

Engage

Enable

Annual Report

National Network of
Parent Carer
Forums

Empower



National Network of Parent Carer Forums
'Our Strength is our Shared Experience'
www.nnpcf.org.uk

April 2024 - March 2025

Introduction	1
Snapshot of the year	3
About the NNPCF	4
Introduction to the NNPCF	5
What we do	7
Our work this year	9
Regional annual reports	13 - 23
What will the next year bring?	24

Introduction

Welcome to the 2024-2025 Annual Report from the National Network of Parent Carer Forums

This year has been one of significant change politically with the change of government for the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) and Parent Carer Forums (PCF). As always, our work has been guided by the lived experiences of parent carers and the collective voice of PCFs across England. Despite the many challenges and uncertainties in the wider landscape, the strength of our network has shone through, enabling us to influence, collaborate, and remain focused on our mission to improve outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families.

Update on the NNPCF Team

The past twelve months have seen changes within Board Membership and our operational team members. We said farewell to valued colleagues whose dedication and hard work helped strengthen the NNPCF, and we welcomed new members to our team who bring fresh energy, skills, and perspectives.

A Changing Political Landscape

Nationally, 2024 brought a change of government and with it new priorities for education, health, and social care. The NNPCF has worked hard to establish constructive relationships with incoming ministers, advisers, and officials, ensuring that the voice of parent carers is heard at the earliest and at every opportunity. We have consistently maintained a clear message that effective SEND reform can only succeed if it is co-produced with families. Our role has been to provide, insights, and lived experiences that reflect the reality for families on the ground. We use that lived experience to provide both verbal and written feedback through our engagement with government departments and wider stakeholders. We will continue to champion this collaborative approach as new policies are developed and implemented.

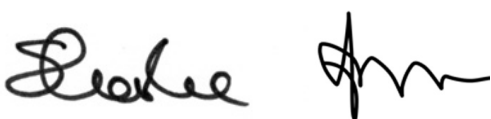
Social Media

This year, our social media platforms have played an important role in connecting us with PCFs, families, and the wider SEND community. The NNPCF have used these channels to share updates from government consultations and shared information about our ongoing work. Social media has become a vital tool, and it is one we must continue to develop to nurture so that it meets the continued needs of our PCFs.

Thank You to Parent Carer Forums

At the heart of everything the NNPCF does, is the work of PCFs. Across the country, PCFs continue to demonstrate extraordinary resilience, creativity, and commitment. From engaging with local authorities and health bodies, to supporting families and shaping local services, your efforts make a real and lasting difference. We know this work is not easy, it often involves balancing personal caring responsibilities and working within a system which at times may not meet the needs of their own child or young person, or ensuring their family is receiving the right support, yet, time and again, you step forward with determination and compassion. The NNPCF is deeply grateful for your continued dedication and for the trust you place in us to represent your voices at a national level.

As the NNPCF look ahead to 2025 and beyond, we remain committed to building on the strong foundations laid by PCFs and to working together in pursuit of our shared vision improving the lives of families with children and young people who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Together, we will continue to create better opportunities and brighter futures by ensuring that families' voices shape the services they rely on.

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature on the left is 'Sarah Clarke' and the second signature on the right is 'Jo Harrison'.

Sarah Clarke and Jo Harrison, Co Chairs of the NNPCF

A snapshot of the year:

1193 Days
of work

Here are some of the partners we worked with this year:



About the NNPCF

Launched
in 2011

9
Regions

154 Parent
Carer
Forums

14
National
Representatives

10
Board
Members

5
Operational
Support team
members

183,090
Members

Introduction to the NNPCF

Our vision and mission

The National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) is the independent national voice of Parent Carer Forums.

Our mission is to deliver better outcomes for families living with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We aim to:

- Create a culture of participation and co-production across the education, health, social care and the voluntary sectors. This means that we are involved in all aspects of designing, commissioning, delivering and reviewing services as an equal partner.
- Empower our members to ensure that their voices are heard at a local, regional and national level
- Inspire our partners by sharing good practice and knowledge.

Our vision is for the best possible opportunities and futures for all children and young people with SEND and their families.

Who are we?

The National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) is a parent carer led organisation, which has a network of 154 local Parent Carer Forums (PCFs) nationwide. Our role is to champion strategic parent participation at a local, regional and national level.

Each of the local Parent Carer Forums work within their region, and each region is represented by their National Board Member(s).

The Board is made up of ten members who represent the nine regional areas in England (with two based in London) to ensure that the collective voices of members of local Parent Carer Forums are heard at a national level by working together.

