wheldon School are in isolation booths for up to 5 hours per day
- Training for teachers (around SEN) is optional - good to hear there is currently government agenda around training the workforce, both in teaching and social care

### ***Responses from October 22<sup>nd</sup>***

- Most parents had access to the internet at home (14/17)
- Overwhelming majority wanted forum meetings during the day and in the same place (but there will be one evening meeting for parents who are unable to meet during the day)
- Children of parents attending forum are aged 0-19 years, but most are between 5-16 years (8 under 11 years, 13 over 11 years)
- 9 families use short breaks, mainly school playschemes
- 11 don't use short breaks, for a variety of reasons eg transport difficulties, lack of confidence that staff can meet child's needs
- 10 parents said they would like a short information session at each meeting of the Forum; none said they wouldn't like an information session (see also notes from that meeting)

### ***Representation on AHDC Steering Group and Shadow Board :***

3 parents agreed to attend these meetings -

- Jane Renton and Susan Law will attend the AHDC Steering Group, starting on Dec 9<sup>th</sup> at 2.30pm, Mary Potter Centre
  - Helene Trabuc will attend the Shadow Board meetings, starting Dec 11<sup>th</sup>
- Edwina will contact Marie Halford and Jacqueline Lockhart to make them aware who is attending and find out details of venues, child-care etc

There was discussion about the format of the representation and we agreed that :

- Parents representing the views of the forum should be mindful that they are not just taking their own views/stances
- The forum facilitator (currently Edwina) will note comments made during forum meetings to be taken to the groups
- Views/comments from the forum should be made available to the AHDC Steering Group/Shadow Board prior to the meeting
- Not every comment will be raised but there should be an expectation that those which are particularly relevant to agenda items will be raised
- Feedback will be expected by the forum - at the next meeting, on-line etc

***Future information at forum meetings :***

- Cara Holland to be invited to attend January 14<sup>th</sup>
- Education issues - parents would like to be able to raise concerns with an education professional. Edwina - try to arrange an evening event end January (Thurs 22<sup>nd</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> or Mon/Tues 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup>); same venue but maybe upstairs room?
- Transition? Feb 25<sup>th</sup> - Amanda Payne