

# SEND Reforms Regional Network

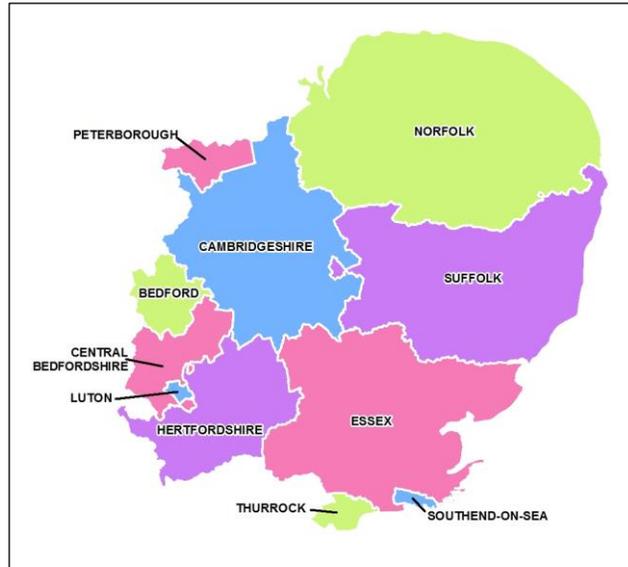
## East of England Peer Support Group

Bedford, Cambridgeshire, Central Bedfordshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Luton, Norfolk, Peterborough, Suffolk, Thurrock, Southend-on-Sea.

## WELCOME

Hello Everyone

The peer network landscape in the East of England is very exciting; over the last five weeks we have run 6 events, as requested by practitioners, parents and carers and the Developing Better outcomes Together (DBOT) partners group.



All of these events are really topical and will assist us in how we are working to refine how we deliver the requirements of the SEND reforms. This is not just about education, health and care plans, but the wider aspects and requirements. I've provided a quick link to materials we have published, so you can have a quick access to these as you need them in your day to day activities:

- Department for Education Transition Workshop
- Council for Disabled Children Materials
- East of England Quality Education, Health and Care Plans – Shared learning
- Preparing for Adulthood

All of the above materials can be viewed at

<https://www.rixwiki.org/gbr/home/east-of-england-send-peer-network/regional-workshops-1/>

For full details of events and workshops within the region, please visit the calendar section on the Wiki:

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## NEWS

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Next East of England events:

**9<sup>th</sup> November**

Key working event  
Delivering Better Outcomes Together

**26<sup>th</sup> November**

East Of England peer network conference  
'Achieving Our Ambitions'

**27<sup>th</sup> November**

Preparing For Adulthood event – Suffolk and Norfolk

**3<sup>rd</sup> December**

Health Care Workshop – Council for Disabled Children

**8<sup>th</sup> December**

Key working event  
Delivering Better Outcomes Together

**11<sup>th</sup> January**

Accountability Regional Workshop

**14<sup>th</sup> January**

Quality EHCP's workshop

**27<sup>th</sup> January**

Preparing for Adulthood event

**28<sup>th</sup> January**

Developing Parent Leadership

The very important question which we are all asking at the current time is “what impact are we making for children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities?” Not only has there been the first of two regional workshops delivered by Mary Rayner HMI, National Lead for Disability and Special Educational Needs, “The inspection of local area responsibilities for disabled children and young people and those who have special educational needs”, but “Accountability” has also been a key theme for two Accelerated Workshops held for Peer Network Leads delivered by Mott MacDonald. The most recent AWG coincided with Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission launch of a public consultation on proposals for inspecting local areas’ effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who are disabled and have special educational needs. This consultation is available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-area-send-consultation> and closes on 4 January 2016.

Use the link to access the materials in terms of Accountability:

- Presentation by Mary Rayner, <https://www.rixwiki.org/gbr/home/east-of-england-send-peer-network/regional-workshops-1/>
- Accountability Mott MacDonald slides (see messages in covering email)
- See forthcoming events

A second workshop will be delivered by Ofsted in the region between January and May 2016, before the planned commencement date of area inspections from 1 May 2016.

This newsletter includes:

- **An article about POET 3** (It’s great news that eight of the eleven authorities in the East of England are taking part in POET 3 – this will give us informative benchmarking information in spring 2016.
- **A wall of Local Offers from across the East of England**
- **Bedford Borough’s approach to delivering person centred transfer reviews** – this follows on from the presentations given at various East of England events over the last month.
- **SEND and Transition Workshop ADASS Workshop**
- **Tales from the East** – was a joined up presentation delivered at the National Network of Parent Carers Conference held in London on 8 October – this was a resounding success in terms of showcasing the East of England and delivering the SEND reforms to the full range of communities across the region and how we are supporting delivery.

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## POET

We are really excited that the East of England continues to play a key role in the development of In Control's Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool – the POET – for children and young people.

