



**SNAP PARENT CARER FORUM**  
CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE

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### **SNAP PCF PARENT PANEL**

A Short Breaks Project to discuss with families how inclusive local services and support are for children with SEND to inform the mapping of provision across Central Bedfordshire. Parent Panels were held in Ivel Valley and Dunstable. A total of 17 parents were involved. Questionnaires are available for parents who were unable to attend and will like to contribute to this piece of work. Please contact SNAP CF via email [admin@snappcf.org.uk](mailto:admin@snappcf.org.uk) for further information.

All information below are parent's comments during both sessions.

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#### **Feedback from Ivel Valley Parent Panel**

**Ivel Valley Hub, The Baulk, Biggleswade SG18 0PT**

**1. Number of Attendees – 5**

**2. Provisions Currently attending**

- L.O.A.F (Autism Beds)
- Carers in Beds
- Swimming session - Beavers Biggleswade
- Bedfordshire Downs Syndrome Support Group
- No limits Sports Group – Saxon Leisure Centre

- Sports Zone Bedford
- Bedazzle Cambridge (theatre, dance)
- Shefford Centre Football on Sundays – Junior session started in Christmas
- Sandy Sports Centre – Weekly evening activities
- Farm in Letchworth
- Riding School on Farm in Flitwick
- RDA School in Willington (The Riding Centre)

### **3. How do parents know about these provisions?**

- Word of Mouth
- Parent Mail from Ivel Hub

### **4. Questions/Concerns raised**

“Why are provisions not signposted to parents through the Local Offer?”

“Why is the access to provisions at concessionary rates not publicised?” e.g. CWD Card

“Is there a possibility to link provisions to the CWD cards to create more places that offer concessionary rates in Central Bedfordshire?”

“How are museums meant to support SEND children?”

“There is no disability swing in Sandy Park”

“Ivel Valley Holiday Club finishes early at 3:30pm which is not suitable for working parents.”

“CBC Short Break Statement means nothing to parents.”

“This work has been done already, why again?”

“Applications are not looked at by CWD”

“There are huge gaps for children in the middle – no social worker, what does the future hold for them?”

## **5. Why don't parents access other local facilities like the library, leisure centre etc.?**

"Sometimes no activity is set up in the library."

"The library is not as relaxed as other provisions"

"How the public perceive the children is heart-breaking"

"One must be brave to go into the library"

"We have tried but it is difficult"

"Some libraries (Sandy) try their best but there are huge numbers of people going in"

"Leisure Centre – sometimes only a lane is closed for children with SEND yet centre states on website that it has a SEND offer"

## **6. Suggestions**

- A dedicated session for children and their families will be helpful
- A closed-door session like the Soft Ball session in the Beehive can be replicated. Parents were relaxed
- Ask about the children's needs before hand when parents enquire about attending a provision. This will help staff and the provision ascertain whether they are trained and equipped to cope with the needs of the child.
- Specific closed days in the library for consistency and reliability
- A set time for a closed session during every half term will be useful
- Right wordings for Closed sessions e.g. using words like relaxed session will attract the elderly and not only the families with SEND
- Facilities where siblings can be included
- Disability swings in all Central Bedfordshire Parks
- More activities during the school holidays so children can have something to break up their day
- Develop a Subscribe calendar e.g. SNAP PCF – start with the word EVENT to get parents attention
- Youth Clubs and Children Centres should have a broader offer
- A Facebook Local Offer

**7. How would you like to know if a provision is inclusive?**

- Use the Local Offer – everything in one place, push Local offer by all
  - Facebook update
  - Sharing with others
  - Twitter
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**Feedback from Dunstable Parent Panel**

**The Disability Hub, 39 Oakwood Avenue, Dunstable LU5 4AS**

**1. Number of Attendees – 12**

**2. Number of attendees that attend any of the 6 Vol Orgs – 4**

**3. Provisions Currently attending**

- FUN
- Otters
- Kids in Action
- Hi Fives
- Autism Beds Summer Scheme
- Spectrum Community Arts
- Groundworks
- L.O.A.F.
- Freddie and Friends Sunshine Stop
- Yes, We Can – Rotary (also offers football session in MK Dons)
- Special Needs Brownie Leighton Buzzard – BIGG

- Access to Sports – Swimming at Lee Manor
- Snakes and Ladders Specialist session
- 360 Milton Keynes
- Bounce Milton Keynes
- Mini monsters
- TANG – Tactic Centre Specialist Group
- David Lloyd Gym Milton Keynes

#### **4. How do parents know about these provisions?**

- Word of Mouth

#### **5. Questions/Concerns raised**

“How do we quality assure staff/carers?” (These are direct payment carers which parents should take the responsibility for. All CWD carers are quality assured).

“Tighter audits of staff and provisions, on the spot check”

“More flexibility for direct parents” (currently being reviewed)

“Opening hours of libraries”

“Have libraries being designed for SEND?”

“Only one disabled changing area at Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre”

“Are there going to be changing places in Tiddenfoot?”

“Closed sessions are not inclusive – how can we make things accessible for all? We would like to do things with everybody else”

“Lego club only caters for specific kids, what about kids with severe needs?”

“Are we trying to get SEND children to use mainstream services or are we providing more services for a set kind of people?”

“Autism friendly events are done either too early or too late in the day”

“Milton Keynes have a voucher scheme”

“FUN not equipped for older children – no outside play”

“Leighton Buzzard is becoming huge, where is the drawback for the community – no special needs school in Leighton Buzzard”

“Disabled access gym”

“Lots of chat from CBC but no action”

“Parent partnership drop sessions at the Children Centre is held in a corridor, which is not appropriate and shows us we are not valued”

“Parents who don’t drive have to travel far to access services”

“Nothing going on in Edwin Lobo”

“Adult Social Care are looking at making services in the community more accessible, can we link in with their work?”

## **6. Why don’t parents access other local facilities like the library, leisure centre etc.?**

“Other children are not nice”

“Safety”

“Lack of staff training”

“Facilities are not appropriate”

## **7. Suggestions –**

- Different types of need for each of the mystery shop activity
- Vol Orgs to stay as they are but in addition a big building with lots of parking and loads of activities outside
- Provisions should ask who their target market is, are staff trained,
- Can there be a tie in with health hubs
- Local Offer to be user friendly
- Something for the older children as part of the recommissioning of Youth Clubs

**8. How would you like to know if a provision is inclusive?**

- Facebook
- Schools
- Local Offer

**9. Are there any gaps in the local services?**

- There is nothing for children aged 5-8 yrs. old
- Gap in provision for 16-18 yrs. old

**10. What would you like to see in the local community?**

- More special needs schools
- Changing places
- More accessible parks – swings with straps, wheelchair cannot be used with bark on floor. Also getting in and out of park is tricky because of the entry gates
- Groups should be run by people that understand SEND