



# SGPC

South Glos Parent Carers

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2024





# The need for a strategic plan: Focussed positive change



**South Glos Parent Carers (SGPC) has many years' experience of engaging with families who have children 0-25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in South Gloucestershire and representing their voice to the local commissioners and service providers. SGPC also works with those providers to help ensure that their services meet the needs of its community of SEND families.**

The community itself identifies, quite properly, whether its needs are or are not being met.

From this recognised need, what requires change, and how best to deliver the change, can be identified. The community's own voice is the driver for change; it also provides the focus for change. Informed co-production can then bring about positive change in services, for the community, with the community, and as identified by the community.

All our Volunteers, Staff and Directors are also part of the SEND community, either through having a family member (or more than one) with SEND or through working with the SEND community in South Gloucestershire. This means that our investment in improving services for our community has begun from our own lived experiences. The SEND community is SGPC's community too!

This document focusses on the key activities of engagement, support and co-production. This is at the heart of SGPC's mission; and so continuous improvement and development in these areas are at the heart of SGPC's strategy, for the immediate future and for the longer term.

No one knows the quality of a service better than those who use it; similarly, none can better identify and articulate those areas in which a service fails to meet the needs of its users.

For those of its community who volunteer to help represent the community's voice SGPC will provide encouragement, training, and support. Volunteers derive a valuable sense of fulfilment from this. They will help sustain SGPC's vital work going forward, and sustainability is also a key strategic aim.

This strategic plan covers the short to medium term. The Covid-19 pandemic makes it impossible to see very far into the future and even a three-year window might seem very uncertain at the far end. But SGPC's community insists that some issues are urgent right now - such as the quality of education, health and care plans (EHCP), annual reviews and especially the length of waiting times for a diagnostic assessment for Autism; if they are to be addressed then planning how best to address them starts now, especially as the planning pipeline may be a long one in some cases.

*Rachel Truman, Chief Executive*



# South Glos Parent Carers: Who we are



SGPC is the independent local Parent Carer Forum in South Gloucestershire as recognised by the Department for Education (DfE).

Our employees and volunteers are parent carers for whom the SEND journey is their real lived experience.



The SEND Code of Practice (paragraph 1.13) defines Parent Carer Forums as:

Representative local groups of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities who work alongside local authorities, education, health and other services providers to ensure that the services they plan, commission, deliver and monitor meet the needs of children and families.



## SGPC is a primarily an organisation that



**S**upports and empowers Parent Carers who are on the SEND parenting journey



**G**athers lived experiences and the views of our community via Parent Carer support and engagement activities



**P**artners with service providers and stake-holders, creating a platform for working co-productively



**C**onnects the voice of Parent Carers with the decision makers and commissioners at strategic level to help shape great services





# SGPC: Our vision, mission & values



## SGPC's Vision

**Our vision** is of a well-informed, empowered, supportive community of SEND families, where every individual's needs are anticipated, identified and met, enabling them to reach their potential

## SGPC's Mission

**Our mission** is to represent the collective voice of our community, working together with service providers to shape great services and achieve positive change

