

Parent Partnership Service

Annual Report

2010 - 2011

**Sue Brooke
Parent Partnership Manager
August 2011**

Contents

	Page
The PPS Team	3
Actions and Outcomes 2010/2011	4
Statutory and Non-Statutory Responsibilities	6
Operating Standards	8
Exemplifications of Minimum Standards	9
Key Performance Indicators	15
How callers heard about PPS	16
Special Educational Needs (SEN)	17
Non-Curriculum Issues (NCI)	21
Outreach	25
Independent Parental Supporters (Befrienders)	28
Trended Information	30
PPS Aims 2011/2012	33

The PPS Team

The number of staff employed by the Local Authority has remained static over the last year. The funding for the Choice Adviser ceased in March 2011, and the post was made redundant.

Sue Brooke, Parent Partnership Manager

Email: sbrooke@worcestershire.gov.uk

Claire White, Parent Partnership Support Officer

Email: cwhite@worcestershire.gov.uk

Delia Crosby, Parent Partnership Support Officer

Email: dcrosby@worcestershire.gov.uk

Alison Barnes, Choice Adviser (until March 2011)

Email: abarnes@worcestershire.gov.uk

Sarah Henley, Administration Officer

Email: shenley@worcestershire.gov.uk

Actions and Outcomes 2010/2011

The PPS is at arm's length from Worcestershire Children's Services and is based in Worcester City, and this helps to promote the impartiality of the service. The service is normally confidential and information will only be shared with other professional with permission of parents, unless it involves 'child protection' or 'is in the public interest'.

Following the outcome of '**Next Steps**' the service has been integrated in to the **Family Information Advice and Assistance Service**, and is line managed by Jan Smith.

Worcestershire Parent Partnership Service has developed over a number of years into an established, well regarded service. The service receives its funding from the Local Authority (LA) and operates at "arms length" from the LA to ensure parents have confidence in the impartiality of the support and information provided by the service.

During the academic year September 2010-August 2011, the service has continued to develop to meet the ever-changing needs of both the service users and changes directed by the government.

The service continues to operate in compliance with the **SEN Code of Practice** (2001:20-25) Chapter 2 – *Working in Partnership with Parents* which specifies the **Minimum Standards** that should be complied with.

The purpose of Parent Partnership Services is to encourage partnership between parents/carers, schools, LA and other professionals including the voluntary sector in the work of identifying, assessing and making provision for children with Special Educational Needs. Evidence clearly shows that better outcomes are achieved when all parties work together, in genuine and equal partnership focusing on the need of the child.

The service aims to empower parents/carers to play an active role in their child's education and will continue to offer information advice and support to help them achieve this

PPS has continued to develop its partnership working both with statutory and voluntary agencies; this has enabled the service to draw on the expertise and support of other agencies, whilst helping to raise the profile of the PPS service.

Outcomes show that working in partnership helps to ensure the information and support that parents receive is easily accessible and of a high standard, resulting in positive outcomes for children and families.

Worcestershire PPS continues to support the Government's emphasis on parental engagement and ensures this is included in all Service Development Plans. The Outreach programme supports this principle by helping to ensure information and support reaches as many parents as possible aiming particularly at the hard to reach parents.

Following the recommendations of the '**Lamb Inquiry 2009/2010**'. The PPS manager and PPS support officers have undertaken SEN legal training. This involved online modules plus two days training.

PPS have also been involved both locally and regionally in the consultation with regard to '**The Green Paper**' '**A new Approach to Special Educational Needs and Disability**'. This is being

undertaken by Sarah Teather, M.P. (The Minister of state for Children and Families). The consultation closed at the end of July 2011. PPS involvement included gaining the views of parents and carers and contributing to a PPS regional response to the recommendations.

This year PPS has supported several events organised by the LA, WCC, and the voluntary sector. The service has assisted with the preparation and organising of an AFASIC conference for parents, and The Worcestershire Parent and Carer Events.

There has been an increase in number of requests for PPS support at meetings, from parents, schools and other professionals.

PPS produces a wide range of information leaflets covering all aspects of PPS work; these are normally reviewed annually, and approved by relevant professionals however with the current changes that are taking place within the LA, it has been agreed to delay reviewing the leaflets until changes have been finalised. FIAAS are also exploring the different ways in which information can be disseminated to parents and carers with a view to possibly reducing the number of leaflets and also to ensure there is not an overlap of information.

The service also holds a comprehensive list of support groups and voluntary agencies that are able to offer additional information and support.

PPS continues to ensure that all schools, other educational establishments and services including the voluntary sector have up to date copies of PPS information leaflets. The service also uses its website to disseminate information. .

PPS annually completes the NPPN benchmarking process and this provides information regarding our position in respect of national and statistical neighbours. The report shows Worcestershire PPS in a positive light showing that the service is both effective and efficient. This report is available from <http://www.parentpartnership.org.uk/Templates/Benchmarking%202006.pdf>; any clarification required can be sought through PPS.

The Parent Partnership Service has its own website – where users can gain access to information on PPS, leaflets, events, and support groups, PPS Annual Report and the Impartiality and Confidentiality Policy.

PPS website – www.ppsworcs.co.uk

Statutory and Non-Statutory Responsibilities

Statutory Responsibilities

The Parent Partnership Service fulfils the statutory duty of the Local Authority to make arrangements for the service to meet the minimum standards outlined in Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2001 (Section 332A Education Act 1996).

(1) A local education authority must arrange for the parent of any child in their area with special educational needs to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to those needs.

Non-Statutory Responsibilities

PPS takes responsibility for providing information/ support with regard to the LA Non Curriculum Complaints Procedure.

PPS offers information/advice on Non-Curriculum Issues.

The service provides information and guidance in regard to Elective Home Education (EHE).

The Choice Adviser post ceased on 31st March 2011, and PPS assumed responsibility for this service, however it was agreed that due to limited resources the service was unable to incorporate all the work previously undertaken by the Choice Adviser.

The situation was discussed with Management and PATS and there are now clear processes in place defining the role of PPS.

Services offered by the Parent Partnership Service

The Service supports parents/carers of children from 0-16years (19 for SEN) in the following areas:

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Information and support on SEN for example explanation of the terminology used and step by step-by-step guidance to SEN approaches

Non-Curriculum Issues Any school issue not related to the curriculum, such as bullying and complaints

Elective Home Education Information on Elective Home Education

Working with Parents

This is primarily achieved through parents self referring, although with the increased multi-agency working, and the Common Assessment Framework, the number of referrals from other agencies are increasing. Referrals are usually through telephone or emails, although new referrals can be generated through the PPS outreach work where there is direct contact with parents.

Telephone Support

PPS offers telephone information and support and also has a 24hr answer machine. The service aims to respond to all enquiries within one working day.

There is a weekly rota prepared by the Admin Assistant, identifying which member of staff is responsible for taking initial calls on any particular day. The calls are then put on the database and an action put on for the relevant member of the team, alternatively calls can be passed directly to another member of the team if they are available.

This system works well as it gives staff the required time to catch up on cases, make follow up calls and attend meetings. Obviously a sensible and flexible approach needs to be taken as demands on officers can change at very short notice.

Individual Support

This includes support for parents/carers at meetings which can include SEN, Annual Reviews, Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Non-Curriculum Issues including complaints.

The service endeavours to meet all requests for PPS support, however this can stretch resources as the service only has three members of staff available to provide this service.

When appropriate the PPS will offer the services of a Befriender these are volunteers trained by the PPS. They can offer support to families with children who have been identified as having SEN, and who may be considering or going through Statutory Assessment.

Casework

PPS case work can be very complicated and time consuming, and necessitates staff being able to draw upon a range of competences and methods using a high level of interpersonal skills, at times it requires an amalgam of abilities usually identified in areas such as counselling, negotiation and mediation.

