

SOLIHULL PARENT CARER VOICE NEWSLETTER

April-June 2023

ABOUT SOLIHULL PARENT CARER VOICE

Solihull Parent Carer Voice C.I.C. is an organisation run by parent carers of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

We listen to the voices of parent carers across Solihull, hearing what they tell us about the services that they and their families access and about the experiences that they have.

We use the voices to help us to inform change. We work with the local authority, health and other services across Solihull at a strategic level. This means we help them to design services and to change services to better meet the needs of people in Solihull. We work in a solution focused way- how can we use our collective experiences and the collective voices of families in Solihull to make things better.

Let your voice be heard.



SPCV is the parent carer forum for Solihull and is funded by the Department for Education.

We receive funding from the LA and health which funds the children and young people's forum in Solihull.

NHS England (paid via the local authority) give us funding which enables us to support the Autism in Schools project across Solihull.

We also receive funding from the All Age Autism Support Service to provide Autism Support Groups in Solihull.

SOLIHULL PARENT CARER VOICE *THE TEAM*

We are delighted to have a team of dedicated and hard-working parent carers.

We are all parent carers of children and young people in Solihull who have special educational needs and disabilities of various types, our children and young people are of a wide range of ages and attend a wide range of provisions.

WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR PARENT CARERS TO JOIN OUR TEAM, TO HELP GATHER AND REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF PARENT CARERS AND HELP WORK TO MAKE POSITIVE CHANGES IN SOLIHULL.



If you would like to join our growing team, please email us at

solihullpcv@outlook.com



SOLIHULL PARENT CARER VOICE

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND NHSE.

We alongside the local authority and health meet with the Department for Education and the NHS advisors on a regular basis.

At the last meeting the DfE praised the strong coproduction in Solihull and the way we challenge in a solution focussed manner.



"The strong partnership work and strategic contribution of the PCF is a strength in Solihull. Conversations are solution focused even when issues are challenging or long standing. Priorities for change are negotiated and agreed."



SOLIHULL PARENT CARER VOICE IMPACT

OUR RESPONSE TO PARENT CARERS VIEWS:

Parent carers have told us they would like meetings in different places around the borough.

We have over the last few months held coffee and chat meetings in Solihull centre, Bentley Heath, Dickens Heath and Fordbridge. We have upcoming meetings in Fordbridge, Chelmsley Wood, Solihull Centre and Lyndon. If you have any suggestions for places to have meetings please do let us know

Parent carers told us that they would like more information about transitions.

In May we held a transitions event, with various services for parent carers to speak to and collect information.

Some of this information is already on our website and the rest is being added. We do have some paper copies of some information if anyone would like them.



Parent carers have told us that access to health services can be very challenging and that sometimes services don't know who to refer to.

We have worked with the Integrated Care Board and our Designated Clinical Officer and Designated Medical Officers to write a new GP Handbook for SEND. This has been shared with all GP practices and we also held a webinar for GP's to talk through the Handbook.

We also have regular meetings with people within health services to talk about what is working well and what needs to be improved and to work together on action plans.



SOLIHULL PARENT CARER VOICE IMPACT

OUR RESPONSE TO PARENT CARERS VIEWS:

Parent carers told us that finding information about services and where to get information and support from is difficult.

We are working with the Local Authority and with Health to improve the information on the Local Offer and also the 'useability' of the Local Offer. This is an ongoing piece of work, we know that more parent carers are using the local offer and reporting it is useful, however we will continue to improve this. If there is information you feel is missing or you struggle to find things etc please do let us know so we can work on getting it improved.

Parent carers told us that they are concerned about the lack of consistency across schools in Solihull regarding SEND Inclusion.

We, and the LA have raised this issue with the Department for Education. The LA are carrying out SEND Audits of schools (piloted this term and rolled out in September)



Parent carers have told us that they are concerned about post-16 services/ support/ colleges.

We are working with the LA to look at what support and information is available, do parent carers and young people know what is on offer and what gaps there are. In June we held a focus group for parent carers to talk to the LA about this. Work on post 16 will be continuing.

Parent carers told us they wanted to join the Dingleys Promise work.

Some parent carers joined the last session about how the Dingleys Promise work is offering training to Nurseries and this training is also now available for parents. If you would to know more please contact us.



SOLIHULL PARENT CARER VOICE IMPACT

OUR RESPONSE TO PARENT CARERS VIEWS:

Parent carers told us that they would like to know more about differences in challenges in different parts of the borough and what we hear from parent carers across Solihull.

EAST- we know that families struggle with accessing services as there are very few in the East Locality, likewise attending appointments can be challenging as many of these are in the North locality with a few in the West. Also families struggle with accessing ARP or Specialist placements due to distance.

