

‘Listening to Parents and Disabled Children’ ‘You Said – We Did’

The ‘You said, We Did’ document lists key issues raised by parents, shows how these are being addressed and details the future commitment from Wakefield Council and NHS Wakefield District.

What You Said...about Information

You wanted

- More information about support and services and about benefits - at particular times, such as ‘after a diagnosis’; to be able to feedback your views.
- 43% of you wanted information via a newsletter.

What we have done so far...

- Wakefield’s early Support, Advice, Information and Liaison Service (WeSail) has been commissioned by Wakefield Council and NHS Wakefield District to provide information and signposting as well as a key working service. Staff deployed into WeSail offer short term interventions, including post diagnostic support. WeSail produces a quarterly newsletter which also offers parents the chance to feedback their views.
- WeSail are working with the Family Information Service to develop a comprehensive ‘hub’ of information for families caring for a disabled child.

What can you do now?

If you want a regular copy of News and Views, sign up to the Information Network by contacting WeSail on (01924) 379015.

Look on the Family Information Service Website: www.wakefieldfis.org.uk/

What You Said...about Inclusion

You wanted

- More leisure facilities for disabled children with better training for staff.

What we have done so far...

- Wakefield is supporting inclusion into mainstream services through a number of commissioned schemes including the ‘Get Started’ Team run by Barnardo’s. Inclusion Champions are being funded in the Youth Development Support Service and 3 special needs play schemes are being run from Children’s Centres across the District. Such initiatives and associated training are leading to a workforce who are more skilled to support disabled children in mainstream settings.
- Barnardo’s Children’s Advocacy and Participation Service provides Disability Respect training for professionals across the district. Disabled young people lead a course which aims to raise awareness and share good practice when working with disabled children.

What can you do now?

If you are interested in the Get Started service you can contact them on 01924 239250.

What You Said...about Transition

You wanted

- More information and support for young people going through Transition and for their families.

What we have done so far...

- Wakefield Council has recently appointed a Transition Champion to act as a 'critical friend' and help us to improve transition for young people in Wakefield.
- A range of extra support has been made available for young people. For instance there is a Connexions worker based with WeSail to give advice and many of the new short breaks, funded through Aiming High, have been targeted at young people aged 14+.

What we are planning to do...

Wakefield Council, with support from young people, is in the final stages of completing a simple, easy to read Transition Pack, including a version in symbols.

What You Said...about Social Events and Family Activities

You wanted

- More social activities in areas where families can get together and meet others; with evening events for working parents.

What we have done so far...

- Supported the Parents' Reference Group to run a number of Family Participation events including 3 evening events for working parents.
- Provided short breaks which support families to enjoy time together such as family coach trips, the 'Grants and Family Activities' Scheme and the Family Link service.

What can you do now?

To find out more about services and support and about events run by the Parents' Reference Group, contact WeSail on (01924) 379015.

What You Said...about short breaks and holiday provision

You wanted

- More choice and availability of short breaks including support for older children and holiday schemes.

What we have done so far...

- Increased the number and choice of breaks available to young people. In 2009-2010 compared to the previous year, 112 more children and young people got a break – and this will increase for 2010-2011 (funded from the Aiming High Grant).

What You Said...about Sharing Views and Feedback

You wanted

- To share your views via Family Participation events (37%) and meetings (36%)

What we have done so far...

- Wakefield Council is supporting the Parents' Reference Group to host events. We are hoping to support a robust calendar of participation events to be agreed for 2010-2011.

What can you do now?

If you want to find out more about the Parents' Reference group meetings, the dates are on the Family Information Service Website www.wakefieldfis.org.uk or to join as a member contact Judith Thompson on (07901008501) or email judiththompson@wakefield.gov.uk

What You Said... about Health

You voiced concerns about:

- the quality of continence pads, therapy services and the need for help to use equipment such as hoists and to organise hospital appointments

Health response

What we have done so far...

