**Contract 7: Support for children and young people with additional needs in speech, language and communication skills**

**Reference:** CSEC (SEND) 17-18/07: Support for children and young people with additional needs in speech, language and communication skills

**Title:** Support for children and young people with additional needs in speech, language and communication skills

**Contact Details**:

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0-25 SEND Unit

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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 2017-18 to improve the support provided for children and young people with additional needs in speech, language and communications.

Some of the key requirements for the contract are 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: Contracts2017-18.SEND@education.gov.uk, quoting the contract title and reference number. In the subject line of your e mail, please include the words ‘Request for ITT documentation’.

**Estimated Contract Start Date (subject to change): 1 April 2017**

**Contract End Date: 31 March 2018**

**Estimated value or range of values**:

The maximum estimated value of this contract is up to £650,000 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 Monday 30 January 2017 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

Monday 30 January 2017 to the contracts mailbox at:

Contracts2017-18.SEND@education.gov.uk

**Attachments**

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

**Whether suitable for SMEs**: Yes

**Whether suitable for VCS**: Yes

**Any other info**:

There may be an option to extend this contract for up to two additional years depending on the contractor’s performance, the availability of funds and an ongoing need for the services provided.

**The estimated date for award is Tuesday 21 March 2017.**

**Annex A: Key Contract Requirements**

**Contract 07: CSEC (SEND)16-17/07: support for children and young people with additional needs in speech, language and communication**

We are seeking to improve support for children and young people with SEND through a clear focus on improving speech, language and communication skills. This is important to children and young people across the 0-25 age range from those in early years through to those in post-16 institutions.

In an increasingly autonomous education system, it is important that professionals working in the early years, schools and post-16 sectors are able to access support and tap into resources on speech, language and communication (SLC) to ensure that children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) are supported and make successful transitions between the key phases of education.

The purpose of this contract is to ensure that the early years, schools and post-16 workforce has the skills to identify children and young people with SLCN and put in place effective support.

Contract requirement 1 - Build expertise within the workforce to identify and deliver effective and evidence-based support to children with SLCN.

Contract requirement 2 - Improve the quality of referrals and the effectiveness of commissioning specialist support.

Contract requirement 3 – Provide research and case studies into the effective teaching of literacy for non-verbal pupils with complex disabilities.

Contract requirement 4 - Extend and strengthen the evidence base on speech, language and communication and influence the behaviour of professionals across the three key phases of education to use it and spread good practice.

**1.1 Contract Requirement 1 – Build expertise within the workforce to identify and deliver effective and evidence-based support to children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).**

Children and young people with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) should be receiving good quality and evidence-based support to improve their outcomes and enable them to reach their full potential. However, it should also be recognised that SLCN can be identified at any age. Some children’s needs may be missed early on and others will emerge over time.

It is, therefore, important that professionals working within the early years, schools and post 16 sectors are able to accurately identify SLCN as early as possible and adapt their own approaches to meeting those needs. As such, professionals working in the three key phases of education need to know: how to identify SLCN effectively; where and how to access evidence-based support; and be able to ensure that good provision is put in place.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Have a sound understanding of the evidence on what works when supporting those with SLCN;
* Support professionals across the three key phases of education to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in SLC; to understand how SLC develops over time; and equip them to identify need early and put in place evidence-based provision;
* Support settings to understand the benefits of early identification and the need to engage parents, children and young people and involve them in the decision-making process;
* Understand the challenges that different settings face in delivering support to children and young people with SLCN and to know what works in supporting them;
* Help settings to develop their own approaches to supporting children and young people with SLCN and to review the effectiveness of their provision;
* Work openly with other organisations that have SLCN expertise, including those with contracts with the DfE and Departmental delivery partners.

