**Contract reference:** CSEC (SEND) 16-17/05

**Contract title:** Contract to provide delivery support to early years providers, schools and post-16 providers to improve outcomes for children and young people with sensory impairment.

**Contact Details**:

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**Background and description of the services required**

On 1 September 2014, Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 took effect, offering simpler, improved and more consistent help for children and young people in England with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The new system is:

* replacing statements of SEN and learning disability assessments with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans - setting out in one place all the support families will receive;
* requiring councils to publish a ‘local offer’ showing the support available in the area to all children and young people who have disabilities or SEN;
* requiring better co-operation between councils and health services to make sure services for children and young people with SEN and disabilities are jointly planned and commissioned;
* giving parents and young people with EHC plans the offer of a personal budget;
* introducing mediation for disputes; and
* introducing a legal right for children and young people with an EHC plan to express a preference for state academies, free schools and further education colleges.

On 26 January 2016, the Children’s Minister Edward Timpson, announced a package of additional support for implementation of the SEND reforms in England during 2016-17. This included:

* £35.8 million in [implementation funding for local authorities in 2016 to 2017](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-reform-funding-for-local-authorities-2016-to-2017), recognising the additional duties placed on them as a result of the transition to EHC plans
* £27.3 million for the [Family Fund Trust](http://www.familyfund.org.uk/) to support low income families with disabled children
* £15 million to fund the [independent supporters programme](http://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/independentsupport), helping to support families and young people to navigate the system, and creating positive experiences for them
* £2.3 million for [Parent Carer Forums](http://www.nnpcf.org.uk/), which bring parents together to provide invaluable support and advice for families

To complement this programme of delivery support, the Government is now seeking applications for a new contract in 2016-17 to support early years providers, schools and post-16 providers to improve outcomes for children and young people with sensory impairment.

A summary of the key requirements for this contract is provided at Annex A. Further information is contained within the Invitation to Tender documentation.

To request a copy of the documentation, please e mail the contracts mailbox at: SENDcontracts2016-17@education.gsi.gov.uk, quoting the contract title and reference number above. In the subject line of your e mail, please include the words ‘Request for ITT documentation’.

**Estimated Contract Start Date (subject to change): 25 April 2016**

**Contract End Date:** 31 March 2017

**Estimated value or range of values**:

The maximum estimated value of the contract covered by this notification is up to £450k inclusive of VAT.

**Deadline for receipt of tenders (time and date)**:

Three hard copies of all completed tenders must be received by Angela Overington no later than 10.00am on 21 March 2016 at:

The Department for Education

0-25 SEND Unit

Level 1, Sanctuary Buildings

Great Smith Street

London SW1P 3BT

An electronic PDF version must also be submitted no later than 10.00am on

21 March 2016 to the contracts mailbox at:

**Contracts2016-17.SEND@education.gsi.gov.uk**.

At Annex A are some of the key contract requirements for this tender.

There may be an option to extend this contract for a second year depending on the contractor’s performance, the availability of funds and an ongoing need for the services provided.

**The estimated date for award of this contract is 21** April 2016.

**Annex A: Key Contract Requirements**

**Contract 05: CSEC (SEND) 16-17/05: sensory impairment**

**What we want to achieve with this contract**

We want to improve outcomes for children and young people with sensory impairment by promoting effective practice and giving the workforce access to quality training materials. We also want to improve the advice that specialist teachers provide for EHC plans for children and young people with sensory impairment and we want to harness the rapidly-advancing technology in this area to improve the accessibility and outcomes of education for children and young people with sensory impairment.

**1.1 Contract Requirement 1 – promoting good practice on supporting children and young people with sensory impairments.**

In an increasingly autonomous education system, it is crucial that early years providers, schools and post-16 institutions are supported to discover and share good practice on how to achieve the best outcomes for their pupils. This is particularly important as sensory impairment is a relatively low-incidence special educational need, making national coordination of good practice essential. Building on existing good practice for children and young people with sensory impairment, we want the successful bidder to facilitate the sharing of this and other good practice on how to support children and young people with sensory impairments.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Be able to innovate and use the creative energy of the sector to find new and rewarding ways of working that stimulate both the professionals who serve this group and the children and young people themselves.
* Share innovative approachesby using models of school-to-school support and system leadership to help school leaders, SENCOs and teaching staff to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people with sensory impairment.
* Build on the evidence-based good practice that already exists by establishing an evidence base of “what works” for teaching children and young people with sensory impairment.
* Work with sensory impairment organisations to provide a range of support for early years, schools and post-16 providers, and act as a gateway for providers to access these organisations if they have a specific training need.