## SGPC's Values

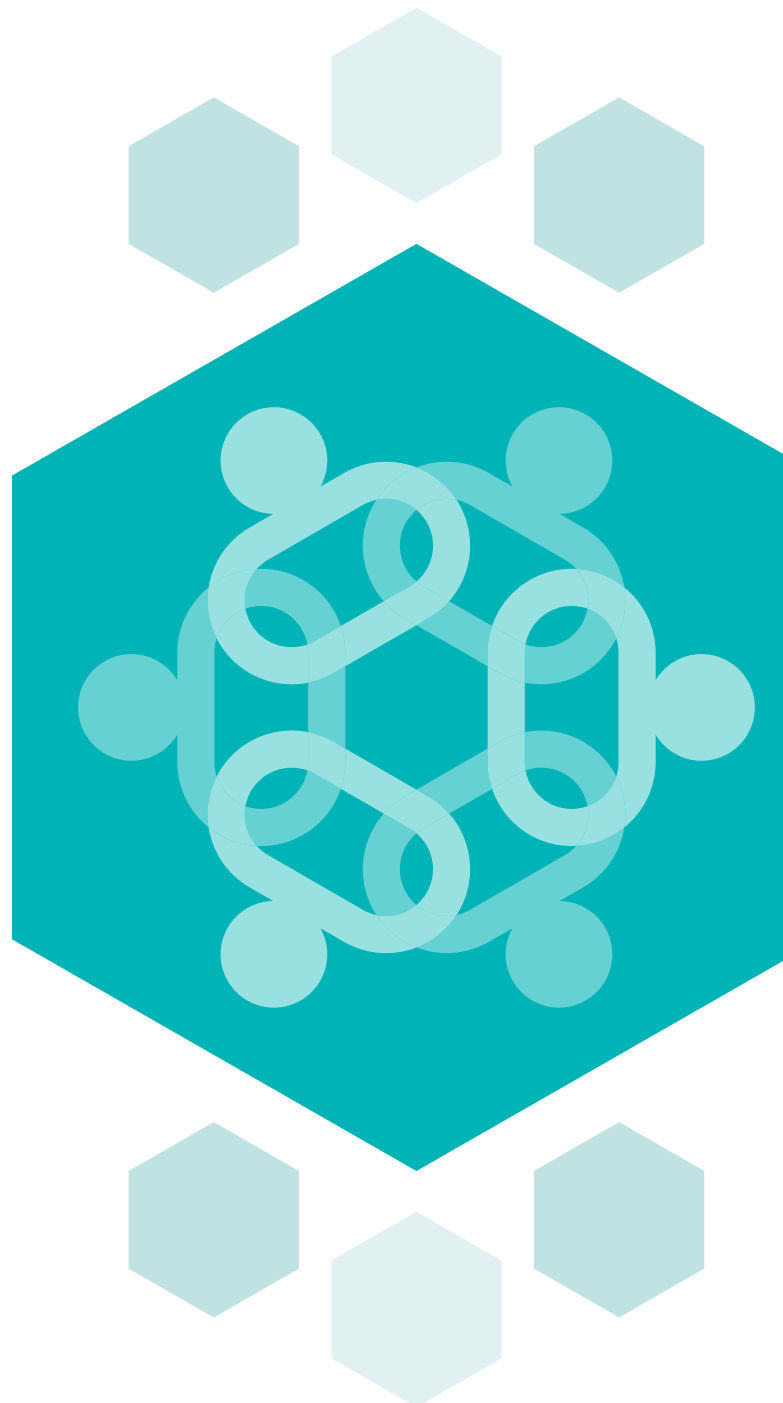
**Respect:** We respect and value our community, the partners we work with, and our team. We value the trust our community places in us to represent their collective voice

**Understanding:** We understand that communication starts by listening and valuing different perspectives, and that everyone's journey is unique

**Passion:** We are determined and passionate about helping others and making a lasting difference for our SEND community

**Empowerment:** We engage, inform and support parent carers to enable them to build their confidence, feel empowered and share their voice

**Collaboration:** We believe that positive change results from shared goals, mutual respect, and working together





# Ethical Statement

**Inclusive**  
**Independent**  
**Transparent**



## **Inclusiveness**

SGPC aims to be the 'go to' organisation for all parents and carers with children with SEND who live in South Gloucestershire. By reaching out to all such parents and carers SGPC can be sure that what we say and do on their behalf is properly representative and captures the full spectrum of opinion. Each individual voice is important, but only the collective voice gives us the full picture; by listening to all the individuals who make up our community it ensures that no voice goes unheard and that each contributes in a proportionate way to the overall picture.

## **Independence and Transparency**

SCPC is not a campaigning organisation and does not have axes to grind. We continue to aim to be open to all the views expressed by our members and are committed to represent them in a transparent way. We aim to be honest and independent brokers.



