



# OXFORDSHIRE PARENT CARERS FORUM

The Voice of Parent Carers in Oxfordshire

## Six Month Report

on

## Parent Activity & Feedback

April 2019

# OxPCF Six Month Report on Parent Activity & Feedback

## **Background**

The new Parent Carer forum for Oxfordshire launched on 8th November at the Oxfordshire Family Support Network (OXFSN) 'Better Together Event'.

The forum was set up by a group of parents with children who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to work with Oxfordshire County Council and the local NHS to help improve services for children with SEN(D). As members of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums we will support the development of parent carer participation, a process in which parents work together with professionals to make improvements to local services.

We believe that 'Every Child Matters' and that all disabled children and young people in Oxfordshire should have access to the same opportunities, experiences and information as any other child.

## **Structure of the Forum**

Our Steering Group has grown from 5 to 12 members and we now have 5 members who are actively sitting on statutory boards across Oxfordshire County Council and Health.

By the end of the Summer Term, steering group members will have completed training delivered by SENDIASS Oxfordshire around positive and confident engagement.

The forum has a wider membership of 24 registered parent carers and 49 pending applications. Our social media reach is:

- Facebook - 243 followers
- Twitter - 52 followers
- Instagram - 104 followers

The last six months the forum has primarily focused on raising its profile with parents and ensuring that it is linked with statutory services. The forum has been working with the local authority and health to ensure that there is parent feedback embedded into the decision and process of those organisations

The Co-chairs of the forum had an initial meeting with the Head of SEND at Oxfordshire County Council on 8 November 2018. Since then, there is now parent representation on the following 6 statutory boards:

- SEND Performance Board
- SEND Operational Group
- Children and Adolescent Mental Health (CAHMS) Assurance Board
- Local Offer
- Post 16 transition board
- SENDIASS

It has been agreed that the forum will provide a written update to the SEND Performance board on a quarterly basis, to update on the key themes being reported by parents and the breadth of activities that the forum are involved in.

## Summary of Key Themes

In the last six months, the forum has specifically sought out feedback relating to formal and informal exclusions, and due to regular attendance at support groups in South Oxfordshire, the forum has mostly heard from parents living in Abingdon, Didcot, Wallingford and the surrounding villages.

The key themes that the forum has heard relate to:

- Exclusions
- Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) Process and Plans
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Diagnosis and Pathway
- Trans Carers Engagement
- Post 16

## Forum Engagement

The feedback that the forum has received to date has varied in its nature due to the activities that the forum has undertaken. In the last six months, the forum has specifically sought out feedback relating to formal and informal exclusions, and due to regular attendance at support groups in South Oxfordshire, the forum has mostly heard from parents living in Abingdon, Didcot, Wallingford and the surrounding villages.

We have summarised the main feedback into topic areas, and have tried to balance the feedback to demonstrate what parents consider is working well, what could be improved and areas where parents consider there to be poor practice. Where parents have given consent, we have included direct quotes from parents to evidence the feedback that we have received. In some cases parents have agreed to be case studies and for their stories to be shared in more detail with the services concerned.

## EHCP Process and Plans

The forum has been involved with the ongoing promotion of the EHCP Process Feedback Consultation. The forum is keen to create a feedback form to capture experience when a Needs Assessment isn't carried out, or if an EHCP isn't issued after assessment. Currently there is a significant amount of confusion and anger around the EHCP process.

***'My son has had his assessment - that deadline was beginning of April. Panel has now been moved to the end of the month due to Easter holidays. His case worker said to me "Once we have all of the information, we will draft the EHCP and it will then be seen again by the SEN panel - at which point a decision will be made' If a draft is being made does that mean we are successful at acquiring an EHCP? What does that statement mean? Sorry if this sounds like a stupid question!!'***

Anecdotally we are aware of parents that are struggling to get their ongoing EHCPs finalised, some EHCPs are at least a year out of date, some far longer.