The bidder should demonstrate:

* Their overall understanding of the aims of the SEND reforms;
* An understanding of the change in the educational landscape and the diversity of engaging the education sector;
* Their understanding of the evidence on what works in terms of effective provision for those with SLCN;
* Their understanding of the benefits of early identification of SLCN and how they will support different settings to better identify SLCN;
* How they will define what constitutes good practice across the three key stages of education; ensure it is accessible and demonstrate how they will ensure that it reaches those at the frontline.
* How they will help settings to upskill their workforce;
* How they will equip settings to develop their own approaches to identifying and supporting children and young people with SLCN; and monitor and review the effectiveness of their SLC provision;
* How they will work with other organisations with SLC expertise to maximise impact, including departmental delivery partners and organisations with SEND expertise.

**1.2 Contract Requirement 2 – To improve the quality of referrals and the effectiveness of commissioning specialist support**

As part of reforming the wider SEND system, we are seeking to improve the quality of referrals and the effectiveness of commissioning specialist support for children and young people with SLCN. It is, therefore, important that settings are able to seek specialist support at the right time and adapt their approaches to ensure the needs of their children/young people with SLCN are met.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Equip settings to determine when to seek external expertise and how to commission it more effectively;
* Increase settings’ understanding of the local authority joint commissioning role and how the role of their setting fits within that;
* Equip settings to effectively monitor the child/young person’s progress and development and assess the effectiveness of the support put in place;
* Support settings in developing innovative approaches to peer-learning and share good practice on what works in delivering specialist support to children and young people with SLCN.

The bidder should demonstrate:

* Their knowledge of what works in terms of specialist support for children and young people with SLCN and how this can be used to improve their outcomes;
* How they will support different settings to understand their roles and responsibilities and equip them to be able to commission the right specialist support for their children/young people;
* Their understanding of the local authority joint commissioning role and how it contributes to improving the outcomes for those with SLCN;
* How they will help settings to improve the quality of their referrals and commissioning of specialist support;
* How they will equip settings to evaluate the effectiveness of their interventions and measure the impact it has had.

**1.3 Contract Requirement 3 – Provide research and case studies into the effective teaching of literacy for non-verbal pupils with complex disabilities.**

There is limited research into the effective teaching of pupils with complex disabilities who are non-verbal. Such pupils are educated in both mainstream and special schools, and we are seeking guidance based on evidence and data as to what works in both settings to help non-verbal pupils acquire and apply literacy skills.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Provide a national overview of the most recent research, data and evidence available on the development of effective literacy instruction provided to pupils with complex disability;
* Highlight how the use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) promotes literacy teaching for students who rely on communication aids instead of speech;
* Showcase examples of good practice through individual case studies from both mainstream and special schools;
* Make recommendations as to how schools could provide improved literacy instruction to those with complex disability.

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| The bidder should demonstrate:* How they will establish the evidence for “what works” in supporting non-verbal children and young people with complex disability to develop literacy skills;
* A good understanding of the interventions, including the use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication, that are effective in supporting this population;
* How they will access individual case studies from both mainstream and special schools to illustrate good practice and how the case studies will be presented;
* How they will engage with special schools to formulate recommendations for improved literacy instruction to those with complex disability.
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**1.4 Contract Requirement 4 – Extend and strengthen the evidence base on speech, language and communication and influence the behaviour of professionals across the three key phases of education to use it and spread good practice.**

In order to develop a strategic approach to improving the outcomes for children and young people with SLCN and enabling them to reach their full potential, we need to know what current evidence and data is telling us about those with SLCN and what progress has been made over recent years.

This is about bringing together the research, data and evidence that already exists, showing an understanding of it and spreading good practice.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Provide a national overview of the most recent research, data and evidence available on SLC;
* Establish an evidence base of “what works” for supporting children and young people with SLCN;
* Evaluate the impact and progress that has been made on SLC;
* Put forward recommendations for how professionals across the key phases of education could better support those with SLCN based on what works in both special and mainstream schools;
* Ensure they are aware of support materials and other resources that are available and how professionals can access these.

The bidder should demonstrate:

* How they will establish the evidence for “what works” in supporting children and young people with SLCN from both special and mainstream;
* A good understanding of the interventions that are effective in supporting those with SLCN;
* How they will seek out, verify, write up and quality assure the evidence obtained;
* How they will use the evidence obtained to raise awareness at national and local level and amongst professionals working in early years, schools and post 16 education.

