

Lidget Green 24th November 2015



Our first Better Together session in the new West Bradford Cluster was held on Tuesday 24th November.

15 parents attended, along with the headteacher of Lidget Green Primary School, a representative from the LA New Communities Team, a local private day nursery manager and a local health visitor.

Following an introduction from Anne-Marie Merifield (Executive Headteacher at St Edmund's), there were 2 workshops focussing on increasing engagement with the children's centre, and communication with parents.

You said:	Our response:	What we actually did:
<p><i>Effective communication needs a “multiple attack”:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletters • Letters • Texts (everyone has a mobile phone) • Phone app (especially if it worked like Class Dojo which gives parents feedback about their individual children) • Emails (only some people have email) • Website • Face to face communication – which everyone thought was most effective, whether in the playground in a meeting or workshop, or at a home visit. 	<p>Produce a newsletter each term, which we will post out to all parents as long as we have sufficient funding in our budget.</p> <p>Launch a phone app in February 2016 (OurSchoolsApp).</p> <p>Develop and promote our website pages http://stedmundsnsc.com/west-bradford-childrens-centre-cluster/</p> <p>Ask cluster staff to visit their local schools regularly, and talk to parents in the playground about children's centre services and the support we can offer.</p> <p>Investigate a text messaging service, if budget allows.</p>	<p>We produced 2 cluster newsletters, but due to funding we were not able to continue to do this. However our outreach programme means that all children receive information about children's centres at 4 months, 6 months and 18 months.</p> <p>The Phone App was not successful. Instead we launched a Facebook page where we regularly post photos of activities, information about upcoming events etc.</p> <p>We are not able to set up a text messaging service, but staff all have work smart phones, and do send texts out to parents they are working with.</p>
<p><i>We would like to be kept informed about courses and special events such as picnics and trips.</i></p>	<p>We will ensure that all special events are promoted in the centres at least two weeks before the events. The phone app will also allow an easy way of notifications and alerts to be sent to parents who sign up. This will be “live” from February 2016.</p>	<p>All events promoted on Facebook, with posters in the centre, and flyers handed out to parents.</p>

You said:	Our response:	What we actually did:
<i>Information in Urdu would be really useful, as some parents don't read English.</i>	We will produce an Urdu leaflet, and Urdu timetable and have information in Urdu on the website by February 2016. We will also set up and promote the Urdu helpline (01274 545426).	Urdu leaflet and timetable now available, as well as Urdu page on the website.
<i>Leaflets are good, but sometimes they don't get the message across. For example some of the parents would like to volunteer, but hadn't seen the leaflet and would like to be asked.</i>	We will make sure that as well as leaflets we have posters up in each centre for all our key areas of activity, including volunteering. We have reminded staff in all centres to talk to parents about our volunteering opportunities.	Posters including volunteer posters are available in all centres.
<i>Parents really want information about what their children should be able to do at each stage of their development.</i>	We will create a display at each centre on child development, with photos of children, showing the key ages and stages and what children are learning through their play. We will hold workshops for parents where staff can talk to parents about child development and the importance of play.	"Provision planning sheets" have been written by staff, and are on display in each area of provision in the crèche room and also available for parents to take away.
<i>Workshops like Better Together are really useful.</i>	We will have a Better Together event each half term, rotating round the centres in the cluster. Dates for 2015/2016 are: Saturday 23rd January 11.00 - 1.00 Lidget Green (focus on working parents, and dads/male carers) Tuesday 26th January 1.00 - 3.00 Farnham Road Friday 12th February all day St Edmund's Tuesday 15th March 9.00 - 11.00 Princeville Saturday 16th April 11.00 - 1.00 St Edmund's (focus on working parents, and dads/male carers) Tuesday 17th May 1.00 - 3.00 Crossley Hall Tuesday 14th June 1.00 - 3.00 Allerton (inc Thornton)	All Better Together sessions went ahead, and Better Together continues to be part of the programme for 2016 – 2017.
<i>Schools and children's centres could communicate better to promote and inform each other's services. When there isn't someone from the children's centre available, could school staff provide information to the parent?</i>	We will put a sign for parents on the children's centre reception desk, letting them know that they can talk to a member of school staff, and also giving the cluster phone number.	Sign now up.

You said:	Our response:	What we actually did:
<i>To reach more parents we need to have better signage at centres/sites.</i>	We will put better signs up at the centres.	New signs have been put up at Thornton and Farnham Road children's centres.
<i>Staff need to be from communities that they serve so that language issues and engagement is better.</i>	We will have staff across the cluster and volunteers that can support families with the different language needs we have across the cluster.	We have identified what languages staff and volunteers speak and made sure that all centres know who speaks what.
<i>The children's centres need to engage with partners to reach more families. Have joint sessions. Link with schools.</i>	We will ensure we continue to develop strong links with the schools, health and other partners. In December the children's centre staff participated at Christmas Fairs at Crossley Hall and St Edmund's Children's Centres. We will try to do more of these joint events.	Stronger links have developed.
<i>Do more for working parents - evenings/weekends</i>	We provided sessions between Christmas and New Year that working parents who have time off may have been able to attend. We will have a particular focus on working parents at the next Better Together day on Saturday January 23rd.	Family Saturdays introduced (2 per year per centre) to which we invite working parents through our children providers.
<i>Ensure we are represented at partners' events. Have fundraising events.</i>	We will continue to develop links with local partners and offer a presence at their events (eg an information stall, or children's activities). We will look into future fundraising events.	Links with local partners are developing all the time. We have had not capacity to run fundraising events.
<i>Have a buddying system where parents can support isolated parents to access centres.</i>	We will support parents who would like to volunteer as buddies. We will also link with the Artworks Parent Champions scheme.	Our Community Engagement Workers are able to support parents to access services.
<i>Run different courses regularly to encourage parents to attend. Provide accredited courses.</i>	We will run a rotating programme of adult education and parenting courses throughout the year. We will look into accredited courses.	Courses have continued to run. We have not been able to run any accredited courses at Princeville.
<i>Need to get Mums to encourage Dads to attend. Encourage mixed environments</i>	We have now recruited 2 Dads' Workers (Qaiser and Hafeez) who will develop our programme for dads. We will run family days and dads' only events as requested by parents across the cluster.	Our Dads Workers attend one Stay and Play session each week in each centre, and also run a Saturday Dads Club once a month – rotating round the centres.
<i>Information in home languages</i>	We will audit and review the leaflets and information that we have in community languages.	Leaflet and timetable available in Urdu and Slovakian.