

national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

Case Study: West Berkshire Innovations and Outcomes Fund research project February 2011

Introduction

Research project investigating whether there are growing numbers of young people with a range of complex learning and physical disabilities coming through the school system.

Introduction

Over a period of three years a local and Berkshire wide data base has been developed in order to provide evidence to support the view that there are growing numbers of young people with a range of complex learning and physical disabilities coming through the school system. The purpose initially was to inform Adult Services and Further Education of the support requirements and cost of that support in a local mainstream setting or at an out of county residential setting. Nationally, it was recognised that young people with a complex range of disability often accessed out of county residential placements away from personal and long standing professional support networks. Out of county placements at Independent Specialist Providers often resulted in a sense of displacement for the young person, away from circles of personal support and the wider local community. The movement of Local Authority responsibility from children to adult services often placed separate budgets under considerable pressure and careful consideration of the data was needed to balance payments.

Capacity building in local Further Education was introduced via the South East Action for Inclusion strategy (annex 1) in 2000 then funded by the Learning and Skills Council.

Serendipitously further development to this work had been undertaken by the Transition Officer at West Berkshire Council. Destination data for school leavers had been collected over several years with a view to being able to identify and evidence trends. The purpose of

the Innovations and Outcomes funded research project is to update the transition database as far as is possible, looking retrospectively at success factors and those factors that hinder success for young people with a Statement of Educational Need in West Berkshire, aged between 17 – 25 years old.

This National Transition Support Team case study includes:

- An updated database, collated data and associated observations
- Questionnaire feedback from:
 1. Individuals
 2. Parents / personal support
 3. General Further Education
 4. Independent Specialist Providers
 5. Supported employment organisations
- An individual case study (2007 – 2011)
- Contrast report

Special thanks for their cooperation go to:

- Young people and their families
- West Berkshire Council SEN Transition Officer and SEN/DCT Manager
- The South East Employment Network
- The Jobs Action Network
- The Action for Inclusion Network
- The Berkshire Sub Regional Group
- The Phoenix Centre Manager and Supported Employment Officer

- The Community Team for People with a Learning Disability
- West Berkshire Mencap
- Job Centre Plus
- Pathways to Employment
- Connexions
- The Castle School
- Brookfields School
- The Berkshire Education Business Partnership
- Newbury College
- Reading College
- West Berkshire Training Consortium
- West Berkshire Youth Offending Team
- National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO)
- Link Up and Growing for All
- Thrive
- Berkshire Autistic Society

Background

Action for Inclusion National Context

In October 2008 the Department for Children, Schools and Families indicated that the responsibility for commissioning all learning provision for 16-18 year olds and for learners up to 25 years with learning difficulties and/or disabilities would transfer from the Learning and Skills Council to local authorities.

The delivery of Action for Inclusion in the South East Region and the information included in this review of provision was critical to the transfer in the South East and to the further development of provider capacity to meet learner need. The Action for Inclusion strategy was developed following the publication of the national Learning and Skills Council's document, "*Learning for Living and Work*", 2006. The national strategy called for a radical change across the sector to enable learners to "progress to the maximum possible level of independence and activity in their communities and employment." The report emphasises the need to plan regionally and locally, so that wherever possible the needs of learners can be met appropriately within high quality provision in their local communities. This vision was endorsed by the Department for Children, Schools and Families in 2008 and is carried forward by the Young People's Learning and Skills Funding

Agency.

Local Context

The Thames Valley Action for Inclusion Network was established providing a platform for curriculum review and mapping of Further Education delivery to identify gaps, offering support for redirection and redevelopment of provision for:

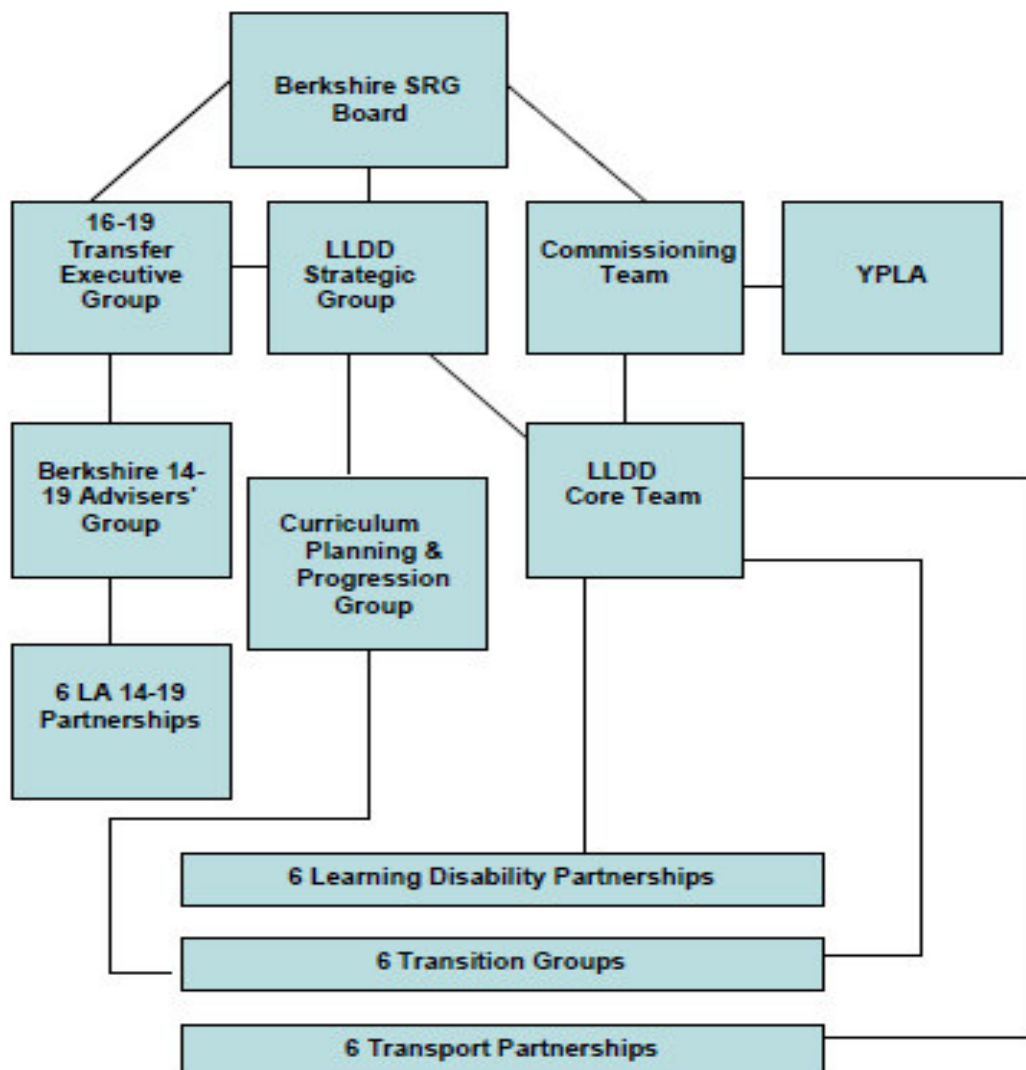
- Learners with profound and/or complex physical and sensory support requirement
- Learners with Autistic Spectrum Condition, including Asperger's Syndrome
- Learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties / mental health support requirement

