



Welcome to the Spring 2016 PPA newsletter

We are coming to the end of this year's grant round and have recently heard of the Department for Education's plans to continue funding parent forums for another two years.

This is really good news for PPA and shows our

Government still values the input parent/carers can have in shaping services.

In this issue we share what we have been up to – much of which is set around the SEND reforms, our plans for the months ahead and other local news.

We hope you find our newsletter interesting and if you would like to provide any feedback – (good or bad!) please do so, as follows:



Email us at:

positiveparentaction@yahoo.co.uk

or phone us on: 020 8947 5260

or, you can 'like' our facebook page to find out when our meetings are:

[Facebook/positiveparentaction](https://www.facebook.com/positiveparentaction)

Upcoming plans

PPA Parent Carer get-together – Wednesday 23rd March 2016

We are hosting a lunch for parent/carers at the Central London Golf Centre on Burntwood Lane, Earlsfield (tbc). This will be a chance for us all to talk to each other over a relaxed lunch, share what's going on in the Borough and discuss what issues you would like PPA to address over the coming year. We will be sending out invitations by email when details are confirmed, so if you are not on email, please ring Elizabeth and she will book you a place. Tel: 020 8947 5260.

We really hope you can make it!

Mindfulness training

We are running a taster session for parent/carers on Tuesday 10th May 10.00am -12pm.

It will be based at the Early Years Centre and is going to give an overview of the techniques parent/carers can use to deal with stress.

PPA meetings

We meet each month at the Early Years Centre. Generally we meet on the first Tuesday of every month, during the term but this can vary. Please check in advance if you would like to come. We post this information on our Facebook page.

Places are limited so please let Elizabeth know if you are interested in attending any of these. All our events and training are free for parents and we can reimburse travel and childcare expenses if needed. We are sorry that we cannot provide crèche facilities.

PPA update

Positive Parent Action is part of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF). Membership is free and anyone who cares for a child or young person (0–25 years) with special needs in the Borough is welcome to join.

We are run by a steering group of parent/carer volunteers. Some of our steering group members are also parent reps and Co-Chairs on the Council's workstreams that are implementing the new Special Educational Needs and Disability systems in Wandsworth. We are always looking for volunteers to help with the forum and its work, so if you want to know more about PPA or make suggestions about how it could work better for you, please look at our website/Facebook or get in touch. Our work needs to reflect all your views, so please let us have your contact details if you haven't already – your email address would be perfect.

'Outcomes workshop'

One of the things that we aim to do is to give parents information about how to get the most out of provision, so in January we ran some training at the Professional Development Centre on how to write 'outcomes' for EHC Plans.

The workshop was delivered by Claire Lazarus from a national organisation called 'In Control'. Contact a Family's Independent Supporters, Ashling Barve and Meagan Leggett also explained how the EHC process was working in Wandsworth. Feedback from parents was very positive; here are some of the things they said:

It was a very important session as I have an upcoming transfer review and it opened my eyes that I need extra support and have much to do

Excellent information

*Very good speakers.
Still feels like a minefield!*

One of the key messages that came out of the workshop was to start thinking about long term and short term 'outcomes' for your child before you get into the formal EHC process. It may be a good idea to speak to your SENCO or an Independent Supporter about it a couple of months before the assessment or statement transfer process starts.



How PPA has been involved with the Council

Most of you will be aware that since September 2014 there are new processes in place to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). This means that 'Statements' will no longer be issued and will be phased out over the next couple of years. In the new process your child may be issued with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) instead of a Statement. If your child does not receive an EHC assessment or Plan, they may access extra help at school through 'SEN Support'. Ask your school's SENCO to explain what is new, if you need to know more.

PPA's continued involvement in Wandsworth's implementation of the reforms has included participating in meetings, giving a parental perspective; reviewing

documentation, taking part in 'EHC and Complex needs' Panel meetings, attending conferences and training.

Some of the current issues that we are involved with include:

Short Breaks - In December, the Council sent out consultation documents to over 1000 families, to find out which Short Breaks services parents and young people value most. The response rate was not that high, so the Council will be asking PPA to look at the feedback with them, to help shape future Short Breaks provision. We have been told that Wandsworth's funding for Short Breaks has not changed significantly from the last few years, which is good news, given the cuts some areas are having to make.

If you have any issues you would like us to raise on Short Breaks, please let us know.

Transport Policy - The Council has published their draft Transport Policy which can be found on the Local Offer website. They asked for views on the policy and PPA met with Wandsworth Advice and Support Service (WIASS - previously known as Parent Partnership) to put together a joint response. We think it needs some further development and will let you know of the outcome. If you have any issues around Transport that you would like us to raise, please let us know.

Ofsted Consultation - From May 2016, Ofsted will start inspecting local areas on their effectiveness at identifying and providing for children and young people with SEND.

At the end of last year we responded to their consultation on what they should be looking for in their inspections.

'SEND Handbook' - Wandsworth have developed a 'Handbook' which aims to explain how SEND systems have been implemented in Wandsworth. It has been co-produced by the SEND workstreams. This is for professionals and parents and will be mainly an on-line resource.

It is intended that the 'Handbook' can be updated as needed. It will be available on the Local Offer website.

WIKIS - The Council is investing in the development of web-based profiles of young people, which can make it easier to understand a young person's needs. They are called WIKIS and a parent has been part of the working group that is setting up the system. If you are interested in looking at an example, here is a link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4gpfkL4fc>

Local News

Local News

Local News

Sports

Matt Doherty from Wandsworth Council came to our January meeting. He replaces Kay Swygart as the Sports Development Officer and his work includes sporting provision for children and young people with SEND as well as the Youth Games. We talked about the sports we would like to see available to our children and the things that are already working well. We discussed the issue that there needs to be more specialist swimming sessions.



Wandsworth Carers Centre

Wandsworth Carers Centre is establishing a new Carers' forum. This is for anyone responsible for caring for someone. They say meetings will be led by carers and will include representatives from the Council and other providers; that there will be opportunities for you to socialise with and get support from other carers. The first meeting was at the Town Hall on 25th February and they plan to meet every three months in different parts of the borough. If you would like to find out more, please get in touch with them on: 020 8877 1200.

Life after school

One of PPA's parents wanted to share her good news:

My daughter went to Garratt Park School and she wanted to be a florist, like me. After leaving school she went to college for young people with special needs called Roots and Shoots. She has now passed level 1 and level 2 in floral design and we have just started up our own freelance floristry going out and teaching other people to make flower arrangements and doing flowers for people when asked. So it just goes to show that people who go to special needs schools and colleges can indeed do well for themselves in life. I also went to a special needs school and I went on to become a qualified florist myself



If you would like to know more about their floristry service, please let us know and we can put you in touch.

Local offer

The Local Offer on Wandsworth's Family Information Service website shows what is available locally for children and young people with special needs. Whether you are looking for information on schools or for things to do in the holidays it is the best place to start your search. You can find it on-line at:

www.wandsworth.gov.uk/localoffer or speak to someone at the Family Information Service on: 020 8871 7899.



for disabled children and young people in Wandsworth

PPA Contact details

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**WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE
and WE DO NEED YOUR INPUT TOO!
PLEASE COME AND JOIN US**