Support for schools and other agencies

As part of its Outreach Programme PPS offers the following support to schools and other relevant agencies including the voluntary sector:

- PPS awareness raising sessions
- SEN training sessions
- Attendance at parent's evenings
- Attendance at relevant events and conferences
- Attendance at support group meetings

Operating Standards

The team continues to operate in compliance with the **SEN Code of Practice** (2001:20-25).

Chapter 2 – '*Working in Partnerships with Parents*' sets out the '**Minimum Standards**' that Parent Partnership Services and L.A. are expected to meet. These were further developed in **The Exemplification of Minimum Standards 2007(Revised in 2010)** with a particular focus on:

- Working with parents
- Funding and Budget
- Monitoring of standards of service delivery
- Flexibility and responsiveness to changes
- Confidentiality and Impartiality of the service
- Raising the awareness of the service
- Appropriate training for staff and volunteers
- Collaborative working
- Gaining feedback from stakeholders
- Involvement of parents and carers in informing policy

Local authorities and Parent Partnership Services are measured against the following criteria:

- Best practice
- Good practice
- Minimum Practice
- Non compliant

It is intended that PPS and LA will use the exemplars as a self review tool alongside their current monitoring and evaluation processes.

Worcestershire Parent Partnership Service achieved 'Good or Best practice' in the majority of the exemplars.

Exemplifications of Minimum Standards

Funding

- **The LA Authority provides support and resources to enable the PPS provide an impartial and effective service and to be innovative and creative in doing so**
- **The Budget for PPS is delegated and ring fenced**

The LA set out their funding and budget plans for PPS and the budget is delegated to PPS and managed by the PPS manager, who has monthly budget monitoring meetings with Finance. The budget is also reviewed at the monthly management meetings.

The budget delegated the PPS for 2010/2011 was £149,322, with staffing costs at £115,952. Other costs include building, utilities and LA recharges leaving an expendable budget of £9,072.

The expendable budget was used to meet the costs of PPS information leaflets, stationery outreach work, advertising, and training costs.

The PPS has a very limited budget, which has meant that resources have been stretched; the service is constantly looking at innovative and new ways of ensuring that information and support can be disseminated to all stakeholders.

Management

- **The service has an effective multi-agency group**

PPS does not have its own multi-agency group, the rationale being that it is more efficient and effective for PPS to be part of other established steering groups, taking into consideration the demands on resources. PPS has continued to attend groups such as the 'Worcestershire Parents and Carers', Speech and Language Pathway, Scott Atkinson and voluntary groups including AFASIC. All of which can give feedback on PPS, that assists with the development of PPS.

Working with Parents

- **The confidence of parents in the PPS is fostered through an explicit policy on confidentiality. The handling of information parents provide complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act, and is not shared with anyone outside of the PPS unless they have given permission for it to be shared or there are strong public interest concerns i.e. child protection**
- **All parents have access to independent parental support when requested**
- **Parents receive support in preparing for Tribunal hearing**

PPS has confidentiality policy which is included on the PPS website; the policy is reviewed regularly to ensure that it is up to date with the correct information. Parents are informed that PPS is a confidential service, and the occasions where information may be shared. If PPS feel that it would be beneficial for them to speak to other professionals, then they always seek permission

from the caller. Evidence shows that the majority of parents/carers are happy for PPS to do this as it can often result in situations being resolved quickly and with relevant professionals involved. Parents have access to independent support either from PPS staff or from Befrienders (PPS volunteers). When requested PPS and Befrienders also provide support to parents when preparing for SENDIST hearing. PPS does not support at SEN tribunals.

Information and Publicity

- **Published policy on how PPS acts in a impartial way and provides a comprehensive way and provides a comprehensive and balanced range of information for parents**
- **Procedures to monitor impartiality of information and publicity**
- **PPS has its own service identity including logo, colour, style, strap line etc**
- **PPS website**

The service has an impartiality policy which is published on the PPS website. PPS provides a comprehensive range of information leaflets for parents; these are also made available on the PPS website. Any information given to parents or included on the website is very closely monitored to ensure that it is impartial. When PPS leaflets are updated and revised then draft copies are sent to relevant professionals for their approval. Feedback from parents/carers other stakeholders clearly shows that information they receive is seen as impartial.

From the 1st July 2011 all new publications are forwarded to Louise Barnett the 'Marketing and Communications' manager for approval before printing.

The PPS continue to retain their own logo, colour etc. on their publications, whilst still meeting the LA requirements.

The Service has its own website – where users can gain access to information on PPS, leaflets, consultations, events, and support groups, PPS Annual Report and the Impartiality and Confidentiality Policies. PPS have responsibility for maintaining and updating the website, it is the responsibility of the Administrative Assistant to fulfil this task.

Training, advice and support

- **PPS staff receive training which enables them to provide accurate and impartial information, advice and support**
- **Staff are also able to facilitate training to volunteers, parents and other groups in accordance with a published service policy on impartiality**
- **Staff identify and seek to redress their own development needs including but not exclusively courses leading to nationally recognised qualifications**
- **The PPS provides training for staff and volunteers in accordance with a published service policy on impartiality**

PPS staff have undertaken the following training this year;

PPS manager and PPS support staff – SEN legal training, which involved on line modules and two days training – this training was provided by NPPN.

PPS support staff – completed NVQ 3 in Customer Care which was provided by the LA. The PPS Admin Assistant is currently undertaking the course which should be completed by the beginning of 2012.

There is training on 'Academies' planned for October 2011.

During the period 2010-2011, all staff have continued to undertake any relevant LA training.

The service has a training package that is delivered to new volunteers ('Befrienders'), and the PPS manager and support officers are able to deliver the training. The service did not train a new cohort of Befrienders in 2010, as PPS were meeting their PI's. However the service is monitoring the situation closely and consideration is being given to delivering training in the beginning of 2012. PPS meet with Befrienders once a term, and this presents an opportunity for any update training, and this can be delivered by PPS staff or other relevant professionals. This year has included training with regard to 'The Green Paper', Schools moving to Academies, and updates on 'Safeguarding' and SEN.

All PPS staff have the opportunity to discuss their training needs during their monthly supervision and SRD meetings, where the continual professional development of staff is discussed and plans put into place. SRD's carried out in July 2011.

Networking and collaboration.

- **The PPS is involved in networking and collaboration (locally regionally and nationally) in order to develop and sustain a high quality and impartial service**
- **PPS impartiality is maintained in working with other voluntary and statutory agencies**
- **LA supports the role of PPS as an impartial service in networking & collaboration at national, local and regional level in the context of ECM**

Networking and Collaborative working is fundamental to the role of PPS, and is a major component of the strategic planning of the service. The service has continued to build on existing collaborative working with Children's Services, Health, Educational establishments, and the Voluntary sector. This has included attendance at multi-agency meetings, support at events such as open days and parents evenings, PPS information and training sessions and ensuring that all agencies have access to PPS information. The outcome being that there an increase in requests for support for parents from different agencies and also an increase in the number of services that are signposting parents to PPS.

The PPS manager also attends the regional PPS, meeting once a term where there is the opportunity to discuss government initiatives and policies, and training for staff. Most recently the regional group have been involved in preparing feedback to the National Parent Partnership Network on the proposals of 'The Green Paper'. These meetings are also very useful as they can identify areas where joint training for PPS staff, which can prove to be cost effective and very productive. This year saw the organising of the two day SEN legal training for staff and in October this year there is training planned on 'Academies'

Networking at a national level is essential as enables the PPS to be informed with regard to new government directives and policies and this year these have include 'The Green paper', The Education Bill, 'The Exclusions Bill' and the update information on Academies all of which have implications for the PPS.