In addition to the Network and with support from the Learning and Skills Council, the **Berkshire Capacity Building Group** was established. The original group came into being as a result of work undertaken by the Adult Services Manager and Foundation Learning Curriculum Manager at Newbury College. Young people who did not have access to a 24 hour curriculum often moved to out of county residential Further Education returning after 2 or 3 years to put families and Adult Services budgets under pressure. The Capacity Building Group recognised the need for local inter-organisational cooperation in curriculum planning at a strategic level to offer an alternative to an out of county Independent Specialist Provider.

In local Further Education, courses offered to people with a learning disability were often without focus, becoming known as the 'revolving door'. Both Action for Inclusion and the Capacity Building Group recognised the need for curriculum review and mapping of local provision.

The Berkshire Capacity Building Group evolved over time into the **Curriculum Planning and Progression Group** as part of the Berkshire Sub Regional Group strategy. Terms of Reference and an action plan emerged, splitting curriculum and commissioning based on data, into operational and strategic groups.

Much in line with this work, West Berkshire Council established the **Virtual Transition Team**, specifically to ensure that young people



coming through the school system are known well in advance to Adult Services and local Further Education.

The Curriculum Planning and Progression Group continues to be the forum for sharing successful and established practice across schools and Further Education providers, discussing educational themes such as the complexities of progression through Foundation Learning, the implications for funding in Further Education and continuous professional development of specialised staff etc.

This is now known as the 'Berkshire model' and has been shared with other Local Authorities in the Thames Valley. With acknowledgement to David White and permission from the Berkshire Sub Regional Group, the following flow chart is reproduced.

- 1) To use data to support long term planning of Post 16 provision in Berkshire for learners with a Statement of Educational Need (Sub Regional Group)
- 2) To use destination, real time and retrospective information and data to inform services whether they are delivering what is actually required or requested by young people with a Statement of Educational Need in West Berkshire (Local Authority database and the subject of this research report)

Objectives (2 – Local Aim)

- Contact Connexions, local Further Education / training providers, Youth Offending and rehabilitation teams etc; update database

Innovations and Outcomes project aims

- Collect and collate completed questionnaires
- Record individual case study and group profile
- Identify trends, raise questions, draw conclusions

was made with the Disability Employment Advisor at Job Centre Plus.

Throughout the meeting it became clear that no information could be gathered without the National Insurance number of every young person we wished to trace.

Introductory meeting	31/08/10 -	Project outline, specification requirements, description of planning process. Research exemption and confidentiality agreement. Design and send out questionnaires.
Monitoring meeting	28/09/10-	Meet with project associated organisations
Transition Forum	11/10/10-	Present findings to date to Forum
Virtual transition Group meeting	13/12/10-	Update database Yr 12, 13, 14
Monitoring meeting	20/12/10-	Update database (Connexions / FE)
Monitoring meeting	18/01/11-	Undertake 1:1 incentivised interviews
Transition Forum	08/02/11-	Present findings to date to Forum
Final report	28/02/11	Send draft and final report to WBC

Approach

The project spanned September 2010 – February 2011, during which time three formal monitoring meetings took place in addition to regular updates via the West Berkshire Transition Forum

The West Berkshire database lists 927 young people with a Statement of Educational Need aged between 17-25years old.

Initial contact was made with Connexions who were able to offer information with regard to 486 young people, 58 are noted as seeking employment but with no record of achievement at Level 2. Is it a fair assumption to say that the remaining 441, less those still at school, are not actively seeking employment for a range of reasons, and therefore not engaged with the Connexions service?

The database is incomplete in places, leading to the thought that those for whom no information is held are either in employment, unemployed not known to Connexions, unemployable or deceased.

In order to try to ascertain how many young people who had been in receipt of a Statement of Educational Need whilst at school were in employment, an appointment

These discussions with the Disability Employment Advisor regarding access to confidential data, leads to the suggestion that the Local Authority may wish to ask young people to volunteer their National Insurance numbers when allocated at 16 for the sole purpose of then being able to run an annual or bi-annual report to reveal the percentage of young people in work by the age of 25.

Gaining permission is not within the scope of this project; however advice was sought in November 2010 to the Information Commissioner's Office, case reference ENQ0358372, in order to understand the application process should the Local Authority wish to pursue this line of enquiry.

Clearly the Department of Work and Pensions have stringent rules regarding what a National Insurance number should be used for; however to make use of a National Insurance number (NINO) for any purposes other than social security, child support, tax or contribution records a Local Authority may seek the formal consent of their NINO board.

Applications may be made in writing to: DWP NINO Board at Holborn House, 1 Caxton Road, Fulwood, Preston, PI2 9ZZ.

Without formal consent, research exemption exists within the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998

.To obtain data, the Local Authority would need to identify and approach the relevant organisation. The organisation would most likely need to satisfy the 'research purposes' exemption under section 33 of the Data Protection Act. The text of the exemption itself can be viewed at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/section/33> .

Section 33 exempts organisations from complying with:

- Principle 2 of the DPA, which requires organisations to only keep personal data for limited purposes
- Principle 5, which talks about only retaining personal data for so long as necessary
- Section 7 of the DPA -the obligation to comply with individual data subjects' requests for information about themselves -where the processing in question is for 'research purposes'.

To satisfy this exemption, the following conditions need to be met:

- The data in question must be being processed exclusively for 'research purposes'
- The data must not be being processed to support measures or decisions relating to particular individuals
- The data must not be being processed in such a way that substantial damage or substantial distress is, or is likely to be, caused to any particular data subject
- The eventual results of any such research or the resulting statistics must not be made available in a form which identifies the individual data subject.

All aspects of the exemption must be satisfied before the data controller can rely on it and most often the information covered by this exemption is stored in anonymised form. The term 'research purposes' is not defined in the DPA, although the DPA does specify (in section 33(1)) that those purposes can include statistical or historical purposes.

