



SEND

Special Educational
Needs and Disability

SEND Parent Consultation Sessions Spring 2018



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February 2018



Introduction

Since the publication of 'SEND Parent Consultation Sessions 2017', there have been a number of opportunities for families of children and young people who have special educational needs (SEN) to discuss matters of interest or concern with members of staff from Cornwall Council in an informal setting, as a group.

Over the last year meetings have taken place in Penzance, Camborne, Truro and Bodmin. The meeting in the Bodmin area related specifically to transport arrangements for post-16 and post-19. The themes discussed in meetings and the actions taken in the light of these discussions are listed below.

The analysis of recent meetings shows that a large proportion of the matters raised by families relate to statutory special educational needs processes. One of the actions following discussion with family members is that, from January 2018, there are now local opportunities to meet with caseworkers in the east, mid and west of Cornwall every week. For further information about opportunities to discuss statutory SEN matters, or to book a meeting, please contact your Statutory SEN Casework Officer. If you do not have a Statutory SEN Casework Officer, or you are not sure who they are, please contact the Statutory SEN team at statutorysen@cornwall.gov.uk.

Cornwall Council welcomes opportunities to engage with families in groups, as well as individually. One example of how this is done is taking part in the Parent Carers Cornwall annual information event in Newquay on the 6th March 2018.

Future group meetings relating to SEN will be publicised by Parent Carers Cornwall and take place with staff from Cornwall Council at least twice a year. More frequent meetings will be arranged if they are needed.

Points raised

Families want to be able to access information more easily.



[Cornwall's SEND Local Offer](#) has been revised with significant input from families and young people. Updated information through the website is available from January 2018.

Families asked for information regarding what a SEN Panel meeting is like.



A short film to illustrate what the SEN Panel is like will be available by summer 2018.

Parents wanted to know how children and young people's contribution to statutory assessment and review meetings can be recorded.



Different formats to prompt how children and young people's views can be captured are now available on the Council website. There is no one prescribed way as each child and young person is an individual. Capturing the views of children and young people is a continued focus for members of SEN support services and school staff; in the current school year there is a particular focus on One Page Profiles.

Concerns relating to some letters being hard to understand.



All statutory SEN letters are being considered and revised. The lead in time for change is affected by IT systems, legal timelines, and the end of the transfer of Statements of SEN into Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. Changes to letters should be evident from summer 2018 onwards.

A request for advice about who to approach about enhanced transition between primary and secondary schools for a child at SEN support



Individual advice was provided about the role of SENCOs, how records and information transfer occurs between schools and how and when to approach different members of staff.

Positive feedback about contact from new caseworkers in the Statutory SEN Service, but not all families had experienced this.



Feedback to Statutory SEN Service was given to enhance contact with all families. Casework officers to be available every week in local Council offices for face to face contact.

Families reported that they sometimes felt caught in discussions about resource availability and eligibility for services, between education, social care and health, and also in discussions between schools and the Council



These concerns have been shared with senior staff in different organisations. It is recognised that all partners need to work together in the best interests of children and young people.

Staff induction and ongoing supervision includes being mindful of clear, appropriate communication with families. Effective communication includes clear information of options and about available services.

Comments were made about how social care needs are represented in Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans



From April 2018, across the whole country there will be a two year trial of new arrangements for SENDIST (special educational needs and disability tribunal) that includes social care. Further information can be found at www.afcinfo.org.uk

Family members shared some concerns about the consultation on transport for young people aged 16 to 19



Clarification of the legal framework for post 16 and post 19 transport for young people with EHC plans was given. Families said that this was helpful. Council staff will include more detail about this in future communications about transport.

At the conclusion of the consultation in 2017 Elected Members of Cornwall Council decided not to adjust the policy.

Some people felt that arrangements such as responsiveness and communications had improved. Other people were concerned that limited resources were the cause of ongoing difficulties.



Staff at Cornwall Council are committed to continued improvement. The Council and its services are independently assessed and any recommendations are addressed. Staff also benchmark performance with other local authorities on an ongoing basis so that improvements can be identified.

There are campaigns currently underway to lobby for fairer funding for education in Cornwall and for all council services across the south-west. Further information about the Fight for Fairer funding is available on the Council's website.

It was confirmed that easier access to face to face meetings to discuss individual matters and group meetings to discuss broader aspects of SEN would be helpful



Members of the Statutory SEN Service are now available to meet family members in offices across the County.

Parent Carers Cornwall will publicise opportunities for groups of family members to meet with staff from Cornwall Council. The Council is committed to hosting these meetings and ensuring that an appropriate range of senior staff are able to attend according to the topics identified.

What next?

It is essential that the Council hears, and responds to, the views of families about SEN. Information and important key messages from the meetings have been followed up with different services. Working with families in this way, helps to inform the development of services, our priorities for change and how we can improve the information available.



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An extensive consultation with face to face meetings, a survey and activities in schools took place at the end of 2016 and the beginning of 2017. Information about "SEND 0 to 25 – Knowing where we are, moving forward together" is available on the Cornwall Council website.

At the time that this large consultation took place, the Council committed to engage again with a wide range of people about SEN, and that this would take place within 18 months. Please look out for opportunities to take part in this engagement during Spring 2018. Such opportunities to meet informally with key staff will be publicised as they become available.

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 send@cornwall.gov.uk.

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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