“Parent Carer Forums are representative local groups of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities who work alongside local authorities, education, health and other service providers to ensure the services they plan, commission, deliver and monitor meet the needs of children and families”

Para 1.13 SEND Code of Practice 2015

Meet the NNPCF Board

You can find full profiles of our Board Members including our new North East Director Claire North on the NNPCF website

<https://nnpcf.org.uk/blog/about/meet-the-team/board-members>



Sarah Clarke
South East and Co-chair
southeast@nnpcf.org.uk



Jo Harrison
East of England and Co-chair
eastofengland@nnpcf.org.uk



Elaine Lambe
West Midlands
westmidlands@nnpcf.org.uk



Richard Jaramba
East Midlands
eastmidlands@nnpcf.org.uk



Kath Bromfield
North West
northwest@nnpcf.org.uk
Term ended July 2024



Martin McAndrew
North West
northwest@nnpcf.org.uk



Jilly Russell
North East
northeast@nnpcf.org.uk
Resigned September 2024



Jayne Fitzgerald
Yorkshire and Humber
yorksandhumber@nnpcf.org.uk



Tina Emery
South West and Co-chair
southwest@nnpcf.org.uk
Term ended October 2024



Kenton Mee
South West
southwest@nnpcf.org.uk



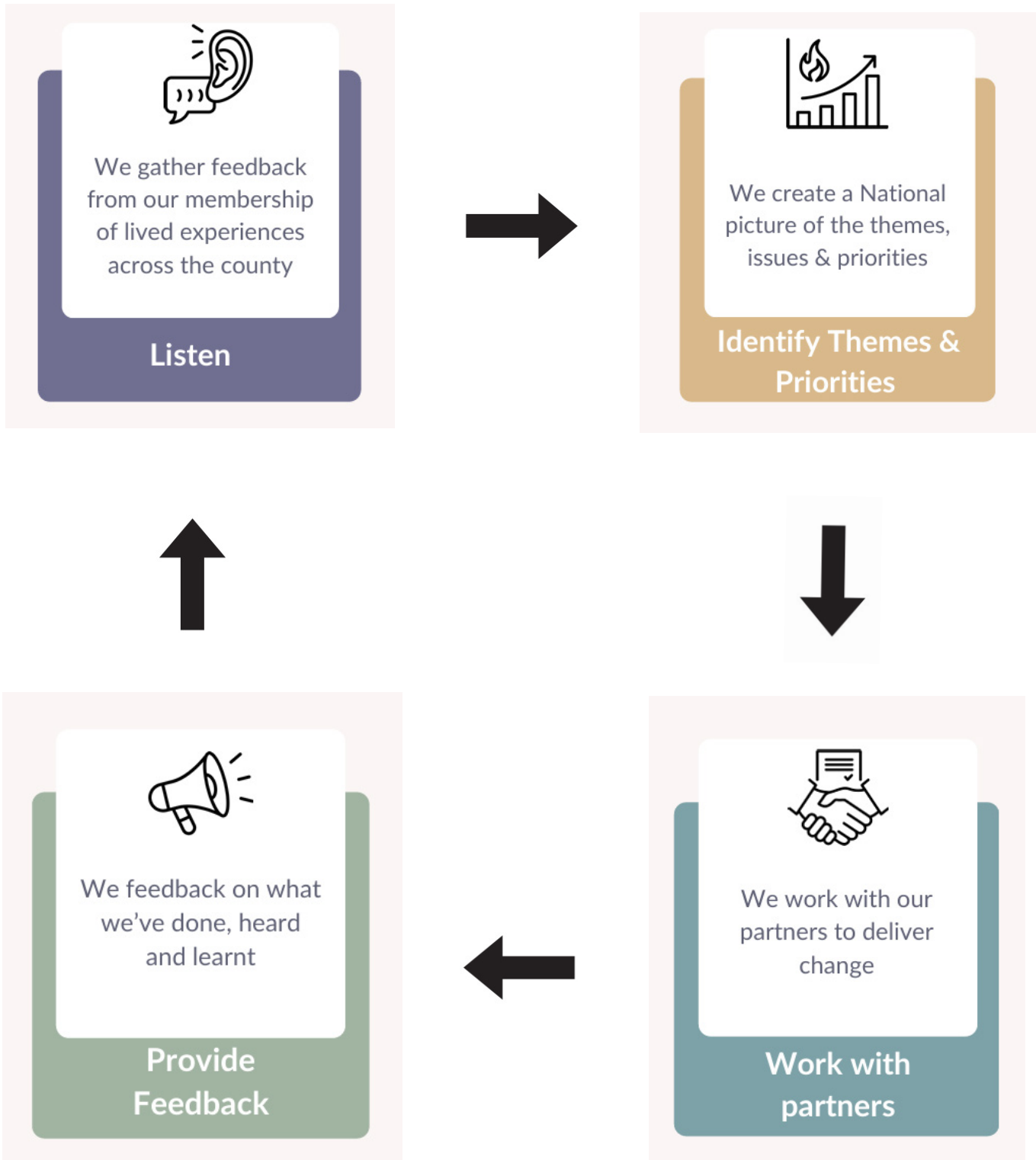
Ros Luff
London
london@nnpcf.org.uk



Claire Richmond
London
london@nnpcf.org.uk

What we do

We think about our work in four simple stages:



Listening to our membership

The lived experiences of our members form the basis of everything we do. We use a variety of means to listen to our membership.



