

Receiving the Department for Education grant – What does it involve?



Funded by
UK Government



Key information

- This session will be recorded and uploaded to the parent participation you tube account. If you don't want to be on the recording please do switch off your camera.
- We have designated some time for questions and answers. However if you need to ask something at another time please do, you can ask by voice or in the chat.
- Please keep yourself muted if you aren't talking to help minimise background noise
- At the end of the session we'll send you a link to a short feedback survey – please complete it. Your views and ideas are really important to help us improve and develop how we can support.



Introduction

This session looks at what you agree to as a parent carer forum (PCF) when applying for the Department for Education grant.

The requirements haven't changed, and PCFs read and accept them as part of their DfE grant application annually.

This session is an overview of the requirements of the grant that you can share with others in your PCF who might not be involved in the grant application process.



Acknowledgements

- The timing of this session – current challenges
- Grant requirements – and the reality & lived experience
- Contact's commitment to PCFs.

If you feel as though your forum aren't meeting some of these conditions, please don't worry, we can support you in meeting your obligations.



What we'll cover

- [The conditions of grant](#)
- [The governments code of conduct for grant recipients](#)
- The memorandum of understanding with the local authority (part of the grant application)
- Opportunity to stay on with us for questions, ideas, support (optional and not recorded – we might have to 'get back to you' on some questions).



Purpose of the grant

The Department for Education grant enables parent carer forums to engage with local parents and carers to help improve services for children and young people (0–25) with SEND. It strengthens PCFs, supporting parent carers to shape services and influence decision-making for children and young people with SEND.

The purpose of the grant is to:

- support, develop and sustain parent carer participation in local areas.
- enable the strategic participation and representation of parent carers with local statutory and voluntary partners in service provision, development, and improvement.

The grant is for parent participation to represent families with children and young people with a range of special educational needs and disabilities



What the grant can be used for

The grant must only be used to:

- develop and sustain parent carer participation
- improve co-production with local services
- help parent carers influence SEND services
- support collaboration, training and peer support
- support work linked to SEND reform and consultation activity
- 75% on staffing



What the grant cannot be used for

- party political activity
- religious promotion
- lobbying or campaigning
- alcohol
- parking or speeding fines
- gifts over £25
- Activity that isn't in your approved grant application or agreed with your Adviser.



Conditions of grant

The Conditions of Grant are legally binding. The named signatory is legally responsible for:

- following the grant conditions
- completing monitoring forms
- making sure funding is used correctly
- keeping accurate records
- If the signatory leaves during the year:
 - there must be a formal handover
 - otherwise the original signatory still remains legally responsible
- All DfE funded PCFs should use the PCF handbook as the standard for their work and work towards being fully in line with it as part of the grant conditions



Conditions of grant

Financial rules

- keep accurate financial records for 7 years
- follow their Financial Control Policy
- provide receipts or proofs of expenditure if asked
- maintain an asset register for items over £500
- seek 3 quotes for services or work where appropriate
- ensure good value for money

The DfE grant money:

- must stay in the approved bank account
- cannot be transferred to another organisation without permission
- cannot be distributed to other groups



Conditions of grant

Governance and policies

PCFs are expected to have:

- a constitution or governing document
- terms of reference
- code of conduct
- conflict of interest policy
- complaints policy
- a minimum 3 parent carers involved in decision-making

Contact can support you if you are missing any of these.

Conflicts of interest must:

- be declared
- be recorded in minutes
- not influence decisions
- Close relatives or partners:
- cannot both authorise payments or expenses

• [Policies required by the grant application are covered in the handbook.](#)



Conditions of grant

Governance and policies

PCFs need

- a Safeguarding Children Policy
- a Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

Policies must be:

- be regularly reviewed
- be actively used and updated

Equality and Inclusion Duties Forums must comply with the Equality Act 2010.

This includes:

- preventing discrimination and harassment
- improving equality of opportunity
- supporting positive relationships
- [Safeguarding and EDI policies are available in the handbook](#)



Conditions of grant

PCFs must

- submit grant monitoring by the deadline
- provide evidence of spending if requested
- cooperate with audits, monitoring and requests for information

If the PCF closes

- monitoring and financial responsibilities still apply
- remaining money may need to be returned
- Deadlines will be set for monitoring by the grants team if a PCF closes, and these need to be adhered to.



