



Partnership Agreement between Solihull Parent Carer Forum and Solihull Local Authority

Introduction

Effective partnership working between the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) and the Local Authority (LA) means that:

- **Services will more effectively meet the needs and contribute to positive outcomes of children and young people with disabilities/ additional needs and their families.** Resources are efficiently targeted on services which parents and families take up or value.
- **Services are more cost effective.** There are many examples of how it has produced simple low cost solutions to local problems.
- **Expectation of Service Provision is more realistic.** Parents and professionals develop a shared view of how services can best be provided to support families. Informed parents are generally realistic about their expectations and the reality of delivering services within funding limitations
- **Expectation of PCF role is realistic and clear**

Working Together

Regular liaison meetings quarterly, as a minimum, will be held between the LA and the PCF to promote informal communication, monitor progress on the work plan and inform future direction. Themed work may be initiated by either party at any time outside the liaison meetings.

Sharing Information

The Local Authority will ensure that:

- The PCF is recognised as the primary route to involve parent carers in the borough on strategic and key themes/ issues.
- The PCF has the clear information needed to effectively be involved in decision making and where appropriate have representation on strategic and planning groups, such as the SEND Strategic Board and the associated task and finish groups.
- There is regular and clear communication, which is in plain language and jargon free with parent carers about the progress in relation to strategic and key themes/issues and other relevant future plans

The Parent Carer Forum will

- Act as the first point of contact for planning parent carer participation in the Borough.
- Assist the LA in ensuring wide communication with a range of parent carers and parent carer groups/networks, representative of the parent / carer population of Solihull.
- Assist the LA in sharing information for the purpose of Inspections / self-assessments and sharing the information
- Be involved in developing local authority information and materials and advise on clarity and appropriateness of content.
- Provide appropriately skilled parent representatives to be part of the strategy and planning groups and take part in consultation events.

- Ensure that the key messages from families are evidence based – through surveys, feedback from meetings etc.
- Ensure that LA feedback from consultations is distributed to parents via their website and social media and any printed materials.
- Keep lines of communication open between the PCF, the LA and the wider parent group
- Provide mechanisms for the LA to request parent representatives for strategy and planning groups
- Will abide by the rules of confidentiality laid down by the LA

Consultation

The Local Authority will

- Offer a variety of approaches within an agreed framework e.g. questionnaires, focus groups, larger events, attending existing groups.
- Provide feedback to parent carers via the PCF on the outcomes of consultations

The Parent Carer Forum will

- Assist the LA in planning and undertaking the SEND reforms and other strategic planning.
- Help identify the process, the timescale and the extent to which parent carers will influence final decision making

Participation:

The Local Authority will

- Ensure that the PCF is involved in planning parent carer participation and consultation right from the start
- Support parent carers to participate fully. This will include ensuring that they are knowledgeable, supported, welcomed and respected. Where appropriate, training will be provided to support this. This may include having an advocate to relay their views.
- Will support parent carers to contribute actively and positively in the implementation of the reforms and future planning in Solihull and also to challenge appropriately.
- Provide timely feedback to parent carers about the outcomes of participation and consultation using a “you said, we did” approach as well as other more formal methods

The Parent Carer Forum will

- Assist the LA to involve a wide range of parent carers and parent carer networks.
- Promote participation and opportunities for participation widely
- Offer training to parents so that they can build their confidence, be informed and knowledgeable about local parent issues and pan disability issues

Co-production Activities

The Local Authority will:

- Commit to an agreed programme of co-production activities with PCF to develop and embed parent engagement at strategy, policy and service delivery levels.
- Work with PCF representatives to develop an agreed programme of co-production activities.
- Provide named LA representative(s) for regular liaison meetings and other co-production activities

Parent Carer Forum will:

- Work with the LA to develop the programme of co-production activities
- Provide named PCF representative (s) for regular liaison meetings and other co-production activities

Signature for the Forum:
Name:

Date:

Signature for the Local Authority:
Name:

Date: