

SEND reforms - still a long way to go!

The new SEND Code of Practice was finally given parliamentary approval in July 2014 and has now been in practice since September 1st. Former nasen CEO **Lorraine Peterson OBE** comments on the changes and the road ahead.

THE implications of the Act and the new SEND Code of Practice are far-reaching and the full impact will not be seen for a number of years.

It has been a long and arduous journey from February 2011, when the DfE published its Green Paper: *Support and aspiration: a new approach to special educational needs and disability*, to March 2014 when the Children and Families Bill finally received Royal Assent. Not all of the aspiration of that original Green Paper is evident in the final Act but there is a great deal that will support children and young people with SEND as we begin to work towards the Act being implemented across the sector.

However, three years on, the end is still a long way off. The SEND journey continues until April 2018, the final date by which local authorities must have transferred all current statements to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP).

Now, every local authority has to produce the local offer which sets out, in one place, information about the provision that is available in their area across education, health and social care to support children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

continued on p2

KEY CHANGES

- The Code of Practice (2014) covers the 0-25 age range and includes guidance relating to disabled children and young people as well as those with SEND
- Clearer focus on the participation of children and young people and parents in decision making at individual and strategic levels
- Stronger focus on high aspirations and on improving outcomes for children and young people
- Guidance on the joint planning and commissioning of services to ensure close co-operation between education, health services and social care
- Guidance on publishing a Local Offer of support for children and young people
- Social, emotional and mental health needs replaces behaviour, social and emotional difficulties as an area of need
- A single category called SEND Support replaces School Action and School Action Plus
- Quality first teaching embedded throughout the identification, intervention, evaluation process
- SEND provision is that which goes beyond the differentiated approaches and learning arrangements normally provided as part of high quality personalised teaching and uses appropriate evidence-based interventions
- SEND support in schools based on 4 part cycle of action – assess, plan, do, review

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cardiff date for NAS

THE National Autistic Society will be running a one day PDA conference at the Mercure Holland House Hotel, Cardiff on 4th November 2014.

Pathological demand avoidance syndrome (PDA) is increasingly recognised as part of the autism spectrum. It is a lifelong disability that affects boys and girls equally. People with PDA need different amounts of support depending on how their condition affects them.

As a result, people with PDA usually experience increased difficulty throughout their lives. They often imitate inappropriate behaviour or come across as overbearing, and may exhibit an obsessive desire to dominate socially.

This behaviour can be extremely disruptive within classroom settings and may make for a chaotic and distressing home life.

For more information visit www.autism.org.uk

Disabled students allowance extended

THE Council for Disabled Children has highlighted that the planned reforms to the Disabled Students Allowance will no longer be made this year. In a Written Ministerial Statement, Greg Clark, Minister for Universities and Science, last week confirmed that the proposed changes were not being made for the 2015/16 academic year.

The Special Educational Consortium had argued that disabled people, and the organisations that represent them, had not been properly involved in the changes being made and had called for them to be suspended.

Policy forum

SSAT schools in every region are invited to attend our expert policy updates sessions free of charge. SSAT is constantly distilling the key points of new policies as we move through this time of seismic change, making sure you're fully informed on the latest changes. SSAT works as a network to analyse what the policy updates mean in practice, and formulate implementation strategies.

Visit www.ssatuk.co.uk for further information.



Continued from Page 1

Each local authority must have published an initial, accessible Local Offer by September 2014.

Statements have been replaced by new Education, Health & Care plans. Children and young people currently with a statement will be transferred to an EHC Plan over the next four years.

Schools should have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND. If high quality teaching is taking place in a classroom and regular

assessment of progress is identifying pupils making less than expected progress then the class/subject teacher needs to make a judgement about how they are going to support that pupil.

In order to ensure that all of our teachers and support staff have the knowledge and skills to support this process we need to ensure that they are offered high quality professional development as soon as possible.

As the new SEND legislation reform

is now implemented, there has to be a very clear idea of how to meet the needs of these children and young people.

It's been a long SEND journey since March 2011 when the Green Paper was launched. However, there is still a long way to go before it's right. With a first class educational system that supports all children and young people, especially those with SEND, there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

NAS and Axcis - working together!

AS the UK's leading autism charity the NAS (National Autistic Society) are very proud of our long term and highly successful partnership with AXCIS Education Recruitment.

AXCIS have supported the National Autistic Society for four years and are our title sponsors of Network Autism, the Professional Conference, the Autism Awards, Ask-An-Expert and so much more.

The activities and forums that AXCIS support enable the National Autistic Society to engage and join together autism professionals – so they learn more practical tools and best practice. This enables professionals to give better support and care for children and adults with autism. This only achieved because of AXCIS's continued, long term and valuable support.

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability that affects how people communicate and interact with the world around them. It is a spectrum condition, which means that while all people with autism share certain areas of difficulty, their condition affects them in different ways. Many children with autism may require significant specialist support in the classroom to achieve their full potential, while others will require less intensive support. As autism affects more than 1 in 100 people, teachers are bound to come across young people with the condition in the classroom during their career. It's therefore essential they have access to autism training.

