



THE NATIONAL SEND FORUM
MINUTES 16th May 2018, 10.30am

Present: David Bateson OBE (DB) *Chair*, Mark Dale-Emberton (MDE) *FLSE*, Kiran Hingorani (KH) *SWALSS*, Chris Rolling (CR) *FLSE*, Michelle Haywood (MH) *WMRSEDF*, (CIK) *NGA*, Lucy Hayes (LH) *IPSEA*, Mark Blois (MB) *BrowneJacobson*, Richard Boyle (RB) *engage*, Jackie Mullan (JM) *FLSE*, Lydia Vye (LV) *NAHT*, Rona Tutt (RT) *NAHT*, Penny Barratt (PB) *SSV*, David Canning (DC) *BATOD/Natsip*, Carol Kelsey (CaK) *NNPCF*, Hugh Steele (HS) *FLSE*

Guests: Amit Kulkarni (AK) *RCSLT*, Maggie Roger (MR) *The Laurel Trust*, Dame Pat Collarbone (DPC) *The Laurel Trust*

Minutes: Natalie Bambridge (NB)

1. Welcome and Introductions

DB welcomed everyone and introduced new representatives.

2. Changes in representation, guests and links

CR attended with the view to replace HS at *FLSE* following his retirement in August 2018.

AK is attending the meeting with considerations of *RCSLT* joining *NSENDF* and to discuss Item 9.

MR and DPC would be joining later in the meeting for item 14.

3. Apologies

Apologies were received from *NASEN*, *ASCL*, *SEN.SE*, *Shaw Trust*, *NAS*, *NASS*, *NSN* and *Firmament Education*.

4. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

No amendments to be made.

Matters arising:

- Lorraine Mulrone *NHS* would be attending the next meeting 4th July 2018.
- Professor Ben Laker (PBL) would be attending the next meeting 4th July 2018. A donation from PBL to be discussed under item 12.
- Nick Carey (NC) *Shaw Trust* unable to attend the meeting to discuss The IT Challenge.

No further business declared for item 20.

The minutes were agreed. Thanks were given to NB.

KH joined the meeting

5. **DfE and Policy update**

This is a standing item, Andre Imich (AI) DfE attends alternate meetings. DB opened the item to the forum for any views or comments.

MDE stated he found the NAHT assessment of the School Fund Reform useful and asked if RT would be happy to circulate to all. RT agreed to forward to NB for circulation with the minutes.

ACTION: RT/NB

DB informed the meeting in relation to the HNF paper that an investigation had begun into a Chester Trust following the loss of 19 teacher posts. MPs for the area have been called upon to take this further. This is an example of needing collaboration for change.

6. **Select Committee's SEND Review (RT)**

NAHT have sent a questionnaire to members before forming a response to the Select Committee's SEND review. There are various strands of assessment for children with SEND such as funding, roles of health and social care and the 19-25 provision. The deadline to respond is 14th June 2018. RT suggested submitting a response from NSENDF.

DB questioned whether organisations were responding individually; a number of members confirmed they were. It was suggested organisations send their responses to DB asap in order for NSENDF to make a collective response. This was agreed and RT would support DB in formulating this.

ACTION: ALL

CIK joined the meeting.

7. **Labour's Early Years, Education and Skills: Towards a National Service (RT)**

The Labour Party are using this report to form future policy. The key principle is straight forward. RT recently met Richard Riesen who has been asked to form a view on inclusion for the Labour Party. A discussion took place regarding inclusion with the following points raised:

- The definition of inclusion is unclear – this needs to be highlighted.
- NSENDF could formulate a definition of inclusion.
- NSENDF may also be well placed to discuss the issue of social mobility.
- There is a focus on the world of work, but a significant percentage of young adults with SEND will be unable to work.
- The impact of inclusion in mainstream, in particular funding and capacity.
- Parents often have a different view of inclusion to professionals which can be counterproductive.

The deadline for response is 24th June 2018. DB agreed to draft a response and circulate to members.

ACTION: DB

8. **Whole School SEND bid and Governance Review**

AB was not present for this item.

MH confirmed the bid is no longer embargoed. Positions have been advertised and a partnership will be formed with University College of London. WMSEND will receive some funding for classroom practice research.

DB agreed that the WSEND Governance Review would be circulated with the minutes.

ACTION: DB/NB

A report on WSENDS progress so far is available and would be circulated with the minutes.

ACTION: DB/NB

9. **R and D at the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (AK)**

DB welcomed AK, stating that RCSLT may be interested in joining NSENDF.

AK addressed the group. RCSLT represents SLTs across the UK with over 17,000 members. In terms of SEND, RCSLT try to influence and provide leadership and guidance regarding papers and key topics. RCSLT also helps practising therapists resolve issues and keep up to date.

