



Terms of reference for Suffolk Parent Carer Network and the Management Board

Purpose

SPCN aims to be a voice to inform service providers of the needs of children and young people with additional needs and/or disabilities and their families.

It will facilitate two-way communication between parents and carers and services used by children and young people with additional needs and/or disabilities and their families in Suffolk. The forum will work to provide feedback on services, offer constructive challenge to current services and input into decision making and planning for future service provision.

SPCN believes that by working co-operatively with local service providers parents and carers can contribute to improvements in the services delivered for children and young people with additional needs and/or disabilities.

- Through regular communication with parents/carers', ensuring they are able to decide whether to be involved in a piece of work/consultation.
- Ensuring a diverse forum membership and representation of diverse views from children and young people with additional needs and/or disabilities and their parents/carers' from all backgrounds and sectors of the community.
- Promoting a reputation and image of SPCN which reflects its aims and values.



SPCN terms of reference

Membership

SPCN's membership will be made up of residents of Suffolk who are parents/carers of a child or young person with additional needs and/or disability, aged 0 to 25 / using children's services.

Meetings

SPCN parent forum meetings will be held every term.

Any parent/carer of a child or young person with additional needs and/or disability living in the county can put an item on the agenda by contacting [XXXX](#)
[Email address to change](#)

Service providers will be invited to attend SPCN meetings as appropriate.

Information should be provided in a range of ways and formats to support the engagement of a wide number of parents and carers.

Words and terminology used in documents that are circulated at meetings, presentations and discussion should be free of jargon and abbreviations so that no one is excluded from participating.

Members may be nominated to sit on working groups set up by service providers. Members sitting on such working groups will feedback information to the main parent forum meetings. All members taking on a 'representative' role will sign a Parental Representation Agreement Form.

Parent representative names and details of areas of expertise they represent will be publicised so parents know who is representing them.

SPCN Management Board terms of reference

The business of **SPCN** will be managed by the management board.



Membership

SPCN parent forum meetings will be held every term.

Ideally the members shall number no more than 10 and no less than 4.

After one year, members will stand for election annually.

A chair or co-Chairs and treasurer will be elected from the SPCN Management Board's Membership. The secretarial function will be provided by a paid worker.

A member can resign from the SPCN Management board at any time, by putting this in writing to the chair or co-Chairs.

A member who has not attended three meetings consecutively without giving apologies will be asked to stand down.

Each member will be responsible for representing the views of a wider group of parents. Thus each member should have a system of networking and disseminating information to other parents.

There should be a place on the SPCN management board for specialist workers representing small community groups e.g. Travellers, LGBT. These specialist worker/s will have been nominated by each particular group of parents.

All members of the SPCN Management board will agree to and sign these Terms of Reference.

Meetings and feedback

The SPCN management board will meet on a regular basis – this is usually monthly excluding the summer holidays. This can be changed if there is a need to meet more often.

Venues and meeting times will be arranged for the convenience of parent carers. Meetings will be during term time.

There should be a quorum of no less than 1/3 of members present for a decision to be made of which one must be a parent carer.



The management board recognises that there will be differences of opinion and priority between members. Decisions will be made by consensus where possible, or where not possible, by majority.

Members will be entitled to claim reasonable expenses for travel and child care incurred to attend particular meetings.

Information to be presented at the meeting must be circulated in good time prior to the meeting in order that members have timely access to information.

SPCN will provide feedback to its membership through regular communication via social media, the SPCN website and other stakeholders e.g. Activities Unlimited newsletter. This will include outcomes from consultations and participation work undertaken, and in particular the effect on future service provision.

Terms of reference will be reviewed once a year – next review 8th June 2017.

Date:

Signed: