

EMPLOYMENT IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

Purpose of the Report

1. This report updates Berkshire's Joint Committee and Elevate partners on the work of the DfE-funded project Employment is Everyone's Business across the 6 local authority areas of Berkshire. The report also reviews the action plans that were developed as part of the project, identifying areas of strength, weakness and providing opportunities to improve employment outcomes for young people with special educational needs and disabilities across Berkshire.

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 was 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 for Pan-Berkshire

4. As part of the project, baseline data was sought from Berkshire on outcomes for young people with disabilities. The following people were the main contacts for the 6 areas; who led on their area and provided information:
 - Bracknell Forest - Kashif Nawaz (Virtual School Head for Vulnerable Children)
 - Reading - Chris Stevens (SEN Service Manager)
 - Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead - Melanie Moodley provided information and then Debbie Verity was the main link for the project.
 - Slough - Unfortunately Nandita Sirker was the link for the project but did not engage. This caused a significant delay in working within Slough, though when Robert Hardy (Interim SEN Team Manager, Slough Children's Trust) came into post he has been the main driver for the project.
 - West Berkshire - Jane Seymour (Service Manager, SEN & Disabled Children's Team)
 - Wokingham - Lynn Lee (Post 16 and EHC Co-ordinator)

5. An action plan was drafted to support the 6 areas with the aim of achieving better employment outcomes for young people with SEND. Various parties and key stakeholders were involved in developing the action plan and proposed the following deliverables, that they said they wanted the support of the project to achieve:
 - 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 leaved education and get meaningful 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. Questionnaires were sent to young people with SEND who attend SEN schools across Berkshire to determine if they have employment aspirations.
7. Project events were held across Berkshire and a range of specific days for each area were delivered around a number of key themed areas (See Appendix 1). 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.

Conclusions and Findings

8. 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.
9. There is a real commitment in Berkshire to advance opportunities for people with SEND around employment. All 6 areas have been working towards implementing learning from the events to improve employment outcomes for young people with SEND.
10. To support the 6 areas, BASE with the support of Elevate developed a model for each that has been 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

11. As part of the project – BASE supported the 6 LA patches to identify areas of strong and best practice and also acted as a critical friend to highlight areas that need improvement. Appendix 2 shows the breakdown for each LA patch. There are some pockets of really good practice within Berkshire with good employment outcomes being achieved for young people with SEND.

Recommendations and Opportunities

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

- Each LA area to continue developing and implementing their action plan from this project
- 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
- There is an opportunity to standardise the EHC plans across Berkshire, as currently each area is different and employment should be embedded in all EHC plans as core routine
- The provision of supported employment¹ needs to be of high quality and evidence-based that delivers employment outcomes for the young people with SEND, on behalf of each LA area 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, for example, Level 3 Certificate for Supported Employment Practitioners.
- Each LA and Slough Children's Trust should commit to ring-fence a number of work placement opportunities/apprenticeship/internships/employment opportunities for young people with SEND.
- Explore using employers / parents and young people with SEND as role models to boost aspirations across the system.
- Local offer pages, linked to the Council webpage, need to be developed in regards to employment. Explore the possibilities of each LA local offer being linked to the Elevate pan-Berkshire website (and relevant local Elevate site)

1 – Definition of Supported Employment - "Providing support to people with disabilities or other disadvantaged groups to secure and maintain paid employment in the open labour market" European Union of Supported Employment 2005.

- Each LA area to share their good practice with other areas across Berkshire to develop employment opportunities including person centred approaches;
- flexible post-16 courses (supported internships; study programmes; traineeships & apprenticeships) and employer engagement
- The LA areas 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 provides a real opportunity to align local 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 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 via Elevate.

Project Events Held

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
20/01/16	Boosting Aspirations for Parents (Wokingham)	Provide parents with information on examples of young people with SEND who are in employment. What the evidence base says works. Informing parents on what good support looks like. Discussions on what can be done in Wokingham to boost ambition in the system.	11
20/01/16	Developing the Employment Pathway (Wokingham)	To develop the pathway transition from education to employment. What the evidence base says works. Mapping what employment support is available; identifying gaps and barriers; voting on priorities and next steps	14
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
23/02/16	Developing the	To develop the pathway transition from education to employment. What the	12

	Employment Pathway (West Berkshire)	evidence base says works. Mapping what employment support is available; identifying gaps and barriers; voting on priorities and next steps	
29/02/16	Boosting Aspirations for Professionals (West Berkshire)	Provide professionals with information on examples of young people with SEND who are in employment. What the evidence base says works. Informing professionals on what good support looks like. Discussions on what can be done in West Berkshire to boost ambition in the system.	33
03/03/16	Boosting Aspirations for Parents (Reading)	Provide parents with information on examples of young people with SEND who are in employment. What the evidence base says works. Informing parents on what good support looks like. Discussions on what can be done in Reading to boost ambition in the system.	1
10/03/16	Developing the Employment Pathway (Reading)	To develop the pathway transition from education to employment. What the evidence base says works. Mapping what employment support is available; identifying gaps and barriers; voting on priorities and next steps	2
11/03/16	Developing the Employment Pathway (RBWM)	To develop the pathway transition from education to employment. What the evidence base says works. Mapping what employment support is available; identifying gaps and barriers; voting on priorities and next steps	4
14/03/16	Boosting Aspirations for Professionals (West Berkshire)	Provide professionals with information on examples of young people with SEND who are in employment. What the evidence base says works. Informing professionals on what good support looks like. Discussions on what can be done in West Berkshire to boost ambition in the system.	8
4 days in March	Exploring provision in Bracknell Forest	As part of the project for Bracknell Forest, in order to capture current scope of opportunities and outcomes available to young people with SEND, BASE allocated 5 days to spend consulting with a variety of partners & stakeholders include IAG and training providers,	Various

