Parent carer participation grant monitoring 2016/17 – guidance notes

As the recipient of the parent carer participation grant in 2016/17, you must submit evidence about how the grant was spent and demonstrate that:

- it met the conditions of grant that you signed up to
- it was spent in line with your approved 2016/17 grant application
- the forum achieved positive outcomes which developed or enhanced parent carer participation in your local area

You will need to provide brief details of:

- how the grant money was spent
- the activities you undertook during the financial year, and
- what outcomes/differences were achieved.

If a different organisation held the grant for you, you will need to work together to complete this form.

You must have spent your grant on goods, activities, or services which occurred by **31 March 2017**. You **must complete the online monitoring form**, and submit the relevant receipts, invoices, and if possible, a spreadsheet detailing your financial breakdown, by **Friday 28 April 2017**. We provide information about acceptable formats for your Proofs of Expenditure in a separate document which will be emailed to you.

To make things easier for you, we have created text boxes for you to enter your responses. Some of the boxes contain drop-down menus or options that differ depending on your answer.

If you have any questions about the monitoring process, or if you have difficulty with the online monitoring form, please contact the Parent Carer Participation Advisor for your area, or Ben Bennett our Grants Programme Officer (details below).

**Why is grant monitoring important?**

As the Department for Education’s (DfE’s) contracted partner, Contact a Family is responsible for overseeing the parent carer participation grant which is awarded from public money. We want parent carer forums to play a full and active role in decision making in their local areas and to be able to make the most out of the DfE grant to support their activities. One of the ways we do this is by supporting forums to have adequate structures and governance in place to protect members, and manage and public money effectively. Through the grant application and monitoring process we conduct due diligence checks to assess and minimise risks and to protect against fraud or misuse of the grant. We encourage you to carry out internal checks and to notify us of any concerns. If we identify significant risks or concerns, we may hold the grant on the forum’s behalf until there are sufficient governing arrangements in place to satisfy us that the grant will be managed competently. If serious malpractice is identified at any stage, the DfE may take steps to recover the grant.
The information that forums provide with the Grant monitoring enables Contact a Family to evidence to the DfE, the value and impact of providing the parent carer participation grant to parent carer forums at local, regional and national level. Hearing about forums influencing decision makers, reversing decisions about cuts, or being an integral part of local boards, highlights the continued importance of funding to the DfE.

You should ensure that you read this grant monitoring guidance thoroughly before completing the grant monitoring form.

What you need to be aware of:
Where the grant applicant is different from the grant holding organisation they must work together to ensure that the information required for the monitoring form is collated on time.

The grant applicant (and grant holder, if they are different organisations) are responsible for:

- meeting the submission date of Friday 28 April 2017
- ensuring that the grant money has been spent in line with the approved 2016/17 application
- seeking an approved grant variation if the forum’s activity needed to change part way through the year, for whatever reason
- ensuring best value
- ensuring that all invoices, expense claims and other proofs of expenditure are collated and presented in the acceptable format (outlined in accompanying document)
- providing information that demonstrates how the grant money has strengthened parent carer participation
- notifying Contact a Family of any changes or issues with complying with the monitoring deadlines such as delays, missing proofs of expenditure, or difficulties with other requirements of the monitoring process
- alerting Contact a Family to any suspected fraud or deception, or other issues which may affect our decision to award future grants. It is important that this is done as soon as is practicably possible after you become aware of the issues

Additionally

- the person who signed the Conditions of Grant (CoG) is responsible for ensuring that the forum complies with the guidance and conditions of grant and that the forum spends the money for the purposes outlined in the application.

- the grant monitoring form should be completed in conjunction with the main forum decision making group, or committee, as they will hold the relevant information on their outputs and outcomes.

- the person/organisation who signed the Conditions of Grant in the 2016/17 application remains accountable for the grant until the monitoring has been signed off. If there are any queries, we expect this person or their nominated representative to co-operate with Contact a Family until we are able to sign off the monitoring form. This is a condition of the grant.
Opening the online grant monitoring form
Follow the link to the online monitoring form. Read the instructions carefully, along with these guidance notes (these instructions will appear on screen as “hover text” to help you at the relevant section of the application). You will be invited to fill in your name and email address. Once you have done this you will be emailed a link to the online monitoring form from Ben Bennett. If you do not see the email, please check your junk and spam folders.

