

EMPLOYMENT IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

Purpose of the Report

1. This report updates Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) and Elevate partners on the work of the DfE-funded project Employment is Everyone's Business. The report also identifies areas of strength, weakness and providing opportunities to improve employment outcomes for young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Background

2. NDTi and the British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) were awarded a grant by the Department for Education to work together on a project called 'Employment is Everyone's Business'. The project's overall aim is to improve employment outcomes for young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The funding for the project was from April 2015 – March 2016. We have worked with four sites across England:
 - Wolverhampton (NDTi)
 - Kirklees (NDTi)
 - Bath & North East Somerset (NDTi)
 - Berkshire (BASE in partnership with Elevate Berkshire)
3. The Project commenced in June 2015 and worked closely with Elevate Berkshire, on behalf of the Local Authorities (LA). The idea of the project was to demonstrate how:
 - Vocational Profiling can be embedded in the curriculum, education, health and care plans and reviews as well as careers advice.
 - Post-16 providers can develop effective employer engagement strategies and study programmes that facilitate young people moving into employment.
 - Local authorities are ensuring the needs of young people with special educational needs and disabilities and those who are NEET are at the heart of their employment, economic, housing, personal budget and commissioning strategies.
 - How work around skills and employment outcomes for young people with disabilities/SEND could align with the work of Elevate Berkshire and inform future delivery through re-engineering existing resource that could be aligned with Elevate to deliver a supported employment model of employment support.

Executive summary – Bracknell Forest Council

4. As part of the project, baseline data was sought from BFC on outcomes for young people with disabilities. Kashif Nawaz (Virtual School Head for Vulnerable Children) provided information that was available and was the main link for this project.

5. An action plan was drafted to support BFC with the aim of achieving better employment outcomes for young people with SEND under the following deliverables:
 - a. Everyone involved in supporting and working with children, young people and families have high expectations of what can be achieved in relation to paid work and careers, which includes enterprise development and self-employment. They work together to boost aspirations and expectations so that more young people leave education and get paid work and careers.
 - b. All young people have access to high quality information, advice, support and guidance, on a face to face and 1-to-1 basis from qualified, impartial careers guidance practitioners or job coaches to co-produce a personalised employment pathway. This includes access to high quality benefits advice including better-off-in work calculations.
 - c. Study programmes are available that have meaningful work experience as the core aim including supported employment embedded into the curriculum.
 - d. Traineeships and apprenticeships are accessible to young people with SEND. Education and training providers are making full use of reasonable adjustments to ensure this is an option for young people with SEND and embedding supported employment into the provision.
 - e. The local offer is comprehensive on the employment support available to young people and families. This includes resources for those supporting young people and families. The local offer is co-produced, updated regularly and developed on the basis of what the evidence-base says works.
 - f. There is a clear, shared strategy to engage with employers to benefit young people with SEND. Those people engaging with employers understand the business cases of a diverse workforce and can promote the benefits of employing young people with disabilities. The Strategy is linked to the LEP and education provider strategies and provides a single point of contact for employers.
 - g. There is a clear well governed strategy and plan to ensure that more young people leave education for work and sustainable careers. The

strategy has been developed in partnership with all stakeholders (internal and external) which demonstrated that it's everyone's business.

6. Though it was agreed at this stage, that BFC would prefer if BASE utilise their time allocated for BFC exploring what opportunities etc were available for young people with SEND residing in Bracknell.
7. Questionnaires were sent to young people with SEND who attend SEN schools across Berkshire to determine if they have employment aspirations. 87% of the young people self-declared that they would like a job.
8. Project events were held across Berkshire around a number of key themed areas. Two shared learning events were delivered for all of the sites where good practice has been shared and lessons learnt across the sites as well as employer engagement.

Date	Event	Purpose	Number of Attendees
10/11/15	Vocational Profiling (X-Berkshire)	Introduction to supported employment and the underpinning core values. Methodology on the completion of Vocational Profiles and their purpose. Discussions on what can be done to embed Vocational Profiles within the system	10
11/11/15	Writing outcomes for Employment in EHC plans (X-Berkshire)	Introduction to writing outcomes in EHC plans. What to consider when developing employment outcomes. Good practice and examples of writing employment outcomes in EHC plans. Discussions on what can be done to ensure employment outcomes are embedded within EHC plans	7
21/01/16	Employer Engagement Techniques (X-Berkshire)	Participants will have a greater understanding of the employer's role and perspective; the importance of marketing and customer service; the business case for employing workers with disabilities; how to initially approach employers and engage with them; how to identify and meet employer needs and how to organise and conduct a pitch to employers	11

9. As part of the project, in order to capture current scope of opportunities and outcomes available to young people with SEND, BASE allocated days to spend consulting with a variety of partners & stakeholders include IAG and training providers, supported employment service, college and schools.

