



for Scotland's Disabled Children
from good intentions to better lives

fSDC Coalition and the fSDC Coordination Group

Terms of Reference

- Vision, aims and values
- Membership
- The fSDC Coordination Group
- Chair and Vice Chair roles
- Coordination Group Nomination Form

October 2013

for Scotland's Disabled Children

Introduction

Formed in 2007, the [Scotland's Disabled Children \(fSDC\) Coalition](#) is the campaign to secure rights and justice for disabled children, young people and their families in Scotland.

The Coalition is in a unique position in that it works collaboratively with member organisations across Scotland to achieve its aims.



Vision, aims and values

for Scotland's Disabled Children (**fSDC**) is a coalition of organisations and groups that work with, and on behalf of, disabled children and their families.

fSDC believes that:

- Disabled children and young people should enjoy the same rights and opportunities as other children.
- All disabled children and young people have a right to have their views heard.
- The views of disabled children, young people and their families are vital to the development of an inclusive society.
- All disabled children and young people should be fully included in every aspect of society.
- Disabled children and young people are entitled to support to enable them to take up active and valued roles as they move to adulthood.

fSDC's aims:

fSDC works to ensure that national developments which aim to improve the lives of disabled children and their families are delivering the positive outcomes expected, throughout Scotland. We want to see the good intentions promoted by policy makers and decision takers translated into better lives



fSDC's key aims are therefore:

- To maximise influence on national policy and legislation relating to disabled children and their families.
- To identify new and developing issues that impact on the lives of disabled children and their families.
- To amplify the voices and experiences of disabled children and their families.

By harnessing the collective knowledge, experience and energy of its membership fSDC will:

- Contribute effectively to the development of policy and legislation to deliver the most benefit for disabled children, young people, and their families
- Create opportunities for families to share their experiences of local services and support, so this can inform policy makers, decision takers and legislators
- Identify and promote awareness of new and developing issues that impact on the lives of disabled children, young people and their families
- Promote the development of inclusive services and opportunities within our communities which ensure that disabled children and young people are supported to achieve their potential, and live the lives they want
- Promote greater efforts at all levels to involve disabled children, young people and their families in directly shaping policy and practice that will impact on their lives
- Form Strategic Partnerships with other bodies or groups to jointly advance the aims of fSDC.



Membership

The fSDC Coalition is made up of member organisations and groups with the individual and collective aim of better outcomes for disabled children and young people and their families. Membership of the fSDC Coalition is by organisation rather than individual. Membership is primarily open to registered charities and voluntary organisations or other groups eligible for membership through the following criteria:

- An organisation established for charitable, humanitarian, or educational purposes that exists to benefit the community.
- The organisation uses surplus revenues to achieve its goals rather than to distribute them as profit or dividends to shareholders.
- This includes some not for profit organisations, community interest companies and social enterprises.
- The aims, objectives and methods of working of the organisation are written down in a publicly available document.
- The organisation must agree to the fSDC terms of reference and the responsibilities of fSDC Coalition Membership (see below).

Co-opted members

At the invitation of the Chair, observers and individuals with specific expertise may be co-opted onto the fSDC Coalition or invited to attend all or part of the meetings. Should an organisation or individual wish to be co-opted onto the fSDC Coalition they should in the first instance contact the Secretary.

Representatives on the Coalition

Member organisations have a nominated lead individual who represents the organisation at fSDC Coalition meetings. Organisations may also select one other named alternative in the event that the lead representative cannot attend a particular meeting. Should a person leave their organisation, it becomes that organisation's responsibility to find a replacement to sit on the fSDC Coalition. The fSDC Coalition elects the fSDC Coordination Group, as set out below.



Benefits of membership

Benefits of membership include:

- The opportunity to inform and be informed on a variety of disabled children's issues.
- Participation in fSDC Coalition Meetings which take place three times a year.
- The opportunity to participate in fSDC working groups arising from these meetings.
- fSDC members can also receive information from any of these working groups.
- The opportunity to participate in fSDC's work with Strategic Partners.
- The opportunity to contribute to the responses fSDC is making to government consultations.
- The opportunity to have their organisation's materials displayed at events fSDC has a presence at.
- Participation in workshop sessions/conferences on key policy and practice issues.

Responsibilities of membership

fSDC Coalition members are required to:

- Sign up to this working model and the terms of reference set out below.
- Sign up to fSDC's vision and values.
- Participate in termly Coalition meetings.
- Represent and be a link to their organisation.

New member organisations

Representatives of new member organisations will:

- Receive a copy of this document, copy of fSDC's list of members, past minutes and other relevant material.
- Be welcomed at their first meeting by a Coordination Group member who will ensure they are introduced and understand the procedures of the meeting.



