

## Hampshire Children and Families Forum – Basingstoke Branch

Minutes of the Spring Term Branch Meeting of Hampshire Children and Families Forum, Basingstoke Branch held at Marnel Early Years Centre Shetland Road Popley Basingstoke Hants on Friday 20 January 2006 at 12.30pm to 2.00pm

**Present:** Alison Newman – Childminding Network North Hampshire  
Frances Candler – Discovery Centre Project Team, Basingstoke Library  
Debbie Ruppenthal – Speakeasy Advocacy  
Nicky Blunden – Pre-school Development Worker  
Joan Bunn – Development Officer Basingstoke PLA  
Lesley Allen – Senior Development Officer PLA  
Karen Williams – Portage Team Manager  
Jo Whitfield – HCFF Area Manager  
Brigid Bell – HCFF Co-ordinator

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Jo Whitfield welcomed attendees to the meeting and introductions were made.

### 2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Kim Taylor, Sue Riley, Evelyn Askew and Debbie Bonner

### 3. Minutes of last meeting

Minutes of last meeting were agreed.

### 4. Co-ordinators Report

Brigid distributed a copy of her report of the main projects worked on and meeting notes for the CAMHS Local Implementation Group (attached). Brigid also informed meeting that she would be on annual leave from Monday 20 February to Friday 3 March 2006.

### 5. Consultation and Research.

Brigid spoke about last terms consultation and research regarding P & T Groups and thanked Joan for her assistance with group questionnaires during some of her visits.

Brigid also advised the meeting of the research and consultation taking part this term on pregnant teenagers and young parents.

### 6. Speaker Frances Candler – Proposed Discovery Centre Basingstoke Library

Frances gave an overview of what was being planned for the Discovery Centre in Basingstoke and highlighted how Gosport and Winchester had approached the opportunity in their areas, and discussion took place around items highlighted in her hand out. She explained she had a vision for the library to be more like a community centre and have a wider remit to include more opportunities for organisations, café, education and support links. She explained how a feasibility study and consultation had thrown up criticism the main problems where highlighted. She asked for attendees to look at the plans and consider anything that could be added or changed about the plan.

It was felt very strongly that all children and families should be catered for and in particular Karen Williams felt that there should be some early years resources for Parents and children to borrow. Books, videos and DVD's. Sensory materials and even a sensory room that could be booked would be a voyage of discovery for many children with special needs and an oasis of calm for parents too - a place for calm reflection and

1:1 bonding for parent and child where sensory books could be shared. This would be most helpful for parent with SEN children.

Karen also said though should be given to the location of the sensory room with good access near the entrance, coffee area and toilet facilities which needs wheelchair access toilet. The lift needs to be wide enough to take a wheelchair parent/s shopping and at least one other sibling. Some children with special needs will need to be kept in their special wheelchair due to their condition so isles need to be wide enough also.

Karen suggests that parents need to be asked what they want. Look at good practice in other areas where Discovery Centres are already in place. Special schools have a vast knowledge of suitable resources for early years with special needs.

Frances agreed that there was much to consider that asked groups to contribute by email after the meeting.

#### **7. Items for Newsletter**

Brigid advised that the deadline for the next newsletter had been advised on the Agenda, as it had to be brought forward to today's date. She advised she had received a good mix of articles to fill the newsletter.

#### **8. HCFF Website**

Brigid advised attendees of the HCFF website and asked for items for this. Brigid explained about the opportunity for information sharing to a wider audience and pointed out that the branch website has a calendar and bulletin page especially for groups working with families.

#### **9. Members Information Sharing**

Karen Williams reported that Portage were now working with behaviour support and wanted to encourage early referral from practitioners. Childminders are to link for shopping trips.

Alison reported collaborative work with teenage parents to support them for one off occasions as a trusted baby sitter or on a more regular basis for childcare so that parents can continue education through the Care to Learn Scheme.

Lesley advised that the Pre-school Learning Alliance had recruited Nicky Blundell as Pre-school Development Officer, which meant that Basingstoke is up to full strength. Once settled in, they would all be working hard to ensure that visits missed last term would be caught up on. Joan reported that at Tuesday Tots a nurse was working within the parent and toddler group.

#### **10. Date, time and Place of next meeting**

The date, time and place of the next meeting was agreed as Friday, 21 April 2006 12.30 – 2.00pm at Marnel Early Years Centre, Marnel Infants School, Shetland Road, Popley Basingstoke RG24 9PT. **THERE WILL BE A SPEAKER AT THIS MEETING Cllr Paul Harvey Leader of the Council regarding the Three Year Council Plan.**