

(Acting) Chair of Trustees Statement 2019-2020

This financial year we made the successful transition to The Rose Road Association following the decision to outsource the operational participation element of our work. The partnership with The Rose Road Association has given us the opportunity to take advantage of their extensive experience, share best practice and benefit from economies of scale cost savings which have reduced our overhead spend. This new arrangement has proved to be a very successful one.

HPCN has built a new parent led group which has 25 parent representatives and 12 steering group members. All members of our new Parent Steering Group have a passionate interest in supporting the parent carer forum, can communicate well with our multiple stakeholders and understand the principles of being a forum member. This year our representatives have been instrumental in driving forward HPCN and have attended meetings with numerous external stakeholders, reviewed policies and attended workshops hosted by the Department of Education alongside Hampshire County Council (HCC) senior leaders.

During this year our membership has continued to grow. We communicate with our members regularly to ensure we are able to provide them with the essential updates and information they need. Hampshire is a large county and our range of services run within nine local areas. They are designed to empower parents/carers to build resilience, help them to feel less isolated and to share good practice through their experiences. Such engagement and participation across the county allows us to gather parents' views and feedback, and report what we hear to SEND leaders and our external stakeholders. As well as meeting each other, parents/carers have also been given the opportunity to meet SEN team leaders from HCC and HPCN have facilitated nine meetings across the year. We have also been involved in peer reviewing the Local Offer and helping to improve the existing offer. HPCN have been able to report back views and experiences of parents/carers to SEND leaders to ensure that our children and young people with additional needs are able to get the best possible outcomes.

In January 2020 HCC were inspected by Ofsted and CQC. HPCN were integral to ensuring that parent/carer views and experiences were heard at every meeting. This highlighted the excellent working relationship and trust that stakeholders have in our team and members. Prior to the inspection we sought parent/carer views on the support they are receiving for their children/young people with additional needs. We received 300 responses in just three weeks and shared the survey results with both HCC and the Inspectors.

In March 2020 the challenges of COVID-19 and lockdown arrived. The HPCN team rose to these challenges and developed a set of innovative new methods to ensure parents and carers could still receive the help and support they needed. These were especially welcome as the pandemic has induced huge stress in many families.

In conclusion, it has been an interesting and challenging year. In August 2019 our Chair of Trustees (Anne Edwards) stepped down due to work and family commitments. Although she was a trustee for a relatively short time, she was invaluable in helping the charity through a very turbulent and unsettled period. We are extremely grateful for her dedication to ensuring HPCN remained a going concern. Corrina Davies also made the decision to step down from the Board of Trustees in January this year again due to family commitments. A big thank you to Corrina for her time, we are grateful for the experience she brought to the board.

I would like to thank both the trustees who stepped down this year and those to continue on the board for their commitment to HPCN. Similarly, I would like to thank the HPCN team at Rose Road and the members of the Steering Group members and the Parent Representatives for their hard work and continuing support of our members, they continue to be at the core of what HPCN does and all that it achieves. And finally, thanks to all our members. We could not continue in our work without them.

Al Crabtree
Acting Chair of Trustees
29 January 2021