However, even where section 33 applies, the organisation disclosing the information must still

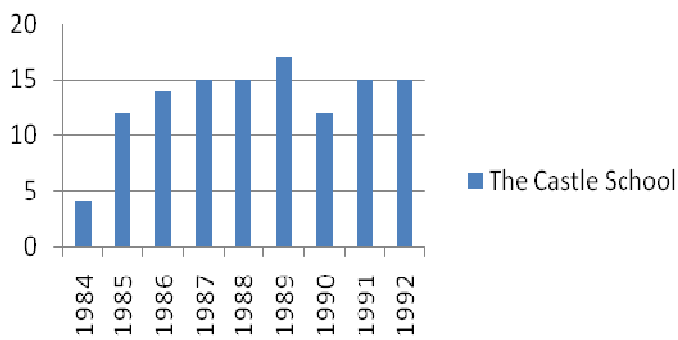
be able to satisfy the requirements of principle 1 – that is, data must be handled 'fairly' and 'lawfully'. This breaks down to an obligation to give 'fair processing' information - that is, letting people know what is happening to their personal data in some way - and the organisation must also be able to satisfy one of the conditions for processing set out in Schedule 2 of the Data Protection Act.

Having satisfied the exemptions in Section 33 of the DPA, information was sought from all known organisations working with the sample group.

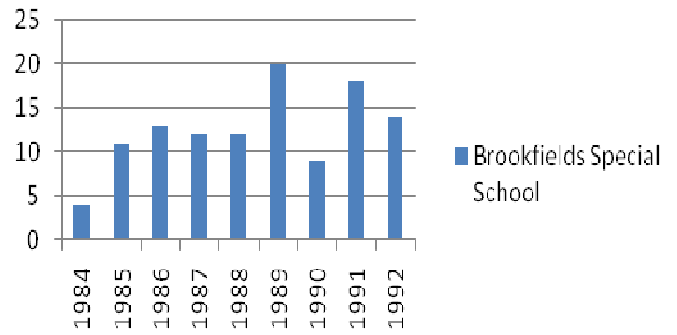
Of the total 927 young people listed on the database, 2 birth dates are unknown.

Annex 2 lists all the education providers used by West Berkshire Council for young people with a Statement of Education Need born between 1984 and 1992. The average number of education providers is 33, with a maximum number of providers for young people born in 1988. Assuming that pupils started secondary school at 11 years old this would indicate that the maximum number of providers was available in 1999 (individuals would now be 22 years old). The following charts illustrate the number of children with a Statement of Educational Need accessing secondary education in Newbury, with a comparison made between Castle and Brookfields Special Schools. Please note that the vertical axis data varies.

