

Notes of Parents in Partnership Forum Meeting
Held on Wednesday
27th April 2011
Room 1
Wakefield Town Hall

Present: Geoff Tulley, Catherine Boothman, Alistair Formby, Ann Formby, Ian Bradbury, Gary Stuart, Sabrina Archbold, Gillian Archbold, Marium Haque, Gary Cooper, Angela Brocksom, Fiona Law, Denise Daykin, Val Railton, Amanda Courtman, Helen Hudson, Emma Juckes.

Apologies: Alicia Tulley, Andy Simpson

Matters Arising: The Forum members briefly discussed the progress that had been made and how much had been achieved since the Forum started meeting. It was felt that the relationship between parents and the LA was now more productive and the systems in place to support children were greatly improved.

The long term commitment to the Forum of members was also recognised. Many members have been attending since it was formed some ten years ago.

Marium Haque introduced the SEN Strategy 2011-2014.

The current Strategy Achievement for All has been in place since 2008. Most of what it planned to achieve has now been completed. It was decided that a new strategy now would move things forward but take into account what was proposed in the SEN Green Paper.

One key area that was discussed was the transition to Post-16. Angela pointed out that she has been working with NEW College to draw up an agreement for SENSS to provide support to those attending the college with sensory impairments.

Support for students in secondary schools with ADHD was now in place with the re-structure of the behaviour support service.

The importance of early intervention was also discussed and how this played a prominent part in the Green Paper.

The subject of greater parental choice with regard to special or mainstream school education for children was discussed. Forum members felt that it was important to have a balanced system to give the choice and that Wakefield's decision not to close special schools some years ago had been a wise one. One of the main concerns for parents was not whether mainstream schools could meet their children's academic needs but whether they could provide an adequate environment to protect the most vulnerable against bullying for example. It was agreed that parents had to choose whether between using their local school so that their child might achieve some degree of academic

success or whether a caring and supportive environment which better prepared children with life skills was more appropriate.

This led to a discussion around the classroom support available for students in mainstream schools and particularly the training of teachers to enable them to understand the needs of pupils with SEN. This again was pointed out as a priority in the Green Paper.

Gillian was keen to point out that children wanted to have more awareness of disabilities and how the Kidzaware puppet show was well received by children in schools.

There was also a general discussion around bullying issues and the role of the Governing Body in schools.

In the second section of the meeting there was a general discussion about the SEN Green Paper. It was decided that the Forum should make a response to the DfE. Arrangements for an additional meeting on the 24th May were made for people who attended to contribute to the submission.