In terms of research and development, RCSLT are focusing on two areas:

1. Support research capacity in professionals by ensuring SLTs have research skills and influencing funding bodies. Research is a priority, looking at gaps and identifying how to address them.
2. How best to support SLTs working at ground level with evidence-based practice.

RCSLT currently have 3 key projects:

- *Bercow: 10 Years On* report – review and address the key issues.
- Review of the child services strategy and offer guidance.
- A joint event with NSENDF regarding Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) to help galvanise support for children with DLD. DLD replaces SLI (Speech and Language Impairment) as a term. This needs to be a system wide approach for maximum impact. RCSLT are hosting a roundtable event in Autumn 2018 to develop an action plan for this. RCSLT would appreciate the views of NSENDF and suggestions of key stakeholders RCSLT should approach for this.

DB asked members for their thoughts on a joint event with RCSLT. There was unanimous agreement on holding a joint event. DB said NSENDF would try to represent a broad constituency, including Shaw Trust who would be a major player for providing a positive outcome post school. A proposed date for the event is the week commencing 17th September 2018, though a NSENDF meeting is to be held the same week. AK to take this back to RCSLT and return to DB whether a possible clash would cause a problem.

AK explained there is a 3-tier approach to S&L therapy:

1. Universal level – contributing at teacher training level.
2. Targeted level – help educate school staff and parents, for example through workshops.
3. Intervention level – evidence shows direct impact from SLTs has the best outcome, though this is held back by funding issues.

Queries were raised by members and AK responded:

- How will RCSLT engage commissioners? AK confirmed a number of networks currently exist.
- Could RCSLT develop relationships with other therapeutic services? AK would take this back to RCSLT as an agenda from NSENDF for further reflection.
- How would the joint event be funded? The event would be held at RCSLT offices with room for 35 guests and catering would be funded by RCSLT. The event would not impact NSENDF financially.
- An opportunity in S&L training for mainstream teachers could contribute to a reduction in exclusions.
- Parents are let down by LAs offering SLT but due to funding the package is diluted and often delivered by TAs. AK said SLTs are being given the message not to deliver a second-rate service. If a first-rate service cannot be delivered, SLTs are being encouraged to advise

commissioners of a risk to the child. RCSLT are aware some commissioners deliver assessments instead of a service or provide block packages that are not a good service.

- There seems to be a postcode lottery regarding funding for therapy services. AK agreed, this was a key theme raised in the *Bercow: 10 Years On* report which RCSLT intends to address.
- In terms of long term impact, are RCSLT doing research supporting adults in the world of work? AK clarified that RCSLT support rather than conduct research. There is a policy focus on adults with S&L needs, with evidence this can affect job opportunities. Language delay does continue into adulthood but provisions do drop off at this point.
- With regards to membership, is there a picture of how this is made up, e.g. commissioned direct from provider, private SLTs etc? AK said a recent survey showed a shift from predominately NHS led positions to a changing landscape of more independent therapists. This does raise significant issues: within the NHS SLTs have a historical understanding and continuous training and support whereas independent SLTs commissioned by schools may not be aware of the structure. RCSLT are looking to develop guidance around schools commissioning SLTs directly.
- S&L needs often co-exist with other learning needs. AK said there is an increased awareness of this which has a positive effect of putting pressure on services to provide more and put targeted strategies in place for SLT and educational teams. Research shows that these strategies work where educational professionals support and prioritise S&L provisions.
- Will there be a boost in the number of SLTs? AK said a bursary had been received in the past which led to more SLTs being trained, however, extra places were not funded for. There are other methods of recruitment such as recruiting SLTs from abroad and an apprenticeship programme.

DB thanked AK.

11. The IT Challenge (NC)

NC was not present for this item.

12. Discussion item: Effective use of the research donation from Professor Ben Laker

DB updated the group that PBL has an interest in SEND and evidence-based research and, as such, has kindly donated £20,000 to NSEND. This donation was transferred to the FLSE account where it has been ringfenced for NSEND.

MH notified the group she had received an email from PBL suggesting the money may have been donated for the use of WMSEND. DB emailed PBL directly who replied promptly to confirm the donation was for NSEND as a whole.

DB opened the group for possible ideas for the best use of the donation. Various suggestions were raised and discussed:

- Centre of Expertise as worked on by RT, CD and DB.
- Definition of inclusion.
- Approach small, considered audiences to get requests for part-funded projects.
- 19-25 transitions.
- Inclusion of SEND into adulthood.
- Website pooling established research for easy access.
- Consideration of how to deliver.
- Freedom of information requests to build up national picture of postcode lottery.

