



Annual General Meeting

29th June 2023 from 18.30 to 19.30

Ayton House, 11 Ayton Rd, Wymondham, NR18 0QQ.

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Family Voice Norfolk CIC

Company number 14181696



Report from the Chair

Tracey Sismey reports:

My report this year must begin with an enormous 'Thank You' to all of the parents and carers of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who have taken the time to provide their views and experiences, enabling Family Voice Norfolk (FVN) to share these anonymously with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Norfolk County Council (NCC). We have attended a total of **988** meetings this past financial year, conveying the collective Norfolk parent carer voice.



Now that the most critical time of the pandemic appears to have passed, we are hearing the term 'Covid babies'. This refers to babies who have been unable to meet and spend time with extended family and friends, or to attend baby groups and socialise. These situations are likely to have lasting effects on these children, possibly for years to come.

The re-visit by OFSTED took place at the end of 2022 and we must thank all of those who took the time to fill in the parental survey for the inspectors. The result was released and it was deemed that Norfolk had made sufficient progress in the three areas of serious weakness the original inspection had identified. The work towards improvements, however, is by no means finished.

One of the major highlights of the Family Voice Norfolk year was the annual conference which was held in March 2023 at the John Innes Centre, having been off the calendar for two years due to the pandemic. The conference was back 'with a bang', giving the 10th anniversary conference in 2020 a run for its money! All the details can be found on our website www.familyvoice.org.uk

There have been some changes within the FVN team during the past financial year. Gemma Everett left FVN for pastures new and we were joined by Gita Bose, who, with the help from other Family Voice Norfolk team members, organised the 2023 conference. We are pleased to say that Gita has remained with us post-conference and will be supporting the team in an administrative role, in addition to organising the next conference which will be taking place on Saturday 23rd March 2024.

I cannot end my report without mentioning the sad death of Nicola Baxter, our Communications Lead, in early 2023. Her passing rocked the whole team as well as those from the ICB and NCC with whom she worked relentlessly to improve the lives of children and young people with SEND. Lastly, I would like to say a huge 'Thank You' to the Board members, ambassadors, reps and staff who work tirelessly to get the voice of parent carers heard when we meet with commissioning staff and others to help make change for families in Norfolk, all whilst juggling their own families and lives.



Report from the Ambassador Lead

Rachel Clarke reports:

This will be my final report as I step down from Ambassador Lead, although I will continue to organise and co-ordinate all the ambassador activities.



Throughout 2022/23, our ambassador team has been working hard to talk to parent carers, listen to their views and experiences and to encourage them to become members. Our Check In and Chat sessions have been held monthly where possible (2023 has seen many bank holidays so far) and are an informal way for parent carers to share their experiences with us, meet other parent carers and pick up information and tips from others who understand their situations.

As an organisation, and as a team, we were delighted to be able to hold our conference on 11th March and to welcome so many parent carers to our event. A huge amount of work went in to making the day as good as it was and I would like to thank all the ambassadors and the reps for all they did to ensure its success.

External events for our ambassadors to attend are becoming more frequent and we have been part of the NCC Making Sense of SEND events, both in planning and in attendance, been out to schools for coffee mornings, parent information days and also 'moving on' events. There have been some larger events such as the Visible Festival, the Early Years Conference, Care for Carer days and the upcoming Deaf Festival at the Forum on 7th and 8th July. It was truly wonderful to take the FVN stand to SENDfest on 17th June and be part of something inclusive and celebratory of SEND. If you see us at any events, please come over and say hello.

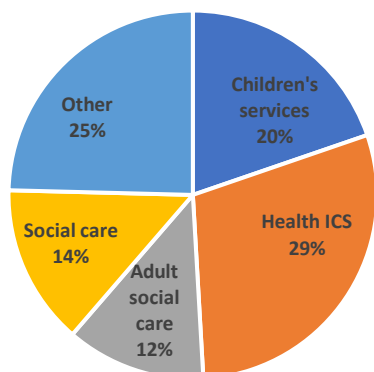


Report from the Family Voice Norfolk Co-ordinator



Rachel Clarke reports:

I have been in post now as co-ordinator for Family Voice Norfolk (FVN) since February 2022. The role is an extremely busy one with no two days the same and many a juggling act to be performed.



