



Minutes / Cofnodion
Cross Party Autism Group / Grŵp Trawsbleidiol Awtistiaeth
Tachwedd 18 November 2015
Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru / National Assembly for Wales

1 WELCOME / CROESO

CPAG Chair Mark Isherwood AM, welcomed everyone to the final meeting of 2015. The meeting was also attended by William Powell AM and a representative from the office of Simon Thomas AM.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING / COFNODION A MATERION YN CODI

There were no matters arising and the minutes were agreed to be an accurate account of the previous meeting.

3 RESEARCH INTO THE EXPERIENCES OF PARENTS OF BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC PUPILS WITH AUTISM

Dr Sheladevi Nair shared her research paper with the Group. The paper examined the experiences and perceptions of parents of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) pupils with autism and the support they and their children received in mainstream and special schools in an urban city area within a Local Authority in south Wales. The paper also explored the perceptions of stakeholders in education and relevant support organisations who provide support for these pupils and their parents.

Dr Nair's research concluded that:

- The local community must recognise that BME parents of children with autism cannot depend on their own BME communities for support, and disability within BME community is often considered a stigma
- The BME community regard themselves as diverse and not homogenous, with parents referring to themselves as being Chinese, Pakistani or African and not BME as a whole
- There is the perceived need for culturally appropriate educational services. Service provision in education are generally similar for all pupils without differentiating for the different cultural needs of BME pupils
- There is a sense of apportioning blame and shifting responsibility between parents and stakeholders

4 EDUCATION AND CARE

Colin Howarth from Orbis Group outlined the different provision that they offer children young people and adults with autism. They offer safe and supportive environments in which to learn, gain life and work skills, build confidence and self-esteem, and help individuals to have as good and as independent a life as possible.

Colin also outlined Orbis' new services at Port Talbot and explained the concept of 'The Orb' – a new day service in Porth, which offers a range of learning environments and activities that can be provided in conjunction with schooling or as an alternative to a formal college placement on leaving school.

5 SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Lisa Rapado from the NAS Cymru Ystradgynlais Branch highlighted a number of issues with school transport and discrepancies in provision across Local Authorities in Wales.

ACTION: CPAG to write to the Minister for Transport seeking clarification on the School Transport Guidelines

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Date and location of the next CPAG meeting: 24 February 2015 at the National Assembly for Wales from 12:15pm-13:15pm.