***'My sons EHCP should have been finalised after his Annual review in May 2018...it's still not complete, I had to unlock the PDF and make the changes myself. His next review is in May and we still don't have last years finalised.'***

We are hearing positive feedback that some parents are being assessed for their EHCPs more quickly and in some cases this does appear to be a smooth process. So it appears that there is inconsistency for families.

***‘I’ve just received an email saying that they are going to Assess. Thank you Oxfordshire for seeing the need.’***

Unfortunately there are families that are going through the tribunal process to get the support that they require. The forum appreciates that this is often a complex matter, but felt it was important to highlight that we are hearing from these families.

### **ASD Diagnosis and Pathway**

A lot of our involvement relates to the ASD diagnosis and pathway, and we see a significant amount of feedback relating to children with ASD or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). We have actively been involved with:

- CAMHS Face2Face with Strategic Lead for review of the Local Transformation Plan. Parents involved with reviewing the plan were also asked for feedback on areas where they would like to see change. Parents asked for ASD training for CAMHS staff and this is now being rolled out and we await an update. Next review now due.

***“What we really need is for the consultants delivering the interventions, to understand autism, so we don’t get discharged when our kids can’t engage.”***

- There is considerable ongoing work needed with the Parent Support Pack handed out Post ASD diagnosis. There are elements of it that need immediate attention and are causing upset to families.

***“I was very pleased to be given a pack full of useful information, but really shocked to see Autism Speaks recommended in the support section.”***

### **Transgender Engagement**

Oxfordshire Trans Carer Support Group supported by Rethink Mental Illness and Carers Oxfordshire work with 10 - 15 families across Oxfordshire. Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust has recently met with this group and the main points that came out were based around the following:

- Using the preferred name, some CAMHS are very good with this for example Northamptonshire, but Oxfordshire often refuse to do this without a deed poll. This causes unnecessary distress for both the child and the parents.
- There is currently no pathway for Gender Dysphoria via CAMHS, even though the Tavistock and Portman (the gender hospital) in London ask for CAMHS to work with the child, CAMHS have refused to accept a referral.
- There is a lack of awareness generally in health and education services, and further training needs to be given, not just to the medical professionals, but also front facing people such as receptionists etc
- There are no support services or groups currently offered from health or education, for either the child or carers. The only support groups are run by outside people with no access to funding.

A member of the Oxfordshire Trans Carer support group is also a steering group member for the forum, and we are pleased to have this breadth of experience on our group.

## Physical Disabilities

We are linked with the Downs Syndrome Community and Deaf Community and we often hear very positive feedback from parents around the support offered by both the Hearing and Visual Impairment Support Teams and the Physical Disability Teams. Support within the voluntary sector is good and parents feel supported. Children are able to access activities outside of school through the Deaf Society and receive in-reach from the Teachers of the Deaf.

*“The support and guidance we needed was there from the very start. The team almost seemed to know what we needed before we even asked.”*

## Post 16

Members of the steering group and the Post 16 Provider Network met in March to consider what an offer for ASD might look like at college. The workshop was a great opportunity to do some blue sky thinking around future provision, and was well attended.

The Provider Network meets on a regular basis and has representation from the forum. The forum was pleased to hear that there will soon be a dedicated Moving into Adulthood Team in Social Care. The group was informed that work on residential options for post-16 is ongoing. This would give families more confidence in the local offer and the aim is to co-commission local accommodation to keep young people in county. It was reported that forum representative had been unable to go to the Disability Rights UK Post-16 workshop in London but had been sent the presentations which would be circulated.

It is anticipated that there will be a Transitions Fair in November which the Forum hope to participate in.

## Exclusions

Exclusions have been occupying a large number of the comments fed-back to the forum. Following feedback from 3 parents relating to exclusions in one South Oxfordshire mainstream secondary school and a number of other concerns raised by parents, the forum developed a short survey. There has now been an analysis of these results which clearly highlight the need around this topic and the practices being used by some schools.

