



ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Salford Parent Carer Forum

Viv Ormrod, Chair



In numbers.....

1200
members

Over 500
posts/messages/emails reaching
out for information and advice
between 1st January 24 -
30th April 24

630
responses to
4 separate
surveys

In a recent
satisfaction
survey, 100% of
responders said
SPCF are making a
difference.

Over 5000 volunteer hours

10
volunteers

"You guys are
amazing. Thank
you for all you
do!"

A parent on our Facebook
group

"It was lovely to meet Hayley yesterday,
actually helped the rest of my day,
thanks for the support!"

From a parent attending one of our drop ins.

1056 website
hits since its
launch in
February '23

40 sessions / drop-
ins / feedback
sessions

Annual report 2023-24

1. Management

23-24 was SalfordPCF's 3rd full year. We have a core steering group of 6 who plan, organise, and deliver our current programme of events.

Chair – Viv Ormrod

Secretary – Charlene Delve

Treasurer – Hayley Robinson

Steering group member – Luca Urban

Steering group member – Lynsey Ferguson

Steering group member – Gemma Cooper

We have one vacancy on the steering group that we would like to fill.

2. Membership

Our membership is now at 1200 and continues to grow, week on week.

White British makes up 90% of our membership, the other 10% is Black African, Asian, and White European. 59% have a child in mainstream schools and with the most common SEND being Autism.

3. Finance

Our main source of funding is from the grant provided by the Department of Education (£17500). We were lucky enough to have been successful in two CVS grants. The volunteer expenses grant (£350) and the Wellbeing grant (£1500). The Autism. SalfordPCF receive a contribution of £10000 for the Autism in School Project.

4. Sessions and events

We have hosted over 60 sessions over the course of the last 12 months. We have 2-4 sessions each week in a range of venues throughout the city. We have supported over 600 parent carers through these sessions.

Holistic Sound Healing with Reiki

Held monthly in Salford's Gateways. Up to 15 parents each month attend these sessions. The aim of the sessions is to improve parent carer well-being, promote self-care and reduce isolation. This is a hugely popular session in which parents have specifically requested more of.

Drop-ins

We have three regular drop-ins: Swinton Family Hub, The Height Library, and Irlam Leisure centre. There is now a regular attendance from lots of families who are isolated and looking for information, support or wishing to connect with others in similar situations. In addition to offering peer support, we use these drop-ins to gain the views, opinions, and experiences of parent carers and to explore what they want SEND support to look like.

SPCF Allotment

Last year, we signed for a plot at Weaste Allotments. The aim was to bring families together to create a safe space where they could share experiences, get advice, and feel supported. We have several regular attendees who enjoy the space and benefit greatly from this. This year, our plot was expanded, and we are planning to use the additional space to install raised beds that are accessible for wheelchair users.

RHS Bridgewater

We have been lucky enough to have been able to access regular sessions at RHS Bridgewater. We have held a monthly session for parent carers and several additional sessions in the holidays to include children and young people.

Virtual sessions

To ensure we are fully accessible; we host some virtual drop-ins in the evening for parent carers. These are held quarterly and are often attended by parent carers who are in work during the day and are unable to access some of our other groups.

Walk and Talks

The forum meets up monthly at Clifton Country Park. We stroll around the lake (the pace is set by the littlest legs) followed by a play on the park. At times, these are themed (Easter/Halloween/Christmas). In the last 12 months, 100 people have attended.

'Autism in Schools' sessions

Although the project is planned and run in partnership with other services, Parent Carer drop-ins are solely organised by the forum. From the three schools that we are working with this year, and the three drop-ins held so far, 29 parent carers have attended so far and we have received lots of feedback about what is working well, in addition to areas for improvement.

Salford SEND Information Day

This year, the attendance to this event was higher than the year before. Over 400 parent carers attended this amazing event! The feedback we received was incredibly positive and parent carers valued the opportunity to speak directly to professionals.

5. The voice of Parent Carers and their children and young people

Our Annual SEND survey that was launched in the Autumn was well received. We had 450 responses (parent carers) and 124 (young people). The results of this survey were shared to Salford's SEND partnership board who used them to inform their SEND Improvement plan and SEND Strategy.

We have worked with many services this year to ensure that parent carers' views and opinions are considered when developing services.

SEND Partnership board	Neurodevelopmental Pathway	CAMHs
Family Hubs	The Local Offer Partnership	SIASS
Commissioning Team	EBSA pathway	
Learning Support Service	SEN team	

SalfordPCF would like to thank professionals and services for taking the time to hear the voices of the SEND community.

