



Wakefield Parent Carer Forum

Wakefield Parent Carer Forum Constitution 2nd November 2020

The constitution covers Parents and Carers of children who have special and additional needs, and/or disability from birth to the age of 25.

Wakefield Parent Carer Forum and its money will be administered and managed in accordance with the provisions in this constitution. Adoption of this constitution as of the date it is signed. This constitution sets out the rules by which Wakefield Parent Carer Forum will be governed. These are legally binding on the members.

The name of the group is Wakefield Parent Carer Forum.

Aims

A] To be the strategic consultative body representing families and carers who are resident in the area of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council, who have children with special and additional needs, and/or disability, providing a liaison point for local Statutory and Voluntary Agencies.

B] To consult with and inform our membership with a view to ensuring that all children in Wakefield who have special and additional needs, and/or disability have the best possible outcomes. These outcomes may be updated from time to time in the light of changes to Government policy.

C] To facilitate participation between all parties and ensure that the voices of parents and carers are heard by The Local Authority, Health and Care Service providers.

D] To empower and support parents and carers to participate.

E] To ensure good practice, knowledge and share expertise to continue to grow and strengthen the forum.

F] To signpost parents and carers to the appropriate services, organisations or services.

G] To develop a cohesive and coherent structure to sustain and develop the effectiveness of participation between parties.

H] To reduce isolation for families & provide peer to peer support.

Objectives

- 1]** To provide a platform of respect and understanding for all and every voice is valued, so that everyone can contribute confidently to the shaping of services for the benefit of children and families living with special and additional needs, and/or disability.
- 2]** To build a robust forum and sustainable participation, with a view to a better and brighter future for children and families.
- 3]** To provide opportunities for families to meet other families who have special and additional needs, and/or disability and professionals and share experiences, and to find out what is happening in their local area.
- 4]** To promote equal opportunities and inclusion for all.
- 5]** To be a positive voice and maintain relationships with all parties, even if the subject is challenging.
- 6]** To share good practice and to learn from one another and facilitate peer support relevant to participation.
- 7]** To develop reports and responses according to Wakefield Parent Carer Forum resources to issues affecting parents and carers.
- 8]** To liaise on a national, regional and local level to champion continued cultural change on statutory organisations.

In furtherance of the aims and objectives the group may:

- Employ and remunerate staff.
 - Raise funds by any lawful means.
 - Accept gifts and donations for the group.
 - Do anything else within the law which is necessary for the group to carry out their aims and objectives.
- 9]** To work in co-production to make a positive difference and improve the quality of life for all SEND children & families in Wakefield.



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Application of the income

- 1.** The Wakefield Parent Carer Forum funds shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the aims and objectives.
- 2.** Any member may be given reasonable and proper remuneration for any goods and/or services bought on behalf of or for Wakefield Parent Carer Forum.
- 3.** Travel costs, material costs and venue hire, may all be claimed from the funds, when they are for Wakefield Parent Carer Forum.
- 4.** Members should give receipts or invoice to the treasurer, for payment.
- 5.** A bank account with Lloyds Bank is open and run by the treasurer. Cheques, & bank transfers must be signed by any two of the three nominated signatories. Wakefield Parent Carer Forum Business Debit Cards will be issued to Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, expenses will be raised and authorised in accordance with the Finance Policy.
- 6.** Accurate accounts of all income and expenditure must be kept for presentation at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- 7.** If Wakefield Parent Carer Forum is dissolved then any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be returned to the grant providers or with their agreement transferred to other such charitable institutions with similar aims and objectives.

The disbursement of any funds held by Wakefield Parent Carer Forum will be commensurate with the conditions of its grant.

Leases or property

- 1.** The Forum can take out a premise lease in its own name "Wakefield Parent Carer Forum"
- 2.** The premise lease will be signed by and managed by the Treasurer, Secretary and Chairperson who will have the authority to execute the lease on behalf of the forum.
- 3.** Payments for the premise lease will be as per Wakefield Parent Carer Forum Finance Policy & Lease Agreement.
- 4.** Termination of leases or property will be as per the terms of the signed Lease Agreement.

Structure and Membership Membership

1. Membership is open to family members and carers of any child or young adult with special and additional needs, and/or disability, up to the age of 25 years and who live in Wakefield Metropolitan District Council area. Bereaved members are still able to be members for up to 3 years.
2. There will also be an associate membership for practitioners, both within the Voluntary and Statutory sectors. This membership will have no voting rights, but will be kept up to date with Wakefield Parent Carer Forum's newsletter and will be able to attend Open Meetings.
3. Membership is not transferable.
4. Steering Group members must keep a register of members, either in a written form or held on computer and will ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and GDPR.
5. Each Steering Group member is entitled to one vote.
6. Any member may request to be removed from the register of members at any time and will no longer receive any communication.
7. If the Steering Group considers that any member's conduct is in any way harmful to the aims and objectives of Wakefield Parent Carer Forum the committee/steering group will reserve the right to terminate membership.

Steering Group Management / Meetings

Wakefield Parent Carer Forum is a member of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums and is represented at the termly regional network meetings and will feedback to local level.

Wakefield Parent Carer Forum Steering Group membership comprises of:

A maximum of 9 parent / carers, including:

- A Chair Person.
- A Treasurer
- A Secretary
- Maximum of 6 Steering Group Members
- Associate members comprising of a database of contactable members.
- Other roles within the Steering Group will be appointed as and when required.