- The manager of the Continence Service attended the SEN/Disabled Children's Programme Board and a further consultation with parents was arranged at Oakfield Park School in order to resolve some issues. An article about the continence service is to be in the next addition of News and Views.
- WeSail provides a designated key worker service that can support families with hospital appointments. Discussions with the Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust are ongoing to identify what support will be available following the opening of the new hospital outpatient departments.
- A review of Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Dietetics is looking at present demand and whether there are any gaps in provision locally. All young people and their families receiving equipment issued by the NHS should have had their needs assessed and been appropriately trained on the use of equipment once equipment has been issued.

What You Said...about Education

You wanted

- Early advice about education and options for schooling
- More specialised training for education support assistants, particularly autism awareness training.
- BSL classes so that 'I can communicate with my deaf & mute child'.

Education Response

What we have done so far...

- The Portage Home Visitors support families of pre-school disabled children to appreciate the range of educational opportunities for their children. This work is also supported by key workers in the newly commissioned WeSAIL service.
- Training for Education Support Assistants continues to be developed and is delivered through the Special Educational Needs Support Service (SENSS) based at the Heath View Centre. The Communication and Interaction team within SENSS focuses on supporting staff re autism awareness: whole school initiatives, advice on differentiating the curriculum and bespoke training around the needs of individual students.

- The Service for Deaf /Hearing Impaired Children offers sign language classes to parents, staff and other children to improve communication for deaf/hearing impaired young people. They also offer activities in the holidays to enable native BSL children and young people to have the opportunity to communicate with each other.

What we are planning to do...

A residential for native BSL children in the Summer Holiday. This is funded through the Aiming High Grant.

What You Said...about Community Facilities

You wanted

- Leisure activities which were more accessible to children with complex health needs, including changing facilities.

What we have done so far...

- After listening to parents, Aiming High capital funding is being used to make social and leisure activities more accessible to children and young people with complex health needs, such as installing changing facilities in a number of swimming pools and leisure centres across the district. Funding has also been allocated to refurbish a number of playgrounds in Wakefield, making them more inclusive for disabled children and young people.
- Plans are in place to fund fully equipped Changing Places such as at Junction 32 shopping centre at Glasshoughton and the Ridings in Wakefield and new equipment including adapted vehicles has been purchased for the Short Break Services.
- A Small Grants Scheme has been set up to enable voluntary organisations to bid for funding to purchase equipment so that their activities can be more easily used by young people with complex health needs. £30,000 has been set aside for this scheme.

What you can do now?

Contact Barnardo's on 01924 239250 if you want to apply for a capital grant.

What You Said ...about support for parents and carers

You wanted more support for parents

To have a break from caring; to be able to work and to keep healthy

What we have done so far...

- Wakefield Council and NHS Wakefield District offer short breaks to disabled children so that parents and carers can have some time for themselves or with siblings or to just rest.
- Wakefield District Carers offer support and advice to parents and carers on a range of issues. They are able to signpost and offer support in accessing services. Wakefield Carers implement the '**My Time**' grant which allows parents and carers to apply on an annual basis for funds to support them away from their role as a carer. Contact them on 01924 305544.

The DCatch programme 2010/2011 (Disabled Children's Access to Childcare) is aimed at supporting parents in employment including:

- Providing training for staff in Childcare settings.
- Developing a specialist document about entitlements and benefits for working parents.
- Offering childcare 'taster sessions'.
- Developing a KITE mark for 'Excellence in Inclusion'.

What You Said Wakefield Were Doing Well

70% of parents of disabled children and young people thought services and support for their children were good or fair and 79% felt that Wakefield is good or fair at meeting the needs of their disabled children.

*Worthy of particular mention were.....
the overnight Short Break services including the Connect service, the work done by therapists, the Special schools, social workers at the Complex Care Needs team and WeSail as well as the Down's Syndrome Group, Wakefield District Carers and the events organised by the Parents' Reference Group.*

Parents feel networking and being given quality information about services and supports are key to supporting them as carers.

At the Parents' Conference, parents also emphasised the rewards of being a parent or carer of a disabled child or young person.

For more information about the services and support which are available for families caring for children and young people with additional needs contact:

WeSail on 01924 379015
Family Information Service FREE on 0800 587 8042
Social Care Direct on 0845 8503 503

or go on line at [www. www.wakefieldfis.org.uk](http://www.wakefieldfis.org.uk)