

Norfolk Parent Partnership Steering Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose and Aims

The purpose of the Norfolk Parent Partnership Service (NPPS) is to support parents, carers and families to improve outcomes for their children and young people who have special educational needs

The aims of the NPPS Steering Group are to:

- Support, promote and develop the NPPS
- Ensure the impartiality of NPPS from the Local Authority by providing an 'arms length' oversight of the management of the Service and contribute to the wider Quality Assurance process by reviewing practises, policies and procedures
- Promote a partnership approach by involving representatives of a broad range of stakeholders with a bias towards those who are parents of children with Special Educational Needs and who have used the service
- Provide feedback to the Local Authority to influence decisions on Special Educational Needs policies, procedures and practices
- To formally discuss and debate the business plan at each termly meeting.
- To monitor compliance with legislation

In order to meet its aims the NPPS Steering Group will:

Monitor and evaluate NPPS

Ensure that the NPPS meets the needs of parents, carers and families for impartial information, advice and support, to improve outcomes for children and young people who have special educational needs:

Monitor the Business Plan with NPPS on a termly basis,

- Ensure that policies, procedures and practices are kept up to date.
- Bring relevant consultations to the steering group.

Influence Service development

Provide feedback to the Local Authority to influence decisions on Special Educational Needs policies, procedures and practices:

- Identify and promote good practice
- Raise issues and concerns
- Identify gaps in services
- Be a key body for consultation and representation with regards any proposed developments in Special Educational Needs

- Ensure that NPPS is engaged as a key stakeholder group in developments within Norfolk Children's Services and any relevant wider consultations

Representation and Membership

The Steering Group will represent a broad range of stakeholders who will promote a partnership approach which involves all members. All members will be equal partners and the individual skills, knowledge and views that each member brings will be equally recognised and valued. There will be a bias within this stakeholder group towards parents of children with Special Educational Needs, particularly those who have used the service. Membership of this group will be kept under 'continuous review' by the Local Authority Manager of NPPS:

- The Chair and Vice Chair will be drawn from members of the Group, preferably a parent of a child with SEN who has used the service.
- Tenure for the Chair and Vice Chair will be for a year at a time, renewed up to and not exceeding 3 years. The Chair cannot be a Local Authority officer.
- Individual membership of the group will be reviewed after 3 years to ensure membership is continually 'refreshed'

The NPPS Steering Group will include:

- Local Authority Manager of NPPS
- The senior Local Authority officer with a lead in SEN
- 5 x Voluntary / Community Sector Representatives across the spectrum of SEN from 5 voluntary sector / Community organisations, with a bias towards parents who have used the NPP service
- 1 x IAG Professional (Connexions)
- 1 x Health
- 2 x Independent Parental Supporter's
- 1 x Head teacher/Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator from Primary inc early years facility
- 1 x Senior Manager Secondary Sector
- 1 x Governor
- 1 x County Council Member
- 6 x Parents/carers who have been given advice and support from the NPP service, drawn from the database.

A Parent Focus group will be formed to draw parent /carer representatives from those expressing an interest via service evaluations.

Members will:

- Adhere to the role description for members
- Promote NPPS wherever possible

- Support the work of the NPPS including, where appropriate and they feel confident to do so, contribute to talks and training events
- Give the perspective and findings of their own agency/constituency or group whilst recognising and appreciating the views of others.
- Promote a partnership approach by giving feedback to their own agency, group or constituency using the appropriate channels when requested
- Be prepared to take part in/lead small NPP 'task and finish' working groups
- Represent NPPS on other key groups as agreed with the Steering Group

Becoming a member of the Steering group

When a vacancy arises a sub group of not less than three but not more than five people will form. This will be led by the Steering group Chair and representatives from Parent Partnership to consider areas of expertise missing and invite interested people to apply. This may or may not be another member of the organisation that has had a member resign. This is to ensure a variety of organisations and individuals are represented and keep the group dynamic.

Where a new member is nominated who has not worked with or been supported by Norfolk Parent Partnership they must meet with a PPO and a member of the steering group to discuss the role of PP in Norfolk.

Applications will be considered by the sub group, applicants may be asked to meet this group before being invited to join.

New members will:

- Take part in an induction to their role, lead by Parent Partnership Officers, before becoming part of the steering group
- Agree to adhere to the terms of reference and role description

Meetings

NPPSG meetings will be held termly, 3 times a year.

Members will:

- Expect to attend each meeting
- Identify and acknowledge with the Chair any conflict of interest if and when it arises
- Notify the chair through the Parent Partnership Team if they cannot attend
- Understand that when members are unable to attend consecutive meetings, their position may be reviewed which is at the discretion of the Chair and their membership be withdrawn.

- Only delegate attendance if this has been agreed by the Chair in advance
- Read relevant material before and after meetings
- Abide by requests for confidentiality

The Parent Partnership Service will:

- Produce and publish an ongoing business plan
- Ensure that policies, procedures and practices are kept up to date by itemising as a rolling programme of review on the agenda.
- Support members to carry out their responsibilities
- Produce and present relevant reports including quantitative and qualitative information
- Provide help to access meetings (venues, materials, formats)
- Be available to members to discuss issues and problems
- Process expenses claims as soon as possible
- Provide induction to the role
- Invite members to attend NPPS training opportunities whenever numbers allow.

We welcome applications on our IPS volunteer's course from voluntary organisations that have a representative on our Steering group. Places will be prioritised for IPS volunteers and then SEN caseworkers but remaining capacity can be used for those giving parental support in education. A small charge will be made to cover costs. There is a limit of two places per organisation per school year.

The Local Authority Manager will:

- Oversee the membership, roles and responsibilities of the NPPSG
- Ensure that members adhere to the role description
- Facilitate the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair
- Ensure support is provided to the Chair and Vice Chair
- Review the Terms of Reference