

Worcestershire Parents' Voice Newsletter



Issue 2 January 2011

Hi everyone

After a hectic October where we organised lots of different events for Parents' Week, the core members of Parents' Voice met to discuss plans for 2011. The group felt that we need to strengthen our links with parents across Worcestershire to ensure we are being fully representative of parent views. We will do this by establishing regular contact with every parent forum in Worcestershire schools and gather feedback. This feedback will be used in a variety of ways; for example, it will support the work of Parents' Voice when we attend Children's Trust meetings with the County Council.

The core members also agreed to find out how we apply for charitable status in 2011 as this will allow the group to apply for grants to support our work and provide greater flexibility on the types of work we can get involved with.

The Parents' Charter is currently being piloted in 2 schools with a further number already lining up to pilot the project in early 2011. If you recall in the previous newsletter I discussed how the Parents' Charter provides parents with confidence on the way an organisation will work with them. The pilot is a great step forward for Parents' Voice and when the pilot is complete, we aim to roll out the Charter to organisations that provide a service to our families, i.e. doctors surgeries, children's centres and community centres.

Thank you for your ongoing support this year and have a great Christmas.

Emma Campolucci
Chair of Parents Voice



Parents' Voice celebrates Parents' Week

During Parents' Week, several member-families took up the offer of a **FREE** sport session at Karate World in Worcester, arranged by Parents' Voice.

Everyone had a great time, and were impressed with the chief instructor, Mr Nettleford, and his staff.

One of our members even signed up for the full course! We have had a further offer of a **FREE** session for Parents' Voice during the February half term, so watch your emails for details!

"It was so lovely to see so many children of all different ages working together and their parents joining in," comment by parent.

Other activities included Halloween arts and crafts, swimming at the Splash, Toy Story 3 at the cinema for 95p, bowling at Bowl Xtreme and fun and games at Mad Hatters.

By Hazel Hyman

Parents' Voice and Ofsted

I was approached to talk with the Ofsted Inspectors, when they inspected Worcestershire County Council, regarding our experiences of Children's Services. My reaction was to accept but to say that I wasn't entirely clear on what they would want to know. All I could do is answer questions as honestly as possible.

Therefore on Thursday 14th October I met up with other parents at County Hall, had a brief meeting to introduce ourselves and our children with their many and varied disabilities.

To the Ofsted inspector I said "I feel that our problems seem to be mainly around the dissemination of information between Children's Services and the Education."

To secure our son's educational needs we have had to battle at every stage, but thankfully the professionals who were assigned to us helped enormously to resolve our problems.

Other parents within the group were not as positive and as the talks opened up it became apparent that services are in place, but not all of the parents know what is on offer and how utilize these valuable resources.

By Beth Seale

Parents having a voice in the Council

Parents' Voice on the Children's Trust Board

The Children's Trust Board includes members from the County Council, NHS and other "partners" such as district councils, police and schools. The Board meets regularly and discusses issues around Worcestershire's Children and Young People's Plan; I've been the usual parent/carer representative on the CTB since it was formed. I try to promote parents' views and to pass on feedback and comments - it can be challenging but it's always interesting!

By Sue Onions



Ofsted and the Children's Trust Board

Having a seat on the Children's Trust Board means that we were asked to take part in the recent Ofsted inspection at Worcestershire County Council. As I had attended a previous Board meeting and Sue was not available to go along, I stood in. It was an interesting experience as the lead HM Inspector interviewed the Trust Board group asking some very probing questions. He was keen to hear how the Board consider views and feedback from parents and I was able to answer direct questions and give feedback about our input into the Board. I was able to communicate how much it meant to us to have a voice and that we will use it to continue to give feedback on behalf of all of the parents in Worcestershire.

Clair de Groot