Conclusions and Findings

10. Based on the results of questionnaires that were sent to young people with SEND (who attend SEN Schools across Berkshire to determine if they have employment aspirations) 87% of the young people who responded self-declared that they would like a job. This needs to be made aware to professionals as part of EHC plans and Information, Advice and Guidance sessions.
11. There is a lot of willingness within BFC to advance the opportunities for employment for young people with SEND.
12. To support BFC, BASE with the support of Elevate has developed a model for BFC, adapted from the Wolverhampton pathway. The transition pathway highlights the seamless transition needed from education to employment and is centred around three key themes: Vision; Influences and Resources (See Appendix 1)
13. As part of the project – BASE have identified areas of strong and best practice and also acted as a critical friend to highlight areas that need improvement to support BFC:

Good Practice	Gaps
Person Centred Planning Approach widely used	The Local Offer lacks information, parents and young people with SEND unsure where to go to look at future options
Employment outcomes are becoming part of EHC plans	Consistent, clear goals in order to inform commissioning.
Vocational Profiling being used in Kennel Lane School and Breakthrough	Vocational Profiling is not used by all secondary schools
Supported Employment model, via Breakthrough and Elevate partners, are linked in with schools and colleges	Breakthrough Service overstretched and with waiting list. Initial engagement with SEND young people needs to be earlier.
External work experience in a variety of setting being used by Kennel Lane	Valuable work experience is not available from all schools/college or

school and B and W college.	available with extended placements and built in education programme.
Elevate engaging with new partners. Some informal guidance available on self-employment.	Parents and young people with SEND struggling to find good welfare advice as well as options for travel training.
Shared space encouraging good partnership working within Elevate, Breakthrough, Adviza and a variety of other partners & "one stop shop" for young people.	Though lack of clarity on roles; referral options etc
Strategic employer engagement being encouraged by Elevate.	Lack of flexibility of courses post-16, example internships, work experience, employment focus.
	Vocational Profiling not embedded within EHC plans

Recommendations and Opportunities

14. In order for BFC to develop and improve employment outcomes for young people with SEND, the following recommendations are suggested:

- Vocational Profiling to be embedded within the EHC plan process. This will then inform Commissioners of what needs to be procured in post-16 provision.
- The provision of supported employment needs to be of high quality, sufficient to meet demand and evidence-based that delivers employment outcomes for the young people with SEND, on behalf of BFC who have a statutory requirement for people with SEND up to the age of 25
- All staff who deliver supported employment for young people with SEND should be trained and have a recognised qualification in supported employment
- BFC commit to develop an employer engagement strategy as well as ring-fence a number of work placement opportunities/apprenticeship/employment opportunities for young people with SEND.
- Local offer pages, linked to the Council webpage, need to be developed in regards to employment. Explore the possibilities of the local offer being linked to the Elevate pan-Berkshire website (and local Elevate Bracknell Forest site).
- BFC and key stakeholders to use the guides and tools supplied from the project to support employment outcomes for young people with SEND. The outcomes of the project to be embedded in relevant team and service plans and learning embedded with commissioners.
- Elevate Berkshire (Elevate Bracknell Forest) provides a real opportunity to align local Elevate budgets (including local provision across 14 to 19) with the SEND Reform Grant – to provide a holistic package of support for young

people with SEND rooted in a local supported employment offer that runs in parallel, offering support to services and teams within the LA and Schools, who support young people with SEN. This re-engineering would improve the life chances of young people.

- Through City Deal Elevate EU funding, resources have been profiled for BASE to do additional work to continue the EEB project. BASE will be able to support Elevate and the 6 unitary authorities in the operational embedding of the recommendations as part of the Elevate Berkshire programme and it is recommended that the strong links continue with BFC – where BASE could support the LA to operationalise the learning.