1,233
Parent carers directly involved in running a forum



1,706
People represented PCFs in local activity



452,703
The combined social media reach of local PCFs



163,667
People contributed their experiences of services to forums



Our work this year

Our Work in 2024–2025

The past year has been one of profound change and opportunity for the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF). Against the backdrop of a new government, shifts in national policy, and ongoing pressures within the SEND system, our network has continued to ensure that the voices of parent carers are heard at the highest levels. Through national consultations, meetings with ministers, collaborative conferences, and through our social media platforms, we have stayed true to our vision: to represent and amplify the lived experiences of families and to influence positive change across education, health, and social care.

Responding to a New Government

The general election in 2024 brought a significant shift in tone and priorities from government. With Labour’s commitment to “Breaking Down Barriers to Opportunity” and “Giving Children the Best Start in Life,” we welcomed a fresh emphasis on inclusivity, early intervention, and recognition that many children and young people with SEND are being failed by existing systems. The NNPCF have engaged in roundtables with key ministers including Catherine McKinnell (Schools) and Stephen Kinnock (Health and Social Care), highlighting the need for reform in accountability, improved outcomes, for children, young people and their families.

Education Committee Inquiries

The NNPCF also gave evidence to the Education Select Committee on both children’s social care and Solving the SEND Crisis. The NNPCF used these opportunities to draw directly on the experiences shared by PCFs. By using the lived experience of parent carers as reported by local PCFs we ensured the Committee heard the reality of lived experience, showing again how PCFs can directly shape national conversations.

Influencing National Policy and Reform

The NNPCF has maintained its seat at many national policy tables. This year the NNPCF has:

- Contributed to the ISOS Partnership SEND Report on “Towards an effective and financially sustainable approach to SEND in England”, and subsequent workshops, ensuring parent carers’ voices shaped thinking about sustainability and reform.
- Fed into Ofsted and CQC’s review of the Local Area SEND Inspection Framework, with survey feedback from forums channeled directly into proposed changes.
- Represented families on the SEND & AP (Alternative Provision) Advisory Board, the Expert Advisory Group on Early Years, and the NHSE National Children and Young People’s Steering Group.
- Contributed to reports and recommendations through the Children and Young People’s Health Policy Influencing Group (HPIG).
- Submitted responses to major consultations such as the Education Select Committee call for evidence on SEND, Law Commission’s review of disabled children’s social care, the curriculum and assessment review, and the NHS 10-year health plan.

Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS)

The Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) initiative was a major focus, with over 100 PCFs working with schools, Integrated Care Boards and Local Authorities to improve provision for neurodiverse children. This program demonstrates how co-production between schools, families, and professionals can lead to more inclusive practices. More information available on our website:

<https://nnpcf.org.uk/partnerships-for-inclusion-of-neurodiversity-in-schools-pins/>

NNPCF and Contact Conference 2025

The highlight of our joint work, with Contact, was the annual conference in February 2025, bringing forums together with national policymakers and sector leaders. Sessions explored SEND reform, inclusion in schools, and building trust in the SEND system. The atmosphere was, as always, buzzing with energy and determination.

Over 200 forum representatives were welcomed at the conference in Northampton. With speakers including DfE Expert advisors, Dame Christine Lenehan and Professor Karen Guldberg, Amanda Allard Director Council for Disabled Children, as well as workshop lead by CQC and Ofsted and an update from NHS England and a virtual ministerial address from Minister Catherine McKinnell. Feedback from the conference was overwhelmingly positive by those who attended, for the opportunity to share experiences in person and contributing to shape the national agenda.



Working with Contact to support PCFs

The NNPCF remains focused on supporting forums and working with Contact. Over the year, we:

- Supported Contact in the development of a new PCF Handbook.
- Strengthening with Contact and NNPCF relationships to, improve the support for PCFs.
- Listened to PCFs to understand the impact of local government devolution and in turn raised concerns with the DfE about its effect on participation.

Participation and our National Representatives

Jacqui Watt - Participation lead

Last year was another busy year for our National Representatives. We had lots of changes within the team including celebrating past National Rep team member Jo Harrison from East of England being voted in as our new NNPCF Cochair. Other exciting changes to report include Martin McAndrew from the Northwest and Kenton Mee from the South West being appointed as new Regional Board Members (replacing Kath Bromfield and Tina Emery respectively). We were delighted that Kath decided to remain as a member of the National Rep team, along with Jilly Russell who made the decision to step down from her role as the North East Regional Board Member but to stay with the NNPCF through working with us as a National Rep. We also welcomed to the team lovely new reps Kerri Rennie from East of England, and Terri Walsh from the South East.



