

SEN Policy Research Forum

**Preparing for
adulthood -
developing
provision for
children and young
people with SEND**

2017

Preparing for adulthood - developing provision for children and young people with SEND

Summary

This policy seminar addressed several key contemporary questions about i. How far is 'staying on' in education a desirable goal for young adults with SEND? In what ways could this be more productive? ii. How can we create more supported internships and inclusive apprenticeship opportunities? iii. How can we better describe 'employment' for all young people with special educational needs/disabilities? iv. What other pathways and outcomes are valuable? What cultural change is needed to develop these pathways and how can it be supported? and What does successful transition from education/training look like?

Yolande Burgess (London Councils) gave an overview of national policy in the field covering the recent Rochford Report which looked at assessment below the standard in national tests and the current Lenehan review examining specialist residential education. Yolande argued that to be serious about helping young people in education and into adult life, there is a need to look at how every stage of education prepares the child or young person for adult life. She concluded that this seminar focussed on how we utilised everything going on in young people's lives to help them have an ordinary life.

Justin Cooke (Ambitious for Autism) who discussed the development of inclusive apprenticeships following the Paul Maynard Taskforce (2016). The task force aimed to use existing programmes and mechanisms to help designated groups benefit from apprenticeships. Justin analyses the 14 recommendations in terms of access to work, promoting awareness and encouraging employers, data collection, target setting and funding streams and pilot schemes. He also discussed the issues of adjusting the English and Maths requirements in the mainstream and the delays in keeping to the original proposed timescale.

Ellen Atkinson (Associate NDTI and Preparing for Adulthood Team) gave a presentation about the culture change journey to valuing people. She discusses how Government policy has now adopted the position that people with very complex needs should not be excluded from work. This presents clear challenges and she indicates that the barriers are not quite what they seem. Societal change is crucial as without positive intervention, people remain isolated and in low paid and status roles. She also explains how the Preparing for Adulthood programme promotes the need to start from much earlier, which is something that is everyone's business, not just about education, health and care. She concludes by suggesting that when working with people with learning disabilities, we need to consider whether we are doing things that we would want for ourselves.

Gill Waceba (Woodfield School, Hemel Hempstead) talked about Special school development of Supported Internships. Gill outlines the context of the school and explains how the school examined the culture on which the development was based. Starting in the summer term 2014 their change strategy had a clear focus on destination led learning and preparation for adulthood, led by a Work-Related Learning Team. Several case examples are provided to illustrate what has been achieved. She concludes with the principles that i. the pupil should be at the centre and the curriculum should be destination led and functional and ii. preparation for adulthood outcomes should be incorporated within the curriculum.

Summaries of the deliberations of the 6 small discussion groups are included in the final section of the policy paper.

Contents:

Sections:

1. Introduction	3
2. Broad national policy context Yolande Burgess - Strategy Director, London Councils	6
3. Developing Inclusive Apprenticeships Justin Cooke, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, Ambitious about Autism	9
4. The culture change journey to valuing people Ellen Atkinson - Associate NDTI and Preparing for Adulthood Team	15
5. Special school development of Supported Internships Gill Waceba Woodfield School, Hemel Hempstead	22
6. Summary of discussions	28

Section 1; Introduction

The policy seminar: Preparing for adulthood - developing provision for children and young people with SEND took place on 1 March 2017 St Albans Centre, Leigh Place, Baldwin's Gardens, London EC1N 7AB with about 40 participants.

The seminar aimed to address several key contemporary questions in this field:

- How far is 'staying on' in education a desirable goal for young adults with SEND? In what ways could this be more productive?
- How can we create more supported internships and inclusive apprenticeship opportunities?
- How can we better describe 'employment' for all young people with special educational needs/disabilities?
- What other pathways and outcomes are valuable? What cultural change is needed to develop these pathways and how can it be supported?
- What does successful transition from education/training look like?

There were four presentations, Yolande Burgess (London Councils) gave an overview of national policy in the field, followed by Justin Cooke (Ambitious for Autism) who discussed the development of inclusive apprenticeships. Ellen Atkinson (Associate NDTI and Preparing for Adulthood Team) gave a presentation about the culture change journey to valuing people while Gill Waceba and Ian Burgess (Woodfield School, Hemel Hempstead) talked about Special school development of Supported Internships. There were also small group discussion in which the deliberations were summarised in the final section of the policy paper.

SEN Policy Research Forum

The SEN Policy Research Forum, which organised this seminar, incorporates the aims and work of the previous SEN Policy Options group in a new format and with some expanded aims. The Forum's website is at:

<http://blogs.exeter.ac.uk/sen-policyforum/>

The aim of the Forum is to contribute intelligent analysis, knowledge and experience to promote the development of policy and practice for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The Forum will be concerned with children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities from preschool to post 16. It will cover the whole of the UK and aim to:

1. provide timely policy review and critique,
2. promote intelligent policy debate,
3. help set longer term agendas – acting like a think-tank,
4. deliberate over and examine policy options in the field.
5. inform research and development work in the field.
6. contribute to development of more informed media coverage of SEND policy issues.

The uncertainties over what counts as 'special educational needs' and 'disabilities' in relation to a wider concept of 'additional needs' are recognised. These will be among the many issues examined through the Forum.

The Forum, which continues the work of the SEN Policy Options group has been continuing this work for over 20 years. It started as an ESRC seminar series with some initial funding from the Cadbury Trust. The Forum appreciates the generous funding from NASEN and the Pears Foundation to enable it to function, though it

operates independently of these organisations.

Lead group and coordination of the Forum:

Dr Peter Gray - Policy Consultant (co-coordinator)
Professor Brahm Norwich - University of Exeter (co-coordinator)
Yoland Burgess, Young People's Education and Skills, London Councils
Professor Julie Dockrell - Institute of Education, University of London
Niki Elliott - Sheffield Hallam University / Special Education Consortium
Brian Lamb - Policy consultant
Professor Geoff Lindsay - University of Warwick
Debbie Orton, Hertfordshire local authority
Nick Peacey, First Director , SENJIT. Institute of Education
Professor Liz Pellicano, Institute of Education
Linda Redford - Policy Consultant
Penny Richardson - Policy Consultant
Chris Robertson, University of Birmingham
Professor Klaus Wedell - Institute of Education, University of London

Membership:

If you would like to join the Forum, go to the website and follow link to registering as a member. You will be invited to future seminars and be able to participate in discussion through the Jiscmail system. SEE SENPRF website for joining instructions.

For further information please contact the co-coordinators of the Forum, Brahm Norwich, Graduate School of Education, University of Exeter, Heavitree Road, Exeter EX1 2LU (b.norwich@exeter.ac.uk) or Peter Gray (pgray@sscyp) .

Past Policy Options Papers (see website for downloadable copies)

1. Bucking the market: Peter Housden, Chief Education Officer, Nottinghamshire LEA
2. Towards effective schools for all: Mel Ainscow, Cambridge University Institute of Education
3. Teacher education for special educational needs: Professor Peter Mittler, Manchester University
4. Resourcing for SEN: Jennifer Evans and Ingrid Lunt, Institute of Education, London University
5. Special schools and their alternatives: Max Hunt, Director of Education, Stockport LEA
6. Meeting SEN: options for partnership between health, education and social services: Tony Dessent, Senior Assistant Director, Nottinghamshire LEA
7. SEN in the 1990s: users' perspectives: Micheline Mason, Robina Mallet, Colin Low and Philippa Russell
8. Independence and dependence? Responsibilities for SEN in the Unitary and County Authorities: Roy Atkinson, Michael Peters, Derek Jones, Simon Gardner and Phillipa Russell
9. Inclusion or exclusion: Educational Policy and Practice for Children and Young People with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties: John Bangs, Peter Gray and Greg Richardson
9. Baseline Assessment and SEN: Geoff Lindsay, Max Hunt, Sheila Wolfendale, Peter Tymms
10. Future policy for SEN: Response to the Green Paper: Brahm Norwich, Ann Lewis, John Moore, Harry Daniels
11. Rethinking support for more inclusive education: Peter Gray, Clive Danks, Rik Boxer, Barbara Burke, Geoff Frank, Ruth Newbury and Joan Baxter
12. Developments in additional resource allocation to promote greater inclusion: John Moore, Cor Meijer, Klaus Wedell, Paul Croll and Diane Moses.
13. Early years and SEN: Professor Sheila Wolfendale and Philippa Russell