Joining the Coalition

Please contact the Coordination Group via info@fSDC.org.uk. The Coordination Group will then contact you to brief you on the work of fSDC as a Coalition. There is no current charge for membership to fSDC Coalition. fSDC reserves the right to review this policy in the future in consultation with its membership. Applications for membership are approved by the Coordination Group.

Complaints or comments

Members wishing to complain or comment about any aspect of membership of the fSDC Coalition should in the first instance contact the Secretary. If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved, the member will be asked to formally write to the Chair setting out details of the complaint. This will be considered by the fSDC Coordination Group at their next meeting, and a written response sent within ten working days of that meeting.



The fSDC Coordination Group

1. The role of the fSDC Coordination Group

- 1.1 The fSDC Coordination Group replaces the fSDC Steering Group as an advisory body. The role of the Coordination Group is to:
 - Coordinate fSDC Coalition activity
 - Oversee fSDC's Strategic Partner activity
- 1.2 The Coordination Group will support fSDC Coalition activity by helping to shape the work of the fSDC Coalition, setting fSDC Coalition meeting agendas, ensuring the fSDC Coalition remains representative of the sector and promoting the work of the fSDC Coalition appropriately.
- 1.3 The Coordination Group will be responsible for developing and maintaining fSDC Strategic Partner relationships, and any arrangements for collaborative working

2. Membership of the Coordination Group

- 2.1 Ten Members of the fSDC Coalition representing their organisations.
- 2.2 A representative from each of fSDC's Strategic Partners. The best person to represent each Strategic Partner will be decided upon by the Partner themselves.
- 2.3 A representative from each of fSDC's working groups. The best person to represent each working group will be decided upon by the working groups themselves.
- 2.4 At the invitation of the Chair, observers and individuals with specific expertise may be co-opted onto the Group or invited to attend all or part of meetings of the Coordination Group. Co-opted members may be co-opted again for one year at a time up to a maximum term of co-option of three years. Should a member wish to be co-opted onto the Coordination Group they should, in the first instance, contact the Secretary.



3. The role of the Chair and Vice Chair

- 3.1 The Coordination Group is led by one Chair, supported by a Vice Chair and Secretary who are elected by the fSDC Coalition every 3 years. They are the Chair and Vice Chair of both the Coordination Group and the fSDC Coalition. Please see Appendix 1 for detailed job descriptions.

4. The role of all members of the Coordination Group

- 4.1 The Coordination Group will support fSDC Coalition activity by:

- Raising issues about policy and agreeing issues to be discussed at fSDC Coalition meetings.
- Contributing to fSDC Coalition meeting agendas.
- Following up issues arising from fSDC Coalition meetings.
- Approving the applications of new fSDC Coalition members.
- Advising fSDC on who else should join the fSDC Coalition.
- Supporting new members of the fSDC Coalition.
- Promoting the work of the Coalition appropriately.

The Coordination Group will engage with fSDC's Strategic Partner activity by sharing information on and contributing ideas to:

- fSDC's Strategic Partner activity
- The work of the Strategic Partners

- 4.2 In addition, as part of their fSDC Coordination Group role, Strategic Partner Representatives can choose to be involved in the following:

- Attending and planning for stakeholder meetings
- Planning and inputting into a range of events including wider stakeholder events organised by fSDC as Strategic Partner. For example: deciding on priority issues for discussion, running sessions, setting agendas etc.
- Identifying and developing priority areas for work.



5. The additional activity of working group representatives on the Coordination Group

- 5.1 The working groups are represented on the Coordination Group to create better opportunities to share information and ideas across the wealth of work areas they represent. Each working group will develop its own governance model which will be approved by the Coordination Group.
- 5.2 As representatives of their working groups members are invited to provide updates on activities to the Coordination Group. In addition they can work with other Coordination Group members to identify and take forward issues of mutual interest and areas of possible joint working.
- 5.3 Members of the working groups sit on the Coordination Group to represent the interests of their working group rather than the interest of their individual organisations.

6. The responsibilities of all members of the Coordination Group

- 6.1 To attend a minimum of 3 of the meetings held each year.¹ For consistency only the named nominated representative from the organisation can attend Coordination Group meetings. Only the named member of the Coordination Group may attend Coordination Group meetings. They may not substitute another member of their organisation without the prior acknowledgement of Coordination Group Chair.
- 6.2 To attend a minimum 2 of the fSDC Coalition meetings per year, or delegate another colleague at their organisation to attend these meetings.²
- 6.3 To promote the work of the fSDC Coalition positively and appropriately in public forums as agreed with the Coordination Group and fSDC staff team.
- 6.4 To agree to the aims, vision and values of fSDC.