The LA supports and promotes the impartiality of PPS and the Line manager for PPS also promotes the impartiality and the extensive networking of the service.

Informing and shaping local policy and practice.

- **The PPS facilitates the involvement of parents and carers in informing policy and practice**
- **The PPS seek feedback from parents and carers about the impact of parents' and carer' participation**
- **The LA and PPS regularly review the effectiveness of PPS intervention**

The PPS actively seeks feedback from parents and carers and this is usually accomplished either by parents and carers completing a feedback form or by offering feedback over the phone. An element of the feedback is whether parents and carers found the involvement of PPS useful and what impact it has had on any further actions they are considering taking.

Some of the most frequent responses are: "It was really nice to have someone to listen to me", "It was good to be able to speak to someone who is non-judgemental", "I feel I have the confidence now to go and speak to the school", "I wish I had spoken to you sooner". Feedback on PPS leaflets has also been very positive and many parents take these with them when they meetings in school.

The service also encourages parents/carers to give their views on policy and practice and the opportunity for this is often at meetings where parents/carers and PPS are attending, for example meetings in school and with the LA, and also at events that PPS attends

PPS are also able to pass on parents views to relevant professionals within the LA.

The LA continues to monitor the effectiveness of the PPS, and since April 2011, when PPS moved FIAAS there have been monthly management meetings where the PPS provides data with regard to their PI's and their objectives on the PPS team plan.

Location

- **The siting of PPS takes account of the need to comply with the PPS' impartiality and confidentiality policies and facilitates collaborative working with Children's Information Service, and other relevant parent/carers information services**

PPS is currently based in Worcester City, in its own premises that, from the perspective of parents and carers are independent of the LA, and has helped to foster confidence with stakeholders. The service is still in a position to work collaboratively with Children's Service and other relevant professionals.

As PPS are now part of FIAAS which includes The Family Information Service, collaborative working is part of the service plan.

PPS is moving to new premises in October 2011, to the Connexions Offices, and although the service will no longer have its own building, this will not affect the impartiality and confidentiality of the PPS.

Worcestershire PPS – Exemplars Review 2010-2011

Exemplar		2009-2010				2010-2011			
		Best Practice	Good Practice	Minimum Practice	Non Compliant	Best Practice	Good Practice	Minimum Practice	Non Compliant
Budget	The local authority provides support and resources to enable the PPS to provide an impartial and effective service and to be innovative and creative in doing so.		X				X		
	The budget for the PPS is delegated to the PPS and ring fenced.		X			X			
Management	The PPS has an effective multi-agency Steering/Management Group.				X				X
Working with Parents	The confidence of the parents in the PPS is fostered through an explicit policy on confidentiality. The handling of information that parents provide complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act and is not shared with anyone outside the PPS unless they have given permission for it to be shared or there are strong public interests e.g. safeguarding.	X				X			
	All parents have access to independent parental support when requested.	X				X			
	Parents receive support in preparing for a Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal.		X			X	X		
Information & Publicity	Published policy on how the PPS acts in an impartial way and provides a comprehensive and balanced range of information for parents.	X				X			
	PPS has procedures to monitor impartiality of information and publicity.		X			X			
	PPS has own service identity including e.g. logo, colour, strap line etc and Steering/Advisory Group considers any other issues concerning the identity of the service, which may undermine parental confidence in the impartiality of the service.		X				X		
	PPS website.	X				X			

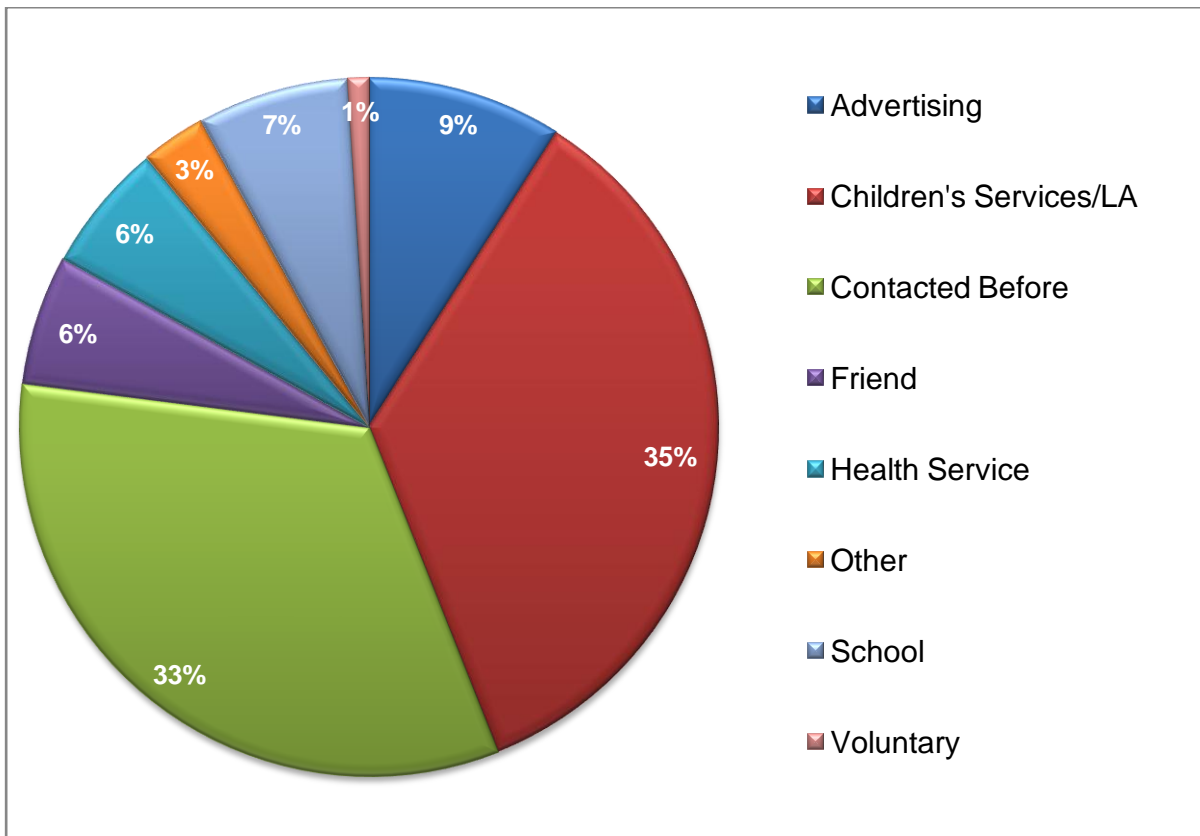
Exemplar		2009-2010				2010-2011			
		Best Practice	Good Practice	Minimum Practice	Non Compliant	Best Practice	Good Practice	Minimum Practice	Non Compliant
Training, Advice and Support	PPS staff receive training which enables them to provide accurate and impartial information, advice and support. Staff are also able to facilitate training to volunteers, parents and other groups in accordance with a published policy on impartiality. Staff identify and seek to redress their own development needs including, but not exclusively, courses leading to nationally recognised qualifications.	X				X			
	The PPS provides training for staff and volunteers in accordance with a published policy on impartiality.	X				X			
Networking and Collaboration	The PPS is involved in networking and collaboration (locally, regionally and nationally) in order to develop and sustain a high quality impartial service.	X				X			
	PPS impartiality is maintained when working with other voluntary and statutory agencies.	X				X			
	LA supports the role of the PPS as an impartial service in networking and collaboration at local, regional and national levels in context of ECM.			X			X		
Informing and Shaping Local Policy and Practice	The PPS facilitates the involvement of parents in informing local policy and practice. The PPS seeks feedback from parents about the impact of parents' participation. The LA and PPS regularly review the effectiveness of PPS participation.		X				X		
Location	The sitting of the PPS takes account of the need to comply with the PPS impartiality and confidentiality policies and to facilitate collaborative working with Children's Information Service other relevant parent information services).	X				X			

Key Performance Indicators

PPS Key Performance Indicators are included in the 2011-2012 PPS Team Plan and regularly monitored.

