

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of Seldom Heard Voices Officer for Family Voice Surrey (FVS). We are a Charitable Incorporated Organisation run by parent carers for parent carers of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Our vision is for a society that:

- allows families whose children have additional needs to be heard.
- allows ALL children to thrive and are supported to achieve their dreams.
- celebrates difference and diversity.
- breaks down the barriers faced by children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Family Voice Surrey aims to bring about positive change for children and young people with additional needs and their families, by:

- Giving families a strong collective voice,
- Being a professional, parent carer led organisation.
- Ensuring parent carers are valued as equal partners within the local authority
- Supporting parent carers to understand their rights and choices.



About Us

We are Surrey's official parent carer forum, part of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums, established as part of the 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' initiative in 2011. We are an established Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

Family Voice Surrey (FVS) is the official parent carer forum for families of children and young people (aged 0–25) with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in Surrey. We work in partnership with health, education, social care, and other stakeholders to shape and improve services through co-production and active parent carer involvement.

We are a parent carer forum



We champion your
needs and rights



We are passionate
about improving
outcomes for your
children



We are experts by
experience because
we are parent carers



We work together
with the local
authority to represent
your experience



We have a say in how
local services work do
that they improve the
lives of Surrey families



Job Title: Seldom Heard Voices officer

Location: Hybrid role involving regular travel to events and approximately 2 office days per month.

Hours: 10 hours per week term time plus 2 weeks flexible working over the summer holidays. This is a flexible role with some evening or occasional holiday working.

Salary: £28,000 PA FTE pro rata

Travel Required: As required – expenses paid

Role Purpose

The Seldom Heard Voices Officer is a key role within Family Voice Surrey. The postholder will lead and coordinate engagement and participation activity with parent carers whose voices may be less frequently represented, ensuring that lived experience meaningfully informs service design, delivery, and decision-making.

Initially, the role will have a particular focus on Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA), working to strengthen the voice of parent carers whose children and young people are affected by school attendance challenges. The postholder will develop accessible opportunities for engagement, build trusted relationships with families, and ensure that feedback and lived experience are effectively represented in discussions with decision-makers.

More broadly, the role will identify and engage with seldom heard parent carer communities, reducing barriers to participation and ensuring that feedback reflects a diverse range of experiences and perspectives. The role also includes supporting Family Voice Surrey's online and community engagement activities and contributing to the development of events and initiatives that build parent carer confidence, connection, and influence.

Key Responsibilities

Parent Carer Engagement and Listening

- Lead and coordinate engagement and participation activity with parent carers whose voices may be less frequently represented.
- Initially focus on Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA), building relationships with parent carers whose children and young people are affected by EBSNA.
- Identify and reduce barriers to participation, ensuring engagement opportunities are accessible, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of diverse families.

- Gather parent carer insight through conversations, surveys, events, community outreach, and online engagement.
- Ensure that parent carer lived experience informs consultation, co-production, service development, and decision-making.

Representation and Co-production

- Ensure that feedback shared reflects collective insight, themes, and patterns rather than individual views.
- Communicate key themes, priorities, and emerging trends clearly and accurately.
- Support co-production by bringing lived experience into strategic discussions in a constructive and collaborative manner.
- On occasions you may be required to attend meetings with local authorities, health services, education providers, and voluntary sector organisations to represent parent carer voice at a strategic level.

EBSNA-Focused Engagement

- Develop targeted engagement opportunities for parent carers whose children and young people experience EBSNA.
- Build trusted relationships with families and create safe opportunities for them to share their experiences.
- Gather and synthesise parent carer experiences of EBSNA to identify recurring themes, challenges, and priorities.
- Ensure that EBSNA-related parent carer insight is effectively represented in discussions with decision-makers.
- Contribute to the development of resources, events, and activities that reflect the emotional, educational, and systemic challenges faced by families.

Community Engagement, Events, and Outreach

- Support the management of Family Voice Surrey's online peer support spaces, including Facebook and WhatsApp groups, ensuring they remain safe, inclusive, and supportive environments.
- Promote respectful dialogue and maintain appropriate boundaries between peer support and organisational activity.
- Strengthen clear routes from online and community engagement into participation and co-production opportunities.
- Plan and deliver focused events, workshops, and outreach activities that build parent carer confidence, knowledge, and participation skills.
- Create accessible opportunities for parent carers, particularly those from under-represented communities, to engage with service leaders, colleagues, and decision-makers.
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Person Specification

Essential

- Experience of working with parent carers or lived experience as a parent carer of a child or young person with SEND, or a strong understanding of SEND-related issues.
- Ability to build trust and develop positive relationships with a wide range of people.
- Excellent listening and communication skills, with the ability to represent collective views clearly and confidently.
- Commitment to inclusion, equality, and the representation of diverse communities.
- Ability to work independently, manage time effectively, and organise workload efficiently.
- Competent IT skills, including the use of email, online meeting platforms, and social media.

Desirable

- Experience of engagement, participation, or community outreach work.
- Understanding of co-production and parent participation principles.
- Experience of working with voluntary or community sector organisations.
- Knowledge of local SEND systems, services, or statutory frameworks.
- Experience of facilitating groups, events, or discussions.
- Experience of managing or supporting online peer communities, such as Facebook or WhatsApp groups

What We Offer

- Full training and ongoing support
- Opportunities to develop skills in research, facilitation, and report writing
- Experience of co-produced project work
- A supportive and inclusive team environment
- The chance to make a real difference to autistic children and young people

Equal Opportunities Statement

We are committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

We actively encourage applications from autistic people, people with disabilities, people from all ethnic backgrounds, LGBTQ+ communities, and those with lived experience of autism.

We will make reasonable adjustments throughout recruitment and employment.

Selection will be based on skills, values, and suitability for the role.



Accessibility Statement

We aim to make this role and recruitment process as accessible as possible.

This includes:

- Offering information in alternative formats
- Allowing extra time for applications or interviews
- Providing questions in advance
- Offering remote or in-person interview options
- Making reasonable workplace adjustments

Please let us know what support would help you.

How to Apply

Application via Family Voice Surrey's application form (available by email or on our website). CV's will not be accepted.

Please send applications F.A.O Ruth Hobbs at Contact@familyvoicesurrey.org

Work with us to improve the future of children with disabilities or additional needs. We can't achieve this without your support.

Join us and add your voice to ours. Together, we're stronger.



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