WEST- again those in the West locality struggle to access appointments as most are in the North. Also because of changing demographics, school places in this area are very limited and families often not getting their first choice of school.

NORTH- families in the North tell us of their concerns with schools OFSTED reports, especially over the last few months. We also know there are high levels of deprivation, and higher SEND levels in the North, challenging the services capacity.

Across the borough the main things we hear from parent carers:

Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health- waiting lists are too long and there is a lack of support whilst waiting.

SEND Inclusion in schools is inconsistent and children and young people are struggling.



Waiting lists for ASD assessments, speech and language and physio are too long and there is a lack of support whilst waiting.

Solihull Parent Carer Voice are currently carrying out our

SUMMER SEND SURVEY

to ask you, your thoughts and experiences of SEND in Solihull.

It is really important that we hear as many views as possible so please do complete this survey.



SOLIHULL PARENT CARER VOICE WORKSTREAMS

PROJECTS AND WORKSTREAMS

Autism in Schools.

This work is funded by NHS England, to help improve knowledge and understanding of Autism. Our project is across Solihull, Birmingham and Warwickshire and in Solihull we have developed a resource pack for schools to use with students to help them better understand themselves and the support that they need, and also worked with the schools and parents to create parent engagement groups within the schools.

Parent Engagement Groups.

As part of the Inclusion Strategy all schools in Solihull are asked to do some form of parent engagement. We have offered to work with schools to help set up parent engagement groups and to facilitate these groups. We are now working with schools all across Solihull and have more schools expressing an interest all the time.

Children's Services, Education and Skills Scrutiny.

SPCV sit as a Co-opted member on this board, working with Councillors to scrutinise the work of all children's services in Solihull.

Family and Parents Advisory Group.

This is group works with Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospitals helping with engagement and doing place inspections.



Family Hubs.

Solihull has been awarded funding to create family hubs. We are continuing to work as part of a multi-agency team across Solihull to look at where these will be, what support they will offer and how they will work.

Local Offer.

We are working with the Local Authority and Health to improve the local offer- the look, functionality, and the information on this. Current feedback from parent carers is that the Local Offer is improving. We will continue to work on this as we know there is areas that still need to be improved.

SOLIHULL PARENT CARER VOICE WORKSTREAMS

PROJECTS AND WORKSTREAMS

Education Inclusion Board.

We have had a seat on this board since its inception, this board is working to improve inclusion in Solihull, not just for SEND but for all. The Strategy for Inclusive Education in Solihull is now live and can be found on the Local Offer. As part of this work, we are working with schools to set up Parent Engagement Groups in schools. This board is also overseeing the Delivering Better Values work which is a Government programme that aims to support the Local Authority and partners to improve SEND services and work towards financial sustainability.

Children and Young People's Mental Health Board.

This board looks at the mental health offer for children and young people in Solihull; the mental health in schools' teams (MHST) the commissioned offer from Solar including the partner services Barnardo's and Autism West Midlands.

This is a multi-agency board including health, public health, schools, educational psychology, SISS, Voluntary sector organisations and more.

Children and Youth Offer.

This group look at what is available for children and young people across Solihull- not just in schools but in the community as well.



SEND Community Organisations Roundtable

This group brings together 3rd sector organisations, support groups, voluntary sector groups so we can all work together. So far, this group includes 24 organisations in Solihull. The roundtable is open to ANY community organisation that works with or supports children and young people with SEND and/or their families in Solihull. We come together termly to network, support each other, and share views and knowledge.

Solihull SEND Community Organisations



Round Table

SOLIHULL PARENT CARER VOICE WORKSTREAMS

PROJECTS AND WORKSTREAMS

Joint Additional Needs Board and Deliver Group:

The Joint Additional Needs work is made up of a strategic board and an operational group and we sit on both.

The aim of both of these groups is to ensure the action plan that sits behind the Solihull Additional Needs Strategy is being followed and that changes are happening to meet the priorities and the 'I statements' in the Strategy.

These are both multi-agency boards with representatives from education, schools, social care, health, Sendias, Our Voices Heard, public health and voluntary sector organisations all represented.

Birmingham and Solihull Health Forum.

This is a strategic health forum where Birmingham Parent Carer Forum, Solihull Parent Carer Voice, Our Voices Heard and Health partners work together to improve health services.

EHC Panels.

We sit to observe EHC Panels every Tuesday-where permission has been given by families.

Personal Budgets.

This is a group across Education, Children's Social Care, Adult's Social Care and health, looking to align how personal budgets work.



Third Sector Assembly.

This is made up of two groups, the assembly and then a smaller panel. This is groups of voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise groups coming together to look at mental health across Birmingham and Solihull. (both adults and childrens)

Department for Education and NHS England.

We attend Solihull meetings with the DfE and NHSE and also East and West Midlands meetings with the DfE and NHSE.

