



**STOKE-ON-TRENT
PARENT PARTNERSHIP**

Terms of Reference for The Stoke-on-Trent Parent Partnership Steering Group

This leaflet explains what the Steering Group is, what it does and how it works with the Stoke-on-Trent Parent Partnership Service.

Introduction

All local authorities (LA's) in England have a statutory duty to ensure that a Parent Partnership Service (PPS) is provided. The Department of Education (DFE) sets out in the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice (COP) 2001 the Parent Partnership Services-increasing parental confidence Exemplification of minimum standards 2007 document, its expectations for the minimum standards to be met. To increase parental confidence, the DFE encourages LA's to ensure that PPS's are run at arms length and impartial.

The Role of the Parent Partnership Service

The role of the Parent Partnership Service is to ensure parents/ carers of children with SEN and children who are at the risk of exclusion or who have been excluded, including the very young, have access to information, advice and guidance in relation to the special educational needs of their children and the processes and procedures around exclusion, so they can make informed decisions.

The Service encourages equal partnership between parents/ carers and the professionals who are involved in SEN.

The Service provides a range of flexible services, including access to an Independent Parental Supporter (IPS) for all parents who request one, together with referral to other agencies, voluntary organisations or parent support groups which can offer advice and support.

The Service meets the minimum standards identified in the SEN Code of Practice and the Exemplification of Standards document 2007.

Steering Group Membership and Function

Parent Partnership Steering Group has representation from parents and professionals involved with young people with special educational needs. The group includes parents who have worked with the service and are well placed to provide parental perspective on the effectiveness of the services delivered. Professionals represent the various agencies and groups who work with children with special educational needs and their parents/carers in the City of Stoke-on-Trent. They have different knowledge, expertise and experience to offer and their role as a member is to support the work of the Parent Partnership Service, not the specific interests of their own department or organisation.

Members are invited to join the group on their commitment to take an active role in promoting the work and vision of the PPS and their willingness to actively promote the service.

The Chair and the Vice Chair are independent of the LA and are elected by the Steering Group

The Steering Group meets twice yearly, or occasionally more often when necessary, to advise on the development of the Parent Partnership Service, to monitor the performance of the Service, to ensure that it has an arms-length relationship with the LA and does not reflect merely the policies and wishes of it's LA and it's education settings. To monitor the PPS budget and contribute their views. To support partnership work in practice and respond to national, regional and local developments. The Steering Group is required to receive the Service's reports and parental feedback, discuss and prioritise initiatives and make recommendations and together with LA line management approve developments in service delivery.

Minutes

Minutes of the meeting are taken and circulated to all members. The Steering Group has a responsibility to follow the principles of

partnership in its operation. Within the Group, all members are equal partners and the individual views and skills that each member brings to the Group are recognised and equally valued.

The Steering Group plays an active role in guaranteeing an element of independence from the LA by:

- having a clear understanding with the LA on the role of the Service
- promoting a culture of challenge and support; supporting both the PPS and LA in service delivery and the arrangements for maintaining impartiality
- helping the Service to develop partnership with, and communication between, all parties
- acknowledging the potential for conflict between the role of the Service as part of the LA and the role of the Service in empowering and supporting parents
- to review and comment on information including the PPS Development Plan, monitor the effectiveness of the role of the Service as part of the LA and the role of the Service in empowering and supporting parents

Steering Group Membership as of September 2010

Chair:

John Bostock - Parents of children with additional needs representative

Vice Chair:

Julie Massey - Casework Officer/ Parent

Lyn Fryer - PPS Head of Service

Heather Weston - Choice Advisory Service

Gaynor Harrison - Primary School SENCO

Michelle Fry - High School SENCO

Eileen McCarthy - Home Start

Louise Hudson - Face 2 Face

Sandra Wright - Connexions

Anna Dunn - North Staffs Carers

Jane Titley - Outreach Manager (Abbey Hill)

Emma Shutt - Behavioural Manager (Inspire)

Dawn Casewell - Youth Inclusion

Sue Broad - Cornerstones

Alison Fee - Parent Representative

By invitation Strategic manager responsible for the Line Management of the PPS

PPSSG Group

Parent Partnership Steering and Support Group (PPSSG) is responsible for all external funding raised for the PPS. It is also responsible for ensuring money raised will be used effectively and to improve the service for parents and children/young people.

The PPSSG will have a committee of four people consisting of the Chair Person, Treasurer, Secretary and Fundraiser.

Those standing for the above positions should be prepared to take on the position for a three year period. If we are to become a charity then the AVG will possibly need Trustees (the Trustees role will be set out on a separate document). It is advisable that the positions go to the above committee plus the Vice Chair.

The committee is elected by the Steering Group and is responsible to for keeping the group informed of finances, work in progress and how PPS are using the money. PPSSG will be impartial but will work with PPS and LA to ensure the PPS is reaching full potential.

Quality , Assurance, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Parent Partnership Service works with the LA to ensure Best Value principles and looks to the LA and Steering Group to monitor and evaluate the performance of the Service.

The Service has a Development Plan and an established multi-agency Steering Group to promote partnership principles and approaches in a range of strategic planning programmes, working in collaboration with local and national agencies.

The Stoke-on-Trent Parent Partnership Service

The Parent Partnership Service is a statutory organisation.

The Service is funded by the Local Authority (LA). To encourage parent/carer confidence in the neutrality of the Service, it adopts an impartial stance and is run at 'arms-length' from the LA.

The Service is based at Mount Education Support Centre, Mount Avenue, Penkhull. The Service works collaboratively with statutory and voluntary organisations who identify with the assessment and provision of special educational needs.

The Stoke-on-Trent Parent Partnership Service

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