

Children's Therapy Services - Parent Focus Group

08 March 2013

How can we improve our communication with parents?

Summary of feedback from parent group

- Phone / verbal conversations – led by therapist – therapist initiated
- Contact after appointment → even if brief
- Initial contact (verbal) with parent if child seen at school
- Team approach – multidisciplinary meetings focused on problem solving, including therapists and parents
- Openness – ease of contact. Being aware of telephone numbers of therapists
- Parents to be present at some appointments – face to face better, so can include therapy as part of daily routine at home
- Home visits / clinic appointments (in holidays / after school)
- Keep lengthy reports to a minimum, practical tips more useful, small steps approach.
- Being kept in 'loop' – i.e. informed on staff changes
- Individualised support
- Therapist responsibility rather than school to keep contact with parents
- Parent training courses
- Use of home/school contact book – telephone numbers
- Parents would like information on voluntary services available in the community
- Pre-school linking into reception → improve transition

Key Messages

- Therapist needs to initiate communication
- Preference for verbal communication
- Practical strategies i.e. suggestions that parents can do with their children are of greater help than very detailed reports

- Therapist needs to take responsibility rather than school for communicating appointments etc.
- Parents would prefer verbal to written communication
- Ask parents to establish preferred method of contact
- For children receiving regular therapy, expect contact with parent termly
- At initial assessment or subsequent review assessments to invite parents / unable to attend following telephone call
- To offer out of school appointments either at home or clinic
- Parents need to be kept informed of staff changes
- Link with Amaze on opportunities available in the community
- Transition into reception year key point for improving communication (esp. SLT)
- Transition generally a time for more proactive communication

Action Plan

1. SLT, OT and physio managers to share key messages with staff teams and agree minimum standards for communicating with parents
2. Key messages from the workshop to be shared with parents through PaCC.
3. Key messages from the workshop to be shared with wider staff groups at Seaside View via managers meeting

Lisa Brock, SLT Manager

Bridget Morden, OT Manager

Hayley Bush, Physio

Debbie Collins, PaCC member