



MERGER STATEMENT

I am very pleased to let you know that Skills for People and Northeast Special Needs Network have been discussing a merger of the two organisations. We hope that the two organisations will join forces by June 2017. The merger will happen only once appropriate checks have been made to make sure this is the best way forward for each organisation, and the people they support.

This merger will make it easier for families to get a range of services through one point of contact. The service will continue to offer information, advice and support, training and events for families, and help with Education Health and Care Plans, and support from other parents of disabled children through the Pass it on Parents project. Existing staff from both organisations will provide this service.

Both charities are chaired by very committed and knowledgeable people who will continue to be involved in the merged organisation. Here's what they say about the merger:

Dawn Benson, Chair, Northeast Special Needs Network said: "I'm delighted that we have got to the stage in our discussions where we can share this news with families and other partners. The skills and experience of the staff within both organisations complement each other perfectly. As a mum of a young disabled person, I know how important it is to get the right information and support when you need it most, without the anxiety of being passed from one organisation to another. I'm convinced this is the right thing to do and that the service to families will be improved because we're going to be doing things better together."

Diana Barnes OBE, Chair, Skills for People said: "I am very pleased that, subject to the appropriate checks, the merger of our two organisations will go ahead. Skills for People and Northeast Special Needs Network share the same values and vision for the future. Our organisations provide a range of services which support local families with disabled children and young people so they can enjoy family life. Bringing together our organisations, will make it easier to secure funding, and secure the future for these vital services at a time when many small charities are struggling to survive. Dedicated and experienced staff and board members will ensure the success of the merger."

There are still some details to be confirmed and I will update you as soon as I can. I appreciate that you may have questions about the new organisation and so please don't hesitate to contact me at liz.wright@skillsforpeople.org.uk or call 0191 281 8737.