We also said farewells to some long-standing members of the team and I'm sure you will all join me in thanking them for their participation over the years and wish them well for the future. So 'Thank You' to Kayleigh Harrison, Ruth Hobbs, Sarah Conboy, and Richard Hobbs.

The national representatives came together as a team virtually this year back in January 2025, where we shared the work, we have been doing. Reasons to celebrate this year included Dave Barnard from London, who received such fantastic feedback on his presentation to the Institute of Government & Public Policy conference in November that they asked him to present at their next one in May next year. We also received incredible feedback from Heather Delaney in the West Midlands who wowed the Local Government Association when she did a presentation for new Councilors on how to work with parent carers. Thank you, Heather, for your amazing work.

Many other team members have also been involved in some useful and interesting pieces of work throughout the year, including Protecting Rights, Eliminating Restraint group, ADHD Taskforce, National SEND Forum, and submitting several consultation responses including for the Law Commission and the Curriculum and Assessment review!

The NNPCF also arranged two focus groups this year for the Law Commission's review of Disabled Children's Social Care, and these were attended by members of our team as well as parent carers outside of the NNPCF. We would like to thank all attendees for giving up their valuable time to participate and share their experiences. By attending the focus groups your comments helped our National Representatives to compile the consultation response.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one within the National Rep team for all their hard work and insightful contributions they made and continue to make. On a personal note, I have been the Participation Lead for the NNPCF for 3½ years, and this will be my last contribution to the NNPCF annual report as I move onto pastures new. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time within the NNPCF and wish the NNPCF team, and all the PCFs up and down the country all the best for the future. Keep flying the participation flag for parent carers, I continue to be in awe of all that you achieve.

Join our national representative team

To become a national rep, you need to be a strategic member of your local parent carer forum.

This could be in any position, such as chair, treasurer, or parent carer representative, paid or voluntary. You do need to have the support of your forum when applying to be a part of our national representatives' team. This is because of the nature of the role; you may need to travel and have portions of time where you are not available to your local forum. Although we support you to balance this, your forum needs to be aware of the commitment this role may require of you. You will also need the support of your Regional Steering Group.

If you would like to find out more about the National Rep role and how to apply, please contact participation@nnpcf.org.uk.

Finance and Operations

Claire Powers - Finance and Operations Lead

During the year, the NNPCF maintained strong financial oversight to ensure that all income and expenditure were managed responsibly and in line with our objectives. The NNPCF continued to monitor our budgets carefully, ensuring value for money across all activities and projects. The organisation remains in a stable financial position, supported by prudent management of reserves and transparent reporting. Looking ahead, the NNPCF will continue to strengthen our financial systems and ensure that our resources are used effectively to deliver maximum impact.



REGIONAL ANNUAL REPORTS



East Midlands

The year 2024 marked a period of significant transformation and turbulence for the forums within the East Midlands. Amidst a backdrop of evolving regulatory landscapes and shifting political climates, the dedicated parents and carers who make up these forums faced numerous challenges. This year, saw a mixed bag of experiences for the parents and carers who rely on the SEND systems. Changes in inspection frameworks, political direction, and financial positioning of Local Authorities and their forums began to strain the forums' solution-focused approach.

SEND's local area inspection framework has changed, bringing different ways of inspections with varied experiences to parents in their forums, with feelings that the new inspection framework process is inconsistent. Forums reported different experiences from the Joint Local Inspection process under the new inspection framework. The report from Inspections in the East Midlands reflects the pressures on the SEND system in the region and the nation. West Northants' inspection outcome highlights failings within the service, which we had previously identified and are working hard to remedy. The inspection roadshow crisscrossed the East Midlands with worrying outcomes for parents and carers. Other areas inspected included North Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. Rutland has become one of only four areas in the country to receive the highest possible inspection outcome.

The forum region network was developing with new leaders in Rutland, Derby City, Northampton East and Leicestershire. Robert, our regional chair, moved to become the chief executive in Memphis. Sadly, Sue Mullinger, the regional network deputy chair, recently passed, leaving a leadership gap that only she filled, and she will be fondly remembered and deeply missed. Robert and Sue M's leadership had brought stability and the sharing of good practices to the regional network.

The East Midlands SEND Forum Meeting, through Pat Bullen and now Sheridan Dodsworth, has been coordinating good practice with forums, local authorities, and health officials. Forums have shared good practice and information on inclusive mainstream, PINS and new DfES directions through the regional SEND Forum.

