

AIMING HIGH FOR DISABLED CHILDREN CONSULTATION DAY

CHILDCARE, SHORT BREAKS, AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES

FACILITATOR – DI LACEY

GROUP 1 – A.M. - 8 FEMALES, 1 BME, 9 CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.
DISABILITY PROFILE - 4 ASD, 3 PMLD, 1 EYE PROBLEMS, 1 MOTOR AND EPILEPSY.
GROUP 2 – P.M. - 6 FEMALES, 2 BME. 7 CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.
DISABILITY PROFILE – 4 ASD, 1 ADHD, 1 HEARING IMPAIRED, 1 PMLD

The general structure of both discussions:-

1. Good and bad experiences and general provision currently.
2. Proposal for ideal service and expansion of current good practice/provision.

AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES

SPECIALIST

- Nothing available at Bedelsford School. Some parents felt this may not be such an issue for those parents as many from out of borough.
- Yorda adventures considered to be 'very good' and group thought they should extend their service to other schools in all parts of the Borough. Should get funding to do this. **'Yorda is fantastic, forward thinking, full of vitality and their mission statement is fabulous'**
- Liked that after school club at Dysart as it was independently run/provided and this was felt to be important.
- Need a new base for non-school based club, well equipped.
- All group agreed that more specialist swimming lessons are required in the borough. Currently they only run 1 afternoon a week, on a Wednesday at the Kingfisher and the waiting list is one year!

MAINSTREAM

- 1:1 support needed in mainstream clubs
- Siblings should be able to go to same activity
- Opportunities for children to stay on after school in an environment that they know with the correct support
- Some of the group felt that SLA/Teaching assistants are more than willing to work after school but there is no funding for this. Support available during school hours but not after.
- One parent expressed the view that there was no mainstream after school activity in N. Kingston for children with a learning disability/ADHD.
- Although there were activities available in Richmond/Ham, these could not be accessed – no cross borough links. Distance/ travel transport issues were raised.
- Need high levels of professional expertise to be able to successfully work and support disabled children
- **'Hard to get regular after school activities for mainstream children, never mind special schools'**. Limited places for every child anyway regardless of disability.

- Concerned about over reliance on sports activities/ mainstream clubs which cannot be accessed by a number of children

GENERAL POINTS

- Point made that Under the Extended Schools Programme; local authorities do have a duty to provide facilities.
- Use of extended schools monies to provide support advocated.
- Parents are not being made aware of what is available.

CONCLUSIONS

- **NEED TO MAKE PROVISION IN NORTH KINGSTON AND ALL PARTS OF THE BOROUGH (ALONG THE LINES OF THAT PROVIDED BY YORDA). NEEDS TO BE 5 DAYS A WEEK.**
- **PARENTS NEED ACCESS TO ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION. A GOOD WEBSITE WITH A PARENTS FORUM WAS SUGGESTED AND ALL CONCURRED THIS WOULD BE A GREAT IDEA.**
- **AFFORDABLE ACCESS TO PROVISION. FUNDING PROVIDED TO SUPPORT IF NEEDED.**

SHORT BREAKS

WARREN PARK/ AWAY FROM HOME PROVISION

- With closure of Maple Children's Centre less choice for out of home breaks. One parent had a commissioned nurse from Surrey who came to house and stayed overnight, which was felt to be a waste of time as it was hard to relax properly. Would have preferred child to go to a facility like Warren Park where a nurse would be on hand.
- Want regularity, same environment- danger of providing too many different kinds of provision for one family.
- Dropping off and pick up times not good at Warren Park, nor is transport.
- Would like the offer of one week in holiday period for parents to spend time with other members of the family
- Warren Park needed expanding/ more flexible/longer breaks available.
- Warren Park only suits certain types of disability
- Complex health children require an in-borough provision like Shooting Star.
- Access out of borough provision like Shooting Star Hospice or Tadworth.

AT HOME PROVISION

- Some families would like weekend support within the family home so that parents/carers could go away for a weekend.
- More funding should be available for direct payments so that families can make access own provision to suit.

CONCLUSIONS

- **OVERNIGHT BREAKS AT WARREN PARK NEED TO BE MORE FLEXIBLE/ LONGER/REGULAR**
- **THOSE WITH COMPLEX HEALTH NEEDS AND MEDICAL NEEDS NEED A SUITABLE PROVISION. WARREN PARK NOT SUITABLE. MODELLED ON TADWORTH/SHOOTING STAR.**

CHILDCARE

GENERAL

- Entitled to childcare
- Vital for full-time working mothers. Want to be able to go back to work
- Should be able to have access to info on suitable private childminders/babysitters. Although the Family Information Service holds a complete list, it is not filtered when sent out to parent/carers. It is left to parents to contact/investigate each provider.
- One parent felt that Kingston should have a babysitting service similar to that provided by the 'Three Wings Trust' in Richmond, which uses students and matches parents/ children to those students wanting relevant experience. Cost is subsidised by the Trust. Could provide childminding in the home or babysitting. The parent informed the group that this provision can be accessed by Kingston parent/carers.
- Need a website which could link to other relevant information sites- but need to be co-ordinated and managed and kept up to date. 'Parents do not have time to seek out this information '. The website should include information from outside the borough.
- Criteria for Disabled Children's team not known and should be publicised for all.
- Need trained and affordable childminders
- Subsidised childcare
- Family support sitting vouchers are excellent but need more of them and time limited. One member didn't know of them.

HOLIDAY AND WEEKEND PROVISION

- Group felt that Warren Park activities are improving.
- "Mini Activity Groups" were very good as is the "Tuesday Special Club"
- Transition groups are good but need more of them
- Warren Park felt to be very underused
- Home based childcare should be used to cover holidays
- "Yorda" received more praise
- "Kingston Holiday club" - Holiday provision for working parents, run by Laura Power, is good.
- "Challengers" is very good, this is an inclusive provision for 4-12 year olds in Ewell and run by voluntary sector.

CONCLUSIONS

- PARENTS SHOULD HAVE THE ABILITY TO WORK
- SUBSIDISED CHILDCARE BY THOSE TRAINED IN SPECIAL NEEDS
- NEED TO BE ABLE TO ACCESS PRIVATE CHILDCARE AND KNOW WHERE TO GO FOR INFORMATION ON THIS
- SET UP A FORUM FOR INFORMATION NETWORKING BY PARENT/CARERS.