



**Swindon SEND  
Families Voice**  
Jacqui Watt  
Chair



our  
**VOICES**

are  
**BETTER**

**TOGETHER**

# Working in partnership with families

## **SEND Code of Practise**

**3.18 At a strategic level, partners must engage children and young people with SEN and disabilities and children's parents in commissioning decisions, to give useful insights into how to improve services and outcomes.**



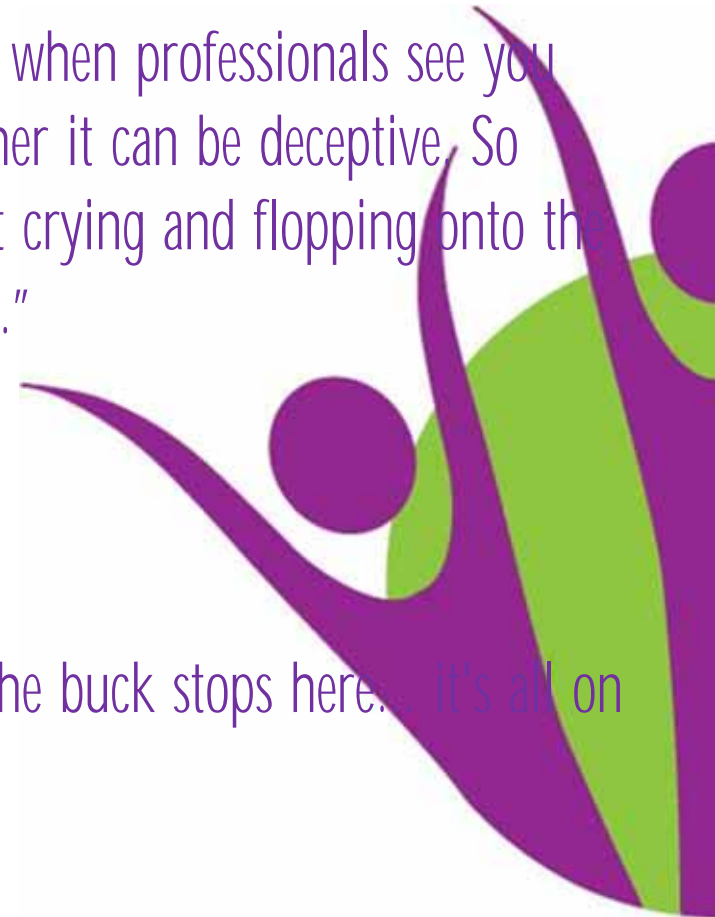
# What does being a parent carer mean?

Working together



"I think sometimes when professionals see you holding it all together it can be deceptive. So often I feel like just crying and flopping onto the floor and giving up."

"Ultimately the buck stops here... it's all on me."



# What is a Parent Carer Forum?

Working together

- A **parent carer forum** is a group of **parents** and **carers** of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and disabilities between the ages of 0-25. Their aim is to make sure the services in their area meet the needs of disabled children and their families.
- There are about 150 parent carer forums in the UK
- Funded by grants from the **Department for Education** and sometimes forums also receive funding from the Local Authority/CCG too



# Who are Swindon SEND Families Voice?

- We are a Committee made up of 5 parents and carers, and 7 parent representatives and volunteers. We share an office with STEP in Nythe.
- We formed in January 2018
- We are volunteers but receive monetary recompense for some of the work we do. We are a non-profit making organisation.
- Currently we have over 1,100 followers on Facebook and 250 on our mailing list.
- Our online Facebook support group has 460 members.
- We've attended over 200 meetings with the LA, CCG and other agencies.

