

Email Update 10th December 2015

To all Supporters of Parents' Voice

We hope some of this email will be of interest to you. You are welcome to share it (or parts of it) with your friends or groups, but please mention that it came from [Parents' Voice](#) if you do, thanks.

- 1) Parents' Voice news
- 2) Local Surveys and Consultations
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- 4) Festive Information
- 5) Special Educational Needs news
- 6) Health News
- 7) Talking Walk-In Drop-In Sessions and Speech, Language and Communication news.
- 8) Reports and Information roundup

1) Parents' Voice news

i) Great news - we are holding another Coffee and Chat session! If you're able to, why not join us next Wednesday morning (16th December) at the [Pump House Environment Centre cafe](#) in Waterworks Road, Worcester, WR1 3EZ between 10.30am and 12.30pm? Get yourself a coffee (or tea, organic cola or any other drink - if you want one) and join Sue, Michele and other parents for a chat. You're welcome to bring children (there is a lovely indoors play area), but they remain your responsibility at all times. A map and directions to the Pump House can be found on the Duckworth Worcestershire Trust site <http://www.dwt.org.uk/contact-us/how-to-find-us> and there's a free car park opposite (as shown on the map). The nearest bus stop is Barbourne Brook/the Swan inn and several services stop there (eg: 144, 303, 31A/C, 32).

All our supporters are very welcome to join us for this informal get-together, as are any other parents (or grandparents); if you'd like to bring a friend, please do (the more the merrier). We look forward to seeing some of you there for our final Coffee and Chat of 2015. (This email was meant to go out on Tuesday so we apologise for the shorter-than-intended notice about this Coffee and Chat.)

ii) Our next evening meeting is scheduled for 14th January. The committee will be meeting to plan events for 2016 (and review some of what we did in 2015) and anyone else can come along too. We will send out further details closer to the time.

iii) We are now collecting used postage stamps to raise some funds for our 2016 activities. If you are able to save the stamps from any letters or cards you receive we'd love to have them (you could bring them to a Coffee and Chat meeting). All stamps are suitable, including ordinary second and first class stamps, British and foreign. Just cut round the paper leaving no more than 1cm of paper round each edge of the stamp (but if you want to leave that for us to do then that's fine).

iv) The [Links page](#) of our website was updated at the end of November; do take a look (and if you find some of the links useful, please tell us).

Remember, Parents' Voice is run by Worcestershire parents, for Worcestershire parents. It's completely free to join us (you just need an email address) and our supporters have children of all ages (from babies to young adults) because parents never stop being parents! We are nothing without our supporters and we appreciate you all.

2) Local Surveys and Consultations

i) Worcestershire Children's Centres

Worcestershire County Council is going to commission a new service to support families with children/young people aged 0-19 years. This means that from October 2016 services will be different for some families.

Each Children's Centre currently offers a range of services depending on the needs of the local community. The council is asking for [views on the use of Children's Centres](#) buildings around the county.

Children's Centres are historically seen as providing services for families with children aged 0 - 5 (the age they were aimed at initially); however, this consultation is open to *everyone* and it will help determine what the buildings are used for in the future and what ages any activities are aimed at.

You can find further details with the consultation here: bit.ly/1N1m1nX

The [consultation](#) closes on 29th January 2016.

A reminder about some other local surveys which we've mentioned previously:

ii) Education consultations and reviews

Worcestershire County Council has some current consultations about schools and nursery provision.

These are about

- potential expansion of three schools which would take effect from September 2017 (Red Hill CE Primary, Rushwick, CE Primary and Wychbold First School. **The closing date for this consultation is 11th December.**

- Remodelling existing State funded Early Years Specialist provision (affecting Fort Royal, Vale of Evesham, Wyre Forest Nursery, Chads Grove and Batchley First schools).

You can find consultations and details of all Worcestershire County Council reviews here: bit.ly/1jqA8LP

iii) Under 5's Parent/Carer Survey

Healthwatch Worcestershire is an independent organisation that gives a voice to people who use health and social care services. They want to hear from parents/carers of children who are under 5 years old (NB: this survey is for those with a child under 5, although at the start of the survey you are asked if you have a child under 18 months).