¹ If members cannot maintain that commitment for any reason they may be asked to step down from the group.

² If you agree to stand for the Coordination Group then your organisation is committing to attend meetings. However, if due to money or time constraints your organisation will find attendance at all meetings difficult this should not be a barrier to you putting your organisation forward to sit on the Board. If you are elected you will be required to put forward a suggested arrangement on how your organisation can contribute to both groups to the Coordination Group for further discussion and agreement.



6.5 In addition, as part of their fSDC Coordination Group role, members can choose to be involved in the following:

- Attending and planning for stakeholder meetings
- Planning and inputting into a range of events including wider stakeholder events organised by fSDC as Strategic Partner. For example: deciding on priority issues for discussion; running sessions; setting agendas.
- Identifying and developing priority areas for work.

7. Coordination Group Meetings

7.1 Coordination Group meetings will take place three times per year.

7.2 All Coordination Group members can suggest items for discussion at the meeting by e-mailing info@fSDC.org.uk The Chair and Vice Chairs and Director will then finalise the Agenda for the meeting.

7.3 Any documents to be submitted for consideration at the meeting must be received 10 working days before the meeting.

8. Decision making

8.1 The Chair will be responsible for identifying, building and maintaining consensus where possible. Where no consensus can be found the fSDC Coalition members will agree a way forward that is based on fSDC's vision and values.

8.2 Coordination Group members will not publicly comment for/about fSDC unless agreed upon by the Coordination Group.

8.3 Group will initially sit for three years, at which time its role will be reviewed.

9. Working groups

9.1 The Coordination Group can establish time-limited working groups drawn from the Coordination Group, fSDC Coalition Membership and the other fSDC working groups. Working groups will be set up to examine specific policy issues, address specific pieces of legislation, or work on consultation responses. Working groups will report to the Coordination Group on a periodic basis.

9.2 The Chair, and Vice Chairs where relevant, will draw up terms of reference for any working group, including chairing arrangements, a timeframe for the group's work, decision-making processes, and a clear end date.



10. Elections to the Coordination Group

- 10.1 Self-nomination for all Coordination Group member places on the Coordination Group shall take place every three years.
- 10.2 The term of office for members of the Coordination Group is three years. Members may hold office for two terms in a row. After this they must stand down for a minimum of one term unless there are not enough nominations to fill places on the group, but can later stand for re-election for one further term.
- 10.3 Self-nomination forms will be circulated to all fSDC Coordination Group members two weeks before the closing date for nominations.
- 10.4 To ensure the Coordination Group is as widely representative as possible, only one nomination per organisation can be made.
- 10.5 If the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacant places on the Coordination Group, voting papers will be circulated to fSDC Coordination Group members for a confidential ballot conducted by the Interim Coordination Group. An external representative not sitting on the fSDC Coordination Group will act as scrutineer.
- 10.6 The results will be posted in the fSDC Newsletter and announced at the following Coalition meeting.
- 10.7 If the nominated person leaves their organisation then their organisation can nominate a replacement subject to Coordination Group approval. If not nomination is made then the position is reelected to as per above.
- 10.8 If there are fSDC Coordination Group empty places due to people leaving the Group, then elections will be held.

11. Election of Chair and Vice Chairs:

- 11.1 The fSDC Chair and fSDC Vice Chairs are elected by the members of the Coordination Group for an initial three-year term, after which they are eligible to stand for a further three-year term. Candidates are expected to nominate themselves.
- 11.2 The election process for the positions of Chair and Vice Chairs follows the process for the election of all fSDC Coordination Group members.

12. Changes to these terms of reference

- 12.1 The terms of reference will be reviewed annually by the fSDC Coalition at the last meeting of the calendar year.
- 12.2 Coordination Group members can also suggest amendments at any time. These will be discussed at the next Coordination Group meeting and taken forward if there is consensus to do so.

13. Feedback and suggestions

- 13.1 fSDC Coalition members are encouraged to make representation to the fSDC Coordination Group with suggestions for discussion, scrutiny or future project work. Initially, contact should be made with the Secretary.