- Build a national picture of CCGs and health and wellbeing.
- Raise issue of investing in SEND.
- Find good practice and share with commissioners and politicians.
- Invest in emerging ideas tracked by others.
- Need to consider how surveyed info translates into practice.
- Need for focus to be in the interest of outcomes for pupils and families.
- Creating a workable GDPR document for schools.

AK suggested the group should reflect on what is the aim of NSEND and consider various issues:

- A need to be realistic about achieving a successful outcome within budget
- Applying to external bodies who look variably on bids where funds are already in place.
- Think about research related activities.
- Funding researcher development.
- Working with other organisations to get agenda seen and make it work in the long term.

AK highlighted the group had varied interests leading to many potential ideas of focus. Other funding bodies would use a bidding process to consider ideas and determine outcome.

It was agreed that members would submit any ideas to DB asap and a smaller working group would come together to consider all ideas with the aim of having 2 or 3 ideas ready for the next NSEND meeting. Any members interested in joining the smaller working group to email DB.

ACTION: ALL/DB

DB thanked AK for his input and advice.

PB left the meeting

13. Discussion item: The Forum, its inception, membership, role and future funding

DB addressed the group, describing NSEND as a voice for organisations of differing viewpoints with the possibility of influencing policy. When NSEND was set up FLSE agreed to fund the forum 85% with smaller contributions from members. FLSE has been reflecting on its budget and, at the last FLSE National Executive meeting, it was agreed there is a need to increase contributions from Forum members, with FLSE still able to underwrite NSEND 30%. Running costs cover catering, professional fees and expenses. The venue is kindly donated by BrowneJacobson for which DB thanked MB. Currently FLSE covers a shortfall of c.£6,000 per annum.

MDE reassured the group that FLSE respect NSEND is made up of organisations of different sizes and budgets and are not looking to exclude any member. He requested representatives take this information back to their organisations for discussion. In the meantime, FLSE would produce and circulate some figures of costs prior to and for discussion at the next meeting, 4th July 2018.

ACTION: MDE

AGENDA ITEM FOR NEXT MEETING

14. Research grants and collaborative opportunities through the Laurel Trust (MR & DPC)

MR and DPC joined the meeting for the duration of this item.

MR thanked DB for the invite and informed the forum on the background of The Laurel Trust, set up to support action-led research and innovation in areas and schools of severe deprivation. This year, trustees have chosen to support children with SEND. MR explained to the group the application process and criteria. The deadline for applications is 25th May 2018, though MR urged members not to let the tight turn-around be a deterrent. The outcome of applications is due to be announced in July 2018 with a view for projects to start in September 2018.

MR answered questions, confirming there is no opportunity for extension, however applications are run annually meaning, although the trustees change the focus for funding each year, the basis is always educational so SEND will always have a relevance.

DB thanked MR and DPC.

DB declared for the sake of any perceived conflict of interest that he had previously been a trustee of The Laurel Trust but is no longer a trustee.

MR, PDC and AK left the meeting.

15. Information item: TTS Special Needs Resources

DB informed the group that Irina Bartlett (IB) of *TTS Special Needs Resources* had been in touch with a view to work with NSEND.

MH said WMSEND had been working with this organisation. They were good at providing resources and products and charge a fee for their contribution. RT said the organisation was well known and had picked up awards for SEND resources.

DB will contact IB.

ACTION: DB

16. Update from members: successes, issues and events

BATOD/NatSIP (DC)

The BATOD annual conference was held on 17th March 2018.

CPD is underway, developing resources on the website with links to the NatSIP website.

The new BATOD website has been established. It has a lot of resources and has been well received. BATOD are focusing on various issues including the difficulty in getting a GCSE in British Sign Language and access to additional funding in higher education.

BATOD have a new logo – this has been passed to Lorraine Petersen (LP).

BrowneJacobson (MB)

There has been a focus on disability discrimination claims, in particular relating to the Equality Act and children with SEND who manifest physical violence. A review is welcomed and MB will be able to update the forum by September 2018.

Engage (RB)

The Engage annual conference is due to be held jointly with SEBDA, 4th-6th July 2018.

A committee has recently returned from New Zealand having focused on social and emotional wellbeing. Barry Carpenter will be visiting UK schools.

A conference was held at Muntham House which was successful.

Engage are funding a research piece on social mobility. Schools will be working with local employers to identify what social mobility means in terms of social cohesion.

Engage are to hold a conference in the Midlands on 9th November 2018.

Engage are to hold a SEND Olympics at Alexander Stadium in Birmingham 15th-16th June 2018. The event is open to all who are relatively able-bodied and looks to be a positive event. Details are available on the website.

The Engage National Awards are due to be held in Newport, 5th-6th July 2018.

RB queried whether members were aware of large MATs having cashflow problems, failing to pay invoices and seizing funding. Other members were not aware of this. MDE suggested where there is evidence of this that MATs should be reported to the regulating commissioner and auditors.

