Marches Family Network

Admissions Policy and Procedure

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Updated By	
Owner	Trustees and Staff of Marches Family Network
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Introduction

Marches Family Network provides many different services to families with a disabled young person in Herefordshire and the surrounding areas. Our services are available for families of young people aged between 0 and 25.

Our Commitment

Marches Family Network are committed to providing a high-quality service to all young people and their families that are registered to receive their services. To achieve this, Marches Family Network undertake a thorough registration process to ensure they have the correct information to be able to support the young person whilst at respite sessions.

Services provided

Marches Family Network's services can be largely categorised into two areas

- Family services.
- Respite services.

Family services include family sessions, family trips, parent/carer sessions, and access to support from the Family Services Co-ordinator. Young people are not able to access these services independently.

Respite services include Saturday sessions and school holiday sessions, where the young person is dropped off by their family and is supported by our trained team of youth workers.

Suitability

Marches Family Network's family sessions and trips are suitable for families with a disabled young person. During the sessions and trips the family retain responsibility for the care of the young person, although Marches Family Network staff are available to help facilitate play and provide support if required. At these sessions, Marches Family Network staff will not provide any direct care to a young person, unless in an emergency at the discretion of the Family Services Co-ordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Manager. Children and young people are able to access family sessions and family trips under the supervision of a PA/"buddy" appointed by the family; the family take full responsibility for the suitability and training of this person.

Marches Family Network's respite services provide activities for a group of disabled young people. Each group is targeted towards a specific age group. Inspire and Little Voyagers is for children aged 3 to 11 (up to school year 6). Elevate and Trailblazers is for young people aged 11 to 25 (from school year 7 up). Thrive and Young Explorers is a mixed age group, from 3 to 25. We do not offer respite services to any child below the age of 3.

Our respite services provide activities in busy groups. Places at our respite groups are suitable for young people that can cope safely in this environment. We understand that there are times when some young people may need a little time and space to regulate their behaviour away from the group. Once regulated, young people can rejoin the group, and this can be supported by their designated youth worker. We cannot meet the needs of young people who require their own area away from the group to keep everyone safe for extended periods of time. There may be occasions where children and young people are able to access respite sessions under the supervision of a PA/"buddy" appointed by the family; the family take full responsibility for the suitability and training of this person. This is subject to places being available at the session and at the discretion of the Manager.

Unfortunately, due to insurance cover, there are some elements of care than Marches Family Network cannot carry out. This includes suctioning, tracheostomy care, ventilation management,

administration of medication per rectum or per vaginal, TPN feeding, intermittent catheterisation (unless the young person does this with full independence), manual bowel evacuation, dialysis, or medication given via IV/Central Line/Hickman Line/PICC line. If a child or young person requires any of these elements of care, they may still be able to access respite sessions with a suitable carer/PA attending with them, at the discretion of the Manager.

Marches Family Network reserves the right to cease providing respite sessions for any young person at any point if they deem that providing a place for the young person poses a risk to any other young people or staff members in attendance at sessions. All efforts will be made to find a solution that works for Marches Family Network, the young person, and their family to prevent this from happening.

Number of places available

Every Marches Family Network session has a pre-determined number of places available for young people to attend. There are many factors that affect this number including the level of funding available, the number of staff available to work and their skill set and the size of the venue being used or number of seats on coaches.

The Trustees of the charity approve an annual budget which includes a cost per session.

Due to funding restrictions, the charity will not run a session if there are less than 5 young people wanting to attend.

Waiting List for New Families

In March 2023, Marches Family Network set up a waiting list for new families wishing to access the services provided. This was due to an overwhelming demand for places at respite sessions, which could not be met because of capacity sizes at the venues the charity uses, and staffing availability.

Families wishing to register their young person with Marches Family Network can be placed on our waiting list. Whilst on our waiting list, families are able to access the family services aspect of Marches Family Network, including family sessions and family trips, when available.

To register with Marches Family Network, families must complete a short online registration form on the charity's website (www.marchesfamilynetwork.org.uk). Marches Family Network services do not require a professional referral.

The young person will then be placed on the waiting list, which is maintained in date order.

Families are invited to register when a space becomes available that is suitable for the young person i.e. relevant age group. The family of the young person highest up on the waiting list with the appropriate support ratio will be offered the chance to fully register. Young people with a higher care ratio could not be offered this place as the staff could not meet their needs within current capacity.

Families are invited to register up to three times. The first 2 invites are sent via email to the address that they provide upon completing the online registration form. The final invite is sent via post, or email if the online form is not fully completed. If families do not respond to any of these invites, they are removed from waiting list, and their information kept for a further year, before being deleted.

The Registration Process

All reasonable effort will be made to ensure that no prospective family is treated less favourably on the grounds of age, race, nationality, ethnic origin, creed, disability, sexual orientation, gender, marital or parental/carer status, political belief or social or economic class, or any other type of discrimination.

- **Step 1**

The registration process is initiated by completion of an online registration form, which can be

accessed via Marches Family Network's website - https://www.marchesfamilynetwork.org.uk/register

- **Step 2**

Upon receipt of the online form, the charity will contact the family, introducing themselves and sending a 'Welcome to Marches Family Network' letter, explaining what happens next.

- **Step 3**

When a space becomes available, the Family Services Co-ordinator will contact the family to arrange a registration meeting. During this meeting, the Family Services Co-ordinator will gather all necessary information to enable a care plan for the young person to be completed, be able to answer any questions the family may have about Marches Family Network, complete consent forms and take the registration payment.

- **Step 4**

Once all the relevant information has been gathered the Family Services Co-ordinator will complete the office-based systems to complete the registration process.

The family will now be considered fully registered and able to access all services that Marches Family Network offer.

Bookings for registered families

When registered families request more places at sessions than there are places available, Marches Family Network aim to allocate places as fairly as possible. This is initially determined through allocating an equal percentage of session spaces requested by each family (where staffing suitability allows). Once places are allocated, they are non-transferable to alternative dates.

Registered families sending completed booking forms after the deadline date will result in the young person's name going on the late booking forms list. Young people on this list may be offered a place if there is a last-minute cancellation by another family, or if less spaces have been requested than can be offered.

When offering out any additional places at sessions, sessions will be initially offered to the young person on the session's waiting list with the lowest percentage of sessions offered that can be safely accommodated based on staff availability and suitability. If this is a tie, then the following priorities will be followed:

- Those with exceptional circumstances that are in high need of place at a session. This is prioritised in discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Megan Chambers)
- Those whose booking forms are received by the booking deadline
- Those whose payments are up to date
- Those who returned their booking forms closest to the deadline