Performance Indicator	Outcome – July 2010	Outcome – July 2011
95% of calls receive a response within one working day	Achieved 98%	Achieved 97%
90% level of satisfaction indicated in feedback and evaluation	Achieved 99%	Achieved 99%
Three opportunities a year for the community and parents/carers to express their views	Achieved 100%	Achieved 100%
90% of all requests for information and training sessions to be met	Achieved 98%	Achieved 97%
Parents have access to independent parental support when requested	Achieved 100%	Achieved 100%

How Callers Heard about the Parent Partnership Service



Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Between the period of September 2010 and July 2011 PPS supported 593 Cases with regard to SEN.

This involved a total of 4313 Actions.

The purpose of the PPS is to encourage partnership between Parents, LA's, schools, Early Years settings and voluntary agencies in the work of identifying, assessing and making provision for children with SEN. The best results are always achieved when all parties work together in genuine and equal partnership focussing on the need of the child.

Evidence shows that parents are often confused by all the jargon surrounding SEN, and have little or no understanding of what is involved and the role they can play in helping support provision for those needs.

The last year has been an exceptionally busy year for PPS with calls becoming more complicated and needing quite intense input from PPS.

In some cases where PPS have been involved there has been an issue about the lack of communication between school and parents, with parents feeling it is ineffective.

Some parents have little or no understanding of the processes with regard to SEN provision, and there have been cases where the parent did not know what stage of the COP their child was on, the level of support their child was receiving or the support that may be available.

In several cases parents were not actively involved in decisions that were being made with regard to their child's support and there were times when the parent had not any direct contact with the SENCO.

Funding has continued to be an issue this year, with some parents being told that school are unable to meet the needs of child as they do not have the funding.

Parents are not always aware of the support that can be offered by other professionals such the Learning Support Team and Educational Psychologists

The service has received enquiries with regard to Statutory Assessment, and a small number of parents believe that the only way they can enlist support for their child is if they have a S/A.

It can involve a considerable amount of time and input from PPS to ensure that parents/carers fully understand the SEN process.

Parents often contact PPS at the time of request for Statutory Assessment (SA) or if they wish to make a parental request for SA. This process can be daunting for parents and PPS can help

them to understand the procedure and will offer the support of a Befriender (PPS volunteer) to assist parents in understanding the paperwork involved.

This support often needs to be maintained once the parent receives the proposed statement and PPS and Befrienders will continue to support parents/carers until the final statement has been issued and relevant provision has been made.

PPS has received a number of calls with regard to clarification of SEN provision at Academy Schools and with the expansion in the number of schools becoming Academies there is likely to be an increase in this area of work.

The outcomes of 'The Green Paper' will have substantial implications for PPS, as it recommends major changes to Special Educational Needs provision. This will necessitate further training for staff, additional collaborative working with professionals, and PPS information will need to be modified. Once the changes have been implemented, the service will need to raise the awareness of the changes to parents/carers and all stakeholders. The service predicts that parents/carers will need considerable reassurance during this period in order to maintain their confidence in the system.

Casework

SEN cases can be very complicated and although the number of cases has not increased considerably, many are now much more complicated taking longer to resolve there has been an increase in demand in the following areas:

Requests for PPS to attend meetings with parents, these can include, Annual Reviews, CAF meetings, and meetings in school.

Communication with other professionals

Request form both schools and parents for PPS to attend Mediation meetings between school and parents with regard to the provision of support for SEN and Non Curriculum Issues.

Case History

The Educational Psychologist had suggested that parent contact PPS as she was concerned with level of support that her child was receiving in school. Parent explained that her child had a diagnosis of ADHD and possible Tourettes Syndrome. His behaviour was causing concern in school and he was spending a considerable length of time isolated from other pupils, and exclusion had been mentioned although there had not been any exclusion to date. It became clear to PPS that parent had little understanding of SEN and did not know whether her child was on school action or school action plus, she did not have a copy of an IEP she was not aware of any support he was receiving, just that he spent time on his own and there was some T/A involvement. School had mentioned the possibility of making a request for Statutory Assessment but she was not aware that this had been completed, and did not know what this involved.

Initially PPS gave an overview of SEN provision and directed parent to the PPS website for further information, PPS explained that parent needed to obtain clarification as to what support was currently in place, the situation with regard to the S/A and needed copies of the most recent IEP involved in. PPS suggested that a meeting with the SENCO should be arranged and that

PPS would attend the meeting. PPS also explained that if her son was at risk of exclusion then Pastoral Support Plan could be put in place and reviewed every fortnight, and if appropriate then the Behaviour Support Team could become involved.

PPS also suggested that parent make list of her concerns she wished to raise at the meeting. Copies of relevant PPS information leaflets were sent to parent.

PPS attended the meeting where parent voiced her concerns, school gave an overview of the support that her child was receiving and also confirmed that they were in the process of collating the evidence for Statutory Assessment, and they had also spoken to the Educational Psychologist. Support strategies were discussed and it was agreed that more T/A time would be put in place and they would look into trying to integrate her child more into the classroom setting, although they explained that this was difficult at times because of the behaviour, particularly with regard to other pupils.

A new IEP was discussed at the meeting and parent agreed to the targets and support that were identified. The SENCO explained that it would take time to prepare the necessary paper work. It was agreed that a PSP would be put in place and that parent would meet once a fortnight with SENCO to review the plan. The SENCO would investigate the possibility of involving the Behaviour Support Team.

Parent gave permission for PPS to speak to Special Services and the Educational Psychologist.

Parent explained that she felt reassured and more positive as a result of the meeting. A follow up meeting was arranged for a month's time and PPS agreed to attend the meeting