14. Specialist Teaching for SEN and inclusion: Annie Grant, Ann Lewis and Brahm Norwich
15. The equity dilemma: allocating resources for special educational needs: Richard Humphries, Sonia Sharpe, David Ruebain, Philippa Russell and Mike Ellis
16. Standards and effectiveness in special educational needs: questioning conceptual orthodoxy: Richard Byers, Seamus Hegarty and Carol Fitz Gibbon
17. Disability, disadvantage, inclusion and social inclusion: Professor Alan Dyson and Sandra Morrison
18. Rethinking the 14-19 curriculum: SEN perspectives and implications: Dr Lesley Dee, Christopher Robertson, Professor Geoff Lindsay, Ann Gross, and Keith Bovair
19. Examining key issues underlying the Audit Commission Reports on SEN: Chris Beek, Penny Richardson and Peter Gray
20. Future schooling that includes children with SEN / disability: Klaus Wedell, Ingrid Lunt and Brahm Norwich
- VI. Policy Options Papers from sixth seminar series
21. Taking Stock: integrated Children's Services, Improvement and Inclusion: Margaret Doran, Tony Dessent and Professor Chris Husbands
22. Special schools in the new era: how do we go beyond generalities? Chris Wells, Philippa Russell, Peter Gray and Brahm Norwich
23. Individual budgets and direct payments: issues, challenges and future implications for the strategic management of SEN
Christine Lenehan, Glenys Jones Elaine Hack and Sheila Riddell
24. Personalisation and SEN
Judy Sebba, Armando DiFinizio, Alison Peacock and Martin Johnson.
25. Choice-equity dilemma in special educational provision
John Clarke, Ann Lewis, Peter Gray
26. SEN Green Paper 2011: progress and prospects
Brian Lamb, Kate Froud and Debbie Orton
27. A school for the future - 2025: Practical Futures Thinking
Alison Black
28. The Coalition Government's policy on SEND: aspirations and challenges? P. Gray, B. Norwich, P Stobbs and S Hodgson.
29. How will accountability work in the new SEND legislative system?
Parents from Camden local authority, Penny Richardson, Jean Gross and Brian Lamb
30. Research in special needs and inclusive education: the interface with policy and practice, Brahm Norwich, Peter Blatchford, Rob Webster, Simon Ellis, Janet Tod, Geoff Lindsay and Julie Dockrell.
31. Professional training in the changing context of special educational needs disability policy and practice. Neil Smith, Dr Hazel Lawson, Dr Glenys Jones.
32. Governance in a changing education system: ensuring equity and entitlement for disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs. Peter Gray, Niki Elliot and Brahm Norwich.
33. School commissioning for send: new models, limits and possibilities, Tom Jefford, Debbie Orton and Kate Fallon.
34. An early review of the new SEN / disability policy and legislation: where are we now? Brian Lamb, Kate Browning, Andre Imich and Chris Harrison.

Copies of most of these papers can now be downloaded from the website of the SEN Policy Research Forum <http://blogs.exeter.ac.uk/sen-policyforum/>

Section 2: Broad national policy context

Yolande Burgess - Strategy Director, London Councils

The context in which we are operating globally is very different from what it was recently. This set the scene nationally for when we are thinking and talking about young people with special educational needs and disabilities. This seminar is about preparing for adulthood, in which issues to do with the community and housing have an impact on all young people's lives. In my job the focus is on London, in which there is a housing crisis. When we think about teaching nationally, there are serious problems in terms of recruitment, retention of teachers, senior and head teachers. These are the big national policy issues which set the context for the specific focus on questions about preparing young people for adulthood.

I will start by considering SEN support in schools which can be related to many other key topics and issues. There are significant policy tensions over mainstream schools as they become less accessible for young people with special educational needs. This is not meant as a judgment; it reflects the growing evidence indicating this conclusion. We also know that some of the changes in terminology that was brought in through the Children and Families Act, such as SEN Support to replace School Action and School Action plus, have caused confusion in some schools and anxiety for parents.

The effect of schools becoming less accessible to young people with special educational needs means we are developing a teaching work force that is becoming less used to working with young people with special educational needs in mainstream. What is important is to help the entire system to work for young people with special educational needs through the universal (wave 1) end of provision. If that goes wrong we will continue to struggle with targeted and specialist services and support. It is important to not under-estimate how much effort is needed to get the messages right, but also to support mainstream to be better at supporting young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

There are currently proposals from the Department for Education looking at how to change the funding system with implications for high needs funding. This is happening when there is already enormous pressure on funding generally. We have pressure on funding in terms of the amount of funding available. The pressure on funding is partly because we are seeing more young people coming through the education system with more complex needs as well as some with new needs. This requires working out in very particular ways, such as, how we get the right pedagogy for young people going into education potentially up to the age of 25? This raises the question of how we can afford to do this, not just well, but very well.

Organisations like my own (London Councils) lobby the government for a sufficient quantum of funding. But, insufficient funding is not an excuse for not ensuring that there is a good system in place, one that delivers high-quality education and services for children; not one where it is simply continually said that there is not enough money. This is not solely the responsibility of local government.

There have been a number of reviews and reports in the field recently. There has been the Rochford Report (DFE, 2016), a review which looked at assessment below the standard in national tests in a school setting. The challenge is how to support schools to assess young people's progress, but also help policy makers understand that you can assess progress without attaching it to qualifications. There is also talk about how can there be a sensible, reasonable, national assessment system for young people that also makes sure that what is being offered to children with educational needs is equitable. That is not easy.

What happens in schools impacts strongly on young people in their preparation for adulthood. If we think about some of the headlines in newspapers in recent years, we read that employers continually complain that the education system is not preparing young people for the world of work – this is all young people, not just young people with SEN/disabilities. This could be seen to suggest we do have an extremely narrow assessment system in operation, one very focused on qualifications that does not look wider. This is relevant not just for young people with special educational needs. With the current interest in resilience as a characteristic that is worth pursuing, this poses the question of how it can be brought into the educational process.

There is also the Lenehan review (DFE, 2017) which is currently going on, that is examining specialist residential education to evaluate whether such provision is really doing what it needs to do for young people in terms of preparing them for the next stage in their life. Interestingly for me, because the focus of my day job is on young people's education and skills at the upper age range, we frequently find that the issues that we tend to address post-16, definitely start pre-16. The risk is to compartmentalise different sections of education; primary school, secondary school, tertiary education and higher education. If we are serious about helping young people in education and into adult life, we have to put the system back together and look at how every stage of education prepares the child or young person for adult life.

When I was having a look at the list of seminar participants, it was disappointing to me there are so few school representatives here. Too often when schools see a seminar or session title starting with Preparing for Adulthood, they are not convinced it is for them. So, we need to find ways of making sure that we make it relevant to them. We have to find ways to make sure that schools know that they are critical to preparing young people for adulthood.

We also need to remember that we are still in the formative years of significant reforms; we have moved to a system that is now fully 0-25. There are some serious practical issues that we are still working through and grappling with, for example, what is suitable when you are 19-25? Particularly when thinking about preparing for adulthood, education is not necessarily the only outcome. What does a good outcome look like? How do we engender that it is important to capture outcomes clearly in the practical process of writing an Education Health and Care Plans? And, is there serious thinking about what is the impact on that young person's life throughout their education journey? Will it make a positive difference to that child or young person when they are an adult? What constitutes age-appropriate education and training, particularly for young adults? And, how can we help people to be genuinely creative about education and training when thinking about positive impact into adult life?

In thinking about the significant funding pressures, there is a particular topic that I want to examine from the perspective of preparing for adulthood. Much of Children and Families Act, and a significant part of the Code of Practice, talks about joint commissioning to support Education, Health and Care planning. I recognise that joint commissioning is not easy. But it is a nut that we have to crack, particularly if we want to improve preparing for adulthood. We need to be much better strategically at thinking about all young people with special educational needs and how we draw relevant information and intelligence together to better plan our services and provision. How well does preparing for adulthood planning feed into Local Offers? What are young people saying that they need to have good adult lives? And, are we moving fast enough from a deficit model to a more positive model of taking account of children and young people's assets and aspirations. We have spent too much time focussing on targeted and specialist services within the Local Offer. We need to invert the triangle of services; the crucial part of the offer is universal services, that is where we need to do better.