Working together



# What are we doing?

Working together

- We are the strategic partners to the Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group, who commission our health services.
- Working with parents, carers, children and young people should be at the centre of everything the LA and CCG do relating to SEND.
  - SEND Strategic Board
  - Children's Scrutiny Committee
  - Meet regularly with Senior Managers
  - Sendiass management committee
  - Recruitment panels
  - Mental Health Trailblazer Steering Group
  - Local Offer
- Encourage participation through consultations/surveys





# What we aim to do?

Working together

- Encourage working together, collaboration and co-production
- Host events that are useful
- Spread good news stories – via social media, emails and newsletters
- Encourage better communication and transparency
- Ensure the voices of parents and carers are listened to, that they feel heard, and their concerns are acted upon, build good relationships
- Make life better for families in Swindon with children and young people with SEND



# How are we doing this?

## Encourage working together, collaboration and co-production

We worked with the CCG on the Hidden Disabilities Lanyard scheme, from the beginning idea, through the trial period and now as it is being rolled out to more health provisions – getting feedback from the parents and carers every step of the way.





# How are we doing this?

## Host events that are useful

- Preparing for Adulthood, Challenging Behaviour EHCP workshops.
- Family events - sensory play, mindfulness, performing arts, crafts sessions
- Branches Support Group

Feedback from Challenging Behaviour Workshop: Experienced speakers, opportunity to ask questions throughout, practical advice, information available on the day, informative and interesting.



# How are we doing this?

## Spread Good News Stories

- Our Facebook page is public so open to all we are followed by professionals as well as parents and carers – over 1,100 followers.
- We focus on local and national SEND news, what we doing/is going on in the community and useful information and advice.
- We have a website [www.swindonsendfamiliesvoice.org.uk](http://www.swindonsendfamiliesvoice.org.uk).
- Not everyone is on social media so we also put together a quarterly newsletter and send out regular emails.



# How are we doing this?

## Encourage better communication and transparency

Working together



**BRANCHES**  
working together - reaching out  
- strengthening support

Please join us for making new friends,  
supporting each other, guest speakers  
and useful advice

<b>Hot, Glue and Jump</b> Under Shaw Ridge Farm, SWS SPU Tuesday 7th May 10-12 Tuesday 2nd July 10-12 Tuesday 1st October 10-12 Tuesday 3rd December 10-12	<b>Customer Service Hub</b> 1st Floor, Orbital Shopping Park, SN25 4AN Tuesday 4th June 7-9 pm Tuesday 3rd September 7-9 pm Tuesday 5th November 7-9 pm Tuesday 7th January 7-9 pm
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Email: [swindonsendfamiliesvoice@outlook.com](mailto:swindonsendfamiliesvoice@outlook.com) Tel: 07486 873405

- Talk to professionals/get questions answered
- Understanding procedures better
- Providing more feedback
- More parent carer participation



# How are we doing this?

Ensure the voices of parents and carers are listened to, that they feel heard, and their concerns are acted upon, build good relationships



- We regularly ask families for their participation in surveys, consultations, focus groups and feedback.
- Face to face interactions through Focus Groups with Senior Managers.
- You said, We did



# How are we doing this?

Working together

## Make life better for families in Swindon with children and young people with SEND

- The SEND Room was launched in November 2018
- 460 members and growing!
- Peer to peer support
- Positive, friendly environment



## The SEND Room

**S**upport **E**ncourage **N**urture **D**iscuss

The SEND Room is a new online Facebook support group for parents and carers of children and young people aged 0-25 in Swindon who have **any** Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

- A place to support one another
- A place to meet others who understand
- A place to share information



Search: The SEND Room

our VOICES are BETTER TOGETHER



# How will we know we are we doing this?

## Make life better for families in Swindon and young people with SEND

- Show how their opinions and concerns are a
  - 'You said, we did'
- Families notice an improvement in the comr the LA/CCG
- Feedback received is more positive
- They tell us they feel listened to and better i





# How we can help you find out more?

- Visit our stand today at the Preparing for Adulthood
  - Join our mailing list
  - 'like' our Facebook page
  - Visit our website [www.swindonsendfamiliesvoice.org.uk](http://www.swindonsendfamiliesvoice.org.uk)
  - Join The SEND Room
  - Attend 'Branches'
- What is your experience with SEND Services in Swindon? Please let us know on our stand today.

Working together



Our strength is our shared experience

Working together



**"Our Voices are Better Tog**

