



## Delamere: Let's Get Started November 2023 – May 2024

### Review

Compiled by Liz Johnson (FLO)

#### **Background**

The course is now a firm fixture in the Delamere calendar with continuing positive feedback, however it is important to continue to review it and adapt it based on feedback each year. Over the years the number of sessions has grown due to parental feedback as well as emerging issues / focuses within the school. This year there were 19 planned sessions.

#### **Recruitment**

The course is for the parent / carers of all the children new to the school, mainly nursery and reception. I first raised the course at the home visit before the child starts the school. In September as their child starts I rang each mum / carer to discuss it and gauge interest. I then sent out a flyer with the details about times and a programme of activities (appendix 1).

Due to the availability of myself and the room I ran it on Friday morning.

Each Wednesday the participants would receive a phone call reminder and each Thursday a reminder would go out on parent mail.

#### **Attendees**

Following from feedback from previous years, those parents whose child had an afternoon nursery place and so therefore struggled with child care were invited again as their child was now in full time reception.

29 children were originally identified and invited, in some cases both parents and/or grandparents attended.

5 parents said no due to work commitments. 1 of those came to sporadic sessions, 1 removed their child from the school.

18 sessions were held. The open session was cancelled.

The average attendance was 12 with the highest being 14 for play and interaction. The lowest was 3 for reading for pleasure. I would regularly receive apologies from regular attendees if they couldn't make it. Attendance for each session is shown in appendix 2.

1 parent attended 14 of the sessions. 2 attended 10 and 2 attended 9 (1 with an interpreter)

3 out of 6 of the families from last year's nursery attended.

9 families didn't attend any sessions. 1 is at CP and has regular meetings, 5 I have met with separately either at their home or in school.

### **Feedback**

The last session was partly used as a review of the group. Firstly, I asked the group 3 questions, I also emailed these questions to those who were regular attenders but couldn't make the last session, their comments are included below:

#### What did you get out of the group?

- Support and reassurance we are all in the same boat and we are all doing great, we are not alone
- New ideas and creativity
- Understanding of my child's world
- School is a safe place to offload concerns
- Motivation, strength, support / emotional support, new ideas, communication power
- Support from other parents going through the same journey, tips and advice
- Lots of information about SNED, different benefits e.g., lanyard
- Logistical, emotional, practical support
- Help with problem solving
- Lots of info re financial support I don't think I would have found anywhere else.
- Sense of community
- I have really enjoyed this group and found it so useful in many ways. You and all the guest speakers have adopted a non-judgemental approach, acknowledging the challenges facing parents/carers of a child with additional needs, offering support & advice but also allowing for people to talk freely in a safe environment. Every session I have taken something away, sometimes that has been more about listening to other parents/carers (including on occasions the guest speakers) lived experience.
- Knowing I'm not alone, hearing other parents' perspectives helps you to understand your own circumstances a little better, if that makes sense. Yes, J has his difficulties but there is an awful lot he can do, and can do independently, which other children unfortunately can't. It's also an opportunity to find out about support services that other families have used, any bits of advice others' might have with things like applying for a blue badge or for funding. Also hearing about equipment other children have found particularly useful, or exercises/classes. Venues which have accessible facilities and quieter sessions for SEN children is also handy as you can read all the reviews you want online, but it's completely different being able to speak to someone and hear their experiences and ask specific questions.
- Every session has been really informative and thorough which enables me and other parents to take care of our special children

#### What is your takeaway, the one thing you will remember from the group?

- To continue to listen and follow my child's needs regardless of how odd that. may look to other parenting styles

- Most important is a emotional support when we interact with parent who are dealing with the same situation like ours so we feel strength and motivation. And its so important to share your thoughts these sessions are really helpful for me to become a better person for my little one.
- All behaviour is a form of communication
- Lanyard, I feel less stressful while my child is wearing the lanyard when we go out. I don't need to explain to other people that my child needs extra help.
- Support is always available
- All of our children are magical!
- I think the biggest thing I have taken away is that I am not alone, that parents/carers of children with additional needs share similar emotional, psychological and practical struggles. I have learned that having a child with additional needs is tough but it is also so deeply rewarding, I think that I have become a better person as a result, more empathy and understanding. This group has helped with this. I think most of the sessions have made me cry but this was what I have needed!! There has been an emphasis on self care, which is important.
- You are your child's advocate, if you don't ask, you don't get! The worst thing that can be said is 'no' when applying for things or asking for help.