When I use the term services, I am using the term outside of traditional services provided by local and central government. If a family cannot access their local community because the

local shop does not welcome their child, or the local museum does not welcome child, that is a problem. I believe we need to be much more focused on what it is that the 'world', the community is doing around us and when we use the term 'services', we need to consider what is happening in everyday life. Joint commissioning is about trying to glue and stitch some of that together. If some of the services that our young people need are not just in education but also health and care, are these services doing what they need to do? It is also worth considering that whilst we have a 0-25 system, a young person on their 26th birthday has not changed to some new being overnight. If we do not have those parts of the system working well together in the statutory period, how will they ever work together when that young person leaves the statutory period of the process? That is where joint commissioning becomes critical in terms of Preparing for Adulthood. Some aspects of the process feel quite unwieldy e.g. Health and Well-Being boards and joint strategic needs assessments, but they crucial to improving and embedding joint commissioning. We may not all have direct access to such Boards nor contribute directly to strategic needs assessments, however, there is a need to be better at reminding those with such responsibilities not to forget special educational needs. Good joint commissioning is a 'big ticket' item for bringing Preparing for Adulthood to life.

In conclusion, though education is a large part of what we talk about in these policy sessions, this seminar's focus is about how we utilise everything that is going on in young people's lives to help them have an ordinary life. For any child or young person, we would want them to have good health and choice and control over how their health is managed if they have specific health issues; the opportunity to work, to be able to live as independently as they can; to have friends and be part of their community; to have some choice over where they work and how they live. This is not asking for anything special. We must ensure that throughout young people's entire educational journey, right from birth, that this is at the front of people's minds.

References:

DFE (2017) Lenehan review of experiences and outcomes in residential special schools and colleges. Accessed on 25.5.17 at:

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/special-educational-needs-and-disability-division/lenehan-review/>

DFE (2016) The Rochford Review: final report: Review of assessment for pupils working below the standard of national curriculum tests. STA/16/7703/e. Accessed 25.5.17 at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/561411/Rochford_Review_Report_v5_PFDA.pdf

Section 3:

Developing Inclusive Apprenticeships via the Paul Maynard Taskforce

Justin Cooke, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, Ambitious about Autism

Introduction

The Paul Maynard Taskforce was commissioned in May 2016, as joint departmental taskforce by then Minister for Disabled People Justin Tomlinson and Minister of State for Skills Nick Boles MP. It was established with crossover departmental agreement and buy-in from all three Departments who at the time had overlapping responsibility (see note 1) with a verbal agreement that the task force could make recommendations which affected any of the sponsoring Departments.

From the start Paul Maynard MP and the taskforce members looked at the remit as being very much focused on making the existing apprenticeships program fit for people with learning disabilities and impairments and to this end it was given just three tasks:

1. reach an understanding of the issues and barriers that affect people with learning disabilities in accessing and completing an apprenticeship.
2. identify solutions that could help overcome these barriers and raise participation levels
3. make recommendations to both Ministers on which options to pursue

Of the taskforce remit Nick Boles MP was quoted as saying:

“This taskforce will focus on how apprenticeships can be more accessible to people with learning disabilities so everyone can be part of the apprenticeships success story.”

The taskforce was set up, not so much to look for new ideas, but for ways in which existing programmes and mechanisms could be used or "flexed" to help designated groups benefit from apprenticeships and so help meet Government targets of 3 million apprenticeships and halving the disability employment gap.

The recommendations

Given this brief it is not surprising that timescales for the taskforce fitted this pattern of having just three meetings and a final report made with fourteen recommendations, all accepted by the departments by mid-July 2016 (Paul Maynard taskforce, 2016).

In accepting the taskforce's recommendations, the departments set out a planned implementation timetable with the recommendations being grouped to aid the process.

Access to Work

The first grouping had just one of the recommendations and was in effect the easiest one to deliver as it was wholly focused on a single existing programme, Access to Work. Evidence to the task force had identified Access to Work as a key leaver and one which was viewed by many as being under-used.

Indeed, many on the taskforce considered Access to Work as a natural fit to help overcome barriers to developing inclusive apprenticeships due to its core goal of helping persons with disability into and stay within work.

Recommendation 4:

DWP updates the Access to Work eligibility letter to 'sell' the support available better (e.g. up to £41,400) and emphasise that this support is available in situations which require more than reasonable adjustments. Furthermore, case

studies of the transformative effect Access to Work can have for individuals should be included with the letter.

The departments anticipated that recommendation four would be completed quickly which was the case with an updated letter, as called for, being published in December 2016. With the Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills, Robert Halfon MP, going on to say that:

“In response to the Maynard recommendations, DWP has updated Access to Work’s downloadable pre-employment eligibility letter to reflect the support available to apprentices” and “Access to Work is able to consider assessments of additional learner needs that set out any in-work support required beyond reasonable adjustments.”

Promoting awareness and encourage employers

The second grouping of recommendations focused on promoting awareness within the broader context of apprenticeships and learning disabilities. It aimed to make employers understood the validity of them for both apprenticeships and persons with learning disabilities. But not all were outward focused with some internal recommendations to prepare the departments for a wider role out of “flexed” or inclusive apprenticeships.

Recommendations 1, 5, 10, 11 and 14:

- 1** **BIS and DWP formulate, implement and subsequently evaluate a joint communications strategy to promote awareness, particularly of the funding and financial support available, and the positive business benefits of taking on someone with learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD), using case studies and role models to inform employers and providers. This should include using existing channels such as the current ‘Get In Go Far’ apprenticeship communications campaign and the future mental health apprenticeship champions network. In addition, all guidance, including the website and NIACE toolkit, should be reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose and reflect the needs of LDD apprentices, their employers and training providers.**
- 5** **DWP uses the Disability Confident campaign – both in terms of pledges and events – to encourage employers to drive demand and increase supply. This could include signposting to good practice (including non-traditional recruitment practices mentioned below) and providing information on ‘navigating the system’ from a disability perspective.**
- 10** **BIS and DWP lead by example with their own apprenticeship programmes, and encourage wider Civil Service and public sector commitment to apprenticeships for those with LDD. Other ways of influencing the wider labour market that departments should consider include using public sector contracts to set expectations with regard to apprenticeships.**
- 11** **BIS and DWP investigate and raise awareness of the range of non-traditional recruitment practices including working interviews, job carving roles, electronic portfolios and other digital options to help LDD apprenticeship applicants. This should include investigating good practice from the Movement to Work programme and organisations such as Mencap, as well as the situation with others that have no previous experience of employing and supporting individuals with LDD.**
- 14** **BIS and DWP to consider the use of technology to support user-led strategies for apprentices with LDD, for example the Brain in Hand app.**

In grouping these recommendations the departments highlighted the taskforce's own emphasis and the importance of recommendation one for a joint communications strategy and so have been prioritising this recommendation alongside the other related recommendations within the group such as prompting non-traditional recruitment via Disability Confident.

Data collection, target setting and funding streams

The third set of recommendations looked at the internal working of the departments themselves and what was required for setting up an inclusive apprenticeships scheme. Much of this was around data collection, funding streams and target setting which all needed to be aligned before the apprenticeship scheme could accommodate more people with learning disabilities and hidden impairments such as autism.

Recommendations 6, 7, 8 and 12 will be carried out during autumn 2016.”

- 6 BIS ensure Individualised Learner Records are as robust as possible in data capture by auditing providers, improving data collection particularly on severe and mild/moderate LDD to ensure that the right questions are asked, and also that there are ample responses.**
- 7 BIS and DWP consider ‘what good looks like’ for relevant hidden impairment groups and age brackets, in order to set appropriate targets for increasing the number of apprentices with LDD. Given that existing analysis indicates that the overall LDD apprenticeship participation is at a similar level to the 16 to 24 year old employed population, the moderate learning difficulty group is likely to be a key group to look at, though there may be others such as those with autistic spectrum conditions. Any targets should take account of any existing departmental or cross-governmental targets in this area (e.g. the existing priority on recruiting more 19 to 24 year old apprentices with LDD as prescribed in 2013 Regulations).**
- 8 BIS and DWP consider joining up funding streams, for example Additional Learning Support and Access to Work, so that potential hurdles are reduced and that the application is seamless from an apprentice/employer/provider perspective.**
- 12 BIS revisits recommendations from the Little report (2012) and provide a response to his update with a view to making further progress in delivering against them.**

Work on these recommendations started unfortunately at the wrong time with the amalgamation of the old Department of Business Innovation & Skills into the Department for Education causing delays and staffing issues. For many the amalgamation is viewed as a positive move with the Department for Education being able to focus with a 0-25 attitude and approach to learning and skills, but the delays in creating new teams means the original proposed timescale, which was to have these recommendations complete by the autumn of 2016, could not be met.

It is also perhaps with these recommendations that the real first sticking point has come with many viewing differing internal pressures with the departments and apprenticeships programme working at odds with each other. Some internal concern had been raised that flexed apprenticeships could affect the overall brand of the scheme with it somehow devaluing apprenticeships. A further delay will also occur as early work on these recommendations

identified a requirement to change the framework agreement which can only be achieved via modification to statutory instruments.

Adjustments to English and maths requirements

Among the evidence collected by the taskforce was a clear indication that one of the main blocks to persons with learning disabilities, autism and other neurological disorders being accepted on apprenticeships was the requirements of the apprenticeships programme to have a certain standard of English and maths by the end of the apprenticeship.

As such this was seen as one of the main areas requiring alteration if an inclusive apprenticeships programme is to be developed with a real indication that if this could be achieved apprenticeships would open up to the targeted demographic.

If taken singly it is perhaps this group of recommendations which will make the most difference and open up, and indeed in a large number of cases reopen, apprenticeships to persons with learning disabilities who, on the whole, will not require the required level of English and maths to undertake the apprenticeship and job which could follow.

- 2 BIS adjusts the minimum standard of English and maths required (to entry level 3) for a defined group of apprentices with learning difficulties and disabilities who are able to meet the occupational standard but will struggle to achieve English and maths qualifications at the level normally required. The taskforce recommends that further work is done to define this group and its potential volume, and quantify the impact any changes will have on people with LDD. This should be implemented in a way that ensures we have a robust system to avoid potential misuse of this adjustment.**
- 3 BIS investigates potential changes to the method of assessments for English and maths for targeted groups as some people with LDD may be able to demonstrate the minimum requirements in the workplace, but be unable to complete a formal assessment.**
- 13 In the light of evidence that providers sometimes refuse to take on people with LDD, DWP and BIS to undertake further work to ensure that the system of reasonable adjustments and the availability of support, for example through Access to Work, are understood and consistently applied by providers, particularly in relation to those learners who could meet the normal English and maths criteria with this help.**

The departmental response to the task force findings identified these recommendations as a priority and originally planned for work to be undertaken over the summer in 2016. This was of course delayed by the departmental amalgamation but also due to some hesitancy towards two key sections of the recommendations, namely that further work was to be undertaken to define the targeted group and its potential volume, and also the potential changes to the method of assessments for English and maths for targeted groups. Work on the target group has been slow with many feeling that the outcome could go beyond implementation of accepted recommendation and instead reshape the intentions of the task force.

However, the current indication is that this work is now complete. From September 2017 apprentices with an Education, Health and Care Plans who have difficulties meeting the English and maths requirements at Level 1 and level 2, as a result of their learning disability, will be able to apply for an adjustment to the lower this to Entry Level 3. This is of course is a

very targeted group and may not cover all the taskforces intended persons and the department intend to look at extending this flexibility to a wider group of people with learning difficulties and disabilities later.

The Pilot of flexed apprenticeships

The remaining recommendation was for a pilot to be developed alongside the new funding model and implemented from April 2017.

- 9 A defined pilot should be conducted exploring how the funding model introduced with the apprenticeship levy might be flexed to incentivise employers to recruit apprentices with learning disabilities. The pilot should bring together these recommendations and test how they work as the levy is introduced, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of the funding incentives available in the levy funding model, to see if the right support can be provided efficiently to a range of apprentices with learning disabilities. The pilot should include private, public and voluntary sector employers and look to test out how such an exemption might work within the levy. In turn, this would generate good practice case studies, which could be used to demonstrate how apprenticeships can work for people with a learning disability, showcase the support they need and then be used to inspire other young people.**

Given the other delays it is of course not surprising that the pilot, which is still subject to Ministerial approval, will itself be delayed until at least September 2017. It is nearly coming up to a year since the taskforce was commissioned but its work, and above all its recommendations, are still very much valid and will, when fully implemented, make a real difference to the lives of people with learning disabilities, autism and other neurological disorders via a route in to employment.

Note:

1. Chris Heaton-Harris MP, Steve Double MP, Cheryl Gillan MP, Beth Grossman Head of Policy, Scope, Rob Holland Public Affairs and Parliamentary lead, Mencap, Kevin Oakhill Director of Service Development, Ambitious about Autism, Grace Breen Senior Policy Advisor, Confederation of British Industry, Paul Warner Director of Policy and Strategy, Association of Employment and Learning Providers, Peter Little OBE Author of 'Creating an Inclusive Apprenticeship Offer', Jeremy Crook OBE Chair of the Apprenticeships Equality and Diversity Advisory Group, Justin Russell Director, Disability and Employment Support Directorate, DWP, Jenny Oldroyd Deputy Director for Programme and Strategy, Apprenticeships Directorate, BIS/DfE.

References:

Pells, R. (2016) Task force created to help disabled people become apprentices. The Independent. Accessed on 25.5.17 at

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/task-force-created-to-help-disabled-people-become-apprentices-a7022841.html>

DBIS, DFE & DWP (2016) Apprenticeships: improving access for people with learning disabilities. Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, Education, and Work and Pensions Accessed on 25.5.17 at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-improving-access-for-people-with-learning-disabilities>

Paul Maynard taskforce (2016) Recommendations. Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, Education, and Work and Pensions. Accessed on 25.5.17 at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-improving-access-for-people-with-learning-disabilities/paul-maynard-taskforce-recommendations>.

DBIS & DWP (2016) Access to Work eligibility letter for employees and employers Department for Work & Pensions. Department for Work and Pensions. Accessed on 25.5.17 at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-work-eligibility-letter-for-employees-and-employers>

DWP (2017) Letter from Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills to task force members. Department for Work and Pensions.

Section 4:

The culture change journey to valuing people.

Ellen Atkinson - Associate NDTI and Preparing for Adulthood Team

Introduction

The 'Valuing People - A New Strategy for Learning Disability in the 21st Century' (2001) report was based on the premise that people with learning disabilities are people first. It set out national objectives for services for people with learning disabilities and promoted the establishment of local partnerships as a model for making change happen. However, although the vision and expectation in the report delivered some progress, several subsequent initiatives have been required to sustain the momentum to deliver the changes needed.

'Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People' (2005) and the refresh of 'Valuing People' through 'Valuing People Now, from progress to transformation' (DH December 2007) stated that if 'Valuing People' were to be delivered, we needed to know what progress we had made and encourage managers to do things better. It emphasised that people with learning disabilities are entitled to the same aspirations and life chances as other people, including the opportunity to work.

It was clear, from many UK (and international) examples, that people with learning disabilities can secure and retain jobs in roles that employers value, with the right support, this applies to people with severe impairments as much as those with milder disabilities. (Case study examples are at: www.valuingpeoplenow.dh.gov.uk). Linked to 'Valuing People Now' (2009) and research to understand what was needed make progress, "Valuing Employment Now" (2009) (VEN) was developed to improve outcomes for people with learning difficulties and to more specifically address their employment prospects through a dedicated strategy and action plan. The journey has involved addressing cultural barriers and influencing government policy across a broad spectrum of society.

The work undertaken by the Valuing Employment Now (VEN) project to improve employment prospects and outcomes for people with learning disabilities in England, has addressed the barrier to employment and explains how understanding these barriers, often cultural, has helped to unlock solutions and new approaches.

Government policy has now adopted the position that people with very complex needs should not be excluded from work, although clearly the challenges here are even greater. This was the focus for the Sustainable Hub of Innovative Employment for People with Complex Needs (Tizard Learning Disability Review, 2011). Few people with learning disabilities are in employment:

- In 2009-10 just 6.4% of adults in England aged 18-64 known to Local Authority Adult Social Services were in paid employment at the time of their assessment or latest review.
- Of adults known to social services but not in receipt of services, 12.9% were in paid employment, compared to 2.2% for those in residential care.
- The Labour Force Survey put the overall employment rate for disabled people at 46%, but the average employment rate for people with "severe or specific learning difficulties" (a

broader category than those receiving social services) over the past 8 years is far lower at 15%.

- The cross-Government Valuing People employment team investigated what it would take to change this and attempted to tackle the barriers, in particular through:

The 'Getting A Life' demonstration sites (driving whole-system change so that young people with severe learning disabilities get a paid job and full life when they leave education).

Project Search internships (a partnership of a host employer, supported employment provider and education provider who offer a year of supported work experience and training delivered on the employer site).

The 'Jobs First' project (where people with learning disabilities in seven Local Authorities refocused their lives on employment goals and used their personal social care budget, along with other appropriate funding such as education monies or Access to Work, to buy the support they needed to get and keep paid work).

The 'Aspirations for Life' campaign (working with families and children from much earlier to raise aspirations for employment in later life).

VEN supported campaigns and training to increase work aspirations and expectations among people with learning disabilities, parents and family carers, education and post-16 education staff, health and social care staff, midwives, paediatricians and Early Years staff as well as among NHS employers.