The eight East of England LAs taking part have committed to trying to ensure that at least 50 parents/carers, 50 practitioners and 25 children and young people complete questionnaires between 1<sup>st</sup> September and the first week in January 2016. Nationally, if all 75 areas involved in this test period achieve this target this will result in over 9000 people giving their views about the reforms one year after the implementation of the Children and Families Act. This will provide a hugely important and useful national benchmark. It will also give us regional as well as local data to compare against the national picture enabling local and regional benchmarking to help us review and action plan going forward.

Funded by the Department for Education, the current pilot of the POET provides a simple low cost, method of capturing user (parents/carers, children and young people) and practitioner experience of the new Education Health and Care planning process and its impact on outcomes. Understanding the user experience is of fundamental importance at both a national and local level and the POET is recognised by the [DFE's accountability framework](#) published in March this year. Ofsted too, recognise its importance; proposal 4 of their current [consultation on SEND inspection](#) is all about user experience and cites how they propose to look at local survey and consultation results

Cambridgeshire, Essex and Hertfordshire took part in the first two years of the pilot and have helped shape the way the tool looks today as well as having the views of their families and practitioners captured in local and [national reports](#). It's brilliant that we now have eight out of the eleven east of England LAs taking part in this final year of piloting.

Cambridgeshire managed to secure the highest number of returns nationally in the first two years of testing. We really want the East of England to lead the way again! Essex has taken an early lead nationally in this current round of testing but there is serious competition from other authorities and regions so please keep spreading the word about the importance of POET and please keep encouraging people to complete the questionnaire (we estimate that it only takes 10 minutes to complete the parent/carer and practitioner questionnaire).

Please contact Claire Lazarus at In Control ([clairelazarus@btinternet.com](mailto:clairelazarus@btinternet.com) 07880 787190) if you would like any further information.

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## A wall of Local Offers from across the East of England

The local offer is the key tool for families, young people and practitioners; naturally it has been a feature in all our workshops in the East of England this autumn – not only about the practical use of the Local offer, but also in terms of informing joint commissioning plans.

	<b><u>Bedford</u></b>	<b><u>Cambridgeshire</u></b>	
<b><u>Central Bedfordshire</u></b>	<b>East of England Local Offers</b>		<b><u>Essex</u></b>
	<b><u>Hertfordshire</u></b>	<b><u>Luton</u></b>	
<b><u>Norfolk</u></b>	<b><u>Peterborough</u></b>	<b><u>Southend-on-Sea</u></b>	
	<b><u>Suffolk</u></b>	<b><u>Thurrock</u></b>	

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## **New Guidance on Safeguarding, Managing Risk and Personal Budgets published.**

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/research-and-resources/safeguarding-managing-risk-personal-budgets>

The guide, published by the NSPCC and In Control, focuses on safeguarding issues that are specific to the use of personal budgets including direct payments. It draws on practice from across the country and sets out to provide key guidance relating to the challenge of maximising the potential of personal budgets while managing risk and minimising issues.

The guide has been written to headline the key issues that need to be addressed by the LSCB, service managers, individual workers, and more specifically by those charged with rolling out personal budgets as part of the SEND reforms. It has been developed with the support of professionals who work with personal budgets and with families who are in receipt of personal budgets. It focuses on children, young people and young adults up to age 25 who have special educational needs and disability (including sensory), highlighting some good practice examples from real-life situations, drawing out recommendations for promoting safeguarding and providing checklists for professionals, parents, children and young people to support them.

## **Bedford Borough's approach to delivering person centred transfer reviews**

Bedford Borough Council is a small unitary authority and in August 2014 we had a total of 695 Statements of Special Educational Needs plus about 40 or so LDAs. We decided very early on to use some of the resources from the SEND Grant to employ a dedicated specialist 'Conversion' team of officers to implement the transfer of existing Statements of SEN to Education, Health and Care plans over the three and a half year period from September 2014 to April 2018.



The five officers come from a variety of backgrounds including Connexions, FE College, a special school teacher and a mainstream school SENCo, plus a dedicated admin support person. The team are a cohesive unit who work very closely together and see the process through from beginning to end within timescales, whilst also being an important part of the wider SEND team.

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We have a detailed pupil specific plan for when 'conversions' will take place:

- In 2014-15 we successfully converted all pre-5 year olds, pupils due to transfer phase, Year 9 and 11 pupils, plus all students with LDAs – a total of 347
- In 2015-16 we will convert pupils due to transfer phase, Year 9 and Year 11 pupils – a total of 243
- In 2016-17 we will complete the process and convert the remaining 150 or so

The conversion team follow a very clear process:

- Family conversations to complete Section A are often held in the family home
- The focus is on the Family and Child/Young Person's view and sets their aspirations. Listening to families is central to this approach
- Multi-Agency Meetings are held in place of the Annual Review Meeting
- Increased level of participation of parents and young people at reviews
- Schools and College/Alternative Providers have been very heavily supported by the team so far

To ensure that knowledge of the new system is embedded in schools the wider SEND team follow the same process when delivering new EHC plans, although the Conversion team carry out all new family conversations for continuity.

