

Volunteer Profile – Independent Parental Supporter Parent Partnership



Wired is a charity that delivers a range of services in the north west of England and in north Wales that support children, adults and older people to live as independently as possible. Wired's ethos and culture is about empowering people, helping to remove the barriers disadvantaged people face and support the inclusion of all people in society. The charity could not help as many people each year without the support of volunteers.

Wirral Parent Partnership is a service for parents and carers of children and young people with additional educational needs. We are currently looking for volunteers with excellent people skills to train as Independent Parental Supporters.

Independent Parental Supporters volunteer to work for a couple of hours each week during school hours and offer impartial advice and support to parents and carers who have concerns about their children's educational progress.

An Independent Parental Supporter can:

- Listen to concerns about a child's education
- Support parents at meetings concerning a child's special educational needs
- Provide information and guidance on where to get further information
- Explain the assessment process
- Talk through options available
- Sort out paperwork with parents

An Independent Parental Supporter does not:

- Make parent's decisions
- Impose their personal views
- Attend meetings in the absence of the parent
- Help with every family problem
- Write reports in the absence of the parent

A full and comprehensive training programme is offered to successful applicants. Throughout your time as a volunteer you will be offered

training, support and guidance from us. You will meet other volunteers, have new experiences and might discover skills you never thought you had.

Main Purpose	To support parents and carers of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities around educational issues.
Aim	To empower parents and carers to become more confident and involved in their child's education by providing impartial advice and information.
Supported By	Pauline Severs and Parent Partnership Team
Based	At Upton office or in schools or community centres in Wirral. May occasionally be asked to do a home visit with a colleague by arrangement and following lone worker policies.
Time commitment	<p>Training is one day per week for 10 weeks. The training covers the SEN Code of Practice, supporting parents and working with professionals. All our volunteers receive on-going supervision and support.</p> <p>Minimum time commitment thereafter is 2 hours per week. All training and voluntary hours will be between 9am -4.30pm, Monday to Friday, term time only</p>
Essential training	Volunteers must participate in: Independent Parental Supporter training, Safeguarding, Data Protection and any other training required by WIRED or the Parent Partnership Coordinator.

Agreed Responsibilities

1. Listen to parents' concerns about their child's special educational needs and provide appropriate impartial advice and information to enable them to address the issues.
2. To advise the parent/carer regarding various educational issues, including parental rights and responsibilities operate in an impartial and non-judgemental way when giving advice and support.

3. Provide practical support such as help with understanding documents, statutory procedures, form-filling and at meetings.
4. To make and keep files and records of meetings and advice given and store these confidentially to be passed on promptly to the team Coordinator or Administrator.
5. To remain independent of the Local Authority and to be available to undertake training and to meet and take advice guidance and supervision from with your coordinator.
6. To liaise with the co-ordinator or senior officer and, as appropriate, with other professionals.
7. To adhere to Wired policies at all times e.g. confidentiality, conduct, health and safety, safeguarding, lone-worker etc.

Wired services exist to respond to the needs of individuals, therefore, many of the tasks and responsibilities may be unpredictable and varied. It is expected that volunteers will be flexible when needed, for instance undertaking tasks that have not specifically been named in their task description.

Person specification

For some roles there are essential or desired skills or experience that a volunteer needs to have to be able to undertake the role. This table lists the ones specific to this role.

Skills / Experience	Requirement
Criteria	➤ <i>Must be aged 18 years or over</i>
Knowledge	➤ <i>Some knowledge, awareness or of school systems and some understanding of the issues for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.</i>
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>An ability to communicate effectively with parents and professionals</i> ➤ <i>To be able to question and challenge people in a professional and appropriate manner.</i> ➤ <i>To give support to others and receive support and guidance as required.</i>

	➤ <i>Able to work independently as well as part of a team</i>
Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>A commitment to equality of access and opportunities.</i> ➤ <i>A warm, friendly, non-judgmental approach.</i> ➤ <i>Sensitivity to the needs and wishes of the person.</i> ➤ <i>Patience</i> ➤ <i>Reliability, dependability, consistency and punctuality.</i> ➤ <i>Promote the involvement of children in decision making</i> ➤ <i>To be willing to gain knowledge and experience in the role</i> ➤ <i>A willingness to undergo training and completion of safeguarding checks.</i> ➤ <i>Willingness to be flexible in meeting the needs of parents/carers</i> ➤ <i>A balanced approach and view of life</i>
Qualifications	➤ <i>No specific qualifications are needed but applicants must have a sufficient standard of literacy to be able to read and analyse letters and documents and help parents to complete forms and paperwork when needed.</i>

Record of achievement

Wired will keep a record as you undertake your role of what tasks you have completed to a satisfactory level. You will not be expected to undertake any task without appropriate training being provided. This can be used as a record of achievement whilst undertaking the role and can be provided as part of a reference for any potential employers if you wish.

Task	Date completed	Supervisor signature
Successfully completed all basic and required training		
Attended first supervision session		
Shadowed an IPS in a 1-1 meeting with a parent/carers		
Shadowed an IPS in a school meeting		
Attended and contributed to a 1-1 meeting with a parent/carers		
Attended and contributed to a		

meeting with parent/carer and professionals		
Undertaken written correspondence with or on behalf of parent/carer		