

SWINDON SEND FAMILIES VOICE PARENT CARER SKILLS REGISTER

What are we making better?

"You got me to believe I was useful and could work, I am grateful"



During a parent carer focus group for the Written Statement of Action one parent suggested it would be a good idea to put together a Skills Register – where the parent carer forum asks Swindon parent carers what skills they have/or would like to learn that they could offer to the forum:

- 1.To manage day to day tasks within the forum
- 2.Help with ad-hoc questions and challenges
- 3.Every parent carer has something they can contribute no matter how small
- 4.We are not just parents, we also have careers, hobbies and interests that can be useful to others
- 5.Reduce costs for the forum

CASE STUDY PARENT 1

Parent 1 has two children, one of whom is diagnosed with ASD. She also has health issues herself and has not been able to have a permanent job in the past due to her carer role with her son and her health. She joined our Skills Register so that she can keep up her skills from her previous career, so that when the time is right she can access a permanent job.

We call on parent 1 for help with report writing, data analysing and event planning. This helps the forum as it means we can share the workload rather than depending on the core team to action everything. We support parent 1 by providing her with a financial contribution per hour for the work she does for us which provides her with some independence. Working with us has also increased her confidence to take on new studies to upskill herself in a Level 2 Equality and Diversity qualification.

Parent 2 is a Father to 3 children, one of whom has SEND. He works full time during the day so is unable to commit a lot of time but still wanted to offer help and support to the parent carer forum as he feels our forum has helped support his family. He added his name to the Skills Register as a computer programmer with a high knowledge of IT, which is his full time job. We call on parent 2 when we have any IT issues and recently he set up our online mailing list form. Parent 2 does not charge us any money for the support he provides us, so the forum benefits from his expertise at no cost to us.

CASE STUDY PARENT 2

What difference is this making?

1. Empowering parents and carers
2. Encouraging upskilling
"I have been unable to work full time since having the children and taking time to focus on a new skill has been very rewarding."

3. Making our small budget stretch further

We pay a very reduced rate for professional graphic design work - our latest leaflets were designed by a parent carer to a child with hearing impairment.

4. Encouraging participation

Helps more people invest in the forum, so they want to contribute more.

5. Enables everyone to 'give something' of themselves to the forum

Our birthday cake was made for free by a parent of an 8 year old child with ASD.

"It has helped to give me a sense of achievement and worth."

What will we do next?

We will regularly update the skills register, and ask for new members to help grow our pool of volunteers encouraging participation with the forum.