When you follow the link to the form, read the instructions and contents page carefully before progressing. Click ‘next' to proceed.

Section 1 – Area
Enter the local authority area in which the forum operates. If you are working in more than one local authority area, separate monitoring returns must be completed for each area.

Section 2 – Organisational and contact information
2.1 Grant applicant – The grant applicant is the person or organisation named as the applicant in the grant application (usually the chair or officer of the forum). If the same organisation holds the grant, this should be the same person who signed the Conditions of Grant in the 2016/17 grant application. This person should fill in this section of the monitoring form giving their contact details.

2.2 Grant holder (if different) - this section is only completed if a different organisation held the grant on behalf of the forum. Enter the name and details of the organisation which is holding the grant money: this is the same organisation (and person, if available) that signed the Conditions of Grant as part of the 2016/17 grant application. If this person is no longer in post, you must notify the grants team who will advise you on what you must do. Leave blank if the forum holds the grant and leads on the participation work.

Provide details of at least one person who can be contacted about the grant monitoring over the summer holidays.

Section 3 – Declaration
This is a declaration regarding the use of the grant and the information submitted as part of the monitoring return. The grant applicant named in 2.1 needs to read this carefully and check the box to say that they agree to these terms. If there is a grant holder, named in 2.2, they will also need to indicate that they agree to the terms.

Section 4 – Parent carer involvement
Enter the number of parent carers who are involved in different aspects of the forum and its work, and the number of hits on the forum’s website and social media reach, if you have social media channels.

Section 5 – 2016/17 summary grant expenditure
5.1 Indicate whether you used a professional service to help you produce the financial information for the forum, e.g. an accountant or auditor.

5.2 Details what information we require for the grant return including information about paid work, and remuneration and expenses to parent carers. We need a total figure of spend for your main grant and any discretionary grants received. You will have received a reminder letter from the grants team if you also received discretionary grants that need to be included in the return. If you
did not receive an email about this and you are unsure of the amounts, please contact pcfgrants@cafamily.org.uk.

**Staffing costs declaration:** If your forum did not employ a paid worker, indicate “no” in the drop-down menu. If you did employ a worker, e.g. for admin or development work, please indicate approximately how many hours per week that they worked, and their hourly rate. If you have difficulty providing this information or have comments regarding this, please elaborate on this in the box provided. You will also need to confirm that the information is correct and that any decision to pay the worker was recorded in the forum’s minutes.

5.3 For this section you will need to refer to your approved 2016/17 grant application (and any discretionary grant applications) to provide a summary of your grant expenditure in 2016/17. When you click on the page you will see rows appear. Fill in what you spent for each “area of spend” from your application – put in the **actual amount** that you spent and **not** the projected amount. If an activity did not happen for any reason and there was a nil spend, please put a ‘0’ amount in the box.

For each new category of spend ‘save’ and ‘add’ an additional box and include your total spend for each category – and indicate which proofs of expenditure relate to this area of spend, if applicable. Remember to include a row for your discretionary grant if you had one.

![Total Spend Table](image)

You’ll then need to enter your total grant spend figure in the box below. If you have a spreadsheet detailing your full expenditure, please upload it here.

We have a separate document on **proofs of expenditure** which can be found on the grants page of our website and in the managing your grant document. This explains about the requirements around acceptable proofs and what claims for expenses and remuneration need to be included in your grant monitoring return.

Copies of all proofs of expenditure documents (invoices, receipts, signed expenses claim forms etc.) must be included and clearly referenced. Proofs can be sent by email, Dropbox or by post (for details of how to do this see the final page of the form) and ideally cross-referenced with your financial spreadsheet.
Section 6 – Outputs and outcomes (for main and discretionary grants)

In this section, we want to know what you achieved as a result of receiving the DfE grant. Refer to the outputs and outcomes you described in your main 2016/17 grant application, and tell us what actually happened, or changed as a result of how you spent your grant.

Please do not include activities in the monitoring form which are solely funded by other grant giving bodies. Do include activity which is solely, or part funded by the parent carer participation grant, even if part funded through other sources.

6.1 Outputs

In your 2016/17 grant application, you detailed budget items for intended spend on activities (outputs). Please provide a brief summary of the work that the forum actually carried out in the box provided – please note that we have introduced a word limit here (500 words) so we are only after a summary of the forum’s work over the year using the grant and any discretionary grants that you received.

