

A Charter For Parent Carers OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ANY ADDITIONAL NEED and Practitioners

WORKING TOGETHER
IN CALDERDALE

Publication Date: January 2020

In Memory of
Mark O'Neill
1961 - 2019



This charter was produced in partnership with Family Voice Calderdale,
Calderdale Council and Calderdale Clinical Commissioning Group

Foreword

Pete Ruse

Co-Chair - Family Voice Calderdale



As Co-Chair of Family Voice Calderdale, I am delighted with the Charter for parent carers and practitioners working together. It is the result of many hours of endeavour by many people, working together, naturally. We hope the Charter will set the scene for parent carers to have a stronger voice in the lives of their children and young people and that it will help to embed the idea of 'Nothing about us without us'.

Julie Jenkins

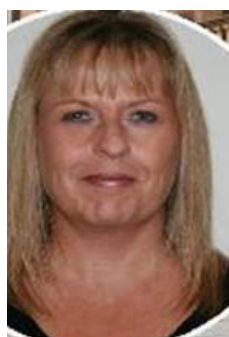
Director for Children and Young Peoples Service - Calderdale Council



As Director for Children & Young Peoples Service for Calderdale Council, I am pleased and proud to sign up to the Calderdale Charter for parents and carers. In our view, parents and carers are the experts in what works for their family. Calderdale Council has a Vision for 2024, that it will be the Best Borough in the North for our children to grow up; to be known for its kindness and care. Our ambition for children and young people with any additional need is clear – for them to be healthy, safe and successful. There is real strength in our partnership and co-production which will continue to help our children and young people to develop and flourish.

Rhona Rhadley

Deputy Head of Service Improvement - Calderdale CCG



The Calderdale Charter for parents and carers shows the partnership work that's helping to improve mental health and emotional wellbeing services for children and young people in our area.

People are already feeling the benefit of the influence young people, their parents and carers have in how services are planned and delivered.

The charter is a fantastic example of co-production, built on the equal footing and influence of all partners, and will help us meet our goal: to ensure children and young people in Calderdale get any help and support they need to thrive.

How parents and practitioners can get the best from each other

Parents and practitioners both want to support children and young people to thrive. Parents know their children best and bring their passion for their children to do well and be happy. Parents love their children unconditionally. Practitioners bring a wealth of knowledge, experience and skills. No-one chooses a career working with children and young people unless they want to make a positive difference.

We need a charter to give a stronger voice for parents, which was a key recommendation of the Lamb Inquiry Report of 2009. The report was clear that “*good, honest and open communication* is one of **the** important components of building confidence and good relationships. Face-to-face communication with parents, treating them as equal partners with expertise in their childrens needs is crucial to establishing and sustaining confidence. Where things go wrong, the root causes can often be traced to poor communication between school, Local Authority and parent.” (Lamb, 2009 p3)

The Lamb Inquiry Report identified the need to see change in four key areas:

- **Children’s outcomes at the heart of the system**
- **A stronger voice for parents**
- **A greater focus on children’s needs**
- **A more accountable system that delivers better services**

The Lamb Inquiry Report informed the Childrens and Families Act 2014. The National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) reviewed the Act in 2018 and compared it with what it replaced:



‘The Children and Families Act sweeps away the most pernicious aspects of the “old” system and seeks to replace them with fairer, more effective practices – co-production not confrontation, outcome focused not provision led services, joint arrangements not silo working.’

NNPCF (2018) State of the Nation Report

The Children and Families Act 2014 places the family at the centre of assessing needs and planning services. The principles, as set out in its Code of Practice, support:

- The participation of children, their parents and young people in decision-making.
- Greater choice and control for young people and parents over the support they receive.

- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support.
- High quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN.
- A focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
- Successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment.

‘Principles underpinning this Code of Practice

1.1 Section 19 of the Children and Families Act 2014 makes clear that local authorities, in carrying out their functions under the Act in relation to disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs (SEN), must have regard to:

- the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child’s parents;*
- the importance of the child or young person, and the child’s parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information*

and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions;

- the need to support the child or young person, and the child’s parents, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.’*

SEND Code of Practice (2015) p20

This refers to all services in the local area that make decisions about, and provide services for, children and young people with SEND. It includes all schools. **‘Must’** means that this is compulsory under the Act.)

The **Local Area** is all the services within Calderdale that engage with families with a child or young person with additional needs. It includes Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council (CMBC);

Calderdale Clinical Commissioning Group (CCCG); all schools, whether academies or maintained and all voluntary sector organisations.

