



To: College Principals in the South West Region

Cc: SEND managers

17 January 2018

Dear Colleague

Natspec: the voice of specialist further education - Network subscription

I am writing to invite your college to become a member of a new South West SEND network, facilitated by Natspec, the national specialists in provision for students with high needs. Your own college is likely to have experienced an increase in the number of students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), with FE numbers nationally having risen from 15,000 in 2013 to over 27,000 in 2017/18. The Children and Families Act is now in its fourth year of implementation, and there is pressure on all organisations to improve the implementation of the legislation.

Our vision is that all young people with learning difficulties and disabilities can access quality education and training, which meets their individual needs and supports their aspirations for skills, work and life. The new network will provide an opportunity to explore how colleges and other providers (both specialist and mainstream) are achieving this vision, and share practice.

The network will support managers and practitioners and improve their professional development, thereby improving outcomes for learners. We will examine issues such as designing appropriate study programmes, using RARPA systems, using assistive and accessible technologies, building relationships with local authorities, and learning from Ofsted inspections.

We held three network meetings in 2017 (March, June and October), all of which were well attended with positive feedback. Delegates expressed the view that the network should be sustained, so we are proposing a small network membership subscription to enable it to continue. The cost of joining is £500 per year, with the following benefits:

- Two free places at three regional networks or CPD events per year (worth £600 if paid for separately). The first event is **22 March at Gloucester College** - [book your place here](#).
- 10% discount at other national and regional Natspec conferences, training and events (see www.natspec.org.uk/events for a list of courses currently on offer)
- Membership of a professional network electronic forum for Q&A/ information sharing between colleges.
- A termly bulletin summarising policy and funding issues.

To join our South West network, simply [complete the online form here](#). If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me or our South West Regional co-ordinator, Rosemarie D'Ambrosio-Winter (email rosemarie.dambrosio@natspec.org.uk)

Yours sincerely

Clare Howard
Chief Executive