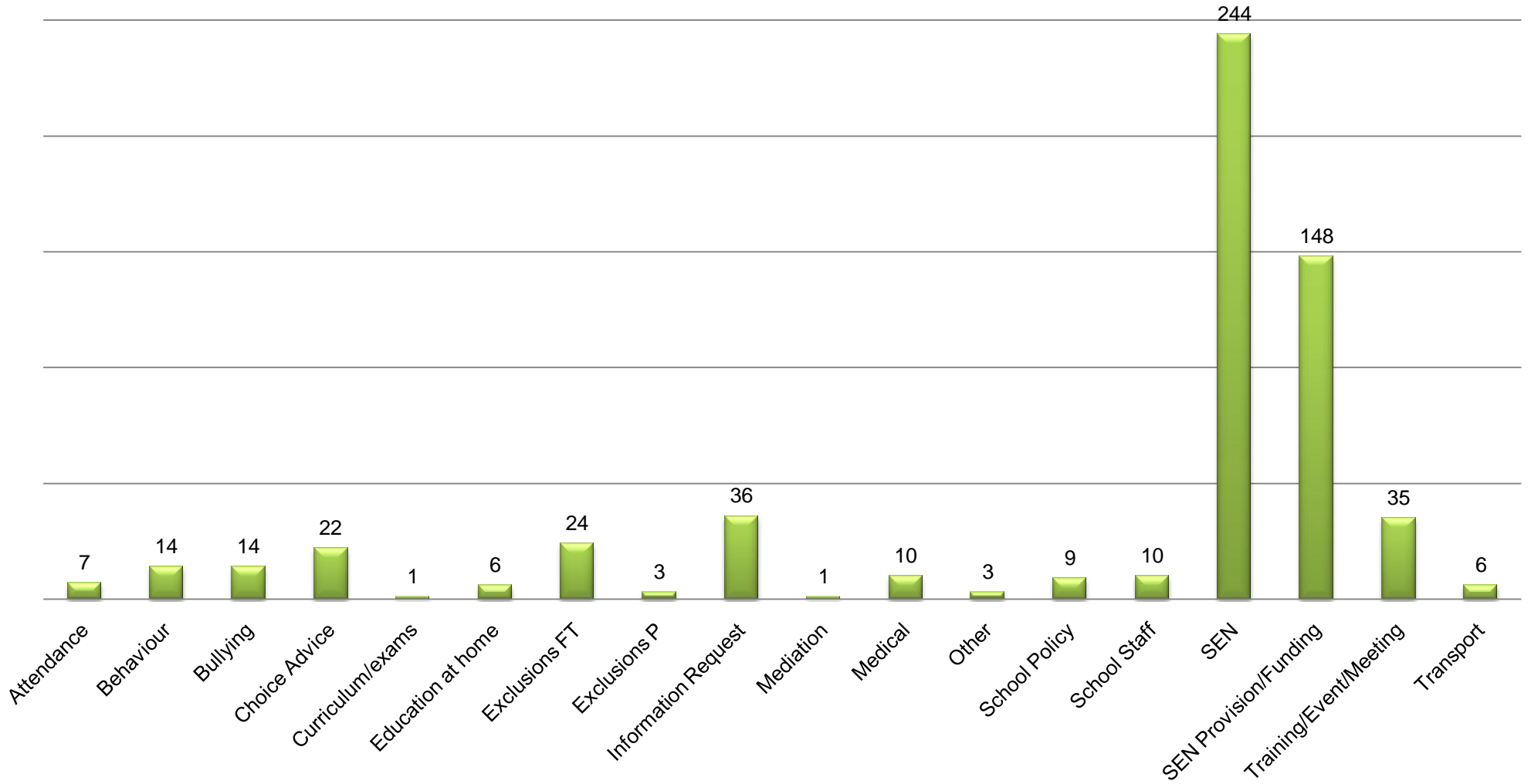
At the follow up meeting it was confirmed that the request for Statutory Assessment would be sent in time for the next panel meeting, although some of the targets on the PSP had been met, there were still ongoing problems with behaviour, which had involved a change in support. Parent explained that she was having some difficulties at home, and it was suggested that parent consider a visit to the GP to Ask for a re-referral to Child Psychology. The behaviour Support Team had been into school and given strategies for dealing with the child's behaviour and the Educational Psychologist had completed her assessment.

The outcome of PPS involvement was that;

Parent had a greater understanding of SEN provision, and felt more confident and involved, the relationship between school and parent improved. The child received the necessary support to meet their needs.

The case remained open until parent had received the final statement and relevant support had been put in place.

Special Educational Needs Case Breakdown



Non-Curriculum Issues (NCI)

Between the period of September 2010 and July 2011 PPS received and dealt with 654 cases with regards to NCI.

This involved a total of 3807 actions.

Non -Curriculum Issues (NCI) include any issue that may in some way be affecting or preventing a child accessing an education and can include:

- Bullying
- Exclusions
- School Policy
- School staff
- Attendance
- Admissions

Although NCI is not a statutory duty of PPS, it has always been accepted that the service take responsibility for offering impartial and neutral information/advice to parents/schools. NCI is therefore considered part of the services core business. However it is important to point out that PPS is not an advocacy service.

The role of PPS is to assist parents in resolving any issues or concerns they may have, and this is achieved by offering impartial information and advice and when necessary signposting them to relevant agencies/professionals. The aim being that, issues are resolved quickly, and before they become too entrenched

In March 2011 the Choice Adviser post was terminated, and as result of this it was decided that PPS would take responsibility for the statutory duty of the Choice Adviser which would involve giving basic information to parents/carers with regard to choosing a school, information on appeals, and sign posting to other agencies for example ACE for more in depth support. The service has always given parents general information on Admissions when requested, and this is seen as an extension of that function. It has been agreed however that due to limited resources PPS would not be in a position to deliver the same level of service as the Choice Adviser, however it meets the statutory obligation of that post. An agreed process has been set up with PATS, with regard to PPS responsibilities, and the services continue work in partnership to ensure that Parents/Carers continue to receive the support required.

NCI cases can be very complicated and although the number of cases has not increased considerably, many of them take a considerable length of time to resolve and require the involvement of several different professionals. PPS have continued to liaise and work collaboratively with other professionals, endeavouring to achieve a quick and positive resolution to issues.

There continues to be an increase in the number of requests for PPS to attend meetings. The requests have come from schools, parents/carers and professionals. (See the outreach graph). PPS endeavour to meet all requests for support; however this has been a stretch on PPS resources.

There have also been increases in the number of CAF meetings PPS have been requested to attend, and although PPS do not normally take on the role of lead professional there have been two cases this year where this has occurred, mainly because the need for CAF was initially identified by PPS.

Casework

Some NCI issues can be resolved quickly by talking to parents and helping them to see the options available, which enables them to take the necessary action to help resolve their issue. If however the situation is not resolved it could result in the parent making a complaint

There are clear procedures in place with regard to Non-Curriculum Complaints, and the PPS continues to take responsibility of ensuring that parents follow the procedures. It is sometimes the case that parents will write directly to a Senior Officer at the LA, before going through the procedures, if this is the case they will receive a reply suggesting that they contact PPS.

The Worcestershire Hub will give information regarding the procedures and if callers want to discuss issues further they will signpost them to PPS.

PPS produce a NCI leaflet which clearly outlines the procedures along with other useful guidance for parents. The service also provides PPS leaflets on Anti-Bullying, and Exclusions.

The service will be reviewing its Non-Curriculum Complaints leaflet to include information on complaints with regard to Academies

PPS are able to take time to discuss issues with parents, which helps to clarify the situation, the result often being that parents are in a position to look objectively at the options that are available to them. If parents/carers wish to make a complaint the service is able to guide parents through the procedures, and when appropriate signpost them to relevant services.

The outcomes of PPS involvement are;

- Parents feel as though they are being listened to
- Parents are in a position to make more informed decisions
- Parents are aware of options that are available
- Parents have a clearer understanding of procedures
- Schools and professionals have point of contact for advice
- Issues can be resolved more quickly

Case History

Parent contacted PPS; she was very upset and angry and said that her child was being bullied at school by a group of students, and despite the action the school had taken so far the situation was not improving. PPS established what was happening and the action the parent had taken so far. There had been issues within the family that the group of students were aware of and they were constantly taunting her. There had been a recent issue in school which had resulted in her child being injured and needing hospital treatment. Parent explained that she had spoken to school on several occasions and had recently requested that her child change tutor groups, however school would not agree.

She explained that her child was often getting in trouble with staff, as they would sometimes see her behaviour as unacceptable when she was in reality responding to a situation where she may have been verbally targeted by the group, and the member of staff was not aware of the whole situation. This left her child feeling very angry and upset.

PPS Officer discussed the strategies that could be used by both parent and school to address the issue, it was agreed that parent would ask for a copy of the school's Anti-Bullying leaflet, and ask for a meeting with the Head of Year. Parent also said that she was keeping a diary of incidents. A copy the PPS Stop-Bullying leaflet was sent to parent.

Parent contacted PPS with date of meeting and PPS Officer confirmed that she would be able to attend.

