

Parent Partnership Newsletter



Autumn 2009

Parent Partnership Update

It's been another busy year for Parent Partnership. Between September 2008 and August 2009 we supported **327** parents. Most of those parents received support via home visits, meetings in schools and with the Local Authority.



- ❖ We are always looking at ways to improve the service we offer to parents and welcome comments from Parents/carers who have used our service.
- ❖ Welcome to Sandra Smith our new admin assistant. Sandra is part time and will be in the office Monday to Thursday mornings.
- ❖ We are currently undertaking an evaluation of our Independent Parental Supporters (IPS) and would appreciate your views if you have been allocated one of our IPSs.

Choice Adviser News

The next few weeks can be a very stressful time for parent/carer's; you may already have received your letters and booklets asking you to choose a school for next year. As a reminder to all parent/carers of children transferring or starting school next September 2010 the Choice Adviser service is available for enquires regarding choosing a school or for help with completing the Common Application Form. The Choice Adviser is also on hand to accompany parent/carers on visits to school's or help with arranging appointments with the school SENCO.



I have recently been busy visiting the Islands' High School's with parents of children with statements and these meetings have proved to be both enlightening and informative. The parents and I have been able to have discussions about what is on offer in the schools and make fair comparisons. As a general rule I would advise you to visit at least three schools and to have a list of prepared questions ready to ask.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of your child transferring school/or arrange for support during a meeting or school visit please contact me on **01983 825548** or mob **07807159603**.

If you would like to receive this newsletter in another language, large print or audio version, please contact us.

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A message for SENCO's



Many parents would like to receive information about Parent Partnership through their child's school, so please help us by:

- ☺ Mentioning our service to parents when discussing their child's SEN.
- ☺ Keeping a stock of our leaflets and hand them to parents.
- ☺ Photocopying our newsletter and give it to interested parents.
- ☺ Post our newsletter on your school's website.

Thank You!

Parents Voice

Members of the Parents Voice steering Group have been working towards extending the network of parents and carers who can share their views about the services which our children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities receive.

We are pleased to announce that we now have a **parent representative** who has recently joined the **Aiming High for Disabled Children** steering group. This is a huge step forward in the journey towards better services for our children. The Aiming High Steering group is responsible for the decisions locally about how the funding available through this initiative will be used.



Parents Voice would like to thank those people who have helped us so far, and would like to **encourage all parents and carers** of children with SEN and disabilities **to become part of our network**. We are aiming to involve more parents in consultations, either online, via email, telephone, post or through focus groups. We hope to be able to involve local support networks, so if you already belong to one then please tell them about us. But however you prefer to share your views, you can choose if you wish to take part in consultations when they occur. We aim to keep you informed when the opportunities arise.

We would also like to be able to **share useful information** about what is happening locally for families of children with SEN and disabilities. So if you have any information you think would be useful to others then please let us know. We would like to hear from anyone working to support families of children with SEN and disabilities, as we are keen to know about you and what you offer.

Our parent volunteers can be contacted by email at: parentsvoice@hotmail.co.uk, Alternatively you can telephone **Parent Partnership** on **01983 825548** who will put you in touch with one of our parent volunteers.

Lorraine.
(Member of the Parents Voice steering group.)

Aiming High for Disabled Children

The **Aiming High for Disabled Children transformation short break programme** is now moving up a gear with some exciting new developments and projects for disabled children. Government funding is expected to increase next year and parents are expected to be a key part of the planning process for future strategy. Any parents who have an exciting idea of activities that could transform the lives of disabled children – in particular, those with complex disabilities and severe health needs – are welcome to bid for some of this money. One key objective of this programme is to try to increase access to 'ordinary' social and leisure opportunities for children and their families so that they can take part in everyday activities of their choice, just like all other children.

Please contact **Moira Henderson**, the new Short Term Breaks Implementation Officer on moira.henderson@iow.gov.uk or phone **533523** if you would like more information.

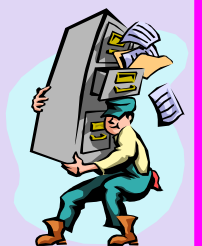
Recent summer play schemes provided by the YMCA and Funky Friends across the Island have proven to be tremendously successful and more holiday schemes are planned for 2010 – 11. We have also had some exciting bids from local providers who are intent on opening up their activities for children who would normally find access a problem.

Look out for the next workshop and parent forum on Aiming High for Disabled Children in our next newsletter and have your say about what matters to you and your child!

The Early Years Support Service now known as the **Early Years Support Team** have moved to: The Early Support Team, Specialist Services, Thompson House, Sandy Lane, Newport, PO30 3NA.

Tel: 533523.

