

# Trustees' Annual Report for the Period

From: 26/06/2023

To: 31/03/2024



## Charity Information

Charity Name: Wigan Parent Carer Forum

Charity Registration Number: 1203737

Charity's Principal Address:

Wigan Parent Carer Forum

Ashland House

Dobson Park Way

Ince

Wigan

WN2 2DX

## Objectives and Activities

### *Summary of the Charity's Purpose*

Wigan Parent Carer Forum exists to empower parent carers of children and young people (aged 0-25) with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in Wigan Borough. The charity aims to promote social inclusion and influence the development of local services, ensuring they reflect the needs of SEND families.

### *Key Activities and Public Benefit*

During this period, the charity has:

Hosted forums, workshops, and training sessions to provide parents with the knowledge and resources to support children and young people with SEND.

Delivered peer support sessions to reduce social isolation and create a strong parent network.

Worked closely with local authorities and health services to advocate for better SEND provisions.

Participated in key community events to increase awareness of SEND challenges and solutions.

Offered direct support to families through drop-in sessions, signposting, and empowerment programs.

### *Trustees' Statement on Public Benefit*

The trustees confirm that they have had due regard to the Charity

Commission's guidance on public benefit while carrying out the charity's objectives.

## Achievements and Performance

### *Highlights from the Year:*

Christmas Party (Dec 2023): A successful family event supported by volunteers, with a special visit from Santa.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) Hybrid Session (Nov 2023): First-ever hybrid session, made possible by a donated Smart TV.

Wigan Central Family Hub Opening (Oct 2023): Actively involved in launching this essential service hub.

Parent Empowerment Programme: A 6-week training programme to equip parents with tools to support their children's best lives.

Low Bank Ground Trip (Sept 2023): Families engaged in outdoor activities that helped build confidence and social connections.

Neurodevelopmental Focus Groups: Sessions designed to gather parent feedback on essential health and educational services.

All Different, All Equal Event (Mar 2024): Engaged with the community on topics such as Transport, Housing, Education, and Employment.

## Financial Review

### *Financial Position at the End of the Period:*

Total Income: £56,419

£32,359 rolled over from previous funding,

£24,060 earned through charitable activities.

1 grant received: £22,785 from the Department for Education via Contact.

Total Spending: £50,100

Remainder : £6,319,

### Reserves Policy

The charity aims to maintain reserves covering 3-6 months of operational costs to ensure sustainability. As of this period, unrestricted reserves are within a prudent range.

## Risk Management

The charity recognizes several key risks and has developed mitigation strategies:

**Funding Uncertainty:** Diversifying income streams and applying for new grants.

**Volunteer Retention:** Regular support, training, and appreciation initiatives for volunteers.

**Governance & Compliance:** Strengthening financial controls and adopting missing governance policies (e.g., risk management policy).

## Structure, Governance, and Management

**Governing Document:** The charity operates under a constitution as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

**Trustee Selection:** Trustees are appointed based on alignment with the charity's mission and values.

**Financial Controls:** The forum adheres to its Financial Control Policy (revised 2024), ensuring transparency and accountability. Key elements include:

Use of NatWest online banking, with three signatories for oversight.

No use of cheques; all transactions are recorded digitally.

Strict expense reimbursement guidelines.

## Volunteers and Community Impact

Wigan Parent Carer Forum is heavily volunteer-driven, with 15 dedicated volunteers contributing significantly to its success. Their efforts in event coordination, peer support, advocacy, and administration have made a tangible impact on SEND families in Wigan Borough.

## Future Plans

Strengthening governance policies, including implementing a risk management policy.

Expanding outreach programs to engage more parent carers.

Developing new funding sources to ensure long-term sustainability.

Enhancing hybrid and digital service delivery

The next financial year is well underway, and we have all manner of exciting things happening. We look forward to sharing these developments in next year's annual report.

## Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved this report.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name: Lisa Aldred

Position: Chair of Trustees

Date: \_\_\_\_\_