6. Our work: You said, we did!

The following table highlights just some of the work that we are doing:

Feedback request	What you said!	What we did!
<p>Leisure and recreation The forum, alongside Salford LA, undertook a survey to look at the opportunities available to your children and young people.</p>	<p>There are limited activities for Children and Young People who have SEND. Some activities for families (swimming/cinema/theatres/museums etc), are also difficult to access.</p>	<p>Parent reps attended the Local Offer Live. This event was organised by Salford Council's Local Offer team where they invited providers of leisure activities to help them improve their accessibility and offer to children and young people with SEND.</p> <p>We liaised with some venues to look at their Social Stories and how accessible they are.</p> <p>We continue to build working relationships with Salford Community Leisure. SLC attended the SEND Information Day.</p> <p>We regularly share information on activities that are available for children and young people in Salford.</p>
<p>Salford's Local Offer We asked what you thought of the Local Offer, and if you could find the information that you needed.</p>	<p>"I didn't know about it"</p> <p>"The Local Offer is difficult to navigate"</p> <p>"I can't find the information I need"</p> <p>"There is nothing for children with ASD"</p> <p>"The information is hard to understand"</p>	<p>Parent Reps are part of the Local Offer Partnership and continue to give a parent's perspective on the webpages and their content.</p> <p>We took part in the Local Offer Live to support organisations to be accessible to children and young people with SEND.</p> <p>Forum members attended a session where we explored the Local Offer and the SEND code of practice.</p>

<p>Salford's Annual SEND Survey In September, we sent out our Annual SEND Survey to hear your thoughts on how Salford is meeting the needs for our children and young people.</p>	<p>450 parent carers responded with their views (up from 343 on the previous year)</p>	<p>The results of the survey have been shared with the Local Authority and partner agencies to contribute to the SEND Improvement Plans, SEND Strategy and other planning of services.</p>
<p>Short Break care</p>	<p>Some of you have told us that you don't know what is available for short break or what short breaks are.</p>	<p>We have shared information on what is available to families and how they access it.</p> <p>The Forum attended an event organised by Salford commissioning team to work more closely with providers of short breaks.</p> <p>A number of our short break providers attended our SEND Information Day to meet with families and to share what their offer is.</p>
<p>CAMHs</p>	<p>Many parents have told us they are waiting a long time for their child to be seen by Mental Health Services.</p>	<p>We have shared these concerns with the LA and CAMHs.</p> <p>We have discussed with CAMHs how we can work together to share parents' views and to ensure that they feel informed and supported whilst waiting to be seen.</p> <p>CAMHs came to our Annual SEND Information Day to meet with parents and to discuss how to support young people in Salford.</p>

<i>Salford SEND Information Day</i>	Parents who attended our 2023 event asked for us to host this annually.	This year we had over 100 professionals from 35 services coming together to empower and inform parent carers.
<i>Parent Carer well being</i>	Many of you have told us that you have often found this journey stressful and isolating with very little support.	In addition to our regular drop-ins, SPCF introduced Sound Healing Sessions with a holistic therapist. These sessions are hugely popular.
<i>Coffee morning drop-ins</i>	Lots of you have shared how you often don't know where to turn or go to for advice or support.	We have held regular drop-ins around the city to enable parent carers to come and meet the forum, find out what we are about and where to get the right advice and support.
<i>Autism in Schools Project</i>	<p>"My child's school struggle to understand his needs"</p> <p>"My son is always sent home because he struggles in school"</p> <p>"Schools don't do enough for kids with neurodiversities"</p>	Following a successfully first year, SPCF are now working with 3 of Salford's Schools alongside partner agencies.
<i>Short break panel</i>	There aren't enough activities in the city for children with SEND.	A Parent Rep sits on the Short Break Panel to represent the Forum.
<i>EBSA pathway</i>	<p>Parents feel blamed when their child is struggling to attend school.</p> <p>Parents say there is little advice available when they cannot get their child in school.</p> <p>Parents share that they are threatened with fines.</p>	SPCF is working closely with Salford's Educational Psychology Service to ensure the pathway meets the needs of children and young people in Salford and is supporting their parent carers.

7. The New Year ahead....

We have lots of ideas of what we would like to achieve over the next 12 months, we have also asked our membership what they would like from the forum too. Ideas include:

