

Multi-agency groups: the views of parents

What we were thinking before we went...

'When I was invited to the group I was a bit nervous. I wasn't sure what to expect with the group, with the other mums and the other children'

'Before I started at Bears when I was thinking about actually attending the group for the first time... I did feel quite anxious about actually walking into the group for the first time and seeing lots of children with disability'

When we got there.....

'I had concerns I suppose about meeting other parents ... would they be a similar age to me, similar background, but in fact it honestly really didn't matter'

'When we actually got to the group my son was actually one of the better behaved children. There were lots there with quite a lot of different issues so it was quite a relief for me to see that other parents were struggling with the same issues'

What we learned....

'Snack time was really good. It helped me with Hannah because she isn't a great eater so the way they handled it was in a superb way. They had pictures of the food so she can choose'

'My son has become more tolerant of having other children nearby and playing alongside them. He is able to control himself a little more and is obviously a lot better at sharing'

'I brought the things that I had learnt into her play at home as well and considering there wasn't any actual specialist toys, they were all toys we had at home, we could take what we learnt from the session and use it at home'

'During meal times we chattered as parents which was a fantastic support'

'Coming to the group on a regular basis you tend to pick up the skills that you are being taught from many of the therapists... I came away with a wealth of knowledge'

What we would say to other parents...

'Overall the group gave me confidence to deal with my son and face things head on rather than worrying about what everyone else thinks. It brought out the best in my son.... I would definitely recommend it ...'

'If anybody else had a group offered to them, I would strongly recommend then going to it. It may be daunting at first to go in not knowing what to expect but it's well worth doing.'