



Financial Control Policy

The Parent Carer Forum Devon Financial Control Policy consists of:

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Management of financial records

- 1) The financial control policy is designed to ensure that all expenditure is on the Forum's business; that it is properly authorised; and that this can be demonstrated.
- 2) Financial records (a book of accounts) must be kept so that the forum:
 - has proper financial control of the organisation
 - meets its legal and other statutory obligations (if relevant), such as Charities Act, Inland Revenue, Customs & Excise, Companies House returns and common law
 - meets the contractual obligations and requirements of funders
- 3) Accounts must be drawn up at the end of each financial year within three months and presented at the next steering group.
- 4) Prior to the start of each financial year, the forum will approve a budgeted income and expenditure account for the following year. This will be agreed by the forum steering group.
- 5) A report comparing actual income and expenditure within the budget should be presented to the steering group/members on a termly basis.
- 6) Parent Carer Forum Devon will appoint an independent examiner to review the accounts to coincide with the end of the financial year.

Banking arrangements

- 1) Parent Carer Forum Devon will bank with Lloyds Bank and accounts will be held in the name of Parent Carer Forum Devon. The account will hold the grant funding and will require dual signatories for transactions.
- 2) A bank mandate (the list of people who can sign cheques on the forum's behalf) will be approved and minuted by the directors/steering group, as will any changes to it (see Appendix A).
- 3) Parent Carer Forum Devon will require the bank to provide statements every month. These will be reconciled by the budget manager with the cash book at least every three months. The directors will check that this reconciliation has been done on a termly basis.



- 4) Parent Carer Forum Devon will not use any other bank or financial institution, or use overdraft facilities or loan, without the previous agreement of the directors/steering group.
- 5) Parent Carer Forum Devon will if possible, aim to maintain a reserve in its account equal to three months of running costs.
- 6) The Forum may hold a second account with Lloyds Bank, which will contain a maximum of £500 at any one time, taken from the forum's own money. This account will be a single signatory account with debit cards for each director attached. The account will be used for the sole purpose of ordering/purchasing goods which have been approved by the Directors or Steering group, e.g. advertising flyers. This will offset the need for individuals to purchase such items from their own funds and be reimbursed.
- 7) Named signatories agree to only use funds from either account in accordance with the forum's policies and as approved by the steering group. The signatories will provide receipts within 7 days for any purchases.

Receipts

- 1) All monies received by the forum will be recorded promptly in the cashbook and banked without delay. The budget manager will maintain files of documentation evidence.

Cheque payments

- 1) The approved budget provides the cheque signatories with authority to spend up to the budgeted expenditure and not beyond it.
- 2) The directors will be responsible for holding the cheque book (unused and partly used cheque books) which should be kept locked in the office when not in use.
- 3) Each cheque will be signed by at least two people.
- 4) A cheque must NOT be signed by the person to whom it is payable.
- 5) Blank cheques will NEVER be signed.



- 6) The relevant payee's name will always be inserted on the cheque BEFORE signature, and the cheque stub will always be properly completed.
- 7) No cheques should be signed without original documentation (see Appendix A).

Expenses, payments and honoraria

- 1) Parent Carer Forum Devon will reimburse pre agreed expenditure paid for personally by volunteers or staff, providing prior approval has been given by the directors, which includes the following:
 - Parent Carer Forum Devon will cover travel to and from the meeting venue and any prior agreed travel undertaken while volunteering (see Appendix B for details).
 - Refreshments will normally be provided free of charge to representatives where appropriate. However, there will be occasions outside of this and Parent Carer Forum Devon will reimburse the pre-agreed cost (see Appendix B for details).
 - Parent Carer Forum Devon will contribute towards agreed childcare expenses incurred while representing the forum (see Appendix B).
 - Parent Carer Forum Devon will reimburse other minor expenses supported by receipts if agreed in advance with the budget manager.
- 2) Every payment out of Parent Carer Forum Devon's bank account must be evidenced by an original invoice and never against a supplier's statement or final demand. The original invoice will be retained by the forum and filed.
- 3) The only exceptions to cheques not being supported by an original invoice are items such as advanced booking fees for a course, deposit for a venue, VAT, etc. Here a photocopy of the cheque will be kept.

Staff

- 1) There must be a clear trail to show the authority and reason for EVERY payment to staff; e.g. a cheque requisition form asking for payment to an employee. All employees will be paid within the PAYE and National Insurance regulations.
- 2) All staff appointments or departures will be authorised by the directors who will consult with/advise the steering group members at their regular meeting, minuting the dates and salary level. Similarly, all changes in hours and variable payments (e.g. overtime) will be authorised by the directors.





Other rules

- 1) Parent Carer Forum Devon does not accept liability for any financial commitment unless properly authorised.
- 2) The forum will always adhere to good practice in relation to its finances. This should include a fixed asset register stating the date of purchase, cost, serial numbers and normal location of assets. Any assets should be returned to the forum upon request or if individual members stand down.
- 3) Purchases of goods or services over £500 will be agreed by the directors and steering group. Parent Carer Forum Devon will obtain at least two quotes and the subsequent decision will be on value for money and minuted by the steering group.
- 4) Any Parent Carer Forum Devon steering group member who has a personal interest in, or connection to, an organisation or individual who is already being paid by the forum (or intends to quote for work being commissioned by the forum) must declare this interest and have it minuted by the steering group.