The three PCFs of Leicester City, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) have continued to play a key role in the East Midlands Change Programme Partnership. The Leicester City PCF lead is the CPP and the NNPCF regional link. PCFs are fully included and leading within the CPP Steering Group, which meets monthly, and have co-chaired several test and learn groups within the CPP, including:

- ELSEC- Early Language Support for Every Child, alongside Leicestershire Health Provider Trust
- EHCP template and digitisation testing
- Strengthening Mediation
- Multi-Agency Panels (MAPs)
- Advisory Tailored Lists

Between October and December 2024, the PCFs were crucial members of two workshops which developed a new LLR Coproduction Charter. Whatever the outcome of the DfE decision to close (or not) the national Change Programme in August 2025 or to extend it, the PCFs will be part of a new SEND & Inclusion Alliance, with the same allocation of funding per annum as they have received from the CPP, to continue their leadership and work across the ICS system within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

West Midlands

The West Midlands region is made up of 14 forums (Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Herefordshire, Sandwell, Shropshire, Solihull, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Telford and Wrekin, Walsall, Warwickshire, Wolverhampton and Worcestershire) who vary considerably in size, structures and funding – this means that they all work very differently in their local areas have different capacity to engage with the region.

The Change Programme work led by Telford and Wrekin (including Shropshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire) continued to help build relationships between the four forums, although the disruption due to the General Election has been frustrating.

Local Area SEND inspections preparation has been a focus for many areas' with lots of speculation about who will be next, adding to anxiety across the region. This year Dudley, Herefordshire and Worcestershire had their inspections. Worcestershire's inspection highlighted widespread and/or systemic failings whilst Dudley and Herefordshire's inspections highlight inconsistencies in experience. Whilst the inspection findings were not all positive it is good to see the work of our forums being recognised - Dudley's report highlighted that "*Partnership work with the PCF is strong and is helping to drive improvement*" and Herefordshire's report states "*Co-production with children and young people with SEND and their families is strong*". Worcestershire's forum team was very new at the time of their inspection, and as they have built their capacity the area has become stronger in working co-production over the past year.

All forums in the region continue to be invited to the monthly West Midlands SEND Forum meetings where we meet with SEND leads from each area. However, the momentum for these meetings seems to have been lost with the lack of national direction in the SEND system and the planned retirement of the region coordinator.

We are grateful that several forum leads were offered funded place on the West Midlands SEND Leadership Course that is taking place next year and hope that this will strengthen the future leadership of the West Midlands Parent Carer Forum Network and help build relationships across the region.

Compared with some other regions there is a lack of regional coproduction activity (and funding for parent carer participation at a regional level) and we hope that this is something that will develop in the year ahead.

It was amazing to see Voice4Parents (Wolverhampton) winning a special recognition honour for SEND excellence for their work on the Power of Words project and it is positive to see that this work has been expanded across the Black Country ICB footprint although it is sad to hear the closure of this parent carer forum at the end of the year. We look forward to welcoming the new forum into the regional network once it has been established.

Finally, I would like to recognise all the amazing work that the PCFs in the West Midlands are doing, for continuing to work so hard to improve things for families in their areas and for all they do to support the regional and national work.

East of England

In the East of England (EoE), we are fortunate to have a committed and capable team, with Sarah Conboy as Chair, Julia Brunning as our new Vice Chair, Sylvia Jenkins as Secretary, and Lisa Belton serving as a Regional Representative.

Our termly face-to-face meetings provide a valuable opportunity for forums to come together to share challenges, celebrate successes, and highlight what matters most to families. These are complemented by termly virtual catch-ups, enabling us to connect every half term. The insights gathered during these sessions—alongside our termly data collection—consistently reflect the passion, resilience, and dedication of our forums in striving to improve services. This feedback is essential in enabling our regional representatives and the NNPCF to effectively represent our members at both regional and national levels.

Regional representatives have continued to play a key role at the regional SEND forum and have actively participated in three “Courageous Conversations”, an initiative designed to support honest, solution-focused dialogue between Local Authorities and peer teams. Our collaboration with health colleagues also remains crucial, supported by additional funding from the Regional NHS Team. This funding has enabled ongoing representation at NHS England-led regional meetings and has helped strengthen our collective voice.

This year, we used our regional Contact grant to host a dedicated event in Cambridge focused on mainstream inclusion. This was identified as a priority by our region based upon the government’s commitment to strengthening mainstream inclusion for children and young people with SEND.

For local Parent Carer Forums (PCFs), recent Local Area SEND inspections, preparation for future inspections, and engagement with the ongoing Change Partnership Programme (CPP), Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS), continue to be core aspects of their work. Alongside these priorities, forums remain deeply involved in their everyday activities—co-producing and collaborating on service improvements, hosting conferences and events, organising family fun days, running coffee mornings, conducting annual surveys, and recruiting new members of the Team and Expanding membership.

The tireless efforts of our eleven local PCFs across the East of England remain the foundation of all we do. These forums not only advocate for local families but also face many of the same personal challenges themselves. Despite these pressures, they continue to highlight the growing strain on families and the increasing demands placed on their capacity.

As we neared the end of another very busy year, it was fantastic to see so many of our members attend the Annual NNPCF and Contact Conference in February 2025—a great opportunity to connect, reflect, and move forward together.



London

The NNPCF Directors for London are members of the Association of London Directors of Children's Services SEND workstream (ALDCS), meeting 8 times across the year.