**1.5 – Contract requirement 5 - Overall delivery and project management**

Bidders should describe the staffing and management structure of the team required to deliver the contract. Bidders should think about any specific risks and issues they foresee. They should describe what contingencies and countermeasures they might put in place to mitigate these risks. They should also describe the structures and governance arrangements required to keep oversight of the scheme and proposed reporting mechanisms and measures.

Bidders should detail:

* proposed staffing and management structure (if bidding as a consortium, including the responsibilities of different consortium members and how they will work together, including who leads the consortium)
* key staff and their roles (CVs can be attached as an annex)
* how they will co-ordinate the different strands of work within the contract to provide a coherent package of support to settings in the early years; schools and post 16 sectors
* demonstrate that they have a detailed understanding of the processes and systems affecting children and young people with SLCN, including a good working knowledge of the SEND reforms?
* specific risks or issues in delivering the proposal and describe the contingencies they would put in place to mitigate them
* how the independence and impartiality of any advice will be maintained, particularly to avoid any potential conflicts of interest.
* key performance indicators for the contract: what they would look like, examples of what they might include and how the contract’s success will be measured
* how the Department for Education will be provided with management and performance information, including co-ordinated reporting to show the support provided to all settings across the 3 key phases of education and across all strands of the contract (whether or not provided as a consortium), and how links will be maintained with the Department for Education, including who would provide day-to-day contact; and
* how the overall contract will be managed to ensure coordination and achieve economies of scale (whether or not provided as a consortium), including realistic project management arrangements and a high level project/delivery plan.

Bidders will be expected to demonstrate how the skills and experience of key staff will ensure the successful delivery of the contract.

The bidder should provide details of the proposed staffing structure that will be employed to deliver the outcomes, including key roles identified to lead the activity as well as other roles to support delivery.

The bidder should indicate: whether staff are already in place, or would need to be recruited, what they will be responsible for, how much time they are expected to dedicate to the activity (on a Full Time Equivalent basis) and how, if at all, this will change during the contract.

**1.6 Contract requirement 6 - Costs and value for money**

The Department expects to award a contract to run for one year commencing 1 April 2017.

The proposed budget will be £650,000 over the one year period. This funding is inclusive of all VAT that may be chargeable.

The scope of this contract may be extended up to a further value of 30% of the contract. Any changes, including the revised costs, would be agreed with the contractor.

The contract may be extended for up to two further years should it continue to align with Government priorities and should funding be available.

Bidders will need to demonstrate that proposed costs are based on efficient models of delivery and provide good value for public money. You must ensure that all estimated costs are real, auditable and can be justified. Be sure you separately identify and include all expenditure that you expect to incur in relation to proposed activities, i.e. costs associated with:

* overheads i.e. premises/facilities/licences; and
* staffing i.e. management, delivery and administration.

There are restrictions on all paid for communications and marketing activities funded by the Department. You should set out any planned expenditure on these activities with supporting information on the nature of the planned activities.

We would expect quarterly reporting against spending. Please note that the contract is intended to be inclusive of VAT costs and that further amounts will not be available should a vatable supply claim be made at any later stage. No additional costs will be charged to the Department unless agreed with the contract manager prior to expenditure.

It is the responsibility of tenderers to check the VAT position with HMRC before submitting a bid.

Payments of costs to the supplier will be made quarterly by BACS transfer following receipt of a valid invoice.

Bidders should detail:

* a complete breakdown of all costs for the year i.e. 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018, including clear costs for all overheads, including recruitment, accommodation, etc and (if applicable) what VAT will be charged. Where bidders are intending to charge VAT this should be clearly set out in the costs breakdown, including what rate of VAT and an estimate of the total cost of VAT to be charged for the work in question.
* as a memorandum, any planned expenditure on communications and marketing activities and information on the nature of the planned activities
* accounting and finance provisions; and
* how the overall contract will be managed to ensure co-ordination and achieve economies of scale (whether or not provided as a consortium).

**1.7 – Contract requirement 7** **Security of Data**

Please submit a security plan that explains how you will ensure that departmental or personal data will be protected.