A meeting was held at the school, parent voiced her concerns and explained she was extremely worried as regardless of the strategies that the school had put in place, the situation did not seem to be improving and she emphasised that her child was becoming more reluctant to attend school. The head of year explained that from reports he had received the situation had improved, he addressed the issue of her child getting into trouble with staff, and explained there had been less of these, and when it did happen it was because her child had been quite verbal when approached by staff. Parent explained this was because she had probably just been targeted by the group of students and that staff had not seen the whole incident. Strategies were discussed which included, the suggestion that her child distance herself from the group concerned, that she have a weekly session with the school counsellor, and that there would be a member of staff and her child could go directly to if there were further incidents. The head of year would also continue to alert other staff to the situation. The head of year had addressed the situation with group of students involved but would do this again.

Parent once again requested that her child be moved tutor group as she felt that the situation had been going on for a considerable length of time, and that if her child continued to be disaffected, and reluctant to attend school, then she have to look at changing schools which she did not ideally want to do. The head of year explained that this could be difficult but that he would look into it.

Following the meeting parent confirmed to PPS, that she felt the meeting was positive, and that she had been listened to, she also felt that the PPS involvement had been particularly helpful.

Outcomes

Parent contacted PPS, and explained that she had been contacted by the head of year and the following strategies had been put in place:

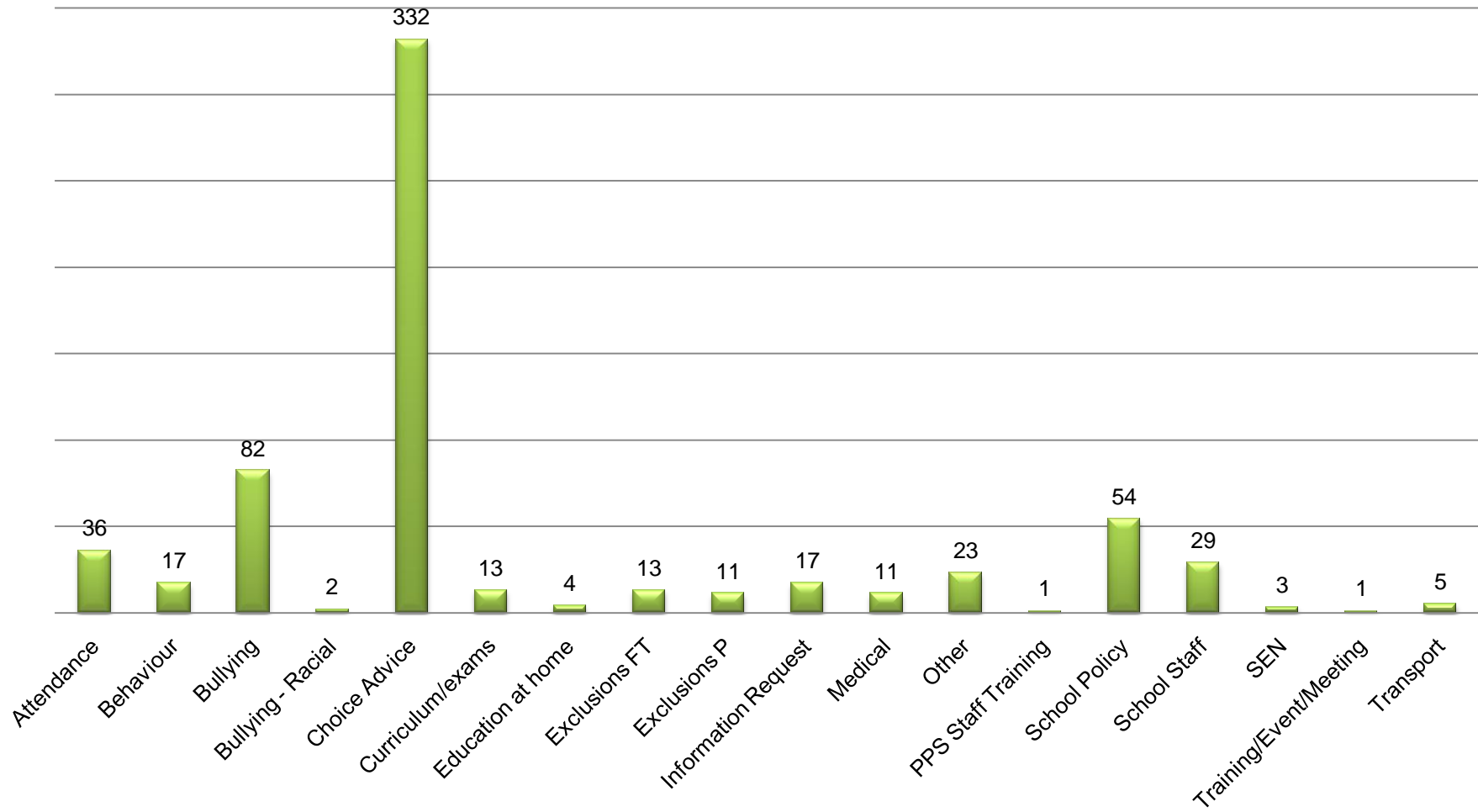
- It had been agreed that child would change tutor groups.
- Appointments had been arranged for her child to see the school counsellor.
- Named member of staff for her child to report to if there were any incidents that caused concern.

Parent also stated that the Stop Bullying leaflet had been extremely useful, as the information and strategies were very practical. Parent said that she felt reassured as was her daughter; she would monitor the situation and call PPS should she need any further support.

Parent did not call back; PPS made a courtesy call where parent confirmed that everything seemed to be going quite well, her child had settled well into the new tutor group, the sessions with the school counsellor were going well, there were still some incidents involving the group of students, but parent felt her child was coping better with the situation.

PPS explained that they would now close the case and send out an evaluation form, and that parent could contact the service in the future if further support was required.

Non-Curriculum Issues Case Breakdown



Outreach

Outreach works includes:

- Attendance at meetings with parents
- Attendance at school parents evenings
- Organising events in the community
- Supporting other events organised by the LA, and other relevant agencies including the voluntary sector
- PPS talks – raising the awareness of PPS
- SEN training
- NCI training

PPS continue to regard outreach as a part of PPS service delivery, as it is one of the most effective ways of informing parent/carers and all stakeholders of the role of PPS and how the support the service can offer, it is also the most successful means of engaging the hard to reach parents/carers. These are often the parents in most need of support, but may not have knowledge of the service.

Evidence shows that when, outreach, attendance at events, or training activities are undertaken the service is always successful in reaching more parents either directly or through other professionals.

Limited resources have an impact on the level of outreach the service is able to undertake, and 2009 saw a noticeable increase in the demand for support particularly with parents at meetings in school. (See outreach graph)

The service endeavours to meet all requests for support and data shows that 97% of requests were met.

The service has supported AFASIC this year, in the organising of their 'Speech and Language Pathway Event'

PPS contribute to the Worcestershire Parents and Carers Forum and have played an active role in their training sessions and events for parents of children with disabilities.

The services also attended other events organised by professionals, including the voluntary sector and this is an effective way of disseminating information regarding the PPS service.

PPS has also continued to offer SEN training sessions to professionals including T/A's and SENCO's, and also delivered awareness raising sessions on the role of PPS to professionals, support groups, including the Voluntary Sector

PPS are continuing to develop positive relationships with schools and data shows that there has been an increase in the number of schools who have either directed parents to PPS for support or who have contacted the service themselves. Evidence and feedback show that this work needs to continue particularly taking into consideration that some schools will be moving to Academy Status.

The service is currently exploring avenues to help ensure that all new Academies are aware of the role of PPS and the support the service can offer to both them and their parents, specifically with regard to Special Educational needs provision.