The number of meetings FVN is invited to attend has been consistently high and there has been a marked increase, over the past year, in the meetings within health services. We have been actively recruiting new parent carer reps to our team and the return of the Family Voice Norfolk conference on 11th March provided us with the perfect opportunity to encourage parent carers to come on board. We still have a number of parent carers interested in the reps role, but the recent teacher strikes thwarted several planned training days so I shall be devoting myself to re-arranging those shortly.

Existing reps have responded well to the ever-increasing demands for their availability at meetings. I would like to thank them for their flexibility and dedication to each and every meeting that they attend, for joining our weekly debrief sessions and for ensuring that the voices of families who share their experiences with us are heard within the Local Authority, health and the voluntary sector. New meetings have been added to those we already attended and continue to be held mostly online using Teams and Zoom. There are some which are becoming 'in person' and whilst we have been reminded of how lovely it is to be in a room with people working together, this does occupy more time and resource in terms of travel times and costs.

In addition to meetings, as an organisation we are increasingly asked to review and improve materials that are intended for families to use, review surveys and help to plan and create events for families to attend. As always, it is preferable for us to be involved from the get-go, to be part of the design and creation of services and materials, for that production to be true co-production. Some of our team have taken part this year in presentations locally around subjects such as the effects of Special Needs and/or Disability (SEND) on the mental health of children and young people, siblings and parent carers, the trauma and challenge of having a child with complex needs, social care training and we were very pleased to be invited back to the UEA to talk to student teachers. We have been part of the recruitment process for many positions within NCC Children's Services, Children's Health Services and will be taking part in interviews and recruitment again shortly.



Family Voice Norfolk representation

These are just some of the groups and topics that Family Voice Norfolk Representatives have been involved with this year. You can find a fuller list on our website at www.familyvoice.org.uk/current-projects/boards-meetings-projects/

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| Adult Social Services: employment services | Every Relationship Matters in Norfolk steering group |
| All-Age NDD Stakeholders | Families We've Got This meetings |
| Carers Voice partnership meetings | Family Hubs Steering Group |
| Carers Voice: Locality meetings | Green Light Champions Network |
| Carers' Passport workshop | HAF (Holiday Activities and Food Programme) Strategic Group |
| Charging Reference Group | Home-School Transport Collaboration |
| Children's and Young Persons' Strategic Alliance Board | Learning Disabilities Partnership Board (LDPB) |
| Children's Health and Integrated Commissioning Group | Learning into Action |
| CYPMH Executive Management Group | LEDER Working Groups |
| Direct Payments Support Service (DPSS) advisory group | Local First Inclusion Executive Board |
| District Early Childhood Advisory Networks (DECANS) | Making It Happen Strategy Oversight Group |
| Early Childhood Advisory Board (Norfolk) | Making Sense of SEND planning and events |
| Early Language Forum | Mental Health Support Teams in Schools steering group |
| Eastern Region Parent Carer Forum (ERPCF) meetings | National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) meetings |
| EHCP Quality Assurance Board | NNUH Transitions Working Group |
| EHCP quality audit framework meetings | |



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| Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (NNUH) Children's Board |
| Norfolk and Waveney Eating Disorders Strategy |
| Norfolk Area SEND Multi-Agency Steering Group (NASMA) |
| Norfolk Area SEND Strategy |
| Norfolk Autism Partnership Board (NAPB) |
| Norman Lamb Coalition for Young People |
| Palliative Care Network |
| Parent-Led Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Steering Group |
| Prevention and Early Help Board |
| Queen Elizabeth Hospital Carers Forum |

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| SEND Communications Group |
| SEND Health Clinical Network |
| SEND Participation Steering Group |
| SEND Post-16 Learning Group |
| SEND Multi Agency Data meetings |
| SENDfest planning |
| Short Breaks |
| Speech and Language Communication Network |
| Stakeholder Engagement and Insight Working Groups |
| Young Carers Multi Agency Steering Group |



Report from the Membership Administrator

Kate Draycott reports:

