

## Blackberry Park Family Network Meeting Coffee Morning 16<sup>th</sup> October 2025

### Attendees:

- Mary Kennedy, Independent Facilitator.
- 12 parent/family attendees.
- Olive Barry, Children's Disability Network Manager (CDNM) Blackberry Park.
- Mairead Lyons, Administrator. , Blackberry Park (note taker).

### Update from CDNM:

- CDNM opened the meeting, welcomed everyone & completed introductions.
- CDNM outlined the following:
  - Aim of today's meeting
  - Role of Family Representative
  - Seeking feedback from families on what services improvements they would welcome

### Update from Family Rep:

- Cliona (Family Rep) explained her role & the areas that they are providing feedback on, to the Heads of Service in the HSE. The Family Reps are a voice for parents with the aim of improving services.
- Cliona shared that a new countrywide WhatsApp Group has been created amongst the forum reps nationally. Cliona also discussed how more volunteers are needed to become Family Reps.

### Feedback from Families attending today's meeting included:

- A Family member spoke regarding her positive experience of accessing 'Meitheal' (model that is supported by a Tusla coordinator- where any services involved with a family can be brought together to share goals & to coordinate service delivery). Further information can be found on the Tusla website – parents/ guardians can self-refer.
- Community support information shared today:
  - Parent Peer Support Group run by Rosie in Northside Family Resource Centre. Next group on Wed 21st Oct from 10am-12pm in the Northside Family Centre in Ballynanty – the group is great for support & it takes place every second Wednesday.
  - Boxing classes (Cloncastle boxing club) in Clonlara age 9-12 & 12-14 - classes working very well for a family.
  - Dance classes - St Johns Square – very positive feedback from a number of families.
- Advice around puberty: discussion regarding same today & where one can access information (including CDNT workshops on topic).
- Families shared their experiences regarding additional services, e.g. CAMHS

- Waiting-times for assessment – some families seeking assessments privately.
- Education – some parents shared their experiences, and views, where they feel that there is a need for more teacher training & better understanding of children's needs. Some challenges being experienced by families were shared (including school avoidance, children using bad language, don't want to wear school uniform, trying to settle them back into school after holidays).

Feedback from Families around Communication:

- Parents requested more information on Team updates – for example: current staff out on maternity leave, more information on waiting times for disciplines, how to access information in other languages.
- Some parents shared their experiences re; accessing technology.
- Positive feedback from Families on receiving texts & emails

Actions:

- Provide a copy of today's slides to attendees.
- Provide details of websites that provide support to families in additional languages.
- Put the details of the Parent Peer Support Group in Northside Family Centre on the Newsletter.

Next Family Network Meeting in Jan '26:

- January 29<sup>th</sup> 10-11.30 a.m.
- Venue: Moyross Community Centre (V94 V0NP)