



National Network of Parent Carer Forums  
'Our Strength Is Our Shared Experience'

## MEMBERSHIP POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

1.1 The aim of this Policy is to set out the process by which the National Network of Parent Carer Forums ("NNPCF") will seek to recruit Member Organisations, and how Regional Representatives and non regional Steering Group Members will be selected.

#### 1.2 **Constitutional Issues Applicable to the NNPCF and the Steering Group Membership**

The members of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums are Parent Carer Forums across England. Any parent carer forum which meets the NNPCF's criteria as set out in its terms of reference is eligible to become a member.

The Steering Group for the NNPCF comprises of up to 12 members

- 10 Regional Representative (2 for London)
- 3 Non Regional Representatives

This Policy considers in detail the membership for the Steering Group.

### 2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

2.1 The Steering Group has responsibility for the governance of NNPCF. The main roles of the Steering Group are to:

- Set strategic Direction
- Ensure that the NNPCF achieves its aims and objectives
- Agrees the utilisation of resources allocated to the NNPCF to promote the participation of parent carers nationally

- Provide clear mechanisms for communication about national developments and opportunities to local parent carer forums
- Growing capacity nationally, and creating opportunities to promote the participation of parent carers

The core values of the NNPCF include:

- The NNPCF is peer led
- Demonstrates and promotes parent carers' voice by parent carers at all levels
- Acknowledges that parent carers have an independent and unique voice
- Models and promotes recognition of skills and experience of parent carers

2.2 NNPCF supports the principle that Steering Group Membership should be representative of all its members.

2.3 Steering Group members will act collectively at all times

### 3. **MEMBERSHIP OF NNPCF**

3.1 One local Parent Carer Forum in each local authority area is eligible to become members of NNPCF as long as they can satisfy our minimum entry requirements;

- Open to all parent carers of disabled children and children with additional needs
- That the Forum is pan disability - Across all disabilities and conditions/spectrums
- That Forums are for parent carers of Children and young people aged 0-25 years
- That Forums welcomes and actively encourages inclusion of parent carers from all sectors of community (BME, faiths, LGBT, gender and other minorities)
- That the forum is involved in issues across service boundaries (health, education, social care, and leisure)
- Urban and / or rural

- Receive the Department for Education Parent Carer Participation Grant.

OR

- Would be eligible to receive the DfE grant in their local area as agreed in writing by the Delivery Partner or the Department for Education. However they have chosen not to access this but do provide the Parent Participation delivery partner with a monitoring report of their activity and outcomes.

#### 4. **RECRUITMENT OF STEERING GROUP MEMBERS**

- 4.1 When recruiting to both regional and non regional representatives Steering Group members, the NNPCF will always strive to ensure the process is accessible to as many parent carers as possible to enable the most representative and proportional membership of the steering group as possible. It is vital that the steering group is made up of individuals with a wide range of complimentary skills, and a willingness to develop and learn new skills as required.
- 4.2 All prospective Steering Group Members will complete an application form as set out in Appendix A. This reflects the competencies as set out in the NNPCF's Framework.
- 4.3 All Steering Group Members are required to resign on completion of a three year term. They may apply to serve a further three year term and will be subject to the relevant process as detailed below
- 4.4 **Regional Representatives** will be selected by their own regions although minimum criteria will apply;
- Must be a parent of a child with a disability aged 0-25 or a bereaved parent carers of a disabled child
  - Actively engaged with their local forum
  - Have effective links with other forums in their region (e.g. via regular participation at regional networks and events)

The core competencies required of steering group representatives and main responsibilities of Regional Representatives is included at Appendix B.

4.5 Regional Representatives will be nominated by their own local parent carer forum, and seconded by one other forum.

4.6 Regional Networks will form a Selection Panel, consisting of 2 Parent Carers drawn from 2 separate local forums and the NNPCF Operations Manager. This panel will shortlist against the competencies framework and consider suitability to fulfil the responsibilities described at Appendix B. Suitable nominees, to a maximum of 3, will be invited for interview. The interview panel will be made up of the NNPCF Operations Manager, and a minimum of two members of the regional network who are NOT from forums that nominated candidates are part of. If this leads to capacity issues, further consideration will be given to appropriate interview panel members.

4.7 **Non Regional Representatives** will be selected against a person specification which will be drawn up as and when vacancies arise. This will reflect any skills gaps that are identified through the periodic Skills Audit. Nominees will need to have nominators from at least two different local forums, in order for their application to be considered. The selection Panel will consist of a minimum of 2 Regional Representatives and one other member of the Steering Group and the NNPCF Operations Manager. Again, suitable nominees, to a maximum of 3 will be invited for interview.

In the interests of the NNPCF, Non regional representatives will be elected for a term of up to 3 years, to ensure stability. It is expected that non regional representatives would have a high level of knowledge and experience in relation to parent participation and issues involved, to enable them to effectively undertake this role.

4.8 **Process**

Local Parent Carer Forums will be notified via the NNPCF Communications about the proposed plans and dates for election to the Steering Group. The members of each individual Regional Network will also be formally notified at least 6 weeks in advance of the election process, to ensure the process is transparent, and accessible to all.

5. **ELECTION OF STEERING GROUP OFFICERS**

5.1 Officer positions within the Steering Group will be elected for 3 years or the length of the period for which they are Steering Group members if that is shorter.

- 5.2 Candidates will seek nomination from two serving Steering Group Members. They will complete an application form as set out at Appendix C, which reflects the competencies as set out in the NNPCF's Framework. The nominations will be considered by Steering Group Members and a secret ballot will be conducted by the Operations Manager

## 6. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

- 6.1 NNPCF is committed to achieving equality of opportunity in every area. Our aim is that everyone should be treated fairly and be equally respected and represented. The aim is to ensure that NNPCF reflects its Member Forums.

## 7. **REMOVAL OF STEERING GROUP MEMBERS**

- 7.1 The NNPCF has a Code of Conduct which applies to all members, and has some particular remits for members of the Steering Group. If the Code of Conduct is breached, the remaining steering group members will convene a meeting to consider the removal of a steering group member.

## 8. **GENERAL**

- 8.1 NNPCF will seek to ensure that Steering Group Members collectively possess the skills and qualities required to undertake their role.
- 8.2 NNPCF will make use of succession planning and individual training and development plans will be developed through a review process initiated by the Co Chairs.

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