Barriers that are not quite what they seem

VEN found that the barriers are not always quite what people assume.

- The benefits system is often cited as the single biggest barrier, with pervasive beliefs that people with learning disabilities will be worse off in work due to loss of benefits. While it is true that fear of this is a major deterrent, the reality should not be. The Government has made clear that most people with learning disabilities will receive significantly more money in work for 16 or more hours per week than on out-of-work benefits. In cases where the amount by which individuals would be financially better off in work is small, the answer is to increase the number of hours worked, rather than advise people against employment.
- We are often told employer prejudice is a factor; but VPN have found that, once employers are introduced to how people with learning disabilities could benefit their business (often a gap) and connected to high quality employment support (also a gap), many will respond positively to recruiting this group. This is in line with international evidence, particularly in the USA. Project Search employers have found quantifiable business benefits (such as recruitment savings) from including people with learning disabilities in their workforce.
- Professionals often say that families' low aspirations for their own relatives with learning disabilities are an obstacle to them accessing work. As most people with learning disabilities live with their families, it is true that family encouragement is crucial to people's work ambitions. However, in-depth work with families in the Getting A Life sites found that parents tend to have high aspirations for their children. Rather, their low expectations are of what the 'system' will enable.

During Valuing Employment Now, young people said they wanted to:

- be independent and they wanted places to meet other young people and to have relationships with boys and girls and meet other people

- have work experience and understand what the world of work was about
- live where they wanted to with people they chose to work with. And also having a job means people can go on holiday and do other things.

The Valuing Employment now DVD that came out in 2010, shows a young woman who talks about having a job and loving her job. However, when asked 'what do you do with your money?', she said she puts it in the bank - at this point she had never been supported to think about how to budget or what exciting things she might do with her money. We need to influence and move forward thinking on what can be achieved for individuals with the right support.

The role of Society

We have the society that we created, but what sort of society do we have today in relation to people with learning disabilities? We are trying to get to a place where young people are part of society but we still care for vulnerable people, or we think we do, we make the people we are supporting more disabled by not empowering them. We are overprotective and paternalistic. Without positive intervention, people are isolated and put in low paid and low status community roles that actually are not valued.

There have been many different models over the last 100 years of where people with disabilities have been placed. In the beginning of the last century, people were locked up in institutions and seen as a threat, segregated from society. We moved from this to a model of 'care', symbolised by group homes and day centres, to the current model which is one of citizenship characterised by valuing people, direct payments and disability equality - Valuing People promoted something really groundbreaking, at the same time as the Nothing about us Without us report (2001).

There have been a plethora of reports, recommendations and reviews over recent years that have made some difference, but to achieve lasting impact to people with learning disabilities we still have many areas to address. This is clearly demonstrated by the Mencap report, 'Death by Indifference' (2007), which highlighted how people with disabilities are not given the same care and support as their non-disabled peers and starkly reported on the death of eight individuals who died, not because of ill health or injury but, because of lack of understanding of how their individual needs could be met. The Winterbourne View inquiry 2011 reported similar findings and conclusions as the Ely Hospital inquiry in 1969, which was the first major inquiry into people being institutionally abused. The Winterbourne view inquiry was over 40 years later.

What is the problem we are trying to solve?

There are low aspirations and expectations about what people with learning disabilities can achieve. We are trying to move people forward by raising aspirations and expectations about what young people can achieve. We know the focus on the label of SEND is a real problem; that is the deficit model. By the age of 26 disabled people are almost four times as likely to be unemployed than non-disabled peers. We know people can really achieve a lot if they are given the right support, the right advice and the right guidance.

Many people still work to the medical model of disability. That has to be something we address and change. We still hear on a weekly or daily basis about many people in really difficult circumstances, not being enabled by professionals who support them due to lack of understanding about what people with learning disabilities can achieve with the right support.

Positive policy context but difficult waters to navigate

A positive policy context is an important first step, but there are difficult issues to address.

The wider austerity measures in the UK dominate the economy and place an increasing pressure on budgets. This is leading to services and allocations cuts, staff being made redundant and experienced staff moving on. This means that we are losing knowledge and expertise that can take years to replace. It means people get bigger jobs and bigger portfolios of work and they put their heads down and carry on working to try to meet their priorities which leaves little room for creativity and creative thinking.

It could be said that previously we have not had policies in place to allow for positive change. The Lamb review (2009) made recommendations that influenced current policy on SEND and the reforms. The policy context we have currently started with Support and Aspiration 2011: A new approach to SEN and disability, led to the Children and Families Act, (2014) and the new Code of practice, has involved reform for how children and young people with Special Educational Needs and disability are supported to achieve good life outcomes. The move away from Statements to Education, Health and Care Plans, that include real life outcomes, brings different agencies together and focuses them on and making sure they are working to support people to achieve them. This legislation is about moving things forward and improving lives; the Code of Practice which set the legislative tone has over 600 "musts" and over 1,000 "shoulds", The legislation enforces the changes but it should not be about what the law says we 'must' do, but what we know we 'should' do that makes change happen.

To address low aspirations the question to ask must then be "what do we want?". If we are working in an education system or any sort of service for people with learning disabilities, are we doing things that we would want for ourselves? If the answer is yes, let's carry on and do more of that. If it is no, then why not? That's the question we really need to be asking. If it is not what we would want for ourselves, siblings or family or children, then why are we doing it, why are we commissioning it? This needs to be a key aspect when commissioning provision.

We want true participation for young people, places for young people to meet other young people and for them to have relationships that aren't paid for. Young people say they want to work but not enough people move into work. The statistics show that less than 6% of people with learning disabilities are in work of over 16 hours a week and the national unemployment rate is 4.7% (Source: Office for National Statistics, April 2016).

Young people want to be in control of where they live and to have an element of control of their lives. The opportunity of the reforms is really to consider the people we work with and what they want and to do, to put the person at the centre. If people are working and living in their local communities, they are visible to society, not locked behind doors at special educational facilities or residential units miles away from their homes, with no continuity of support or medical care. We have to start much earlier, talking to parents and carers about what is possible, knowing what a good and meaningful life really looks like for a young person and really thinking creatively about what we commission to support positive outcomes.

Are the SEND reforms making a difference?

The Children and Families Act and the publication of the new Code of practice in 2014, the move away from Statements to the introduction of Education Health and Care Plans that include real life outcomes has encouraged a more perso-centred focus when planning support for children and young people with SEND. Chapter 8 in the Code of Practice, 'Preparing for Adulthood from the earliest years', for the first time mentions outcomes beyond education, to include employment, independent living, community inclusion and good health.

The Preparing for Adulthood programme (2011) (PfA), in partnership with the Council for Disabled Children has worked with local authorities and education providers, delivering training and the development of resources to implement the reforms. This includes working with

parents, carers, children and young people to ensure the services developed support children and young people to have the best life outcomes.

All four strands of Preparing for Adulthood are important and no single strand can exist in isolation as they all relate to aspects of the young person's life.

However, employment is at the top of the graphic, which highlights the importance of thinking about work. If someone gets a job, then they are often more independent, maybe travelling independently to get to work, they are more likely to be part of their community and be visible and we know that when people are employed they have better health. If we start our thinking with employment for all people, we can support them to achieve a lot more.

Conclusion

The Preparing for Adulthood programme (see Figure below) promotes the need to start from much earlier. It is something that is everyone's business, it is not just education, health and care. It is all of us, **where we live, where we work who we interact with. The intentions behind the special**

Figure: Preparing for Adulthood programme

education needs reforms is to implement a new approach which seeks to join up help across education, health and care, from birth to 25. Support will be offered at the earliest possible point, with children and young people with SEND and their parents or carers fully involved in decisions about their support and what they want to achieve. This will help lead to better outcomes and more efficient ways of working.

There are challenges in implementing the reforms. Working across different systems in



education health and care. The commissioning cycles are very different in education to health and care. But if we work out cross agency agreements we can make it work. There are local area efficiencies that can be created by doing that.

Many Local Authorities are struggling, schools and colleges are challenged by funding changes. When young people leave education there should be a plan in place to support them to move on to the next stage of their lives. We need to speak to young people to find out what

they want and know what is working for them and what is not working for them. We need to begin with the person, not the service they are accessing. We also need to consider if the service or support a person has is right for them. We need to recognise and acknowledge a person's strengths and help them develop resilience within their community. People need to have choice and control of their lives to ensure they can live the life that they want.