EdSEND Board.

This is a board looking at SEND and education provisions, it is chaired by and attended by schools, with representatives from the local authority attending to discuss SEND in schools.

SOLIHULL PARENT CARER VOICE WORKSTREAMS

PROJECTS AND WORKSTREAMS

Dingley's Promise.

This project is offering training to early years settings, looking at improving early interventions, the SEND offer and improve knowledge about SEND and early identification.

10 Local Authorities were selected to be a part of this project including Solihull.

Many nurseries, childminders and early years providers in Solihull have signed up to this and Fordbridge Primary School have now received a Dingley's Promise Kitemark.

Supported Internships

We sit as part of a group to look at the Supported Internships that are available in Solihull, and currently the focus is on bringing more Supported Internships to Solihull, to provide are young people with EHC plans another alternative for Post-16.

Children and Families Prevention and Early Intervention Board.

This board aims to bring together multi-agency partners to promote partnership working. Enabling partners to work together more effectively, in collaboration with local communities, to ensure a more cohesive approach to service delivery across agencies



HEALTH WAITING TIMES

Autism Assessments:	88 weeks
Occupational Therapy:	10 weeks
Speech and Language Therapy:	60 weeks
Physiotherapy*:	65 weeks

*Physiotherapy does work on a priority basis so wait times will vary.

We are raising with Health the length of the waiting times and the disparity between Solihull waiting times and Birmingham waiting times.

SOLIHULL PARENT CARER VOICE WORKSTREAMS

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL WORK.

West Midlands Region Parent Carer Forums Network.

We sit with the other 13 forums across the West Midlands, as a part of the West Midlands Region of Parent Carer Forums. This brings us together as forums across the region, enabling us to share good practice and look at what is working well and what are the areas of challenge across the region.

Regional SEND Leads.

Working with SEND Leads across the East and West Midlands to see how things can be done better at a regional level to improve services and outcomes for children and young people.

Regional SEND Leadership Programme.

We have been the West Midlands parent representative on this programme, this brought together representatives from health, education and social care across the East and West Midlands. We are also supporting with the shaping of this Programme moving forwards.

Local Government Association Training-NNPCF

Delivering training as part of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums to elected Councillors from across the UK on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. It is really important that elected Councillors across the Country hear from Parent Carers.



FACTS AND FIGURES

April to June 2023

Facebook reach:	116,186
Direct Contacts with Parents:	4027
Social Media Followers:	4237
Number of meetings:	102
Hours 'worked':	1001

SPCV membership:

Covers all wards of Solihull.

SPCV membership is 22% BAME, which is broadly in line with the Solihull population. Our membership is from all around the borough, in every ward and again is broadly in line with the Solihull population.

SOLIHULL PARENT CARER VOICE WORKSTREAMS

OTHER AREAS OF WORK

OUR VOICES HEARD:

Solihull Parent Carer Voice are funded to host the children and young people's forum for Solihull, called Our Voices Heard. This forum is run by a project lead and a youth support worker and focuses on gathering the voices of children and young people in Solihull and ensuring those voices are heard by services and informs and influences the design of services as well as making sure that the views of children and young people are at the heart of everything. Our Voices Heard membership is growing all the time. They also hold Young Peoples Participation groups in Schools to enable more to have a voice.

Our Voices Heard also has 12 YP Ambassadors who volunteer to support the forum and actively seek out children and young peoples voices.

We are delighted that over the last few months some of these Ambassadors have been empowered to build their confidence and Volunteer for other organisations as well.



AUTISM SUPPORT GROUPS:

Through the All Age Autism Support Service, we offer Support Groups, one for parent carers of autistic individuals and one for autistic individuals aged 18+

From September these groups will meet on a Wednesday and a Friday.

These groups offer support and information and also invite in professionals to offer information and advice, as well as social events and activities.

These groups have a dedicated facebook page:

Solihull Autism Support Groups and can be contacted by email at: autismsolihull.spcv@outlook.com



All Age Autism Support Service

SOLIHULL PARENT CARER VOICE EVENTS

EVENTS:

19th July 2023 10am-11.30

Coffee and Chat with SPCV and Tim Browne at The Family Tree Social Club, Clopton Crescent, B37 6QT

11th September 2023, 10am-12pm

Coffee and Chat at The Evergreen Hub, Kingshurst Way, B37 6DX

14th September 2023, 10am-12pm

Coffee and Chat at Three Trees Community Centre, Heddingham Grove, B37 7TP

19th October 2023, 10am-12pm

Coffee and Chat at The Hub, Touchwood.

23rd November 2023, 10am-12pm

Coffee and Chat at Ulverley School. Rodney Road, B92 8RZ

More details of our events are on our events page on our Facebook page and our website-

www.spcv.org.uk/events



CONTACT US:

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