



Department
for Education

0-25 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES, ALTERNATIVE PROVISION AND ATTENDANCE UNIT

October 2018 Newsletter

Welcome to the October 2018 edition of the 0-25 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Alternative Provision and Attendance Unit Newsletter. In this Newsletter, we are focusing on:

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The Education Endowment Foundation Funding

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) is launching a new funding round testing different approaches to improving attainment and other outcomes for children with SEND.

Official figures show there is a larger attainment gap for pupils with SEND than for any other group. Pupils with SEND are also twice as likely to come from disadvantaged homes, (27% of pupils with SEND are eligible for free school meals compared to 12% of all other pupils) so often face a double disadvantage in the classroom.

To date, the EEF's funding has focused on improving the outcomes of socio-economically disadvantaged pupils. Much of this work, particularly around the effective use of teaching assistants, has generated evidence schools can apply to support the teaching of pupils with SEND. However, this is the first time the EEF has focused a funding round specifically on improving outcomes for pupils with SEND.

Successful projects might include whole-school programmes, teacher training programmes, or targeted interventions for pupils with particular needs. The EEF is also hoping to fund pilots of interventions working in special schools, to find out how feasible it is to evaluate approaches in these settings using the EEF's approach.

The funding round will be open from 17 October until 14 January 2019.

For information on how to get involved, please visit the [EEF website](#).

Relationships and Sex Education

The Government is making Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools; Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory in all secondary schools; and Health Education in state-funded schools compulsory for primary and secondary schools.

DfE is now consulting on the draft regulations and guidance and are keen to hear from anyone with experience of, or an interest in, the teaching of these subjects. We would especially welcome feedback on how it will work in the classroom.

We want to identify particular issues relating to SEND and so want to invite SEND stakeholders to respond to the consultation.

Please bring this consultation to the attention of anyone with a potential interest.

The consultation closes on 7 November, and further details can be found here <https://consult.education.gov.uk/pshe/relationships-education-rse-health-education/>.

Local Offer – Children’s Education Advisory Service

The Children’s Education Advisory Service (CEAS) within the Ministry of Defence provides advice and guidance to Service parents, educational establishments and local authorities on educational issues relating to Service children, including issues relating to SEN. As such, links to CEAS should be included on all local offers, as essentially any Service family, anywhere in England, can access CEAS support.

The children of Service personnel is a group referenced in chapter 10 of the Code of Practice, and we would ask all LAs to include a [link to CEAS](#) on their local offers.

SEN Information Reports

Since September 2014, all schools, including academies, have been required to publish an SEN Information Report on their school website, and ensure that it includes details of, and links to, the area’s local offer.

As part of the statutory requirement to have an SEN Information Report, schools are expected to review these at least annually and ensure it is updated. In undertaking such a review, some of the key questions that need to be explored are:

- Is the SEN Information Report easy to find?
- Does it cover all 14 required areas – see paragraphs 6.79 – 6.83 of the [Code of Practice](#)?
- Is it up-to-date? Has it been reviewed within the last year?
- Is it easy to understand?
- Does it convey a welcoming message?
- How well presented is it?
- What do parents and children think of it, and how can they be more involved in co-producing the report?
- Does it provide a link to the school’s accessibility plan?

Keeping the SEN Information Report as a live, up-to-date profile enables schools to celebrate with pupils, parents, local authorities, Ofsted and other interested members of the public, the quality of the school’s provision for pupils with SEN; and share details of their pupils’ achievements.

Alternative Provision Innovation Fund

On 6 August, School Standards Minister Nick Gibb announced [nine innovative schemes](#) across the country would benefit from a £4 million fund to deliver projects to improve outcomes for children in alternative provision (AP).

The AP Innovation Fund was launched alongside the DfE’s [vision for reforming AP](#), which outlined steps to build the evidence about how to improve outcomes for

children, develop and share best practice, and strengthen partnership arrangements for commissioning and delivering alternative AP.

Government response to the Education Select Committee Inquiry on Alternative Provision

Having launched an inquiry into AP in September 2017, on 25 July 2018 the Education Select Committee published their report [Forgotten children: alternative provision and the scandal of ever increasing exclusions](#).

On 17 October, the Government published its [response](#) to the committee's inquiry, setting out its plans to consider the recommendations alongside the exclusions review, which will report at the beginning of next year.

New research on Alternative Provision

On 17 October, DfE also published two research reports on alternative provision, these are:

[‘Alternative Provision Market Analysis’](#), by ISOS partnership, working with Peter Gray, Karina Kulawik and Aliya Saied-Tessier. The report considers the supply of and demand for AP, and the features of a successful local AP commissioning and funding system. Findings are based on a survey completed by 118 local authorities, and fieldwork in 15 local areas to meet with school, AP and local authority leaders.

