**ASN Parent Support Group Case Study**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Establishment: | Cadder PS |
| Group Facilitator: | Elaine McDonald |
| Case Study Date: | 23.4.25 |
| No of Parents/Carers: | 4 |

|  |
| --- |
| Group Background (Reason for group/access to group/how long group has been established) |
| Cadder Primary is a mainstream school located in the North West of the city. Specifically, after the pandemic, the school became aware of a need to support the families who were recently received or were awaiting a diagnosis of an additional need. Parents felt isolated and were asking ‘What do we do?’ The school responded by liaising with the parents, offering a safe space for parents to meet to talk freely about their experiences and concerns.  The group has been established for approximately 3 years. The school advertises the group, displays a poster at the school reception, emails the parents periodically, sends reminders of group dates and chats to parents that would possibly benefit from attending the group. Initially the group met one a month but decided to meet every two weeks. The group is facilitated by the school but occasionally the participants meet on their own. The group meets in the school library. |

|  |
| --- |
| Parent/Carers (who attends and why) |
| Five parents consistently attend the group with others dropping in when they don’t have other commitments i.e. work. The parents attend because it is a space to meet different people, get to know one another and help one another. The parents share different ideas about dealing with their children because ‘We are living it’. |

|  |
| --- |
| Format of a Typical Session |
| The session takes place from 9.00-10.30am to allow parents to attend straight after dropping off their children. The group starts with refreshments and a chat and a laugh. The participants are encouraged to talk freely about their experiences of family life from one meeting to the next and share how they may have dealt with and reacted to positive and negative experiences. The facilitator researches information via websites, bringing it back and relaying it to the group in a more relatable format, i.e. useful links, QR codes, videos, information on benefits. This gives the group an opportunity to discuss what information is out there and do their own research if there is a further interest or time allows. Outside agencies are invited into the group and are asked to chat and explain things in a down to earth way. Visitors have included the Central Parenting Team, Speech and Language Therapists, benefits agencies and Quarriers. The group has received information on ‘A Beginners Guide to Autism’. The facilitator is looking to invite the Financial Inclusion Team to a future session. The parents decide who visits the group. |

|  |
| --- |
| Impacts on Parent/Carers (how have parents/carers benefitted from attending the group) |
| ‘I like being in the group. I wouldn’t have spoken out at the school gates. To be honest, I wouldn’t look at information on my own. That’s why I like coming to the group. Websites are overwhelming. I’ve got 3 children. I don’t have time to read anything out with the group. It’s a minefield finding stuff and Ms McDonald brings us stuff. I’ve just watched a Tik Tok video and it was like watching myself. I have turned a corner. There is a lot of support for the kids but not a lot to help parents so we can suffer mentally. There is a lot of stress on the parents. This group gives safety and relaxation. I’m always learning from other parents, but we need more parent support. (S)  ‘Ms McDonald helped us. The school helped me the most. If I wasn’t coming here, I wouldn’t know anything. Health visitors say things like ‘Age and Stage’. It’s just nice to talk and have adult time. Sometimes its easier to speak to people you don’t know. I wish I had had the support and information when I had my oldest son. I had to learn and do it alone. I’m glad I went through that to help my other child. It’s a shared struggle. It’s not just me. I see and hear experiences and see people that are struggling. I had a lonely time with my son and then I got support from Action for Children and access to CAMHS. However, I experienced negative language around ASN when dealing with certain agencies. Schools have things in place to help but not all schools have this. We are dead lucky to find this school. Parents have to learn how to deal with things themselves, but school support helps. I wish there were more ASN clubs out there for our children, like ‘Possobilities’. (C)  ‘The best thing is to come and chat and start your day after dealing with stressful children. We meet new people and get information on how to navigate the system. Ms McDonald prints out things that bullet points information. We get information on tactics to deal with our children. We learn how to be calm, like doing the starfish breathing activity. We hear what’s on in the community from each other. Like I told you (refers to another parent) about what was on. You moved here and had no friends or family here and I’m really chuffed that I could help you. This school has been so supportive. Some of us have experienced a lack of support in the past when dealing with other schools and have been told just to get on with it. (L)  ‘We hear about groups are on outside the school. It was a life saver coming to this group and getting to chat outside the school. I really appreciated (L) telling me about what was on in the community. My children got access to activities that they didn’t get elsewhere.’ (S)  **In summary**  ‘We’d be lost without this group’. (Parent)  ‘Parents sharing their information is like gold’ (Facilitator)  The parents chatted about individual child’s/children’s issues and difficulties. There was also lots of positive chat around how their children are making progress in many different ways. Parents shared their experiences on using different strategies when their child needed support and referred to activities that were used in the school i.e. visuals or colour coded cards ‘Red Card, Yellow Card’ to manage feelings and a parent gave an example of when this worked for their child at home. The school liaises with the families on what activities work at home.  The facilitator discussed offering a ‘Mum’s group’, but the participants intimated that they would only attend the ASN group for now. |

|  |
| --- |
| Any Information/Advice that could be Shared with Other Parents/Carers who Require Support |
| ‘Try things with your children that the school does and discuss the difference that this makes to your children with the group’.  ‘Not really any advice for parents but we need advice and resources for schools because they have the knowledge to spot an additional need i.e. behaviours. Waiting on diagnosis is too long. We need the relationships with the school, and we need early intervention to get help and the school needs to understand more about all the different needs. There should be more funding for schools. In an ideal world there would be specialists in the schools and all working together. We need a diagnosis before individual support is put in place i.e. 1:1 support. We all struggle with a lack of support – both the parents and the teachers’.  ‘My advice to parents is that we need to go into their world (the child’s), not them into ours’. |

|  |
| --- |
| What’s Next for Parents/Carers/Group (staffing, planning time/delivery time/budget) |
| The parents intimated that they want to keep the group going as it is. The school will continue to liaise with the parents and arrange to invite different partner agencies to visit and provide information to the group. The group was asked if they would share their information publicly i.e. speak to other groups about their experiences and a few stated they would be hesitant to do this but it’s food for thought.  The parents intimated that they prefer face to face contact when receiving support rather than online support.  The school would like to invite a speaker into the group who could share information on what happens when children grow up, moving from a teenager into adulthood and what their journey may look like i.e. going to college/university.  The school will continue to share any community information received with the parents. |

|  |
| --- |
| Information on Agencies/Partners who have Supported Parents/Carers/Group |
| Central Parenting Team: [centralparentingteam@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:centralparentingteam@ggc.scot.nhs.uk)  Quarriers <https://www.quarriers.org.uk/>  Action for Children <https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/>  Glasgow Life Family Finance Team - Mobile: 07443 814 190 / 07443 814 677 Email: [financialcapability@glasgowlife.org.uk](mailto:financialcapability@glasgowlife.org.uk) |

|  |
| --- |
| Resources Required to Support the Group |
| Refreshments  Accommodation  Staff time  Printing (resources given to parents/advertising) |

|  |
| --- |
| Additional Information |
| N/A. |