



Welcome to the Autumn 2013 PPA newsletter we hope you had a good summer!

In this issue we focus on the SEN reforms and how PPA is being involved in the implementation of the reforms in Wandsworth. We've also included a questionnaire, so that we can make sure everyone is getting the opportunity to have their views heard. Please fill it in – not only do you get to hear about what's going on and how you can help shape local services, but you also get a chance to win £50!

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Reforms

The SEN reforms are now progressing from trials in pathfinder areas to being implemented nationally. The Government plans to have the legislation for the new system in place in September 2014. Wandsworth Council are now beginning to implement these reforms.

At the end of the summer term, we were invited to take part in the first meeting of the SEN Reforms Steering Group. As a result of this meeting, it was agreed that local parent/carers should Co-Chair, with Council officers, five implementation work streams. The work streams cover five areas:

Education, Health and Care plans
these will replace Statements

Local Offer
available services and eligibility

Personal Budgets
these will be optional

Preparing for Adulthood
transition to adult services

Joint Commissioning
Local Authority and Health services

We were asked by Wandsworth Council to find a number of parents to take on the role of Co-Chairs and parent reps, so in September we held an open meeting asking for parents/carers to express an interest in joining the work streams. It was a really successful event and lots of parents signed up. The parent/carers have now each been allocated a role and a work

stream and will be paid a small fee for taking part in and feeding back from meetings.

We intend to send out regular updates from each of the work streams, once the groups have been established

At a national level, the new SEN Code of Practice is presently out for consultation.

It can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/draft-0-to-25-special-educational-needs-sen-code-of-practice-draft-regulations>

We will be formulating a response as a forum, under the guidance of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums, but individual parent/carers are urged to respond too, to maximise impact.

We have also put links to some of the relevant organisations on our website:
www.positiveparentaction.org.uk

SEN Co-production workshop 21ST October

Two newly recruited parent Co-Chairs recently attended an event exploring the ways Councils can best implement the reforms, using the experience and expertise of parent/carers. They have provided feedback on the event and one parent said:

It was a very good and informative event with lots of positive speakers. It was invaluable in terms of the co-chair role I've taken on.

National Network of Parent Carer Forums

www.nnpcf.org.uk

There are over 30 Parent/Carer forums across London and another 120 nationally.

Positive Parent Action is part of the National Network of Parent Carer Forum's South London Cluster group and regularly attends meetings with the other forums from this region.

Furthermore, PPA is one of the two forums who represent the South London Cluster in the NNPCF London Wide Strategy group.

Recent discussions at both the South London Cluster group and London wide Strategy group were dominated by the SEN reform process in both pathfinder and non-pathfinder areas. It is clear that implementation of these reforms is challenging, and some areas are working better than others. However, the message that parental involvement is important is being heard more and more by local authorities.

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Please get in touch if you would like to come to the next meeting

Positive Parent Action c/o Contact A Family, 1 Siward Road, London SW17 0LA
www.positiveparentaction.org.uk and info@positiveparentaction.org.uk

Short Breaks

At the moment we remain part of the Short Breaks steering group, although this group may not continue once the SEN work streams are fully operational.

There are still lots of activities going on for families and we would advise you to contact the Family Information Service for more details:

Telephone: 020 8871 7899 Internet: www.wandsworth.gov.uk/fis

Here are a couple of the things that our children currently enjoy:



Dolphin swimming club

A very welcoming club for swimmers who have learning difficulties. We all really enjoyed the recent annual Dolphin Gala and party at the Latchmere leisure centre. They even had a club outing to Brighton in the summer - great fun!

Share a Family Sunday club

My son really enjoys going to the Sunday club at George Shearing every month. He gets to be part of a similar peer group - something that is hard to do at mainstream school.

LBWASA

disability swimming club

The lessons aim not only to help my son learn to swim but also very importantly to gain confidence in the water. In a short time they have done wonders for our son as it is run by expert swimmers and teachers. He is now happily kicking in the water and laughing and finds it great fun.



There is also a new disability sports club at Battersea sports centre on Tuesday evenings for children/young adults age 11-25 years.

We have been advised that the club caters for those with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities.

**Every Tuesday term-time 5:00 - 6:30pm
Battersea Sports Centre**

Hope Street, Battersea, London, SW11 2DA
For more details please contact:

Alan Whetherly for the organisers directly

Telephone:

020 7021 0973

Email:

alan@disabilitysportcoach.co.uk

Internet:

disabilitysportscoach.co.uk/clubs

Events

We are planning events for the next few months and are considering:

- ❁ Wills workshop
- ❁ Daytime SEN consultation event in February/March plus a smaller evening
- ❁ SEN information event in December.

We would really like to gauge interest, so would be grateful if you could **fill in the enclosed form**.

On a separate note, we are really keen to get our **Facebook page** established, so if you 'like' our page before the Christmas break, you will be entered into another £25 prize draw.



Health



Charlie Rumsby, from Healthwatch came to our last meeting to explain about their role in the new Health system.

Following her visit, one of our members attended the first voluntary/community sector Healthwatch meeting at Earlsfield Library in September and reports:

Healthwatch explained they will now operate within two main groups:

*Firstly, the **Health and Wellbeing Partnership** will feed directly back to the Health and Wellbeing Board (the board comprises, senior council members, Clinical Commissioning Group and Healthwatch Wandsworth).*

The Partnership is to focus on service delivery (with members from St. George's, Police, Pharmacies etc) and one member from the voluntary sector will be selected to join this group.

*Secondly, the **Healthwatch Voluntary Sector Forum**, which will have a more consultative focus.*

PPA will continue to attend these groups as a way of raising awareness of the particular issues that children with special needs and disabilities face when using health services.

If you have had any issues or concerns around the care your family has received, please let us know. If there are common and recurring issues, then we can approach Healthwatch as a group.

Contact details

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Term time: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

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Email:

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or

positiveparentaction@yahoo.co.uk



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