Together is Better Agreement South Gloucestershire

SAY SEND AND YOU SENDIAS

SGPC Est 2009 South Glos Parent Carers

Content:

Context of the agreement..... p 1
Overarching principles..... p 1
Agreed five principles..... p 1

PART ONE
Common goals and values..... p 2
Common code of conduct..... p 2
Building positive working relationships..... p 2-3

PART TWO - Organisations
South Glos Parent Carers (SGPC)..... p 4
SEND and You (SAY)..... p 5

Accessibility..... p 6

Signatures..... p 6
Review date..... p 6

Together is Better Agreement

The context for our agreement

This is an agreement setting out how we, **SEND And You (SAY)** Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS), and **South Glos Parent Carers (SGPC)**, the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) for **South Gloucestershire** will work together as individuals and organisations.

The purpose of our joint agreement is so that families of children and young people with additional needs and disabilities benefit from the best support, advice and meaningful participation opportunities possible, enabling them to achieve the best outcomes

The overarching principles we share are: -

1. A shared belief in empowering our SEND community, improving outcomes and opportunities for all disabled children and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or additional needs and their families.
2. Cooperative partnership working as professionals and actively promoting positive communication in our working relationship.

The five principles we agree to are: -

- Clarity over each other's respective roles and responsibilities
- Commitment to working together to support, train and empower parent carers to be their own voice
- Acknowledge the development of each other's practice
- Communication is open and honest and solution focussed
- Publicly promoting, supporting and championing each other

PART ONE

Our Common Goals and Values are: -

- we agree to work together to identify shared concerns and improved outcomes.
- We agree that events and co-production activities planned together are timely and positive for parent carers and young people.
- We agree to plan our shared activities so that all children, young people and parent carers feel involved.

Our common code of conduct

Individuals and our organisations agree to:

- Behave with respect and professionalism towards each other as per the expectations and standards set in the Nolan Principles of public life.
- Communicate in an open, constructive and honest way that is diplomatic and not personalised, being mindful of both parties confidentiality and impartiality function. (See SAY's confidentiality & impartiality policies). (See SGPC' policies)
- Agree to be honest when there are challenges or differences to enable us to find a useful way forward that best enables parent carer voices to be heard.

Building positive working relationships

We acknowledge the importance of partnership working and the maintaining of professional relationships and as such agree to resolve and mitigate any mistakes, tensions, and disagreements as soon as they arise.

We agree the following:

- We will meet 3 times per calendar year (face to face where possible) so that we can best understand each other's works and capacity issues, priorities, and plans - to coordinate our efforts, plan ahead and work jointly when needed. This can be meetings or phone conversations.
- We acknowledge that SEND is a complex arena and there are a range of views, passions and capacities.
- We agree to talk and find a solution at the earliest opportunity and put any learning into place so that when the issues arise again we know how to avoid problems escalating.
- We will do our best to share and promote information on each other's events.
- Advise each other of potential duplication or conflicting work or events as soon as possible.

Building positive working relationships (cont.)

- We will commit to working together on the annual SEND event, and other events that may take place.
- Make contact with one another to discuss any potential areas of disagreement if they arise to consider our concerns and discuss a way forwards.
- Be respectful of volunteer time.
- **SEND and You** agree to act as Secretariat for the thrice-annual "Together is Better" meetings in as much as they will arrange the meetings and take minutes, but where there is additional work or cost involved this will be shared on an equal basis and agreed beforehand. · We will only use each other's branded logos if we are holding a joint event unless we request a prior agreement for an individual event. We agree to signpost to each other's services via the use of logos on each other's website.
- We agree to all register if we intend to attend each other's events even if we are exhibiting.
- We agree not to charge each other attendance at events but in order to meet liability insurance requirements, we must register attendance. Where possible we will have representatives available reflective of the size of the event.
- Commit and encourage other organisations to keep SGPC updated on experiences of parent carers they are working with, to feed back into the collective voice of parent carers that SGPC represents locally at a strategic level.
- Promote our own and each other's events, sessions and groups on our respective websites at SGPC calendar and events, SAY's events and bookings and social media (see part two below).
- Commit to being accessible in our service delivery as a joint commitment and will endeavour to working together in our access arrangements for parent carers, children, and young people.
- Information about sessions will only be shared with third parties in the event of a safeguarding concern. Any concerns regarding an organisation will be discussed collaboratively with Robbie Holland, South Glos Parent Carers, and Flo Weston or Santie Human, SEND And You, where appropriate next steps will be discussed and agreed.

