

Peterborough Forum devises Topics of Importance

Peterborough Forum in the East of England identify Topics of Importance.

Parent carers in Peterborough have consistently reported that information and communication across the special educational needs and disability (SEND) arena is problematic and they cannot see any change as a result of sharing their views. Using “You Said – We Did” did not seem to be working. The idea was to create a system that had sign up from key partners within the Local Authority (LA) and Health which detailed far more clearly what parents were saying, and what changes would be implemented as a result.

A pro-forma was co-produced for recording and demonstrating change, and senior buy-in was established for the new way of working. The initial pro-forma is completed by the forum with key recommendations being made, and the response pro-forma is then completed by an LA/Health professional agreed at the SEND board, who has the authority to implement changes.

Some Topics of importance have included Parent Panels, Information Sharing and Communications, Covid-19, and Education and Communication. The Topics are driven by families and there is an aim to have the topic raised and responded to within three months.

Changes as a result have included:

- New guide to parents on panels – the who, what, and why of decision-making
- SEND newsletter from the LA
- Fact sheets for frontline professionals to share consistent information with parent carers
- New pages on the Local Offer – parent carer participation, short breaks, and more
- New Covid-19 specific pages on the Local Offer and support from services
- Letters being sent to all parents who have a child/young person with an Education, Health, and Care Plan about changes from LA, etc.
- Co-produced section M used to detail changes to provision in EHCPs during the lockdown

The impact has been better information sharing, more consistent messaging, more timely communication, improved involvement in EHCP discussions and planning, and increased awareness of what support is available to parent carers.