



Birmingham Parent Carer Forum Update.

Looking at the past year we can see that the Birmingham Parent Carer Forum has seen growth in its membership and in its engagement at levels that exceed previous years. This growth has enabled the forum to reach more parents across the city including those from underrepresented communities. We have been able to increase our capacity allowing for more meetings to have a representative from the forum therefore amplifying the parent carer voice.

Getting out and speaking face to face to parents has definitely increased the PCFs awareness and visibility across many localities and communities, however we know we still have more work to do?

We have started a pilot group for Somilian ladies who have children with SEND. The PCF was approached by 2 ladies who attended the parent rep event and asked for support in setting up a group for the Somali community as they felt they had nowhere to go? The group is run in collaboration with Kids and has 2 meetings so far which have been well attended.

The PCF have visited many schools in Birmingham meeting with parents and support groups explaining who we are and what we do as there are still parents who haven't heard of us?

We have supported HAF programmes during the holidays collaborating with different organisations and meeting parents and young people which has been fantastic!

The PCF collaborated with the Children's quarter to provide 4 training sessions aimed at giving parents information.

Birmingham Parent Carer Forum C.I.C.

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Membership

Since May 2023 we have seen our membership grow from 646 to 840 in May 2024 an increase of 30%. Our net subscriber growth (The number of subscribers gained over the year minus the number the number of unsubscribes) is 163 up 47% from the previous year this tells us that we are not only increasing the number of parent carers we are able to reach but we are also keeping our existing membership engaged.

Social Media

Facebook

Since May 2023 our Facebook followers have grown to 1874. This is an increase of 83.7% from the previous year. (April 2023 – April 2024). We have had over 1.5K likes on our posts.

Our closed Facebook group has 313 members of which 95.8% are women and 3.6% are men, the main age groups are 35-44 and 45-54.

We have also seen an increase in the following numbers:

- Impressions 249,200 up 70.8% from the previous year
- Reach 89,100 up 272.8% from the previous year
- Content interactions 3700 up 18.1% from the previous year

Twitter/X

We currently have 761 followers on Twitter/X. Unfortunately we are unable to see the same data in terms of growth that Facebook gives us.

Instagram

In September 2023 we set up our Instagram account and we currently have 46 followers. We have not promoted our Instagram account yet.

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Events

Wibbly Wobbly World of play engagement event November 2023

The event enabled parents to meet charities and third sector organisations to gain knowledge and information about the services available to them and their children. Parent carers were able to bring their children with them and had free access to the soft play area. In total 80 people attended the events we had 20 complete our feedback form and 40 signed up to the membership.

The PCF had been working with organisations in the Ladywood and Perry Barr areas of the city and from this we were able to identify it as an area that had a large community of underrepresented families. We knew that we wanted to hold an event in a different type of environment and Wibbly Wobbly was chosen.

Meet the Services Event February 2024

During this event parents could meet statutory service providers to gain knowledge and information about the services that are available to them. over 200 people attended, the highest number of attendees at a forum event, 100 completed our feedback form and 150 signed up to the membership as well as 2 parents agreeing to become Parent Representatives.

This was the first time the forum had hosted an event where parent carers were able to meet with service providers face to face. Feedback from Parent carers and service providers was overwhelmingly positive. Parent Carers particularly spoke about how important it was to speak with providers face to face and be able to get important information relevant to them.

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Looking at the data Eventbrite gives us around the ticketing of the event we can see that over 1000 people viewed the event page. As there were only 350 tickets available they were sold out before the event, we believe if we were able to offer more tickets either through a larger venue or having a second day of the event then we would have seen even more tickets sold and a higher attendance at the event.

Both these events and by attending events put on by other organisations the PCF have been able to speak with more families than in previous years we believe that this has been a key factor in our increase in membership and engagement on social media. BPCF has adopted more of a locality way of working and as a committee we naturally fall into North, South, East, West and Central.

Committee Members and Parent Representatives

The Forum has been able to greatly increase its capacity by recruiting new Committee Members and Parent Representatives. 2 new committee members have joined the Forum last year, Amanda has since taken on the role of Secretary and Amber has been able to bring her experience of early years to the committee, an area which we had identified as a gap within the Committee.

I'm delighted to announce that we have another new committee member, Ayisha initially joined us as a parent rep and has now joined the BPCF committee. There are 2 other parent reps that I am hoping will be joining the committee soon. We have got some really experienced and passionate parents who are wanting to help make changes and work co-productively with everyone.

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In January we held a Parent Representative recruitment event, where parent carers were invited to a coffee morning where we explained the role of a parent representative and the opportunities to get involved. 12 new parents signed up including 2 dads and members from diverse communities which before the event was not represented in the Parent Representative group. Since then we have been able to recruit new Representatives at other events we've attended. The group now has over 20 members who are involved in various meetings and projects including Family Voices and the OAG Project. Previously the forum would not have had the capacity to have had representation in these projects, thanks to the growth in both our committee and parent representatives we are now able to ensure parental input into more meetings and projects than ever before.

Current work the PCF are involved with.

Ordinarily Available Guidance - OAG

Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools -PINS

Co-production training

EHCP - Templates, Annual reviews and health and social care

Family hubs/voices

Short Breaks procurement

Short Breaks - What does this mean?

Inclusive City Steering Group

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