

Parents Group Meeting 20/01/2015, 9:30-11:00am

Present: Rita Joshi (parent), Maria Hartshorn (parent), Margaret Ogunbayo (parent), Duniyo Ahmed (parent), January O'Donnell (Coordinator for Autism)

Minutes:

The main agenda for the meeting was support available for parents with a focus on pupils with autism. Parents shared information about services and events they have found beneficial.

1. One Voice

Is involved in helping parents understand "The Local Offer", the changes that will happen as pupils move to EHC Plans. They provide information about training schemes open to parents. It is very useful - "The more people that join the bigger the voice."

2. Brent Carers are independent supporters for The Local Offer. The Local Offer will start from April. You will be given a "package" that includes Education, Health and Social Care. Direct Payments and DLA will be phased out. Brent carers have people trained to help parents.

3. Brent Parent Partnership – has changed to Information Advice and Support Service (IAS)

IAS services are designed to ensure that parents, carers and families of children with SEND have up-to-date information, advice and guidance on matters that allow them to make informed decisions about their child's education, including information about changes to the way that services are provided for children and young people with SEND, which were introduced in September 2014.

We discussed the complexity of these changes, The Local Offer, and how some parents and children may be disadvantaged due to a lack of understanding. We discussed how schools may be impacted upon and their services such as Speech and Language Therapy.

For more information Google: Brent Local Offer

We discussed how some parents have had assessments from their social workers and have had their direct payments stopped. A recommendation was made to contact Brent Carers.

4. Two Saturday clubs, both highly recommended by parents

- Resources for Autism – has a very long waiting list but if you put your name down now it is very good. There is a charge.
- Sportsability at Willesden Sports Centre – 2-5pm, £6

5. "Resources for Autism" run a range of youth groups and activities i.e. Saturday club, Wednesday club, Art and Music Therapy, Reach Out Programme. All the information is on their website. There is usually a waiting list and a charge but they are very highly recommended by parents. We discussed the best action is to put your child's name down now on a waiting list, it could be one-two years but it is well worth the wait.

6. BOAT – their support is for pupils with autism in mainstream setting but they do have a newsletter and mailing list which includes lots of useful information.

7. Mousetrap – do relaxed theatre performances for pupils with autism and come highly recommended from parents.

8. Cineworld at Staples Corner do autism friendly screenings of the latest movie on

occasional Sundays.

9. Parent Recommended Residentials:

- The Frontier Centre and Lockerbrooke with Woodfield School
- HCTP Pilgrimage to Lourdes – run by a charity, do not have to be catholic, takes children of all faiths and abilities.

10. Riding for the disabled www.riding-for-disabled.org.uk

Wormwood Scrubs, W12 0NN, Phone: 0845 450 7016, Email: maryjoy.langdon@btinternet.com

11. Upcoming sports days at Woodfield during the holidays run by Mr Obrien. Look out for the information.

- Tuesday 17th February, 10-2, Key Stage 3
 - Wednesday 18th February, 10-2, Key Stage 4
- There will also be more during Easter and Summer.

Next meeting will be after half term and will focus on behaviour and have a guest speaker to talk about the Local Offer.

In the Summer Term we are hoping to have a Picnic where parents can bring a dish from their home nation to share. Please join us!