You can find the survey here: svy.mk/1Px6AJI

3) National Surveys/Consultations

There are a number of current national surveys and consultations - if you think one of these would be relevant to someone you know, please pass on the details. You can also find details of some consultations/surveys Special Educational Needs news.

i) [Survey Content of the Survey of the Mental Health of Children and Young People \(MHCYP\) 2016](#)

NatCen Social Research and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) have been commissioned by the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) to carry out the Survey of the Mental Health of Children and Young People (MHCYP) 2016.

They would like views about the survey content for 2016 on:

- Which existing areas the survey should continue to cover;
- Whether there are new question areas that should be included;
- Where new question areas are suggested, which areas these should replace in the survey.

You can read about this [consultation](#) and find a link to give your views here: bit.ly/1HtrOWD

This [consultation](#) closes on 5th January 2016.

i) [Wraparound and Holiday Childcare](#)

The Department for Education is seeking views on draft departmental advice about how schools should respond to requests regarding wraparound and holiday childcare.

‘Wraparound childcare’ is childcare that schools provide outside of normal school hours, such as breakfast clubs or after school.

Parents' (or carers') views are wanted.

This [consultation](#) closes on 29th February 2016.

A reminder of some national surveys we have already told you about:

ii) [GCSE and A-Level Reform: Geology, Politics and Physical Education](#)

This [consultation](#) **closes at 5pm on 15th December**. It concerns revised content for GCSE Physical Education and A-level Geology and Politics. It will affect the subject content from September 2017. Parents' views are wanted, as are those of young people.

You do not have to respond to questions about all the subjects to take part (so if there's one particular subject you do have views about, do take part).

You can find the documents (including a downloadable response form) about this consultation and a link to respond online here: bit.ly/1WYukLl

iii) [Implementing the English Baccalaureate](#)

The Department for Education is seeking views about the government's proposals on how to get at least 90% of pupils to take GCSEs in the EBacc subjects. This consultation closes at 5pm on 29th January 2016.

Parents' views are wanted, as are those of pupils.

You can find the documents (including a downloadable response form) about this [consultation](#) and a link to respond online here: bit.ly/1S3Gps2.

iv) [Teen Issues - a parent's perspective](#)

Family Lives would like to know what understanding parents have of the issues young people are facing with regards to relationships, sex and the digital age. They have a [short survey for parents](#) to complete.

You can find the survey here: svy.mk/1L8NF3w

v) [Ofsted Parents' Panel](#)

Ofsted are setting up a Parents' Panel. You can find out more about this and take part in their survey here: svy.mk/1Mxo8nj

4) Festive Information

i) Family Lives have some [advice for coping with festive holidays](#) if you are divorced or separated. You can find their tips here: bit.ly/1NAXtGg

ii) West Mercia Police are urging parents to talk to youngsters about online safety. If you're giving a digital gift you may like their [downloadable card](#) with tips for staying safe online. This can be printed and included with the gift. You can find information and a [link to the downloadable card](#) here: bit.ly/1MUKLhH.

iii) Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service have some [tips for keeping your family safe](#) during the festive season. They say that " fairy lights, candles and decorations mean it is a time to take extra care to keep our loved ones safe from fire". You can find their advice here: bit.ly/1M55wFG (to make sure that fire doesn't ruin your family's festive cheer).

5) Special Educational Needs news

i) [POET](#)

Worcestershire County Council is one of 70 local authorities taking part in a project, part funded by the Department for Education, looking at a Project Outcomes Evaluation Tool (POET). Parents whose child/young person has an Education, Health and Care Plan are wanted to take part in their anonymous [survey](#). The survey is about you, your child and the help they get (but it is anonymous).

The [survey](#) should close at the end of December.

ii) [Local area SEND consultation](#)

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission are holding a [consultation](#) about the inspection of local areas' effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who are disabled and have special educational needs. The views of parents or carers of a disabled child or young person (or one who has special educational needs) are wanted (and you can describe yourself as this when responding to their survey). The views of children and young people with disabilities or special educational needs are also wanted (and there is a separate young person's survey).