[‘Investigative research into alternative provision’](#), by IFF Research Ltd, Professor Martin Mills (University College London) and Professor Patricia Thomson (University of Nottingham). The report considers what schools do to prevent exclusions, schools' relationship with AP, and practices in AP settings. Findings are based on interviews with teachers in 276 mainstream and special schools and 200 AP settings, as well as 25 in depth case studies in AP settings with teachers, pupils and their parents.

T Levels

T Levels are brand new, two-year courses designed with employers. As the next step after GCSEs, they combine classroom theory, practical learning and a three-month industry placement to give young people the technical skills, knowledge and experience needed to get a job. Available in some areas from 2020, the first three T Levels will grow to 25 across the country in a variety of professional skills such as construction, accounting and digital occupations from 2025.

We are committed to ensuring that T Levels are accessible to students with SEND. We have listened carefully to SEND organisations and others and held a consultation event focused on the needs of SEND learners. The event resulted in the establishment of an advisory group of specialist sector representatives to support the successful delivery of T Levels for students with SEND.

DfE has made some important commitments in relation to young people with SEND, including:

- Building accessibility into the design of T Levels, including reasonable adjustments for students with SEND and fair assessment of their progress and achievements. This is reflected in the Invitation to Tender for Awarding Organisations seeking to develop T Levels.
- Recognising the importance of direct entry into employment at level 2, in our forthcoming review of qualifications (see below).
- Exploring how we can support students with SEND who may find it difficult to attain English and maths qualifications, taking into account the flexibility on apprenticeships.
- Ensuring that T Level industry placements are accessible, building on good practice and building in appropriate flexibilities to accommodate the needs of SEND learners, including flexibility about the hours they work. We will also continue to look at the evidence base for further funding for SEND students on industry placements.

Review of non-GCSE key stage 4 qualifications and review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below

In the T Level [consultation response](#) published in May, the government committed to carrying out a review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below. The review aims to simplify the current qualifications landscape, so all funded qualifications have a distinct purpose, are good quality and lead to good outcomes.

We want any qualifications we continue to fund to provide students with the opportunity to progress into further study or directly into employment, and to have genuine currency with employers and others. Therefore, following the strengthening of GCSEs, DfE has now confirmed an intention to review the non-GCSE qualifications available for pupils at key stage 4.

The reviews will take into account the wide variety of students' needs, including those with SEND. Engaging with SEND stakeholders is an important part of the reviews, and we will be consulting in two stages. This two-stage consultation process will allow us time to engage widely and work closely with schools, colleges and others who will be affected by the review. First, we will consult on the principles, scope and broad process of the reviews. We will then consult again in 2019, setting out the proposed criteria that will be used to determine qualifications' suitability for public funding.

We are aiming to publish the first consultation by the end of the year. For queries on either of the reviews, please contact the post-16 team at post16.Level3andbelowreview@education.gov.uk.

Exam accommodations for Autistic Students

Autistic students may face additional challenges when taking exams, such as sensory overload. Having recognised these challenges, the DfE commissioned the [Autism Education Trust \(AET\)](#) to develop [guidance around accommodations](#)¹ to help teachers and exam officers support autistic students to demonstrate fully their knowledge and skills in qualifications. The guide was written specifically to support autistic students being entered for GCSEs, but the principles and good practice examples can be applied to all public examinations.

The guide includes tips on:

- **The availability of access arrangements**

The [Joint Council for Qualifications](#) (JCQ) publishes requirements for the most common access arrangements for GCSEs etc. Access arrangements include reasonable adjustments that are needed to make exams accessible for candidates who have disabilities. A reasonable adjustment may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the JCQ's list of available access arrangements.

- **Preparing the student**

In order to prepare autistic students for taking exams, teachers should be familiar with the exam content and formatting so that they can provide individualised guidance and support. It is good practice to make use of any available previous papers and practice material.

Ealing Building My Future Project– example of therapeutic intervention to prevent crisis and reduce costs

Ealing Service for Children with additional Needs has been funded for two years (September 2017 to November 2019) by the DfE Children's Social Care Innovation Programme 2017 to fund Building My Future (BMF).

BMF is a multi-professional responsive service, to support a target of 156 young people (mostly with autism and learning disabilities), parents/carers and schools/colleges where there may be difficulties accessing the curriculum or in attendance, due to complex additional needs. BMF offers early help and support to young people aged 11- 25yrs, families and the schools and colleges they attend.

¹ <https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/shop/aet-exam-accommodations/>

BMF's multi-disciplinary team includes clinical and educational psychologists, social workers, occupational and speech and language therapists, youth workers and a dietician is available. Ealing Youth & Connexions and Youth Offending Services and wider community organisations also support the work of the BMF team.