		supported employment service, college and schools.	
13/04/16	Developing the Employment Pathway (Slough)	To develop the pathway transition from education to employment. What the evidence base says works. Mapping what employment support is available; identifying gaps and barriers; voting on priorities and next steps	14
14/04/16	Developing the Employment Pathway (Slough)	Continuation from 13/04/16, where the group focussed on addressing gaps and developing the action plan	12
19/05/16	Finalising the action plan (Slough)	A smaller focussed group meeting to look through the draft action plan and finalise for SCS/SBC to take forward in implementing changes for young people with SEND achieving employment outcomes.	3

Strengths/Gaps identified in the 6 LA patches**Bracknell Forest**

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 school and B and W college.	Valuable work experience is not available from all schools/college or 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

Reading

Good Practice	Gaps
Vocational Profiling being used in Brookfields School	The Local Offer lacks information
Supported Internships being utilised with Brookfields School and Reading College	Lack of specialist Careers Information, Advice and Guidance across schools with employment focus for young people with SEND
Elevate hub at Reading library with variety of partners	Vocational Profiling is not used in all secondary schools
	Parents and young people with SEND unsure where to go to look at future options
	Parents and Young People have identified lack of support from Social Care during the Transitions process.
	Lack of flexibility of courses post-16 with employment outcome focus
	Work experience is not available from all schools
	Vocational Profiling and employment not embedded within EHC plans
	Opportunities for supported employment are quite limited

Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

Good Practice	Gaps
Good employment outcomes being achieved by Manor Green School and Ways into Work	Lack of specialist Careers Information, Advice and Guidance across schools
Vocational Profiling being used within Manor Green School	The Local Offer lacks information
Supported Internships are being utilised and developed.	Vocational Profiling is not used in all secondary schools
Some staff are qualified in supported employment	Parents and young people with SEND unsure where to go to look at future options
Elevate hub at Nicholsons Centre with a variety of partners	Work experience is not available from all secondary schools
Ways into Work are well linked in with provision in their area – employers; parents; schools; colleges and other provision	Employment and Vocational Profiling not embedded within EHC plans
Manor Green School and Ways into Work keen to share good practice across the Borough	Needs to be a culture change to boost employment aspirations in the system with professionals
Good Employment outcomes being achieved at Berkshire College of Agriculture and Ways into Work.	Lack of flexibility on some courses post 16.
Study programmes being used flexibly to meet the needs of young people and Employers.	Lack of understanding around the funding for supported internships / supported apprenticeships
Supported Apprenticeships promoted and available to some young people	Links between Supported Employment and CYPDS needs to be improved

Slough

Good Practice	Gaps
Person Centred Planning Approach used in EHC plans	Vocational Profiling is not used in schools and EHC plans
Employment outcomes are becoming part of EHC plans	Slough's Supported Employment Service overstretched and constrained by eligibility criteria. Initial engagement with SEND young people needs to be earlier.
Virtual Elevate hub with partners working together	Lack of flexibility and availability of post-16 provision that have an employment focus
Pockets of good practice in partnership working to achieve employment outcomes for YP with SEND	Needs to be a culture change to boost employment aspirations in the system with professionals
East Berkshire College are working towards employment outcomes	Valuable work experience is not available from all schools/colleges or available with extended placements and built in education programme.
There is a willingness to embed joint working and achieve employment outcomes for YP with SEND	Lack of joined up partnership working across agencies to improve employment outcomes
	Lack of Careers Information, Advice and Guidance across schools to meet needs
	The Local Offer lacks information

West Berkshire

Good Practice	Gaps
Good employment outcomes being achieved by Brookfields and Castle Schools	Lack of specialist Careers Information, Advice and Guidance in some mainstream schools
Person Centred Planning Approach used	The Local Offer contains some information on employment support but this needs developing further.
Vocational Profiling being used within SEN schools	Vocational Profiling is not used in all secondary schools
Newbury College has commenced a vocational pilot and achieving employment outcomes	Parents and young people with SEND unsure where to go to look at future options
Supported Internships are being utilised and developed	Work experience is not available from all secondary schools
Some staff are qualified in supported employment	Vocational Profiling not embedded within EHC plans
Newsletters are being utilised to promote good practice and share stories	Overarching employer engagement strategy
Supported Employment Services have been commissioned	
Employer engagement is established within SEN schools	

Wokingham

Good Practice	Gaps
Person Centred Planning Approach used in annual reviews	The Local Offer lacks information, parents and young people with SEND unsure where to go to look at future options
Vocational Profiling being used in Addington School and Optalis	Vocational Profiling is not used in all secondary schools
Supported Internships being utilised at National Grid via Addington School and Royal Berkshire Hospital via Reading College.	Lack of flexibility of courses post-16 with aim to achieve employment outcomes
Optalis and Addington School keen to share good practice across the Borough	Work experience is not available from all schools
Careers and Opportunities Events delivered at Addington in partnership with colleges, WBC, Optalis, community providers.	Vocational Profiling not embedded within all EHC plans
Employment outcomes are becoming part of EHC plans.	Out of County pupils not accessing specialist Careers Information, advice and Guidance
Elevate hub at Wokingham library with variety of partners	
Optalis are well linked in with provision in their area – employers; parents; schools; colleges and other provision.	