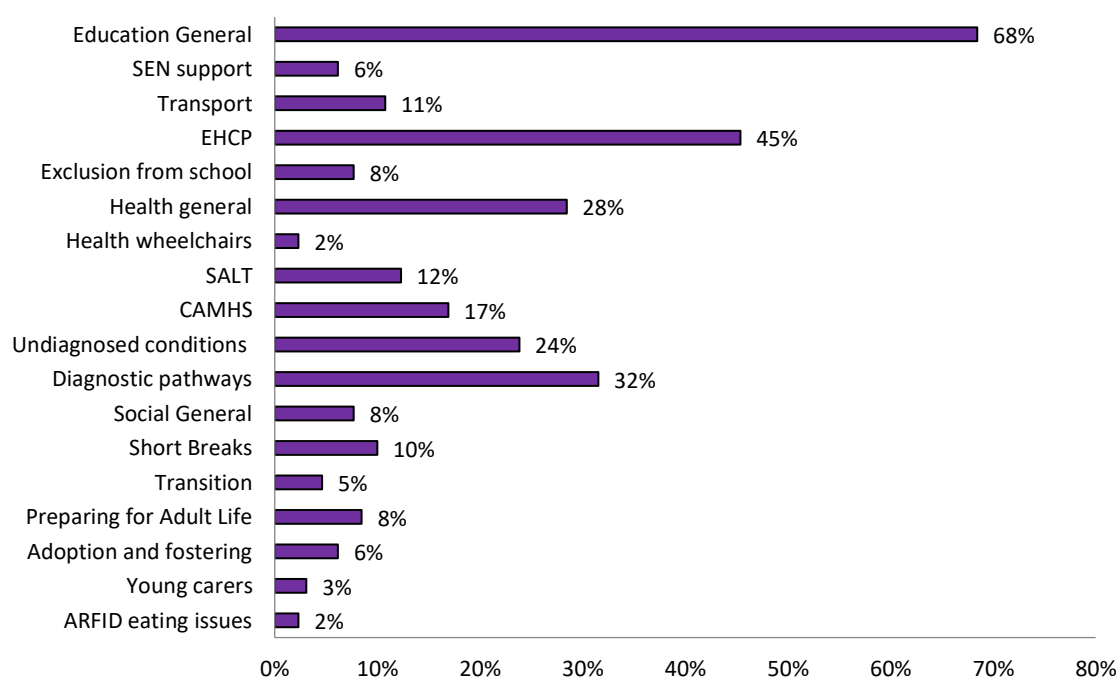
I am now in my eleventh year of the membership role at Family Voice Norfolk. I really do like talking to other parents as many of the experiences that I have been through, our membership are also experiencing. I think it is essential for people to know that they are not alone, as often being a parent carer of a child with SEND can be isolating and lonely. We want you all to know that it is our world too.



The main issues raised by members, with increasing frequency, are focused around private diagnosis routes, EHC plans and tribunals, and obtaining places in a specialist provision with the shared worry being the prolonged time it takes for these processes to be implemented and completed. A year in a child's life is a very long time.

When I gather these issues, they form part of my anonymised monthly report which goes to our core team of parent carer representatives so when they attend meetings with service providers and commissioners, they are equipped to effectively communicate the real-life experiences and challenges faced by parent carers with SEND children in Norfolk.

Summary of Issues and Concerns from 130 parent carers
April 2022 to March 2023



Report from the Social Media Administrator



Lisa Lonergan reports:

Our social media platform is a vital way for us to share information with a wider audience alongside our membership base. As well as Family Voice Norfolk posts, we share information on behalf of a huge variety of organisations, including the Local Authority and health services. We also promote activities suitable for children and young people with SEND throughout Norfolk.

From our Facebook statistics, we can see that 93.20% of our audience and followers are women in the age bracket 35-44. Unsurprisingly, our biggest audiences are in Norwich with 671 followers and 305 in Great Yarmouth. The numbers are then evenly spread as we look across the rest of Norfolk. This gives us a useful insight into where we have the biggest audiences, whilst also highlighting other geographical areas for us to focus on raising awareness. Our aim is to ensure that all families in Norfolk are aware of us and have access to the information that they need.

We have joined many groups across Norfolk, such as the 'Community Connectors' pages which enable us to get the word out about all things SEND and extend our reach to more families. It is vitally important that we hear from these families, that we hear how life is for them and the difficulties and challenges they face, so we can represent the views of all families across Norfolk.

