

## Topic of Importance - Information Sharing and Communication

The main way in which Peterborough Local Authority shares information relating to SEND is via the “Local Offer” website. This is a comprehensive guide to service provision across Education, Health Care and Social Care, Preparing for Adulthood and Leisure and Social Opportunities. The Local Offer website is undergoing constant update and improvement and has been co-produced with Family Voice Peterborough, parent carers and young people.

SEND inspectors during the recent LA Area Wide SEND Inspection felt that LO showed good co-production with young people and was generally easy to use by parents and professionals who were looking for information.

When referring to information sharing and communication views and experiences expressed relate to a range of areas not just the Local Offer. Areas where information is shared and communication takes place include via social media and between parents and professionals across a range of SEND services.

The SEND system is based upon a “person centred approach” whereby parents and young people should feel knowledgeable and empowered enough to be involved in decision making and target setting and thereby receive a service which is tailored to individual needs.

### What are parents telling us?

Through a combination of online surveys, feedback forms, discussion on Facebook and face to face interactions parents are telling us that:

- The Local Offer website is not being used, either because of a lack of awareness about its existence, or a lack of clarity over how best to find information on it.
- Social workers are lacking in knowledge surrounding service provision;
- Information relating to Social Care is particularly poorly shared.
- Post-diagnosis support and information is poor for neurodevelopmental conditions
- It is difficult to find information on what services are available, and what they do.
- There is a lack of information and sources of support
- Communication between professionals and parents is intermittent and incomplete

### Where we get our evidence from

We have recently conducted three general surveys, two preparing for Peterborough local area’s Ofsted/CQC inspection, and our annual parent carer support survey which all include aspects of how parent carers information sharing and communication, and which fortified concerns we were hearing directly from individuals at face to face meetings.

How easy do you find it to get information about what services are available and what they do?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0

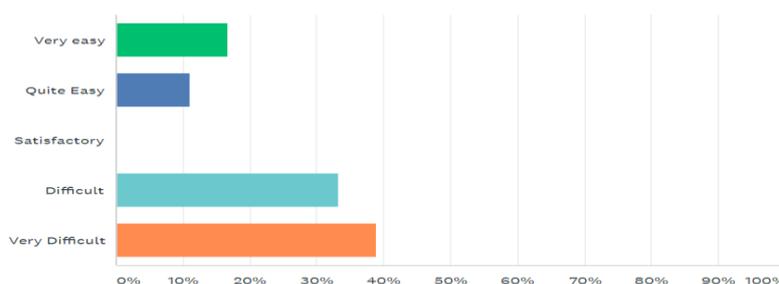
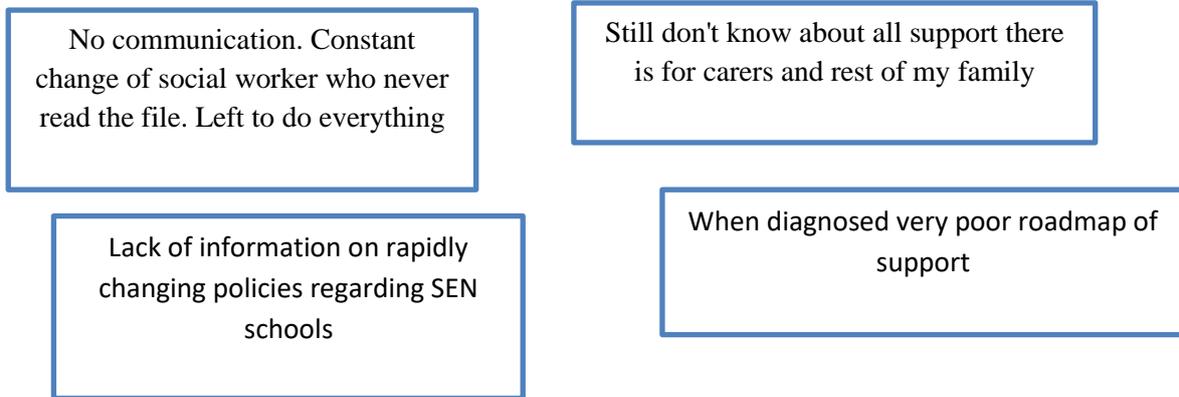