The NHS constitution encourages services and parent carers to work together:

'You have the right to be involved in planning and making decisions about your health and care with your care provider or providers, including your end of life care, and to be given information and support to enable you to do this. Where appropriate, this right includes your family and carers. This includes being given the chance to manage your own care and treatment, if appropriate.'

You have the right to be involved, directly or through representatives, in the planning of healthcare services commissioned by NHS bodies, the developments and consideration of proposals for changes in the way those services are provided, and in decisions to be made affecting the operation of those services.'

NHS Constitution 2015



The SEND Code of Practice also sets out how Parent Carer Forums play a key role in the way local Education, Health and Social Care services engage with parents:

Parent Carer Forums

‘Parent Carer Forums are representative local groups of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities who work alongside local authorities, education, health and other service providers to ensure the services they plan, commission, deliver and monitor meet the needs of children and families.

Parent Carer Forums have been established in most local areas

and local authorities are actively encouraged to work with them. More information about Parent Carer Forums is available from the websites of Contact a Family and the National Network of Parent Carer Forums.’

SEND Code of Practice (2015) p22



The Parent Carer Forum for Calderdale is Family Voice Calderdale (FVC).



Family Voice Calderdale is funded by an annual grant for parent participation from the Department for Education, administered by the charity Contact, and is part of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) and the regional

Yorkshire and Humberside Network of Parent Carer Forums. FVC has its own Steering Group of Parent Carers and is a distinct project of Unique Ways (UW), a small Calderdale charity that provides support and services for parents of children with any additional need in Calderdale. Support is based on the social model of disability. Membership of Unique Ways is free for Parent Carers in Calderdale.

Working together happens at two levels:

Individual: Parents, Education, Health and Social Care work together around individual children and young people to meet their particular needs.

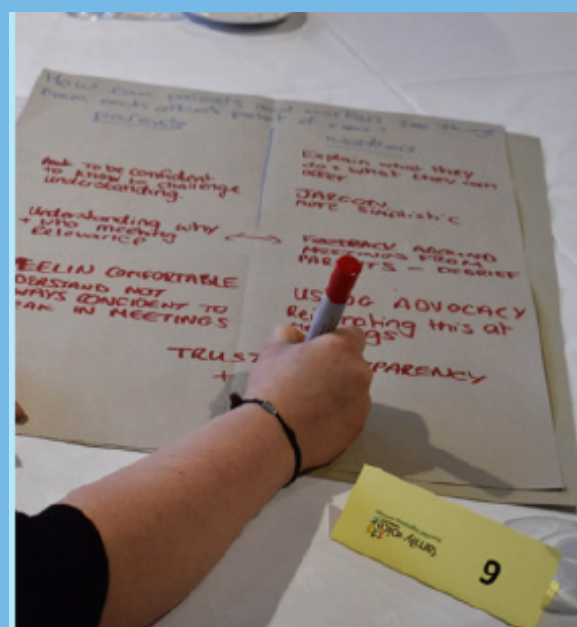
Strategic: Parent organisations, Education, Health and Social Care work together to make and evaluate decisions about services that affect children and young people with SEND.

At the strategic level, **Parent Representatives** from FVC sit on a number of Health Service/ Local Authority groups to provide the parent perspective. At the time of publication these include the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Task Group and the Autism Steering Group as well as a number of ongoing work streams. Each of these has produced great examples of parent carers and practitioners working together as equal partners to construct services that are better able to meet the needs of our children and young people.

One example of good practice is Short Breaks: Parents from FVC were involved from the very beginning in writing the Short Breaks Statement, the Short Breaks Self-referral form and the Short Breaks criteria and have ongoing involvement with