We can see from the statistics on each post which topics have the most engagement and are shared most widely. As always, it is SEND events, workshops and surveys from us and other organisations/services that have the most engagement and shares. We know from talking to our membership at our Check in and Chat sessions, that families value events where they can gain knowledge and understanding of services, groups and activities that can support them as a family.

Below are examples of the posts that have been popular with families. The number of people reached is just on our page and does not include the wider audience that is reached when the post is shared.

Family Voice AGM - 408 people reached, 4 shares.

NHS neurodiversity virtual workshop - 1,728 people reached, 21 shares.

Making Sense of SEND event - 800 reached, 26 shares.

Norfolk SENDIASS - 222 people reached, 8 shares.



Our closed Facebook group, 'Family Voice Members Chat Room', has 459 members and offers a safe and private space where members can ask questions, share information, or just chat with other parent carers who 'get it'. It also gives us the opportunity to see what issues families are experiencing which we can then anonymously feed back to services when we attend meetings, working together towards making important changes. Anyone wishing to join this closed Facebook group must be a full member of Family Voice Norfolk . It is easy to join us via our website at www.familyvoice.org.uk. The link to the closed Facebook group is: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/674209366743395/about/>



[FamilyVoiceNorfolk](https://www.facebook.com/FamilyVoiceNorfolk)



[@familyvoicenf](https://twitter.com/familyvoicenf)



[@familyvoicenf](https://www.instagram.com/familyvoicenf)



Report from the Treasurer



Alison Furniss reports:

Thanks to the support of Norfolk County Council (NCC), the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board (ICB) and the Department for Education (DfE) via Contact, we were able to carry out a full range of activities on behalf of our members this year.

We had an overspend during 2022/23 of £2507.17.

The accounts have been presented, as usual, to show the monies received that were earmarked for specific activities (restricted) and those used more flexibly at our discretion (unrestricted).

Restricted funds come from DfE (via Contact) for agreed activities. All the agreed activities have to be justified and vetted beforehand and audited afterwards. The fixed sum of £17,500 is given to all Parent Carer Forums in England and comes in two parts from the DfE; the first part during the summer and an additional amount received later in the year. The majority of these monies funded our conference and in-person engagement events. We also received a further £2,900 Priority Grant to fund our social media for six months.

Our unrestricted funds (£124,036) came from the local authority allocations and ICB/CCG allocation. There was an increase in our funding from NCC to enable further staff recruitment and running costs.

Our reserves have been maintained again this year in order that we could continue for a short while should other sources of support be lost.

I should like to thank our administration team, particularly Bernadette Pallister, for all their support in making my role much easier.



Family Voice Norfolk financial report

Financial year ending 31 March 2023

| | Financial year 2022/23 | Financial year 2021/22 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Balance Brought Forward | £50,502.19 | £55,300.44 |
| INCOME | | |
| Restricted | £20,400.00 | £29,500.00 |
| Unrestricted | £124,036.00 | £87,932.00 |
| Interest income | £97.73 | £5.18 |
| TOTAL INCOME | £144,533.73 | £117,437.18 |
| EXPENDITURE | | |
| Restricted Expenditure | £20,440.35 | £29,666.20 |
| Unrestricted Expenditure | £126,600.55 | £92,569.23 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | £147,040.90 | £122,235.43 |
| Balance Carried Forward | £47,995.02 | £50,502.19 |

| INCOME | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Restricted | | |
| DfE Grant | £20,400.00 | £29,500.00 |
| Total Restricted Income | £20,400.00 | £29,500.00 |
| Unrestricted | | |
| NCC Children's services to 31 March | £81,586.00 | £54,000.00 |
| NCC Adult social services to 31 March | £23,090.00 | £19,572.00 |
| CCG participation | £19,360.00 | £14,360.00 |
| Interest Income | £97.73 | £5.18 |
| Other income | £2,000.00 | £300.00 |
| Total Unrestricted Income | £126,133.73 | £88,237.18 |
| TOTAL INCOME | £146,533.73 | £117,737.18 |

| EXPENDITURE | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| Restricted | | |
| DfE restricted | £20,440.35 | £29,666.20 |
| Unrestricted | | |
| Expense claims, running costs (11 months in 2021/22 and 13 months in 2020/21) | £126,600.55 | £92,569.23 |
| Total Expenditure | £147,040.90 | £122,235.43 |