According to information on the consultation site "We particularly want to hear from disabled young people and those who have special educational needs **and their parents and carers.**"

You can find all relevant documents, the survey and a link to the young person's survey here: bit.ly/1Ok0iaT

The [consultation](#) closes at 11.30pm on 4th January 2016.

6) Health News

i) South Worcestershire GP Services have launched a new [website](#) "helping you find medical advice and support across South Worcestershire." The site has sections for various symptoms (eg: sore throat, cuts, diarrhoea) to help you decide how best to manage them. You can find the site at: bit.ly/1XFYK5w

ii) According to a recent poll many parents never talk to their children about mental health. 20% of the parents who took part said they did not know how to address the issue. You can find a [BBC News article](#) about this here: bbc.in/1PVuQWc.

The [Time to Change](#) campaign has [tips to help parents](#) to talk with their children about mental health. You can find them here: bit.ly/1Hd1D2i.

You can also read about the national [Children and young people's mental health and well-being taskforce](#) here: bit.ly/1SrtcJS.

7) Talking Walk-In Drop-In Sessions and Speech, Language and Communication news.

We Need to Talk Month ended yesterday, but Worcestershire's Speech and Language Therapy service will continue their campaign to [Get Worcestershire Talking](#).

There is also a parents' section on the [Worcestershire Speech, Language and Communication Needs Pathway website](#).

The following dates have been published by Worcestershire Speech and Language Therapy for their Talking Walk-In Drop-In Sessions. Parents of pre-school children can go along for general advice and if appropriate refer their child.

Please note that these dates have been publicised as taking place; we are not responsible if any are cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances (we will try to let you know if we learn of any changes).

Fri 11th December, 2.15 - 2.45 pm - REDDITCH
Woodlands Children's Centre, Woodrow First School, Longdon Close, B98 7UZ

Fri 11th December, 11.00 - 11.30 am - PERSHORE
Blossom Vale Children's Centre, Abbey Park First School, Abbey Road, WR10 1DF

Fri 11th December, 11.00 - 11.30 am - DROITWICH
WANDS Children's Centre, Westlands First, Farmers Way, WR9 9EQ

Mon 14th December, 10.30 - 11.00 am - KIDDERMINSTER
Chestnut Children's Centre, Franche School, Chestnut Grove, DY11 5QB

Mon 14th December, 2.15 - 2.45 pm - REDDITCH
Cherry Trees Children's Centre, Batchley First School, Cherry Tree Walk, B97 6PD

Mon 14th December, 2.45 - 3.30 pm - EVESHAM
Spring & Orchard Vale Children's Centre, next to Evesham Nursery, Four Pools Lane, WR11 1BN

8) Reports and Information roundup

Finally, a few items in brief:

- i) Parents of children aged 5 - 12 years can find [tips for keeping them safe online](#) here: bit.ly/1POV3pA
- ii) [Grandparents Plus](#) now incorporates the Grandparents' Association.
- iii) The [Child Accident Prevention Trust](#) has issued some [information about some dangers of common cleaning products](#) such as liquitabs. This follows "two very serious incidents and a study showing that children are more attracted to them than toys". You can find the information here: bit.ly/11xmRT4.
- iv) [Warm Home Discount](#)

For winter 2015 to 2016, some people can get £140 off their electricity bill through the [Warm Home Discount Scheme](#). The money isn't paid to you - it's a one-off discount on your electricity bill, usually between September and March.

Check if you qualify here: bit.ly/1LvghYf

Thank you for reading this email and for your continued support, we really do appreciate it, especially at this busy time of year - Season's Greetings, whatever you may be celebrating!

Parents' Voice - Worcestershire

Email: info@parentsvoice.co.uk Web: www.parentsvoice.co.uk

Twitter: [@parentsvoicewor](https://twitter.com/parentsvoicewor)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ParentsVoice.co.uk>

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