Fig. 1 Parent Carer Responses regarding finding information on services

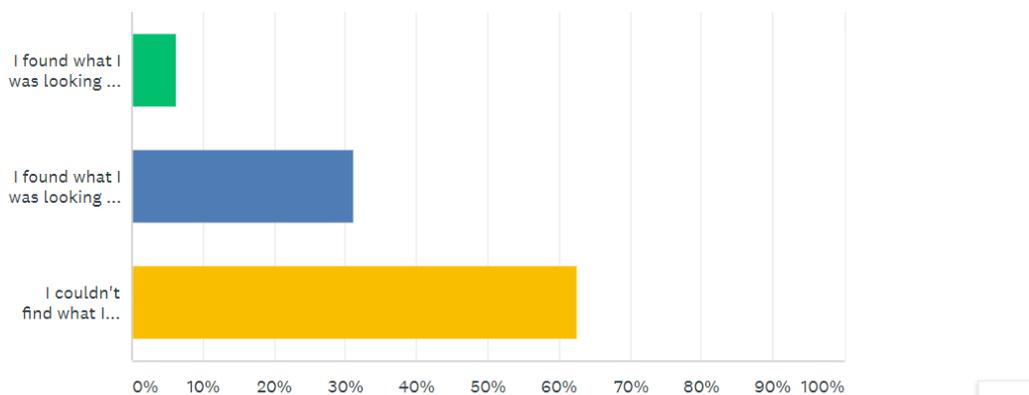
70 % of survey respondents have declared that they find it either difficult, or very difficult to find information on the availability of services and what they do. This is an alarmingly high percentage, the feeling of having to fight to get information leads to much lower levels of satisfaction relating to SEND services, and lower levels of general wellbeing amongst parent carers



**Fig. 2 Parental Comments Relating to Communication and Information Sharing.**

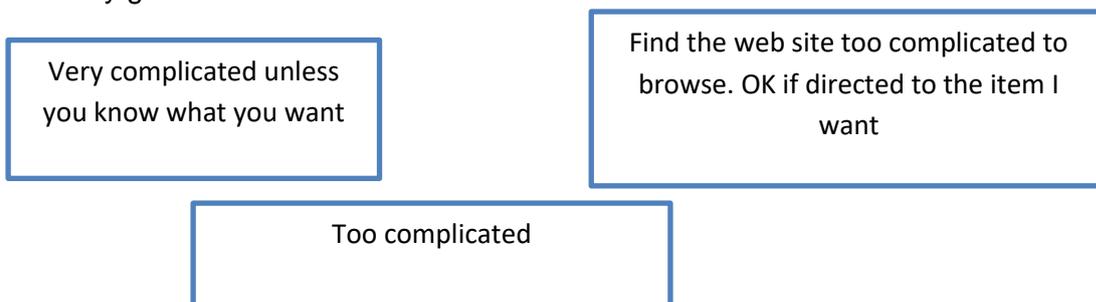
If you HAVE used the 0-25 SEND Local Offer how easy did you find it? Please choose the most appropriate statement

Answered: 16 Skipped: 2



**Fig. 3 Parental Reporting of ease of Finding Information on the Local Offer Website**

Parents who are aware of the Local Offer are reporting that the website is not user friendly or fit for purpose, with over 60% reporting that they were unable to find what they were looking for, and 30% indicating that while they did find the information they needed it was a difficult process. A note needs to be added here that numbers who responded to the surveys are too low for any general conclusions to be drawn.



**Fig. 4 Parental Comments on Using the Local Offer Website**

There is a possibility that those parents who have taken the surveys by FVP may have not have been involved in discussions with SEND inspectors recently and their experiences of using the Local Offer differ from experiences of other people. Parents often take the surveys when they are dissatisfied and wish to express their views and be heard. More work would be required and more in depth user analysis of the Local Offer to establish any conclusions. What is presented in this Tol are the views of parents who have participated.

Parents are reporting a particular difficulty with communication channels in social care. There is some confusion around the Community Short Breaks offering, and the pathway to getting support and help at home is unclear. At one of our recent school coffee mornings a parent relayed to us that the waiting lists for the Short Breaks offerings were too long to be accessible – and was unaware of the larger group offering provided by Vivacity which could be accessed immediately.

I have tried to refer myself to the team but never got any response what so ever. Only with the help of Carer's Trust my child now has a social worker but we struggle even more because some things should have been done much earlier. Social workers are changing all the time and in doing so making mistakes,