We are members of the SEND Strategic Managers and Parent Carer Network (SMPN) and steering group, coordinated by the London Improvement and Innovation Alliance (LIIA). SMPN held 8 thematic workshops. As steering group members, we help set content & often present. Six regional representatives also attend to feedback to forums.

We are members of the Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Board. Through NHSE funding we meet the London region SEND lead regularly. We helped with a film on co-production.

London NNPCF are part of the advisory group shaping content of the London SEND Leadership Programme commissioned by LIIA. Following the first cohort, we negotiated additional funded places for parents on subsequent cohorts.

We sit on the Advisory Group for the Mayor's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) Difference Matters Project. The project aims to support neurodivergent children to be comfortable and thrive in mainstream schools. We attend networking opportunities with the VRU Parent Carer Champion Network to increase their knowledge of SEND.

One director presented (in person and online) on parents' perspective around the supported internship programme led by NDTI.

Networking with our London forums.

London Region PCFs meet termly (9 mtgs). We co-ordinated engagement/training opportunities throughout the year including: meetings with forums focused on the governance, structure and regional priorities, update on SEND law with SOS SEND.

Co-developed a survey with MIME research on inclusion, along with focus groups (Early years & out of school inc EOTAS). We presented to an All Party Parliamentary Group for London, which was well received with much interest from MPs in hearing parent perspectives/lived experience around inclusion.

We invited the Law Commission Review Team to present at SMPN on the consultation around Disabled Children's Social Care. Following on a group of parents met with the Review Team to feedback on specific issues faced by SEND families. An NNPCF Representative attended the Review Team regional listening event which all informed the evidence for consideration by the Review Team.

We held two online focus groups to formulate a response to the Government Education Committee's call for evidence on Solving the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Crisis. This fed a London region response.

One NNPCF Director worked with the SEND Lead in SWL ICB to create a model for parent carer partnership working at senior level. This NNPCF director represents parent carers at the SWL ICB SEND Assurance Board. Hopefully, this will encourage similar models across London ICBs to develop partnership working with parent carers.

We carried out a survey to inform our consultation responses regarding the Education Committee's Solving the SEND crisis Inquiry, the Law Commission's Review of Disabled Children's Social Care Legislation.

We have been involved in separately funded projects PINS and CPP, delivering a presentation to the London CPP in January.

We have offered advice and support to Forums going through change alongside our regional colleagues from Contact.



North East and Cumbria

The Northeast region has undergone a year of significant change. One of the most notable developments was the realignment of the region in line with the Department for Education's North East footprint. As a result, our colleagues in Cumbria have now transitioned to and are warmly welcomed by the North West region.

Despite these changes, the region continues to meet regularly, supported by the Regional CIC, led by Carla, Becky, and Claire. It is evident that the North East forums are driven by a strong sense of purpose, with a shared commitment to collaboration, peer support, and the exchange of good practice.

Following the resignation of the North East Regional Director in September, the NNPCF dedicated time and resources to re-establish and strengthen relationships across the region. Kath Bromfield was appointed as an independent representative to engage directly with forums, listening to their experiences, identifying what was working well, recognising challenges, and helping ensure their voices are clearly represented within the NNPCF.

As part of this effort, the NNPCF Co-Chairs visited Newcastle to meet with the Regional CIC and discuss the key issues raised by forums. This visit coincided with their participation, alongside the Regional CIC, in a national workshop held in the North East: *"Towards an Effective and Financially Sustainable Approach to SEND in England"*, hosted by the Local Government Association and ISOS Partnership.

The recruitment was disappointingly held up by delays in the announcement of the Participation Contract, however once announced in February, the role was advertised and we were delighted to appoint Claire North in April 2025.

In the absence of a named Regional Director, Co-Chair Jo Harrison has provided vital support, using this period to strengthen communication across the region. Jo has worked to keep forums informed about the work of the NNPCF and ensured that the views of the North East were actively represented.

North West

The North West region of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) encompasses a diverse community, spanning urban, suburban, and rural areas. It is made up of 24 forums across a large geographical area, including some of the most deprived areas of the country as well as some of the wealthiest, highlighting significant socio-economic disparities. This year, we also welcomed Cumbria into the North West region, further increasing our footprint.

Throughout the past year, the North West region has demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability in the face of many ongoing difficulties, such as system changes in Integrated Care Boards (ICBs), devolution, and numerous poor inspection results. These challenges impact forum capacity, particularly in PINS and CPP areas. While this can strain relationships with partners, it also presents opportunities for renewed focus on SEND services following inspections. Conversely, areas with good inspection results face the challenge of maintaining the drive to improve services.

Congratulations to Kath Bromfield and the team from Contact, Alder Hey Children’s Hospital, and Edge Hill University for winning a special recognition honour for SEND excellence in co-production for their work in improving access to healthcare for underserved communities.

