

# Short Breaks Forum - 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023

## In attendance

Local Authority: Sam Ives, Beth Morgan, Johanne Brodrick, Marie Hatton, Andrew Meredith

PODS: Jayne Stevens, Caroline Lake

Parent Carers: Andy, Elsa, Denise, Maire, Claire

## We're Listening

The forum started with parent carers sharing their stories and experiences with the LA.

- Maire raised that she has had trouble finding iCan2 targeted activities information online since COVID. Beth and Andrew advised where to find it and acknowledged that the website needs updating to ensure parents can reach it easily.
- AM agreed to design a Club 17 poster for Andy to distribute
- Parent carers would like a list of all activities, including targeted activities, how to access them and details on date, time, location etc.
- Parent carers would like an event held for post 16/18 to promote services and support available, aside from work and education. LA advised that there had been one recently held by Adult's Services at CVS
- Sam agreed to link in with Derwen College, Oswestry, to keep them informed of current 'hot topics' and events they may wish to join
- Parent carers would attend the Adult's Working Together meetings, but they are held in the daytime when parents are at work. AM stated that this may be due to change and Sarah Poole, Adult's Services Co-Production Lead, is now in post

## Children with Disabilities Team Update

LA shared several new/updated documents with the parent carers for comments and questions:

- Children with Disabilities Register information flyer and registration form - Denise suggested sending the forms to SENDCOs to share with SEND children in schools
- A-Z of Useful Services in Telford booklet - Jayne raised that the 'Children with Disabilities Team' heading may mislead parents into thinking that they can only access the services as they are receiving support from the CWD Team. The document currently says 'Useful Services for Children and Families in Telford – Children with Disabilities Team.'
- Short Breaks Newsletter – Two editions have been released and have received very positive feedback from families
- Short Breaks Statement - Telford and Wrekin Council published a new Short Breaks Statement in March 2023. Jayne queried the use of the phrase 'assessed needs' in relation to targeted/preventative support, as they do not have an assessment but complete a request form for LA to consider eligibility. JB advised that in some circumstances an assessment will have taken place following a referral to CWD and the outcome may be

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targeted and not specialist support to be provided. Also, when the application is completed an assessment / judgement is made from the information provided to determine eligibility. Parent carers queried the parity between children when looking at the criteria and LA responded with how assessments are carried out and eligibility is decided. Reassessments will be being undertaken inline with the statement criteria which should provide more consistency and equity. The statement will be reviewed each year with stakeholders.

## **iCan2 Brand for Targeted Activities**

LA asked parent carers what they would like to do with regard to use of the iCan2 brand that is used for the Targeted Activities. Parents agreed that it is widely recognised in the community and should not be reinstated and not changed. The group agreed to use the term 'member' or 'membership' when referring to iCan2. The iCan2 brand will be the 'umbrella' term for all targeted activities.

## **My Options Update**

The group acknowledged that updates had already been provided in previous conversations. AM stated that My Options will be a provider of iCan2, and in future there may be other providers that offer a targeted activity under the iCan2 brand.

Recruitment within My Options is continuing to improve and more applications are being submitted. This is really positive for children with disabilities.

## **Short Breaks Commissioning Update**

The Council acknowledges the difficulties experienced by families with regard to the availability of local care and support service capacity. Workforce and recruitment issues are being experienced across the country, particularly in the health, care and support sector. We are working hard to address this and have the following updates:

- New community support agencies have joined, or in the process of joining our provider frameworks. We continue to promote our local needs to attract CQC registered providers.
- Overnight respite. Our strategy is to increase the number of part-time (Short Breaks) foster carers whereby local, formally approved foster carers can provide a matched, homely option. At the same time, we are undertaking formal market engagement and business case work to develop a bespoke, Ofsted registered service. This aims to provide high quality regulated overnight options for a range of needs, that are local and are within a homely atmosphere. The Council are promoting the Part-time foster care option via recruitment campaigns.
- The specialist playscheme is undergoing some changes. There will be a new venue as The Bridge school is having extensive building works. A new provider will be commissioned. We understand this change will create uncertainty and we will provide updates as the plans for this

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summer are firmed up. We aim to offer 4 weeks this summer, to include a lunch. The playscheme will be offered to children with specialist level needs. The Council will also promote other playschemes and the Arthog Stay and Play options. It was acknowledged that the changes will be positive for some children and young people who have difficulty attending the playscheme at their own school due to changes in the routine, activities and who is supporting them.

- The Council have embarked on a Communications campaign to promote a number of job roles for children with disabilities, including: Skills Coach, Part-time foster care, Personal Assistant, Childminders. PODS support of this campaign is very appreciated.
- We are aiming to commission a primary age Youth Club to enable younger children to have this opportunity.
- A new 'Arts Club' will be commissioned later this year. We aim to offer a wider range of arts related activities including music, dance, as well as arts and crafts.
- We are working with Library services to support them to expand their range of books and create new 'Easy Read' sections, as well as expanding their e-reader offer.
- The SNAC offer continues to grow, check out their Facebook page! (link below)
- We are working with 'RockSteady' who are coming to Telford to offer a music session. This will be a one-off event, but there may be scope for more.
- A Short Breaks Marketplace event is being planned for early July – we will keep you posted.

## Next meetings in 2023:

19 <sup>th</sup> June	1-3pm	PODS Hub, 1 Hawksworth Road, Central Park, Telford, TF2 9TU
12 <sup>th</sup> Sept	4-6pm	PODS Hub, 1 Hawksworth Road, Central Park, Telford, TF2 9TU
7 <sup>th</sup> Dec	9-11am	PODS Hub, 1 Hawksworth Road, Central Park, Telford, TF2 9TU

## Getting in touch

We would love to see as many of you as possible in the forum. If that is not possible, and you wish to ask a Short Breaks service question please get in touch via the Short Breaks email:

[Shortbreaks@telford.gov.uk](mailto:Shortbreaks@telford.gov.uk) and we will address it in the following forum.

## Useful Links:

**Childminders** [Live Well Telford Childminders](#) or Family Connect on 01952 385385

**Childrens Autism Hub** - [About Children's Autism Hub | Telford Autism Hub](#) 01952 262062

**SEND Activities & Events page** [Activities & Events](#)

**PODS** [Home - PODS \(podstelford.org\)](http://podstelford.org)

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**My Options** [My Options - Activity, Wellbeing & Care - Home | Facebook](#)

**SNAC (Special Needs Activity Centre)** [SNAC Telford: Special Needs Activity Centre | Facebook](#)

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