



Parent & Carers feedback – Survey Response

DECEMBER 2018

Have your say about SEND today...

Introduction

Warrington Parents and Carers work constantly to collect the views of Parents and Carers in Warrington, holding regular coffee mornings and targeted information sessions to signpost parents to appropriate services whilst offering the opportunity for Parents and Carers to share information and ideas to support each other.

At each of the sessions, we collect written feedback from the Parents and Carers that attend in order to evidence the issues they are currently facing and ensure our agenda is relevant. We also ask for positive feedback to help ensure that current services which are working well in Warrington continue to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Warrington.

Upon hearing that the SEND inspection would be carried out the following week, Warrington Parents and Carers put out a Survey to ensure we had a relevant updated view of the current issues that Parents and Carers are facing.

There are a lot of comments that praise the work that WarrPAC do to support and assist parents and ensure they are signposted to the correct services and ensure their views are considered on a strategic level. Parents feel that WarrPAC offer invaluable support and guidance and provide them with the opportunity to share their experiences and strategies with other parents and carers who understand their lifestyle and the difficult situations they have to deal with on a daily basis.

So, what did we want to know?

We asked parents and carers the following three questions to get a good overview of Warrington's SEND services and provision.

SAY ONE THING that works well in Warrington?

SAY ONE THING you'd like to see changed?

SAY ONE THING that would make a big difference to your family?

We received a good response from our forum members who were keen as ever to have their say, with sixty-five respondents in total.

So, what did our Parents and Carers have to say?

What is working well in Warrington

Parent comments give praise to the towns Primary School Designated Provision, in-particular Bewsey Lodge, Dallam and Woolston Primary schools. They felt there was good support in schools with special mention to Cardinal Newman and Birchwood High school, Parents and carers say there are some very good teachers and staff supporting their children in school settings and that Warrington's 6th Form provision at Woolston Learning Village is excellent, awarding special praise to Green Lane School.

Parents feel that services such as Speech and Language and Physiotherapy are providing a good and consistent standard of service and that professionals are understanding and care about children and young people with SEND.

There is praise for services such as Playability holiday provision, respite provision at Westlands Drive, direct payments and PA's. Support workers, youth workers and Russell Treasure mindfulness coach.

Warrington Play and Sensory centre is also mentioned, some parents feel this is a lifeline for their children and young people.

What would Parents and Carers like to see changed?

There is a real sense amongst Parents and Carers that they don't feel they are listened to enough, they feel Professionals and service providers can be very un-sympathetic to the difficult and exhausting life they lead caring 24/7 for a child/young person with SEND. Parents find it difficult to continuously battle for the help their children need.

There is still a significant need for better joined up working amongst professionals, particularly between health and education to ensure that the right support is in place to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people with SEND. Schools need to effectively train staff to make referrals to early help services as forms are often filled out incorrectly or left incomplete which causes a delay in securing the correct support for the child or young person. This is particularly difficult where a child with SEND is attending a mainstream setting and needs extra help or provision to support their learning and social and emotional wellbeing.

CAMHS needs to be more accessible, some children and young people will not leave their home and this seems to be a stumbling block when seeking help from CAMHS, especially when families are in crisis.

Parents still feel that waiting lists for services can be unacceptably long, this also applies to waiting for available places in specialist education provisions.

There is a need for earlier intervention, better signposting early on for parents and more constructive advice after diagnosis or along the pathway. Parents need to be correctly signposted to appropriate services as early as possible along this pathway to ensure they get the best and most appropriate help at the right time. Parents feel that better advertising or communication of existing services would help them rather than relying on word of mouth from other parents.

What would really make a difference to families of children and young people with SEND in Warrington?

The main theme from parent responses to this survey, is that they would like to see improvements continue in joined up working and co-production to achieve fully integrated services across the board. Better communication is needed amongst parents, professionals and all agencies involved in providing appropriate support for our children and young people. More support is needed for children and young people and their carers to improve mental health and social and emotional wellbeing. Parents would like service providers and the local authority to be transparent and honest about service availability and the applicable timescales and waiting lists. They would like to be more informed of services along the pathway from early years and pre-diagnosis right up to transition to adult services and beyond. They feel that information should be better communicated, up to date and advertised for all services and provision. There also needs to be some level of childcare that is suitable and available for children with SEND to allow parents to work and avoid financial hardship.

Parents would like more designated and specialist education provisions to improve waiting times and therefore outcomes for their children.

Parents feel they would benefit from targeted support groups where they can share ideas and information and help one another to navigate the difficult journey of caring for a child or young person with SEND.

Other ideas include a bank of PA's that they can access as it can be difficult to find a suitable person who works well with their child and has appropriate availability. They also feel more support and guidance is needed with applying for and using direct payments to provide a suitable support package. Parents would like to see more support to gain meaningful employment and transition to adulthood for those who wish to achieve a more independent lifestyle. More support is required to create opportunities for teenagers and young adults to socialise and for children and young adults who are housebound.

There is a significant unrest with the whole process and implementation of EHCP's, parents feel very anxious stressed and pressured when trying to ensure that their children's plans are relevant and contain correct and appropriate information to become working documents which ensure the correct help and support is implemented. The process is very lengthy and frustrating for parents as they feel they need to constantly chase up their child's plan to ensure it progresses to completion and calls and emails often go unanswered by the EHCP team.

Conclusion

In conclusion there is still a significant need for effective co-production to create integrated services with one front door that are fully transparent and accessible and reduce the need for parents to tell their often difficult and distressing story repeatedly.

The full report submitted to the inspectors included the individual comments made by parents and carers. In order to protect confidentiality, however, this version of the report excludes these comments.