At a regional level, we have continued to build strong links with partners in NHSE. A big thank you to Janet Wray and Kelly Taylor for their continued support and tireless work to improve outcomes for children and young people (CYP) in the region. Along with Kelly, we hosted a successful NW engagement day focused on co-production, which was well received by senior healthcare leaders across the region.

We also have good engagement with our regional Department for Education (DFE) leads, with particular thanks to Gareth Llewellyn for his support in this area.

In May we had our face-to-face regional meeting where we welcomed our new forum from Tameside and new forum leads for Lancashire. A big thank you to Laura Burling from Contact for supporting these setups, along with our new forum in Blackburn with Darwen. Our focus was to discuss terms of reference to further develop the cluster model, which follows an ICB footprint in Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Mersey, and Lancashire and Cumbria. Special thanks to the cluster leads, Andrea and Christine, who has now stepped away from her forum work after many years of dedicated service, and Jean, who has been amazing despite her own challenges this year. This has all been supported by our regional Contact representative, Lisa Aldred, who has been a great personal help to me this year as well as to all our forums.

Looking forward, we face many challenges, such as the changes to NHS England, variable engagement in co-production at the local level, particularly with ICBs, and changes at the national level around benefits etc.... These events underscore the even greater importance of effective partnership working and co-production at all levels.

Finally, a big thank you to all the forums in the North West. Your dedication, humour, and passion are truly inspiring.



South East

Every year the strength, the resilience and the incredible work and support PCFs undertake and offer to each other, seems to grow stronger. This year has been no exception.

This year we have focussed on improving wider regional involvement with PCFs. Whilst there hasn't been a huge increase in the number of opportunities for PCFs to contribute to regional work, the South East PCFs were given the opportunity to take up Healthy Parent Carer training, funded by SESLIP. We have also continued to strengthen our relationship with the Regional DfE leads and Regional NHSE SEND lead.

As a region we have taken part in SEND Courageous Conversations which are facilitated by SESLIP. These conversations are an opportunity for Local Authorities and other stakeholders, including the PCFs, to take part in group discussions that offer peer challenge and support, enabling local areas to build on strengths and have candid discussions on what can be improved. These Courageous Conversations have proven to be welcomed by the Local Authorities and will be continued in 2025/26.

In June 2024, we held our South East Regional Conference, a welcomed opportunity to meet in person. This year we were delighted that Elise Meyer, Portsmouth PCF and a Claire Mason from Portsmouth County Council, came to train and speak to us about the Portsmouth Neurodiversity Profiling tool. There has been huge interest in this ND profiling tool, and it was great to receive first hand training, information about how the project works and what its role could be in other areas. All those present were delighted to hear about the level of local coproduction that had gone into the project and the strong culture of working in partnership that unpins the project in Portsmouth.

As a region, we have continued with our regional structure, having our regional meeting every half term virtually, with an in person meeting in the June of each year. This year we owe huge thanks to Andrew Howard for running the regional finances, and for also stepping in to lead on the regional administration whilst we assessed the needs of the region and recruited. We were delighted that Leanne Willard joined us in January 2025 to take on the South East Regional Co-ordinator role.

Thank you to our regional colleagues at Department for Education and NHSE who continue to support and advocate for coproduction and the importance of the work that PCFs undertake.

Thank you to our South East Regional Chair, Lisa Scarott, Medway PCF and to our Regional Steering Group for their continued support.

Thank you to our Contact advisors Sue Mennear, Olivia Newbolt and Laura Burling, who continue to support the region.

And finally, thank you to all the South East PCFs, it has been another great year of information sharing and feedback when you are all so incredibly busy, and especially for all the support and laughter. As always, you are all amazing.



SE PCF Conference June 2024

South West

Firstly, a huge thank you to everyone across the South West and the NNPCF for the incredibly warm welcome I received as I stepped into the role of NNPCF South West Director in October, following Tina's inspiring leadership. It's been a privilege to see how our network of Parent Carer Forums (PCFs) continues to support one another and grow stronger together.

At the start of the year, Tina visited Cornwall to personally thank Kay and the team as they stepped down from their PCF roles. Their dedication has left a lasting legacy, and we're incredibly grateful for all they've contributed.

In May, PCFs joined Local Authorities and ICBs for a regional peer review through the RIIA (Regional Innovation & Improvement Alliance). It was great to witness such positive, collaborative energy across the region, with real co-production in action.

A huge thank you to Rachel, who stepped in over the summer to help with regional admin and coordination. Her tireless support has been invaluable and deeply appreciated.

At our October regional event, we formally said goodbye and thank you to Tina, whose dedication helped shape the region. Stuart from Wiltshire shared moving words for Tina, myself, and Ruth, who also stepped down from her invaluable work keeping the region functioning. I was officially welcomed into my role and had the chance to share my vision for the year ahead. We also agreed on interim governance roles (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer) and formed a working group to develop our regional PCF structure.