*“My son was being excluded all the time, his CAMHS Consultant is involved with things more and things are starting to improve.”*

*“My child was being excluded quite often, now they are offering a reduced timetable to help with his anxiety.”*

The forum sent out a question on Facebook, asking:

### **“If Parents Could Share Their Experiences of Formal and Informal Exclusions”**

This was promoted on Facebook in closed groups that support children with special educational needs in South Oxfordshire.

In total 31 parents responded. It should be noted that all parents that fed back had children that had been either received repeated fixed term exclusions or informal (illegal) exclusions or permanent exclusion.

- Six parents had children in mainstream secondary schools (three of the parents were from the same school).
- Twelve parents had children in primary schools

- Two children were at a pupil referral unit
- Six are currently out of education
- Four did not identify where in the school system their child was.

The parents reported a range of diagnoses:

- Dual diagnosis of ASD & ADHD
- Tourette's
- Cerebral Palsy
- Global Development Delay (GDD) & Autism
- ASD & Anxiety
- Behavioural and emotional needs
- Type Diabetes
- Rare chromosomal deletion
- Single diagnosis of ADHD
- Single diagnosis of ASD.

Within the stories provided a number of parents identified what services and support they have access to:

- Eleven had Educational Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in place at the time of their children's exclusions
- Six were in the process of applying for an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Four identified referrals to Children's Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS)
- Four said that they have received no access to any support
- Eight did not provide this information
- Less than three parents were going through the Appeal process for placement
- Less than three parents identified that they had accessed SENDIASS, Social Services, Attendance Officer, Speech and Language Therapy, Educational Psychologist service.

***'I've lost count of how many fixed term exclusions he's had across primary and secondary, some of which could have directly been avoided if certain teachers had had more understanding of ASD. This all culminated in a permanent exclusion last October'.***

The key themes that people reported are shown below:

### **Behaviour Related Exclusions**

Parents reported that exclusions are used to manage behaviour, it was not clear from the feedback received what strategies were being put in place by the schools to address the behaviour or to enable the child to behave differently.

***'I told the school that excluding him will have no effect whatsoever and he will continue to behave like this'.***

***Parents highlighted the impact of repeated of exclusions on their children.***

## Home Schooling

Some parents fed back that they were now home schooling, as a result of exclusions within mainstream schools.

***'They sent her home several times due to her difficult behaviour..and still used these absences against her with the attendance officer...I now home-school..***

***'he is still on the schools role but hasn't been for years, I'm thankful he is now year 11 so we haven't got to worry for much longer'.***

## Staffing and Training

Parents raised concerns that exclusions happen as a result of short staffing or a lack of training of staff.

***'I believe his behaviour and their response was largely due to staff shortages, staffs complete lack of knowledge and manipulation of his weaknesses'.***

***'there seems to be a lack of communication between schools and different professionals to find a diagnosis, and solution on how to manage the sen pupils and the schools want to pass the buck and make parents apply for the funding because they don't have the time to cope with the amount of work they have to do'***

***'He's struggling every day to get through secondary..... there needs to be more teacher training in autism and other SEN'.***

## Delivery of EHCPs

Parents reported inconsistency and confusion around the application of EHCPs within school settings. Concerns related to how funding allocation was being spent on their child, hours of support available, type of support available, how support was being delivered/offered. Some of this related to insufficient staffing or appropriate staffing and also to the strategies being implemented by schools to support the child with the EHCP.

***'Problem being in EHCP it doesn't state how many hours now just the amount the school get. (Child) care is all over the shop and the school are not listening to what she needs instead using TA's like a babysitting service instead of what we want which is to help (Child) progress...its rubbish that they can do whatever they want with out explanation just to fit'***

***'I have a 12yr old son who wasn't so much as excluded, but prevented from accessing the curriculum by his primary school even though he had a statement which entitled him to 25 hours a week one to one. He was sat at a table on his own away from the rest of the class, sometimes behind a screen'.***

## Information about EHCPs

Some of the feedback received from parents, shows that there is a miscommunication of information or lack of information about the EHCP application process. It was reported that some parents are being advised that they cannot get an EHCP, or should not apply for an EHCP, whereas others, believe that some schools, deliberately exclude pupils in order to speed up the EHCP process.