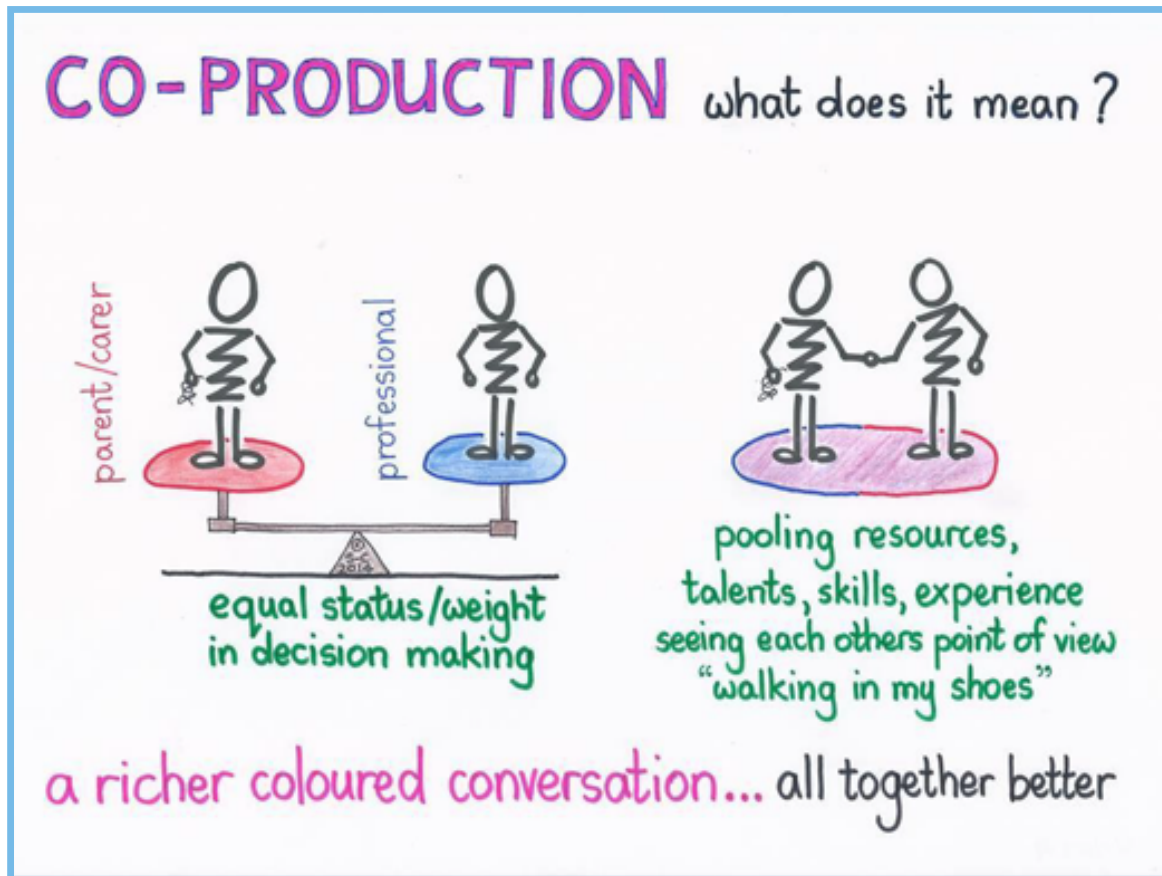
developing the Short Breaks Service in Calderdale.

Outcomes from this work have been that the information about what Short Breaks are; what Short Breaks are available and how the Short Breaks system works in Calderdale have all become clearer. The increased transparency has led to increased confidence in the system and has made it more accessible.



We work together because:

Working together improves services – they become more effective, more flexible and more person-centred.



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Working together enables *good, honest and open communication* that builds confidence and good relationships. This leads to better outcomes for children and young people. 'Nothing about us without us' is quite rightly the rallying call of the disabled activist movement.

It is widely accepted that co-production:

- ✓ promotes better relationships, which leads to fewer complaints and reduces conflict.
- ✓ increases fairness, transparency and accountability, leading to more confidence in the system.
- ✓ feeds in to a better working environment for staff and improves their morale.
- ✓ sets up a cycle of improvement that builds on the good practice already happening.
- ✓ is more efficient – more cost effective; better value for money and supports an 'invest to save' approach.

When we work together

We recognise that there are some decisions that can be made together and some not. Some decisions are solely the concern of schools and services and it would not be appropriate for them to involve parents. Even where this is the case, decisions should be made with openness and transparency and communicated clearly. Deciding which teacher teaches which class would be a good example of this - this

is simply the responsibility of the Head of the school.

Other kinds of decision are best made together with parents, for example:

- ▶ **working out what the needs of an individual child are and how to support the child so that they thrive.**
- ▶ **planning, developing and evaluating services as a whole across Calderdale.**

Over recent years the idea of a ‘ladder of participation’ has been a useful model to help practitioners and parents to understand different types of engagement and working together and where each might be appropriate.

Partnership	From the beginning, Parents and Practitioners collect and evaluate evidence and then make decisions together.
Consultations and Surveys	Where consultations and surveys are produced collaboratively with parents, they are more likely to address issues important to families, be more accessible and lead to better evidence for decision making.
Information and Communcations	Where information and communications are produced in partnership they tend to be much more accessible and fit for purpose

How to work together



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Parents best know their children and bring their unconditional love for their children and a passion for supporting them to thrive. Parents have a responsibility to understand and acknowledge that there are other perspectives than their own. This helps to clear the kind of space needed to collaborate with practitioners.