FLSE (MDE/JM/HS)

FLSE is looking at future management strategies and funding.

The next FLSE National Executive meeting is due to be held 4th July 2018.

The FLSE East Conference is due to be held at Wyboston Lakes, Bedfordshire 21st-22nd June 2018 focusing on mental health and whole school wellbeing. Spaces are available.

In the North East, there has been an external reference group meeting looking at assigning a senior lead in mental health in every school.

Equals are holding a conference in London, 6th-7th London. Places are available.

IPSEA (LH)

IPSEA have responded to calls for evidence on exclusion and are hoping to be asked for future evidence. Guidance on exclusion focuses on the school and other children as opposed to the affected child. IPSEA is questioning what schools are trying to achieve through exclusion and whether this works.

IPSEA have launched a new website which is easier for parents to navigate.

IPSEA are taking on the first EHCP cases for tribunal. LH explained if there is a refusal to reassess an existing EHCP, tribunals can make recommendations on health and social care, this is helpful for poor transitions. It was questioned whether parents are told to go straight to tribunal without first seeking mediation? LH confirmed IPSEA advise to take mediation if parents consider this useful but this is not a requirement prior to tribunal.

NAHT (LV/RT)

NAHT have produced a report on high needs funding and will share this with the group.

NAHT have submitted evidence to the exclusion review.

NAHT have submitted a response to the Education Committee enquiry.

A committee on accountability has been set up with a report due September 2018.

The NAHT annual conference was held in Liverpool 3rd-5th May 2018, a successful event.

RT was asked to speak at the Policy UK Forum, 19th April 2018.

The Mental Health Green Paper v.2 was released 9th May 2018. The paper is not aspirational enough with outcomes too far away.

Books released to help people with SEND explore work were released 30th April 2018 with authors such as Baroness Sheila Hollins. NAHT consider these to be really useful.

RT gave a presentation at the NAHT annual conference. MDE praised the presentation.

NGA (CIK)

Referring to a query at the previous meeting regarding responsibility for the checking of mandatory qualifications, CIK confirmed although school governors hold responsibility, this is an operational matter, as with all recruitment processes. Policies and procedures should be in place within school. CIK would not be attending future NSEND meetings as she is leaving NGA.

NNPCF (CaK)

NNPCF have updated their State of Nation document with members input.

NNPCF have added their name to the Special Educational Consortium (SEC) response.

NNPCF are meeting with new Ministers to share State of Nation priorities.

NNPCF are responding to the Early Years consultation, Child in Need consultation and Home Education consultation.

SWALSS (KH)

SWALSS are offering a number of conferences, including Business Managers, Principals and Deputies.

Research bursaries are being offered. Once schools have completed their research, they are given a platform to share their findings and present at conferences. MH expressed an interest in these schools presenting at a WMRSEND conference.

The next SWALSS conference will be held in January 2019.

WMRSEND (MH)

WMRSEND are putting a group consultation together for the first time.

Research SEND are holding a conference on 23rd June 2018.

The next conference will be funded through SEND Workforce Contract on 17th November 2018. Contributors are needed for this event.

MH is working on a Research SEND publication, including pieces on WMRSEND. MH welcomed articles from other organisations, to be submitted by 30th July 2018.

17. Updates from other affiliations, forums, trust and partnerships

No updates to announce.

18. NSEND website

In the absence of LP, DB asked members to email LP with any events and updates for the NSEND website.

CR informed the group, as well as his role in replacing HS at FLSE, he is currently Chair of Equals and trustee of HEADS. CR questioned whether interest could be advertised on the NSEND website. It was said that NSEND looks to support organisations within the forum, therefore it would be acceptable to raise awareness of an event if speaking on behalf of FLSE.

19. Any focus for action and statements of agreement

- RT to forward the NAHT School Fund Reform document to NB for circulating with the minutes.
- Members to forward their response to the Select Committee SEND Review in order for a NSEND response to be prepared and submitted. Deadline 14th June 2018.
- DB to draft a response to the Inclusion Review and circulate to members. Response deadline is 24th June 2018.
- WSEND Governance Review to be circulated with the minutes.
- Report on WSENDs progress to be circulated with the minutes.
- Ideas for use of the research donation to be submitted to DB.
- Bids for The Laurel Trust to be submitted by 25th May 2018.
- FLSE to produce and circulate costings of NSEND.
- DB to contact TTS Special Needs Resources.

20. Any other business

No further items were discussed.

21. Dates for 2017/18 and 2018/19

DB confirmed the dates for 2017/8 and new dates for 2018/19.

22. Venue 2017/18 and 2018/19

DB confirmed BrowneJacobson would continue to provide the venue. DB thanked MB.

Meeting closed 2.30pm