

Dear Parents and Carers

East Sussex Parent Carer Forum (ESPCF) have shared with us their survey findings for 2023/24. I wanted to send a short response and am grateful to ESPCF for including this in the newsletter.

The views of parents and carers are really important to me and to my colleagues at the local authority. We take them seriously and use them to improve the services that we provide for children and their families. There is a lot of information in the report, and I have asked my teams across Children's Services to review this in full.

I am disappointed to read that there are still many parents and carers who do not feel that they receive the support and provision that their children need. Challenges remain in the national SEND system, so our focus is on those areas where we are able to make improvements as a local authority and with our partners.

We recognise many of the issues in the report. There is good work in place across our teams, and in education settings, on identifying and supporting SEND. Progress is being made on our local area SEND Strategy and ESPCF are important members of the Governance Board that oversees its delivery.

We will build on this to ensure that our work has real pace and that it directly improves the experience of children and their families. We will also continue to look at how we can engage further with children, young people and their families about SEND provision.

I am confident we are working on the right things. I can see this in the positive feedback that parent carers share on some areas of our work. It is important to us that every child with SEND and their family have this positive experience. We want to understand where that is not the case and what we need to do differently across the system.

Our partnership with parents and carers is a really important one. We are committed to continuing our joint work to improve the support and provision for your children.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carolyn Fair'.

Carolyn Fair

**Director of Children's Services**