

**S.E.19 SEND Regional Network**

**Preparing for Adulthood Group: LA and Provider Forum**

Wednesday 24th February 2021 13:30 – 15:45

**Notes of meeting**

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| **Organisation** | **Attendees** |
| Abingdon and Witney College | Hazel Friel |
| Abingdon & Witney College | Joanne Milsom |
| Activate Learning | Vronwyn Hutch |
| BCA | Emma de Goede |
| Bracknell Forest LA | Christina Skipper |
| Bucks College Group | Kath Dunn |
| Chichester College Group | Eileen Darby |
| Chichester College | Tracy Fisher |
| East Sussex College Group | Penny Mackay |
| East Sussex LA | Lucy Butler |
| EKC Group of FE Colleges | Jo Campbell |
| Guildford and Merrist Wood College | Christina Hart |
| Hadlow & West Kent College - Group Head ALS | Karen Richardson |
| Hampshire County Council | Toni-Marie Leaf |
| Hampshire LA | Catherine Smith |
| Hampshire LA | Deborah Copeland |
| Havant & South Downs College | Debbie Collinson-Bolles |
| Isle of Wight LA | Andrew Briggs |
| Mount Camphill | Sara Garland |
| Newbury College | Jane West |
| Orpheus Centre | Chloe Smith |
| Orpheus Centre | Rachel Black |
| Portsmouth LA | Amanda Percy |
| Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead LA | Joanna Safa |
| Sheiling College | Mike Gamble |
| Southampton City College | Jackie Bean |
| Sparsholt and Andover College | Liz Wilson |
| St Piers | Richard Gargon |
| St. John's College | Simon Charleton |
| St. John's College | Karen Grist |
| Surrey LA | Andy Stowell |
| West Sussex LA | Paul Morrison |
| Wokingham LA | Lynn Lee |
| **National Bodies/ Reps** |  |
| Association of Colleges | Gemma Baker |
| Association of Colleges | Liz Maudslay |
| DfE SEND PfA Unit | Ian Turley |
| DfE SEND Advisor (S.E. Region) | Liz Flaherty |
| South East Network of Parent Carer Forums | Andrew Howard |
| Mott MacDonald Regional Support Officer | Laura Hargrave |
| National Association of Specialist Colleges | Ruth Perry |
| NDTi/PfA lead and SEND Leadership programme lead | Julie Pointer |
| S.E.19 SEND Network Co-ordinator | Tracey Maytas |

1. **Welcome and introductions**

The joint chairs Richard Gargon (St. Piers College) and Paul Morrison (West Sussex County Council) opened the sessions and asked delegates to introduce themselves.

**2. Task and Finish Groups - Update and next steps**

Tracey Maytas (SE19 SEND Network Co-ordinator) shared an update on three PfA task and finish groups. Tracey called for volunteers and asked those interested to email Laura Hargrave (Mott MacDonald Regional Support Officer) to express their interest. Laura showed the three first meeting dates of groups A, B and C (see appendix 1) and explained that during the first meetings the dates for the second and third meetings will be organised by the group at a time and date which best suits them.

**3. Describing FE for learners with SEND; a shared generic descriptor**

Ruth Perry (Natspec) and Gemma Baker (Association of Colleges S.E. Region) gave an overview to the guidance paper they have produced entitled ‘What can further education offer people with SEND’ which was distributed to the group prior to the meeting and attached.



Ruth explained that the document aims to give CYP and their families an understanding of FE because often parents of CYP in special or mainstream schools have little understand of FE and therefore the typically stay in special schools as they don’t know what else can be offered to them. Ruth asked the group to provide their immediate feedback to the paper and to consider if they are happy with how Ruth and Gemma have described GFE and FE and whether any elements have been missed or misrepresented:

* Mike Gamble (Sheiling College) shared that phrasing of ‘large’ and ‘small’ should be reconsidered, as ‘large’ can be off-putting and unsettling to pupils and parents
* It was noted that there is no mention of sixth forms colleges
* It was noted that the document discusses GCSE results specifically and other qualifications should also be included
* Julie Pointer (NDTi/PfA lead and SEND Leadership programme lead) suggested wording for study programmes. Julie additionally added that community and volunteering opportunities should be included
* Andrew Howard (South East Network of Parent Carer Forums) added that it would be beneficial to emphasise that FE colleagues provide adult education and therefore pupils are not required to leave college after two years
* Joanne Milson (Abingdon & Witney College) suggested that parents may not understand the definition of ‘entry level’ and clarification here would be useful. Richard Gargon agreed that a matrix to show the qualification groups would be useful
* Andrew Briggs (Isle of Wight LA) added explanations of apprenticeships, supported internships and work-based learning programs would be helpful
* Eileen Darby (Chichester College Group) agreed to send Ruth a helpful visual ‘ladder of progression’ document
* Christian Hart noted that the language of ‘general FE’ implies that these colleges do not cater to complex needs as ‘special’ schools do. It needs to be emphasised that FE colleges can create employability opportunities as there are greater opportunities for vocational learning in general FE colleges.
* Andy Stowell (Surrey LA) shared that the document feels like it was written by an educational profession and how young people and families interpret the document should be considered. Language such as ‘careers’ or ‘work’ can be used instead of ‘vocational’ for instance.

