



Summary submission for Ofsted / CQC

Ealing LA inspection January 2019

By Ealing Parent Carer Forum (EPCF)

EPCF organisational information:

Membership:

January 2019: **855** (Increase of over 300% since 2015 due to an increase in outreach activities, visits at schools, regular information drop in sessions and use of the Max Card incentive for new members, enabled by an increase in admin hours)

Methods of gathering the views of members:

- Regular surveys (survey monkey) on individual services (e.g. Wheelchair service, Bladder & Bowel Service, EHCP process, SEN support in mainstream schools)
- Focus group meetings open to all held with Ealing officers or health professionals
- Our Issue Log where every concern or issue mentioned to us is logged with regular updates being given to ESCAN / LA services
- Face to face conversations at parent coffee mornings
- Email contact with parent members
- Close work with our Partner Organisations (EalingHELP, ISAID, Mencap, CONTACT. P.E.S.T.S. (Early Years SEN support) and ECIL)

Challenges:

- funding limited and insecure from year to year
- no office space
- parent volunteers limited in their capacity to commit to regular work / representation
- very different views amongst members with regards to how best to challenge / communicate with the LA / ESCAN services. Parents' views range from those who are satisfied with the LA and grateful for the support for their child and want us to pass this on, to parents who demand a more confrontational style, frequent use of FoI requests etc. Amongst the Steering Group there is general agreement for a pragmatic, professional and positive approach, however, there are frequent challenges from one or two parent members.
- Participation / cooperation very patchy from LA. Frequently requests for parental input comes last minute at the end of a process. Promises for more practical and systematic co-production are made and then not always followed up.

Successes:

- Strong relationship with our partner organisations
- Termly meetings with service leads from ESCAN and other services have improved communication
- Increased communication in particular with individual ESCAN services (e.g. Speech & Language, OT, the SENASS team) enabling more parents to regularly contribute to service improvement

- Establishment of an interim Bladder & Bowel service when we highlighted the service had disappeared and regularly met with the CCG over a period of 1 year to find a solution. However, communication since then has seized again.
- BMF (Building My Future) project co-produced with parent representation and funding for this as part of the project
- Parent representation on relevant boards within the SEND management structure
- Development of a Participation Strategy

Parents' Priorities for the Ofsted inspection:

These were taken from existing evidence (Issue Log, Surveys and minutes of meetings) and discussions within the group of parents representing during the Ofsted trial in November 2018 (Steering Group and others).

- 1) Severe problems within the EHCP process (problems with timeliness, communication, lack of information, too many administrative faults, frequent lack of input from Health / Social Care)
- 2) Communication across all services (lack of clear, helpful information on Local Offer website, many problems over the past 4 years with the website have resulted in parents not using it, introduction of new telephone system which has made communication worse, lack of communication with parents, lack of transparency of services e.g. threshold for eligibility for short breaks)
- 3) SEN support in mainstream schools (some very good practice but too variable and many examples of very poor practice in schools – evidence see survey and case studies)
- 4) CAMHS services – lack of funding / waiting times / urgency of need
- 5) Lack of 0 – 25 services: most services have not changed to adapt to the C&F Act 2014 with the new age range from 0-25. Transition between services often leads to problems at the age of 16 or 18 in particular. At the other end early identification depends to a large degree on the child attending a Children Centre, many families are falling through the net in the absence of a key-working or portage services and are only picked up when the children start school.

Evidence:

Issue Log summary of last year
 Surveys
 Case Studies