‘Outputs’ are usually things you can count – they are the activities you have organised, events or meetings you have run, services, equipment or facilities you have purchased using the parent carer participation grant money.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please summarise your main aims and the activities you carried out using the 2016/17 Parent Carer Participation grant funding – i.e. Large event or conference, Open day, Parent Training, Staffing, parent carer expenses, day to day running costs, purchase of equipment etc. (Maximum 500 words)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office rental, office equipment and day to day infrastructure costs including stationery, printing and postage; 2 events: transition consultation in conjunction with LA &amp; school transport focus group and survey to fee into LA report; Annual conference for forum for parents and LA/health networking, workshops on hot topics, updates on co-production agreement, future planning – room hire, catering, speaker costs and expenses; Forum steering group meetings – room hire for 8 meetings plus refreshments; Parent carer expenses for attending strategic meetings and work streams – travel, child care and reasonable subsistence; Parent carer remuneration for attending strategic meetings and work streams; admin wage – 10 hours per week at £9 per hour. Discretionary grant - production of a leaflet in Urdu to reach out to our Asian community to inform them about</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2 Outcomes

‘Outcomes’ are the changes or differences that your activities or purchases (outputs) have made, either to services, provision, or to the development of parent participation in your area. Tell us what you achieved as a result of spending the grant money. Note that there is a word limit (500 words) for this section. We do not need to know the outcome of renting your office or of purchasing ink cartridges, as they are self-explanatory, but you could tell us about the outcome of sending out your termly newsletter which drew in 100 new parents to the forum, for example.
Please tell us about your progress towards these aims. We want to know what you have achieved by using the grant money (Maximum 500 words) What difference did having the grant funding make? Consider outcomes for the forum (strengthening; capacity building; training; cohesion) and furthering participation (increased membership; promotion; greater influence; website and social media reach; responses to consultations); positive outcomes for service development (boards and meetings you have reps on; changes made as a direct result of the forum’s involvement or influence; reports submitted as evidence); outcomes for parents (increase in knowledge, confidence, skills, resilience, reduction of isolation; harder to reach groups or families).

Events - Our events enabled us to consult with parents on a large scale and to inform the LA’s consultation on school transport. We had so many parents respond that we were able to write a report with stats and case studies which we presented to the Director of Children's services. The outcome of this was that planned changes were amended to include families' wishes. By listening, the LA was able to make cost savings but in a way that did not adversely impact on families.

6.3 Forum health and effectiveness
Answer the questions which will give an indication of how the forum has fared and if you need any additional support. Your regional Parent Carer Participation Advisor will be able to see what issues you are having, and how they might be able to help.

6.4 Rate the forum’s overall effectiveness and tell us what additional support you require in the box, if any.

6.5 Tell us about any changes to the forum’s structure or personnel which have had an impact on the forum this year, in terms of expected progress, or to the forum’s ability to spend the grant. Expand upon this in the box provided if necessary.

6.6 Comment on what you think your forum’s greatest achievements, and greatest challenges, have been in 2016/17.

Indicate whether you are happy for these to be shared with other forums and through the NNPCF, including via their social media or annual report.

6.7 - Relationships
We ask the questions in this section to help you to assess how your forum is working with services in your area. It can help to identify progress or deterioration in relationships since the last grant monitoring. This not only helps us as the DfE’s contracted partner, to monitor participation and report to the DfE about the benefits of maintaining the grant, but helps forums to prioritise areas of work for the coming year.

Assess your working relationship in relation to education. We have given the categories as below (see description for each on the right):
In the text box, describe who in education you are working with, and provide at least one example of how the forum has impacted on a decision, policy or procedure. There is a word limit for this section.

As above for social care.

As above for health.

6.8 Local Offer. Answer the questions to tell us if your forum has been involved in reviewing your area’s local offer and use the box to tell us anything else you think we should know.

6.9 Local area inspections. We ask if your forum has been involved in your local area’s preparations for the Ofsted/CQC inspections. If you have any further comments about this, please tell us in the box provided.

Section 7 – value for money
This section asks about aspects of spend where value for money can be a particular consideration.

7.1 This question asks if any parent carers were paid by the forum to undertake work in a professional capacity (i.e. not as a parent carer representative) e.g. as an administrator, web developer, accountant, etc. If so, such decisions should be minuted, and be in line with the forum’s governance documentation, to ensure the forum is achieving value for money and avoids any conflicts of interest. Please provide details if this occurred.