***'I also want an explanation as to why I was wrongly informed by school that my son would not get an EHCP and that I was "not Allowed" to get a private diagnosis and could only go through CAMHS'.***

***'In fact the teachers said sometimes excluding the pupils helps the ehcp'.***

***'At the moment we are trying to get an EHCP but this is proving difficult all we get from school is how much it would cost them'.***



## Placements

One of the themes related to parents needing support to find the right placement for their child. Two families were going through appeal to get the right placement, and others appeared from their feedback to be struggling to know where to get advice and guidance.

***'I'm now 3 months after permanent exclusion but because the school took two years to complete ehcp assessment paperwork no mainstream school will except him and we are receiving no support from local authorities'.***

***'We had to remove him from his state primary last year and put him into a local private school known for their excellent pastoral care, high standard of teaching and small classes. The EHCP wouldn't support this and said his needs could have been provided for at his primary (total rubbish)'.***

## Vulnerability of Children with SEN

One of the themes raised by parents related to the vulnerability of their children and reasons behind behaviour causing exclusions and the impact on the child.

## Whole Family Impact

A common theme throughout was the wider impact on the family. Some families cited that they had to pay additional childcare for their out of school child, other families had opted to home school their child, some reported that their own mental wellbeing had been impacted.

The social impact of the child that has been excluded was also reported by parents, as these children are perceived as 'naughty kids' and therefore struggle to maintain friendships and activities. This places added pressure on families.

***'It also has an impact on my son as he doesn't now have many friends and I don't have many people who are willing to help him because he is seen as "the naughty kid" because he gets excluded but I'm actual fact he has severe SEN needs and every day is a struggle for him'***

In addition to direct parent feedback of their individual experiences, we have also been notified of a mainstream secondary school in South Oxfordshire, writing to all their parents suggesting that children with poor or disruptive behaviour should not be in mainstream education. The school also practices a process called Late Room, whereby children are kept at home until 12.15pm and then brought into school for isolation until 16.15 as part of the school's disciplinary process. This approach to managing behaviour concerns the forum, as we feel that this is not an inclusive approach, especially for children with additional needs, and could be considered discriminatory. We also feel that to apply a blanket approach to all families without due regard for Special Educational Needs requirements could be considered discriminatory.

The forum is not sure whether this behaviour management policy is an isolated case within the county or whether there are other schools practising similar methodologies. This is an area that the forum is keen to explore further.

## Oasis Event

This event is held in Oxford and organised by OASIS, one of Oxfordshire's thriving Autism specific groups. Several times a year they invite Professionals and Support/Information Groups to a single Evening event.

It became evident at this event that some Primary Schools were using Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE) on very young children with diagnosis of ASD.

*“He’s only in yr 1 and they have sent him home for 2 days because he threw paint at another child.”*

*“Last term in Reception, he was just naughty! Now he has Autism diagnosed, they keep sending him home and now he only does half days.”*

## Next Steps Around Exclusions

The forum is becoming increasingly concerned about the amount of feedback relating to exclusions. We are aware that the County Council have set up a Learner Engagement Board and have also developed a Learner Engagement Strategy, however, these have not involved any input from the Forum or from parents.

We are concerned that the County Council are showing a 21% reduction in exclusions, however, it is not clear to the forum, whether the County Council has tracked the movement of the children experiencing exclusions.