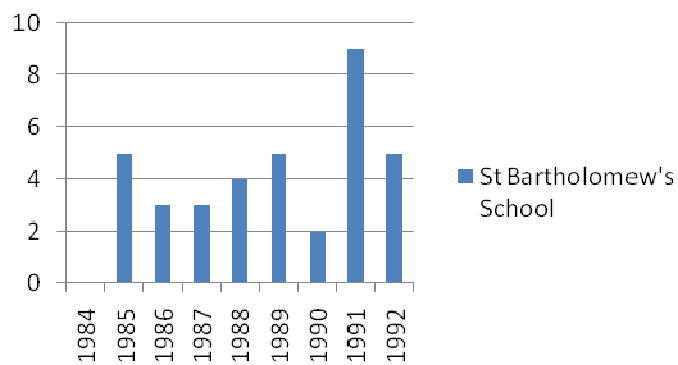
The Castle School



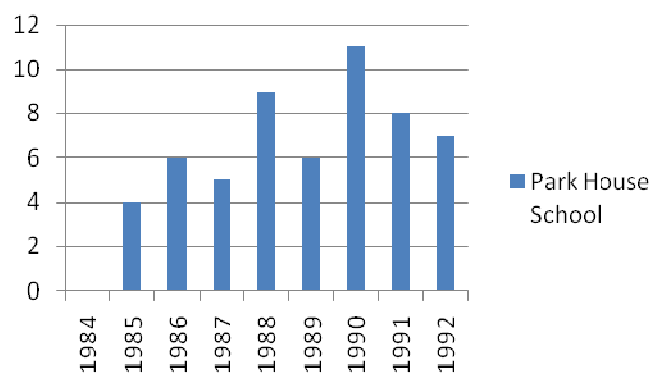
Brookfields Special School



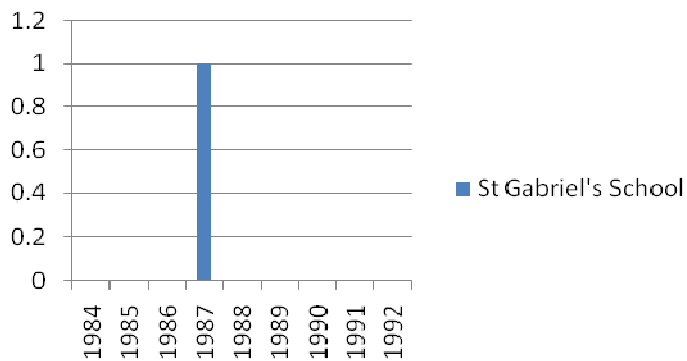
St Bartholomew's School



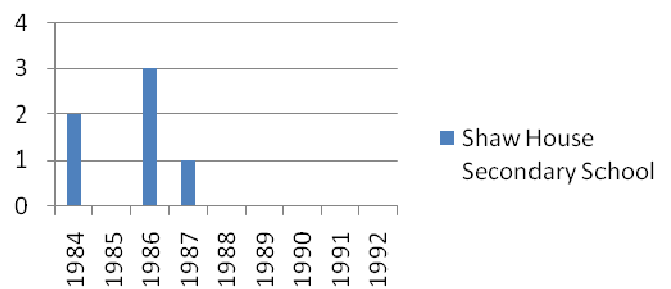
Park House School



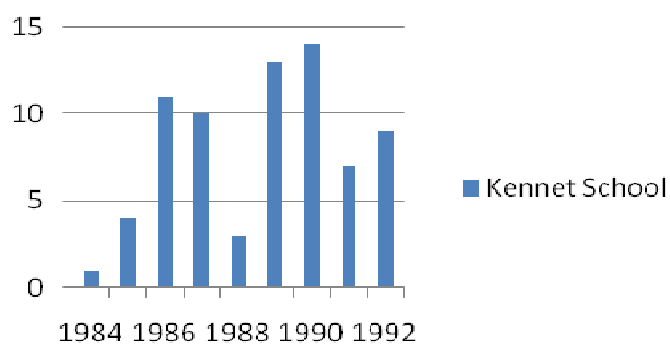
St Gabriel's School



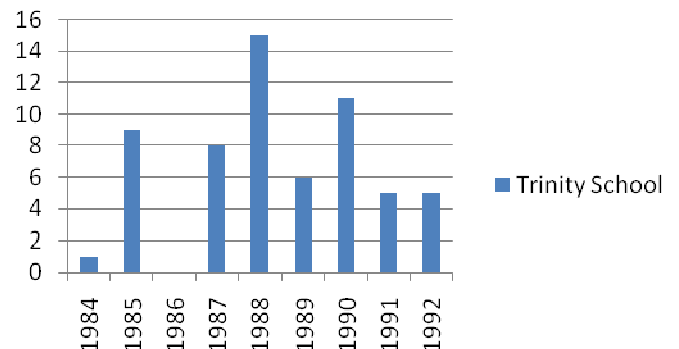
Shaw House Secondary School



Kennet School



Trinity School

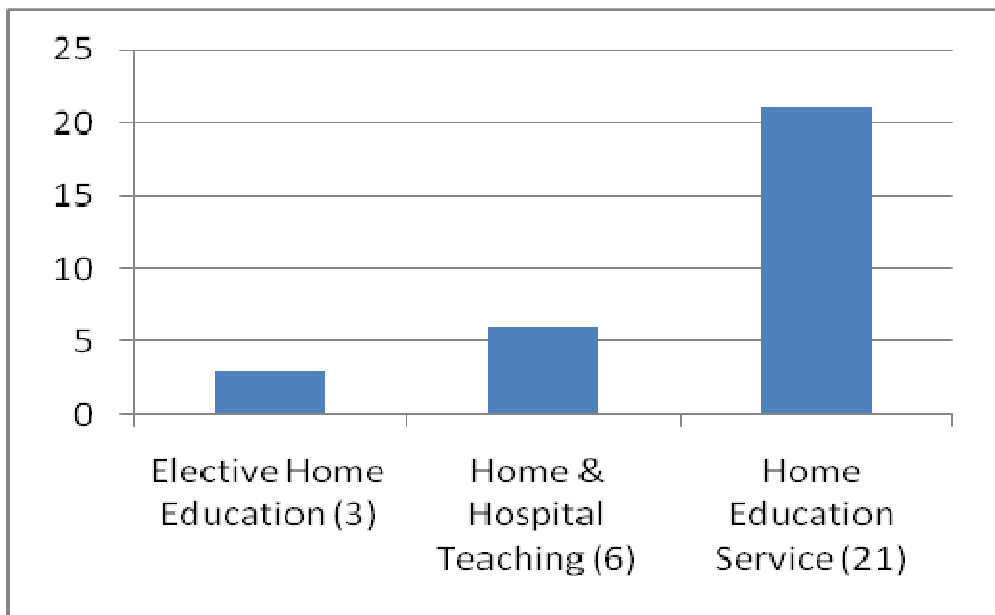
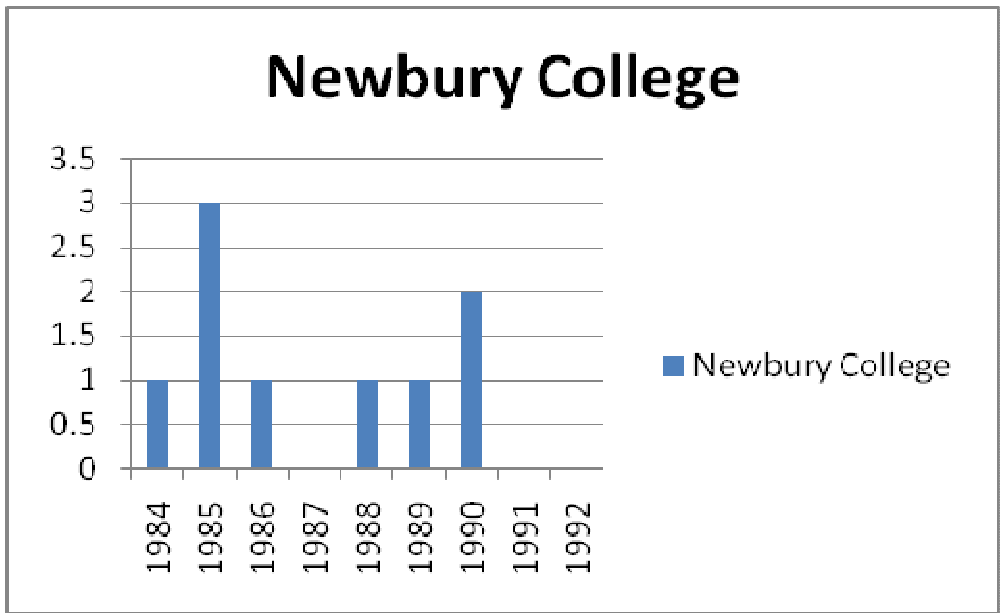


The Castle & Brookfields are both special schools; the former located in Newbury, the latter in Tilehurst, Reading. Results indicate that more children born in 1989 and 1991 accessed Brookfields than The Castle School.