PART TWO

Our Organisation-specific Goals, Values and Responsibilities

South Glos Parent Carers (SGPC)

South Glos Parent Carers (SGPC) is the local parent carer forum working to represent the collective voice of parent carers of children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in South Gloucestershire. Through SGPC, parent carers can have their say on local services in Education, Health and Social Care to help influence, shape and design how these are delivered.

SGPC also offers a range of support to parent carers, whether their child has a diagnosis or if they are just showing signs of having an additional need.

These options include:

- drop-in support at the SGPC Community Base in Kingswood,
- online support,
- free online workshops on a range of SEND topics,
- stay and play support sessions for those with children aged 0-5 years, and
- Early Years specific drop-in support sessions at The Patchway Children's Centre.

Visit: www.sgpc.org.uk or email: team@sglospc.org.uk

SGPC will be responsible for the following:

- Representing the collective voice of Parents and Carers within South Gloucestershire.
- Recruiting and training Parent Reps to ensure our Reps are representing the wider views of the community and needs of families
- Reaching out to as many parents as possible by linking with other parent groups, voluntary organisations and settings to encourage families to join our membership database
- Listening, collecting and collating the views and experiences of parent carers, so that Parent Reps can better represent families at strategic meetings
- Co-producing at strategic level across Education, Health and Social care informing and influencing local and national policy
- Running networking, information and engagement events to help inform our families and our community.
- Providing support to our community through various means depending on what our members ask of us (ie support groups, information events).
- Signpost families requiring support for SEND related questions and processes only to organisations that have trained advisors.
- We will actively signpost and advertise families requiring support to the local SENDIAS service
- We will maintain open and honest communication with all parties.

SEND and You SENDIAS Service

SEND and You (SAY) provides the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) in North Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

SAY SENDIASS is free, impartial, confidential, and independent. Our role as a SENDIASS is to help children and young people aged 0-25, and parent carers build their knowledge, understanding and confidence in SEND procedures, policies, practices, and law. In doing so, we want to enable people to communicate their own needs, wishes, aims and rights during their own journey.

We aim to empower children and young people and parent carers to play an active, informed role in making decisions about their education, health and social care. Professionals can use the SENDIASS to build their own knowledge and understanding and enable the people they work with to access SAY.

We cover: -

- SEN (Special Educational Needs) Support in early years, school, or college
- Improving communication with educational settings, local authority, health, and social care
- Transition between educational settings, phased transfer or moving between Children's and Adult's services
- Transport to educational placement
- Annual Reviews of Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) EHCP Application and Needs Assessment
- Appeals to Tribunal for refusal to assess for an EHCP, refusal to issue an EHCP, contents of an EHCP, ceasing to maintain an EHCP, and placement
- Exclusions and part-time timetables
- Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) Disability Discrimination
- Making a complaint Health and social care queries related to the child or young person's disability. (See 'What to expect from SEND and You' guide).

SEND and You (SAY) SENDIAS Service will be Responsible for:

- Providing trained staff to deliver free, confidential and impartial information, advice and support (IAS) to children, young people and their parents with any type of special educational need and/or disabilities (SEND) aged 0-25 years, in line with the requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014
- Offering an all-year-round service with a dedicated information advice and support line, including a 24-hour answerphone service within the current expectations of our contractual agreement
- Supporting a young person to access the service when they request as a separate service to their parent/carer
- Feeding back to SGPC on key issues and themes arising from service users and providing further information and data at the trustees' discretion.
- Publicising the work of SGPC, including key projects and events via our social media platforms, in line with our existing policies and practice.
- Signposting people who use SAY to SGPC based on individual enquiries.
- Maintaining open and honest communication with all parties.
- Sharing knowledge of Local and National SEND developments and the work of the service.
- Help represent the legal backdrop behind health and social issues and support SGPC in raising concerns with the LA and offering challenge where this is appropriate.
- Work collaboratively with SGPC in emphasising and maintaining good practice and policies to the LA to ensure positive impact can continue.

Accessibility

SAY and SGPC agree to do our best to ensure that people know how to find and access our services, ensuring we plan and make adjustments to support individuals.

Together is Better Agreement South Gloucestershire

Agreed on 30th of April 2025 by:

Robbie Holland
SGPC Parent Voice & Co-production Manager
Signature: R Holland

On Behalf of **South Glos Parent Carers (SGPC)**

and

Santie Human
SAY External Strategic Lead
Signature: S Human

On Behalf of **SEND And You SENDIAS Service (SAY SENDIASS)**

To be reviewed on:

Date: **September 2025**

SAY SEND AND YOU SENDIAS

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