Appendix A – Signatories

I hereby agree to only use funds from accounts belonging to Parent Carer Forum Devon in accordance with the forum's policies and as approved by the steering group. I will provide receipts within 7 days for any purchases. Any money deemed to be outside of this agreement by the steering group will be returned within 7 days.

Signatory	Signed
Victoria Mitchell	
Julia Bonell	
Jane Ring	*SIGNATURE REQUIRED*

Addresses available on request



Appendix B – Reward and Recognition

Introduction

We aspire to reward and recognise the value of parent carers who contribute their time, skills and expertise to support the aims of Parent Carer Forum Devon; we receive participation and coproduction funding from Devon County Council as one of their strategic partners. We are a member of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums which is recognised and funded by the DfE as the strategic voice of parent carers across all English Local Authorities.

How claims will be made

All parents/carers are required to complete the relevant Parent Carer Forum Devon Online Claim Form. This will need to be approved before any expense claims can be processed.

Paper claim forms are available via admin@parentcarerforumdevon.org and will be posted upon request.

The Parent Carer Forum Devon Online Claim Form is to be completed for every meeting attended or every day of time volunteered. Claims for expenses over 3 months old will not be accepted.

The Accounting period runs from 1st April to 31st March every year. To enable us to comply with our grant monitoring, claims must be received by the second week in April for any claims up to and including the 31st March every year.

These occasional representations on behalf of Parent Carer Forum Devon do not constitute a contract of employment, but the hourly rate may be classed as earnings. It is the sole responsibility of individuals to notify HMRC of their earnings or expenses. If you are claiming benefits, it is your responsibility to declare your earnings or expenses where appropriate to any other relevant agencies.



Expenses

Travel Expenses

Parent Carer Forum Devon will cover travel to and from the meeting venue and any prior agreed travel undertaken during the course of volunteering.

The first 30 minutes of any travel each day will not be paid at the hourly rate. Travel longer than 30 minutes may be paid at the discretion of Parent Carer Forum Devon.

Parent Carer Forum Devon will pay an agreed vehicle rate per mile (see Appendix C). We offer a passenger rate to encourage car sharing of a return trip from pick up and drop off point of a passenger in a private vehicle (see Appendix C).

Public transport reimbursement will be made against a receipt.

If for any reason a taxi is required, please make all reasonable efforts to clear this in advance with the budget manager. A receipt must be obtained.

Refreshments Expenses Criteria

Refreshments will normally be provided free of charge to representatives where appropriate. This includes lunch where activities take place over lunchtime. However, there will be occasions outside of this and Parent Carer Forum Devon will reimburse the cost of reasonable meals or refreshments in accordance with the following criteria:

- Necessarily absent from home and are more than 3 miles from their home.
- Away from their home for more than five hours and the period of absence covers the whole of the normal lunchtime period of 12 noon to 2.00pm or dinner period 5:00pm to 7:00pm.
- Non-alcoholic drinks may be reimbursed where the number of hours of voluntary time and participation time has exceeded 3 hours or more.
- See Appendix C for current rates. Receipts must be provided.

Childcare Expenses Criteria

Parent Carer Forum Devon will make a contribution towards childcare expenses when representing Parent Carer Forum Devon.

Childcare should only be claimed where additional childcare costs are incurred, ie not when immediate family members are caring for the child/young person in their own home.

See Appendix C for current rates. Receipts must be provided.



Appendix C – Remuneration for Parent Representative Participation

A reward will be offered as a token of appreciation for parent carers' knowledge and expertise and will be paid at a set rate as detailed in the following table:

Level	Involvement and activity	Notes
Level One No expenses or reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Handing out information and membership forms.• Small update meetings.• Phoning representatives with updates.	
Level Two Expenses and hourly rate	<p>General Admin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Answering general enquiries• Bookings for events or meetings• Loaning Library activity• Basic communication and social media• Steering Group meetings.	Hourly rate of £11.55
Level Three Expenses and hourly rate	<p>Strategic Planning and Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writing Agendas and meeting minutes.• Representing the forum at meetings, events, workshops and funding panel.• Regional meetings.• National NNPCF AGM• Conference where asked to represent parent carers.• Meetings with other organisations to further the participation work of the forum.• Participation coordination & admin	Hourly rate of £18.50



Level Four Expenses and an agreed rate decided in advance by the committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One off tasks/projects.• Newsletter.• Training• Website updates and design• Grant applications.• Grant monitoring.• Excessive research for a meeting or project.• Writing Reports.• Running support groups.	Parent Carer Forum Devon sometimes has pieces of work for which members may be given a reward. The representative is responsible for their own tax and insurance position, and is responsible for checking how any payment, either cash or voucher, may impact on their benefits, and/or tax.
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Refreshment expenses

Maximum of £10 for lunch and £20 for dinner.

Childcare expenses

Up to a maximum of £7.50 per hour per child, supported by receipts. A payment of up to £15 per hour per child will be paid where a child requires 2 to 1 care, supported by receipts.

If your childcare costs are higher than this, please contact the Directors as this should not be a barrier to participation in PCFD activities.

Travel Expenses

Travel expenses will be paid at the rate of 45p per mile.

An additional 5p per mile may be claimed if car sharing per additional person.

Review

Monitoring and review of this policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if necessary due to budgetary constraints.



This Policy was agreed by the Steering Group on 17th May 2023.

Print Name	Signature	Date
Victoria Mitchell Co-chair PCFD		17/05/23
Julia Bonell Co-chair PCFD		17/05/23

Date of next review:

May 2025