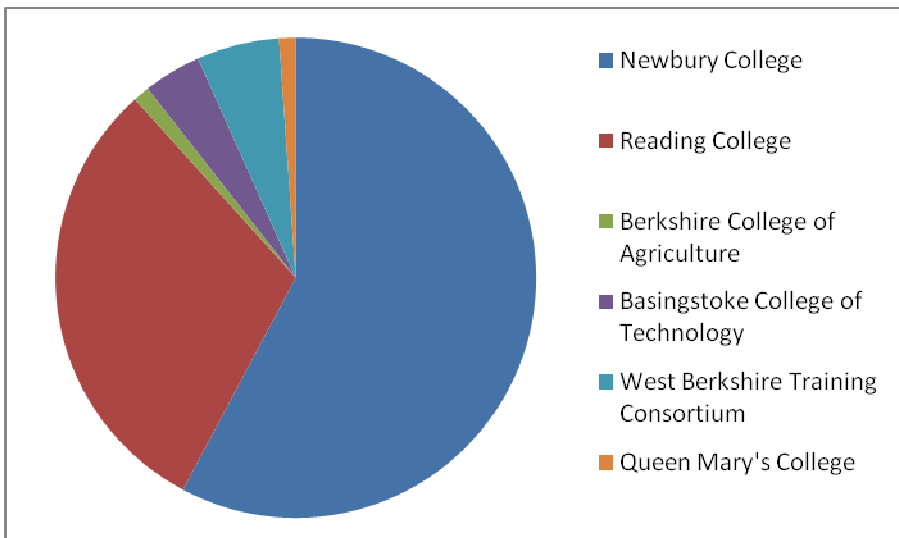
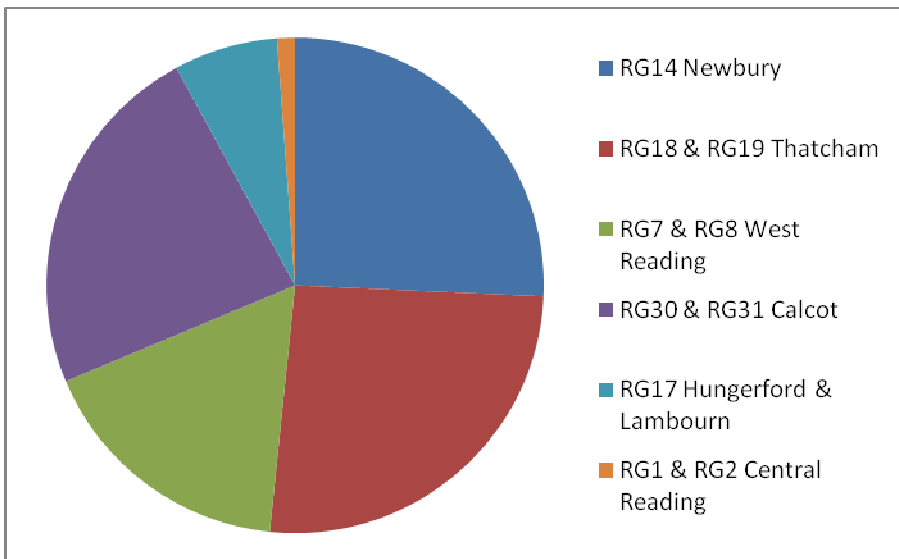
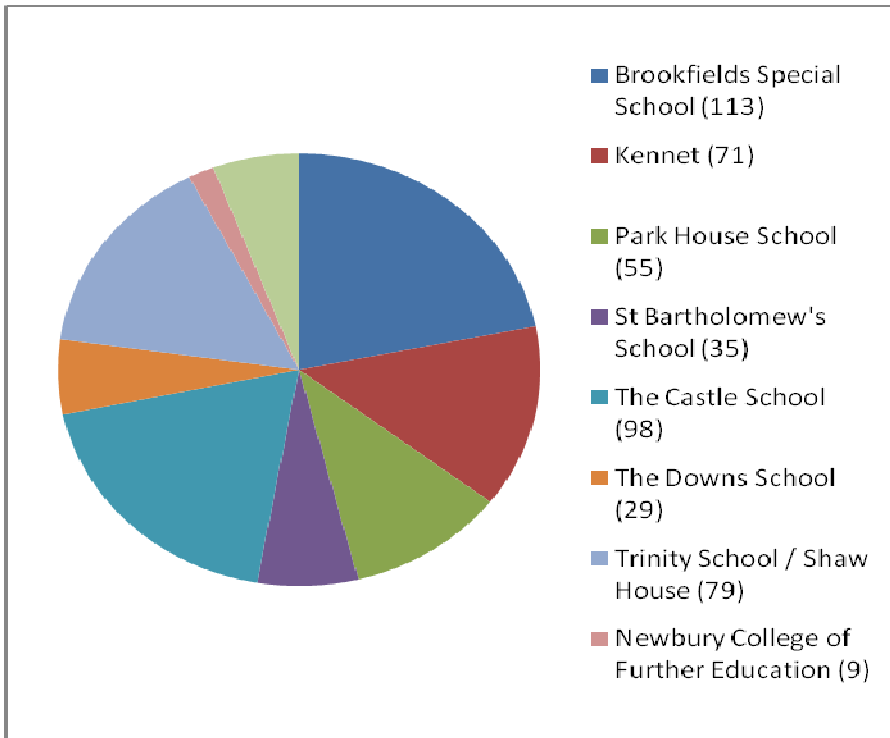
Shaw House School merged to become Trinity in 1999, integrating significantly higher numbers of young people with a statement of Educational Need (those born in 1988) with

an equally significant drop in applications to the Kennet School.

Overall, for young people born within the sample group, slightly higher numbers have been educated at Brookfields School. Smaller numbers of Pre 16 learners were educated at Newbury College or at home, as indicated below



The proportion of young people attending local education providers:



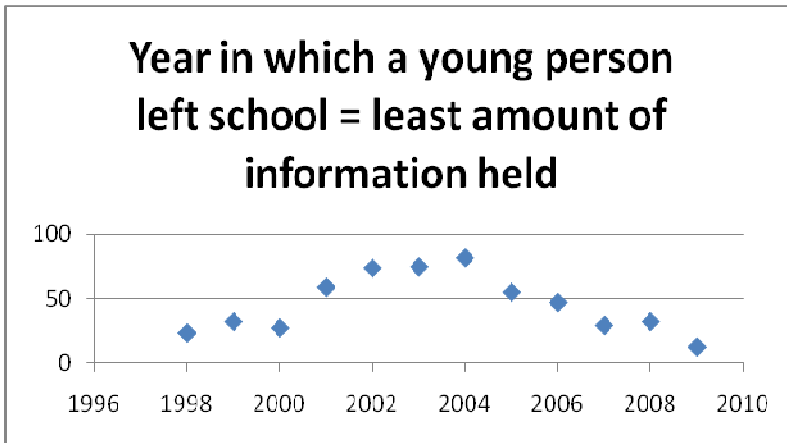
Of the addresses listed, almost equal numbers of young people live in Newbury or Thatcham; the highest proportion however, live in rural West Reading (i.e. Burghfield Common, Padworth, Theale etc) and Calcot.

With assistance from Thames Valley Colleges it was possible to identify the numbers of young people for whom local Further Education was an expected and actual destination after transition from school.

An observation is that more children attended Brookfields Special School in Tilehurst than The Castle School in Newbury and that more learners live to the West of Reading; however the greater proportion attends Newbury rather than Reading College after transition.

Without information on whether a young person is employed (ICO case reference ENQ0358372) it is clearly difficult to ascertain whether courses offered in Further Education lead directly to full or supported employment.

The greatest number of young people leaving school with the least amount of information held is for those leaving school in 2004.



Significant information is held when a young person with a Statement of Educational Need is eligible for Adult Services; usually offered when an individual is considered and tested to have an Intelligence Quotient of less than 70 or if a case is considered to be critical. 10% of the 17-25 year old sample group are known to the Community Team for People with a Learning Disability.

