

Executive Summary

Report Findings:

- Between 2016 and 2018 the Whole School SEND Consortium has created a suite of resources containing six free-to-download frameworks with which to review SEND provision in the following contexts:
 - Across a school using the SEND Review Guide;
 - Within the classroom using the SEND Reflection Framework;
 - Deployment of TAs using the Teaching Assistant Deployment Review Guide;
 - Beyond the school setting using the Preparing for Adulthood from the Earliest Years Review;
 - Governance using the SEND Governance Tool;
 - Across multiple schools using the MAT SEND Framework.
- The launch of the first of this suite of tools, the SEND Review, in September 2016 had its roots in the foundations of the WSS community of practice that emerged from a network of professionals and parents, committed to improving SEND provision in England.
 - WSS currently has a newsletter list of 5,800 recipients, the majority of which accessed WSS through downloading a resource;
 - WSS training events have been held across England;
 - Over 800 individuals have been trained to use the SEND Review Guide across England.
- WSS have developed bespoke CPD training programmes:
 - SEND Advocates - encouraging the under heard voices of SEND to develop skills to advocate on SEND issues in their locality;
 - MAT SEND Leadership Programme – for newly appointed Directors of Inclusion/SEND in a MAT.
- In 2017 and 2018 WSS developed the free resources and training offer further to provide targeted strategic-level interventions working largely though not exclusively with Opportunity Areas, Local Authorities and Multi-Academy Trusts.
- WSS has made a positive contribution to reducing the knowledge deficit in SEND issues within the school workforce in England, as WSS resources have been downloaded by over 8000 unique users, covering approximately one-fifth of schools in England
- Mainstream and Special schools are increasingly sharing good practice and learning from each other, with over 300 examples of good practice being uploaded to the SEND Gateway
- SEND is increasingly becoming a high priority for OAs, LAs and MATs, evidenced by increased engagement with WSS resources and training, as well as the majority of OA delivery plans placing SEND as a high priority area of development
- WSS is well-placed to scale-up contract delivery to reach more schools in more regions but needs to continue understanding the nuances of stakeholders within the community of practice to ensure continued delivery of appropriate interventions.

Key Learning:

- SEND Review Guide though widely in use across the system is relatively new and it may be too early to assess the impact of the review process on pupil outcomes. As the work develops over time, this area will come into sharper focus as action points from the review take shape.
- It will be important to consider how WSS builds on the momentum developed, in order to maintain a high level of average downloads across the suite of materials, if there are fewer materials being launched in future. Finding vehicles to draw attention to the review documentation, such as speaking at other organisations' event or writing materials for publication, may help to keep the review in the public eye and mobilise the wider community of practice.
- The *reporting* stage of the review process proved most problematic amongst respondents, a stronger encouragement for reviewers to upload anonymised examples to the SEND Gateway is a necessary next step. This will provide reviewers with access to a selection of indicative examples, to mitigate reporting issues in future SEND Reviews.
- Despite regular reminders and messaging from the consortium that the review process is about the process of 'reflection, not inspection', the misinterpretation of the review as an inspection process remains a barrier to many schools participating in the review process.
- Condensing the length of a resource without compromising on the quality is a complex process. The balance of usability and comprehensiveness are evident in thought processes of all WSS resources.
- Schools have responded well to TA Review process, as it encourages staff to contribute to the review process and offers SLT data that they might otherwise not be available to them
- There would be value in conducting further implementation testing and impact evaluation following a more sustained roll out of the resources.
- Prioritising sharing practice for practitioners is difficult to achieve
- The Gateway provides an excellent opportunity to facilitate the sharing and provision of SEND focused resources and information across the sector as well as being a means of school to school support. To ensure that this is as effective as possible the Gateway should become the hub, from which links to relevant information and organisations can be found
- Baseline stakeholder engagement in 2016 suggested training only has a limited impact on priorities and attitudes towards SEND. More work needs to be undertaken to test whether the training provided has had an impact on priorities and attitudes in relation to SEND provision.
- The opportunity for reviewers to learn from peers who had a mutual review experience but no prior personal or professional relationship, was a value in itself and creates a significant learning opportunity.
- Programme leads support the recommendation that all schools and providers must nominate a governor with responsibility for SEND and inclusion. Work so far recognises the challenge to practitioners in accessing the levers to wider system change without adequate representation.

Policy Recommendations:

- In discussions with NQTs it has become increasingly apparent that the degree of variability regarding SEND input within Initial Teacher Education is too great. Steps need to be taken to enhance the quality and quantity of SEND ITT input in order to ensure that NQTs are better equipped to address classroom complexity
- Steps need to be taken to strengthen the role of Regional Schools Commissioners in relation to their ability to challenge under performance relating to the education of children with SEND in the academies sector.
- There is a need to re-evaluate the purpose of the Local Offer and the extent to which they are effective vehicles for the dissemination of information. Currently the level of dissatisfaction with the Local Offers is too high and the degree of variability in quality and ease of use is too great.
- An evaluation needs to take place of the impact of the imbalance in accountability that exists between pupils with SEND and those in receipt of the Pupil Premium. The requirements of schools made by Ofsted regarding reporting on and evaluating the use of Pupil Premium funding compared to requirements associated with SEND funding is a good example of this.
- There would be value in establishing a formal programme for those with multi-site responsibility for SEND in order to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for the strategic leadership of SEND within multi-school structures
- There would be value in investigating how much time SENCOs spend on the administration of SEND in comparison to the improvement of classroom practice. Consideration should be given to creating an evidence base relating to how SENCOs can maximise their impact on pupil outcomes
- Consideration should be given to how much time a SENCO needs to be effective in the role, given the high degree of variability in time allocation across schools and the lack of specification in the Children and Families Act
- A requirement should be made for all Multi-Academy Trusts to have a named SEND trustee
- There would be value in analysing the extent to which funding opportunities available to defined local areas, specific programmes of delivery or to secure specific school designations are supporting the development of SEND provision in an equitable manner
- Consideration should be given to evaluating the impact of geographically or socio-economically determined investment in education on children with SEND within those areas.
- For some schools, professional development opportunities are difficult to access due to cost, even when free at the point of access. There may be value in looking at how to support the cost of supply cover, transport and accommodation where necessary and where a clear need can be identified