

Parent and Carer Engagement in the Early Years

Maree Munn

Parent Carer Engagement

Inform | Empower | Improve

Maree Munn

Participation and Engagement Officer

Where to start

- SEN Code of Practice
- The Local Offer
- Parent Engagement Toolkit

Worcestershire's Seven Quality Standards

Benefits of good Parental Engagement ...

- for the Parent Carer
- for the provider

Effective Communication

- • Communications & Meetings
- • The Graduated Approach
- • Methods to build relationships

What is a Parent Carer Forum?

Invitation to book a FREE consultation

Resources



SEN Code of Practice



The SEN Code of Practice states:

That **parents hold key information** and have a **crucial role to play in their children's education**. They have **unique strengths, knowledge and experience** to contribute to the shared views of a child's needs and the best ways of supporting them.



Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years

Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities

January 2015

The Local Offer

Being updated and will launch late October 2023.



SEND Local Offer

Information and advice for families with children and young people with SEN and/or disabilities.



Welcome to our new style SEND Local Offer website. It has been co-produced with parent carers, young people with SEND and colleagues from other organisations including health and the voluntary sector. We would like to thank them all for their invaluable insights and contributions.

We have included lots of new information, which families have told us would be useful, and arranged it in age groups to make it easier to navigate. The work on the website is ongoing, and over time things will change and improve further.

We have tested the new site with parent carers, colleagues and young people before launching it, you may still encounter some glitches. If you find a link that doesn't work, or can't find the information you are looking for, please can you let us know by emailing localoffer@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk and we will try to fix it. We welcome any feedback about the website, good and bad, so please let us know what you think.

Thank you again for your patience and we hope you find the SEND Local Offer useful, if you do, please tell your friends about it, if you don't then please tell us.

Our SEND Local Offer provides information about provision families can expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people who have a Special Educational Need (SEN) or are disabled, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. You can find out about resources, services, support, activities and events here.

Every Local Authority has to work with children and young people, parent carers and professionals to make sure that everything that's included on the Local Offer website makes sense and is helpful and relevant. This is an on-going process so things will change again over time as needed. If you want to send us your thoughts and feedback on the SEND Local Offer, please email localoffer@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk.

Throughout the SEND Local Offer we have included links to other websites, which are run by outside providers, organisations and charities and are not provided by Worcestershire Children First (WCF) or Worcestershire County Council (WCC). While every attempt to ensure all information held here is accurate, we cannot accept any responsibility for third party websites. Their inclusion here is for your information only and does not represent endorsement or recommendation by either WCF or WCC.



Early Years (0 to 5 years)



Reception to Secondary (5 to 11 years)



High School years (11 to 16 years)



Preparing for Adulthood (16 to 25 years)

News, updates and feedback

Find the latest updates about services for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

AAD service

The All Age (0 to 25 years) Disability service (AAD) is made up of several different teams and services within Worcestershire Children First.

The Parent Engagement Toolkit

Actively engaging with parent carers, as distinct from the school's wider parent community, can require **slightly different approaches and methods.**

This **toolkit** brings together a range of guidance to help schools reflect on their current practice, consider alternative approaches, and most importantly, help them to support and enable their parents' carers to be fully involved.



Effective Communication

- Be clear, avoid jargon and use simple language
- Be accurate
- Provide all the relevant information
- Be conscious
- Be courteous
- Be an attentive listener
- Be approachable
- Be calm



The Graduated Approach

Work through a meeting in a logical, structured way, following the principles of the **graduated approach**

Assess Plan Do Review

1 | **Assess** – ask how the family think things are going using questions that are open ended.

2. **Plan** - check that you have understood what has been said, and then agree what needs actions or planning

3. **Do** - discuss what needs to be done and who will do what

4. **Review** - recap on what you've agreed, ensure a shared understanding and expectations and agree the date of the next meeting.

Be prepared and bring supporting information.
Encourage Parent Carers to do the same.
Evidence is an essential part of the process.



Methods to help build relationships with parent carers

Schools were involved in this project to develop a list of different methods they have used to engage with their parent carers and help to build those relationships.

The toolkit is full of ideas from **coffee mornings** through to **SEN Newsletters**, utilising technology and developing on line and/or face to face networks for your parents and your SEN team.

What ever your approach you take, you must ensure **clear, consistent** and **honest communications** at all time. Reflect on what you do and consider if you need to change or try something new.



Information

Website: All schools have a website, and their SEND Policy should be on it.

Leaflets: Schools produce a series of information leaflet's about SEND related topics which can be shared with parents and carers.

Pupil passport: A profile of the pupil which contains information about the child, what their preferences are and what can help them learn.

Social media: Schools have a Facebook, Twitter and/or Instagram account and they encourage families to follow them.



Communications

Love document: An individual working document is set up for some of the SEND child in school. It takes the form of an Excel spreadsheet. Parents carers have real time access.

Apps: Use on-school apps to share information with parents.

Email: School have either dedicated year group emails, or individual emails for each teacher and their SENCo.

Home postcard: Schools sends home positive news in the form of a postcard.