Speech, Language and Communication Difficulties

Although it is not possible to identify from the West Berkshire data how many young people have a diagnosed speech and language difficulty, it is evidenced that 10% of the general UK population have speech, language and communication difficulties. 60% of those are known to Youth Offending Teams (Bryan et al, 2007); 'speech, language and communication difficulties are wide ranging and impact adversely on the young person's social, emotional and psychological development leading to social exclusion and isolation' (Snowling et al, 2006). Further information available from www.informahealthcare.com and www.onlinelibrary.wiley.com

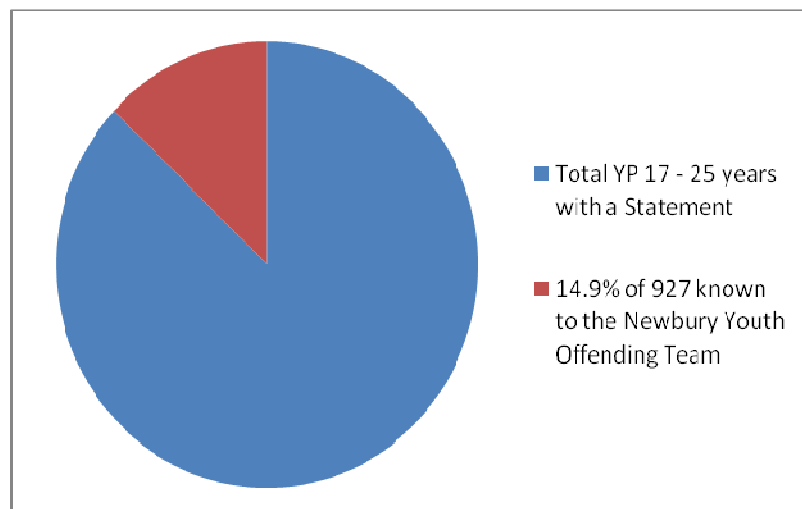
It was possible however to gather information with regard to local youth offending by exploring the question:

Is there an evidenced correlation between the number of young people in West Berkshire with a statement of educational need and being known to the Youth Offending Service?

It became clear that it was only achievable to identify young people who were born in 1991 and 1992 to determine if they were known to the Youth Offending Team as it is not possible to access YOT data for young people beyond the age of 18.

The sample group of 1991 and 1992 birth years totalled 215 young people. Of this group, 32 were known to the Youth Offending Team, representing 14.9%.

If this is used as a base line example, then it may be assumed that of the whole sample group totalling 927 young people with a Statement of Educational Need, 14.9% represents 139 young people possibly known to the Youth Offending Team at some stage.



The work undertaken to ascertain the current percentage of young people under 18 with a Statement known to Youth Offending was substantiated by historical information available from YOT, as follows:-

2000 / 2001: 17%

2003 / 2004: 20%

2004 / 2005: 14%

2005 / 2006: 13%

Within the context of this study it was not possible to gather intelligence relating to the total number of 19 – 25 year old people known to Adult Offending Teams and how that percentage would compare to the total with a Statement of Educational Need as indicated above.

Newbury Youth Offending Team was keen to canvass opinion from the young people involved with their service. An incentive was offered to anyone answering a questionnaire that related to their experience of life after school.

A number of discussions took place as to the appropriateness of offering a gift voucher in return for a completed individual questionnaire, one argument being that Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) was a good example of incentivised learning, or that most people are motivated to work in exchange for money; is offering a gift voucher any different? It remains to be seen what impact the removal of EMA will have to Youth and Adult Offending Teams, Further Education providers and the young people themselves.

Other questionnaires were sent out via email to General Further Education, Independent Specialist Providers and supported employment agencies across the South East using the Action for Inclusion and South East Employment Networks. Individual interviews / questionnaires were arranged via Link Up, West Berkshire Mencap, Castle School, Engaging Potential and the Newbury Youth Offending Team. The condensed results are as follows:

Individual questionnaires

Of 52 returned individual questionnaires:

6	Under 16, YOT/Engaging Potential
16	16-18 years old still at school
30	19+ known to Adult Services / Link Up and West Berkshire Mencap

- Special school returns indicate that some realistic outcomes are aspired to.
- 6 Youth Offending / Engaging Potential returns indicate that own attitude, drugs and pregnancy is most likely to stop progress towards an aspiration or employment goal
- 3 Engaging Potential returns indicate that 'nothing' will stop the individual from achieving what they wish to achieve

Of the remaining 22 questionnaires:

42% recorded that they were working in a field associated with their aspiration (e.g. I would like to work in business; work placement is at a reception desk)

28% recorded that they did not have an aspiration to work in any particular field

30% recorded that they were not working in or towards their aspiration

0% overall are in paid employment

Parent / supporter questionnaires

Of 8 returned questionnaires

- 100% expressed anxiety for the future

When asked 'What worked well during the transition process?'

- Good advice to start process early
- Sharing experiences with other parents
- The Annual Reviews were very comprehensive and well attended (SEN representative, local

Connexions)

- Helpful input from the Community Team for People with a Learning Disability (CTPLD)
- Everything school based went well

- 10% work in partnership with an employment agency
- 0% formally record progression once a learner has left Further Education

When asked 'What did not go well during the transition process?'

- Too much conflicting information and the time it took
- Our Connexions PA changed 5 times in the space of 3 years
- The timeframe to put an application for funding is ridiculously short
- Connexions were unhelpful; the procedures for applying to a Natspec are prohibitively complicated and stressful, with changes to the funding making it even more confusing.
- The Transition Plan from Year 9 onwards was a box ticking exercise with little relevance to real life
- Young people are failing in our system because they are led to believe that they can achieve TV celebrity status, we give dreams to young people, they have wild ideas when they leave school and when they find they can't achieve these, they give up, get benefits; they are not loners by choice but by society

When asked what works well and provides successful outcomes for discrete learners?

- Smooth transition from school, link programmes with local schools
- Early information, getting information to staff and up-skilling the workforce
- Good learner support at the start of a programme

When asked what does not work well / what would you like to see changed?

- Better joined up planning
- Information about a learner at the last minute, no opportunity to prepare, immediate access needed to Additional Learning Support funds
- Lack of the 'right' skills in support and teaching staff
- High cost of equipment and assistive technology, better joined up loan agreements or equipment that follows the learner
- Learner attitude, realistic expectations, accurate information, advice and guidance given to prospective learners

General Further Education and other training provider questionnaires

Of 7 colleges returning questionnaires:

- 80% offer specialist discrete provision for 16 – 18 years and 19+
- 100% offer mainstream support where required for young people with a statement
- 100% conduct interviews at entry to Further Education to ascertain destination
- All kept progression information within Further Education

Independent Specialist provider questionnaires

Of 2 questionnaires returned

- 1 provides for young people between 16-19 years old
- 1 provides for U16, 16-19 and 19-25 year old learners
- 1 does not conduct destination interviews due to the nature of the learner
- 1 always conduct a destination interview at entry to Further Education
- 1 does not keep post Further Education

destination data

- 1 keeps post Further Education destination data for 5 years

experience is far more important than having qualifications, and we look for skills rather than qualifications in the people that we hope to appoint

- Accessibility of resources

Supported employment questionnaires

Of 8 questionnaires returned

- All offered work experience and volunteering opportunities to individuals 16 years +

When asked what type of preparation is required or most suitable in order for young people with a disability to access paid employment:

- Ongoing advice and support
- Travel training
- Personal & Communication skills, Life skills
- Transferable accredited skill but also place and training model
- We use work-based activities with a media focus during our summer Job Forum, and these allow the participants to explore the reality of and barriers to work in a fun way
- To give individuals the knowledge of what opportunities there are out in the community. Taster sessions
- We strongly believe that the best people to enable a young disabled person to access the workplace are young disabled people themselves

When asked what factors contribute greatest to a successful work outcome for an individual with a disability?