#### What would you change about the group?

- Some sessions could have 2 topics rather than a whole 1 like seating and reading for pleasure could have been 1 session
- Nothing, just sometimes I feel it should be available for those who have some language difficulties (those who come from countries with different languages) there should be a language interpreter option for them.
- There was a high number of sessions which made it difficult to attend every one due to other commitments, so reduce the number of sessions.
- It would be grateful if we have more people to come and share their experience about their older children so that we will have more ideas what to expect in the future with our children.
- Nothing.....perhaps more collaborative activities would help people who are more shy to share their experiences?
- I have no areas for development to add as I honestly enjoyed all the sessions I was able to attend. I am going to miss them
- The opportunity to meet regularly with other parents to share knowledge, and potentially to speak to staff (I understand this is likely not possible). Chatty Tuesday is good, and there is now a theme for each session, but something a bit more frequent, even weekly? Open to parents in all classes as a drop in. No idea how many could attend this regularly though so I can see why it's not done already.  
I wanted to suggest that for some of the sessions such as sensory processing with Moffat, it is either longer, or split over a couple of weeks to capture as many parents as possible because I found this fascinating. Moffat has a recorded training session on the Padlet he kept referring to and this was so helpful in understanding some of J's behaviour, so maybe highlighting this more too?

Sorry, one last thing. Maybe a lending library of all the brilliant books that are available? They can be pricey and it's tricky to know if a book will be useful without first looking, and they're not always available in shops. There are also some very expensive resources out there which have some great suggestions and guidance but are only really accessible by professionals because they are so expensive. It could involve asking parents for book donations, with a short summary of the particularly useful sections (we're all time-poor!) and how they might have implemented some of the activities or recommendations etc.

I then asked the group to rate their top 5 sessions. The full results can be seen in appendix 2 but sensory processing, communication and getting out and about scored the highest.

I also sent a questionnaire on parentmail to those who didn't attend any or only a few. 7 parents responded to this with 1 stating transport was the barrier, 1 childcare and 5 work commitments.

### **Success Indicators**

1. High attendance and a good rate of apologies where a parent couldn't attend.,
2. Home visits / meetings in school also took place for most of those who didn't attend to build relationships.
3. Positive feedback from the participants
4. Staff felt good relationships with the participants, Family Liaison Officer had contact outside of the group and either picked up on issues during the sessions and followed these up or has been contacted by participants for support during or since the group.

### **Recommendations**

1. Continue with the group but reduce the number of sessions, see appendix 2. The proposal is 11 sessions. Offer the sessions for 1 ½ hours to allow for 1 hour group and 30 mins chat with visiting professionals or for longer time where subjects are combined.
2. Continue to invite those families where their child was in PM nursery to come when their child is in reception.