7.2 This asks if the forum commissioned the service(s) of a business that is owned by a parent carer, or a relative of a parent carer in the forum. Such decisions should be minuted, and be in line with the forum’s governance documentation, to ensure the forum is achieving value for money and avoids any conflicts of interest. If this did occur, provide details in the box provided.

7.3 This question asks about other funding the forum may have received to support parent carer participation in 2016/17. If you indicate ‘yes’ in the drop-down box, we ask who the funder was
and how much you received. Note, this is not asking about additional funding for service delivery such as short breaks, face to face support, running parent support groups. This information helps us place the grant expenditure in an overall context, which helps to demonstrate value for money.

**Section 8 – Engaging with parent carers and other groups**
This section asks about how well the forum is reaching all parent carers across your local area. There is a list of seldom-heard groups to help you with this question.

**8.1** If your forum has a strategy around seldom-heard groups or is actively trying to include different groups please provide an example in the box, and indicate the outcomes that you’ve achieved. If you have a plan to do this in the future, please tell us what these plans are.

**8.2** Indicate if your forum’s membership form enables you to collect information on diversity issues.

**8.3** Indicate whether your forum keeps a running record of your membership and steering group so that you are able to evidence diversity issues.

**8.4** Indicate whether you record information about children/young people’s conditions – and please tell us more about this in the box if you have comments to add.

**8.5** Tell us if there is a disability represented by a greater number of members of the forum, and add any comments in the box if necessary.

**8.6** To tell us more about your forum’s reach, type into the box the other groups in your local area that the forum has links with, or works in partnership with. By this we mean other parent groups, support groups (either generic or condition specific), or carers organisations.

**Section 9 – Regional network meetings**

Indicate whether members of your forum regularly attend regional network meetings, and give some feedback as to why you feel it is important to attend. If members don’t attend, please tell us why this is. You are also asked to indicate whether you are happy for this information to be shared with the NNPCF.

**Section 10 – Satisfaction levels**

This section asks you about how satisfied you are with the support offered by Contact a Family. We are keen to know what your thoughts are, and if you have any suggestions you would like to make for the coming year. Please be open and honest with us as it will help us to improve our practice, and will not impact on your grant.

**Submission**

Finally, you are asked to indicate who your regional parent carer participation advisor is so that they will receive a copy of your monitoring form by email. Click ‘next’ and you will see some final instructions regarding submitting your proofs of expenditure. They can be sent by email to pcfgrants@cafamily.org.uk, via Dropbox, or by post to Ben Bennett (address at the end of the form). Please see our document on proofs of expenditure to help you to fulfil the requirements of the grant.
Click ‘submit’. You will see a large green tick and you will receive an email with a link to your saved form.

Your email will contain a .pdf version of the form and a link to the form which will enable you to make edits. You will also be able to see what text was submitted in the body of the email.

**CONTACT A FAMILY – PARENT CARER PARTICIPATION TEAM**

**Parent Carer Participation Advisors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Advisor Name</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Grants Team**

**General grant enquiries**

pcfgov@cafamily.org.uk

**Grants Programme Officer**

Ben Bennett  020 7608 8744  ben.bennett@cafamily.org.uk

**Grants Administrator**

Rachel King  020 7608 8783  rachel.king@cafamily.org.uk
Monitoring and reporting form and Proofs of Expenditure must be submitted by **28 April 2017.**

**Formats accepted for 2016/17 grant monitoring form**

The 2016/17 monitoring form must be submitted using the online form.

**Format accepted for Proofs of expenditure**

Proofs can be emailed to pcfgrants@cafamily.org.uk, submitted via Dropbox (link on the form), or by post (see below).

**You do not need to submit the original Proofs of Expenditure.** We accept photocopies or scanned copies of Proofs of Expenditure, whichever is easier. If you submit photocopies, it is on the understanding that you retain the originals, and that you can make these available if the Department for Education request an audit in your area.

If you do submit original Proofs of Expenditure, **we strongly advise that you take a copy as documentation can go missing in the post.**

**Posting items**

We recommend that posted items are sent by recorded or special delivery. A number of submissions have been lost in the post in previous years.

**Addresses**

pcfgrants@cafamily.org.uk

Parent Carer Participation Grants team

Contact a Family

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