Text: Schools use text messaging to send out reminders to the whole school year groups or classes or individual parent carers can be contacted via text.



Supporting parent carers to participate



Accessibility

Consider time of meetings.

Inclusion

Work together to think about ways to engage priority groups.

Jargon

Using plain, with parent friendly language is essential.

Individual barriers

As well as language parent carers may face many other barriers and obstacles, and they may find it difficult to engage with school for a variety of reasons.



Supporting parent carers to participate continued



Family Support Worker

Do you have one on your staff?

Parent Ambassador

Do you have a parent who could help bridge the gap?

Playground Presence

Parent Carers can feel their most vulnerable

Drop ins/ Walk-in Wednesday

What do you offer - could you set up a regular meet?

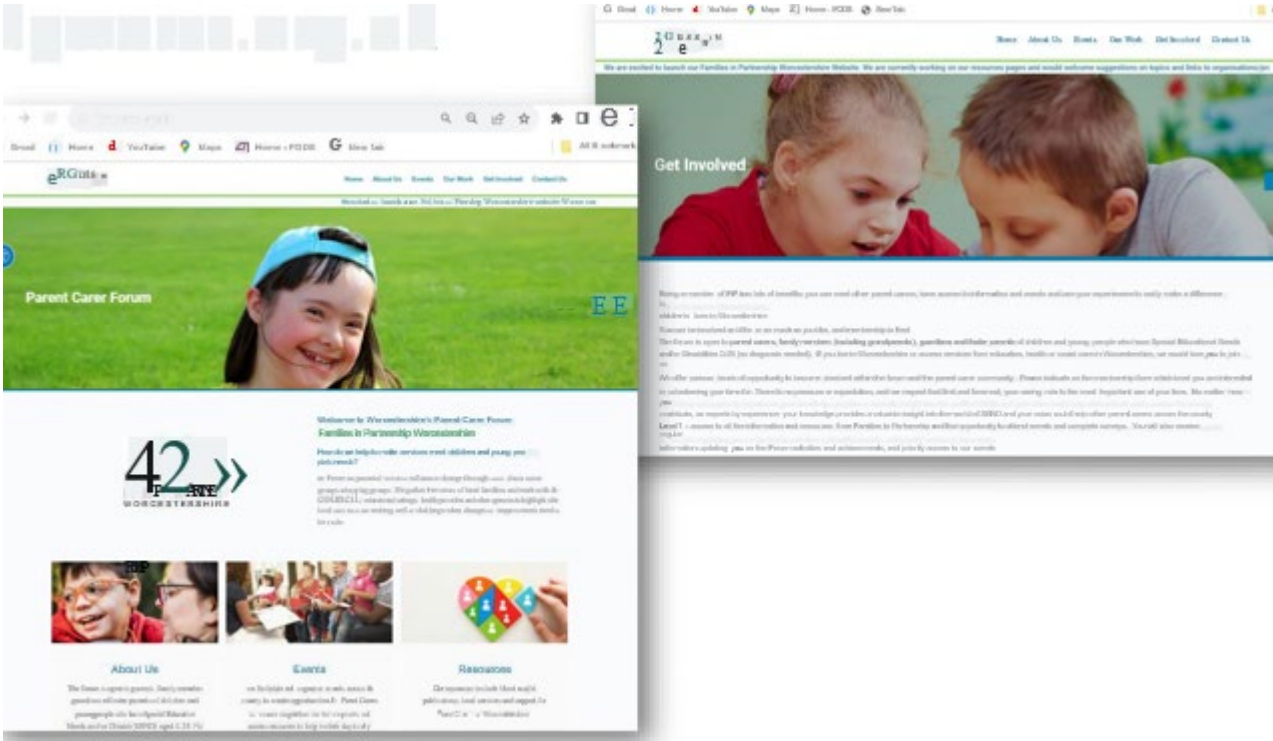
Understanding the curriculum, school life and language

The emphasis on parental support on learning is far greater now than ever. Do the parents have barriers that go significantly impact on their ability to support their child's development?



For more information and to share with all your parent carers

please see our website:
fipworcs.org.uk



For more information and to share with all your parent carers continued



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EK'IN'is
WORCESTERSHIRE

Worcestershire's
Parent Carer Forum

Our Forum uses parental voice to influence change.

Open to parents, family members, guardians and foster parents of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and or Disability (SEND) 0-25yrs.

For information, contact details and membership:
www.fipworcs.org.uk



To book a **FREE CONSULTATION** onsite or online contact Maree at mareefip@carersworcs.org.uk OR text **07427 476852**

Maree is a Parent Carer; a SEND Governor; a Peer Educator for Autism Central and a volunteer for Resources for Autism. Her skills and knowledge working with health and education (mainstream, alternative and specialist provision) provides valuable insight into what works well and how to promote positive communications for you and your SEND families.



Resources

SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)

REVIEW OF BEST PRACTICE IN PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT
(publishing.service.gov.uk)

Visit the Worcestershire Council website and search for Local Offer

<https://fipworcs.org.uk/>

sendiass@worcestershire.gov.uk

<https://www.startingwellworcs.nhs.uk/families>