Feedback so far has been very positive with parents, young people, schools and other professionals feeling more involved than with the previous 'statementing' process.

### **NEW SEND and Transition Forum held on 18 September 2015**

An ongoing sector led improvement group led by ADASS and ADCS is in place and met on 18 September 2015. From the participation at the event, a plan of action was developed – this will be explored further at the next meeting of this group being planned for February 2016.

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## Tales from the East

On 30<sup>th</sup> September Patrick Agius joined us at our Regional Meeting held by Eastern Region Parent Carer Forums (ERPCFs). Prior to the meeting all Forums contributed ideas of topics they wished to raise and this was sent to Patrick. During the Meeting, which was attended by representatives from 11 of the 13 ERPCFs, Patrick started by outlining a little about how the DfE works and his role. Reps from various Forums then raised their discussion points and questions.



An informative and constructive discussion was held on the following topics:

- Engagement with Health.
- Ofsted
- Accountability of LA's
- Funding
- Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and High Needs Block
- Differentiated Forum funding to reflect Forum size
- Financial accountability of Forums

One of our Regional Co-Chairs of the Meeting explained to Patrick how the Eastern Region operated and Patrick was able to stay for until lunch time as the Meeting continued its usual format with a news update from our NNPCF Rep, Karen Wooddissee, an update from our CaF Rep, Julie Singleton and a Rep from each Forum sharing their achievements since the previous Meeting. Forums also raised any challenges they were facing so that peer support could be received.

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## **National Parent Carer Participation Event: 8 October 2015**

The National Parent Carer Participation Event, hosted jointly by Contact a Family (CaF) and the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF), was held in the Camden Centre in London on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2015. It was exceptionally well attended; with over 200 delegate places filled and a long waiting list of disappointed parents who were unable to join us. The East of England Region had a 50 minute slot on the Agenda at this prestigious event, enticingly titled "One thousand and one nights: Tales from the East".

The presentation was given by four Parent Carers from across the Eastern Region, who were joined by Sarah Vize, our East of England Peer Lead from Hertfordshire County Council. Mrunal Sisodia, one of the Co-Chairs of the Eastern Region, introduced the slot and the presentation then featured two local PCF stories. Steph Rowley, from Central Beds PCF, spoke about the culture change in Central Beds such that the PCF now enjoys Co-Production with the Local Authority. The PCF and the Local Authority have made a video together to spread the message about the benefits of co-production with others. The video can be viewed on YouTube at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y29jWXkPv1g>

Lynn Hoppenbrouwers from Bedford Borough then spoke about Leading Change within Beds Borough. The PCF found that the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment did not mention SEND. Beds Borough Council, the Strategic Clinical Network and the Parent Carer Forum have worked together to produce a clear timetable of activities to make sure they meet their target aspiration for children and young people with SEND and their families by April 2018.

Mrunal Sisodia and Kulwinder Bola, the Co-Chairs of the Eastern Region, together with Sarah Vize explained how the Eastern Region has developed from its early days of providing peer to peer support between Forums to its role today - working very much like a Forum but on a Regional scale. The Eastern Region is now a representative group that co-produces with regional bodies, such as Strategic Clinical Networks, and at present has 27 members nominated to attend regional steering meetings and 14 Regional Reps. Sarah Vize spoke about the Regional Peer Network and how delivery across the Eastern Region is being achieved through co-production with parents. Finally, with a great injection of humour, Mrunal invited the delegates to play 'guess the leader' from their childhood photos as he reminded us that leaders are made not born and inspired us all to rise to the challenge of continuing to ensure parent participation evolves.

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## Employment Grant / Preparing for Adulthood

A number of local authorities in the East of England have already considered how the grant can be put to the best use to improve outcomes for young people.

The grant is being used in the East of England to:

- Provide training to ensure staff have the right skills to support young people into employment.
- To help employers understand what young people can offer in the workplace.
- To raise aspirations about what young people can achieve when they have the right support.

The Department for Education [press notice](#) announcing the additional £5m for local authorities on preparation for employment for young people with SEND stated;

Our aspiration is that local authorities will target funding in the following ways:

- We want to see a significant increase in the numbers of supported internships being offered by FE colleges and schools, ultimately leading to more young people with SEND entering paid employment and changing the shamefully low current employment rate of just 7%;
- We know that employer engagement can be a barrier for schools and colleges. We want local authorities to build strong relationships with employers of all sizes and strategically coordinate activity at a local and regional level on behalf of schools and colleges. This should lead to work experience for young people with SEND, including extended supported internship work placements; and
- It's not just about young people with EHC plans (or equivalent). We want to see all schools and colleges improving the preparation for employment activities they offer through personalised study programmes for all young people with SEND, which will result in more young people with SEND finding paid employment.

For more information, see the [grant determination letter](#), which sits alongside the grant determination letter announcing the nine local authority regional leads who will continue to coordinate regional activity on implementing the SEND reforms.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sen-and-disability-reform-s31-grant-determinations>

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