If you want to learn more about how Ealing's project works please contact Michael Nolan, BMF Project Manager at nolanm@ealing.gov.uk.

Development opportunities and resources

Supporting children and young people with SEND in the health system

One of our aims in the SEND reforms is to join up services across health, education and social care and improve transition from childhood to adulthood. The [SEND Quick Guides](#) are designed to assist health commissioners and providers with joint commissioning of services and provide guidance on developing processes to ensure that children and young people with SEND are fully supported.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan Journey Website

The ehcpjourneys.com website has been active for two and a half years, having been based on independent [research](#) in 2015 into the parental experience of the new EHC needs assessment process. During that time, the site has had almost 20,000 visits.

The site provides real-life examples of what it is like to go through the EHC process from the perspective of children, families and young people who are going, or have gone, through it. It also discusses ways for services to get feedback on their local delivery, and how to improve their system. New case studies have recently been added and this is a great resource to use if you are looking to improve your EHC needs assessment and plan-writing processes.

Resources available from pdnet

Pdnet is the national network for all those supporting learners with physical disability. In April 2017 pdnet was awarded the DfE contract 'Support for Children and Young People with Physical Disabilities' which aims improve the knowledge, skills and the capacity of the physical disability workforce across all phases of education. Over the past 18 months pdnet have worked with the sector to develop phase-specific online training modules and Standards, all of which are now available to access **FREE** of charge online at pdnet.org.uk.

Pdnet Standards

The pdnet Standards provide a practical structure for schools and settings to self-evaluate current provision, and reflect on the effectiveness of their organisation in meeting the diverse needs of children and young people with physical disability.

'Raising Awareness of Physical Disability' Online Training

These training modules are designed for anyone working within an educational setting who needs to develop their awareness and understanding of physical disability and the impact it can have on learning. Each module is approximately 1 hour in length and uses custom graphics and scenario based learning to help users to understand the barriers or challenges that can be faced by children and young people with physical disability and the steps that can be taken to overcome these.

Effective Practice Hub

The Effective Practice Hub holds a wealth of useful resources to help support children and young people with physical disability. Free to access online, resources available include; information and advice leaflets, case studies, risk assessment examples and 'top tips'. All resources have been written by professionals from across the physical disability sector and then quality assured by the pdnet Editorial Board.

For more information about pdnet, please visit pdnet.org.uk or email support@pdnet.org.uk. A leaflet summarising the pdnet offer can be downloaded [here](#).

Mencap E-learning module

Work experience placements can be hugely valuable for young people with SEND, but it isn't always easy to find the right placement or make it a success for the young person and the employer.

As part of [The Right Place](#) project, DfE has funded Mencap to develop a free, online learning resource for education providers. Based on best practice, four e-learning modules will help you to engage employers, allocate the right student to the right placement, and provide effective support to the young person and the employer. There are resources for you to download at the end of each sub-module.

Each module takes about 45 minutes to complete, and you can come back and complete them in stages to fit around your busy schedule.

The module can be accessed through this link - <https://www.foundationonline.org.uk/course/view.php?id=97>.

Autism Education Trust

The Autism Education Trust (AET) has been experiencing a rapid expansion in the past few months thanks to several new partners joining its community of training providers. Bob Lowndes, director of AET said: "It's particularly exciting to see local

authorities joining us and starting to frame their response to autism in our programme. As autism is a very complex condition local authorities and educational settings should think holistically, and develop an autism support framework that – apart from training - includes practical resources helping practitioners in all aspects of their work. This is exactly what AET offers.”

To find out more about how AET can support your organisation please visit: [Autism Education Trust](#).

Work Experience resources

Work Experience Guide for Employers and Education Providers

Work experience is an important part of a young person’s journey towards employment, and young people with SEND often struggle to gain a meaningful experience of being in the workplace. A new [guide on work experience](#) has been published on the Preparing for Adulthood website. It contains top tips on supporting employers and education providers to prepare, and host, young people with SEND on work experience.

Routes Into Work Factsheet

The Preparing for Adulthood website also contains a factsheet on [routes into work](#). This factsheet provides information about options for young people with SEND to help them move into paid employment. It includes details of what qualifications are required to access study programmes, supported internships, traineeships and apprenticeships, where to find out more information about them, and how to apply to join a programme.

We hope this newsletter reaches as many people and organisations as possible with an interest in SEND issues. Please feel free to pass it on to anyone who does not currently receive it and invite them to join our mailing list. However, if you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please contact SEN.IMPLEMENTATION@education.gov.uk and we will remove you from our mailing list.