Appendix 1 – Programme of activities

Appendix 2 – feedback and recommendations

## Appendix 1

### Delamere: Let's Get Started!

2023 2024

10-11am at Delamere School

- Run by Liz Johnson, Family Liaison Officer

	Date	Session title	Guest Speakers
1	Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	Introduction to the course All about My Family	Lorraine Howells (Chair of Governors)
2	<b>MONDAY</b> 13 <sup>th</sup> November	All about the EHC Process	Catherine Jones (Head of Early Years) Speech and Language Therapist Educational Psychologist
3	Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> November	Reflection and questions Session	
4	Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> December	Your Child's health	School Nurse
5	Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> December	Play and Interaction	Lauren McLeod, Delamere HLTA
No Session Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> December, 22 <sup>nd</sup> and 29 <sup>th</sup> December and 5 <sup>th</sup> January			
6	Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	Communication	Lauren McLeod, Delamere HLTA
7	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> January	Your child's behaviour, including sleep	Susie Tinsley – Learning Disability Nursing team
8	Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> January	Eating and drinking	Emily Goose, Speech and Language Therapist
9	Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February	Sensory Processing	Moffat Makomo, Sensory Occupational Therapist
No sessions 9 <sup>th</sup> and 16 <sup>th</sup> February			
10	Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February	Seating	Delamere Seating specialist
11	Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> March	We're talking money!	STEP- Stronger Together Empowering Parents
12	Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> March	Getting Out and About	Sarah Bradley, SEND Local Adviser
13	Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> March	E Safety	Charlotte Thomas, Delamere Teacher
No Sessions 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 29 <sup>th</sup> March and 5 <sup>th</sup> April			
14	Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> April	Reading for Pleasure	Amy Owen – Teacher
15	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> April	Dental Care / Hair dressing / Nail cutting	Specialist Dentist - TBC

16	Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> April	Ongoing support / Sibling support	Trafford Parents Forum Trafford Carers centre Young Carers
17	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May	Open Session – To Be decided by the group	
18	Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> May	Next Steps / The Future	Parent of older child
No Session Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> May			
19	Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> May	Review and Closing Party	Friends of Delamere

## Appendix 2

### Attendance, comments and review

Session title	Guest Speakers	Attendance	Scores from feedback session	Head teacher input	Next year?
Introduction to the course All about My Family	Lorraine Howells (Chair of Governors)	11	1	Y	Y
All about the EHC Process	Catherine Jones (Head of Early Years) Speech and Language Therapist Educational Psychologist	3 (N/A for many)		If majority of assessment	SEPARATE TO THIS GROUP
Reflection and questions Session		6	1	combine	Y COMBINED WITH HEALTH
Your Child's health	School Nurse	8		Y	
Play and Interaction	Lauren McLeod, Delamere HLTA	14	4	Y	Y
No Session Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> December, 22 <sup>nd</sup> and 29 <sup>th</sup> December and 5 <sup>th</sup> January					
Communication	Lauren McLeod, Delamere HLTA	13	5	Y	Y
Your child's behaviour, including sleep	Susie Tinsley – Learning Disability Nursing team	10	2	Y	Y
Eating and drinking	Emily Goose, Speech and Language Therapist	10	4	Y	Y
Sensory Processing	Moffat Makomo, Sensory Occupational Therapist	10	6	N	Y

No sessions 9 <sup>th</sup> and 16 <sup>th</sup> February					
Seating	Delamere Seating specialist	7	1	N	COMBINE WITH READING
We're talking money!	STEP- Stronger Together Empowering Parents	6	2	N	COMBINE WITH OUT AND ABOUT
Getting Out and About	Sarah Bradley, SEND Local Adviser	6	5	N	AS ABOVE
E Safety	Charlotte Thomas, Delamere Teacher	4		Combine	N
No Sessions 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 29 <sup>th</sup> March and 5 <sup>th</sup> April					
Reading for Pleasure	Amy Owen – Teacher	3	1	combine	COMBINE WITH SEATING
Dental Care / Hair dressing / Nail cutting	Specialist Dentist - TBC	7	1	N	N
Ongoing support / Sibling support	Trafford Parents Forum Trafford Carers centre Young Carers	8	2	N	COMBINE WITH REVIEW
Open Session – To Be decided by the group		Session cancelled		N	N
Next Steps / The Future	Parent of older child	6	3	N	Y
No Session Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> May					
Review and Closing Party	Friends of Delamere	7		Y	Y INCLUDING ONGOING SUPPORT