

### 1. Role description

- Representatives provide a perspective relevant to their role to the DSPL Local Area and County Groups. Whilst personal experience may inform this, they must not rely entirely on their own experiences, views and judgments, but seek to be representative of the wider network of those they represent.
- All representatives are stakeholders alongside others in the Group. The Chair of the DSPL Local Area Group is responsible for ensuring that all representatives have equal rights and are equally valued.
- All representatives must commit to reading papers, regularly attending and contributing constructively to meetings.
- All representatives should have experience of working as a member of a group, listening to others, sensitively representing points of view and issues arising in group discussions, commenting constructively and maintaining confidentiality.
- Representatives, other than those with Local Authority roles, volunteer to join the DSPL Local Area Groups in accordance with the membership structure set out in the DSPL Local Area Groups Terms of Reference. Further details on parent representation and selection is set out below.

### 2. Expected commitment

- All representatives can expect to attend Local Area Group meetings twice a term. Representatives may volunteer to join working parties in addition to this.
- Meetings will be of approximately 2 -3 hours duration.
- Meetings will take place at mutually agreed times for the DSPL group and will take into account of all stakeholders' availability.
- Those elected to attend the County Group meetings can expect to attend meetings three times each year in addition to their other commitments at the Local Area Group level.
- Those sitting on the Development Group can expect to attend meetings three times a year.
- All attempts will be made for papers for the meetings to be circulated one week prior to the meeting to allow reading and consultation time of one or two hours depending on the agenda.

### 3. Support

- All representatives can expect to have the full support of their DSPL Local Area Group to undertake the representative role, and especially their Group Chair.
- Training will be arranged for representatives through HCC and Herts

Parent Carers Involvement (HPCI) (for parents) to help with terminology, confidence, analysis of data and other skill requirements which may be identified.

- At any point, representatives will have access to named individuals (officers or parents) who can be phoned or emailed to get support to understand any aspect of the DSPL programme or any issue arising as a consequence of taking on the role.

#### **4. Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest**

- All representatives must respect the confidentiality of any issues being discussed and documents being presented. Where there is the possibility of a conflict of interest, this must be declared.
- Parents are expected to comply with the HPCI confidentiality and conflict of interest principles which are available from the HPCI.
- Any concerns within the DSPL Local Area Groups about parent representation should be raised with HPCI in the first instance. The HPCI Coordinator can be contacted at [chair@hertsparentcarers.org.uk](mailto:chair@hertsparentcarers.org.uk) or by phone on 07840 360245

#### **5. Parental Representation**

- The DSPL structure includes nine Local Area Groups, a County Group a Development Group and an SEND Executive. Parent/carer (hereafter referred to as "parent") representation is included in these groups except for the Development Group which is for DSPL Managers only.
- Each DSPL Local Area Group must include a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 3 core parent representatives.
- All parent representatives attending meetings must be members of the HPCI network.
- Each DSPL Local Area Group should identify a further 3 or 4 parent representatives to form the wider parent representatives group. These parents should be able to substitute for the core group where necessary and may be invited to join working parties for limited periods of time.
- Each DSPL Local Area Group must seek the views of the larger network of parents within their local area.
- A minimum of two parent representatives will be elected by the members of the Local Area Group Parent Representatives Group to attend the County Group.
- Core parent representatives can also expect to attend a meeting of the Local Area Group Parent Representatives Group at least once a term. This group will meet to discuss issues arising within the local areas, issues arising from the County Group and Local Authority and to network and share experiences. The parents will support each other in performing their role as parent representatives. This group will elect a chair. A Local

Authority officer and the Information, Advice & Support Service (IASS) Manager will also attend.

- Parent representatives will feedback to the Local Area Group Parent Representatives Group, and will be supported through this route by HPCI and the wider network of parents who are involved in DSPL.
- Expenses will be paid to parents in accordance with the HPCI expenses policy available from HPCI.

## **6. Parental Selection criteria**

- The parent must be a parent of child with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and therefore have direct experience of education services and schools meeting the needs of children with SEND.
- The parent must have local connections with the DSPL area. Being a resident in the area is the best way for this to be evidenced. Having a child who is attending school in the DSPL local area may also be evidence of local connection.
- The parent should be able to demonstrate that they are a member of a support group and have contact with other families with children and young people with SEND.
- If there are too many volunteers in any one area for the role as core parent representative each parent will be asked to complete a nomination form prepared by HPCI. The nomination form starts with a short personal statement by the person who is interested and this is supported by parents residing in Hertfordshire, who write a short reference to support the nomination. As a suggestion this could be a parent from a support group or a teacher/governor. HPCI in conjunction with the Chair of the DSPL Local Area Group will then assess which parent is best placed to join the Group.