The service has continued its work with 'Family Ties' at Brockhill Prison, which involves attending the monthly family time visits. Unfortunately Brockhill closed in June 2010, but there is discussion taking place with regard to PPS attending the 'Family Time meetings at Hewell Grange Open Prison. This is when families are allowed to visit in an open and relaxed atmosphere; there are craft activities, reading and games, followed by family tea. These events allow for greater communication with the families who are often open to talk about issues that the men might not wish to talk about themselves. PPS have been part of the team and offered some craft activity, played games with the children and helped in any way they can. They have also brought in leaflets which partners can take away. When there have been difficulties in families, such as coping with an ADHD child, PPS have offered support to the partner and followed up afterwards.

Feedback from the Chaplain and the Prisoners has been extremely positive and rewarding.

Restorative Justice

PPS has three officers trained in Restorative Justice (RJ) and although it is not part of the core delivery of the service. There have been requests for the support and involvement of PPS both in the delivery and training of RJ especially with regard to the use of Restorative Practices.

It is a facility that PPS would like to develop particularly taking into consideration the LA Anti-Bullying Policy and their recommendations made with regard to RJ. Unfortunately current resources do not enable the service to develop the role with regard to RJ, although it does allow the current level of input to continue.

PPS is part of the Restorative Practices Steering Group which is currently on hold until the final outcome of Next Steps and Bold.

Impact

PPS outreach work provides the service with the opportunity to engage with a wider range of parents/carers professionals and the voluntary sector. This helps to ensure that PPS information and support is disseminated to a wide range that the service is engaging with a wide range of parents, and professionals.

PPS information is widely disseminated.

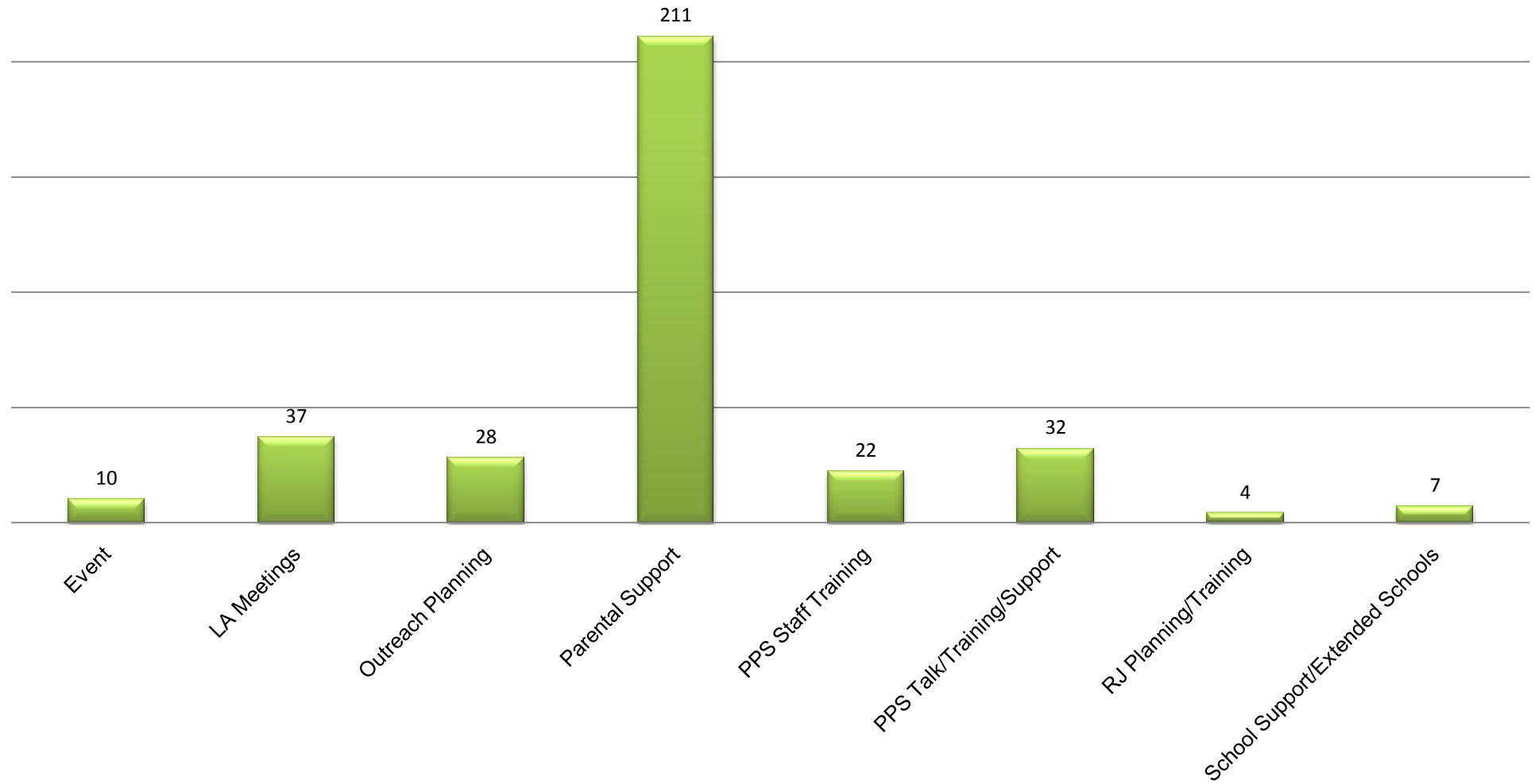
Increase in engagement with parents

It provides opportunity for engagement with hard to reach parents.

Clearer understanding by professionals of the role of PPS

Raised awareness and understanding of SEN provision by both parents and professionals

Outreach/Training/Meetings



Independent Parental Supporters Befrienders

PPS currently have 5 active Befrienders

There is sometimes difficulty in providing Befrienders support to parents/carers in all areas of Worcestershire, and if necessary PPS will provide the support requested by parents/carers.

PPS have continued to have update training and supervision sessions for Befrienders once a term; however due to the commitments of Befrienders there have been occasions when it has been difficult to arrange a suitable time that is convenient to everyone and as result of this there have been times when there has been limited attendance at these meetings.

The service has resolved this by contacting Befrienders and requested that they suggest a time which be most convenient for them. The response being that Saturday morning would be the most suitable time to meet.

Meeting dates for the coming year have now been forwarded to all Befrienders, and agendas for the meetings will be sent nearer the time.

Update training is discussed and planned at the meetings and have this year included

- The PPS Minimum Standards
- The consultation of 'The Green Paper'
- Health and Safety
- Overview of the PPS legal training and the possibility of training for Befrienders

The service has decided that it will be more efficient and effective to delay the training of a new cohort of Befrienders until the outcome of 'The Green Paper' as this may involve revisiting the training package to make any necessary adjustments.

Outcomes of Befriender Support

The impact of having a group of trained volunteers (Befrienders) is that they are in a position to support the PPS by offering impartial information and support to parents through the Statutory Assessment process, which can sometimes be confusing and stressful.

Parents have support to help them complete paperwork with regard to Statutory Assessment.

Parents have a direct point of contact, throughout the Statutory Assessment process and able to talk matters through discussing options available.

They can liaise with other professionals on behalf of the parent

Parents have help understanding the implications of objectives set out in the statement.