The Children and Families Act, introducing major reforms to the SEND system in England, came into force on 1 September. The Act changes how children and young people's special educational needs will be



identified, assessed and met, and will shape the future of a generation of children with autism. The National Autistic Society and AXCIS believe the Act has a lot to be positive about. Firstly it will replace SEN statements with Education, Health and Care plans, and the system will run from birth to 25, rather than ending when a young person leaves school. However, both organisations also believe the reforms will not introduce a joined up system for appealing decisions on education, health and care provision. The National Autistic Society is concerned that without a joined-up appeals system, families affected by autism will continue to face protracted battles to get the right support for their children.

The NAS will be closely monitoring the implementation of the changes to ensure the best possible outcomes for children and young people with autism.

For more information about our partnership please contact Selina Fairclough, Corporate Partnerships, National Autistic Society, selina.fairclough@nas.org.uk

Team Teach - invaluable training resource from Axcis

TEAM Teach, accredited by BILD (British Institute of Learning Disabilities), is a fantastic course for dealing with behaviours that challenge.

Axcis Education is proud to run Team Teach courses in-house. We have been doing this for over five years. Not only do we run it for our candidates regularly, but we run the training to an extremely high standard. Our course promotes risk and restraint reduction, which means that our staff have the tools to deal with young people who have challenging behaviours. The feedback from our candidates has been superb.

They say that it instills the self confidence necessary to effectively deal with a child who is at crisis point in the safest way possible. Not only is there a layer of security, but they will also have the tools to de-escalate behaviour before considering using a restraint on a child.

Axcis recognise the importance of follow-through after an incident and Team Teach offers the tools for our candidates to enhance relationships with young people, creating a caring and nurturing environment. The course runs on a reduced rate for candidates, and our schools have been thrilled with the results shown by those who have undertaken the two day training.

For more information email training@axcis.co.uk

Top tips for Autism professionals - Overcoming the barriers to inclusion

IN the academic year 2011 to 2012 2,750 pupils on the autism spectrum were given a fixed period exclusion. That's an 11% increase on the previous year. What can be done to reduce the risk of exclusion for pupils on the autism spectrum?

There is no one quick-fix set of strategies that schools can follow to reduce the number of school exclusions.

However, schools may like to consider the following tips when planning how best to support a pupil on the autism spectrum:

1 Get to know the individual. Every person on the autism spectrum is unique, therefore a 'one size fits all' approach is inappropriate. Investing time into trying to understand how an individual sees and experiences the world will benefit not only the individual, but also those who come into contact with them. Observe and listen.

2 Working in partnership with the individual on the autism spectrum, parents, and other professionals can benefit all.

Parents are experts on their own child. Schools should recognise this and help to build a more complete picture of the individual and ensure consistent support. Professionals can also collaborate with colleagues from other schools and professionals from other fields, including specialist autism support (Autism Outreach Team).

3 Address issues around stress and anxiety. Schools can do this by:

- identifying what triggers high levels of stress

and anxiety and the resulting behaviour.

- recognising the strategies individuals may already use to manage their own stress and anxiety, but not trying to eliminate them.
- providing the individual with ways of identifying their own rising levels of stress and strategies to manage them.
- creating a sanctuary – a safe place - somewhere in the school that the individual can feel calm.

4 Reasonable Adjustments need to be made to school policies and practices.

Schools have a duty to do this under the Equality Act 2010. Schools need to take positive steps to ensure that disabled pupils, including those on the autism spectrum, can fully participate in all aspects of school life. A school's behaviour policy should make allowance for behaviour which is a consequence of a pupil's disability, rather than disobedience. A 'one size fits all' policy, fixing a standard penalty for a particular action, is therefore both unfair and inappropriate.

Reviewing all practices and policies will help a school to ensure that it does not discriminate.

5 All school staff should have autism awareness training to gain a better understanding of how to work with children on the autism spectrum. Staff need to be alert to the warning signs or triggers that if left unheeded, could lead to potentially explosive situations. This includes support staff and lunchtime supervisors, who play a crucial role in overseeing unstructured parts of the school day.

Join the SSAT

SSAT is the hub of the UK's biggest and most active network for teachers, support staff and leaders of specialist provision for pupils with SEND.

Their special schools and SEND Network is a national forum supporting the development and exchange of specialist knowledge and understanding, keeping pace with the implications of SEND policy, and sharing innovative and high-impact practice.

As schools wrestle with the system changes of the revised SEND Code of Practice, funding reform and the complexities of pupil needs, SSAT can assist your school to build on its strengths.

Everyone in your school can access the benefits of membership:

- Weekly SEND e-newsletters keeping you up to date with research evidence, policy developments, resources and case studies of recent improvement planning by schools nationally
- Online forum providing real-time support and networking opportunities with other member schools
- Learn from the findings of dedicated focus groups researching, developing and testing interventions - or better still, join in!
- Accreditation opportunities to celebrate pupils' achievements

Members enjoy up to 1/3 discount on our courses, programmes and resources, all designed to improve leadership, curriculum design and pedagogy - including the influential National Conference.