To prepare young people for adulthood from the earliest years, we need to have discussions with parents of children who are very young and start to think about it as they move through the different stages in their life. The cultural shift that is needed is that society believes it is important that most people can live independently and that most people can work, irrespective of their complexity of need. It is essential for a young person to move forward and be supported to have the best life possible, but we are not there yet. This is the journey from service land to community and work and to people having meaningful lives.

The 'Valuing People' report still resonates today, 16 years on. The intention of the SEND reforms is to move things forward but making change happen and delivering the Government's ambitious plans for people with learning disabilities will take time, as real change always does. Improving the lives of people with learning disabilities is a complex process which requires a fundamental shift in attitude on the part of a range of public services and the wider local community. This will not be easy. It needs real leadership at both national and local levels, supported by a long-term implementation programme with dedicated resources and on-going action to monitor delivery.

We all have a part to play in this and a role in influencing developments and changing the narrative about people with learning disabilities and to change the culture, to actually making valuing people a reality and not just a report.

References

- Cabinet Office (2001) Improving Life Chances of disabled people (2001) Accessed on 25.5.17 on:
webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.../disability.pdf
- CQC (2011) Winterbourne View inquiry Report. Accessed on 25.5.17 on:
<http://www.cqc.org.uk/news/releases/cqc-report-winterbourne-view-confirms-its-owners-failed-protect-people-abuse>
- DFE (2009) The Lamb inquiry Report. Accessed on 25.5.17 on:
[HTUwww.dcsf.gov.uk/lambinquiry/UTH](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/lambinquiry/UTH)
- DFE (2011) Support and Aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability. Accessed on 25.5.17 on:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-and-aspiration-a-new-approach-to-special-educational-needs-and-disability-consultation>
- DFE (2014) The Childrens and Families Act (part 3). Accessed on 25.5.17 on:
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted
- DFE (2014) SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years. Accessed on 25.5.17 on:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- DOH (2001). Valuing People - A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century - Accessed on 25.5.17 on:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/valuing-people-a-new-strategy-for-learning-disability-for-the-21st-century>.
- DOH (2009) Valuing People Now: a new three year strategy for learning disabilities. Accessed on 25.5.17 on:
http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130107105354/http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_093375.pdf
- DOH (2009) Valuing Employment Now: Real jobs for real people Accessed on 25.5.17 on:
http://www.realroles.org/rrdocs/pathway_into_employment_overview.pdf
- Mencap (2007) 'Death by indifference'. Accessed on 25.5.17 on:

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/2016-06/DBIreport.pdf>

NHS Information Centre, (2009-10) Social Care and Mental Health indicators from the National Indicator Set, Provisional further analysis England.

Preparing for Adulthood Programme (2011) Our work. Accessed on 25.5.17 on:

<http://preparingforadulthood.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work>

Tizard Learning Disability Review (2011) Accessed on 25.5.17 on:

<https://www.kent.ac.uk/tizard/research/TizardLearningDisabilityReview.html>

Section 5:

Special School Development of Supported Internships

Gill Waceba – Headteacher Woodfield School

The aim of this paper is to look at the development of Supported Internships at Woodfield School. It will start by outlining the context of the school then looking at the culture on which the development of the Supported Internship work is based. Some case studies will be given before concluding with what has been learned so far and the way forward.

Context of the school:

Woodfield is a community special school for pupils with severe learning difficulties and complex needs based in Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. Many pupils have additional needs including autistic spectrum disorder, epilepsy, physical and sensory impairments; and many need regular medical intervention. There are currently 85 pupils on roll aged 3 -19. All pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan or are in the process of having their Statement of Special Educational Needs transferred to an Education, Health and Care Plan.

The school was purpose built in 1977 and has had many extensions and additional facilities added including a recently built new pool and café complex. There are currently 8 classes across the school – 4 classes in the primary department, 3 classes in the middle/secondary department and 1 Post 16 class. Pupils are taught in classes based on chronological age, with an average class size of 11 pupils; pupils may stay in one class for 2 – 3 years. All the classes cover a diverse range of needs and one secondary class is a class for pupils with physical disabilities. Lessons are differentiated accordingly in order to meet the needs of each individual pupil. A minimum of 4 staff support each class group, and there are a few pupils who have 1:1 or 2:1 support for all or part of the week.

There has always been a large proportion of pupils diagnosed with ASD in the school, but the number has increased slightly over the past couple of years. There are a growing number of pupils with mobility issues, with a significant intake of pupils with mobility issues at the start of the 2016/17 academic year. Sensory issues (VI/HI) are also becoming more prevalent within the school.

Culture – changing and developing:

Historically at Woodfield the focus for preparing students for their post school provision was primarily on preparing them for college placements as this was seen as the only real possible option for most students. We therefore generally only offered college experiences and talked about college placements with the students, their families and with the staff as a group. In the past, when students reached Post 16, they were given short bursts of work experience which generally lasted up to a week, but there was very little sense of building up to this in the earlier years. Each of these experiences was, as such, an isolated activity with limited preparation. Work was not generally seen as an option for our students. In addition to this the curriculum was in need of review as it was not fully meeting the needs of the pupil population and there was limited preparation for adulthood.

During the summer term 2014 we started work on changing and developing our culture with a clear focus on destination led learning and preparation for adulthood. We started by looking at our assessments to ensure we were assessing what we valued; and developing the curriculum to ensure it was appropriate to meet the needs of our pupil population. This work involved all stakeholders, including students, families and staff, in order to ensure everyone was on board with the direction we were heading in. In order for our culture to change all stakeholders needed to be involved in our journey. Whenever a change in culture happens it must, by

definition, change the thinkingand we thought long and hard about what we were aiming to achieve with our students and how best to go about successfully achieving our aims. We asked questions about our curriculum and assessment such as 'Why are we doing this?', 'What's the value in this?' and 'What does this mean to our pupils? We wanted to ensure our vision in school, of our students leaving as confident, independent young people who could successfully take their place in society and were prepared for adulthood, was actually enabled.

It was evident around school that staff were seeing progress with pupils, particularly in respect of their independence and confidence, yet we had no way of measuring this progress, other than anecdotally. We therefore started our journey by doing some work on developing our own assessment system for measuring the 'soft skills' which we valued the most. This resulted in the birth of ISEC – an assessment system focusing on Independence, Self- Esteem and Confidence. Alongside this we started working on developing our *destination led curriculum* with a strong focus on development of functional and purposeful learning, with the pupil very clearly at the centre.

After much discussion and exploration we agreed on the areas of learning for our new curriculum. It became a 'Me and My...' curriculum with areas of learning such as My World, My Communication and My Physical Development. We reviewed subject leadership across the school and rather than continuing with the traditional individual subject leadership, we set up Curriculum Learning Teams (CLT's) with each teacher being allocated to two CLT's. Work related learning became a strong focus throughout all our curriculum development work as did the preparation for adulthood outcomes.

The curriculum at Woodfield is now very relevant to the pupil population and we assess and teach what we value. We teach everything within context. This is especially true as the pupils get older. There are some 'pure' English and maths lessons that take place lower down the school, but these are often phased out with a more practical approach so that there is a purpose to the activities. Our ISEC package is also now embedded across the school and being used as a more appropriate and relevant way to assess the progress pupils are making.

Developing Supported Internships and Work Related Learning:

In Nov 2014 we were offered the opportunity to trial running Supported Internships in an SLD context. Supported Internships are structured study programmes based primarily at an employer. 'They are intended to enable young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to achieve sustainable, paid employment by equipping them with the skills they need for work through learning in the workplace.' (DfE, 2014)

This was a very exciting opportunity, at an ideal time; and one which has had a phenomenal impact on the way we have developed our work in school. In preparation for this work we identified 3 members of support staff to be trained in Systematic Instruction and to then go on to do the Certificate in Supported Employment to become job coaches. We had very limited time to get ready to run Supported Internships, but in January 2015 we were able to start two year 14 students on a Supported Internship – one at the local Holiday Inn and one at a local hairdresser. As stated in DfE advice on supported internships:

'The overwhelming majority of young people with SEN are capable of sustainable paid employment with the right preparation and support. All professionals working with them should share that presumption'. (DFE, 2014)

In September 2015 a Work Related Learning Team was set up. We really valued the work being done by the three Teaching Assistants to run Supported Internships and the training the three staff had undertaken. It changed their thinking and way of working and we wanted to cascade this across the school. Because we placed importance on this work and could see the

positive impact it was making, we enabled the three staff to work four days a week as the Work Related Learning team. The aim for the work of the team was and still is to enable our young people to be as independent as possible, with the ultimate aim of being able to cope successfully in the world beyond school. How this is achieved is by using 'Training in Systematic Instruction' (TSI). This breaks down each step of a task into smaller manageable parts enabling the development of confidence and independence in a range of tasks. Work related learning is not only about work skills, but is extended to encompass learning everyday life skills and social skills. In learning these work related learning skills the hope is that this then leads on to help the students be able to make informed choices for themselves which gives the individual a sense of self-worth/self-esteem. Ideally work related learning takes place all the time. Everyone can benefit as we all need experience to make informed decisions which is so important in preparation for life as an adult. This team is proving pivotal in the development and implementation of the curriculum as well as the change of culture at Woodfield and we know that this investment and way of working is paying dividends.

