



**SEND**

Special Educational  
Needs and Disability

# **SEND Parent Consultation Sessions Spring 2017**



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April 2017



## Introduction

Earlier this year, families of children and young people who have special educational needs were invited to attend three open meetings with Jane Black, Service Director for Education, and Julie le Masurier, Head of SEND Services, to discuss anything of interest or concern to them in an informal setting.

The meetings took place in Penzance, Camborne and Bodmin. This was the first time this type of informal session had been held, and as such the meetings developed organically, led by the participants. Family members each spoke, sharing their own experiences and questions. Several people commented that they found the meeting supportive and being able to speak to Jane and Julie directly was helpful.

## Points raised

**Having limited access to after school and breakfast clubs at special schools**



**Parents' involvement in the Local Offer**



**Specific positive feedback about helpful services and individuals was received**



**Concerns relating to accessing support at a specific school were described.**



## Answers

Options currently available at some special schools are based on previous individual arrangements and circumstances. All special schools have been approached and are very willing to explore, with families, a range of options for the future. Please contact your individual school.

Families present were not aware that parents are actively involved in the review and development of the SEND Local Offer. If you would like to be more involved in the SEND Local Offer, please see details on the [website](#).

Feedback has been shared with staff and service managers. Thank you for your feedback.

Council staff have since worked with people at the school and addresses specific points.

**A parent enquired whether Doubletrees special school's hydrotherapy pool was sometimes closed due to funding shortages.**



It has been confirmed that the pool has to be closed each time it is fouled by a pupil. Pupils are time tabled, as far as possible, to reduce the risk of this happening in the early part of the week to limit how many children are affected. The school is also currently looking into a more efficient filtering/cleansing system.

**Waiting time on services within school (paid for services) until enough pupils need it.**



The impact of charging for services has been raised with the service managers. Charging is necessary for the services to continue, and schools also need to make the best use of the funding they have. When needs are critical, schools will engage charged for services without delay. Most services to schools are provided free at the point of use.

**Parents being advised to consider home education by members of Council staff.**



The legal guidance on home education has been reconfirmed with all education services. Some families wish to electively home educate and that is their right, but no family should feel that they need to explore this option for education unless they want to.

**Difficulty in finding out who does what in relation to education on the Council website.**



The site will be adjusted soon to include clearer information about responsibilities and contacts.

**Some schools are not really listening to the views of parents and parents do not always feel they are equal partners.**



Jane Black is determined that this must improve and will discuss Parents as Partners with Headteachers across Cornwall in the summer term at the Headteacher Information Sessions, which happen termly.

**The risk that schools will say they can meet a child's needs because they have to in law even when they are very worried and may not be able to do so in practice.**



This will also be discussed with school staff at the Headteacher Information Sessions and be a focus at the conference for special educational needs co-ordinators in May.

**Parents want clear information about when a school can and cannot exclude a pupil and who to contact if they have concerns.**



There is detailed information about exclusions for parents available on the [Council site](#). The Parent Carer Council Cornwall (PCCC) is being asked to review this information and recommend anything that could improve how easy it is to use.

**Some schools do not follow non-attendance procedures for pupils with SEN in the same way that they do for other pupils.**



This has been discussed with the Education Welfare Service, which provides support for schools with school attendance. Steps are being taken to analyse and act on information relating to pupils with SEN and attendance issues, for example appropriateness of part time timetables. School attendance is supported and challenged equally for all children attending schools in Cornwall.

**Five parents, privately, raised questions relating to their own children.**



We spoke to these families in the days and weeks following the meetings, using the processes that are in place, and developing.

## What next?

Information from the three meetings has been followed up with different services and the important key messages raised will be presented by Jane Black at the Headteachers' Information Sessions during the summer term.

The Council is committed to improving and maintaining regular and clear communication with families. Working with families helps inform the development of services, how we improve the information available and our priorities for change.



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The Council arranges for key staff to meet with parent groups on an ongoing basis. If you are a member of a group and would like to discuss this, please contact [senreform@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:senreform@cornwall.gov.uk) in the first instance. Further opportunities to meet informally with key staff will be publicised as they become available.

If you would like this information  
in another format please contact:

**Cornwall Council  
County Hall  
Treyew Road  
Truro TR1 3AY**

Telephone: **0300 1234 100**

Email: **enquiries@cornwall.gov.uk**

**www.cornwall.gov.uk**



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