Based on the feedback that the forum is hearing, it is clear that parents are facing a number of alternative options to exclusions:

- de-registering and home schooling their children
- accepting lengthy reduced timetables for extended periods of time
- alternative education, off site from the main school (Café's, libraries etc)
- Internal isolation, or 'Late Room' to avoid fixed term exclusion
- Children changing placement
- In some case, parents are simply not sending their children to school, and they remain on the school roll.

In all of the examples above, this does not indicate an improvement in mainstream schools, it simply shows that the child has gone elsewhere. It does not prove that the mainstream schools are managing special educational needs, behaviour or mental health any better.

**Forum Recommendation:** The forum recommends that the County Council should track the movement of children that are being excluded only then, will they know that there has been improvement in the management tools of schools. We also think that it would be beneficial for the County Council to work with CAHMS to understand where the high referring schools are as this may help to identify need.

## Forum Activities

### Networking:

The forum has been invited to and attended, 7 separate events around the county, creating new opportunities to engage with parent carers.

### Fitzwaryn School, Wantage

This was the forum's first invitation to attend a school information event attached to a Parents Evening. It was a great start and we were able to chat with parents about their very positive experiences at Fitzwaryn School. Parents were keen to ask questions and several signed up to the forum. We were able to signpost 3 families to groups able to provide the support they needed.

*“We didn't have an easy time getting here, but my son is now thriving and the support he receives is second to none.”*

*“Our Disability Social Worker was brilliant and I couldn't have managed the move here without her help.”*

*“Once you get to the right place, you suddenly realise how hard it all was before and I now realise it was really bad.”*

*“Our daughter travels quite a long way, but it's worth it.”*

### OASIS Clinic Night

This event is held in Oxford and organised by OASIS, one of Oxfordshire's thriving autism specific groups. Several times a year they invite professionals and support/information groups to a single evening event. It is always very well attended, by both parents and professionals from across all services. It provides an excellent platform for parents to share their experiences face to face with the people who make the decisions and have the specialist advice needed. The forum was able to share information about the forum and sign up new members.

*“I just found out about Short Breaks and didn't know anything about it. Wow.”*

The forum were able to steer some parents towards SENDIASS and the support they needed as well as listen to parents who were pleased with the information they were receiving and loved the event.

The forum received several concerns and comments around the sometimes inappropriate and inadequate understanding of autism by health professionals. Even within CAMHS, it was felt that the interventions offered, were not always autism friendly or accessible.

**Forum Recommendation:** This is an area that the forum has raised with the CAMHS Assurance Board and it is being addressed. We hope to be able to feedback plans for future development and training very soon.

### SHIFT Open Morning

SHIFT is an Abingdon based non diagnosis dependent support group. One of very few that will support any family or condition, meaning families often come from further afield to attend sessions.

As well as the Co-Chair of the forum, along with another steering group member, we also sit on the committee for this group. This provides us with the opportunity to engage with parents on a very regular basis.

It was a pleasure to be able to facilitate the attendance of Strategic Leads from Oxfordshire County Council at the event. This was a great opportunity for some very strong face to face conversations and first hand engagement. There is already a very strong connection between this rapidly growing group and the forum.

*“Having people come from the Council is really good. I know we can tell you, but seeing their faces when we explain our case lets me know they understand.”*

*“I think there is too much pressure on Support Groups and the Forum to tell them how it is. Why don't they invite us to them, so we can tell them.”*

*“I have nothing but praise for the Health Visitors, after my baby was born severely disabled.”*

### Autism Oxford Conference

This is a significant Conference in the autism calendar, with international guest speakers and was a wonderful opportunity for the forum to be involved in a larger event. We were able to engage with other professionals and share information about what we do. We found that families very much wanted to share their experiences and concerns with us and we were able to provide a listening ear, in a way that many other information stall holders didn't.

The main themes expressed were around-

- **Moving to Secondary School**

Concerns around there being no real option available to families where there are real fears for the children moving onto large Secondary Schools.