At Woodfield, staff are encouraged to think about the next step in a pupil's career. So, the Early Years class think about the needs for primary, primary for secondary and so on. However, we are also mindful of the longer term possibilities too. The last thing we want to do is to limit options, which is something that we may have inadvertently done in the past. We start early, with preparation for adulthood beginning as soon as a child starts at the school. When talking to parents we talk about *destination led learning* and find out their long term goals and aspirations for their child. This all ties in really well with Education, Health and Care planning. College and work related learning is part of that discussion including the potential for participating in a Supported Internship in the final year (Year 14) at school; we are proud of our Supported Internship work and what the students have achieved.

The Work Related Learning team have a particular focus on working with all our parents to ensure they are clear about the potential options for their child, which now includes Supported Internships. Previously we would just have focussed on college – we still have a college focus, with students participating in link courses, taster sessions and transition programmes. For our younger pupils in preparation for the future they participate in integration links with local schools. Where it is viable, we now work hard in looking for opportunities for pupils to work. Aspirations, which start from day one, are about the future, about possibilities and encouraging all involved to be ambitious. Realism is important but so is allowing hope.

We have developed many opportunities in school for pupils to experience work related learning and work experience. The training in Systematic Instruction which the Work Related Learning team participated in has resulted in a different way of working with our pupils to ensure success in a range of job related activities. We now have pupils doing such things as:

- School jobs (for site supervisor) on a weekly basis
- Running a Pop Up Café half termly
- Setting up dining room - daily
- Recycling - weekly
- Cooking staff lunches as part of Young Enterprise
- Cooking staff snacks as part of café skills lessons
- Preparing food for functions held by the school.
- And now Running our new Coffee Shop

The Work Related Learning team works throughout the school. Initially, they focussed on older pupils for the first year, but by experience of supporting year 14 students on their Supported Internships lessons were learnt particularly about how important it was to start early to enable pupils to develop the skills they need for life beyond school.

We use vocational profiling with some of our students; this is a living document. A lot of thought must be put in to make it accessible and to get an accurate picture as possible about the individual. It should change as the pupil gets older. For pupils at Woodfield a lot of the information gleaned is through experience as that pupil undertakes a task, but it is also worth noting that, aside from the pupil themselves, other sources of information are as important too e.g. families and current and past staff. This enables us to ensure we try and get the right work placement for our Supported Internships; it has to be based on what the students want to do.

So, in developing Supported Internships at Woodfield the key to our success was in identifying the right staff to lead on the work, enabling them to access the training, setting up the WRL team and importantly changing the culture in school. Giving time for developments to take place and valuing the importance of Supported Internships for our students was paramount.

Finding employers to take on our students on a Supported Internship can sometimes be quite difficult, but this is again where it is important to give the staff the time to go out into the community and make those all-important contacts with local employers. Our students come from a wide catchment area so it was important to acknowledge that for a Supported Internship to work most successfully it needed to take place in the students' local area which was not always necessarily near the school!

Case Studies:

When students do a Supported Internship the job coach learns the job that the student is expected to do. They then support the student by teaching them the job in the work place; support is initially high as the coach teaches the job but fades out so that the student is independent at the end. So far, we have completed four Supported Internships; and also give as an example a work experience placement where we learned a great deal about what we needed to put in place to ensure any placement in the work place was successful.

Student A worked at the local Holiday Inn for 3 days a week during his last two terms at school. He very quickly learnt the job and enjoyed his work. He became far more confident and independent and his self-esteem noticeably improved. His communication skills noticeably improved as well. He also learnt to get to his work place from home during the second term of his placement. His job coach supported him to learn the route by bus from his home to work and back again; things like this involved staff having to work slightly different hours to normal school hours.

At the end of his Supported Internship Student A was offered a job for 25 hours per week. It was an extremely proud moment for us all in school; our first student to be offered employment as an exit route from an SLD school. We tried to persuade the student to take the job, but he went to college.

Student B worked at a local hairdresser for 3 days a week during her last 2 terms at school. She was very clear about the type of work she wanted to do and was keen to get into the hair and beauty industry. We had enabled Student B to complete a Level 1 qualification in hair and beauty when she was in year 13. This was not something we offered within school but we linked her with one of our local secondary schools and she attended the secondary school one day a week, supported by one of our teaching assistants. During her Supported Internship, as well as learning the job and developing travel skills, she learnt a lot about social skills and how to 'handle a boss you don't like'. At the end of the Supported Internship Student B said she didn't want a job at this hairdresser. She was not offered a job, so she went to college.

These two cases show how we learned about the importance of getting families on board as well as the students. Both students probably needed another year before they could see work as an option. We did not have enough time with them on the Supported Internship and we

certainly did not have enough time to work with the families. We had college ingrained as the only option post school; that was all we used to talk about and promote. Work was never seen as a realistic option and therefore wasn't promoted. Both these students were more than able to hold down a job and they were both very successful on their Supported Internships.

Student C worked in a Café at the local Railway Station. This placement was one which we needed to be in the student's home area which was not local to school. The job coach worked with Student C through Vocational Profiling and numerous discussions to find the right placement for her. Initially she wanted to work with children and she had completed some work experience in previous years based on child care placements. However it became ever more difficult to source a child care placement for a Supported Internship with the potential of a job offer at the end. Student C's other interest was cooking and she decided she would like to try café work. The job coach took her to visit various cafés near her home and made contact with several employers and eventually a placement was secured. Unfortunately this took time to sort out and so she did not start her Supported Internship until later in the year. Student C thoroughly enjoyed working at the café. She learnt many new skills and was able to work in the café independently, but unfortunately there was no job offer at the end, so she went to college.

Student D did his Supported Internship at the Post Office. This placement was again one which we needed to be in the student's home area which was not local to school. The placement was eventually secured through a family contact. Student D was a young man who presented as very sociable and able, but he lacked confidence and became very anxious if under pressure or in unfamiliar situations. Work, for Student D, was quite difficult. However he coped very well on his Supported Internship and was very successful, but there was no job offer at the end and he went to college.

Student E did an extended work placement rather than a Supported Internship as he is a younger student. He worked for one day a week at the local Holiday Inn for a year. However, this is where we learned about the importance of the impact of social skills outside of the task. For example, Student E could complete simple tasks well and was quite sociable, but he encountered issues when having lunch in the staff canteen area which impacted on his relationships with the hotel staff. It was also clear that we started a bit too soon with him and that sufficient preparation work had not been done. He did complete his time there, but with extra support. The goal is to repeat this placement again after more input has been put in at school to support his area of difficulty and he will definitely be a candidate for a Supported Internship when he is in his last year at school next year. However, this case study highlights the importance of giving our pupils early input and the opportunity to develop the basic skills at an early age so that they can be successful in the work place in later years.

Conclusions

It is so important to start early from day one and set the scene for the years ahead. Ensuring the curriculum is relevant for the pupil population and links to aims and outcomes in Education Health and Care Plan's is key. The pupil should be at the centre and the curriculum should be destination led and functional. Preparation for adulthood outcomes should be incorporated within the curriculum.

Everyone needs to be on board. In as much as everyone should be thinking years ahead, so the preparation with the family starts early too. We failed our students in this aspect, particularly in the first round of Supported Internships. We did not have long enough to work with the families and we did not have a bank of employers ready to work with our students. This is gradually improving; but to change culture and mind-set takes time.

Being involved in developing Supported Internships within an SLD context has been an amazing opportunity and has had a phenomenal impact across the whole school and in

changing our culture and ensuring our provision is right. The key for us, and what we have concluded as a school, is that if we get it right with our pupils when they are young, by the time they move through secondary and get to the point where they can participate in a Supported Internship, they will have all the foundations and skills they need to enable them to be confident and independent young people who can take their place successfully in society beyond school. What is important is the focus on preparation for adulthood from the earliest years. This is our aim and this is what we will achieve.