Conditions of grant

GDPR and Data Protection

PCFs must:

- follow GDPR rules
- protect members' personal data
- get consent before sharing personal information

Fraud and Clawback Rules

Funding may be reclaimed (“clawed back”) if:

- grant conditions are broken
- information provided is false or misleading
- duplicate funding is received
- financial management is inadequate
- the PCF does not cooperate with monitoring
- governance is poor
- fraud is suspected or proven



Conditions of grant

Working with Contact

PCFs must

- respond to requests for meetings or information
- discuss concerns openly
- accept support if it is a condition of funding
- notify Contact about important changes

Examples include:

- officer changes
- bank account changes
- governance concerns
- PCF closure

The bottom line

By signing the Conditions of Grant, PCFs confirm that:

- they understand the conditions
- they agree to follow them
- they understand the agreement is legally binding
- serious breaches may lead to funding being withdrawn or reclaimed



Code of Conduct for Recipients of Government General Grants

Act with integrity and professionalism

Behave ethically and responsibly at all times.

Protect public money and help maintain trust in grant funding.

Use the grant only for what it was awarded for

Spend funds only on agreed purposes

Deliver the activity to the agreed standard, within scope, and as planned.

We understand that sometimes variations of spend need to happen, please let the advisor know of any of these

Be transparent, accurate and open with information

Provide true, accurate and complete information in applications, reports, monitoring returns, and any other communications.

Tell Contact promptly if something goes wrong (e.g., delivery risks, significant changes, underspend/overspend, or other issues affecting delivery).



Code of Conduct for Recipients of Government General Grants

Manage money properly and show value for money

Keep proper financial controls and records.

Be able to evidence that spending decisions are reasonable and represent value for money.

Prevent fraud, error and misuse; cooperate fully with checks, assurance activity and audit.

Manage conflicts of interest

Identify, declare and manage conflicts (actual, potential, or perceived).

Ensure decisions—especially financial/procurement decisions—are fair, justifiable, and properly recorded.

Keep good governance and oversight

Make sure the organisation has suitable governance arrangements.

If delivery involves partners or subcontractors, the grant recipient remains responsible for ensuring those parties meet equivalent standards and requirements.



Code of Conduct for Recipients of Government General Grants

Follow the law

Comply with relevant laws and regulations (e.g., equality, safeguarding, data protection where applicable), and the specific conditions in the grant

Protect people, data, and sensitive information

Handle personal data and confidential information appropriately and lawfully.
Use information only for legitimate purposes connected to delivering the grant.

No improper influence

Do not offer or accept bribes, gifts, hospitality, or inducements that could influence (or appear to influence) decisions.

Avoid behaviours that could create suspicion of undue influence.



Memorandum of understanding with the local authority

As part of the grant application PCFs agree to

Follow the SEND Code of Practice and use co-production as the way of working. Work in partnership with the local authority and health organisations to improve services for children and young people with SEND.

Treat the local authority and health as key strategic partners, recognising their statutory responsibilities.

Raise parent carer issues constructively through open, respectful dialogue—challenging constructively where needed.

Work together with mutual respect and as equal partners.



Section 6.2 (application form)

6.2 We also require the forum to agree to the same principles and to also sign up to work in partnership.

- We commit to uphold the principles of the SEND Code of Practice and to work in partnership with the local authority/health organisations to improve local services for children and young people with SEND.
- We recognise the local authority and health organisations as our strategic local partners.
- We value the role of the local authority and health organisations in carrying out their statutory duties and will raise issues from parent carers providing constructive feedback through open dialogue, and challenging partners when necessary.
- We agree to work together with respect and as equal partners.
- I confirm we will abide by the principles of co-production

I confirm we will abide by the principles of co-production above *

I confirm

Agreeing to the grant MOU does not supersede any local partnership agreements or arrangements.



Local authority memorandum of understanding

Declaration:

- We commit to uphold the principles of the SEND Code of Practice and to work in partnership with the DfE funded local parent carer forum to improve local services for children and young people with SEND.
- We recognise the independence of the DfE funded parent carer forum.
- We value the role of the DfE funded parent carer forum in representing the needs, experiences and views of parent carers of children and young people with SEND including their role in raising issues, providing constructive feedback through open dialogue, and challenging partners when necessary.
- We agree to work together with respect and as equal partners.



Thank you. Any questions
about this session/content?

We'll stop the recording, and can chat
informally if you want to – or go get
some time back!

