Richmond SEND Parent Panel

Grimwood Road Training Centre , Twickenham
Date: Tuesday 12th March, 6pm – 7.30pm

Present: **Parents: Ana Daruwalla, Ann- Valancha O Brown, Claire Hambleton, Dave Leeman, Ekaterina Harrison, Jacqui Hindley, Joanne Chidwick, Joy Beauchamp, Katy Stannett, Kristina Dale, Oksana Clancy, Rob Robinson, Romany Wood – Robinson, Sam Linsley.**

Others: Ashley Whittaker, SEND Programme Director, Charis Penfold, Director for Education Service, Doreen Redwood, Children's Senior Health Commissioning Manager, James Thomas, Director of Children's Services, Joel Hartfield, Associate Director, Business Development & Communications, Karen Lowry, AfCinfo/SEND Local Offer Website Manager, Cllr Penny Frost, Cllr Jo Humphreys.

Apologies: Aminta Townshend (parent), Angie Millard (parent), Churchill Hagan (parent),Ellen Purton (parent), Maria Chisholm (parent), Michelle Porter (parent), Navjote Chan (parent), Peter Bailey (parent), Sophie O'Hara (parent), Stephanie Evans (parent)

Heading	Main points
Introductions and welcome	James Thomas (JT) welcomed the group and thanked parents for giving up their time to attend. JT recognised the value of listening to parents and children and young people. Achieving for Children (AfC) acknowledged that there had been past mistakes with the approach to parent participation and that they needed to learn from those. AfC committed listening to the voices of parents and to supporting the work of the panel. Wanted to work in open and transparent way and won't promise to do what they can't do. This initial meeting would be chaired by AfC but the intention was that parents own the panel and facilitate with AfC support (Karen Lowry).

	Parents should decide how much representation they want at panel from AfC and partners in future.
Context	The previous Parent Carer Forum (PCF) had closed. Arrangements being led by Contact (previously Contact a Family) to set up new PCF. Likely to be separate PCF for Richmond and Kingston. Process not likely to be resolved soon. Although AfC and partners have other ongoing ways of engaging with families and young people, it was desired to have a way of working more closely with representative group of parents pending the set-up of a new PCF.
How this might work	JT described his view of the difference between a parent panel and a parent carer forum and how the two might proceed in future. A PCF receives funding from (central government). Being part of a PCF would require a bigger commitment. Members might work in more detail and in partnership on projects with AfC and partners. A PP might be a bigger and more representative group. The panel would be keen to have voices heard but require less commitment. It might not be clear for a while whether the two should merge or continue alongside with distinct roles. A solution might be to let both run for a while and then for parents to consider a future arrangement.
What parents want from a panel	To use experience to make a difference for other parents now or in future; To see services (health and social care for example) work better together; To explore how there can be more consistency across services;

	To identify gaps in services – 18 + and transition; To explore how parents knowledge can help mainstream schools can be more inclusive for all pupils; To give representation and a voice to those who would not be able or find it daunting to engage more formally; To learn more and how to navigate the services on offer. For it to be accepted that although some of us in the room were paid and some unpaid, we were all professionals.
Summary	There was lots of commonality in the room and themes arising. All had unique challenges but strong desire to make voices heard and to share experiences and make a difference. But there was an anxiety that the PP must be "worth it." Parents were keen to understand what the interaction and influence of the group would be. JT outlined that the PP would be part of the refresh of our approach on how we address participation. With the group agreeing priority issues, AfC and partners would commit to working consistently with parents to effect change. Parents were invited to send two representatives to the SEND Partnership Board on Thursday 21st 11am – 1pm at Twickenham Training Centre. Dave Leeman and Romany Wood Robinson volunteered to attend the first meeting and it was agreed that the PP would decide who should represent at future meetings. Parents were asked to consider future format and make up of group - i.e. whether group should be closed or allow new members. There were benefits and counter benefits to both approaches. Also frequency of group and times of meetings. Six weeks was agreed as the initial frequency, and a choice of times would be made available.

	AfC would consider alternatives means for parents to take part in settings such as an online forum or other technology.
Next Meeting	To be arranged for 6 weeks time. AfC to circulate details and options.