References:

DfE (2014) Supported Internship Advice Revised Reference: DFE-00430-2014; December 2014. Accessed on 25.5.17 at www.gov.uk/government/publications

Section 6:

Group discussion

Following the presentation that participants discussed in small groups the issues that arose from in terms of the suggested questions to focus their discussions.

Group discussion questions:

1. How far is 'staying on' in education a desirable goal for young adults with SEND? In what ways could this be more productive?
2. How can we create more supported internships and inclusive apprenticeship opportunities?
3. How can we better describe 'employment' for all young people with special educational needs/disabilities?
4. What other pathways and outcomes are valuable? What cultural change is needed to develop these pathways and how can it be supported?
5. What does successful transition from education/training look like?

What follows are summaries as reported by one member of each group

Group 1:

This group strayed from the suggested questions but had a very productive discussion nevertheless. For this group education may not be the most desirable outcome, but it is the known one. Someone commented, as Gill Waceba illuminated in her presentation, that the tendency to talk only about college. If there is a wish to change this, there is a need to describe other options. In addition, there is a need to be honest too about what we are describing. There is a need to be aware of what was called a shameful statistic, that less than 6% of people with learning disabilities known to social services are in employment.

It was also mentioned that it would not be surprising if parents could not believe that there is an employment opportunity for their child. This calls for much thought and awareness of the need for a culture change. This is where the whole community needs to be able to present opportunities. Someone expressed this in terms of a community needing to be in the classroom; the whole community needs to be responsive to the employment opportunities. This also involves how parents are worked with and supported to consider different options. There is also a need to hear student voices as well as help other people to hear their voice. This was a point that Gill Waceba made about the school's initial efforts; they did not prepare their parents well enough to really help them think through some of these issues and options.

This group also had a discussion about how people place certain values on employment. It was proposed that if we are describing work and occupation in a different way, it is important to be clear about different options, such as, young people can volunteer, young people can be in flexible work and part-time work, but that it is important to stick to the paid employment one. This is because there are many young people who do get not paid for.

Group 2:

For this group whether staying on in education was a desirable goal, they believed that it is about personalization. Staying on is a possibility and something that is open for young people and their families to choose. But, there needs to be a menu of options and they need a wide choice of what they would like to do. This group believed that there are too many children who are "churning" in FE. They are there, but not progressing, not really doing anything. They are holding on and spending another few years. This group believed that the outcomes' focus really needs to remain throughout education.

For this group there was also some concern about the number of young people that are now staying on in their schools until 25, whether schools have developed a 19-25 provision or not. When this happens these young people are with the same other young people in the same school and often the same teachers until 25. There might be quality provision for these young people, but there was still some concern about this length of stay.

On the matter of creating more internships and apprenticeship, more work needs to be done with employers to ensure that apprenticeships have the possibility of a job. The risk is that the young person is just spending time doing something. It was also recognized that there are other skills that people learn, e.g. soft skills, which can be useful. This group also believed that there is a need to move away from the increasingly high academic standards required for jobs; jobs that do not actually need this academic standards to be done well. It was also felt that it is important to not end up believing that support and internships are the answer for everybody. They are part of a wide offer of options, with support from Access to Work and the Skills Funding Agency.

For deaf students the BSL qualification or BSL qualifications at the right level should be accepted in place of English and again that depends on more flexibility in the system. There is also the issue of what is employment. It is not just standard mainstream work. It might be a shopping list of opportunities where a person is happy and productively part of society. This might involve a portfolio that could include doing supported apprenticeship one or two days a week while doing something else as well. This is about doing more than one thing.

On culture change this group concluded that there are still a lot of old fashioned views to be found in schools and governing bodies. This was partly a generation issue with older people seen to be holding onto old views and models. The group went on to identify particular issues in some mainstream schools for pupils with disability such as ADHD and autism. In these schools their teachers do not have the skills to support them and they can end up being excluded either internally or permanently excluded. This impacts on their chances for further education or employment.

Groups 3 and 4

This group summarized the themes that arose in their discussions not already covered by previous groups. One theme was that it was more difficult to have focused work on employment options in a mainstream school than a special school. This was seen as another challenge around inclusion. This group talked about the benefits of the focused teams and that their availability in special schools might be another reason why parents might prefer special to mainstream schools. They assumed that parental confidence, aspiration and experiences are based on their views about support for young people.

The group also talked about the focused teams, the movers and shakers, the people with local knowledge who went out and engaged people, whether that is at school level, the setting level or locality community level. This was linked to responsibility and leadership, responsibility for increasing employment and life outcomes of young people with SEND whether that was in their school, in their locality, in their community, their community of schools. It was also noted that what counts as a community of schools is now changed. Where in the past it was a pyramid of

nursery to primary to secondary, there are now academy chains, multi-academy Trusts, that cut across localities and communities. This affects leadership for developing employment options. One person expressed shock to hear about the Government seeing that young people with learning difficulties are devaluing the apprenticeship scheme. The problems stem, it was suggested, from this kind of leadership. However, it was noted that all Ofsted inspections of local areas are commenting on supported internships, but they are a blunt statement. With local authorities struggling financially, this group wondered where was the leadership to come from.

This group also talked about regionally based local groups and businesses, in the West Midlands for instance, coming together to move and shape provision. This was linked to the social responsibility of employers. They also talked about whether there was potential with the creative incentives (up to £41,000 per individual) and whether this was encouraging action by local businesses.

Group 5:

One of the central themes that this group discussed was the concept of work for all, including people with complex learning needs. There was some disagreement in the group about this concept. This was about how to persuade the various agencies and institutions to come on board with this concept. There are clearly going to be some families who are quite resistant to the idea of their young people going to work. Whether you talk to them at 3, 13 or 23, they are still resistant about this, because there is a concern about protection and care for their children. Employers are also resistant to this idea, because of all sorts of difficulties about economic worth in a profitable operation. Therefore, there needs to be a lot of persuasion to progress this concept. Within the group there were also some disagreements about how you get that persuasion going; is it about legislation, financial incentives and/or advertising. They came up with a mixed economy idea with different avenues that are to be worked upon concurrently and by different organisations.

The group also moved into quite radical ground, that the whole of the curriculum needs to be moved towards a focus on work at the end of their school time. The group saw this in the context of criticisms of lifelong education that it does not necessarily lead to a job or work. It is not, as the arguments goes, about spending time doing something, like pottery, because doing a pottery class is better than sitting at home doing no pottery class. This is an issue that needs to be much more openly questioned in the media.

Group 6:

This group had a similar focus as the previous one on employers' incentivisation with similar mixed views about ways of addressing that. The group also talked about commissioning and agreed there needed to be stronger commissioning about what is wanted at a local authority area level. One person identified some interesting barriers that currently operate. Within local authorities there is a focus on avoiding tribunals, cost pressures and other financial risks in an area which has little new money coming in. This raises questions about managing expectations. It is not just about more money, but about those daily barriers for particular local authority people.

This group also talked about parents' expectations and the importance of making things more destination-led and starting early. But, it is also about more family-centered approaches to find out about parental concerns and issues because these perspectives are not always known without asking. Finally, the group looked at work like inclusion in mainstream, thinking about groups of young people with special educational needs who should really be making that progression from mainstream school into the field of employment. Differentiation and adjustments would happen at school and in work with that being a normal universal practice. It

was concluded that there is not much accountability on mainstream schools about destination and there is not much accountability on the receiving end for making that work either.

The group also talked through some of the issues at the other end of the continuum about young people with very complex profound multiple learning disabilities. Here the group was not as radical as expecting everybody to access paid employment. Instead the group was trying to think about what defines employment. The group also wanted to move beyond the position that direct payments was just a good thing. In their experience, direct payment has been used to fund personal assistants etc., when this source of funding could potentially be used in a more purposeful way.

Final comments from presenters:

Gill Waceba: the need was for a culture change about preparing for adulthood whatever that adulthood may be, paid employment or not. This starts from the earliest years.

Ellen Atkinson: work comes in a range of guises, with a need to raise awareness with employers that they are the solution. There needs to be more campaigning for disability. There are some national employers leading the way. This needs to be showcased more widely. The expectation needs to be sustained that it is work, if they are supported in the right way.

Yolande Burgess: if parents and their anxieties are part of the picture, then there has not been enough work with parents. There needs to be a move from talking to somebody to co-producing; that is the gap. Young people are also not listened to enough to find out what they would develop in terms of authentic pathways into having a life.

Justin Cooke: Many groups are talking about leadership to find a way of making this work. There are ideas from Government that could be good or bad, that could work or not. There are some schools doing great work, but what we do not have is local or sub-regional encouragement and co-ordination to pass on all those ideas and make it work. This is the bit of the jigsaw that is currently lacking.