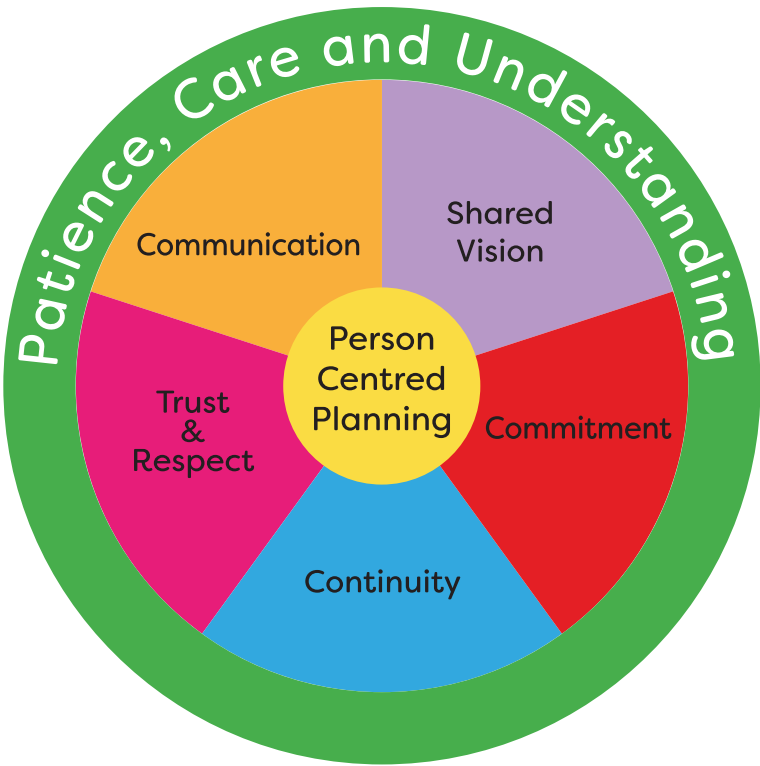
Practitioners bring a wealth of experience, knowledge and skills. They have a responsibility to understand and acknowledge their power and the attitudes they hold towards parents. This helps to clear the kind of space needed to collaborate with parents.

The outcomes for children and young people are much better when Parents and Practitioners work together. Working together allows Parents to share their expertise and Practitioners to share their knowledge and skills.

The Values and Commitments underpinning the Charter

This Calderdale Charter has been co-produced by a wide range of partners including Parent Carers, the Voluntary Sector and Local Area colleagues. The development of our charter began at the FVC Annual Conference ‘Working Together’ in February 2018.

It provides a framework to encourage and enable families, schools and services to place disabled children and young people and those with Special Educational Needs at the heart of their conversations.



Person Centred Planning We will base our work together around the child.

Communication We will work at sharing information and active listening.

Commitment We will be positive, show a “can do” attitude and believe things will change.

Trust and respect We will be transparent, non-judgemental, co-operative and value others.

Shared Vision We will work towards a common purpose and common practices.

Continuity We will involve others from start to finish and acknowledge the partnership of parents and practitioners.

Patience, Care and Understanding We will treat others as we want to be treated.

The voice of children and young people is clearly important and also needs to be encouraged and enabled by both parents and practitioners.

References

Children and Families Act (2014) Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>

Lamb Inquiry (2009) Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>

NHS Constitution (2015) Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/480482/NHS_Constitution_WEB.pdf

NNPCF State of the Nation Report (2018) Available at: <http://www.nnpkf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/State-of-the-Nation-20180514.pdf>

SEND Code of practice (2015) Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

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Useful Contacts

Contact

A national charity for families with disabled children. Supporting families with the guidance and information. www.contact.org.uk

NNPCF

The National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) is the independent national voice of parent carer forums. www.nnpkf.org.uk

Unique Ways

A local Calderdale charity for families with disabled children. They support families with information, training and specialised one to one services and they bring families together to support each other. www.uniqueways.org.uk/

Calderdale Local Offer

For information on services and support for children and young people aged 0 - 25, with special educational needs and disabilities in Calderdale.

www.calderdale.gov.uk/v2/residents/education-and-learning/local-offer/send

For more information about this charter, please contact

family.voice@uniqueways.org.uk