The bidder should demonstrate:

* Their knowledge of what best practice looks like for supporting children and young people with sensory impairment effectively.
* How they would use models of school-to-school support to provide training, sharing of practice and other peer-learning approaches across schools in delivering advice and guidance on supporting learners with sensory impairment.
* How they will establish the evidence for “what works” in teaching children and young people with sensory impairment.
* How they would build on existing knowledge when delivering support to professionals working with children and young people with sensory impairment.
* How support will be matched to the particular needs of early years providers, schools and post-16 providers, and how these will be engaged and brought together.
* How support will be provided and accessed – being mindful of any restrictions on paid-for communications and marketing.
* How they will ensure they reach their target audience and have national reach.
* Their ability to work with a range of sensory impairment organisations.
* What difference they will make and how improvements in sensory impairment provision in schools will be sustainable in the longer term.
* How they will evaluate their effectiveness and measure their impact.

**1.2 Contract Requirement 2 – equipping the early years, schools and post-16 workforce to deliver high quality teaching for pupils with sensory impairments**

As part of reforming the wider SEND system, we are seeking to improve support for pupils with sensory impairment and provide additional support and training for teachers, lecturers and staff working in early years, schools and post-16 settings. We know that high quality teaching is vital for improving outcomes and want children and young people with sensory impairment to receive this from their early years provider, school or post-16 institution so that they can make as much progress as possible.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Enhance teachers’ knowledge, understanding and skills in supporting children and young people with sensory impairment.
* Develop a short CPD module, for each of visual impairment and hearing impairment, which providers could use to equip teachers with the skills required to teach children and young people with sensory impairment.
* Plan future requirements for sensory impairment expertise in the workforce and in academia; this should include successor planning of Heads of Sensory Services and lecturers.
* Raise awareness in the sector of which training materials are available and how they can access them.

The bidder should demonstrate:

* Their ability to develop training materials for schools and providers that enable them to provide the best possible support for children and young people with sensory impairment.
* How they plan to develop this training, including how it will be of sufficient breadth and depth to increase the capacity of the workforce.
* How they will develop existing training materials and make these available to teachers, post-16 providers and support staff to support their CPD.
* How they will assess existing and future requirements for sensory impairment expertise in the education and specialist sectors and how they will work with existing experts to ensure the need for future expertise is met.
* How they will work with the contractors engaged by the department to support the schools and FE workforce to deliver a coherent approach to workforce development across SEND.
* How they plan to raise awareness in the sector of the training that is available.
* How they will evaluate their effectiveness and measure their impact.

**1.3 Contract Requirement 3 – Improving the quality of specialist advice for education, health and care (EHC) assessments for children and young people with sensory impairment**

We want the successful bidder to support the development of excellent EHC plans for children and young people with sensory impairment. An EHC plan can only ever be as good as the advice and information provided during the assessment, and specialist teachers need guidance, templates, and completed examples to help them write effective advice.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Build on the existing resource base and develop further tools and practical guidance on writing advice and information plans for children and young people with sensory impairment. This will help to ensure that EHC plans for children and young people with sensory impairment meet the requirements of the code of practice, identify good outcomes clearly, and are expressed and targeted in line with SMART principles in the SEND code of practice.
* Provide best practice examples of advice and information from specialist teachers submitted as part of EHC needs assessment. This will take the form of three for hearing impairment, three for visual impairment and three for multi-sensory impairment. The three examples will consist of one for early years, one for 5-16 pupils and one for post-16 students.
* Produce a checklist that practitioners can follow when writing EHC plans, setting out the principles of excellent EHC plans for children and young people with sensory impairment, including guidance on how education, health and care professionals should work together.

The bidder should demonstrate:

* Their understanding of what best practice looks like in the development of excellent plans for children and young people with sensory impairment.
* Their ability to develop tools and practical guidance on writing advice and information plans for children and young people with sensory impairment.
* Their ability to work with local areas and SI professionals to improve service delivery, promoting the use of the tools and practical guidance they have developed.
* How they propose to improve the quality of EHC plans for children and young people with sensory impairment.
* How they will evaluate their effectiveness and measure their impact.

**1.4 Contract Requirement 4 – promoting the use of technology to improve the accessibility of education and outcomes for children and young people with sensory impairment**

Rapid technological advances have the potential to improve the educational experience of children and young people with sensory impairment greatly, particularly by supporting them to access education.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Think creatively about how the latest technology can be used to help children and young people with sensory impairment.
* Evaluate the effectiveness of the latest technologies for children and young people with sensory impairment in supporting teaching and learning.
* Promote the effective use of technology to improve the educational experience and outcomes for children and young people with sensory impairment.

The bidder should demonstrate:

* Their understanding of how technology can be used to improve the educational experience of children and young people with sensory impairment.
* How they will keep abreast of the latest technological developments that could help children and young people with sensory impairment and help classroom teachers to understand and access them.
* How they will evaluate the effectiveness of the latest technologies for children and young people with sensory impairment.
* How they will promote the use of the latest technology that could help children and young people with sensory impairment, to help schools meet their ‘reasonable adjustments’ duties under the Equality Act 2010.
* How they will evaluate their effectiveness and measure their impact.