Ruth agreed to review the document in the light of this input and would re-circulate an updated version. **Action - Ruth and Gemma**

**4. Hand-over to new GFE Co-Chair of S.E.19 PfA Forum**

Paul Morrison explained that Richard Gargon will be stepping down as co-chair and the group thanked Richard for all his work. Paul welcomed Eileen Darby (Chichester College Group) as the new co-chair and Eileen introduced herself.

**5.** **Introduction to the role of the DfE SEND Advisor Team**

Liz Flaherty (DfE SEND Advisor, S.E. Region Lead) provide an overview to the role of the DfE professional SEND Adviser team and provided an update on behalf of the DfE.

* There are nine Advisers in total who monitor, support and challenge LAs across England. A key focus is LA inspections and the relevant follow up actions as the Advisers work closely with areas which have received a WSoA.
* Liz oversees the South East region and there are 19 LAs in total. Liz is happy to join regional meetings as and when requested and is happy to dip in and out if the group would like a closed session.
* Liz gave an update on behalf of the DfE. From the 8th March all pupils should be back in school as attendance will be mandatory, however there is flexibility as returning to school will not be suitable for everyone. The key message is that attendance should be encouraged.
* Before half term 33% pupils attended special school.
* There are increasing mental health issues especially in young women.
* A recent Special Needs Jungle survey looking at support for CYP with EHCPs in the pandemic shows that parents and guardians are concerned about the lack of direct therapy provision.
* Face coverings should be worn by secondary school and college pupils when moving around the premises and it is strongly recommended that face coverings should be worn in the classroom. There is no expectation for primary pupils to wear face coverings, but there are no barriers if the student wishes to. Staff in the settings should wear coverings when social distancing is not possible. There is limited evidence showing that transparent face coverings are effective, but schools and colleges have discretion here to decide whether these are to be used where young people rely on lip reading.
* From the 8th March, secondary pupils and college students should have tests three times per week. Testing is completely voluntary. Home testing is not suitable for all...
* All were reminded of the importance of the 31st March deadline for school leavers. It was discussed that the March deadline seems to be more of an issue this year. Julie Pointer noted that there are reports of some areas naming a place just to meet the deadline and Liz agreed to report this back centrally.
* It was discussed by the group that there is still confusion about whether testing should take place at home or in college/school and Liz agreed to follow up and clarify. **Action - Liz Flaherty**
* Lynn Lee (Wokingham LA) asked for clarification on how young people on supported internship access testing and Liz agreed to follow up. **Action - Liz Flaherty**

**6.NDTi Preparing for Adulthood Team – Update**

Julie Pointer (NDTi PfA Lead) provided an update on recent PfA events, outcomes and learning – please see the slide deck attached.



* Julie summarised that there has been wide and varied PfA delivery in the South East region over the contract year, drawing down from the DBOT targeted support days.
* The SEND Leadership programme was delivered with a nine leadership colleagues attending from varying backgrounds across the South East.
* Tracey Maytas confirmed she’d send the NDTi survey link back out
* Julie explained that moving the PfA delivery model online as a result of Covid-19 has meant the PfA team have been able to capture a broader range of people.

**7. AOB**

* Ruth Perry explained that the findings from the recent Natspec parents survey should that two thirds of parents rate the quality of advice on post-16 options for young people with SEND as poor. Ruth encouraged the group to read the report and provide recommendations. <https://natspec.org.uk/new-report-reveals-anger-and-frustration-at-quality-of-post-16-information/>.
* Julie Pointer shared that those who attended Avril’s Access to Work training sessions, part three of the Support Workers claim form can now be signed by the representative of the agency that supplied the Job Coach – please see the form attached.



* Julie Pointer suggested inviting the regional career enterprise officer along to network meetings to share best practice in the region on employment.
* Paul Morrison asked the group for their preferences on dates for the future meetings. It was agreed that a meeting in the summer term following the PfA task and finish groups would be useful. It was noted to avoid the 10th May online conference.

**Cont:**

**Appendix 1:**

Task and Finish Groups – first meeting dates and times.

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| **Date/Time** | **Task and Finish Group** |
| Wednesday 10th March 15:00 - 17:00 | Group C: Using PfA Outcomes to Identify & Commission Individual Study Programmes |
| Thursday 11th March  10:00 - 12:00 | Group B: Transition Out from Education to Future Life |
| Tuesday 23rd March  12:00 - 14:00 | Group A: Defining 'Continuing Progress' |