Parents have support to prepare for SENDIST Tribunal hearings.
Support parents at meetings
Support with visiting new schools with parents

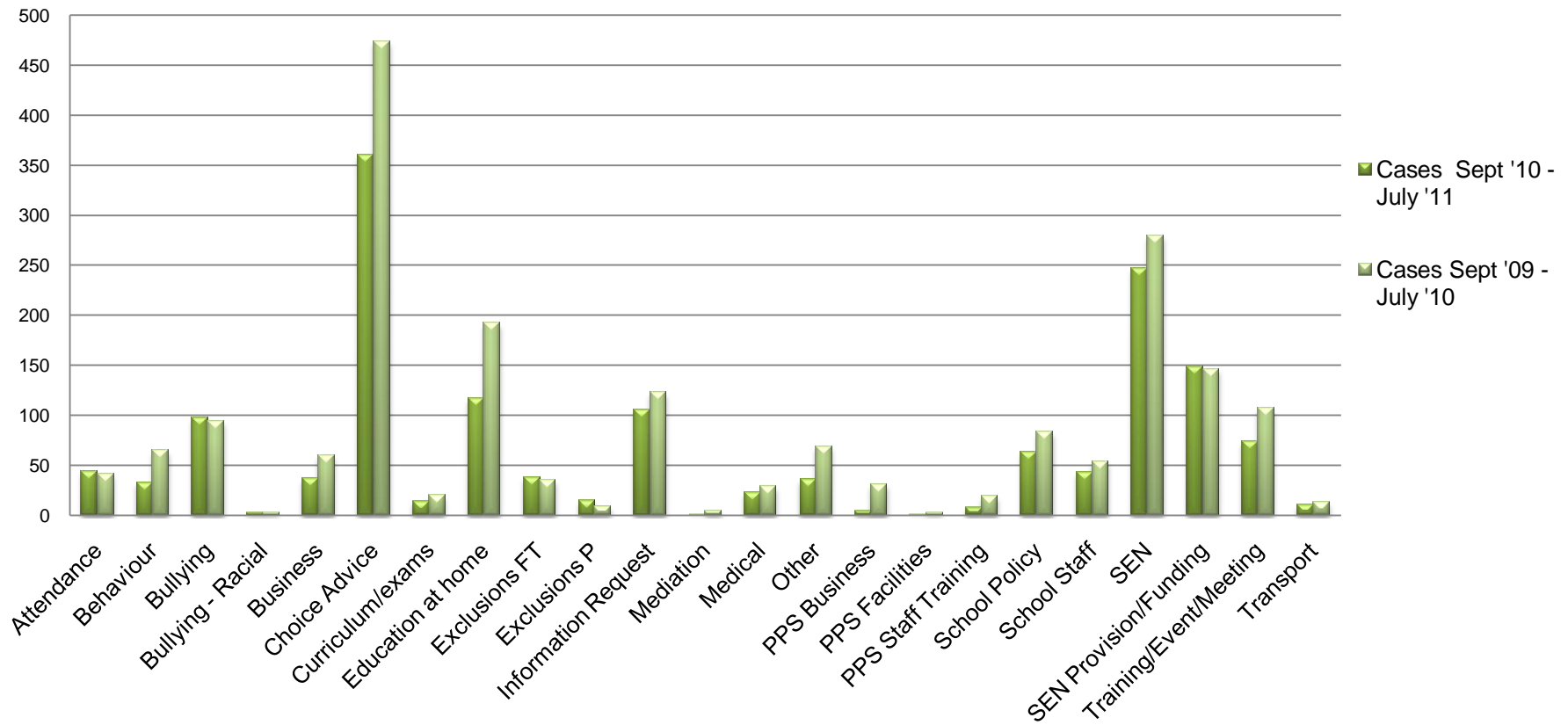
Befrienders also support PPS at events they may be organizing or attending which helps to increase the availability of PPS.

Trended Information

Cases Breakdown by Issue

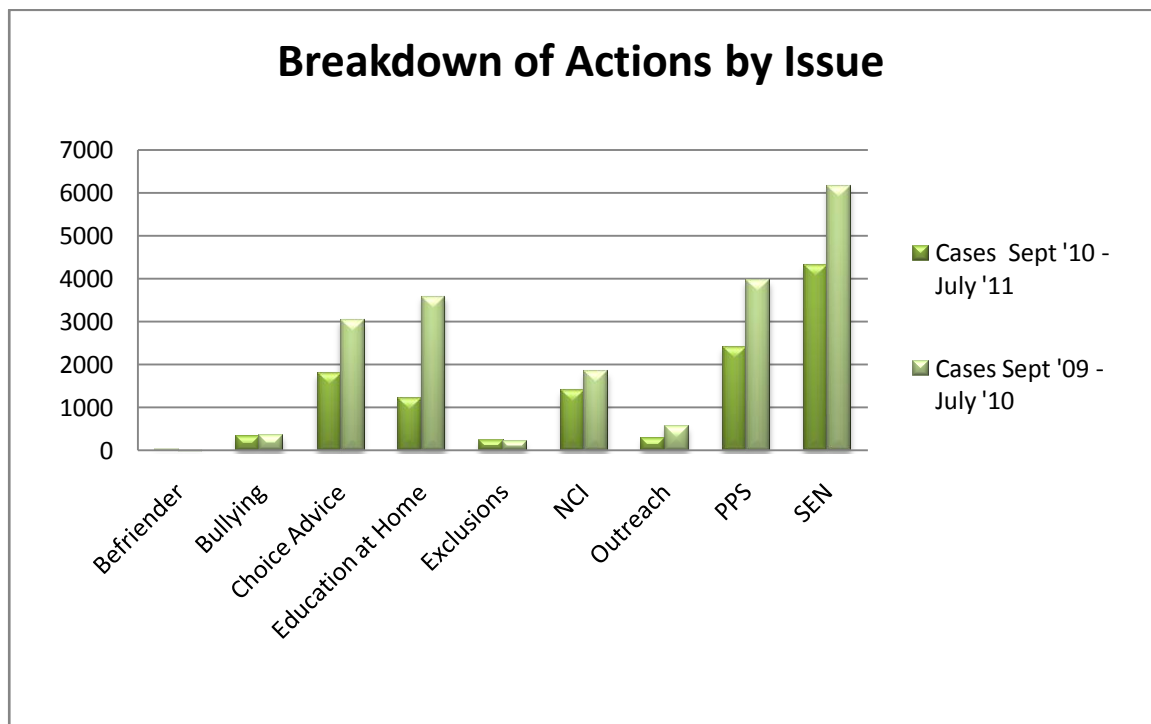
Description	Cases September 2010 – July 2011	Cases September 2009 – July 2010
Attendance	44	41
Behaviour	33	65
Bullying	98	94
Bullying – Racial	3	3
Business	37	60
Choice Advice	360	474
Curriculum/Exams	14	20
Education at Home	117	192
Exclusions FT	38	35
Exclusions P	15	9
Information Request	105	123
Mediation	1	5
Medical	23	29
Other	36	69
PPS Business	5	31
PPS Facilities	1	3
PPS Staff Training	8	19
School Policy	63	83
School Staff	43	54
SEN	247	280
SEN Provision/Funding	148	146
Training/Event/Meeting	74	107
Transport	11	13
Total	1524	1955

Breakdown of Cases by Issue



Actions Breakdown by Issue

Description	Actions September 2010 – July 2011	Actions September 2009 – July 2010
Befriender	18	7
Bullying	350	365
Choice Advice	1800	3047
Education at Home	1212	3589
Exclusions	252	220
NCI	1409	1837
Outreach	304	558
PPS	2408	3972
SEN	4311	6159
Total	12064	19754



PPS Aims for 2011/2012

The aims for the PPS during the next academic year are:

- PPS to continue to deliver an efficient and effective service
- To meet the objectives of the PPS Team Plan
- To support the requirements of the FIAAS service Plan
- To monitor the performance of PPS alongside the NPPN Minimum Standards.
- To ensure that PPS receive the relevant training relating to 'The Green Paper' and 'Academies'
- PPS manager to investigate the opportunity for PPS support officers to undertake the accredited 'Casework training'
- To ensure that the PPS relocation to new premises (Connexions Office) is organised appropriately, and with the least effect on service delivery.