- 100% response in support of Job Coaching
- Bespoke step by step plan
- Support for employer
- Job matching
- It is our strong belief that learning from

When asked what barriers are there to a young person gaining a successful work placement?

- Stereotypical idea of disability / lack of employer understanding, fear and ignorance
- Employers taking advantage of vulnerability, accessibility of the workplace
- Family history of unemployment
- Lack of opportunity / recession
- Limited funding for travel; lack of travel training
- Limited funding for job coaches
- Lack of experience and / or confidence, fear of failure
- Lack of literacy and numeracy skills
- Travel to work area limited which reduces labour market options
- Long term unemployment / lack of motivation
- 'There are so many, and we wrote about them in a book published early in 2008. It was called User Driven, and we brought out a sequel, User Driven 2, earlier this year. Anyway, our list of barriers, which is still relevant now, includes:
 - Telephone use
 - Poor job description/CV
 - Parent Trap i.e. parents having low expectations of their disabled children and holding them back
 - Lack of understanding in employers
 - Benefit Trap
 - Nerves, lack of confidence

- Red tape
- “Living routine” unsuited to work
- Bad experiences (other people)

Other questionnaires completed by:

- Thrive (gardening to change lives of disabled people)
- Education Business Partnership
- Job Centre Plus
- National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders: NACRO
- Youth Offending Team: YOT
- Pathways to Employment
- Castle School

A clear distinction was made between young people who are disadvantaged by their disability to those who are disadvantaged by their behaviour; one may be remedied over time, but is one group more disadvantaged than the other by a poor start or a permanent support need?

- All noted that mentoring, coaching and ongoing support is essential for successful outcomes in life, not just employment
- 1 provider noted that prospects are not good for any youngster, let alone if you have a disability
- 1 provider stated that young people achieved most when they are 'owned by someone and supported by everyone'
- 4 Providers commented on unrealistic, specific expectations that result in an inflexible attitude towards work and work experience
- All providers stated that wrap-around ongoing support is a significant success factor.

Individual case study

In 2007 a case study was undertaken by the West Berkshire Education Business

Partnership; the report, referred to here with permission from all parties, was undertaken by Corrie Barker as follows:

'Interview with 'B' - student at the Castle School 27th June 2007

B is a Year 11 Student at The Castle School in Newbury. The Castle is a school for students with a variety of SEN.

Students in Years 10 and 11 are placed on work experience placements by West Berkshire Education Business Partnership.

B became a pupil at the Castle School when he was 5, and is now 16. A told me that he moved up into Tintagel class (Years 10 &11) a year early. He was apprehensive before hand, but soon enjoyed it and liked meeting new class mates.

B's Placements: Abacus Day Nursery and WH Smith

B's first work experience placement in the autumn of Year 10 was to Abacus Day Nursery in Newbury. B said that before his interview and placement he was: “mega nervous, I was the most nervous I had ever been in my life. I was worried that I would make mistakes on work experience. But after my interview I felt better. The night before I started I was nervous too, but the placement was good and I really enjoyed it.”

B said that after this placement “I had a lot more confidence, and I knew that my next placement would be easier.”

Each year West Berks EBP holds a Logbook Competition. All students complete a logbook about their experience and placements. B won the Special Achievement award that year. The judges commented that they had never seen a logbook from the Castle School completed so fully, and it was clear to them how much B had got from the placement.

At the ceremony B was very nervous when he came to receive his award.

In the autumn of Year 11, B was placed at W H Smith for a 2 week placement. B said: “I wanted to try something different and learn new skills. I was a bit nervous, but not as much as my first placement.”

B had a great time. B identified that he became more confident when talking to people. Customers asked him for help, and if he couldn't help he would ask his manager.

At the end of the placement the manager said that it was a shame that B wasn't 16, because she would like to offer him a part time job. B went back to the store when he turned 16 and the manager helped him complete an application form. The great news was that B got a job on a Sunday. Duties included putting out newspapers, tidying magazines, filling the fridge, and working on the till!

B has identified that he did well on work experience because "I was able to concentrate and stick at the job, I did not get distracted and I was really interested in what I was doing."

B is also going to work at W H Smith for whole weeks during the summer. This just shows how far B has come and what a great benefit work experience has been to him. B has clearly identified that from work experience "I am much more confident now and I've got more independence."

The Future

B has also been offered a placement at Newbury College to study Independent Life Skills, Sport and Recreation and Maths. B is nervous as it will be a big change, but is looking forward to it.

Summary

It is clear to everyone who knows B just how much more confidence he has now. B is able to engage and the fact that he has been successful in gaining employment through his work experience is an example of how important and valuable work experience is'.

Corrie Barker West Berkshire EBP June 2007

Several years on and whilst researching this work for West Berkshire Council I heard that B was no longer working at WH Smith and that he was unwell. I wrote to B at home asking for his permission to update his story.

On the 31st January 2011, I was able to meet with B to talk through what had happened since leaving school; B was supported by his mum

throughout the interview.

B, who is now 20, started a full time course at Newbury College in September 2007. The programme, then called 'The Entry Course' was designed to support learners with a learning difficulty or disability interested in going out to work; these learners would need more support with this transition than most other young people with this goal.

During his time at college B received an award for 100% attendance, his confidence growing daily. He managed the class work, made new friends and 'loved it'.

The Entry Level course came to an end after two years with B applying, unsuccessfully at the time, to extend his learning to a Level 1 ICT course.

Towards the end of his course and with the thought that there may be no source of ongoing support, B's confidence began to wane. A misunderstanding at WH Smiths left B anxious, worrying about his time keeping and in particular around working on the tills. B became apprehensive in crowded places, feeling sick, 'nauseous' and 'ill'. B says that he got very depressed and his mum confirmed that B was unable to leave the house after experiencing panic attacks. B was keen however to say that he feels better on medication and especially now that T takes him out once a week.

