



Devon Parent Partnership Service
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We provide independent and impartial support to parents who have children with additional educational needs.

Working for the Devon Parent Partnership Service - A week in the life of Liz Batchelor -

I'm Liz Batchelor, Parent Partnership Officer (PPO) for Teignbridge, Totnes, West Exe and Exeter central. I've been working as a PPO for 7 years, supporting parents who have children with additional educational needs.

One of the things I like about my work as a PPO is the variety. There's a certain amount of admin and record keeping to manage, but most of my work involves talking to people on the telephone or meeting them face to face. A typical week would involve receiving referrals by telephone or email, making contact with parents to listen to their concerns, giving them information and talking through their options. Sometimes a parent may need support in preparing for or attending a school meeting. Others might want help with completing forms or writing letters about the educational support their child receives. I can also be involved in working through official documents with parents and signposting them to other groups and services that might be of help.

I often meet parents when I attend local parent support groups or Parent Carers Voice forums, sometimes to talk about the work of the Parent Partnership Service or to deliver a specific piece of training. If you belong to a parent support group in Devon we'd love to hear from you, particularly if we've not yet visited your group.

Another element of my work involves meeting and liaising with other professionals across health, education, voluntary organisations, charities etc so that I can build up a wide picture of what support is available to parents in my area.

Finally, I am starting to work with a new team of volunteer Independent Parental Supporters which will enable us to provide even more support for parents.

Independent Parental Supporter (IPS) Update

Independent parental supporters are volunteers who have been trained to do some of the parent support work currently being done by PPOs like me in Devon. Some are themselves parents of children with additional needs, some are trained teachers, TAs or other professionals and some are simply interested in making a positive contribution within their own community.

The IPSs have all completed our 3-day training course, have been interviewed and have had both CRB and reference checks. Many are keen to support parents directly while others have opted to do research at home, represent the Parent Partnership Service at conferences and events or work in the resource library. These people will be working with the Parent Partnership Officer in their area and will be given regular support, supervision and further training as their role develops. If you would like to request support from an IPS in your school you can contact us on our central number.

The next 3-day IPS training course will be on Tuesday 20th October, Friday 6th November and Monday 23rd November in Exeter. If you are interested in finding out more about the course and volunteering opportunities with the Devon Parent Partnership Service, please call us on 01392 383080 for details.