In January, PCFs unanimously voted to become a Community Interest Company (CIC), a big step forward and we agreed on the CIC model to suit our needs.

February saw a fantastic turnout from our region at the National Conference. It was wonderful to catch up with so many of you in person and hear firsthand about your brilliant work.

It's been a pleasure connecting with PCFs across the region and especially exciting to meet the new Cornwall team - who are already doing amazing work as they establish themselves.

Some key highlights:

1. Increased PCF participation at regional RIIA meetings, with a shared priority for co-production.
2. Incredible efforts from forums delivering PINS projects locally—thank you for your dedication!
3. PCF leaders taking part in the SEND Leadership Programme run by NDTi.
4. NHSE SW's funding of 'Waiting Well' projects, helping families of children with Autism/ADHD - regardless of diagnosis.
5. Over 2,000 views of our NHSE-funded transitions research and a remarkable 20,000 views of our admissions avoidance booklets.



A sincere thank you to our partners at NHSE SW, DfE, RIIA and Contact. And above all, thank you to each and every forum for your dedication, passion, and care.

A special thank you to our South West Working Group: Rachel T, Rachel H, Ruth, Victoria, Claire P, Claire B & Sue for your tireless work and dedication. Here's to another year of working together and making a difference.

Yorkshire & Humber

Over the past year, 15 Parent Carer Forums (PCFs) across Yorkshire and Humber have once again shown extraordinary commitment in supporting families and each other. Stronger inter-forum relationships and consistently high attendance at regional meetings have reinforced a spirit of collaboration and resilience.

Following a recent restructuring, Yorkshire & Humber (Y&H) PCF now operates with co-chairs, alongside administrative and finance officers. The group met eight times this year and will meet six times in the upcoming year, alternating between online and face-to-face meetings across various regional locations. The growing use of a regional WhatsApp group has further enhanced communication, supporting this shift to fewer but more purposeful meetings.

Forums continue to share experiences and solutions, reducing duplication of effort and increasing support to families. One quote from York PCF highlights this value:

“Support from the regional PCF has been incredibly helpful. We’ve benefitted from shared ideas on communication, developing parent rep communities, and supporting PINS projects. Winning the NHS ‘Voice for Change’ award and increasing membership were among our recent highlights.”

Key Priorities

2024/2025 regional priorities were:

1. Preparation for Adulthood (PfA)
2. Partnership for Inclusion in Schools (PINS), including assessments for neurodevelopmental and broader needs
3. Wellbeing and sustainability of PCFs

Priority Events

PfA remains central to the regional agenda. A major milestone was the successful November 2024 conference **'My Perfect Week'**, which brought together young people, parent forums, and key partners to explore meaningful adulthood planning.



To support forum wellbeing and sustainability, the Y&H PCF hosted a regional wellbeing conference in March 2025, titled **'Strengthening Relationships and Planning for the Future as a Region'**. Funded by the Department for Education, this event featured contributions from Community Matters (on funding and sustainability) and Sheffield PCF (on mindfulness and self-care).

Communication and Engagement

The WhatsApp group has proven a valuable communication tool, enabling rapid support and exchange between forums. Regional admin continues to distribute updates and calls for input on regional and national issues. Discussions are ongoing about how best to amplify the collective voice of parent carers across Yorkshire and Humber.

National Representation and PINS

In February 2025, a record 17 strategic representatives from nine Y&H forums attended the NNPCF/Contact National Conference in Northampton, marking the region's highest level of participation to date.

PINS remains a focal point, with 10 of 14 forums actively involved. While some areas have fully embedded PCFs into their local implementation plans, others face challenges in establishing partnerships. Forums continue to contribute to the monthly NNPCF PINS drop-ins, ensuring their voices shape national discussions.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to our partners in the Department for Education and NHS, our regional co-chairs, admin, finance officers and PCF leads for their ongoing support. Thanks go to our Contact advisors, Cindy and Lisa for your continued support, and most importantly..... **to the families and forum members across the region. Your shared experiences, dedication, and collaboration continue to inspire and drive positive change.**



Looking Ahead

As we move into 2025–26, many challenges remain. Too many families still experience delays, inconsistent support, and systemic barriers. But the commitment of PCFs, the strength of our partnerships, and the new government’s promise of reform give us hope.

Our priorities will be:

- Ensuring family voices are central to any SEND reform.
- Continuing to build the visibility and impact of forums locally, regionally and nationally.

Together, we will keep working towards a community where every child, young person and their family with SEND is valued, supported, and able to thrive.

NNPCF Team





National Network of Parent Carer Forums
'Our Strength is our Shared Experience'
www.nnpcf.org.uk

Contact us

NNPCF

Email: info@nnpcf.org.uk

www.nnpcf.org.uk

NNPCF
124-128 City Road,
London
EC1V 2NX

Find us on
Facebook and Twitter
@NNPCF