# SGPC's Outcomes

SGPC will monitor progress on all our strategic goals for 2021-2024 against a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that we have developed and will measure our impact against agreed outcomes.

Monitoring outcomes and feedback collected against KPIs will demonstrate that we properly represent the views of our community and therefore help us to make progress towards better services for all SEND families.



## Outcomes we want to see:

- Families report that they feel listened to by members of their own community who understand the journey, where their views and experiences are understood and valued
- Families who use our service will report their anxiety and isolation levels are reduced and their confidence has increased because they feel more informed and connected
- Families will report they feel more empowered as they have a channel through which to express their views to those who are able to represent and influence positive change
- Services report that they understand what families need and the impact their service has on families wellbeing. They can therefore better align accessibility or delivery to the needs of local SEND families.

# The strategic aims



SGPC has over 11 years' experience of working with SEND families and service providers in pursuit of improving the lived experiences of SEND families. An important part of our work is to develop parent carers' confidence to work with service providers as partners. Helping to make a positive contribution towards engagement and representing the wider views of families.

The following four strategic aims are derived from our core activities and securing their continuance into the future.



## CO-PRODUCTION AND REPRESENTATION

We will work to ensure that the collective views of parents and carers of children 0-25 who have special educational needs and disabilities are included in the decision making about new and existing local services and provision in South Gloucestershire.



## ENGAGING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Before we can ensure that we have the accurate and current reflective views on the issues we understand to be important for families, we must be sure the wider community feels the same, so we must engage effectively with our community to capture their views.



## PARENT CARER EMPOWERMENT

Through developing skills and confidence by supporting and informing parent carers, we will empower more families to get involved and to participate in shaping local services and supporting each other.



## SUSTAINABILITY

By establishing a wide income base and through careful planning, we aim to be a sustainable organisation that can continue our valuable and important work into the future.



# CO-PRODUCTION AND REPRESENTATION



We will work to ensure that the collective views of parents and carers of children 0-25 who have special educational needs and disabilities are included in the decision making about new and existing local services and provision in South Gloucestershire

A recurring theme among the voices we hear from our community is that professionals and commissioners often do not appreciate (or perhaps do not have the time to appreciate) the effect that inaccessible, poorly designed or poorly implemented services have on their lives which are already lived under challenging conditions. In line with our responsibility to represent accurately and honestly the voices of our community, we embrace as one of SGPC's strategic aims, the raising of awareness among professionals and commissioners of the community's concerns and helping to achieve a proper focus on what our community sees as the priorities.

## **1. SGPC will ensure we fully understand the needs of our community and will focus and prioritise our resources according to the needs articulated by our community.**

We commit to making sure that these needs are collated and heard in the right format and in the right places by heads of service, service leads and other responsible persons who have the authority to act; as well as feeding back to the community of parents and carers.

### **Analysis of those needs collected**

We aim to provide clear and easy-to-understand analysis of the views that our community shares. We will use the clearest possible lenses bring into focus the trends and patterns that emerge from the views and feedback we collect. Such commentary as SGPC gives on any facts and figures we give to illustrate the views we report, will be as neutral as possible. We aim to let our community's voices speak for themselves.

## **2. SGPC will provide parent carer representation in strategic meetings that impact our community.**

We will ensure that the lived experiences of our community are properly represented in all forums we are invited to participate in as co-producers. We represent the views of our community without spin or distortion. We do not filter out opinion unless it is likely to, or will, breach the law or give offence.

We will make our best endeavours to ensure that the views of our community are properly factored into service redesign and delivery through our relationships with our partners in co-production level and elsewhere.

By working in partnership with commissioners/practitioners to ensure that services are designed, commissioned & delivered in a way that reflects the needs of SEND families,

SGPC commits to;

- Working proactively in all co-production activities to which we are invited to participate
- Working with all partners towards finding acceptable and workable solutions
- Reviewing progress and maintaining momentum towards agreed common goals
- Being the best 'go to' partner we can be in our field of expertise





# CO-PRODUCTION AND REPRESENTATION



## 3 Feeding back to the community

SGPC will give feedback and report how we have represented the voices of families and how our involvement has helped shape positive change or raised awareness of where change may be needed.