B said that he had thought about going back to college but that he was happy where he was at the moment, at home with 'no money worries'. B says that he doesn't really have any dreams of what he would like to do but continued to speak with me in an enthusiastic way about making videos and posting them on 'You Tube'. He is also a great fan of WWE Royal Rumble wrestling and will watch 8 hours in one sitting.

B is supported by Occupational Therapy and T from the Community Mental Health Team who goes bowling with B on Thursday afternoon. B says that he likes walking, bowling, making videos, playing rounders and food.

Contrast report for a group of 7 young Newbury people with a range of complex learning and physical disabilities leaving school

between 2006/08. None of these 7 individuals are currently able to live independently or work to earn an income that will reduce a benefit claim.

In July 2007, 3 female individuals left school; 2 from the local special school, 1 returning from out of county special education. In September 2007 they all started a full time course at the local Further Education provider at much the same time as moving into local shared supported living accommodation. All three young people completed their course at the local FE provider, learning skills for making choice towards supported living.

In contrast, in July 2006 and July 2007, 3 young men left school; all three attended different out of county specialist residential colleges, returning to Newbury in July 2010. The same group of men moved into local shared supported living accommodation and receive, at the time of writing, a service from the West Berkshire supported employment team; work is an aspiration but at interview it became clear that paid employment was not an option.

One other male individual attended specialist out of county school and college, returning to Newbury and the family home. This young person received an emergency service from the Community Adult Mental Health Team after a significant decline in mental health resulting in a move from the family home into local supported living accommodation.

All 7 individuals, having followed different routes to this point, have supported living arrangements in West Berkshire, none are in paid employment

If the outcomes in terms of support from local services are similar, a comparison of soft outcomes is, of course, more difficult to quantify than cost.

Challenges

Due to a change to an IT system at West Berkshire Council, the original spreadsheet needed updating after the start of the project

There is a lack of a systematic method of collecting data across many providers

Some local provider data was incomplete or not up to date

Information on employment was not available without a National Insurance number; time limitations did not allow for an application to be made to the NINO Board

Some confidential information was not released

Not all Further Education and training providers record destination data for those leaving Further Education

Not all Further Education and training providers know whether students have previously had a Statement of Educational Need or whether additional support would be required

Youth Offending Team data is only available for young people aged up to the age of 18

It was not possible within the scope of this project to collect data from adult offending teams

The age of the clients involved with the Supported Employment Team tended to be outside the age range of the project

Letters sent out with questionnaires to individuals did not yield any response. All individuals completing a questionnaire were supported to do so

The questionnaire sample size is too small to draw conclusive, evidence based results

The questionnaire was used by some parents to vent frustration to changes in funding

Successes of both the Berkshire Capacity Building model and the Innovations and Outcomes project

The National Transition Support Team application asks: how will this work continue or have an impact on young people and families in your local area after the programme ends in March 2011?

- Local Authority response: 'A method of data collection and interrogation would be in place which could be maintained by officers in the SEN team. A model for July 2011 would be established and

subsequent years would be added to. Data will be available to inform agencies in advance and to check effectiveness of provision and strategies in retrospect. Commissioning in Further Education, Adult Social Care and in other services (e.g. housing and transport) would be strengthened. Analysis of the data will enable success factors to be identified in cases where transition has been successful in order to inform future practice. Ultimately, we want to learn from those young people who have gone through transition and use that learning to shape future direction, to ensure that we are continually striving towards the best possible futures for our young people. Young people will be a key partner in the evaluation process and will be advocates for other young people by shaping our future direction'

- The Newbury Virtual Transition Team meetings provide a forum to inform and prepare future providers
- The Berkshire Curriculum Planning and Progression Group continue to tackle difficulties around qualifications and funding for young people with a Statement of Education Need requiring Foundation Learning programmes
- The South East Supported Employment and Action for Inclusion Networks yielded a good number of questionnaires that held more information than most other questionnaires
- The decision to offer a gift card incentive enabled us to collect some information about transition and adult life from young people in the sample group
- Local organisations were cooperative and interested in the results of the report

Observations, conclusion, suggestions to support future role

The local authority may consider applying to the NINO Board to gain permission to gather National Insurance numbers for young people when they are allocated at 16 years old, solely for the purpose of running annual or bi-annual reports to gauge how many young people who

previously had a Statement of Educational Need are in work and in what type of work

An analysis of the type of local work undertaken by young people in West Berkshire who had previously had a Statement of Educational Need could then inform the school and Further Education curriculum. In the short term information from Job Centre Plus may be sought to ensure that local education and training for learners with a learning disability matches local job opportunities

The Local Authority may like to question local Further Education and training providers how they know that the courses they offer are successful in terms of finding employment if they do not record anticipated and actual destination data post FE.

The Local Authority may like to question whether Connexions make a judgement about who is employable and who is not, i.e. if an individual is not working at Level 2 and above, are they considered unemployable?

The Local Authority may like to question when or whether Connexions re-engage with young people when they return from an out of county Independent Specialist Provider.

Identify at diagnoses any emerging patterns of young people with a Speech, Language and Communication Difficulty, which may also include or lead to youth offending; this may provide evidence to target resources.

The Youth Offending Team may wish to report on whether the timing of the Education Maintenance Grant removal coincides with an increase in youth offending

Further investigation would be beneficial into a making a soft outcome and financial comparison between the 7 young people all now living locally in supported housing and with similar employment prospects, 3 of whom accessed out of county residential placements after leaving school, 3 of whom accessed local Further Education and local housing after leaving school. 1 now accesses supported living as a result of crisis management on return from an Independent Specialist Provider attended for the whole of his school and Further Education life

Consideration may be given to the larger number of West Berkshire young people accessing Brookfields School and link programmes to Reading College who may then need to access Newbury College due to transport difficulties or restrictions.

Some further analysis of data and information may lead to some thinking with regard to the cost of travel for young people accessing Reading services who live in Newbury, and for whom Newbury College is not the expected destination but is none-the-less the actual destination

The Local Authority Business Opportunities Officer, Education Business Partnership and local training providers may like to consider a variety of work experience at school which may then include a weekly placement over one or two years that could develop into a learning disability 'Apprenticeship' as opposed to a block placement of work experience which may or may not be 'passed' from school to Further Education. A fully coordinated approach to work experience and Foundation Learning would provide continuity from school to the Further Education provider

The Local Authority and Sub Regional Group may wish to continue to develop data collecting processes either side of transition to provide the evidence for targeted commissioning of services to meet local need

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National Transition Support Team (NTST)

NTST is working alongside the National Strategies and the Child Health and Maternity Partnership to coordinate the delivery of the Transition Support Programme.

NTST is based at the Council for Disabled Children (CDC), the umbrella body for the disabled children's sector in England. CDC is hosted by NCB. www.ncb.org.uk/cdc

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