**Fig. 5 Parental report of Attempts to Access Social Care Provision**

### How have FVP responded

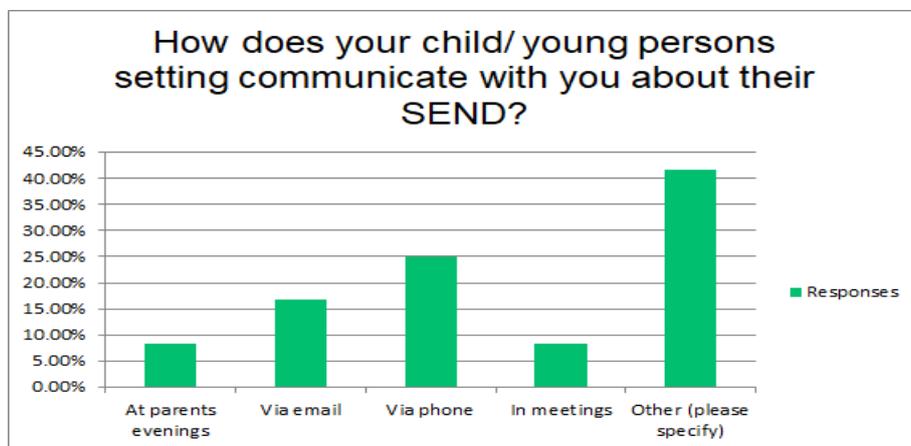
FVP have responded to the views expressed by

1. Conducting wider research
2. Developing this 'topic of interest'

### Wider Research

We circulated an additional survey focussing directly upon Information Sharing and Communication, this survey was completed by 16 Peterborough parent carers and is designed to give a snapshot view of local opinion.

When asked how settings communicate with parents the following responses were provided

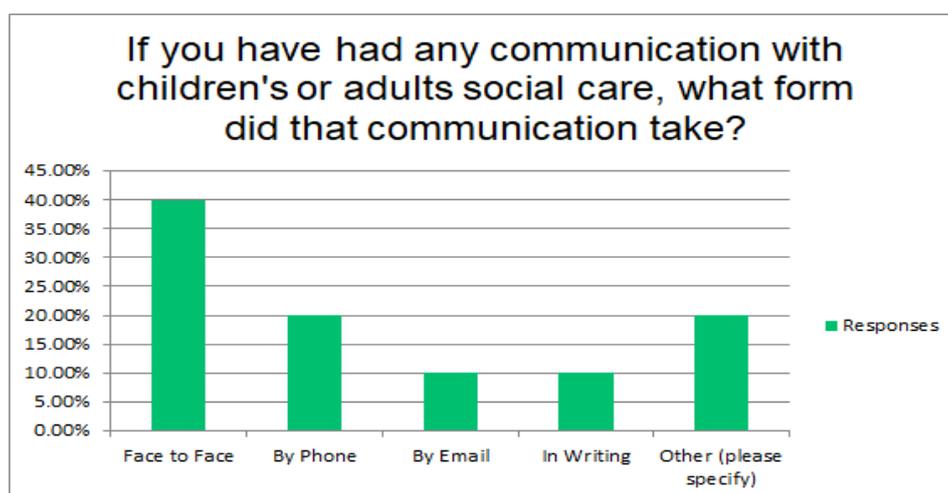


**Fig. 6 Parental choices of how settings communicate with them**

Other methods were specified as:

1. Face to face
2. phone
3. Home/ school communication book

When asked about communication with social care responses were as follows:



**Fig. 7 Parental views of how social care professionals communicate with them**

When asked about preferred methods of communication face to face, email were stated.

Key findings relate to:

1. Other possible sources of information sharing and communication:
  - a. Word of mouth via professionals; Health, Social Care
  - b. E-News, Mailing Lists, Email
  - c. Parent carer database
  - d. Leaflets, posters on bulletin boards (nurseries, schools, community centres, doctors)
2. Information sharing and communication is taking place already using a variety of methods but there is a lack of consistency of methods used and the actual information being shared.

### **Where FVP have shared this talking point**

1. FVP Website
2. FVP Social Media Channels
3. FVP E-News
4. Peterborough City Council Commissioners

### **Next Steps and Areas for Consideration**

1. As well as sharing this 'Topic of Interest' as identified in the list above it will be used to inform the charities annual report as evidence of what parent carers are saying.
2. This will also be used by parent reps in strategic meetings to inform strategic discussions.

3. This will be presented to commissioners and decision makers to help develop further 'you said - we did' work.
4. For PCC to consider exploring further ways of sharing information relating to short breaks, SEND services, support for families post diagnosis
5. For PCC to consider developing an E-News for parent carers
6. For PCC to consider ways to enable front line staff to have access to consistent information that can be shared with parent carers
7. For FVP to explore further what topics parent carers would like information about
8. For PCC to consider the following in relation to the Local Offer specifically:
  1. A parent participation page for communicating participation opportunities and to enable participation
  2. Sharing LO details with front line staff and encouraging sign posting to the LO; handing out the postcard/ business card to all parents who become known to services
9. For PCC to consider creating a card to be shared with parent carers detailing sources of support on one side (SENDIASS, PDDCS, PADSG, NAS, FVP?) and the LO on the other side

### **Timescales**

1. FVP will endeavour to pass the Topic of Interest to the LA within two weeks of completion and they will look to respond within two months.