Keeping families informed of what progress has been made is vital to build the trust of those families. We will conduct a feasibility study to determine how families want to be kept informed so that we do not overwhelm them with too much information, but equally that they do not miss out on information that may interest them.

SGPC will aim to monitor the delivery of new or improved services which we have been invited to help to (re) design. We commit to always make any criticism constructive and to work in a solution focussed manner. Monitoring the outcomes and impact of this work will enable SGPC to produce further feedback to families and keep them informed of how their voices helped.

## How SGPC will monitor progress for aim 1

- By holding regular team meetings to collate all the parent voices we collect from across all our services and by producing reports that we can share with our community
- Updating data regularly showing the number of meetings and hours representatives are attending and have been asked to attend
- Monitoring the levels of satisfaction of families with local services through the annual area survey and comparing each year with previous years
- Reviewing any feedback from activities we run or feasibility studies and making changes where appropriate



## ENGAGING WITH OUR COMMUNITY



Before we can ensure that we have the accurate and current reflective views on the issues we understand to be important for families, we must be sure the wider community feels the same, so we must engage effectively with our community to capture their views.

Since the profile of SGPC's community changes over time (new families join, others leave, children get older) some priorities may change. We are committed to engaging continually and widely with our community to ensure that we have correctly understood what is of current and continuing importance; in this way we can be sure that we properly represent our community's voice.

### 1 SGPC will reach out to the SEND community to build new relationships

To fulfil our mission SGPC recognises that we must reach more SEND families, more service providers, more settings, and related voluntary organisations to marry together the shared outcomes that we all want – better services which better meet the needs of SEND families and children.

SGPC will;

- Conduct market research so that we better understand the number and needs of SEND families in South Glos and to ensure we record appropriate data on them
- Use that data to develop a communications strategy by July 2022 to ensure that we embrace and include all identified SEND families in South Glos and equality and diversity
- The communications strategy will map out how we will engage with:
  - (a) our members
  - (b) service providers
  - (c) other voluntary organisations
  - (d) settings such as specialist schools which will be approached to share SGPC's vision, mission and resources with their families
  - (e) with GP surgeries
  - (f) customer journey marketing
- Ensure our communications are timely, targeted and inclusive
- Design new website and other resources with our recent refreshed branding and to add a Parent Carer and a Professional section by April 2022
- Grow existing partnerships and seek out new ones to strengthen as an organisation and to increase our reach and capacity



## ENGAGING WITH OUR COMMUNITY



### 2. SCPC will engage with families in ways that make it easy for them to participate.

One size does not fit all, therefore SGPC will provide a variety of ways so that families can access our services when they are ready to. SGPC commits to listening to how our members feel about their experiences and to collect feedback from all our sessions to include the wider views.

SGPC will provide;

- Meeting spaces both virtually and in person, in which families can meet and exchange experiences in a safe environment or take part in themed discussion groups
- Online surveys where families can tell us how they feel about services and support they receive
- Support, information, and engagement services using a full range of contemporary technologies and media to make them easy to access (subject to funding)
- Resources that are relevant, informative, politically neutral and jargon-free
- Regular communications that are engaging, consistent and easily accessible via social media and a regularly refreshed website

### How SGPC will monitor progress for aim 2

Progress will be monitored by using a matrix of the following methods:

- Increasing the number of SEND families we engage with through our support and engagement activities by 20% at the end of 2023
- Increasing membership of our parent carer database by 600 by end of 2024
- Doubling membership of our associate database
- Increasing the number of survey responses by 20% year on year
- Recording the number of enquiries we respond to from parents, carers and professionals, and reviewing the difference this has made to families through the feedback they have given and ratings they have provided
- Increase our reach of Parent Carers by linking with early years settings and schools



## PARENT CARER EMPOWERMENT



Through developing skills and confidence by supporting and informing parent carers, we will empower more families to get involved and to participate in shaping local services and supporting each other

We will aim to grow our membership so that more families will tell us they are better able to find, access and navigate the support their children need, and better able to support each other in this common goal.