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- The inaugural Steering Group members and officers shall be those elected at the initial meeting. After this, if there are vacancies in the Steering Group, then members of the wider membership of Wakefield Parent Carer Forum can put themselves forward to join the Steering Group. A Quorum of the Steering Group members is required for a vote to be held, and a decision to be made.
- The Steering Group officers will be biannually elected from the Steering Group members at the AGM; or ASAP if a position becomes vacant.
- The Steering Group may appoint sub-committees to carry out specific tasks and delegate specific powers as necessary. Sub-committees must report back to the Steering Group for ratification of any decisions.
- The Steering Group may have no more than two co-opted members whom will not be entitled to vote.

Rules for the Steering Group

- The Steering Group will meet half termly to update and advise the facilitation of event and consultations necessary to meet the aims and objectives of Wakefield Parent Carer Forum.
- The Wakefield Parent Carer Forum Secretary will record and disseminate information via Wakefield Parent Carer Forum TEAMS platform or via e-mail. Steering Group Members will acknowledge that they have read the post / e-mail. A majority is acceptance of approval unless there is an objection.
- The Wakefield Parent Carer Forum Treasurer will monitor accounts and distribute funds accordingly to meet the needs of Wakefield Parent Carer Forum steering members, and record funding and spending. They will report the financial position at each steering group meeting.
- The Wakefield Parent Carer Forum Chair Person will ensure agenda items are followed up and recorded at Wakefield Parent Carer Forum Steering Group meetings and liaise with The Secretary to ensure the Wakefield Parent Carer Forum members remain informed.
- The Chair Person, in consultation with a minimum of one parent will be responsible for managing the agenda and ensuring that all members of The Steering Group have the opportunity to be heard.
- The agenda should be driven by issues affecting parents and carers.
- If items on the agenda require input from representatives of a statutory or voluntary body, the appropriate individual should be given adequate notice of the agenda items and be invited as a guest of The Wakefield Parent Carer Forum Steering Group to the meeting.
- If members of The Steering Group are in agreement to delegate responsibility for specific tasks to a sub group or person, these should be trusted by all steering group members to undertake the task in accordance with the best interests of all members represented.
- If The Steering Group members undertake representative roles on other steering groups, committee's or external meetings related to the objectives of Wakefield Parent Carer Forum, they must ensure that they share information and feedback to The Steering Group members via the Steering Group Facebook group briefly within 7 days, and submit minutes within 14 days of attending such meetings with the agreed process (via the secretary).



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- If any Steering Group member has a conflict of / or duality of interest with any matters arising they will declare this at the earliest opportunity or when that particular discussion arises and advise The Wakefield Parent Carer Forum Steering Group of such. That Steering Group member may in such circumstances lose their vote on that particular matter.
- All information that is shared and exchanged within the Steering Group meetings is for the specific purpose of achieving the groups goals.
- Any information made available to me prior to the Steering Group meetings and any discussion undertaken within the Steering Group meetings will not be discussed with anyone outside of the Steering Group unless commensurate with the group's goals and current aims.

Steering Group Members and attendees are expected to:

- Abide by the constitution and policies of Wakefield Parent Carer Forum at all times.
- Gather views and opinions from parents and carers wherever appropriate and bring them to The Wakefield Parent Carer Forum Steering Group meeting or The Chair Person via the approved method.
- Champion issues relevant to families and children who have special and additional needs, and/or disability up to the age of 25 years.

Steering Group Meeting Arrangements

- The Steering Group will meet half termly to update and advise the facilitation of event and consultations necessary to meet the aims and objectives of Wakefield Parent Carer Forum. There will be a minimum of 6 meetings per year, including the Annual General Meeting.
- Visitors, speakers and other attendees are to attend by invitation only and after majority agreement from The Steering Group Members, either at a Steering Group Meeting or through other correspondence. Minutes are to be circulated within 14 days after The Steering Group Meeting.
- A draft agenda will be circulated a minimum of 7 days prior to the Steering Group Meeting.
- Times, dates and venues are to be agreed by The Steering Group members at each Steering Group Meeting and giving consideration to locality and equal opportunities.
- Where individual adjustments are required for meetings due to disability or other needs, the person must advise the relevant officer (i.e. The Chair Person) at the earliest opportunity of their needs and that all reasonable efforts will be made to meet those needs.
- One third (1/3) quorum of The Steering Group members are required to attend at any given meeting for the meeting to proceed.
- Each Steering Group member has one vote.
- A General Meeting can be called by at least 3 members of the Steering Group when some special or urgent business has to be considered. Such meetings will be called in writing in advance as and when required. A quorum for such meetings shall consist of a minimum of 3 members of the membership. The same rules shall apply to Annual General Meetings and any amendments made to the constitution



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Notes:

Quorum numbers of one third:

3 – 8 quorum is 3

9 – 11 quorum is 4

The Annual General Meeting is to take place before October 31st of each year and the following will take place:

- An Annual Report from The Chair Person is to be circulated together with achievements and activities carried out by Wakefield Parent Carer Forum.
- A review of the constitution and any changes agreed upon.
- A report from The Treasurer of budgets and accounts reviewed and agreed.

A Special General Meeting may be called to consider the dissolution of the organisation if 33% of the members requests such a meeting in writing. The organisation may be dissolved subsequently by agreement of 2/3 of the members.

The constitution is agreed by The Steering Group members of Wakefield Parent Carer Forum. It can be amended as required only by the majority agreement of The Steering Group members of Wakefield Parent Carer Forum. It will be reviewed annually at The Wakefield Parent Carer Forum AGM to ensure it still meets the requirements of the forum.

As a Steering Group Member of Wakefield Parent Carer Forum listed below, I am in agreement to this constitution and associated policies.