



Preston Children's Trust VCFS Forum Terms of Reference

Aims of the Forum:

- To provide diverse VCFS representation on the Preston Children's Trust to ensure the sector's views and interests are heard
- To provide a mechanism for accountability to VCFS groups providing services to children, young people and families

Objectives:

To elect representatives from among the member groups of the Children's Trust VCFS Forum to the Children's Trust and its subgroups

To advocate and lobby on behalf of the VCFS

To share information with and consult Forum members

To develop awareness and understanding of the Every Child Matters agenda and the Children's Plan within the VCFS and to develop a collective and cohesive voice for the VCFS on the Trust

To help build the capacity of the VCFS to engage in the Trust

To support VCFS representatives in a way that promotes the engagement of the sector as well as its representation

To work jointly with statutory organisations and to promote effective partnership working between the public and voluntary and community sectors.

Membership:

Membership is open to all VCFS organisations providing services to, or representing the views of children, young people and families.

Forum members are expected to co-operate and work together in a way which demonstrates mutual consideration and support. The Forum aims to work constructively with each other and public sector partners and differences of views should be discussed in a spirit of mutual respect which aims to reach consensus where possible

Representatives and substitutes

The Forum will elect its representatives to the Children's Trust annually or as required, from among the member groups of the Children's Trust VCFS Forum. Those named representatives will then be the only people entitled to represent the Forum at the Children's Trust meetings. These representatives may, however, appoint a named substitute from their organisation to attend when they are unable to. Representatives are accountable to the Forum.

Leadership

The Forum will elect a Chair to provide leadership and work with Preston Community Network in co-ordinating the business of the Forum.

Meetings:

The Forum will meet at least 4 times per year. Preston Community Network will facilitate and co-ordinate the Forum and its meetings.

Resources

The Forum will seek resources to enable it to develop as an effective VCFS Forum.
