**1 References and contract titles:**

A new contract is now available to support implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms in England during 2016-17. The reference number and contract title are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| CSEC (SEND) 16-17/07 | Contract to support the National Award for SEN co-ordination and review the SEN co-ordination role in the early years and post 16 sectors |

**2 Contact Details**:

Name: Angela Overington

Address: Department for Education

0-25 SEND Unit

Level 1, Sanctuary Buildings

Great Smith Street

London SW1P 3BT

E-mail: [contracts2016-17.send@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:contracts2016-17.send@education.gsi.gov.uk)

**3 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 the National Award for SEN co-ordination and review the SEN co-ordination role in the early years and post 16 sectors.

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 email the contracts mailbox at: [contracts2016-17.send@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:contracts2016-17.send@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’.

**4 Estimated Contract Start Date (subject to change):** 23 May 2016

**5 Contract End Dates:** 31 March 2017

**6 Estimated value or range of values**:

The maximum estimated value of the contract covered by this notification is up to £150k inclusive of VAT.

**7 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 18 April 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**

**18 April 2016** to the contracts mailbox at:

[**Contracts2016-17.SEND@education.gsi.gov.uk**](mailto:Contracts2016-17.SEND@education.gsi.gov.uk).

Late tenders will not be considered.

**8 Attachments**

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

**9 Whether suitable for SMEs**: Yes

**10 Whether suitable for VCS**: Yes

**11 Any other info**:

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 23 May 2016** though this is subject to change.

**Annex A: Key Contract Requirements**

**Contract 07: CSEC (SEND) 16-17/07: SEN Co-ordination support**

**1.1 Contract Requirement 1 – reviewing the effectiveness of the National Award for SEN Co-ordination and leading the forum for current providers of the Award**

Having a good knowledge and understanding of the National Award and how it operates is vital to this contract as is having a good overview of the SENCO functions that providers have in place for meeting the special educational needs of children and young people. An overall understanding of the aims of the SEND reforms is also essential.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Commission an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of the National Award for SEN Co-ordination and its impact on SENCOs, teachers and leaders, pupils with SEND and their parents, and make any recommendations for improvements.
* Lead a forum of current providers of the Award by bringing providers together and working in partnership with existing provider forums to ensure there continues to be high quality SENCO training available.
* The bidder should demonstrate:
* Their understanding of how the National Award currently operates and the evidence that already exists as to the operation of the Award since its inception.
* How they will commission a review of the Award, and how they will achieve the necessary outcomes, being mindful of value for money.
* How they will work with current and future providers of the Award and bring them together to share practice and quality-assure their offer.
* Their ability to bring in and work with a range of providers and organisations to deliver a high quality project on time and to best effect.

**1.2 Contract Requirement 2 – review the possibility of extending the National Award of SEN Co-ordination to providers in the early years and post 16 sectors.**

The contractor must have a good understanding of the arrangements that providers have in place for meeting the special educational needs of children and young people in the early years and post 16 sectors. It is also essential that the contractor is aware of any particular issues that these sectors face in delivering that support.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Assess the pros and cons of extending the Award to the early years and post 16 sectors, and assess what the likely uptake of the Award would be, working with experts in both sectors.
* Present workable solutions for either extending the Award or pursuing a different option, based on strong and robust evidence. This may include a range of options, from making minor changes to the current learning outcomes, to more radical solutions such as the creation of sector-specific Awards or offering an alternative type of training to these sectors.

The bidder should demonstrate:

* Their understanding of how the SENCO function operates within the early years and post 16 sectors.
* Their understanding of the challenges that SENCOs in these sectors may face in accessing a Masters-level Award, and how these may be overcome.
* How they will work with experts from the early years and post-16 sectors, as well as early years and post-16 providers, to test options and investigate potential options for developing the Award or pursuing a different option.
* How they understand the support already available to SENCOs in the early years and post 16 sectors in fulfilling their roles, including the current qualifications available.

**1.3 Contract Requirement 3 – reviewing the SEN co-ordination function in the early years and post 16 sectors.**

Although the requirements for the SEN co-ordination role in early years and post 16 sectors are not the same as for schools, the 0-25 Code of Practice is clear on the importance of these roles in both these sectors. However, little is known about who is carrying out this role in early years and post-16 settings, and how effectively they are able to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. The contractor will therefore be required to carry out a review of those who are currently performing a SEN co-ordination function within these sectors.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Provide a comprehensive national overview of who currently fulfils the role of SENCO in the early years and post 16 sectors. This should include:
  + the level of training and qualifications they hold to enable them to carry out the role; what continuous professional development (CPD) has/is being undertaken and its effectiveness; and any training and development issues.
  + An assessment of how local authorities are deploying Area SENCOs and how effectively they are working with early years settings to provide support
  + Recommendations for how SENCOs in both sectors could be better supported to deliver effective support for professionals, children, young people and parents.

The bidder should demonstrate:

* how they will engage with a range of providers in the early years and post 16 sectors to ensure that a good sample of information is collected across both sectors, with national reach.
* how they will engage with local authorities to access and obtain information on Area SENCOs
* their understanding of challenges facing those in a SENCO role within these sectors and how this may impact on SENCOs successfully fulfilling their roles.
* how they will seek out, write up and quality assure the information obtained.