Appendix 1: Chair and Vice Chair Roles

Job description for Chair of the fSDC Coalition & Coordination Group:

Leadership of the fSDC Coordination Group:

- *To lead the work of the fSDC Coordination Group with the support of the fSDC, Vice Chair and other members of the Coordination Group*
- *To communicate priorities for the work of the fSDC Coalition & Coordination Group*
- *To chair the meetings of the Council and the fSDC Coordination Group*
- *To ensure that the business of meetings is dealt with and that decisions are clearly arrived at, recorded and followed up*
- *To work with the Vice Chair, Coordination Group members and fSDC Coalition to input into the agendas of Coalition and the fSDC Coordination Group*
- *To provide support in finding consensus at Coalition and fSDC Coordination Group meetings and/or to ensure a lack of consensus does not adversely impact on proceedings*

Promotion of fSDC member involvement:

Work with the Coordination Group and fSDC Coalition to:

- *Ensure representation from across the sector on the fSDC Coalition*
- *Facilitate the full involvement of individual member organisations within the fSDC Coalition*
- *Identify and promote ways in which the skills and experience of fSDC Coalition Members can be engaged in support of fSDC's work*

Other responsibilities:

- *To provide input and advice on the public policy positions that fSDC adopts*
- *The Chair has the remit, with the Vice Chair and fSDC Director, to invite observers and individuals with specific expertise to attend all or part of meetings of the Coordination Group and Coordination Group*

Skills and experience:

- *Commitment to fSDC's visions and values*
- *Excellent chairing skills and the ability to build consensus*
- *The ability to represent and promote the interests of the Coordination Group as separate to the interests of their individual organisation*
- *Experience of leadership*
- *Knowledge and understanding of children's disability issues*
- *Ability to command respect and confidence across the range of organisations within the fSDC Coalition and beyond*
- *Excellent communication skills*
- *Ability to establish good working relationships with organisations within the fSDC Coalition and beyond*

Further information:

- *Candidates must secure the endorsement of their own organisation to stand for election*
- *The work of the Chair requires between X to Y days per month. For an initial period it will take closer to 3 days a month.*
- *The Coordination Group meets three times per year. The Chair must be present at every Coordination Group and Coalition meeting.*

Term of office:

- *The Chair is elected for a three year term*
- *The Chair can stand for election for a second term of office*

Job description for Vice Chair of the fSDC Coalition & Coordination Group:

- *To deputise for the Chair when he/she is not available*
- *To support the Chair in leading the work of the fSDC Coalition and the fSDC Coordination Group with the support of the fSDC Coalition, Vice Chairs and other members of the Coordination Group*
- *To support the Chair in identifying priorities for the work of the Coordination Group and the fSDC Coalition*
- *To deputise for the Chair when he/she is not available by Chairing the meetings of the Coordination Group and the fSDC Coalition*
- *To work with the Chairs, Coordination Group and Coalition members to input into the agendas of Coordination Group and the fSDC Coalition*
- *To support the Chair in finding consensus at Coordination Group and fSDC Coalition meetings and/or to ensure a lack of consensus does not adversely impact on proceedings*

Appendix 2: Partnership Agreement with Children in Scotland on the Parent Participation Project

This agreement will set out the arrangements for governance of the Parent Participation Project during its time of operation.

- fSDC will formally agree an internal governance structure and a schedule of regular meetings of a steering group or equivalent to which the PPP can report and obtain agreement to proposed actions.
- CiS will attend meetings (or sections of meetings as appropriate) of the steering group and provide an update of project activity undertaken and a list of proposed actions, for approval by fSDC, at each meeting of the fSDC steering group. Any documents for approval will be circulated to steering group members in advance of the meeting.
- CiS will internally approve any reports or documents to be presented externally, such as reports to the Scottish Government as funders of the PPP, before such reports/documents are presented to the fSDC steering group. Once agreed by the steering group, they will be formally signed off by CiS.
- In the event of a report or document not being agreed by the steering group, or amendments suggested by the steering group not being acceptable to fSDC and or CiS, a meeting will be held involving two representatives of the steering group and two representatives of CiS, with the objective of reaching agreement. Should this not generate agreement, a meeting will be held involving both parties and the external funders. In such instances, the funders will have the final decision in respect of approval of proposals or signing off reports.
- All materials relating to the PPP will be presented with fSDC as the lead branding and with approval of the fSDC steering group and where appropriate, may carry recognition of CiS involvement as agreed with the steering group.

Nomination form for the fSDC Coordination Group

NOMINATION

I _____ (your name) want to represent

_____ (your organisation's name)

on the [fSDC](#) Coordination Group.

My organisation has agreed that I can stand for election.

_____ email

_____ telephone

PHOTOGRAPH

Please e-mail a photograph of yourself when you return this form.

Role in your organisation

Topics or Areas of interest

Email to info@fSDC.org.uk

Membership form for the fSDC Coalition

I, _____ (your name)

wish to represent _____ (your organisation's name)

as a Member of the **fSDC** Coalition.

My organisation has agreed my Application for Membership of the **fSDC** Coalition.

_____ email

_____ telephone

Role in your organisation

Topics or Areas of interest

Email to info@fSDC.org.uk