

# Parent Forum Jersey

News release  
4th October 2016



## Parents invited to join new group on special educational needs

A new group is being created to give parents a voice if they have children with special educational needs and to help improve the services across health, education and social care that their children use. Parent Forum Jersey is a new independent group and it's looking for mums and dads who might want to take part.

Parent Forum Jersey be run by a committee of parents with an independent chair and up to 12 members. The new group is backed by the Education, Health and Social Services and Social Security Departments and will work with them to feed back other parents' views about the special needs services on offer to the Island's children.

The volunteer parents on the committee will represent other families and put their views forward. These members will receive informal training and help if necessary and will attend meetings along with representatives of the organisations that help children with special educational needs.

Parent Lesley Bratch said: 'Since January 2013 I've been on a group called SNAP, the Special Needs Advisory Panel, which has been encouraging partnership working between the providers of services and the individuals and families who use those services. Over this time, it has become clear that services are better able to meet peoples' needs when everyone works together. The Parent Forum has been born from this concept.

'I would like to encourage all parents and carers in the island to get involved in this new initiative. It will offer a fantastic opportunity for YOUR voice to be heard by working alongside the States of Jersey departments that provide essential services to families and their special needs children.'

The independent chairman of the new group is Warwick Long, HSBC's Head of Commercial Banking for the Channel Islands and Isle of Man. He said; 'I am delighted to be chairing the forum because I feel it is critical that parents have a voice and are heard. We are looking for people to sit on the forum who represent the broad needs of the community and have something to offer.'

Cliff Chipperfield, Director of Inclusion and Family Support at the Education Department, said: ‘We have completely redesigned our services over the past two years and during that change we asked parents for their views of what we do. Their feedback was incredibly valuable and we want it to be part and parcel of everything we do in future. Nobody knows better than the mums and dads what issues their children are facing.’

Dr Lisa Perkins, Head of the Child Development Centre at the Health and Social Services Department also welcomed the new group. She said: ‘We have also been working in partnership with parents in the redesign and development of a wide range of services across Health and Social Services. The Parent Forum will provide an opportunity for integrated working with parents across States Departments. This is really important as families often tell us that they are bounced around different services when they seek support.’

One of the first projects for the forum is the launch of an online survey of parents and carers to help improve communication and encourage volunteers to join. This can be found at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/jerseyparentforum](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/jerseyparentforum)

### **To find out more:**

Please contact Sarah-Jane Walker, Senior Parent Partnership Officer at The Bridge, on 449152 email [s.walker@gov.je](mailto:s.walker@gov.je)

Come and find out more at our Parent Information Events.

- 12th October – 9.30am to 11am Mont à l’Abbé School
- 12th October – 6pm to 7.30pm at The Bridge
- 13th October – 6.30pm to 8pm at the Bridge

Email us at [pfpgroup@gov.je](mailto:pfpgroup@gov.je)

Take a look at the Jersey Online Directory: [www.jod.je](http://www.jod.je)

Please publicise our online survey at:

[www.surveymonkey.com/r/jerseyparentforum](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/jerseyparentforum)