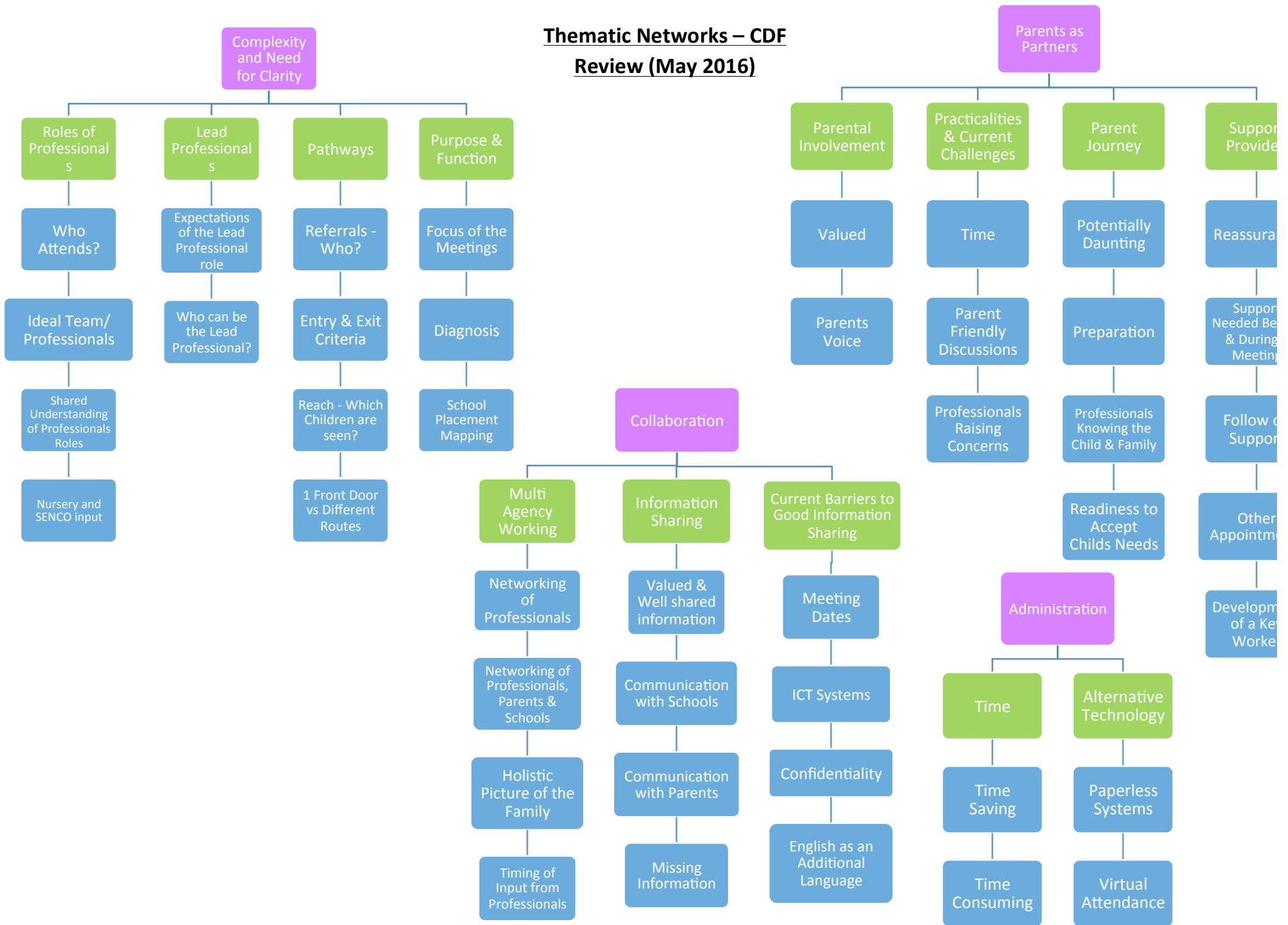


Thematic Networks – CDF Review (May 2016)



CDF Review May 2016 - Brief Summary of Findings

Complexity and Need for Clarity

- There is a need for clarity around; who attends the CDF, who the ideal team of professionals would include e.g. CAMHS/Social Care, the roles and responsibilities of professionals both within and outside of the CDF and the roles that SENCOs and Nursery staff take within the CDF.
- The role of the Lead Professional is unclear to all parties. There is a need for clarity around the expectations of this role and who may be best placed to take it.
- There is currently a lack of clarity around who can make referrals into the CDF, SENCOs in particular are unsure about this. Parties are also currently unclear as to the Entry and Exit Criteria for the CDF and whether the needs of the target group of children (most complex) are still being met.
- There is currently a lack of clarity around the main aim/ focus of CDF meetings (pre-planning, monitoring or giving advice to parents) and its role in the diagnostic process.

