

CYPSP Request for Communication Template

What is the title of the event?

Regional BME Parents Reference Group Meeting

Where will the event take place?

Parenting NI, Andras House, 60 Great Victoria St., Belfast

When is the event?

It took place on Saturday 22 June 2013.

Who will be attending the event?

Members of the BME Parents Reference Group.

The meeting was facilitated by Parent Participation Workers Maria Herron, Sandra Couser and administrator Pauline Martin from Parenting NI.

Three interpreters attended the meeting and helped with translation and facilitation to ensure all parents had opportunity to contribute their views.

Eileen Chan-Hu, attended on behalf of the CYPSP BME Sub-Group

Key messages

This event marked the third meeting of the BME Parents Reference Group. There are now 64 parents involved in this group representing a diverse range of communities living in Northern Ireland including Chinese, Ghanaian, Irish Travellers, Indian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Pakistani, Polish, Portuguese, Quechuas, Romanian, Russian, Sudanese and Vietnamese. This group of parents also includes a number of asylum seekers.

The purpose of the event

There were two main aspects of this meeting:

BME Parents had the opportunity to meet Eileen Chan-Hu, a representative of the CYPSP BME Sub-Group. This session gave parents a chance to ask Eileen questions about CYPSP framework and to understand how the views of parents can influence the planning process. This lively Q&A session also provided a tangible link between the Parents Reference Group and the BME Sub-Group. Eileen expressed appreciation for the input of parents into the CYPSP process on behalf of the BME Sub-Group.

The second key aspect of the meeting was a consultation session which provided an opportunity for parents to verify whether or not @ 100 key statements previously made by the BME Parents Group have been included in the Proposed BME Action Plan.

Outcomes from the event

A number of outcomes were achieved from this meeting:

Parents identified their motivations for joining the Group – this list of motivations will be shared with the BME Sub-Group and may be useful in shaping the future direction of the BME Parents Reference Group. One parent said she joined the group “to have an opportunity to have a say and hopefully, to be heard” while another parent was motivated to join the group in order “to voice the problems ethnic minority families may face living in this country”.

Parents worked together to identify key questions about the CYPSP process, and raised a number of these queries with Eileen Chan-Hu, including “Where do our suggestions go? Can we have some feedback?” and “What can be done to help BME parents understand the educational process in Northern Ireland”. Eileen clarified many issues and offered to bring general queries back to the BME Sub-Group as these reflected issues which could be relevant to many BME families living in Northern Ireland. Eileen also offered to provide specific signposting information which parents appreciated. The complete list of questions will be forwarded to the BME Sub-Group as the basis of further two way communication with the Parents Reference Group.

Parents identified whether or not key statements, previously made by the Parents Reference Group, have been incorporated into the BME Action Plan. This verification demonstrates to parents that their opinions and comments have been reflected in the Action Plan and provides authentication and credibility about the process. Issues raised by parents that have not been included in the Action Plan will be presented to the BME Sub Group for further consideration.

Additional information

For more information about the event or to join the BME Parents Reference Group please contact Parenting NI Participation Worker, Maria Herron on mariah@parentingni.org or ring 02890 310 891