

Notes on meeting with ESCAN Service Managers on Wednesday 20th January 2016 at 12o'clock

Present: Debbie Grey (Assistant Director ESCAN) all service managers (see their presentations attached), and:

Matthew Jeatt (EPCF-Chair), Kirstie Ferrett (EPCF), Sarah Theobalds (P.E.S.T.S), Nick Radclyffe (EalingHelp), Marie Holmes (ISAID), Brigitte Bistrick-Bryan (EPCF- Administrator)

The following are not official minutes but notes taken during the meeting. Most of the time was taken up with introductions.

Debbie Grey welcome all present and explained the background of the meeting. All service managers introduced themselves and gave a brief presentation on their services (see attached presentation document).

Matthew thanked Debbie and all managers present and expressed parents' appreciation of this new opportunity to discuss relevant topics around Ealing's SEN provision with service managers directly.

All members of the EPCF Steering Group introduced themselves and their organisations. Matthew pointed out that several parents present are also school governors at different special and mainstream schools in the Borough. He explained the membership and workings of the EPCF Steering Group.

Matthew (EPCF Chair) emphasised the following:

- He hoped the value of these meetings would be to create a neutral space for topics to be discussed, hopefully to take place twice a year.
- He reassured all present that the meetings were not about bringing up individual families' / parents' issues
- He pointed out that the meetings should not be the only conduit for services to get together with service users and that they would not replace ESCAN's communications or dealings with any of the EPCF's partner organisations.
- He suggested for the meetings to be co-chaired by EPCF Chair and Debbie. Debbie agreed to this.
- He emphasised that the meetings should be open and transparent and pointed out that it is the EPCF's policy to publish minutes of any meetings on its website, unless there is (occasionally) a specific need for something to be treated confidentially.

ESCAN service managers were asked what they hoped to get from these meetings.

Karen Benedyk (Speech Therapy) spoke about problems Speech Therapists have to communicate with some parents when the speech therapy work with the child is done at school. She asked for help on how to encourage all parents to engage with the service.

Matthew (EPCF Chair) pointed out that it would be helpful to have an updated register of all children with disabilities. He explained that the Forum is currently renewing its registration of membership forms and that it would make sense to coordinate the information on the form with the information the LA hold on families.

Brigitte pointed out that if ESCAN services had a specific issue they wanted to consult with parents about, the ECF would be happy to make those the topic of one of their monthly Drop In sessions, as they have done for Personal Budgets last year and will do in March on the topic of Ealing's ABA provision.

Kirstie reminded all to be aware that parents will use that opportunity to voice frustration and that service managers needed to be prepared to hear negative feedback.

Oliver Francis (CwD) said it was important to hear parents' views collectively as well as individually to get a better idea of which services provided good value.

Matthew (EPCF Chair) suggested for the meetings to be held in time for them to potentially impact on Ealing's budgeting process. Debbie explained that this year's budget setting had already happened but agreed it would be good if the meetings' discussions could feed into the LA's strategy. She explained that they are currently working on developing a 0-25 SEND commissioning strategy.

Debbie (Asst Director ESCAN) reassured all that ESCAN wants to involve parents in the self-evaluation of SEND services and agreed that the timing of the meetings would be critical. She suggested to work on jointly agreed Terms of Reference for the next meeting and to set up the co-chaired meeting for late June this year.

Nick (EalingHELP) pointed out that it would be in everybody's interest to increase the membership of the Parent Forum and said how helpful it would be if services could hand out membership forms or point parents to the EPCF when they see them at appointments. Matthew (EPCF Chair) will share the new EPCF registration page before the SEN Info Fair on the 10th February.

Debbie (Asst Director ESCAN) will send the presentation on the different service to Matthew.

The problem of different age groups for different services was briefly discussed as a potential topic, as was independent housing for your people with SEN. Debbie confirmed that the promotion of independence is a key theme of services in Ealing.

Debbie summarised that she will remain the key link between the EPCF and ESCAN services but encouraged the EPCF and its partner organisations to contact individual services directly for potential discussions and drop in sessions.

The meeting finished at 1.15pm.