



Conflict of Interest Policy

Policy Statement

Parents in Partnership, Croydon is a network for parents of children/young people who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We manage a variety of activities and projects for the benefit of the families involved.

We value the integrity of the organisation and will uphold this through the quality of our services and of our staff members and volunteers. We believe that the organisation exists to champion the issues and concerns of families of children and young people with SEND. In doing so, we will make sure that everything we do will be towards the achievement of the goals of the organisation and our service users.

This policy applies to board members, staff and volunteers of the organisation.

Introduction

Board Members, staff and Volunteers of Parents in Partnership Croydon have an obligation to act in the best interests of the organisation and in accordance with its governing document. Conflicts of interests may arise where an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of Parents in Partnership, or if an individual will likely to gain favour or financially from his/her association with the organisation.

Such conflicts may create problems; they can:

- Inhibit free discussion;
- Result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of Parents in Partnership; and
- Risk the impression that Parents in Partnership has acted improperly.

The aim of this policy is to protect both the organisation and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety.

The declaration of interests

Accordingly, we are asking Board Members, staff and volunteers to declare their interests, and any gifts or hospitality received in connection with their role in Parents in Partnership. A declaration of interests form is provided for this purpose, listing the types of interest you should declare.

To be effective, the declaration of interests needs to be updated at least annually, and also when any changes occur.

If you are not sure what to declare, or whether/when your declaration needs to be updated, please err on the side of caution. If you would like to discuss this issue, please contact the Manager for confidential guidance. Interests will be recorded on the governing body's register of interests, which will be maintained by the Manager. The register will be accessible only to the Board of Trustees and senior staff.

Data Protection

The information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998 and as set out in PIP's Data Protection Policy and Procedures. Data will be processed only to ensure that Board Members, staff and volunteers act in the best interests of Parents in Partnership. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose.

What to do if you face a conflict of interest

If you are a user PIP services, or the carer of someone who uses the organisation's services, you should not be involved in decisions that directly affect the service that you, or the person you care for, receives. You should declare your interest at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from any subsequent discussion. The same applies if you face a conflict for any other reason. You may, however, participate in discussions from which you may indirectly benefit, for example where the benefits are universal to all users, or where your benefit is minimal.

If you are a board member, staff member or volunteer who have other business such as training and consultancy, you should declare about current and future projects or contracts with other agencies of individuals.

If you fail to declare an interest that is known to Parents in Partnership, the Chair or the Manager will declare that interest.

Decisions taken where a board member or member of staff has an interest

In the event of the board having to decide upon a question in which a Board Member or member of staff has an interest, all decisions will be made by vote, with a simple majority. A quorum must be present for the discussion and decision; interested parties will not be counted when deciding whether the meeting is quorate.

Interested board members may not vote on matters affecting their own interests. They may participate in the discussion but not the decision-making process.

All decisions under a conflict of interest will be recorded by Parents in Partnership Manager and reported to the Board of Trustees. The report will record:

- The nature and extent of the conflict;
- An outline of the discussion;
- The actions taken to manage the conflict.

A *de minimis* exemption applies to contracts less than £500 in value. Random checks against the register of interest will be made on the award of contracts below this value. If the cumulative value of a series of small contracts exceeds £500 the Board Member will operate the policy used for individual contracts over that sum.

The *de minimis* exemption does not apply to contracts of employment with Parents in Partnership.

Independent external moderation will be used where conflicts cannot be resolved through the usual procedures through an EGM or AGM..

This policy and the procedures detailed above were agreed and minuted at a meeting of the Board of Trustees on:

Approved by: Julie Newton-Smith Chair of Trustees	Signed: 	Date: Review by July 2018
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