*“She's just about managing Primary school, but what is going to happen when she leaves.”*

*“Her Primary School has been brilliant and is doing the EHCP, but what next?”*

- **De Registering**

A number of parents had or were planning to remove their children from school because they felt they had no alternative. Many of these cases cited mental health reasons as the factor behind this decision. We were able to discuss the options available to them with regards to support and advise them to seek that advice before removing their child from roll.

*“It's no longer about his education. It's about keeping him alive.”*

*“If I hadn't spoken to you now, I would have de registered my son this afternoon. Why didn't my GP tell me I could self-refer to CAMHS?”*

(This parent has been in touch since to say that their family is now in CAMHS and they are working with the school.)

- **Securing an EHCP**

Many parents had concerns around securing an EHCP when schools were not on-board with the application. Many SEND SUPPORT children were felt to be vulnerable and their needs not fully understood. Parents had made applications but been turned down due to inadequate information from schools.

***“We sent in everything we had, which was a lot, but School sent virtually nothing, so we were turned down. I’m too tired to fight on all fronts.”***

***“Even without the initial input from School, SENDIASS were fantastic and we had an IPS who came to all our meetings which made a huge difference.”***

### Frank Wise School, Banbury

The invitation to this event came about as a result of forum representation on the Post 16 Providers Group. The Head of Frank Wise invited the forum to his School Information Fair and Parent Consultation Day. It gave us the chance to engage with parents in the north of the county, who often feel quite removed from what’s happening.

We were able to recruit a Parent Governor from the school onto our steering group and discuss the possibility of having a forum “Hub in the North”. The first part of the event involved students visiting the stalls and it was great to chat with them. We were invited to the 6th Form Coffee Morning in the Summer Term and look forward to hearing what the YP have to say about their experiences and hopes for the future.

***“This is a truly wonderful School, with amazing staff.”***

***“You can feel quite isolated in Banbury, as most stuff happens in Oxford which is too far away for me.”***

We are truly thrilled with the new connection that we now have in the north of the county and look forward to building a strong and supportive relationship with them.

### Local Offer

Parents have been involved with the ongoing development of the Local Offer. It now has a more easily recognisable front page, with work continuing around accessibility and ease of navigation. Families suggested that it should be advertised on school newsletters and this is being followed up.

***“Why don’t they just make schools put the Logo on our weekly newsletter, then we’d see it every week.”***

## Looking Ahead And Recommendations

The forum is keen to continue developing and this involves working with the County Council and Health to feedback parent experiences to improve services. As such there are some recommendations that forum is making:

1. We received several concerns and comments around the sometimes inappropriate and inadequate understanding of autism by health professionals. Even within CAMHS, it was felt that the interventions offered, were not always autism friendly or accessible.

**Forum Recommendation:** This is an area that the forum has raised with the CAMHS Assurance Board and it is being addressed. We hope to be able to feedback plans for future development and training very soon

2. It is clear that parents are facing a number of alternative options to exclusions:
  - a. de-registering and home schooling their children
  - b. accepting lengthy reduced timetables for extended periods of time
  - c. Alternative education, off site from the main school (Café's, libraries etc.)
  - d. Internal isolation, or 'Late Room' to avoid fixed term exclusion
  - e. Children changing placement
  - f. In some case, parents are simply not sending their children to school, and they remain on the school roll.

In all of the examples above, this does not indicate an improvement in mainstreams schools; it simply shows that the child has gone elsewhere. It does not prove that the mainstream schools are managing special educational needs, behaviour or mental health better.

**Forum Recommendation:** The forum recommends that the County Council should track the movement of children that are being excluded only then, will they know that there has been improvement in the management tools of schools. We also think that it would be beneficial for the County Council to work with CAHMS to understand where the high referring schools are...as this may help to identify need.