Visit www.ssat.org.uk for further information.

Diary of Events - Autumn Term

NASS Annual Conference 2014

Royal Hotel York

10th & 11th October

Axcis is pleased to be sponsoring the National Association of Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools (NASS) Annual Residential Conference for the third consecutive year in a row, 2012, 2013 and 2014.

Key topics are set to include:

- SEN Reform Implementation & You
- LA and parents' perspective on reforms
- Personal budgets in practice
- Ofsted Updates
- Restraint and the law

TES Special Educational Needs Show

London – Design Centre, Islington

October 10th & 11th

Axcis will be exhibiting at the annual TES Special Educational Needs Show at the Design Centre in Islington, London. Among those delivering seminars are two of our favourite people, Robyn Steward and Dr Rona Tutt. Robyn has undertaken hugely successful autism awareness training with our teachers and support staff. She and Rona will be taking part in brief filmed interviews with us and Robyn will also be signing copies of her book – The Independent Woman's Handbook for Super Safe

Living on the Autistic Spectrum.

Axcis CPD for teachers and support staff in SEND

Wed 15th Oct: SEND candidate training evening -

Axcis Liverpool

Thu 16th Oct: SEND candidate training evening -

Axcis Bristol

Thu 6th Nov: Autism Awareness candidate training

- Axcis Birmingham

Wed 20th Nov: Managing Challenging Behaviour

candidate training - Axcis Birmingham

Wed 20th Nov: Managing Challenging Behaviour

candidate training - Axcis London

Autism Awareness

Axcis Birmingham office

Nov 6th 5.30-7.30pm

Steve McGuinness is a Councillor and a former Trustee with the NAS and runs MSITUA Autism Consultancy working with many local authorities.

He has been working with Axcis for some time now, delivering sessions across the country on autism awareness, sensory integration difficulties and challenging behaviour.

This event is for Axcis candidates and clients and will be charged at £10/head to cover printing and refreshments. Each participant will receive a handbook and a certificate of attendance.

Call 0121 647 6386 for more information.

Open days for teachers and support staff to register with Axcis

We know it's not always possible for candidates to get to their most local office so we organise open days and in November we will be in Slough, Kent, Chingford and Surrey.

If you would like to come along please refer to our Candidate Training page and call Gary in our London office. We'd love to meet teachers and support staff looking to work in special education.

Tues 21st Oct: Slough

Tues 22nd Oct: Axcis at Birmingham University Open Day

Tues 4th Nov: Axcis Open Day Kent

National Autistic Society Events

Thur 9th Oct 2014: NAS Women and girls on the autism spectrum conference - Copthorne Tara Hotel, London

Tues 14th Oct: NAS Understanding and supporting challenging behaviour in people with autism – Aston Villa Football Club, Birmingham

Tues 4th Nov: NAS Pathological Demand Avoidance Conference - Mecure Holland House Hotel, Cardiff

Tues 25th Nov: NAS Autism and communication, Hilton Hotel, Reading

Axcis Education - leaders in SEND recruitment

FOR many years Axcis Education Recruitment has led the way in supplying quality staffing solutions to schools throughout the UK. Specialising in special educational needs and disabilities posts, we want to do more than just talk the talk, and as thought leaders, we also walk the walk. This termly newsletter

is part of that process and reinforces what we do and how we do it.

We work with organisations such as the NAS (National Autistic Society) and nasen (National Association of Special Educational Needs), and with key partnerships and support,



our knowledge of SEND sets us apart from the rest.

This newsletter will give you the latest news, reviews, interviews and up to date information about what's going on during the biggest changes in SEND reform in 30 years.

With contributions and articles written by leading organisations and respected and experienced individuals such as former nasen CEO Lorraine Peterson, we hope for this to be a useful tool and a valuable resource to SENCOs and all those working with children and young adults with SEND. For more information please visit www.axcis.co.uk



Axcis Education Managing Director Jean Wilson with Minister Edward Timpson at nasen live 2014.

Axcis Andy - you're helping a real bear!

FOR many years Axcis Andy has been the proud mascot of Axcis Education Recruitment. Did you know that by adopting an Axcis Andy you now have the chance to help save a real bear?

Organisations such as Animals Asia, have worked for many years, helping rescue and look after bears across Asia who are being farmed for their bile - A substance that can be manufactured synthetically!

Each child who has an Axcis Andy will now know they're helping a real bear as with every adoption certificate filled in, we will make a contribution to Animals Asia and support them in saving more bears from captivity. For further information please visit www.animalsasia.org.uk



Downton Abbey star Lesley Nicholl feeding one of the rescued bears.



The ONLY recruitment agency in the UK that specialises in providing high quality SEND staffing solutions.

With over 13 years of proven experience and having built strong professional relationships with charities like the NAS, nasen, NASS, SSAT and Network Autism, Axcis Education Recruitment are industry leaders in providing high quality SEND staffing solutions.

If you would like to discuss your staffing needs or would like to find work through Axcis Education, contact us on

0800 107 9900
or visit www.axcis.co.uk