Through engaging with parents and carers we will seek out other passionate parents and carers who also want to make a difference and for some, be willing to act as representatives of SGPC at meetings, linking with the community and being part of working groups.

### 1 Empowering Parent Carers to better navigate their journey

We know from talking and listening to our community how much families rely on the services SGPC provides. Some families can take years to build the confidence to access support or tell us their views. We will provide opportunities for parent carers to come together, share experiences and offer peer to peer support.

SGPC will;

- Review the peer-to-peer support we offer to ensure we meet current needs e.g. Covid has seen an increase on our services where more families require more support via different platforms
- Listen to and help unpick some of the difficulties families face as well as helping them to navigate to other services
- Raise funds to host more workshops and information events based on what we hear from our community, to help families feel more informed and increase their confidence in supporting their child with additional needs
- Strive to reduce families' feelings of isolation and high anxiety by giving them a sense of belonging to a supportive community which fully understands their needs
- Share examples of good practice, positive outcomes with other groups we work with and celebrate our empowered community.



## PARENT CARER EMPOWERMENT



### 2 Recruiting and training Parent Carer Volunteers

SGPC will recruit volunteers for as full a representation as possible of the range of additional needs and disabilities, from all ages between 0-25 so that there are no gaps in coverage for the co-production meetings we attend. This will be particularly valuable in maintaining SGPC's commitment to co-production; increasing the capacity to help represent the voice of our SEND community.

SGPC will;

- Increase by a minimum of 6 the number of volunteers who assist the core team
- Seek further funding to help us build capacity to recruit and manage parent carer volunteers
- Collaborate with neighbouring local parent carer forums to share training resources and that, through partnership working, can be planned together.

### How SGPC will monitor progress for aim 3

Progress will be monitored by using a matrix of the following methods:

- Recording the number of enquiries SGPC responds to from parents and carers and professionals and reviewing the difference this has made to families through their feedback
- Monitoring the rating scale to assess how families who attend SGPC's sessions are feeling, based on anxiety, happiness and social isolation
- Improving the monitoring of data to show the number of support sessions held and by giving feedback on the data collected
- Analysing the feedback we collect from our volunteers, which will be used to help us improve how we support our volunteers now and in the future.





## SUSTAINABILITY



**By establishing a wide income base and through careful planning, we aim to be a sustainable organisation that can continue our valuable and important work into the future**

SGPC will;

- Publish by the end of March 2023 an income strategy which will set out in detail our plans for sustainability
- SGPC will set up a sustainability working group May 2022
- Produce an action plan by July 2023
- Aim to have a diverse range of funding streams
- Seek to work with partners on a longer-term basis; this will benefit partners, who may continue to draw securely on the unique expertise that SGPC offers, and benefit members, who may enjoy the better designed services, better awareness of them, and better access to them
- Increase our funding by 50% by the end of the plan
- Review the model of SGPC as a community interest company
- Create a permanent post with a particular focus on securing longer term or recurring funding

### **How SGPC will monitor progress for aim 4**

All the below will be regularly checked against milestones embedded in its operation plan and income strategy

SGPC will have;

- A sustainability working group who will plan the work required for this strategic aim
- An effective income strategy detailing future funding plans; there will be key targets within the plan; SGPC will monitor how well each target is being met
- A wide range of income streams across grants, and will track actual income against targeted income for each stream
- A wide range of service level agreements; each will have measurable performance indicators against which SGPC will monitor for compliance

### **Feasibility of Strategy**

SGPC have looked at the feasibility of the aims in this strategy and we believe all of these aims are achievable within the span 2021-2024. This is captured in an operational plan for working towards the achievements of our strategic aims.

The CEO will oversee the plan and will present it to the Board of Directors who will monitor progress through termly meetings.



# SGPC

South Glos Parent Carers

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