



# Countdown to the SEN reforms

## Event evaluation

### Introduction

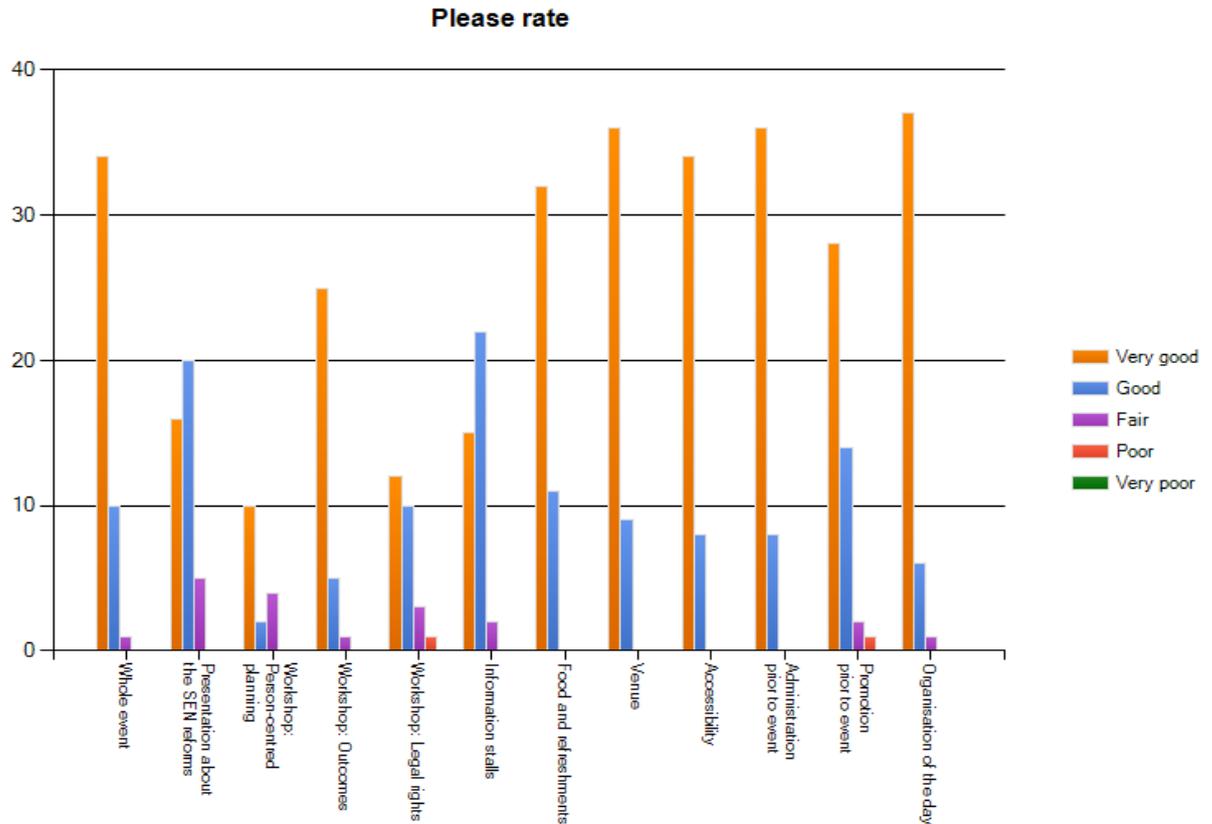
The event was held on 14 March 2014 at St Mary's Church and Community Centre, Bramall Lane, Sheffield. It was attended by around 120 parents, 15 professionals, and 25 stallholders.

The aim of the event was to give parents an overview of the SEN reforms and to help them understand the legal implications of the Children and Families Act, the principles of person-centred planning, and the new focus on outcomes.

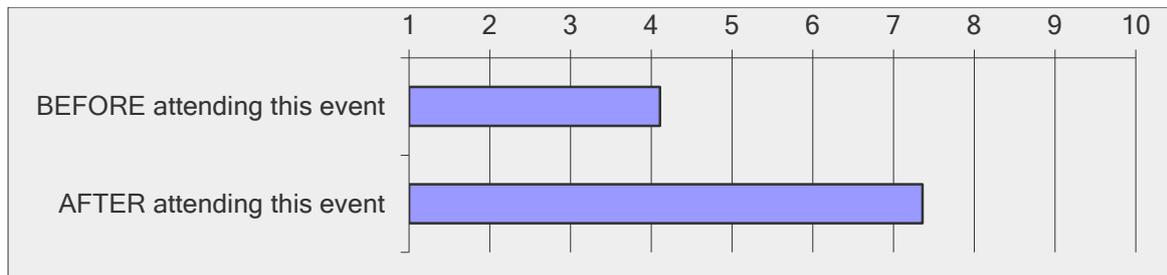
The event included presentations by representatives from Sheffield City Council and the Department for Education, a question and answer session, and workshops on person-centred planning, outcomes, and legal rights in the new system. Participants had the opportunity to visit information stalls provided by 14 national and local support organisations. A legal advice surgery run by Irwin Mitchell Solicitors was used by six parent carers.

This report summarises the feedback from 47 evaluation forms completed on the day.

### 1. We asked participants to rate different aspects of the event:



**2. We asked participants to indicate their knowledge of the SEN reforms on a scale from 1 (nothing) to 10 (a lot):**



**3. What did you like most about the event?**

- Information generally – stalls, presentations and workshops **x12**
- Outcomes workshop **x7** (several participants said it was “inspiring”)
- Well organised **x5**
- Being able to ask questions and talk to people directly **x4**
- Person-centred planning workshop **x4**
- Meeting other parents **x3**
- Positive tone/atmosphere **x2**
- Conference pack (itinerary, copies of slides) **x2**
- Clarity / honesty **x2**

“Exceptionally well organised, good, knowledgeable speakers, thought provoking workshops / presentations”

“Very well organised, good mixture of speakers. Good mix of people in attendance.”

“Gave me an understanding about the SEN reforms, and put the issues on the radar.”

**4. What did you like least about the event?**

- Not enough time: workshops too rushed, not enough time for questions **x6**
- Some of the presentations and workshops were not sufficiently tailored to the audience; parents criticised the use of jargon, talking too much about the past and not enough about the present/future, lack of focus on what the reforms mean to children/families in practical terms, assuming a level of knowledge that some parents did not have **x6**
- Lack of specificity; participants said that they would have liked some specific examples, e.g. an example of an EHC plan, and more information for parents of children on School Action Plus **x4**
- There were several comments about the venue: how to go from one place to the next, uncomfortable chairs in workshops, difficult to hear and see speakers in the Nave

**Other comments included:**

- Lack of representation from Health and Commissioning
- Not knowing anyone
- Being inside in such good weather
- Would have been nice to have a plenary/conclusion to the event and maybe more questions/answers
- No deserts after lunch
- "Politicking" from some of the speakers. No straightforward answer to straightforward questions.

**5. Do you have any additional comments or unanswered questions?**

Questions asked in this section have been included in a Q&A document. Additional comments included:

- Solution offered to problems was the "local offer"
- The person-centred planning workshop had excellent content but was rather rushed
- Would have liked to have attended all three sessions... All of it is important. More informative conferences like this would be brilliant... These events are my only source of information.
- Useful - realise it was aimed mainly at parents, but would also be useful for settings/schools etc. (initially thought it was for parents only)

**6. How did you find out about this event?**

