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Background

Parentsactive CIC exists as a force for positive change. Our purpose is to improve life for parents of children and young people with additional needs in Hammersmith & Fulham by:

- Creating a supportive, inclusive community where everyone belongs
- Ensuring parents’ voices are genuinely heard
- Recognising and addressing the challenges families face
- Helping shape the services that our children and young people deserve

We are an independent, constituted group led by parent carers of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND 0–25). We work in partnership with organisations that provide services to families but are an independent organisation from the local council and health services (NHS). This independence allows us to gather and share the honest experiences of families, ensuring parent carers have a voice that influences real change.

Our Vision

Parentsactive exists to ensure that families have the support they need to navigate the often complex and overwhelming landscape of health, education and social care.

We believe that **knowledge is power** – and that every parent supporting a child or young adult with a disability should have access to the information, support and tools they need to sustain their family’s wellbeing.

Through our support network, we offer:

- Peer support
- Empowerment
- Learning events
- Advocacy

These are designed to reduce the isolation, confusion and helplessness that many families experience.

Unlike many forums, Parentsactive also supports families of young people **aged 25 and over**. We recognise that for many, the end of an EHCP can feel like falling off a cliff edge – yet the need for guidance and support does not stop there.

Aligned with National Parent Carer Forum principles and relevant legislation, we actively gather the views of a diverse range of families to ensure we represent our local population. We work collaboratively with the local authority, education settings, health and social care providers, and other local organisations to highlight what works well and where improvements are needed. We aim to co-produce services as equal partners, ensuring that new initiatives are genuinely responsive to the needs of our children, young people and their families.

Our Values

- **Inclusion** – Welcoming all families, whatever their background or journey
- **Empowerment** – Equipping families with knowledge, confidence and a voice
- **Partnership** – Working collaboratively with local services and decision-makers
- **Challenge** – Speaking up when things aren't working and pushing for change
- **Continuity** – Supporting families beyond the 0–25 bracket, because needs don't stop there

Steering Group

Role of the Steering Group

The day-to-day business of Parentsactive CIC is managed by the Directors. The Steering Group provides essential guidance and support to the Parent Carer Forum on aims and priorities.

Structure and Membership

- The Steering Group will have **between 5 and 12 members**, at least 80% of whom must be parent carers of disabled children/young people living in Hammersmith & Fulham.
- Parentsactive Directors and staff will also attend the steering committee meetings as required.
- The Steering Group will appoint a **Chairperson**, nominated and elected annually by majority vote of the group. This term may be extended by agreement.
- A **Vice Chair** will be elected to support and deputise for the Chair.
- In the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair, members may elect another Steering Group member to chair a meeting.

- The Parentsactive Coordinator will oversee the overall running of the forum, reporting to the CEO and Board of Directors.
- Steering Group members may be asked to volunteer support with events, activities, or to represent Parentsactive on other committees/groups.

Role of the Chair and Vice Chair

The Chair will:

- Facilitate Steering Group meetings (ensuring they run on time, stay on agenda, and allow equal participation)
- Support the Parentsactive Coordinator in meetings with the Local Authority, at national conferences, and in co-production work
- Support the Coordinator in recruiting and inducting new committee members
- Assist the Coordinator in reviewing policies and procedures
- Represent Parentsactive at relevant strategic meetings and events

The Vice Chair will undertake these duties when the Chair is absent.

Decision-Making

- Each Steering Group member has one vote.
- Decisions will be made by **consensus where possible**, or by majority if consensus cannot be reached.
- In the event of a tie, the Chair will have the casting vote.
- A **quorum of at least one-third** of members must be present for decisions to be valid.
- Any serious disagreements or concerns will follow the Code of Conduct and, if unresolved, may be referred to impartial support.

Meetings

- Steering Group meetings will be held **at least once per term**.
- Members will receive **at least 2 weeks' notice** of meetings.
- Papers and information will be circulated in good time so that members can prepare.
- Any parent carer of a child/young person with SEND in Hammersmith & Fulham can suggest an agenda item by contacting info@parentsactive.org.uk.
- Minutes of Steering Group meetings will be shared following each meeting by the Admin Assistant or the Coordinator.

Membership Requirements

Steering Group members must:

- Be members of Parentsactive CIC SEND community
- Represent the views of a wider group of parents by maintaining regular contact with other carers
- Sign and adhere to the Parentsactive CIC **Code of Conduct** and organisational policies
- Attend meetings regularly; if a member misses three consecutive meetings without apology, they may be asked to step down
- Maintain confidentiality – information shared within the Steering Group must not be discussed outside without consent

Expectations

- Attend and contribute to meetings
- Stay in touch with the wider parent carer community
- Represent Parentsactive positively in other groups/committees
- Feedback to Steering Group if appointed as a parent rep on a workstream
- Be willing to participate in workstreams
- Help organise and support activities where possible
- Raise any concerns internally, not externally

Expenses

- Members may claim **reasonable expenses** for travel and childcare incurred to attend Steering Group meetings.
- No attendance fees are paid.

Application and Resignation

- Applications to join the Steering Group should be sent by email to **info@parentsactive.org.uk** or by post to:
AOD Centre for Independent Living, Mo Mowlam House, Clem Attlee Court, London SW6 7BF.
- Members will be elected via majority vote at a Steering Group meeting.
- All applications will be handled in line with Parentsactive CIC's **Data Protection Policy**.
- Members may resign at any time by writing to the Directors.

Updated: 01/10/25

Date of next revision: 01/10/26

Responsibility of: The Steering Group

Appendix A

Examples of unacceptable behaviours that can be considered to constitute bullying and harassment:

- Bullying by exclusion – this may take the form of social isolation and/or exclusion from meetings
- Deliberate withholding of information with the intention of affecting a colleague's performance
- Removing responsibilities
- Undermining a person's role or instructions
- Unfair and destructive criticism carried out publicly or privately
- Intimidating behaviour
- Name calling (consideration should also be given to the use of 'pet names or nick names')
- Shouting or screaming at someone
- Setting someone up to fail
- Verbal abuse and spreading of unfounded rumours
- Humiliation or ridicule
- Copying emails that are critical about someone to others that do not need to know
- Criticism or innuendoes based on protected characteristics

Harassment can be in many forms, below are some examples

- Spreading rumours
- Racist, sexist or homophobic jokes
- Exclusion or victimisation
- Unwelcome sexual advances (touching, standing too close, sending inappropriate messages or images by text or email, asking for sexual favours, making decisions on the basis of sexual advances being accepted or rejected)
- Physical contact varying from touching to criminal assault
- Display of offensive material
- Unwelcome remarks about a person's dress, appearance, race, gender, sexual orientation or marital status
- Using social media to display offensive material or spread rumours.