

N  S S

Special Schools and Specialist Colleges – same language, different accent?

Claire Dorer - CEO

NASS and Natspec Links

- Share at least 24 organisations in membership
- Attend many of same groups – SEC, Contracts, High Needs
- Have lobbied together, e.g. on Children and Families Act 2014
- Occasional joint events, e.g. IPSEA



Members share many common experiences ...



NáSS

Until High Needs Funding Reforms, we used to envy colleges!



NáSS

... and we are still quite glad we don't have to do the ILR!



Current challenges for schools

- 80% of sector seeing steady or increasing student numbers – where does this leave the 20% with falling numbers?
- Still too much time spent on procurement and contracting – very little advantage to schools to taking part
- Struggling to recruit and retain staff
- LAs disengaged from students they place – poor information provided at placement and poor attendance at annual reviews
- Generally seen as a problem within the system, rather than an asset and resource



Changing face of students

- All schools working with children with mental health difficulties – often with little support from CAMHS or having to develop their own mental health services
- All schools work with children with autism, regardless of named specialism. A real challenge for those that specialise in areas such as SI and SpLCN
- Increasing complexity in children referred to schools – behaviours which challenge and serious mental illness
- Rise in number of referrals for primary age children

What's that coming over the hill?

- New Liberty Protection Safeguards
- Independent Inquiry into Childhood Sexual Abuse in residential schools – some schools named
- Lobbying from parent groups on use of restraint in schools – how do we support rather than vilify schools?



Challenges for NASS

- How do we support our member schools to be seen as a solution to the 'SEND Crisis' – how do we do more to share with mainstream?
- How do we support leaders in our schools? Increased focus on staff wellbeing across recruitment and retention strategy and new Ofsted inspection strategy
- Can we ever get a straight answer on procurement?!



Our project work in 2019

- Leadership Development Programme
- Spirals of Inquiry – student-centered learning
- New ‘Incubator’ project – taking great ideas out of schools and into the wider world
- Supervision for school leaders – creating thinking space



Alongside the day work of ...

- Annual conference October 2019 Brighton – colleges very welcome!
- Special Interest Groups – Teaching and learning, HR, Finance, Care and Research
- Lobbying for the sector – new High Needs Ministerial group
- National terms and conditions for High Needs Placements
- Advice and support to schools

