

Response ID ANON-1Q26-1J4X-H

Submitted to **Review of Post-18 Education and Funding: Call for Evidence**

Submitted on **2018-05-01 16:48:07**

Introduction

i What is your name?

Name:

Kay Moore

ii What is your email address?

Email:

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iii I am a:

Representative of my organisation (please complete iv and v below)

Answer:

National Network of Parent Carer Forums

iv (If applicable) My organisation is a:

Other (please state)

Other (please state):

Body representing parent carers of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

v (If applicable) What is your organisation's name?

Organisation:

National Network of Parent Carer Forums

vi Would you like us to keep your responses confidential?

No

Priorities

1 This review will look at how Government can ensure that the post-18 education system is joined up and supported by a funding system that works for students and taxpayers. The panel would like to understand your priorities. What, if any, are your principal concerns with the current post-18 education and funding system?

Please note that you are welcome to respond to as many, or as few, questions from this consultation as you wish.:

The NNPCF is a membership organisation and our mission states that "we aim to empower our members to ensure that their voice is heard at a local, regional and national level."

Working with our membership we have identified a number of key priorities. The priorities have been created using a range of feedback which includes:

- Surveys (including the SEND surveys)
- Feedback from our annual conferences
- The topics raised at regional meetings
- Themes and topics raised by our membership on social media
- Face to face conversations with our membership

Preparing for Adulthood from the earliest years is a key element of the SEND reforms Code of Practice. Chapter 8, gives clear guidance to all professionals working with children and young people with SEND but in particular to those who work with young people aged 14 and over. This includes children and adult social care practitioners as well as health practitioners.

High aspirations for all is a key to success and all work being done with children and young people should bear in mind the 4 themes of preparing for adulthood:

- Education and employment
- Health and Wellbeing
- Being part of the community, having friends and relationships
- Independent living and housing options

For our members when we are thinking about post-18 education and funding systems, parent carers are looking at education in the widest sense and how this leads not only to better education outcomes in terms of qualifications, but training/employment opportunities, functional skills and wider life outcomes which

promote wellbeing and independence so that our young people can participate in and contribute to their local communities.

These outcomes must be considered holistically, with the right focus on all elements to meet the personalised outcomes of each young person.

Families report a number of consistent issues across the country:

- Whilst there are often good, co-produced preparing for adulthood strategies and intentions, provision of services is lacking across the board.
- Joined up working across adult and children's services is limited in many areas
- There is frequently poor planning that is not started soon enough
- Information about preparing for adulthood is limited and confusing both nationally and locally.

Families describe their young people approaching school leaving age as "the cliff edge". Whilst at school, they understand the provision and support their young person is receiving and can align this with the outcomes for their young person. However, upon leaving school the offer from many, if not most local areas is less clear and very often families are unable to see how the services and provision available will serve to deliver the best possible outcomes for their young people. This is because information about services is often poor and too frequently, the services and support parents believe their young person needs are just not available.

As a result, many families seek to retain an education health and care plan (EHCP) after the age of 19 believing that educational provision is the only viable option for their young person. Frequently parents will understand that options other than education may better suit their young person but a lack of provision and information mean they do not believe this will actually be delivered.

Many families report that EHCPs are being withdrawn even in these circumstances. In determining whether to withdraw a plan a local authority must have regard to whether the educational or training outcomes specified in the plan have been achieved.

Often families are only offered part time education provision for their young person (often 3 days a week). Families report that frequently, no or inadequate provision is offered for the other days.

Many parent carer forums report that their local area have good quality, co-produced preparing for adulthood strategies with some stating that transition representatives, PFA officers and employment co-ordinators have been appointed. However, many report that services on the ground are often lacking. Areas commonly identified are low numbers of supported internships, apprenticeships and employment opportunities for young people with SEND.

Parents report that the pathways into employment for their young people are confusing and at times difficult to access. There are many different routes available such as:

- Study programmes
- Supported internships
- Traineeships
- Apprenticeships
- Access to work

However, families do not necessarily understand the differences between these programmes, who provides them, how long they last, where they are delivered. In addition, often information about what is available locally is very poor. In addition, families report that routes into employment are often very rigid and cannot accommodate the particular requirements of their young person.

Part 1: Choice and competition across a joined-up post-18 education and training sector

2 How do people make choices about what to study after 18? What information do they use and how do they choose one route over another: for instance, between academic, technical and vocational routes?

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Many parent carer forums (PCFs) report that services on the ground are often lacking. Areas commonly identified are low numbers of supported internships, apprenticeships and employment opportunities for young people with SEND restricting 'choice and control' by the young person on study routes after 18.

Families report that routes into further education/employment are often very rigid and cannot accommodate the particular requirements of their young person i.e. ability to pursue their aspirations/interests as set out in Section A of their EHC plan.