Thematic Network for Collaboration

- A major benefit of the CDF is the opportunity it gives professionals, parents and schools to network with each other. Useful information from professionals, (those who visit families in the home setting and SENCOs), can be gathered at the CDF. This helps to provide a holistic picture of the family. However the timing of input from some professionals needs to be considered. Information from Speech and Language Therapy is also valued by professionals, as is information of a practical nature that can help in the planning of support and strategies.
- There is a clear need for greater communication and collaboration with schools and parents. Information is often not shared clearly or consistently with them, which has led to feelings of frustration for some. Administrative staff also note a lack of information being provided by some professionals, with others providing information late.
- Barriers to collaborative working include; professionals using differing ICT systems in order to store information (the Early Years Portal may help), schools relying on parents to pass on Health information due to confidentiality issues and parents who expressed that an interpreter at the meeting was needed for them to access it fully.

Thematic Network for Parents as Partners

- The attendance of parents at CDF meetings is valued by all, however there are also some current challenges faced by professionals when parents attend. These include; meetings taking longer than scheduled, professionals ability to be as open and honest as they would like and professionals ability to raise concerns when parents are present (particularly concerns of a safeguarding nature).
- The CDF process is potentially very daunting for parents, they are often un prepared for the meeting and feel that they do not know any of the professionals present. Some are also not at a stage where they are ready or able to accept their child's needs. Ways to remedy this need to be addressed and have been recommended, including; the support needed before, during and after a meeting. The development of a key worker has been suggested to implement some of this support.

Thematic Network for Administration

- The future use of technology such as word processing packages, has been suggested in order to reduce the amount of paper used for CDF meetings. The exploration of ICT systems/ software that may allow professionals to participate in a CDF meeting without being physically present, was also suggested.

Recommendations Arising from each Thematic Network

Thematic Network for 'Complexity and Need for Clarity'

- Clarity around the core team of professionals who need to be present at each CDF meeting and ways in which 'ideal professionals' e.g. Social Care and CAMHS, may be included
- The consideration of the ways in which Nursery and SENCO input can be increased
- The clear understanding of professionals roles both internally and externally to the CDF process including clarity of the Lead Professional Role
- Clarity for all around the referrals process – in particular who can refer and the development of clear 'Entry and Exit' criteria
- The consideration of the development of a specific ASD pathway and/or development of a '1 front door approach' to referrals
- Clarity around; the primary purpose of CDF meetings and the role the CDF plays in the diagnostic process

Thematic Network for 'Collaboration'

- A greater weight given to the information provided by professionals who can provide a more holistic picture of the child's family
- Consideration of the nature and timing of input from some professionals in the CDF process – linking to external ways of working
- The development of the ways in which CDF information is communicated consistently and clearly with both parents and schools
- School SENCOs/settings to be sent the information packs prior to the CDF meeting in the same way that other professionals are
- Development of the use of the Early Years Portal, to make information sharing between Health and Education easier
- Consideration of the use of interpreters for parents who have English as an additional language

Thematic Network for 'Parents as Partners'

- Consideration of the need to separate parental and professional discussions
- The development of guidelines for the clear preparation of parents for the CDF process, at the point of their child's referral
- Inclusion of professionals who directly work with children and their families, in future CDF meetings
- Careful consideration given to the point at which parents attend the CDF meeting
- The exploration of the ways in which the CDF can help to extend the practical support that parents receive post CDF (or post diagnosis)
- Further exploration of the role that the CDF can play in alleviating the time pressure that parents – this may involve the development of a Key Worker

Thematic Network for 'Administration'

- The use of technology, such as word processing packages and iPads, to allow for paperless working
- The exploration of ICT systems and software that may allow for professionals to participate in a CDF meeting without being physically present