Their roles haven't changed—they still work with children with additional needs from birth until the end of transition into year 1



Inclusion Development Programme - Supporting pupils on the autistic spectrum



In autumn 2007 the National Strategies** launched the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP). The key aims of the IDP are, over 4 years to:

- Improve outcomes for all pupils and narrow the gap'
- Promote early recognition and intervention
- Increase the confidence of all practitioners
- Support schools to become more effective at strategic approaches to support and Intervention

Phase 1 of the IDP was launched last year and focused on speech, language and communication needs and dyslexia. Phase 2 is being launched in October and supports pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

The eight areas that are being covered in the ASD materials are:

1. What is autism spectrum?
2. Social and emotional understanding
3. Communication and language
4. Flexibility of thought and behaviour
5. Sensory perception and responses
6. Know the pupil
7. Curriculum priorities and inclusive practice
8. Sources of support.

The materials are not intended to provide high level specialist training, but to increase the confidence of teachers and others when identifying and addressing special educational needs in their day to day practice.

**The National Strategies

The National Strategies are professional development programmes for early years, primary and secondary school teachers, practitioners and managers. They are one of the Government's principal vehicles for improving the quality of learning and teaching in schools and early years settings and raising standards of attainment.

Disabled Children's Register

The Local Authority is about to relaunch its Disabled Children's Register. This will make it easier for services to provide information to parents and carers of disabled children. It will also help the council and other agencies such as health to improve their planning of services for disabled children and young people.

A number of new initiatives are being developed such as Aiming High for Disabled Children which will improve short break care opportunities, and another initiative to improve support to disabled young people making the transition to adult life. But in order to provide the opportunities and choices that young people and their families are entitled to, the various agencies will need the kind of data about young people's needs that signing up to the Register will provide.

The publicity launch is expected to take place in December, with posters, publicity leaflets and other media activity.

All enquiries to Roger Vandavelde, Project Lead for Inclusion with the Isle of Wight Council's Children and Young People's Services.

Lamb Inquiry

In December 2009 Brian Lamb wrote to Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families raising concerns that parents feel they have to 'fight' or 'battle' the system to secure high quality provision for their children. As a result, the government then launched the Lamb Inquiry which is investigating parents' experiences of special educational needs processes and systems and how parents' confidence in these areas can be improved.

Ed Balls has accepted the first findings from the Inquiry on SEN and is recommending that the law be changed by:

- ❖ OFSTED reporting on the quality of education provided for disabled children and those with SEN.
- ❖ Giving parents the right of appeal if the local authority does not make changes requested at an annual review

This will not happen immediately; we will let you know through the newsletter when this applies. Please look at the following website to see the full report:

www.dcsf.gov.uk/lambinquiry

Notice Board



The National Autistic Society Isle of Wight

Coffee, cake and a chat

We are here to support families and individuals whose lives are affected by autism

Cowes ASD Support Group
Held at Cowes Children's Centre
2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month
12.45pm-2.45pm

Please call Louise Cook,
Support Group Co-ordinator,
on 07795 564 465
for further details

*Term time only
Please note there is no onsite parking at
Cowes Children's Centre*

Your autism charity

The National Autistic Society is a company limited by guarantee registered in England (No. 1205298) and a charity registered in England and Wales (269417) and in Scotland (SC039427), registered office: 395 City Road, London EC1Y 1NG

New website

The Isle of Wight Branch of The National Autistic Society (NAS) is run entirely by volunteers, most of whom are parents of children with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs). Although we are still quite new, we are growing rapidly. Gillian Elsom, NAS IOW branch web team co-ordinator (parent volunteer) and 4 other parents have put together a great website that provides a vital resource for those either affected or interested in an autistic spectrum disorder.

Please visit www.autism.org.uk/isleofwight and do let us know if you have any information that can be added to the website.

You can also find us on Facebook too - just search NAS IOW branch and add us as a friend to keep in touch online.



Rainbow Club

**For Families of children with
Down Syndrome**

To get together, have a cuppa, support for each other and most important have fun!

Forthcoming dates:
November 7th 2-4pm
December 5th 2-4pm

Haylands Primary School—Play Zone.

We are hoping to host a Halloween Party which will be open to everyone and will help pay for them. A Christmas party is also planned in December.

We have a growing library of books, DSA leaflets, DVDs to loan out. The materials are at our meetings or please ask for a list.

**For more details phone Clare 873200
Or email: clareane21@btinternet.com**

IOWTL Opportunity Group Christmas Party

For Children under 5 with Special Needs & siblings

10th Dec
10-12.30pm

*Email to confirm:
iowtlgroup@national.nhs.uk
or Tel 01202 729034*



Barton Primary
Afterschool
Club Room
Green St
Newport

www.iowtlgroup.org.uk

Contacting Parent Partnership....

By post to: 11 Orchard Street, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 1JZ Email: parentpartnership@iow.gov.uk

Telephone: 01983 825548 or Visit our website: www.iwpp.co.uk

The Parent Partnership Service offers impartial information, support and advice to parents/carers of children who have special educational needs and disabilities on the Isle of Wight. This newsletter is produced termly by Parent Partnership and distributed to parents, schools, voluntary groups and professionals—please share with parents and colleagues.