

## **North Manchester Parent Champion model**

Information Advice and Support Manchester (IASM) works across the city offering advice, information and support to parents and carers of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) about education, health and care matters.

Families have told us that they would like the opportunity to learn more about the special educational needs process and the law and they would like the service to be more active in the community and to engage more with community groups, particularly those working with black and ethnic minority families.

In response we are offering parents and carers in North Manchester an exciting opportunity to be part of a new project to develop a network of parent champions and support groups with knowledge about SEND matters so they can support families in the community.

We know that there are support groups, voluntary agencies and statutory services working with families in North Manchester and that some of these families need help in understanding SEND processes and available support services. We also know there are parents and carers with experience of SEND who want to help their neighbours and friends.

We want to reach out to these groups in North Manchester to develop a network of Parent Champions who can work with IASM to make sure families have up-to-date and accurate information from people in their community.

### **Why should I get Involved?**

Getting involved with this project will give you the opportunity to learn from experienced trainers with in-depth knowledge of SEND, the law, working with professional services and advocacy. The programme will include:

- Introductory training on SEN legislation by Claire Jackson who has extensive experience delivering legal training to large groups of parent/carers, professionals (including local authorities/NHS staff), schools and those working within statutory services
- Training delivered by Geraldine Hills from the Inclusive Choice Consultancy on getting your message across and the Equality Act
- Access to support and mentorship from an IAS Case Worker
- Ongoing briefings and further training on SEN matters as the Pilot evolves
- A resource pack with useful information
- Reasonable transport expenses to events

You will be able to use your experiences to help other parents and carers and work alongside practitioners from a range of services.

### **How much time will this take?**

You will need to be available to attend approximately two days of training in October and November. We will make sure the start and finish times can accommodate family commitments and the venues will be in the North manchester.

The only commitment we ask is that as a Parent Champion you tell others about the IASM and the SEND Local offer. However if you want to do more there will be lots of opportunities such as attending coffee mornings and drop ins to talk to families, working with the IAS team and supporting other agencies. You might have other ideas of things you could do in your community and we would be happy to support these.

For voluntary agencies and statutory services who get involved the ask is to engage in the project and let us know what impact the training and development opportunity has on the delivery of your service to local families.

### **Interested ?**

We really hope you are interested in getting involved and would be delighted to speak to you about this project.

If you want more information about the project or want to sign up please contact Andy Lomax at IASM by email or telephone at:

email address: [parents@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:parents@manchester.gov.uk)

IAS helpline: **0161 209 8356**

### **About the trainers**

## INCLUSIVE CHOICE

CONSULTANCY

As part of the training we are drafting in the expertise of Geraldine Hills the Director of Inclusive Choice Consultancy

Geraldine has over 15 years' experience working alongside cooperate and the educational sector helping them meet their statutory duties as laid down by the Equality Act 2010. She holds a BA in Learning Disability Studies from the Victoria University of Manchester. She is a guest lecturer within the education department.

Geraldine has experience of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST) process, as a parent who successfully won a landmark tribunal for her child with disabilities. She is a published author has written books for schools and she has also written a free book especially for parents of SEN children.

Geraldine has designed many training course the latest being "Emotional Resilience" and "Getting Your Message Across" As the parent of a young person with disabilities Geraldine knows only too well the important of emotional resilience in families and work life and that is why she has written her latest book Second Chance Day

She gives keynote speeches on various subjects such as starting a small company, emotional resilience and what keeps her motivated.

As part of the training we are drafting in the expertise of Claire Jackson the Director of [SENETA](#)



# SENETA

Claire has obtained LLB Law (1st class) and Higher Diploma in Paralegal Practice in 2011 and has worked as a Consultant Mentor for Durham University's Pro Bono Project. Claire later joined the Legal Team at IPSEA and remained in this role until 2018. During this period her roles and responsibilities included the following:

- Providing specialist legal advice and support to a large group of volunteers nationwide
- Drafting legal training on the special educational needs and disability framework
- Delivering legal training to large groups of parent/carers, professionals (including local authorities/NHS staff), schools and those working within statutory services
- Representing parents in the SEND Tribunal
- Investigating and responding to local authority unlawful policy
- Drafting responses to national consultations on specialist subject matters such as the Equality Act 2010, exclusion from school, home education and SEND funding
- Giving oral evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on the Equality Act 2010 and Disability
- Drafting legal resources for volunteers and the public website
- Drafting a quarterly subscriber's legal briefing