The forum has identified a number of activities to deliver over the next six months to a year, as follows:

- The forum is considering the idea of having "Forum Hubs" around the county that can meet with parents on a small scale, coffee and chat type set up, or via social media and school events. Steering group members could potentially form "Forum Hubs" in their child's school. This is very much in its infancy, however, Oxfordshire is a large County, with some quite isolated parents and we hope this approach will provide the opportunity to capture local experiences. This idea came from a conversation with a parent in the north of the county.

*"I could be the face of the forum up here, because we are quite a long way off."*

- The forum has now purchased survey software and will be putting together simple surveys to gauge areas and themes that are working well and those that need addressing. We would

welcome ideas from Oxfordshire County Council and the NHS on areas that they are interested in as well.

- The forum is actively involved in the county Ofsted Inspection and we will put a call out to parent carers, to see who would be interested in taking part in the inspection process. We are looking at ways to increase Face2Face opportunities between parents and strategic leads. This needs sensitive and careful planning, as many parents are vulnerable and would be discussing highly emotive topics.
- It is our plan, that as the forum grows, we will be able to offer a “Meet the SEND Team Face2Face.” This would be in the form of Open Mornings that happened on school or community sites around the county. In discussion with larger and longer established forums,

***“these are very popular and are kept casual because we provide really good cake!!!”***

(Bucks Forum).



# Addendum September 2019

## Structure of the Forum

After we lost several members due to family and work obligations, we have been actively recruiting and Our Steering Group is back up to 12 members some of whom are actively sitting on statutory boards across Oxfordshire County Council and Health.

SEND Ops  
SEND Performance  
Post 16 Provider  
SENDIASS Steering Group  
CAMHS Assurance Board  
Local Offer  
Trans Carers Support Group

Our wider membership has grown from the 24 registered parent carers and professionals to 140 registered parent, carers and professionals (100 parents and 40 professionals) plus we have a further 35 organisations that we regularly have to forward our communications on to their families.

Our social media reach is:

- Facebook - is now 374 regular followers increased from 243
- Twitter - is now 76 followers increased from 52
- Instagram - 112 followers (small increase from 104)

The forum sent out its first newsletter and is gearing up to produce the next one. Following on from the success of the coffee morning with Shift earlier in the year we decided to host our own face to face events and had a coffee morning in Oxford in July which was attended by 12 families followed by an open evening event on 25<sup>th</sup> September where we had 6 more families attend. The head of SEN (Jayne Howarth), the Deputy Director of Education (Chris Hilliard) along with another colleague (Angela Wellings) all attended the Open Evening and the parents had a great opportunity to engage with the professionals.

The forum was asked to participate in the “Valuing SEND project with ImPower and two other local authorities and we set up two focus groups and invited parents to participate. One was held in Oxford with 7 parents being able to take part and the other in Banbury, as we are trying to extend our reach across the county, where 7 other families were able to contribute to the project.

## Consultation

Transport Consultation - is attended by one of our co-chairs and another steering group member. This is a current ongoing consultation.

Impower - 2 focus groups set up by the forum and input gathered for next stage of this project.

## Areas of Co-Production

EHCP Template - input from parent representatives, new template is up and running and positive feedback about the improved layout has been received (although this does sometimes depend on how well aligned the person filling it out has made it).

EHCP Timeline - the restructure is in process and this is ongoing

Local Offer Development - improvements ongoing

Moving Into Adulthood - looking at a whole new strategy managing transitions

SEND Strategy - ongoing with forum members attending

## Events Attended

Frank Wise School

Oasis Clinic

Inclusion Conference

Autism Oxford

Youth in Mind

Co-Chair on BBC Radio

Regional Involvement in the NNPCF Network (OxPCF were warmly welcomed back)

## Going Forward

Parent Participation Training (scheduled for November 2019)

Invitation to join Learner Engagement & Early Help Board

Children's Trust Board - currently have two parent candidates going through recruitment

OxFSN's Better Together Event 2019 - hoping to build on last year's success

Forum Coordinator booked onto 9<sup>th</sup> National Contact & NNPCF Parent Carer Participation Conference