Some PCFs report their Local Area have introduced a blanket policy of no EHC plans for young people aged 16+ or 18/19+ due to pressures on the High Needs funding block.

3 How do people make choices later in life about what further study to undertake?

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Many young people with SEND are supported by their families who support their child to make informed choices about what further study to undertake, however, this choice is often limited by what is available locally and budget constraints.

Other areas have appointed Preparing for Adulthood Co-ordinators, transition representatives or officers.

The Local Offer should be a source of accessible information for young people with SEND to support the decisions that they will make about further study opportunities.

The NNPCF would like to see local authorities take into account the, quality and relevance of non-education services available to a young person's outcomes when assessing whether to cease an EHCP. If no appropriate non educational provision is available, the young person should continue in an educational setting with an EHCP.

4 In recent years we have seen continued growth in three-year degrees for 18 year-olds. Does the system offer a comprehensive range of high quality alternative routes for young people who wish to pursue a different path at this age? How can Government encourage provision across a wider range of high quality pathways to advanced academic, technical and vocational qualifications?

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5 The majority of universities charge the maximum possible fees for most of their courses and three-year courses remain the norm. How can Government create a more dynamic market in price and provision between universities and across the post-18 education landscape?

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6 What barriers do current and new education and training providers face in developing innovative or diversified provision?

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Funding constraints, especially pressure on the High Needs Funding budget.

The NNPCF would like to see an increased focus from local authorities, the DfE and regulators on the availability of information about local services and the identification of gaps through the local offer.

The NNPCF would like to see the Social Value Act used more extensively to provide employment opportunities for young people with SEND through local procurement processes.

The NNPCF welcomes the additional funding made available to Local Authorities to develop better Employment pathways. This funding needs to continue and be increased.

Families report that often very simple, everyday activities and considerations are a major barrier to employment. For example, these include factors such as the accessibility of local transport services or the timing of social care visits (for example to get ready in the morning). Small adjustments in the wider support package for young people with SEND can remove otherwise intractable barriers.

The NNPCF would like to see a more holistic approach to employment taken that considers more of the barriers that disabled people face in to get employment We would like to explore a holistic "Employment Support Plan" that outlines the support that will address these barriers in the same way that an EHCP addresses the support a young person requires to access education.

The government's "improving Lives" strategy makes reference to joined up support across three key settings – the welfare system, the workplace and the healthcare system. This needs to also include the social care system and communities more generally.

7 How can Government further encourage high-quality further education and higher education provision that is more flexible: for example, part-time, distance learning and commuter study options?

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Work in coproduction with local parent carer forums and young people.

8 To what extent do funding arrangements for higher education and further education and other post-18 education and training act as incentives or barriers to choice or provision: both at the individual and provider level? How does this impact on the choices made by prospective students and learners? What can Government do to improve incentives and reduce barriers?

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Part 2: A system that is accessible to all

9 What particular barriers (including financial barriers) do people from disadvantaged backgrounds face in progressing to and succeeding in post-18 education and training?

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Another barrier to further education/employment is the poor support offered to families about what impact it may have on their family's benefits. Families often express fears that paid employment for their young person will result in a fall in overall family income – often something that they cannot afford.

The NNPCF would like to see clear benefits guidance offered and signposting to specific benefits guidance as a part of pathways into employment.

10 How should students and learners from disadvantaged backgrounds best receive maintenance support, both from Government and from universities and colleges?

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Part 3: Delivering the skills the UK needs

11 What challenges do post-18 education and training providers face in understanding and responding to the skills needs of the economy: at national, regional and local levels? Which skills, in your view, are in shortest supply across the economy? And which, if any, are in oversupply?

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The NNPCF would like to see that young people with SEND have the same opportunities to access further education, training or employment as their peers. This group of young people should not be overlooked.

12 How far does the post-18 education system deliver the advanced technical skills the economy needs? How can Government ensure there is world-class provision of technical education across the country?

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Part 4: Value for money for graduates and taxpayers

13 How should students and graduates contribute to the cost of their studies, while maintaining the link that those who benefit from post-18 education contribute to its costs? What represents the right balance between students, graduates, employers and the taxpayer?

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Students with SEND should only contribute to any post-18 education costs through a financial assessment and on the basis that they progress into paid employment.

14 What are the most effective ways for the Government and institutions to communicate with students and graduates on the nature and terms of student support?

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Via the Local Offer

15 What are the best examples of educational and training providers ensuring efficiency in the method of course provision while maintaining quality? And what are the challenges in doing this?

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16 What are the ways that Government can increase the value for money of post-18 education?

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Ensuring education and employment outcomes for young people with SEND are monitored and providers are accountable for delivering improved outcomes for this cohort.

Attachments

Please upload any further attachments that you wish to be considered with your response.

File Upload:

No file was uploaded